Proceedings

20**24**

THEREPS

Tourism, Hospitality, and Event Conference for
Researchers, Educators, Practitioners, and Students

April 5-6 2024
Chicago
Sheraton Suites Chicago Elk Grove

Organized by **KAHTEA**
The Korea-America Hospitality &
Tourism Educators Association

Message from the THEREPS Conference Board of Directors

Welcome to the 2024 THEREPS Conference at The Sheraton Suites Chicago Elk Grove! Building on the success of the KAHTEA annual conference since 2011, THEREPS, the branded annual conference of KAHTEA, aims to facilitate the exchange of participants' knowledge, expertise, and valuable experiences. Conference attendees will share their expertise through completed research, research-in-progress, case studies, and/or open discussion in stand-up presentations, poster presentations, or undergraduate symposium format. We would like to extend a hearty welcome to researchers, educators, practitioners, students, sponsors, and industry partners.

We have invited a prominent speaker, Dr. Jaehyun Park, Associate Professor of Design at the School of Design, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, to discuss UX & Service Design, and Digital Innovation, and learn cutting-edge research techniques. Dr. Robin Back, Associate Professor, Interim Chair of Food Service and Lodging Management at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management, University of Central Florida, will deliver a speech about the meaning of wine research and education with the title of "Beyond the Grapes" followed by wine tasting. Undergraduate students' Sustainability Hospitality Innovations Challenge Competition will be followed by Undergraduate/Graduate Student Networking. The inaugural KAHTEA Future Researcher Scholarships will be presented during the award dinner. The scholarships were made possible through continued annual fundraising events titled "Giving Heart to KAHTEA."

The success of this year's conference is owed to the contributions of numerous individuals and organizations. Their kind assistance and unwavering support have been instrumental in our journey. We would also like to acknowledge the conference sponsors and donors for their generosity and support.

In conclusion, our sincere thanks go to the authors, the paper review committee, and the best paper selection committee. This proceeding is the outcome of their quality work and their contributions to academics and the industry. We trust that your participation in this conference will be both enriching and enjoyable. With your ongoing support and participation, we eagerly anticipate another successful conference in 2025.

Respectfully,

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Thank You

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STAND-UP PRESENTATIONS

POSTERS

STAND-UP PRESENTATIONS (UNDERGRADUATE)

POSTERS (UNDERGRADUATE)

Stand-up Presentation

DRIVERS OF TIPPING BEHAVIOR IN THE US FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS AND SCOPING REVIEW

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Introduction

The tradition of tipping, once introduced to the U.S. by wealthy Americans influenced by European customs, has evolved into an essential element of the American foodservice industry, generating significant annual contributions to service employees' incomes (Segrave, 1998; Maze, 2023). This study explores the multifaceted nature of tipping behavior over the last two decades, aiming to shed light on its economic, psychological, and social dimensions.

Methods

Adopting a comprehensive two-step approach, this research combines bibliometric analysis with qualitative synthesis to examine over 103 relevant articles, strictly adhering to the PRISMA-ScR guidelines (Tricco et al., 2018). This methodology ensures a thorough and systematic exploration of the literature on tipping behaviors.

Findings

The analysis portrays three primary research themes: Social Psychology and Management, Economics, and Socio-cultural influences, each offering unique perspectives on the factors driving tipping behaviors. The Social Psychology and Management theme investigates the psychological processes and management strategies affecting tipping, with studies highlighting the role of server behavior, customer-server interactions, and management practices in influencing tipping rates (Lynn, 2009; Seiter & Weger, 2010). The Economics theme examines tipping as a social norm and its implications for economic transactions, suggesting that tipping behaviors are influenced by psychological satisfaction and economic incentives (Azar, 2020; Conlin et al., 2003). The Socio-cultural theme addresses the impact of race, gender, and ethnicity on tipping practices, uncovering disparities in tipping behaviors among different demographic groups (Lynn, 2013; Brewster & Lynn, 2014).

Discussions

While the current literature provides significant insights into tipping behaviors, several research gaps still need to be addressed. Firstly, there is a need for further investigation into the impact of digital payment platforms and mobile technologies on tipping practices, particularly how these technologies alter customer perceptions and behaviors (Warren et al., 2023).

Secondly, the strategic and financial implications of tipping practices for businesses, such as how tipping influences employee retention, customer satisfaction, and overall financial performance, warrant more in-depth exploration (Davies et al., 2010). Additionally, the sociological aspects of tipping, including the development and evolution of tipping norms and their impact on social equity and fairness, still need to be explored. Integrating theories from sociology could provide a richer understanding of the social structures and norms shaping tipping behaviors (Azar, 2020; Lynn & Brewster, 2018).

This study provides an insightful overview of tipping behavior within the U.S. foodservice industry, revealing the complex interplay of psychological, economic, and sociocultural factors. Identifying key research themes and highlighting gaps in the literature sets the stage for future research to extend our understanding of tipping practices and their implications for individuals and businesses alike. Further exploration in these areas will enrich the academic discourse and offer practical insights for policymakers and industry stakeholders.

References are available upon request.

THE NEXT CHAPTER IN SENIOR TOURISM: A DECADE OF CHANGE AND FUTURE RESEARCH PATHWAYS

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Introduction

The boom of senior tourism research spotlights the increasing senior economy, poised for exponential growth by the century's end, propelled by a demographic shift that forecasts the population aged 60 and above to constitute 20% of the global total by 2030 (World Health Organization, 2022). Enhanced healthcare, healthy living advancements, and economic fortification catalyze this transformation, spotlighting the 'Active Senior' segment - individuals 50+, including Baby Boomers and Gen X - as a pivotal yet underexplored market (Patterson & Balderas, 2020). This demographic evolution necessitates strategic tourism and healthcare sector adjustments to cater to the unique needs of this burgeoning group (Patuelli & Nijkamp, 2016).

Methods

A systematic review and bibliometric analysis conducted over the last decade underpin this study, focusing on scholarly articles that delve into senior tourism, ensuring an encompassing grasp of the field's evolution and prevailing trends. The research employed Web of Science for rigorous indexing and Google Scholar for citation verification, ensuring a holistic data collection from quality sources. A broad array of keywords, such as 'senior,' 'elderly,' 'tourism,' and 'travel,' facilitated the identification of relevant articles, with the PRISMA procedure guiding the inclusion criteria and screening process. Ultimately, 110 articles underwent systematic review, providing a robust foundation for trend analysis in senior tourism.

Results

The decade-long investigation into senior tourism, analyzed through 110 articles from 38 journals, reveals an intellectual vibrancy and a dynamic discourse, underscored by 4900 references and an average document age of 4.2 years, signaling the field's rapid evolution. A discernible uptick in scholarly attention from 2019 to 2022 possibly reflects the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on this research domain. Predominant themes identified include 'travel motivation,' 'quality of life,' 'satisfaction,' and 'constraints,' among others, revealing a multifaceted exploration of senior tourism motivations and experiences. A three-field plot analysis and co-word network further elucidate key research clusters, influential authors, and central themes, highlighting 'motivation' and 'constraints' as particularly pivotal topics.

Conclusion

The systematic review accentuates a decade of scholarly endeavor to unravel the intricacies of senior tourism, shedding light on seniors' motivations, behaviors, and experiences amidst the backdrop of the pandemic. It reveals a transition in research focus towards well-being and life satisfaction, underscoring seniors' active role as consumers in the tourism industry. The future research trajectory emphasizes methodological diversification, calling for qualitative studies, multidisciplinary approaches, and exploring non-Western cultural perspectives. Furthermore, it suggests a substantive dive into lifestyle changes, risk attitudes, and well-being perceptions to enrich the understanding of senior tourism. While highlighting methodological and thematic shifts, this exploration underlines the necessity of interdisciplinary research to cater to the nuanced needs of the active senior demographic, suggesting a vibrant future for senior tourism studies.

References are available upon request.

DEVELOPING SERVICESCAPE FOR URBAN AIR MOBILITY IN TOURISM

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Introduction

In recent years, the development and commercialization process of urban air mobility (UAM) has been accelerated (Hwang & Hong, 2023). As an potential alternative to the existing ground transportation systems, the UAM market is expected to grow to approximately $50 billion–$125 billion by 2030 (Hwang & Hong, 2023). UAM is an innovative mobility concept with the potential to reduce travel time and change travel patterns (Fu, Rothfeld, & Antoniou, 2019). In this regard, UAM would profoundely change tourist experiences. For the success of UAM businesses, it is necessary to understand how UAM can provide new touristic experiences and reduce tourists' risk perception in the air. Well-designed service environments influence customers' perception of the service and, subsequently, can be used as an important tool to affect customer behavior (Kandampully, Bilgihan, & Amer, 2023). Servicescape is not only a cue for the expected service quality, but also influences customers' evaluations of other factors determining perceived service quality. Thus, the servicescape has a direct and an indirect effect on perceived service quality, which leads the overall user experience and satisfaction (Reimer, & Kuehn, 2005). By exploring both tourists' and firms' perspectives on UAM services in the tourism industry, the purpose of this study is two-fold: 1) to identify special considerations when designing servicescape for UAM; and 2) to articulate key attributes/dimensions of UAM servicescape.

Methods

This study will adopt a qualitative approach. In-depth interviews will be conducted with key stakeholders in the UAM market, including industry experts, urban transportation managers, policy makers, and academic researchers. Semi-structured interview questions will be developed to articulate key design components and operational considerations. Using thematic analysis, this study will sort and analyze the data obtained through interviews according to themes to extract key factors and derive essential principles and challenges.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The results are expected to identify key considerations regarding the physical and social aspects of service environments for UAM users. The scope of UAM research will be expanded towards understanding tourist experiences. This expansion aims to elucidate the services that should be considered in the design of UAM from the perspective of the servicescape. Also, this study will provide useful information to provide potential customers of UAM with positive service experiences. Findings will provide key components that companies should consider for the feasibility of UAM business, not only focusing on the development of UAM technologies but also establishing the encompassing service infrastructure (e.g., vertiports and utilization spaces).

References are available upon request.

OPTIMIZING TOURISM MARKETING EDUCATION WITH GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INSIGHTS

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Introduction

The integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools like ChatGPT is transforming industries, including higher education, marketing, and hospitality and tourism (H&T). With digitally fluent Generation Z (Gen Z) now in college and impacting the workforce, including in H&T, understanding Gen Z work values, learning and skill development needs, and perceptions towards GenAI becomes paramount. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore marketing major students' perceptions toward GenAI, and its opportunities, threats, pros, and cons in academic and marketing practical use scenarios.

Methods

The researchers employed a mixed-methods approach, combining structured online interviews to capture students' nuanced perceptions of GenAI with sentiment analysis and topical modeling techniques.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The findings revealed an overall positive sentiment towards GenAI, with optimism surrounding its potential application in H&T toward enhancing customer experiences, personalizing services, and streamlining business operations. With a skilled and prepared workforce, customer experiences can be enhanced, and access within the H&T industry increased. The recommended strategies aim to leverage GenAI technologies to personalize travel experiences, improve access, optimize operational efficiencies, and cultivate an adaptable and skilled workforce. However, concerns lingered about over-reliance, job displacement, and ethical considerations.

The implications suggest equipping marketing students with both technical proficiency in GenAI and humanitarian critical thinking skills. This dual focus ensures they navigate the evolving landscape of tourism marketing adeptly, leveraging GenAI's benefits while mitigating its challenges.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on GenAI's implications for marketing education and underscores the transformative role of GenAI in shaping educational pedagogy in marketing and student preparedness for employment within the H&T industry. It emphasizes the importance of responsibly integrating GenAI tools into curricula and marketing strategies to prepare Gen Z students for the workforce and enhance their competitiveness. By integrating Gen Z's preferences, leveraging GenAI's capabilities, and addressing its ethical use implications, marketing educators can empower students to thrive in the H&T industry. Future research should further explore the integration of GenAI into marketing curricula, addressing ethical considerations, and evaluating its long-term impact on the H&T industry. The keys to maximizing learning outcomes and preparing students for the complexities of relationship marketing-related jobs in H&T could be in effectively leveraging GenAI in educational settings.

References are available upon request

STAR POWER IN SUSTAINABLE CHOICES: ASSESSING CELEBRITY VS. EXPERT INFLUENCE ON UPCYCLED FOOD ACCEPTANCE

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Introduction

The process of upcycled food involves transforming food remnants into new products, thereby enhancing their value and introducing new categories of food. Given the increasing environmental concerns, it is imperative to comprehend consumer intentions regarding these innovative food products. Addressing food waste within the food service sector holds significant importance for both environmental conservation and economic advantages. However, negative perceptions surrounding the origins of upcycled food contribute to heightened perceived risks among consumers, subsequently impacting their purchase decisions. While celebrity endorsements have been identified as effective in mitigating such risks, expert endorsements prove to be more influential for products requiring technical comprehension. This study examines the influence of these endorsement types on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions toward upcycled foods. It also explores how consumers' familiarity with these foods affects the effectiveness of endorsements and whether perceived credibility serves as a mediating factor. The findings will guide the development of customized marketing strategies aimed at promoting upcycled foods effectively across various contexts.

Methods

The study used a between-subject experimental design to explore interactions between endorsement types (celebrity, expert, or none) and familiarity with upcycled foods. Veggie-based chips were promoted, endorsed by celebrities (e.g., Leonardo DiCaprio) and experts (e.g., a Food Science and Technology professor). Three one-page color ads, including a control, were created. Participants answered questions on familiarity, credibility, purchase intention, food technophobia, and demographics. MANCOVA assessed celebrity on credibility and purchase intention, while moderated regression and mediation tests examined interaction effects and credibility's mediating role.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Findings indicate that celebrity endorsements are generally effective in evoking positive perceptions and purchase intentions, although effectiveness varies depending on individuals' familiarity with upcycled foods. Perceived credibility, significantly influenced by endorsements, emerges as a key mediator in purchase decisions, highlighting the varying impact of endorsement types on consumer credibility in the upcycled food market. The study contributes to understanding efforts to promote sustainable food choices in a dynamically evolving market by unraveling the intricate dynamics among endorsement types, product familiarity, and consumer credibility. Additionally, these insights will guide the development of marketing strategies emphasizing upcycled food principles. They offer a theoretical basis for customizing endorsement campaigns across different promotional contexts in the upcycled food industry.

References are available upon request

UNBOXING CONSUMER SEGMENTS: DECORDING PERCEIVED BENEFITS AND RISKS IN MEAL-KIT SERVICE USAGE

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Introduction

 A meal kit service also referred to as a meal kit box or food box subscription service, delivers customers' chosen food menus with raw ingredients and recipe cards to their front doors. The meal kit industry has witnessed significant growth in recent years, with the global market size estimated at $15.9 billion in 2022 (Yahoo Finance, 2023). The U.S. holds the largest market share in the meal kit industry, with an annual growth rate of 6.36%. In other words, it is expected to reach $5.65 billion by 2024 (STATISTA, 2023). This expansion has attracted attention from researchers and industry practitioners, leading to studies examining factors influencing consumer behavior and motivations for using meal kit services (Shin et al., 2023; Choe et al., 2020).

However, to enhance promotional efforts effectively, identifying and understanding consumer segments is crucial. Consumer segmentation is a fundamental marketing strategy involving the identification of specific demographics and the optimization of supply chain efficiency and cost-effectiveness (Tanfod & Malek, 2015). This study aims to comprehend consumer needs better and segment the meal kit market by evaluating perceived benefits and risks associated with meal kits.

Methods

To identify the consumer segmentation of meal kits, the current study utilized a three-step approach (Jang et al., 2003) 1) market segment determination factor, 2) performing marketing segmentation, and 3) profiling of specified segments. Based on the literature review (Shin et al., 2024), an online survey was developed with nine variables (five perceived benefits: convenience, environmental impact, price, food quality, and health; and four perceived risks: time/inconvenience, financial risk, performance risk, and physical risk). A total of 404 responses were retained for data analysis. Hierarchical clustering was used to identify the number of clusters among data, and K-Means clustering was applied to define the characteristics of clusters on the perceived dimensions that predetermine in hierarchical clustering. The characteristics of the clusters were further profiled, taking into account perceived benefits and risk values, as well as socio-demographic factors.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The study identified four clusters. Cluster 1, Quality-focused moderates, cared about food quality and were moderately interested in health and convenience. They mostly consisted of married and female consumers. Cluster 2, Cost-conscious skeptics, were worried about the cost and financial risks of meal kits. They were mostly female full-time employees who had never bought a meal kit before. Cluster 3, Balanced values seekers, valued a fair price, convenience, and healthiness in meal kits. They were mostly young adults. Cluster 4, Convenience seekers, were young adults who had bought meal kits before and prioritized their benefits over risks. By employing meal kit consumer segments determined by perceived benefits and risks associated with using meal kits, this study contributes to the food service literature by providing insights into various meal kit consumer demographics. Recognizing the diversity among customer bases aids meal kit suppliers in discovering fresh opportunities to devise customized marketing strategies aimed at attracting customers.

References are available upon request

THE IMPACT OF GAME PLAYERS" TRAIT ON GAME-INDUCED TOURISM: FOCUSING ON GAME INTERACTIVITY, PRESENCE, DESTINATION IMAGE, AND VISIT INTENTION

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Introduction

The United States is experiencing a rise in "game-induced tourism," driven by its large gaming community. Games such as "Assassin's Creed" blend virtual and traditional tourism, offering players immersive experiences in cities such as Paris and Greece. These video games serve as interactive platforms where players shape outcomes and engage deeply in virtual environments. Dimensions such as feature-based interactivity, artificial intelligence, and exploration enhance realism and engagement. Psychological factors such as spatial presence, which promotes physical immersion in the virtual world, can influence travel attitudes such as destination image. While the Big Five personality traits have traditionally informed our understanding of gamers, recent research suggests that unique game-related traits may better explain behavior. However, a notable gap exists in understanding the dynamic relationships that shape spatial presence in virtual environments, with little focus on the role of each dimension of game interactivity. This study seeks to address these gaps by examining the sequential relationships between game interactivity, spatial presence, destination image, and visit intentions, while considering the moderating influence of player characteristics.

Methods

The research framework combines game and tourism constructs, including nine game interactivity items, three spatial presence items, and player characteristics (challenge, goal, narrative, and aesthetics) with three items each, for a total of 16 items. Destination image was measured as a second-order construct with cognitive dimensions (infrastructure and attractiveness) and affective image, resulting in six second-order items and two items, respectively. Gamers' intention to visit was assessed with three items. The study used "Assassin's Creed Odyssey", set in ancient Greece, and recruited participants via Amazon MTurk, with 492 respondents included for data analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed the good fit of the measurement model, followed by structural equation modeling (SEM) and latent moderated structural equation analysis (LMS).

Results/Discussion/Implication

This study found that feature-based interactivity positively influenced spatial presence. In addition, spatial presence significantly influenced cognitive destination image as a mediator, and further influenced affective image and visit intention. This finding supports previous literature that high-quality media content, such as audio and controller settings, can influence spatial presence and spatial presence influences destination attitude. Moreover, LMS showed that characteristics such as goals and aesthetics play a moderating role in the relationship between feature-based interactivity and spatial presence, suggesting that these traits perceive a more interactive effect of game interactivity on spatial presence. This study extends the gaming literature by demonstrating how game interactivity influences spatial presence and destination outcomes, emphasizing individual differences in game experiences. By collaborating with destinations, game developers can tailor games that address players' goals and aesthetic traits, which will help destinations shape positive destination perceptions and increase travel intentions.

References are available upon request

WHY DO TRAVELERS NOT SIGN UP FOR TRAVEL SUBSCRIPTIONS? AN INNOVATION RESISTANCE THEORY PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

Travel subscriptions follow the "pay for perks" model, where subscribers pay a recurring upfront fee to access discounts and perks. As a new loyalty program, travel subscriptions represent a service innovation challenging consumers' perceptions of travel loyalty programs. These subscriptions vary in forms aimed at achieving different business goals. A successful loyalty program must simultaneously meet customer needs and corporate goals (Kumar et al., 2004). However, travel subscription encounters customer resistance, with criticisms primarily centered around subscription traps in the travel industry (Palmer, 2024). Hence, understanding customer resistance to travel subscriptions is crucial for initiating the innovative program.

Current literature lacks in three perspectives regarding customer resistance to travel subscriptions. Firstly, studying the generic characteristics of multiple travel subscription forms is necessary to guide service providers in program design. Secondly, there is a deficiency in subscription studies identifying barriers (Bray et al., 2021). Thirdly, although Innovation Resistance Theory (IRT) (Ram & Sheth, 1989) is suitable for explaining individual resistance towards innovations, conflicting views exist regarding information barriers (refer to Huang et al., 2022; Talke & Heidenreich, 2014; Joseph, 2010). Against this backdrop, the study aims to explore specific barriers concerning customer resistance to travel subscriptions based on IRT. Understanding these barriers can provide clear guidance for service providers to develop optimal forms to help achieve their business goals.

Methods

530 posts were extracted from a Facebook group that discusses flight ticket subscription. Social media content analysis was utilized, beginning with deductive coding that positioned travel subscriptions as a service innovation. IRT guided the inductive conceptualization of barriers, from which subthemes within each barrier emerged. The combination of deductive and inductive approaches enriched the content analysis and informed the development of survey questions for further research. Furthermore, topic modeling demonstrated reliability, with an 82% concordance rate with human coding, which surpasses the 80% standard for reliability among human researchers (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Results/Discussion/Implication

Six types of barriers with subcategories and their manifestations are emerged. Compared to previously identified barriers (value barrier, usage barrier, risk barrier, traditional barrier and image barrier), the travel booking information barrier is identified as a new category within the context of travel subscriptions.

Theoretically, the study extended literature on travel subscriptions by exploring and summarizing generic characteristics of subscription forms. Second, it addressed gaps in understanding barriers to travel subscriptions from a resistance perspective. Third, the study contributes to IRT by identifying new barriers related to travel booking information, underscoring the critical role of product information in trip planning (Hyde, 2008).

Practically, The study emphasizes the need to include barriers in program policy frameworks to ensure program designs complement business strategies.

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW ON PROACTIVITY IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM RESEARCH

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Introduction

Proactivity refers to instances in which individuals take the initiative to control and change their circumstances or external environment. The concept has received extensive attention from scholars in various disciplines (e.g., business, human resources) from individual, behavioral, and goal-oriented perspectives (Wu et al., 2013). These perspectives are aligned with the three research domains: proactive personality (PP), proactive behavior (PB), and proactive service (PS), respectively (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Rank et al., 2007; Thompson, 2005).

The importance of proactivity in the hospitality industry is increasingly recognized (e.g., Cheng et al., 2020; Du & Lin 2021; Hwang & Han, 2023). Although there has been research on proactive customer service performance (PCSP), given the nature of proactivity with the three perspectives of PP, PS, and PB, there is a need to conduct a review in a holistic and systematic way. Therefore, this study conducts a systematic review on proactivity research in hospitality and tourism to present the development and thematic evolution of it.

Methods

Current study uses bibliometric analysis to understand proactivity research, utilizing the PRISMA flow diagram for methodology (Merigó & Yang, 2017). This study integrates two databases, Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus (Arici et al., 2022) and selected articles published from 2011 to 2023 in hospitality and tourism journals indexed by the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI). Through a detailed review process, a total of 61 relevant articles were selected from an initial 743 retrieved articles through a detailed review process. Analysis is performed with the bibliometrix 4.3.0 R package (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017).

Results/Discussion/Implication

The results indicate a growing trend of proactivity research, with an annual growth rate of articles at 24.6%. Current research identifies three main pillars that from the underlying structure of proactivity research: Proactive personality (PP), Proactive Service (PS), and Proactive Behavior (PB). Trend topic analysis reveals a shift in research focus from PP to PB or PS. This result indicate while previous studies have mainly investigated the inherent proactiveness of employees as an antecedent variable (Tang, 2015; Horng et al, 2016), current research has more focused on identifying the variables that have a significant effect on PS and PB (Ji, Ye & Deng, 2022; Sun et al., 2023). In terms of research segments, the research was mainly conducted from the perspective of hotel employees. The dominant theories used in the research are social exchange theory and conservation of resources theory, along with the Proactive Personality Scale (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Unlike previous review studies on proactive research, this study takes an integrative and comprehensive approach by systematically analyzing proactive research. It confirms the role of PP as a pioneer of proactive research and reaffirms the value of PP, demonstrates the current expansion of PS research, and highlights the potential of PB. Overall, current research offers comprehensive insights into the recent trends of review research in the hospitality and tourism disciplines.

INVESTIGATING THE IMPACT OF MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES ON TOURIST PARTICIPATION IN JEJU ISLAND'S DISPOSABLE CUP WASTE REGULATION

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Introduction

Plastic pollution is a growing global concern (Lebreton & Andrady, 2019). In response, the South Korean Ministry of Environment initiated the Act of the Promotion of Saving and Recycling of Resources and implemented it in Jeju Island in June 2022 (Ministry of Environment, 2023). Motivation is a crucial factor in shaping individuals' behavioral intentions to participate in the deposit scheme. In particular, Protection Motivation Theory is a theoretical framework that explains how individuals' threat appraisals (i.e., severity) and coping appraisals (i.e., efficacy) contribute to their future behavior (Rogers, 1983). Self-Determination Theory is another framework that can describe individual behaviors influenced by intrinsic motivation (i.e., personal desire) and extrinsic motivation (i.e., external rewards) (Deci & Ryan, 1980). However, little research has paid attention to examine these factors in a holistic way (Lee et al., 2018). Thus, this study investigated the impact of tourists' motivation on their participation behavior intention by integrating two motivational theories into a conceptual model. The study objectives are 1) to investigate how protection motivation influences tourists' participation behavior and 2) to identify how self-determination motivation has a moderating effect on the impact of the threat and coping appraisals on their participation behavior toward the deposit scheme.

Methods

Data were collected from August to November in 2023 through on-site and online surveys that included a closed-ended, self-administered questionnaire with 29 measurement items. A total of 401 responses were used for Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling to test the measurement and structural models (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). By employing Latent Moderated Structural Equation Model and simple slope analysis, this study further examined the moderating role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations in the impact of threat and coping appraisals on participation intentions (Maslowsky et al., 2015).

Results/Discussion/Implication

Findings showed that the two appraisals had a significant impact on participation behaviors; in particular, tourists who see how a problem of using disposable cups could affect them personally (vulnerability), who believe they can make a better environmental impact by reducing and recycling plastic waste (self-efficacy), and who see the effectiveness of the deposit scheme itself (response efficacy) are more likely to participate in the deposit scheme (Chen et al. 2020), despite the higher purchasing costs of using disposable cups (response cost). Moreover, this study showed that extrinsic motivation only significantly moderated the correlation between threat and coping appraisal and participation behavior intention. This implies that the presence of strong extrinsic motivation held greater significance in encouraging participation behavior than each dimension, particularly when their extrinsic motivation was high. By integrating the two theories, this study highlights the complicated relationships among different motivations to influence tourists' participation intentions in a more comprehensive way. The findings will assist destination marketers in formulating more effective strategies for promoting sustainable tourism and customizing initiatives to align with local priorities.

POP STAR FANS' GROUP TRAVEL INTENTION: THE ROLE OF INVOLVEMENT, GROUP IDENTITY, AND CO-CREATIVE BEHAVIORS

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Introduction
The rise of Korean popular culture, particularly in music, has significantly impacted the economy and tourism of the country. Pop star fans often travel in groups to express their passion, connecting with their favorite celebrities and shaping social landscapes. While individual fan behaviors have been extensively researched, little attention has been given to group travel intentions. Thus, this study investigated if fans' involvement, group identity, and co-creative behaviors are important for their group travel intention.

Methods
A survey measurement was developed by including 12 items for psychological involvement (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985), 13 measurement items for group identity (Obst & White, 2005), 39 items for co-creatives in three dimensions: attitudes, participation, and citizenship (Shamim et al., 2017), seven items for group travel intention (Whang et al., 2016; Yin et al., 2020; and Chaulagain et al., 2019). This study selected Blink, fans of Black Pink - a Korean pop music group as a sample of this study. An online survey through Qualtrics was conducted by recruiting participants from social media pages for Blink and Prolific. A survey invitation, along with a Qualtrics link, was sent to people who defined themselves as Blink from October 2023 to January 2024. A total of 613 responses were determined to be valid for data analysis. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), the measurement model was assessed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to ensure reliability and validity. The structural model was then analyzed to examine the relationships between fan involvement, group identity, co-creative behavior, and group travel intentions.

Results/Discussion/Implication
The SEM revealed several significant relationships. Firstly, group identity significantly influences psychological involvement, indicating that individuals with a stronger sense of group identity tend to exhibit higher levels of psychological involvement with their favorite pop stars. Secondly, group identity positively impacted both participation and citizenship in co-creative behaviors. This suggests that individuals who feel a strong connection to their fan group are more likely to engage in collaborative behaviors such as participating in fan events and contributing to fan clubs. However, regarding the impact of co-creative behaviors on group travel intentions, citizenship only influenced the intention to travel in groups while participation had no significant effect. Overall, the findings of this study highlight the relationship between psychological involvement, group identity, co-creative behaviors, and group travel intentions among pop star fans. By filling gaps in the literature on pop culture tourism, particularly by focusing on group travel behaviors, this research highlights the importance of group travel behavior in the context of fan culture, thereby contributing to expanding the pop culture tourism. Tourism professionals are suggested to collaborate with fan clubs to create co-creative group experiences, which will stimulate their interest in group travel and eventually lead to actual visits to the destination.

References are available upon request.

EXPLORING THE SENSES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW ON SENSORY EXPERIENCES IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM

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Introduction

In the ever-evolving hospitality and tourism industry, sensory marketing plays a crucial role in shaping customer behavior and experience (Fong, 2022). Scholars recognize the impact of sensory allusions and descriptions on customer responses, satisfaction, and revisit intentions (Agapito et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2020; Pan et al., 2009; Phung et al., 2011). As travelers increasingly seek immersive experiences, understanding sensory elements' interplay becomes essential. However, existing studies focus on specific aspects, lacking a holistic view, challenging both academics and practitioners (Lee et al., 2018). To address this gap, the study aims to comprehensively review sensory research in hospitality and tourism, analyzing research performance, keywords, thematic maps, contexts, and methods.

Methods

This research conducted a systematic review approach, by collecting data from Web-of-Science and Scopus, employing specific search terms related to sense, environment, and consumers. The criteria comprised peer-reviewed English articles within the hospitality and tourism fields. Following the PRISMA statement, 353 articles were initially identified, however after thorough review, a total of 88 articles were selected. Bibliometric analyses included performance, keyword, and thematic map analyses, using Biblioshiny, a bibliometric and visual analysis program. A literature review matrix aided in organizing information, recording concepts, themes, and research details. This methodological rigor ensured a comprehensive exploration of sensory experiences in hospitality and tourism.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Keyword and trend analysis highlighted a focus on experiential and sensory dimensions, particularly emphasizing soundscape influence. Thematic map analysis revealed nine key themes, including sensescape, tourist experience, well-being, local food, behavior intention, sensory marketing, destination, embodiment, and consumer behavior. The research context explored various sectors, with a notable focus on tourism and food-and-beverage services. Research methodologies balanced quantitative and qualitative approaches, with diverse data analysis techniques. The research context spanned multiple sectors, highlighting the importance of engaging all five senses and exploring new areas for future research. The findings provide valuable insights for both academics and industry practitioners to recognize the significant role of sensory experiences in shaping customer behavior. Further exploration into emerging themes and less-explored sensory experiences is recommended to deepen understanding in hospitality and tourism dynamics. Overall, this study provides valuable insights for both academics and industry practitioners to recognize the significant role of sensory experiences in enhancing customer experiences in the competitive industry.

References are available upon request

DYNAMIC EVOLUTIONARY ERA OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM (2017~2023): A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF REVIEW RESEARCH

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Introduction

Review of reviews (ROR) research contributes to understanding trends, methods, and implications within the research landscape, guiding future research quality and directions (Kim et al., 2018; Koseoglu et al., 2022; Pahlevan-Sharif et al., 2019). However, to enhance the impact of systematic review research in H&T, it is necessary to include more in-depth analysis beyond descriptive methods and clearer research goals aligned with methods (Donthu et al., 2021; Kunisch et al., 2023). In addition, to understand contemporary movements and provide future research agendas in the H&T discipline, it is necessary to incorporate recent literature that reflects 'status quo' (i.e. COVID-19) (Sheth, 2020, 2021; Pahlevan-Sharif et al., 2019). Therefore, the primary purpose of this study is to conduct a robust systematic review of research (ROR) that involves, analyzing the research gaps in the three existing ROR studies and connecting them with the evolutionary shifts of landscapes in the H&T discipline.

Methods

Current research selected Web of Science for bibliometric analysis due to its comprehensive coverage of high-quality peer-reviewed journals. The search query combined titles and author-generated keywords, focusing on terms like 'systematic review,' 'bibliometric,' and 'metaanalysis,' within the hospitality and tourism journals indexed within the Social Science Citation Index. The search was conducted on June 2, 2023, and initially yielded 232 articles. Following the PRISMA guideline, the researchers rigorously examined those selected review papers, and 216 articles were finally selected for analysis using Bibliometrix R package 4.3.0.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The results show that a consistent increase in publication performance with an annual growth of 25.99%. The results show the dominant use of quantitative research method, and WoS as a single database for analysis. Only 15.2% meta-analysis and 23.42 % systematic review followed PRISMA guidelines, which may lead to undermine the consistency and comparability of review research. Cluster analysis highlights reveal four research clusters and each topic led by bibliometrics, meta-analysis, research trend, and environmental imperatives. Hospitality reviews emphasize managerial aspects, while tourism articles cover both consumer and management perspectives. The result of LDA topic modeling identify the gaps in research on sustainabilityrelated topics, the use of artificial intelligence in smart technology, human resources management, the utilization of limited data sources, and the impact of sociaocultural connectedness on stakeholders in local development, which can provide guidance for future researchers. Based on in-depth analysis of current research, this study provides a comprehensive review of recent trends in review research in the H&T disciplines. The findings contribute to theoretical development and provide guidance for future research.

References are available upon request

EXPLORING FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEES' FOOD DELIVERY ROBOT ADOPTION

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Introduction

In response to increasing consumer demand and the imperative for contactless services highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the hospitality industry is increasingly integrating innovative technologies (Hong et al., 2023). Notably, service robots such as food delivery robots are becoming prevalent in their operations. Despite the anticipated benefits, the seamless integration of these robots poses challenges, particularly concerning employees' adaptation and management's strategic decision. Uncertainties persist regarding employees' reactions to these technologies and the consequential changes they bring, necessitating a deeper understanding of their perceptions and evaluations (Lu et al., 2020). Moreover, management confronts with the complexities of incorporating these technologies into real-world scenarios, highlighting the pressing need for practical insights and recommendations (Major & Sarah, 2020). Thus, this research aims to explore the factors influencing employees' perceptions of food delivery robots and provide managerial guidance for their seamless integration, thereby reshaping work environments in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Methods

This study utilized a qualitative methodology, employing semi-structured interviews featuring open-ended questions. In-depth interviews were conducted with employees at a major U.S. university's food outlets, selected as a beta site for a food delivery robot implementation. A total of 16 employees were interviewed. All interviews were transcribed and recorded. Two researchers independently conducted coding and analysis of the data for validity and reliability of the results.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Six major themes identified from the interviews (i.e., management-related, technology-related, self-related, environment-related, other employees-related, and others) and sub-themes under each major themes were further analyzed and classified. This research addresses a significant gap in understanding the integration of food delivery robots into work environments, emphasizing the importance of considering various stakeholders such as management, technology, customers, and employees. By offering fresh insights into this integration process, it highlights the necessity of a holistic approach that encompasses technical functionalities and socio-organizational dynamics. Specifically, this research provides a comprehensive view of employee perceptions and evaluations regarding food delivery robot integration. Practical implications from the findings include guidance for organizations considering integration, such as effective training, policy establishment, workload distribution adjustment, and technological support provision to enhance job satisfaction and foster a collaborative work environment, while optimizing physical workspace and workflow can reduce stress related to technology integration, ultimately supporting employees in embracing the experience of working with robots.

CULTURAL WAVES BEYOND BORDERS: THE IMPACT OF K-CULTURE ON CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT, PERCEPTION, TOURISM, AND EDUCATION

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Introduction
The global proliferation of K-Culture has significantly influenced international cultural dynamics, transforming perceptions of Korea and motivating increased engagement with Korean cultural projects. This study assesses the impact of K-Culture on individuals' willingness to deepen their engagement with Korean cultural offerings, transform their perceptions of Korea, and enhance their motivations for tourism and educational pursuits concerning the Korean language and history.

Methods
A comprehensive online survey was conducted in June 2022 (Qualtrics panel, N = 3,201), representing diverse demographic attributes such as age, gender, location, income, and education levels. After the screening for survey eligibility, survey participants were asked to answer questions with a five-point Likert scale to measure various cognitive and behavioral assessments about K-culture and Korea. Descriptive statistics were analyzed using SPSS.

Results/Discussion/Implication
Findings indicate a robust influence of K-Culture, with a significant portion of participants expressing a positive inclination towards expanding their K-Culture experiences and recommending them to others. The study captures the shift in Korea's image from traditional stereotypes to a more contemporary and favorable viewpoint, emphasizing its modernity, safety, cleanliness, and technological advancement. Additionally, a considerable interest in visiting Korea and a strong motivation to learn the Korean language and history were observed, highlighting the educational value of K-Culture.

The study showcases how cultural exports can significantly impact international perceptions and behaviors. It highlights the potential for cultural industries to serve as strategic assets in national branding and public diplomacy, offering insights for leveraging cultural exports to enhance tourism and educational initiatives. The findings also advocate for targeted marketing strategies to attract young demographics interested in Korea, suggesting a need for further research on the dynamic interplay between culture, perception, and behavior in a globalized context.

HOW ARE WE EVOLVING? INVESTIGATION OF US HOSPITALITY PROGRAMS' MISSION STATEMENTS

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Introduction

As the mission statement has become a starting point for developing and implementing major strategic planning, many hospitality programs present their mission statements to their stakeholders (i.e., prospective and current students, parents, faculty, and possible donors) and other interested parties and organizations (Bart, 2001). The academic programs' mission statements should also align with universities' or colleges' overall mission. Despite its critical role, little is known about the contents of mission statements in hospitality programs, and guidelines for creating effective statements have not been well developed. This study aims to answer the following question: "What do hospitality programs in the United States present through mission statement?" This study identifies key themes, structures, and essential components in the mission statements, grounded in Language Expectancy Theory. The study results provide important guidance on how to create clear, objective, and effective mission statements.

Methods

Seventy-six mission statements of hospitality programs in the United States that present their mission statements on the websites were collected and those accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA) were identified from the ACPHA website. A content analysis was conducted on 3,442 words of 76 programs' mission statements. The analysis used Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) as a language analysis tool, which calculates values to quantify linguistic cues (Shafqat et al., 2016). The LIWC provides the mission statements on four different dimensions with ascale ranging from zero to 100: Analytical thinking, Clout, Authentic, and Emotional tone (LIWC, 2020; Pennebaker, Booth, Boyd, & Francis, 2015).

Results/Discussion/Implication

Accredited programs often score high in analytical and clout evaluations, but need to focus on conveying authenticity and emotional tone to distinguish themselves from non-accredited counterparts. By enhancing the authenticity and emotional tone of their statements, these programs can foster stronger connections with stakeholders, leading to increased support and engagement. Programs should incorporate feedback from stakeholders to ensure relevance and resonance. This iterative process can contribute to continuous improvement and alignment with strategic objectives.

In summary, this study highlights the importance of well-crafted mission statements in shaping perceptions and attitudes towards hospitality programs. By leveraging linguistic analysis, programs can enhance their communication effectiveness and strategic positioning. Striving to balance formality with authenticity and emotional resonance can foster stronger stakeholder relationships and competitive advantages within the dynamic landscape of hospitality programs.

References are available upon request

CLIMATE DISASTER AND PEER-TO-PEER ACCOMMODATION: AN APPLICATION OF SEA, LAKE, AND OVERLAND SURGES FROM HURRICANES (SLOSH) SIMULATION MODEL FOR ESTIMATING ECONOMIC LOSS

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Introduction

As the world faces an increasing number of climate disasters, the importance of discussing this issue is growing as regions are becoming more and more vulnerable. Climate disasters, such as hurricanes, present a significant risk. Currently, there are no standardized guidelines for disaster management in peer-to-peer accommodations, which are typically managed by individuals. Effective management strategies require an understanding of the impact of climate disasters. Few attempts have been conducted to assess this level of vulnerability. This study aims to fill this research gap by evaluating the impact of flooding caused by hurricanes, a major climate disaster, on peer-to-peer accommodations. The study identifies vulnerable Airbnb properties by visualizing vulnerable areas according to flood level. The results can help policymakers and stakeholders develop climate disaster management strategies that are appropriate for each community's level of vulnerability.

Methods

Miami-Dade County serves as the ideal study area for this research due to its unique combination of a flourishing tourism industry and a pronounced vulnerability to hurricanes, attributes that underscore the critical need for comprehensive disaster preparedness.

To investigate the vulnerability level caused by flooding, we utilized Sea, Lake, and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) simulation model. To visualize the flooded areas, the first purpose of this study, the flooded areas by hurricane level were mapped through GIS using the SLOSH method. To identify the Airbnb corresponding to each flood category, the Airbnb for each category is obtained using the GIS-based geoprocessing tool. Finally, to calculate the economic loss, the price of Airbnb, revenue per available room (RevPAR), and occupancy rate are calculated for each category.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The level of flooding varies depending on the intensity of hurricanes. Areas closer to the coast are at higher risk, even during low-level hurricanes. Higher hurricane levels result in more widespread flooding. As the hurricane intensity increases from level 1 to level 5, there is a significant rise in both the percentage of affected Airbnb properties and the corresponding total revenue loss. Specifically, flooding from level 1 hurricanes affects 18.79% of Airbnb accommodations in Miami-Dade County, resulting in a total RevPAR loss of $34,805.49. On the other hand, when a level 5 hurricane causes flooding, over 75% of Airbnb accommodations in the county are impacted, resulting in a total damage of $147,822.28 in RevPAR.

This study highlights the significance of disaster preparedness planning and risk management strategies in the operation and management of the tourism industry, particularly accommodations. Policies and strategies are necessary to protect communities and economies from natural disasters like hurricanes. This study also highlights the need for tailored management strategies based on the vulnerability of each region, providing valuable insights for policy makers and stakeholders in the tourism industry.

MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE:
A CASE STUDY OF INDOOR AIR QUALITY (IAQ) ASSESSMENT DURING AN ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

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Introduction

COVID-19 has brought up the importance of health and safety when traveling. Since the coronavirus is airborne and transmitted indoors, enclosed spaces with crowds are considered a place of concern. Among locations vulnerable to respiratory infectious illness, hotel conference facilities were one of the most frequent and serious COVID-19 outbreaks. For example, About 181 (13%) respondents reported testing positive for SARS-CoV-2 among 1,443 conference participants gathered for the CDE conference in a hotel in Atlanta (NYPost, 2023). It was shameful that the CDC, the agency that set the safe protocols for reducing COVID-19 transmission, held its super spreader event.

Therefore, the purpose of the current field research was to assess the indoor air quality (CO_2, VOCs, and PM2.5) of a ballroom at a conference venue where over 350 attendees were gathered for an awards dinner in order to examine the status of its HVAC system and to identify areas for improvement so that the health and wellbeing of conference attendees can be secured for a postCOVID era.

Methods

Field sampling was taken at the grand ballroom of a conference facility where the 29th Annual Graduate Education & Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality & Tourism took place in North Miami, Florida, on January 4-6, 2024. Awair detects temperature, relative humidity, CO_2, VOCs, and PM2.5 in real-time. It takes a measurement sample every five minutes and stores a 5-minute average. A set of four Awair Omni monitors were placed on three separate dinner tables in order to cover the entire ballroom space of 5,508 square feet.Air sample data of CO_2, VOCs, and PM2.5 were analyzed with the SPSS software and descriptive and inferential statistics analyses were performed.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Each Awair Omni IAQ monitor collected 29 samples for the duration of the awards dinner from 6:45 to 9:05 PM. While 800 ppm of indoor CO_2 concentration is the safe and healthy standard, the mean values of CO_2 for the two-hour awards dinner ranged from 1,252.74 ±350.14 to 1,570.95 ± 487.84. The highest CO_2 levels observed were 1,702.20, 1,858.70, 1,925.80, and 2,147.70 ppm at the end of the awards dinner, which indicates that there was a lack of fresh air ventilation in the ballroom. Therefore, respiratory health risks might be associated with high CO_2 concentrations in the ballroom. If there were people with flu or other respiratory illnesses, their viral particles emitted from breathing, eating, and talking could be airborne and linger for a long time that others could inhale them. The results of descriptive statistics of VOCs samples showed that guests were exposed to chemical pollution in the ballroom. The mean values of VOCs detected varied from 2,881.64 ±1,226.95 to 3,343.86 ±1,572.31 ppb while the industry considers 500 ppb to be acceptable. It is evident that IAQ should be improved in ballrooms.

References are available upon request

PEER-TO-PEER ACCOMMODATION, COMMUNITY RESILIENCE, AND COMMUNITY GENTRIFICATION

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Introduction
Gentrification entails a rise in rent and housing value as well as an increase in the percentage of higher-income, more-educated, and white residents in formerly lower-income, less-educated, and non-white neighborhoods. Short-term rentals, particularly Airbnb, have faced scrutiny for their role in gentrification. The association between Airbnb and gentrification strengthens as it commercializes with professional and corporate hosts. Airbnb commodifies housing, enabling investors to pursue profit maximization. This profit-chasing drives up the rent and housing values, displacing low-income tenants and facilitating gentrification, which in turn can lead to diminished community cohesion, health equity, and residents' quality of life. Destinations respond to Airbnb's disruption through regulation, but studies indicate that the impact of regulations on Airbnb is limited. Therefore, further research is needed to seek means to moderate the impact of Airbnb operations on the gentrification of host communities. Community resilience—the community's capacity to withstand and thrive after sudden and unforeseen changes—offers a potential solution. A community's resilience comes from its economic, social, environmental, institutional, and infrastructural resources, mediated by the severity and duration of the changes. Recent research has found that a strong perception of community resilience may mollify the effects of gentrification from short-term rentals.

This study explores the potential of community resilience to mitigate the impact of Airbnb on gentrification. It assesses composite indexes for Airbnb performance/agglomeration, community resilience dimensions, and variations in gentrification at the zip code level within the State of Florida, the United States.

Methods
To achieve this purpose, it assessed composite indexes for Airbnb performance, agglomeration, community resilience dimensions, and variations in gentrification at the zip code level within the State of Florida, the United States. Two fixed effects linear panel regressions were conducted to examine the relationship between Airbnb, community resilience, and gentrification over time.

Results/Discussion/Implication
The results indicated resilience variables interacted distinctly with the two Airbnb variables. Neither performance nor agglomeration had a significant correlation with gentrification, contradicting the literature. This could suggest that the impact of Airbnb varies across regions or is contingent upon community resilience variables. The findings suggest that community resilience may play a potential moderating role in addressing the impact of Airbnb on gentrification. The four community resilience proxies showed direct interactions with both Airbnb variables, indicating that increased Airbnb agglomeration and performance could undermine the positive influence of community networks on gentrification.

Posters

UNVEILING TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEYS: EXPLORING ELEPHANT NATURE PARK THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA NARRATIVES AND TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY

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Introduction

Ethical wildlife sanctuaries provide opportunities for visitors to connect with abused animals and local communities (Doyle, 2017). The Elephant Nature Park (ENP) is a prime example of such a sanctuary, challenging visitors to reassess their perspectives and stimulating them to further engage in volunteering. This process aligns closely with the principles outlined in Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) (Mezirow, 1991). While previous literature has recognized the potential of volunteer experiences to be transformative, there is a gap in understanding the transition process from tourists to actively engaged volunteers (Brown, 2005; Coghlan & Gooch, 2011). The present study aims to identify TLT-related variables and transformative process and develop a quantifiable scale of transformative experiences by analyzing social media reviews of ENP.

Methods

The study will collect data from various social media platforms, including TripAdvisor, Google reviews, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter (now known as X). The goal is to extract user-generated content that reflects transformative experiences and the presence of Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) steps across different media channels (Kim & Im, 2018; Le et al., 2021). This study will use Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) topic modeling techniques to reveal latent themes and patterns, which will serve as constructs for the scale. Perplexity scores will also be used to determine the optimal number of topics, ensuring the accuracy and effectiveness of the scale (Wallach, 2006). The data obtained from the topic modeling analysis will be used to create items for the survey (Olshansky et al., 2012). This approach ensures consistency and alignment between the identified variables and the items designed for measurement. Additionally, it systematically addresses the issue of construct validation (Olshansky et al., 2012), guaranteeing a rigorous approach to the research process.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Through careful analysis of online reviews, specific elements of TLT will be identified, paving the way for actionable insights to improve sanctuary practices and address relevant concerns. Moreover, the study's innovative approach not only acknowledges the lack of a standardized scale for measuring TLT, but also positions itself as a foundational step toward filling this critical gap and will propose a quantifiable scale that contributes significantly to theory in the fields of volunteering, wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism. Overall, this study not only sheds light on the complex dynamics of transformative experiences within ethical wildlife sanctuaries, but also advocates for improved evaluation practices to ensure their long-term sustainability and impact.

References are available upon request.

THE IMPACT OF TABLE TECHNOLOGY ON CONSUMER TIPPING IN A FULLSERVICE RESTAURANT

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Introduction

Table technology allows consumers to view menu items, order menu items, pay for their meal, view the news, and play games directly from their table tablet in a restaurant (Susskind & Curry, 2016). Table technology has previously been implemented in the restaurant industry within fast food and casual dining. Nevertheless, there is no known implementation of table technology in full-service restaurants, specifically fine dining. Research shows that technology has provided many benefits for the restaurant industry. However, in this study, we aim to discover the consumers perspective on table technology rather than the industry's perspective using Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1986) by evaluating the effects of consumer tipping intentions. The purpose of the study is to fill the gap in research on how table technology in full-service restaurants impacts consumer tipping behaviors based on subjective norms, service quality, and speed of service. The survey will provide meaningful results for the fine dining sector as well as future exploration, and practical implications.

Methods

The data will be collected through the Prolific by the end of November 2023. In order to measure the actual tipping amount based on the independent variables, the participants will be asked to provide the exact dollar and cent amount they would tip the server based on different scenarios. Scenarios that contain different levels of expectations and actual service deliveries adopted the idea from (Lynn & Brewster, 2020) research on consumer tipping motives. The purpose of utilizing this measure is to measure the exact amount of tip the guest would leave the server based on a different experience. This will allow us to see the mean, median, mode, and range which will allow us to see any patterns or significant results.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The results of this study will provide meaningful information to the full restaurant, fine dining industry including restaurant owners, general managers, supervisors, and even employees of the restaurant industry. Information from the consumers perspective that can be used to infer about the future of table technology while sparking new future research. Lastly, it will assist in the decision-making process of fine dining restaurants when it comes to investing and implementing table technology in order to improve employee turnover, employee satisfaction, and consumer satisfaction while increasing revenue.

References are available upon request

UNDERSTANDING USER INTENTION IN AI-DRIVEN TRAVEL RECOMMENDATION SERVICE

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Introduction

Expedia's partnership with OpenAI showcases the travel industry's embrace of AI for planning and booking, yet user trust and adoption remain hurdles. Addressing adaptivity, transparency, and empathy in AI features is crucial for fostering user acceptance, as highlighted by recent studies. This research aims to explore how AI adaptivity, language framing, and type influence user intention to use AI-driven travel services, offering valuable insights for industry practitioners navigating this dynamic landscape.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model outlines two routes, central and peripheral, through which individuals process persuasive messages, with central processing involving systematic evaluation and peripheral processing relying on cues like language and message framing. High adaptivity in AI systems, characterized by dynamic adjustments based on user input, positively influences user engagement and intention to use, while high transparency enhances trust and intention to utilize the service. Empathy, both cognitive and affective, plays a crucial role in shaping user interactions with AI systems, with higher levels fostering emotional connections and driving greater intention to engage. The interplay between adaptivity, transparency, and empathy in AI-driven services underscores the importance of considering these factors in shaping user perceptions and behaviors.

Methods

Study 1 employs a 2x2 factorial design to investigate the impact of AI adaptivity and empathy levels on users' intention to use an AI-powered travel planner. Participants (N = 400) will be randomly assigned to conditions, experiencing scenarios with either high or low adaptivity levels and high or low empathy in AI responses. Measures of perceived expectancy, continuation intention, and realism will be assessed using Likert scales alongside manipulation checks.

Study 2 employs a similar 2x2 design to explore how AI transparency and empathy type influence users' intention to utilize a recommendation service. Participants (N = 400) will be randomly assigned to conditions where they encounter either high or low transparency about AI's role and experience cognitive or affective empathy in AI interactions. Feedback will be collected using Likert scales, assessing performance expectancy, continuation intention, and willingness to book, with additional checks for manipulation of empathy type and transparency.

Discussion/Implication

This research identifies the determinants of user intentions in AI-driven travel services, emphasizing adaptivity, transparency, and empathy. By uncovering insights through empirical investigation, our study informs the design of these services, enhancing user satisfaction and engagement while advancing human-computer interaction and persuasive communication theories.

References are available upon request

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF CASINO-HOTEL ON A RURAL COMMUNITY

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Introduction

The casino industry of some states acts as the state's primary taxpayer and job provider and provides direct/indirect economic impacts. Casino gambling has been legal in Nevada since 1931. Currently, there are over 1,500 casinos in 44 states in the United States except for Alaska, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, and Virginia (Nemanja, 2024). The state of Arkansas currently has three licensed casinos as of 2023, with one owned and managed by a Native American tribe. A fourth one in Russellville, Arkansas is awaiting approval from the Arkansas Racing Commission.

A local casino can have both positive and negative impacts on a community. Positively, it can stimulate economic growth by creating jobs and attracting tourists, leading to increased spending in local businesses. This generates tax revenue for the government and can enhance the area's entertainment options. Some casinos also invest in community projects, improving residents' quality of life. However, there are concerns about problem gambling, addiction, and social issues like crime and substance abuse. Economic benefits may be unstable, and casinos can strain local infrastructure.

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceived economic and social impacts of a casino-hotel on Pope County, Arkansas. The specific research objectives are to determine area residents' perceptions of both the positive and negative impacts of casino-hotel on Pope County, Arkansas, to determine area residents' overall attitude towards having the casino-hotel located in town, and to identify demographic characteristics and attitudes towards the impacts of the casino-hotel which predict the overall attitude towards the casino-hotel.

Methods

Mixed-Method Research is applied to structuring this research. Structured and free-interviews and focus group methods (Edmunds, 1999) will be used for qualitative research. Based on those qualitative instruments and related research articles, researchers will develop a survey questionnaire for a quantitative technique.

The purpose of the interview and the focus group study will be collected more information regarding the positive and negative perceptions of economic and social impacts that residents perceived will result from the presence of the casino-hotel.

The survey questionnaire will be focused on demographic information and attitude towards casino and perceived impacts of casino-hotel on the local community. A total of 200 questionnaires will be collected from the local community and local college.

Results/Discussion/Implication

This study will examine some of the issues and concerns that arise when casino-hotel will be located in a local. Although this facility often creates substantial direct and indirect impacts economically, residents, including college students, still have different opinions on social impacts. This result of this study will be contributed to make a better decision for policy makers and residents alike who need economic benefits but fear the negative social impacts.

WHAT YOU WEAR MATTERS MORE THAN YOU THINK:
THE IMPACT OF ATTIRE ON THE EVALUATION OF DINING EXPERIENCE

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Introduction

Dining experience is not solely determined by the taste of the food itself. The social factor becomes a critical component because interactions with other customers within shared environment can significantly influence individual experiences (Brocato et al., 2012). For example, the presence of other customers in a restaurant may affect customer experiences through multiple pathways (Miao & Mattila, 2013). However, existing dining experience research has narrowly explored the impact of interpersonal interactions between customers and service providers (Ekpo et al., 2015). Previous studies have provided evidence of the effect of direct interactions with other customers, such as shaping brand image of a restaurant (Erkmen & Hancer, 2019; Grönroos & Voima, 2013). However, scant attention has been paid to understand the influence of indirect social factors within the dining experience context, notably in restaurants settings. This study thus aims to shed light on the role of social cues originating from other customers in shaping dining experience.

Methods

This study utilized a 2 x 2 factorial design encompassing two variables: the physical appearance of the individual (categorized as either well-dressed or poorly-dressed) and the level of social comparison (either matched or unmatched). Participants were randomly assigned to one of these four conditions. We then proceeded to gather data on their affective state and their expectations regarding food quality. Self-esteem was evaluated using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Inventory (Rosenburg, 1965). Following this, we explored whether similar patterns of social comparison occurred between different table groups. This objective was accomplished using a second 2 x 2 factorial design. This design concentrated on two factors: the physical appearance within each table and the extent of social comparison with other tables.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The results showed that dress comparison influences dining experience. Participants rated the dining experience more positively when they perceived themselves as well-dressed compared to others, rather than when they perceived themselves as poorly dressed in comparison to others. The results also indicated that dress comparison against other tables influences the evaluation of the dining experience. After experiencing the unmatched condition, people with lower selfesteem evaluate dining experience less favorably. However, people with higher self-esteem who were in either condition (unmatched or matched) were not likely to impact their evaluation of dining experience. That is, the effect was moderated by the individual's level of self-esteem, particularly in the low self-esteem condition. This research contributes to our understanding of how individuals categorize themselves and others, leading to in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination. Moreover, the exploration of small group dynamics and cognitive biases elucidates the underlying psychological mechanisms driving individuals' evaluations and perceptions within social settings.

References are available upon request

RACIAL DISPARITY IN CEO COMPENSATION AND ITS IMPACT ON FIRM PERFORMANCE IN THE U.S. HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

Academic discourse on executive compensation has been ongoing, focusing on the influence of CEO characteristics (e.g., personality, social capital, age) on their compensation (Adhikari et al., 2015; Malmendier & Tate, 2009). Yet, discussion on the impact of race on CEO compensation has been sparse with a few mixed findings. Moreover, should racial disparity in CEO compensation be present in the hospitality industry, it necessitates further investigation into how the disparate compensation structure affects minority CEOs' decision-making and performance. Theoretical frameworks like Tokenism theory suggest that minority CEOs may face increased visibility and isolation, potentially affecting their decision-making and leadership effectiveness. In this context, the disparity in compensation could demotivate minority CEOs, serving as a moderating factor that influences the relationship between CEO race and organizational performance. This research delves into the existence and financial implications of racial disparities in CEO compensation within the U.S. hospitality industry. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between CEO race and compensation in the U.S. hospitality sector. Additionally, this study aims to whether compensation disparity moderates the relationship between CEO race and firm performance.

Methods

The sample of the current study consists of publicly traded hospitality firms in accordance with four-digit SIC industry codes (i.e., 5812 for restaurants and 7011 for hotels) over the sample period between 2000 and 2023. Financial information along with other firm characteristics will be collected from COMPUSTAT database. CEO compensation and other corporate governancerelated measures will be retrieved from EXECUCOMP database. For coefficient estimation, this study will employ a two-way fixed effects model and Generalized Estimating Equations (GEE).

Results/Discussion/Implication

It is anticipated that significant racial disparities in CEO compensation will be identified, contributing to a nuanced understanding of how race influences executive compensation in the U.S. hospitality sector. Additionally, the study expects to find that CEO compensation moderates the relationship between CEO race and organizational performance, highlighting a critical area for policy intervention and corporate governance. This research aims to shed light on the complex interplay between executive race, compensation, and organizational performance in the hospitality industry. This study expects to contribute to the discussion on equity and effectiveness in corporate leadership. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for industry stakeholders and policymakers, encouraging the adoption of more equitable CEO compensation structures for enhancing organizational outcomes.

References are available upon request

VALIDATING A SCALE OF NEW LUXURY CONSUMPTION VALUES IN THE HOTEL BRAND CONTEXTS

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Introduction

Luxury is no longer confined to limited consumption by select groups. Due to the increased accessibility and democratization of luxury, traditional luxury brands and products no longer serve as strong symbols of values through visual displays of wealth and culture (Fraser, 2018). Recently, hospitality and tourism researchers have questioned the traditional or stereotypical understanding of luxury (Christodoulides et al.,2021; Japutra et al.,2022). In the hotel industry, large hotel companies have been diversifying their brands to appeal to various customer segments by offering high-quality services at different price points. One of the reasons for this brand diversification is to align with the trend of masstige consumption. The purpose of this study is to validate a scale of new luxury consumption values (NLCV), including inconspicuous consumption, intrinsic experiential value, life enrichment, self-directed pleasure, and sustainability, as delineated by Atkinson and Kang (2022) and examine their influence on brand engagement in the context of masstige hotel brands. Furthermore, it seeks to investigate how these relationships differ across cultural groups, particularly between Western and Eastern cultures.

Methods

The study population consists of individuals from the Millennial and Generation Z (MZ) cohorts who have experience staying at branded hotels tailored to residents in the USA, representing Western culture, as well as those in Vietnam or Korea, representing Eastern culture. The survey is constructed within the online survey platform Qualtrics and distributed to eligible participants via Prolific. Masstige hotel brands will be identified and selected from a panel of industry experts across three masstige categories. downward extensions of luxury brands (e.g., Aloft by Marriott), upward extensions of mass brands (e.g., Hotel Moxy by Marriott), and standalone premium brands (e.g., Marriott Autograph Collection). Participants will be presented with a series of pre-tested masstige hotel brands corresponding to the category. Subsequently, they will be asked to select the brand with which they are most familiar before proceeding to answer the questionnaire.

Constructs in the proposed model are assessed using multiple-item measures. All scales used here are based on previous empirical studies using a view of NLCV (Eckhardt et al.,2015; Batat,2019; Wiedmann et al.,2009; Pencarelli et al.,2020). Both the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) are used to examine applicability of those scales in the hotel brand setting and test the measurement models from two-split sample. Finally multiple regression is used to examine the moderating effect by involving interaction term between NLCV and the cultural variable

Contributions/Implication

This proposed study represents one of the first studies to explore the new luxury concept, masstige, and its associated personal values in the hospitality setting. This stream of research is expected to enrich the field of hospitality luxury research by offering a comprehensive framework that explains the concept of new luxury from the perspective of young consumers. The study's findings are anticipated to help hotel marketing managers develop brand management strategies aimed at enhancing customer experiences on their efforts on new elements of luxury values.

References are available upon request

FOOD WASTE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK:
INCORPORATING FOOD WELL-BEING IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction
Food waste is a significant global issue with ethical, social, and environmental implications, as it adversely affects both our surroundings and economy (Jabeen et al., 2023). According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), approximately one-third of the world's food production is wasted annually (Das, Verma, & Mishra, 2024). The hospitality industry, in particular, faces growing recognition of its substantial contribution to overall food waste, amplifying concerns about its environmental impact. Despite its significant consequences, research on food waste within the hospitality sector has been relatively limited (Dhir et al., 2020; Principato et al., 2018). Thus, there is a lack of comprehensive approaches for evaluating food waste management through a holistic framework within the hospitality industry.

Therefore, this study aims to pinpoint wasteful activities and behaviors within foodservice operations. Subsequently, it seeks to construct a reliable food waste management framework customized for foodservice operations, with specific emphasis on the behaviors and practices of kitchen staff.

Methods
This study proposes to use a mixed method consisting of both qualitative and quantitative analysis. To identify activities and behaviors of food waste and develop a comprehensive food waste management model, this study first aims to conduct a systematic review of work-related food waste behaviors within foodservice operations in the hospitality industry covering the years 2010 to 2024, building on Filimonau and Delysia (2019)'s study. Second, the study will critically review the best operating procedures and practices recognized by the Green Restaurant Association and MICHELIN Green Star certifications with a particular focus on food waste-related components. Third, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with foodservice operators (N = 10) from establishments recognized by the Green Restaurant Association and MICHELIN Green Star. Next, an online survey targeting kitchen employees or food handlers in foodservice operations (N = 300) will follow, designed based on the developed survey items to validate the measurement Scale

Contributions/Implication
This proposed study has the potential to address at least three significant research gaps identified within the domain of food waste studies in the hospitality industry. It shifts focus from the traditionally customer-centric food waste research to explore workplace related food waste, an area that has been comparatively under-explored in existing hospitality and tourism literature. Secondly, this proposed study is innovative in providing a comprehensive measurement tool for foodservice operations, aiming at evaluating their current waste activities and behaviors. Lastly, it offers hospitality operators a practical tool for identifying areas for improvement, thereby facilitating more effective strategies for reducing food waste within their establishments.

References are available upon request

CLUB INDUSTRY AND HOUSING MARKET: A COMMUNITY-LEVEL APPROACH

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Introduction

Despite the regional differences in the club industry and housing market, relatively little attention has been paid to examining the spatially heterogeneous impacts of the club industry on the local housing market. Using a macro-level approach, we examined the spatially heterogeneous community-level impacts of the club industry on the housing market in the United States. To achieve this purpose, specifically, we (1) identified significant club determinants that may affect housing value, (2) explored the spatially heterogeneous impacts of significant club determinants on housing value, and (3) visualized the spatial non-stationarity in the relationship between significant club determinants and housing value.

Methods

To address the spatially heterogeneous impacts of the club industry on housing value, we utilized spatial hedonic pricing models in conjunction with geographically weighted regression (GWR) analyses, a method rarely considered in previous real estate studies, through a case study of 336 counties in the United States.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The results showed that payroll taxes, total general administrative expenses, total salary/wage expenses, and golf operations/golf shop expenses were positively associated with housing value. In other words, counties with higher payroll taxes, total general/administrative expenses, total salary/wages expenses, and golf operations/golf shop expenses experienced increased housing value. Furthermore, these associations were spatially heterogeneous across the counties.

Such findings can enable local governments and club investors to better understand the regional disparities in the associations between the club industry and housing value, which are essential for encouraging the formulation of community-based club development planning and strategies in the United States.

Stand-up Presentation (Undergraduate)

HOW DOES THE OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE SHAPE STUDENTS' CAREER

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Introduction

There is a lack of research in regards to internship experience in Hospitality, Recreation Management and Recreation Therapy fields. With this in mind, it is crucial to examine how the internship experiences of Hospitality, Recreation Management, and Recreation Therapy students at California State University, East Bay (CSUEB) shape their careers. The three following research questions were created: 1) Does the internship experience meet the learning objectives and outcomes of the Department of Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism's (HRT) internship program?, 2) What are the barriers during an internship that prevent students from completing their internship?, and 3) How involved are the stakeholders: site supervisors, students, university program supervisor, and professors during an internship experience? The learning objectives of Hospitality interns pertain to providing useful experience that will help them transition from interns into professionals in the Hospitality industry (Pusiran et al., 2020; Qu et al., 2021; Tsai et al. 2017). Recreation Management interns are expected to be innovative and utilize the recreation process (Craig & Oja, 2013). Recreation Therapy students are required to incorporate the therapeutic recreation process to address the domains of recreation therapy (Long & Robertson, 2020). Additionally, there are internship barriers that interns have faced, including: language, exploitation, last-minute schedule changes, heavy workloads, and lack of communication, structure, respect, and trust from their internship supervisors (Aghaei et al., 2021; Remington et al., 2022; Ruhanen et al., 2013; Yumol & Wissam 2018). In addition to internship barriers, the involvement, attitudes, and guidance of both university program supervisors and internship supervisors impacted interns' overall internship satisfaction and success (Ko, 2007; Piovani et al., 2020; Port, 2019; Vo et al., 2022).

Methods

Data for this study will be collected through a survey by administering it to CSUEB's Hospitality, Recreation Management, and Recreation Therapy internship students at the end of their internship experience. The survey will consist of three main sections. The first section will ask the respondent 12 questions about their demographic information, major, internship duration, internship sites and population, employment, and household income. The second section will be based on the Likert scale. Survey questions will be utilizing five levels of responses where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The third section consists of open-ended questions that ask about the barriers they experienced during their internship and what areas of improvement they would like to see for future students. Lastly, they have the option to write down responses in the "Other" section to provide an opportunity to point out any specific circumstances that may not have been addressed in the second section. Surveys have yet to be administered, but will be administered by the next academic year for data collection and analysis.

References are available upon request

FEMALE OLDER ADULTS' EUSTRESS AND DISTRESS DURING LEISURE TRAVEL FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES (COR) THEORY

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Introduction

Traveling keeps older adults physically and mentally active and offers various benefits such as cognitive enhancement, social connections, and personal growth (Gu et al., 2016). Studies, however, revealed that traveling also exposes older adults to encounter hassles and stressors which can have negative psychological effects (Zhu et al., 2020). Despite the effort to examine ways to negotiate various constraints among older travelers (e.g., Wen et al., 2020), current literature limits on capturing the complex process of encountering and dealing with many challenges while traveling. To provie new insights into maximizing positive effects of travel experiences among seniors, this study aimed to identify: 1) When and why senior tourists experience stress during their leisure travel; 2) How they cope with stress and types of resources they utilize; 3) What are the consequences of those strategies in terms of resources (gaining or losing resources). This study used the eustress-distress construct, built upon the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989). From this theoretical framework, people's experience of eustress can be explained as maintaining/gaining more resources and experience of distress as losing those resources.

Methods

Taking an intersectional approach, we considered multiple and intersected aspects of identities: age (over 60 years old), gender (gender), and immigrant status (race/ethnicity). Led by the grounded theory methodology, semi-structured in-depth interviews were employed to uncover older females' travel experiences with a focus on stressful situations encountered and dealt with during the travel. Currently, four pilot interviews were conducted, aiming for approximately 25 older female travelers as study participants. Main interview questions covered stressful situations they encountered during the recent trip and how they coped with those stressors. All the interview transcripts will be recorded, transcribed, and uploaded to NVivo for data analysis (Caretta & Vacchelli, 2015). The constant comparative method will be used to analyze data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Results/Discussion/Implication

Senior travelers encountered various stressors which fell under internal stressors (caused by their own physical and psychological factors) and external stressors (derived from environmental and intrapersonal factors). Participants coped with adversities and difficulties (stressors) encountered during traveling using their resources (e.g., money, optimism, skills, and social support from family members). Their social identities as older adults, female, and immigrants added a layer to their experiences of stress as well as affected their available resources. Those who have a good supply of resources were likely to experience eustress or better switch from distress to eustress. The experience of eustress during travel by overcoming (dealing with) difficulties can help senior travelers generate even more resources such as skills, knowledges, social relationships, and energies. By uncovering female older adults' travel experience with a focus on eustress/distress during leisure travel, this study will contribute to the literature on senior tourism as well as healthy aging. Also, this study will provide some practical implications for tourism/hospitality professionals to better serve senior travelers by helping them experience more eustress.

HELPING OLDER ADULTS ALLEVIATE BOREDOM:
DEVELOPMENT OF LEISURE EDUCATION INTERVENTION PROGRAM

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Introduction

A concept of boredom has primarily been studied among adolescents due to its relationship with risky behaviors (Weybright et al., 2015), youth development (Wegner et al., 2008), and internet and social media use (Donati et al., 2022), whereas minimum attention has been spotted among the older adult population. However, a study by An et al, (2022) found that avoiding boredom through meaningful leisure engagement was considered one of the most important factors in defining healthy aging. In order to have more in-depth understanding about the definition, cause, and ways to alleviate boredom among older adults, an exploratory study was recently conducted (Tuttle & An, 2023). While the study findings added meaningful contributions to the body of literature, need for a leisure education program to alleviate boredom was emphasized by the participants. To date, leisure education program that aimed to promote healthy use of free time had been designed for adolescent (Caldwell et al., 2004), however no leisure education program exists that target older adults. Therefore, this study aimed to develop a leisure education intervention program for older adults to help them alleviate boredom.

Methods

Leisure education program was developed based on a thorough review of previous leisure education programs and the findings from the previous boredom exploratory study (Tuttle & An, 2023). Guided by Dattilo's (2015) model of systemic approach to leisure education, we chose three broader areas of interest for our leisure education program that would help older adults avoid boredom and experience healthy aging: 1) learning about own values and different types of available leisure activities and resources; 2) learning about the benefits of leisure engagement (e.g., increased self-awareness, sense of purpose, motivation in life; sense of belonging; eustress); 3) learning self-regulation strategy (Selective Optimization with Compensation) to overcome any obstacles and continue leisure engagement. These broader themes pointed directions to the detailed curriculums of our intervention program.

Results/Discussion/Implication

Developed leisure education program is structured for 6-weeks period, once a week for 60 minutes per session. Each session is comprised of four components: contents learning (lecture style), facilitated discussion, activity-based learning, & take-home tasks. Weekly curriculum topics include: 1) leisure appreciation; 2) leisure assessment & planning; 3) improving selfawareness & sense of purpose through leisure; 4) building self-determination & motivation through leisure; 5) self-regulation & leisure; and 6) decision making to change your life. We are planning to evaluate our program's prelimiarny effects using a non-equivalent quasiexperimental design. Successful validation of our leisure education program on older adults can provide evidence-based programs that can be impelemnted among many parks and recreation senior centers, assisted living facilities, and retirement communities.

GRATUITIES AT A CROSSROADS: THE UNSEEN TOLL OF TIPPING ON ECONOMIC STABILITY, GROWTH, AND EMPLOYEE WORTH

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Introduction

The impact of tipping culture in the United States on the inflated economy is concerning to employees and their customers. Tipflation, which refers to the customary gratuity percentage, "increased rates that people are now expected to tip at restaurants and for other goods or services" continue to rise with inflation (Warren, 2023). This phenomenon not only poses challenges for consumers but also has adverse effects on employees, fostering unethical business practices and unfair wages. One notable consequence is the exploitation of tipping culture by businesses as a rationale for paying their workers a subminimum wage. This practice disregards the concept of providing livable wages, instead relying on customer tips to supplement employee earnings. This research is necessary to highlight the negative impact the tipping culture has on the economy and the employees, specifically within the hospitality and tourism industry. For a better understanding of the U.S. tipping culture, the research questions are: "What effect does tipping culture and tipflation have on the U.S. socioeconomy?" and "What is the customer's willingness to tip an employee based on their experience and employee's wage information?"

Methods

The proposed experimental designs assume the tipping behavior of customers when revealing employee wages. The studies observe customer experience regarding dine-in vs. Take-out and length of time spent in the restaurant, customer interactions with servers, the price of food with inflation, and whether gratuity is built-in or not. Additionally, further studies of what different tipping cultures have on the economy and how they affect it will be observed. The scenarios and experimental designs will show how customer tipping directly correlates to employee worth and economic health. This study aims to explore the socioeconomy's impact of tipping culture and propose experiments to understand customer tipping behavior and its implications for employee devaluation.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The experimental designs proposed indicate customer willingness to tip based on knowledge of the employee wages. Through assumptions, customers become indifferent or less likely to tip an employee when knowledge of their wages is revealed. Further research helps support the idea of restructuring the tipping culture in the United States to be a gesture of appreciation not the factor of an employee's paystub. The solutions given are to implement the Raise the Wage Act 2023. The bill gradually raises and then eliminates subminimum wages for tipped workers, and all workers covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), affecting 19% of the U.S. workforce (Zipperer, 2023). The final solution will be to adopt a separate tipping culture that hold less weight and more flexibility. This includes taking steps to educate on proper tipping habits and understanding the effects tipping has on economic stability. The methods used will aid further data on how tipping culture destroys economic stability, and growth and undermines employees' worth.

References are available upon request

STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING LABOR SHORTAGES IN POST-PANDEMIC HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Introduction

The industry has grappled with significant challenges, including layoffs and furloughs, necessitated by global policies and restrictions such as travel bans, shutdowns, social distancing measures, supply chain disruptions, and other closures stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic (Chen & Chen, 2021; Croes et al., 2021; Liu-Lastres et al., 2023; McCartney et al., 2022). In the period spanning 2019 to 2020, the hospitality and tourism industry experienced a substantial loss of nearly 10 million jobs among employees, as reported by the World Travel & Tourism Council (2023). Projections for the U.S. economy indicate the addition of 8.3 million jobs from 2021 to 2031, with 1.9 million of these expected within the hospitality and tourism industry.

Nevertheless, a reluctance among workers to return to this industry persists, largely due to the psychological toll of the pandemic-induced job loss, contributing to a prevailing labor shortage (Liu-Lastres et al., 2023; Popa et al., 2023). This study seeks to investigate management strategies aimed at re-engaging skilled individuals within the sector, thereby mitigating labor shortages in both the short and long term.

Methods

The study is structured into three phases. Phase one entails the development of a questionnaire, informed by an extensive literature review, aimed at elucidating the experiences and impacts encountered by hospitality employees amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. This initial phase examines the prevailing conditions and factors influencing employee experiences and intentions. The questionnaire, crafted through the utilization of the Qualtrics panel, targets 400 individuals from the hospitality sector who have chosen not to resume their roles. It comprises three primary sections: 1) employees' experiences prior to being laid off, 2) reasons for abstaining from reentry into the hospitality domain, and 3) socio-demographic particulars. The second phase entails the formulation of interview questions, drawing insights from 100 participating college professors and industry experts, employing snowball sampling methodology. This approach fosters a collaborative effort in generating interview questions that explore reasons behind former industry employees' decisions to either refrain from or consider returning to work. Key themes encompass job stability and security, work-life balance, burnout, availability of career advancement prospects, and the enduring repercussions of the pandemic. Lastly, the study culminates in the execution of statistical and thematic analyses to offer a comprehensive understanding of the determinants influencing the decisions of former hospitality employees.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The study will contribute valuable insights into crisis management, employee retention, and human resource development, offering potential solutions for the industry's survival postCOVID-19. Moreover, the significance of the study lies in its potential to inform industry leaders, prompting strategic changes for sustained business and employee well-being amid future crises.

References are available upon request

WHICH DESTINATIONS EXEMPLIFY THE MOST EFFECTIVE BENCHMARKETING PRACTICES? BASED ON THE INVESTIGATION OF FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND YOUTUBE

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Introduction

Social media engagement is pivotal in tourism destination marketing, fostering interactions among tourists, destinations, and stakeholders through compelling content. Understanding the feedback enables personalized content, user-generated experiences, and community building. Engagement metrics serve as key performance indicators, reflecting marketing effectiveness in the tourism industry. Utilizing multiple social media channels like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube diversifies reach, allowing tailored engagement and content formats. Benchmarking aids in performance assessment, guiding goal-setting and decision-making to stay competitive.

This study aims to analyze online marketing performance among top travel destinations, utilizing various social media analytics methods and statistical methods to identify the best benchmarking cases for travel destination social media marketing.

Methods

The study focuses on the top 100 global travel destinations and cities, identified based on 2018 international visitor rankings. From February 4 to February 12, 2024, coding was conducted to document social media marketing performance metrics like follower counts, content volume, and creation dates. The final dataset comprised 75 destinations. Among these, 13 were promoted on national-level marketing organization pages (labeled as Country), while 62 managed their own websites and social media pages (labeled as City). Ratios for comparison were calculated by using EXCEL, visualization of analysis results was conducted using Microsoft Power BI and PowerPoint, and a correlation test was attempted by using JASP.

Results/Discussion/Implication

The descriptive analysis shows that Dubai and Türkiye lead in follower counts on both Facebook and Instagram. On Instagram, Taipei tops in content volume to promote the destination. Frankfurt and Istanbul are leading in subscribers on YouTube, and Bangkok and Taipei excel in video content creation. Geographical analysis showcases differences in social media engagement across destinations, with notable performances highlighted. Countries and destinations in the Middle East showed especially high performances on YouTube, while Asia countries have been successful in marketing on Facebook.

Ratio analysis reveals that the destinations of Dubai, Las Vegas, Mecca, Honolulu, Cebu, and Tokyo had high-performance ratios in both sites. Istanbul and Abu Dhabi relatively performed better in increasing view numbers per YouTube video while Auckland and Singapore earned more followers per Instagram post. Correlation analysis identifies significant relationships among social media metrics, indicating the potential impact of synergy effects among social media sites.

References are available upon request

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE LUXURY HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: HOW HOTELS' COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES DISCLOSING ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE PRACTICES AFFECTS BRAND INTEGRITY & LOYALTY FROM CONSUMER'S PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

Sustainability and environmental responsibility have become critical issues in hospitality and tourism. Guests are increasingly interested in eco-friendly practices and are wary of 'greenwashing,' while stakeholders push for programs that comply with new government and United Nations legislation. Similarly, luxury hotels have implemented Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) programs without compromising their exclusive and upscale image to protect and enhance their reputation and enhance their corporate image. Although many wellknown hotel brands and luxury chains have started implementing sustainable practices, their customers may need to be made aware of these initiatives due to the need for more information or non-participation, which may lead customers to make extra effort to learn more initiatives. This influences guest loyalty and, in turn, company performance. This may prevent many from investing in more sustainable projects or being transparent about their practices. Although research has been conducted on hotels' environmental sustainability practices and their positive impact, few academic studies have empirically examined the effect of these practices on consumer attitudes and behaviors, like consumers' perceived brand integrity and loyalty. Therefore, this study will investigate the sequential relationships among consumers' perceived brand integrity, loyalty, and willingness to book a room.

Methods

By recognizing the importance of transparency and visibility of sustainable initiatives in luxury brands, this study developed a research model and hypotheses investigating the sequential relationship between ESG communication, perceived brand integrity, loyalty, and willingness to book a room. Through an experimental design approach, this study will compare consumers' perceived brand integrity and loyalty of two hotels—one that includes ESG information on its official hotel website and the other that does not.

Results/Discussion/Implication

This study will provide new insight into the importance of luxury hotels' effective communication and efforts by predicting booking intention by evaluating the impact of Environmental, Social, and Governance disclosure on brand integrity and loyalty. The study's results will have practical implications for luxury hotels seeking to improve their brand integrity and loyalty through sustainable practices, particularly ESG activities. This can guide them in prioritizing and improving their ESG efforts to meet stakeholder demands, comply with regulations, and address growing concerns about sustainability and climate change. As the study emphasizes the significance of transparent and effective communication in conveying sustainability efforts to customers, the findings can help hotels strategically enhance their practices to positively impact brand reputation, customer loyalty, and overall business growth by understanding consumer preferences and perceptions regarding ESG initiatives.

References are available upon request.

HOTEL EMPLOYEES' INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY PERCEPTIONS: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ACROSS GENDER, GENERATION AND OCCUPATION TYPE GROUPS

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Introduction

In the US, the hospitality industry comprises 62,500 hotels with over 5.6 million guest rooms, impacting 4.7 million direct jobs (American Hotel and Lodging Association, 2023). These hotels play a crucial role in employees' well-being by providing healthy, comfortable, and productive indoor environments. The COVID-19 outbreak has emphasized the need for health and safety measures. Enhancing employees' well-being through indoor environmental benefits is vital for sustainability and asset improvement (Franke & Nadler, 2020; Han et al., 2017).

Furthermore, there's a growing focus on inclusivity in hotel design and services, regardless of diversity factors like disability, age, gender, race, culture, economic status, and language (Jin et al., 2023). Failure to address diversity can hinder business success. Thus, understanding and catering to diverse employee needs are essential for creating an inclusive hotel environment.

Hence, this study aims to (1) assess the importance and satisfaction of indoor environmental quality (IEQ) attributes such as air quality, lighting, thermal comfort, and acoustics, and (2) compare IEQ importance and satisfaction among hotel employees of different genders, generations, and occupations.

Methods

The study analyzed data from 73 hotel employees in the Midwest region of the United States. Using the Qualtrics platform, an online survey was conducted to gather insights on indoor environmental quality (IEQ) attributes at their workplaces. Participants were rewarded with a $10 Starbucks gift card upon completion. The survey used a five-point Likert scale to gauge perceptions of importance and satisfaction regarding IEQ factors including air quality, lighting, thermal comfort, and acoustics. Statistical analysis, specifically T-tests via SPSS, was employed to identify significant differences. The study also examined specific employee groups: male vs. female, Generation Y vs. Generation X, and administrative vs. operational staff.

Results/Discussion/Implications

While existing research has explored IEQ in other commercial settings, this study fills a research gap by adding valuable insights for the hospitality industry (Kim et al., 2023). Specifically, this study highlights the widespread importance and satisfaction regarding IEQ among hotel employees. Gender, generation, and occupation type showed no significant differences, indicating universal importance across demographics. However, male respondents rated thermal comfort higher, possibly due to biological variations affecting temperature perception. The hospitality industry, where guests and employees share spaces, emphasizes the importance of IEQ for both well-being and business success. Our findings suggest overall hotel employees are satisfied with IEQ regardless of demographics.

References are available upon request.

UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER IMPORTANCE AND PERCEIVED PERFORMANCE OF EXCLUSIVE SERVICES ON LUXURY HOTELS OVER 5-STARS BETWEEN BUSINESS AND LEISURE CUSTOMERS IN THE UNITED STATES

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Introduction

The luxury hospitality market is expanding globally due to the increasing global wealth and demand. Leisure travelers seek entertainment and recreational purposes, while business travelers stay at hotels for work-related reasons. Due to the different purposes of travel, each group has distinct preferences for products and services. Understanding the motivations behind the products or services that customers want is important in the competitive luxury hospitality market. There is limited research focuses on luxury hotel guests, particulaty the differences between two groups: leisure and business. Therefore this study aims to investigate the differences between customers' importance on facilities, amenities, and services of luxury hotels and their perceived performance on those between two groups: business and leisure.

Methods

This study utilitze the online survey platform, Prolific to examine the variance between the customers' anticipated exclusive service and their evaluation of luxury hotels' performance. This study includes 26 products and services that categorized into four groups: 1) hotel facilities, 2) room facilities and amenities, 3) safety and security, and 4) staff service quality. Each attribute will be evaluated on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 (not satisfied) to 7 (very satisfied). Data will be collected from 400 consumers, 200 business travelers and 200 leisure travelers, who stayed in luxury hotels overnight from July 1-30, 2024. After collecting data, exploratory factor analysis will be employed to identify exclusive services that customers evaluated by both the importance and satisfaction of luxury hotels. A multivariate repeated measure analysis of variance will be conducted to examine the differences between customers' importance and the perceived performance of luxury hotel exclusive services will be evaluated across the two customer groups. Last, the findings will compare the importance-performance analysis (IPA) to determine the validity of the two approaches.

Expected Implication

Given the growth of luxury hotels, providing similar services cannot survive in the competitive industry. Luxury hotels are more labor intensive because staff can provide personalized services and a more luxurious experience (Sherman, 1999). Understanding the different personalized services between two groups is important for hoteliers to provide appropriate services to meet their needs. Business travelers have limited schedules and activities, but leisure travelers are mainly getting away from their personal lives, stress, and workplaces. Business travelers prefer meeting rooms, high efficiency, complaint handling, and technology, while leisure travelers focus on tangible activities and personalized and proactive services.

References are available upon request

Posters (Undergraduate)

HOW HOTEL EMPLOYEE PERCIEVE INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY: CASE STUDY OF BRAND CHAIN HOTEL

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Introduction

The hospitality industry continues to evolve through the integration of innovative technologies to improve guest experience and operational efficiency in hotels. In recent years, the adoption of advanced technologies such as virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI), chatbots, and autonomous robots has increased noticeably to meet guest expectations and remain competitive(Erdem & Barakazi, 2023). The current trend in the hotel industry is the increasing adoption of digitalization strategies to innovate business models, create customer value, enhance dynamic capabilities, and improve overall business performance(Nguyen et al., 2024). Despite promising benefits such as simplifying tasks and improving productivity, challenges such as technology stress persist, highlighting the importance of identifying and overcoming barriers to technology adoption(Lam et al., 2007). Understanding hospitality employees' technology adoption is crucial for improving operational efficiency, enhancing guest satisfaction, gaining a competitive advantage, boosting employee performance, informing strategic management decisions, and addressing cultural differences(Guo et al., 2022). By comprehending how employees perceive technology, hotel managers and policymakers can optimize technology implementation, tailor training programs, foster inclusive work environments, and ultimately drive positive business outcomes in the dynamic hospitality industry(Leung et al., 2023). This study will address how hotel employees perceive and adopt understand innovative technologies in the hotel industry depending on their job level. Furthermore, this study will provide a better understanding to a management level of the frontline employee's capacity building in their overall job performance.

Methods & Analysis

The research design will be to first qualitatively explore with specific hotel employees(Frontline position and management position) individual in-depth interviews and then to determine if the qualitative findings generalize to a large sample with quantitative research. From this initial exploration, the qualitative findings will be used to develop assessment measures that can be administered to conduct a survey. In the tentatively planned quantitative phase, online surveys will be collected from the brand hotel chains. Statistical analyses will be conducted using SPSS. Cross-Tabulation Analyses will be used to create a descriptive overview of the survey responses. Factor analysis will be employed to confirm the groupings of Likert-scaled Task-Technology Fit variables.

Theory and Expected Findings

The theoretical approach adopted in this study aims to deepen understanding of frontline hotel employees' interactions with innovative technology services, integrating the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Task-Technology Fit (TTF) by Goodhue and Thompson(1995). This study will address limitations and contribute to hospitality and technology literature by providing valuable insights into hotel management, focusing on employees' intentions and behaviors. The findings can inform the development of targeted training methods and policies to improve frontline employees' capacity to perform their tasks. By continuously evaluating employees' perspectives on technology adoption, management can adapt to evolving needs and foster innovation and a culture of readiness. This can lead to improved service delivery, improved operational efficiency, and greater competitiveness in the hospitality industry.