



UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA
FACULTY OF TOURISM AND
HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT
OPATIJA, CROATIA



Tourism & Hospitality
Industry 2024
27th Biennial International Congress

THI 2024

Book of Abstracts

27th Biennial International Congress

TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY
INDUSTRY 2024

TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

Opatija, June 6 – 7 2024

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**TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY 2024
TRENDS AND CHALLENGES**

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June 6 – 7 2024
Opatija, Croatia



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disclaims responsibility for language and printing errors.**

EDITORIAL

We are pleased to introduce the Proceedings of the 27th Biennial International Congress “Tourism & Hospitality Industry 2024”, hosted by the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, University of Rijeka. The Congress theme “Trends and Challenges” underscored the dynamic and interdisciplinary nature of tourism and hospitality, encouraging authors to delve into a broad spectrum of topics.

This edition received total of 33 papers and 11 abstracts, all subjected to a rigorous double-blind review process. The manuscripts submitted for consideration addressed key areas such as tourism and hospitality management, strategic planning, workforce dynamics in tourism, marketing and consumer behaviour, sustainable tourism and the interplay between tourism and social factors. After a thorough review, 22 papers were accepted for presentation at the Congress. These papers represent a significant contribution to the field, offering fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to the current challenges faced by the tourism and hospitality industry. From these accepted papers, two were selected for publication in the journal “Tourism and Hospitality Management,” highlighting the exceptional quality of research presented at this Congress.

The Proceedings of the 27th Congress, “Tourism and Hospitality Industry – Trends and Challenges,” include the full papers that have been carefully revised in accordance with reviewer comments. This compilation serves not only as a record of the Congress but also as a valuable resource for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers aiming to stay abreast of the latest developments in the field. The Proceedings have been recognised by the international academic community for the relevance and importance of the topics, global contributions, research standards and consistent publication. The topics covered in the Proceedings are both timely and significant and address important current issues. It contains papers from a wide range of international authors, ensuring a rich diversity of perspectives and expertise.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the 50 reviewers whose expert evaluations were instrumental in maintaining the high standards of this Congress. Their dedication and critical insights ensured that only the most relevant research was presented. Their collaborative efforts with authors have made this Congress successful. We also extend our thanks to the organizing committee, whose hard work and dedication were pivotal in this event.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the future and hopeful for continued cooperation in organizing subsequent congresses. Together, we can continue to advance the field of tourism and hospitality, addressing its challenges and leveraging emerging trends.

Thank you for your participation and support. We look forward to welcoming you to the next edition of the Biennial International Congress “Tourism & Hospitality Industry.”

Editors

TOURISM IMPACTS AND WELL-BEING IN HERITAGE TOURISM: DO EMOTIONS MATTER?

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Abstract

Purpose – Using cognitive appraisal theory (CAT) and the PERMA model of well-being as the theoretical lens, this study evaluates perceptions of tourism impacts by international visitors as predictors of different discrete emotions, perceptions of sustainability characteristics of a heritage site, travel well-being and intention to recommend the site.

Methodology – Data for the current study were collected from international visitors to Petra, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the most popular tourist destination in Jordan. The data was collected by one of the authors in different locations, including Petra Visitor Center, the lobbies of 8 major hotels in the town, and in buses where tourists were returning from Petra. A convenience sampling approach was adopted, and potential respondents were approached over different days of the week.

Findings – Results confirm that perceptions of positive and negative tourism impacts elicit different discrete emotions such as happiness, love, contentment, awe, unpleasantness and anger. Specifically, feelings of happiness, love and contentment affect visitors' evaluation of their overall perceptions of the sustainability characteristics of the site and travel well-being. Better perceptions of site sustainability and higher levels of well-being contribute to positive intentions to recommend the site.

Originality of the research – Existing studies on World Heritage Site (WHS) sustainability examine the effectiveness of management plans, resident social emotions and self-efficacy beliefs, and visitor characteristics and branding, but they do not evaluate whether discrete emotions affect tourists' perceptions of the sustainability characteristics of a WHS. Furthermore, while well-being remains an important outcome of tourism experiences, the connection between discrete emotions and well-being in heritage tourism remains sparsely examined.

Keywords travel well-being, sustainable tourism impacts, discrete emotions

TELEVISION INDUCED TOURISM: EVIDENCE FROM WREXHAM, WALES

Abstract

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Purpose – To test the impact of the television show *Welcome to Wrexham* on tourism flows into the Wrexham area as reflected in daily hotel registrations. We will also test the impact of the television show on match-day attendance to Wrexham home and away matches.

Design – We utilize a staggered difference-in-difference methodology wherein two treatments are considered: the beginning of the first season of *Welcome to Wrexham* and the start of the second season of *Welcome to Wrexham*. We utilize daily hotel registrations within ten miles of the city of Wrexham as a treatment group and daily hotel registrations in the southern Welsh city of Swansea as a control group. The staggered difference-in-difference approach allows us to estimate the impact of the television show when it first arrived on the air and then after the between-season break.

Methodology – The staggered difference-in-difference approach has been recently expanded by Goodman-Bacon (2019), Callaway and Sant’Anna (2020) and Sun and Abraham (2020). We intend to employ these newly developed estimation techniques to the high frequency daily data that describe daily hotel registrations and average daily price.

Approach – Our approach follows previous empirical studies that look at the impact of sporting and cultural events on daily hotel registrations such as Depken and Stephenson (2018), Martin and Hall (2020), Heller and Stephenson (2021), and Collins, Depken, and Stephenson (2022). While those papers focus on events that happen within a specific geographic region, e.g., an American football game or a live concert, in this instance, we are investigating the localized impact of a world-wide entertainment phenomenon. Thus, rather than look at how a particular event draws individuals to a specific geography, we are investigating how a television series released simultaneously world-wide can induce individuals to travel to Wrexham, Wales, during the football season but also during other portions of the year. We also use data from Swansea as a control to test whether any impact on tourism in Northern Wales centered around Wrexham was not duplicated by a similar uptick in tourism flows in Swansea, which would reduce the impact of the television show.

Findings – We anticipate that the impact of the television show *Welcome to Wrexham* was not dramatic in the first season as individuals were still learning about the club’s backstory and where, exactly, Wrexham is geographically, historically, and economically. We anticipate that the second season of the television show exhibits a larger and more sustained impact on tourism traffic to Wrexham and Northern Wales in general.

Originality of the research – While the study follows a similar methodology as several other recent studies focusing on daily hotel registration data, as far as we are aware, we are the first to focus on the impact of the television show *Welcome to Wrexham* on local tourism.

Keywords football, difference-in-differences, soccer, tourism strategy

THE LINKAGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL TAXES AND TOURISM TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: EVIDENCE FROM EU COUNTRIES

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Abstract

Purpose – A substantial portion of the economy comes from the tourism sector. In addition, tourism plays an important role in taxing the environment for sustainable development. International tourism made the largest contribution to tourism growth in 2023. For instance, the number of overnight stays in 2023 exceeded that of 2022 in 24 out of 25 EU nations. As a result, emissions from tourists increased, bringing up the topic of sustainable development. To improve environmental performance, environmental taxes play an important role. Environmental taxes have a dual function. First, to raise tax revenues; second, to change the purchasing habits of consumers. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to investigate how environmental taxes, international tourist arrivals and environmental regulations impact sustainable development in 19 EU countries in the period 2003-2020.

Methodology – A dynamic panel regression model was used to obtain empirical results. The analysis was conducted out using annual data from OECD database and Eurostat for the period 2003-2020 for 19 EU countries.

Findings – The empirical results show the negative impact of environmental regulations and per capita gross domestic product (GDP) on CO₂ emissions in the long run. Most importantly, the stringency index, i.e., the proxy used to account for environmental regulation, exhibits negative and strongly significant coefficient, suggesting that the policies are effective in reducing environmental damages in the long run. However, environmental taxes have positive effect on CO₂ emissions in the long run. On the other side, in the short run increasing GDP and the number of tourists has a positive effect on CO₂ emissions, meaning that they are the cause of increasing pollution.

Contribution – The contribution of the paper is twofold. First, this paper examines the empirical analysis of the linkage between environmental taxes, tourism and environmental regulations towards sustainable development in 19 EU countries that have a very well-developed tourism sector. Second, based on empirical results, this paper provides specific recommendations to achieve sustainable development that can be relevant to policymakers.

Keywords environmental taxes, tourism, sustainable development, EU, panel regression

QUALITY IN SLOW TOURISM: AN IN-DEPTH LITERATURE REVIEW PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Purpose – The aim of the study is to provide a comprehensive analysis of slow tourism, focusing on its impact on sustainability, its impact on locals' quality of life and the relationship between slow tourism and the perceived quality of the tourism offer and perceived service quality. Slow tourism aims to raise awareness, but also to encourage the consumption of locally grown produce, use of sustainable forms of energy, employment of local people and improvement of life quality.

Design – Employing a systematic literature review of research articles indexed by Web of Science (WoS) and Scopus, this study contributes to the understanding of slow tourism.

Methodology – The methodology of this study followed a structured approach consisting of assembling, arranging, and assessing the articles.

For the systematic literature review, articles were selected by conducting a thorough search of the relevant databases to identify most relevant articles. Duplicate articles were discarded during screening, and additional articles were excluded for not meeting the research criteria.

Approach – The 47 articles were analysed and summarised to provide a comprehensive overview of the existing knowledge and research findings related to slow tourism.

Findings – The findings provide a holistic analysis of slow tourism and examine its relationship with perceived quality of tourism. By integrating the contextual themes of slow tourism and its multiple impacts, the results of the study identify six quality aspects categorized in the study: Spatial quality, Quality offerings, Locals' quality of life, Quality of travel experience, Perceived service quality, and the quality of the transportation mode.

Originality of the research – The originality of the study lies in the synthesis of findings from different sources that enrich the insight into the dynamics and consequences of slow tourism for both travelers and destinations.

Keywords Slow tourism, Slow travel, Quality, Tourist destination, Quality aspects, Sustainability

WORK FORCE HEALTH & TOURISM: A CASE STUDY FROM BAVARIAN AND AUSTRIAN THERMAL SPA AND HEALTH DESTINATIONS

Abstract

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Purpose – Thermal spa and health destinations in the Bavarian-Austrian program area as well as the entire health tourism industry are suffering massively from an enormous shortage of skilled workers. At least since the corona pandemic many specialists have left their companies, regions or even their industry – individual destinations on their own can no longer solve these challenges. It is therefore important to join forces to counteract this exodus with sustainable strategies and measures in order to (re)gain urgently needed professionals and retain them in the companies in the long run, to improve current trainings and to continue education programs in line with demands, and to make the basic working and living conditions in the destinations more attractive.

Design – This presentation reveals the preliminary findings of a research initiative conducted within the framework of the INTERREG Bavaria Austria project "Sustainable Strategies for the Development of Skilled Workers in Thermal Spa and Health Destinations in Bavaria and Austria (BA0100029)".

Methodology – Focused on addressing critical facets encompassing the training, retention, and working conditions of skilled personnel, this survey collects data from employees within 40 participating companies in the project area (thermal spas, clinics, rehabilitation centers), investigating the operational dynamics within thermal spa and health destinations across Lower Bavaria, Salzburg, and Upper Austria.

Approach – Through this comprehensive survey, the research aims to clarify the existing landscape of working conditions while identifying potential areas for enhancement.

Findings – The questionnaire covers topics like participants' vocational training, current job roles and responsibilities, professional backgrounds, as well as their overall job satisfaction and preferences.

Originality of the research – This unveiling of preliminary findings stands as a crucial step towards stimulating discourse and catalyzing concerted efforts to strengthen the workforce ecosystem within thermal spa and health destinations, thereby charting a course towards sustainable growth and prosperity.

Keywords Skilled Workforce, Working Conditions, Thermal Spa, Health Destinations, (Health) Tourism, Sustainable Development

TOURISM AND QUALITY OF LIFE: EVIDENCE OF EU COUNTRIES

Abstract

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Purpose – Tourism is important for the success of many economies around the world, but it can produce positive or negative effects on the quality of life (QoL). So, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between quality of life, tourism, and economic growth in the context of EU countries.

Methodology – The research covers a time period of 28 years, from 1995 to 2022. Panel data analysis is used to observe the relationship between variables across time, based on fixed effects. Further, the study also explored the causal nexus between QoL, tourism and economic growth by using Dumitrescu & Hurlin (2012) Granger non-causality test.

Findings – The conducted panel analysis confirms the relationship between the variables at a high level of significance. The causality result indicates that QoL cause tourist arrivals and tourism intensity (in one direction) while economic growth and tourism are causal in both directions. Further, life expectancy at birth (LE) and expected years of schooling (SCH) are also causally related to tourism in both directions.

Contribution – Rising GDP per capita and tourism have an important impact on quality of life. The results of this study can be useful to decision-makers and tourism authorities in creating policies focused on future tourism development. Each country needs to develop appropriate tourism and business policies based on its current economic parameters in order to promote quality of life. The future recommendation is to find a limit value up to which number of arrivals in relation to the population will not disturb the local population and quality of life.

Keywords tourism, economic growth, quality of life, seasonality, EU countries, panel analysis

DEVELOPING INTERNAL AUDITING PROFESSION IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Abstract

Purpose – This paper aims to examine internal audit profession in hospitality industry in Croatian hotel companies and how it can be improved.

Design/Methodology – a combination of qualitative research using semi-structured questionnaire was conducted with internal auditors employed in Croatian hotel companies that have internal audit function organized in order to obtain information on their previous and current education level necessary for performing quality internal audits in hotel companies. Requirements set by internal auditing profession authorities and employers when seeking internal auditors for hospitality industry were examined by collecting data from websites specialized in employment.

Findings – The research results reveal that internal auditors working in Croatian hotel companies have graduated Faculties of economics where they gained general knowledge on internal audit without having possibility of introducing specifics of hospitality industry in connection to this profession. They also have Certificates of Internal Audit (CIA) where general knowledge on internal audit function, processes and goals is obtained. Regarding specific knowledge on hospitality industry, internal auditors gained it through their working experience because there are no programs or modules for specific businesses available nor in Croatia nor in the EU. Therefore, there is a need for cooperation among internal auditors, academics and educational institutions that are involved in hospitality industry on national and international level in order to create and develop additional specific knowledge for the module of hospitality industry internal auditor.

Originality of the research – the first study regarding internal audit profession requirements in hospitality industry.

Research limitations – due to the specificity of the topic, there is a small sample of internal auditors working within hotel companies oriented to specific country.

Keywords internal audit profession, internal auditor, certified internal auditor, hospitality industry, hotel companies

MAJOR SPORT EVENTS: TOWARDS A UNIFORM MEASURE OF ESG IMPACTS

Abstract

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Purpose - Sport events, especially major sport events, have a significant economic, environmental and social impact (Getz & Page, 2016). Already in the 1990s studying, measuring and limiting the negative impacts begun and primarily focused on the society, and later on the environment (Preuss, 2007, 2013). Several different measures and guidelines were developed to guide the measuring and mitigating of the major sport events impact by International Olympic Committee (IOC, 1992; 2022), international sports federations (for example: FIFA, 2022, 2024; International Biathlon Union, 2020; International Triathlon Union, 2020), and even clubs and national sport organisations (Ráthonyi-Ódor et al., 2020) particularly to the practical steps related to this. The purpose of this study is to investigate the nature of CSR (corporate social responsibility. With the increase in the interest (and publications), however, there are different measures, metrics and indicators proposed to measure the economic, environmental and social impact of major sport events and there is a lack of uniformed approach that would allow comparison (Chersulich Tomino et al., 2020).

Design and Methodology – This paper investigates the existing measures of the economic, environmental and social impacts of major sport events and proposes a uniformed measure of impacts in the environmental, social and governance (ESG) framework. It incorporates the EU Directive on corporate sustainability reporting (CSRD) and the ESRS – European Sustainability Reporting Standards. The proposition takes into account that major sport events differ with respect to infrastructure used and needed, the scope and scale and proposes a balanced selection of indicators that require limited financial input of the organizers.

Approach – The paper proposes ESG framework with the identification of five environmental topics, four social and one governance topics. This was done based on the review of literature and the review of the existing sustainability plans and reports of 5 major sport events in Slovenia and again, considering the propositions of International Olympic Committee, international and nations sport federations and organizations and sport clubs. The proposal includes eight quantitative and 6 qualitative indicators for measuring major sport events. Special attention is also given to the economic impact and in the governance, topic proposes a measurement of multiplicative economic effects.

Originality of the research – This is the first paper that proposes a unified approach and not event specific approach and by that enables comparison of events in terms of their environmental, social and governance impact. It proposes a set of qualitative and quantitative ESG indicators that are aligned with the corporate ESG reporting and require limited input from organizers.

Keywords major sport events, ESG, sustainability

WHY DO STARTUPS FAIL?

Abstract

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Startups play an important role in contemporary economies. Given the high risk associated with this business type, a significant proportion of these businesses fail within a few years of being founded. Our goal was to draw general experiences, which can improve the very low success rate of startups. In our research we identified the factors that have a significant impact on the survival of start-ups. We used a database that the authors made of 40 ICT startups in the liquidation phase. Our study sample included defunct startups between 2020 and 2023, a significant proportion of which received funding from venture capital. Our database was filtered from the answers to the questions in the semi-structured interviews. Subsequently, we reviewed the related literature and assessed the methodologies that have been used in the past to identify startup failures. For our analysis, we used an extended version of the SHELL model, which has been applied previously in similar research. Firstly, we created a problem map. The main groups of problem factors are funding and customer; business model; and management and product problems. Secondly, we found three groups of failed startups: "basic business model and financing problems", "failed product idea", and "looked promising" clusters. Thirdly, we examined the connection between the problem factors and the life cycle of startups. As startups evolve, the probability of some problems occurring increases, while others decrease. As the life cycle progresses, the following become less important: not feasible, no/wrong business model, and inexperienced management problems. While with the life cycle, the problems of a few customers become more significant. Financial and investment indicators improve, by definition, as the life cycle progresses. Fourthly, we found a positive and statistically significant relationship between the presence of female founders and survival. The results of our research can provide important findings for both startup founders and decision-makers responsible for the development of startup ecosystems.

Keywords ICT, startup success, startup failure, SHELL methodology, gender

APPLICATION OF CIRCULAR ECONOMY PRINCIPLES IN BUSINESS: THE CASE OF PRIMORSKO – GORANSKA COUNTY

Abstract

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The main aim of the paper was to investigate familiarity with CE principles, application intensity of CE and the need for CE education in business organizations in the area of the Primorsko – goranska County in the Republic of Croatia. A survey was conducted in 2023 in order to gather relevant data that can be analyzed for this specific purpose. The results are presented on the total sample of respondents, then differences were investigated between public and private sector employees, manufacturing and services sector employees, age groups and employees' organization sizes. The overall findings suggest a lack of widespread understanding of CE principles among employees. The findings also support for an immediate educational effort focused on CE. The main findings of the survey indicate a higher prevalence of CE adoption in the private sector and among younger employees, predominantly in large organizations, but also highly adopted in micro and small business organizations.

Keywords circular economy, private sector, public sector, implementation

UNRAVELLING THE ANTECEDENTS OF RESTAURANT GRATUITY IN KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING APPROACH

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Abstract

Purpose - Empirically, the act of tipping in the global services industry is as ancient as the Roman times. It can be traced back to centuries ago, although the area has attracted less attention in research. Nonetheless, gratuities contributes immensely on the economic wellbeing of servers. This paper therefore presents an investigation into applicable constructs triggering gratuities within the hotel food service departments including; rewarding service perceptions, incentives for improved future service and social norms. Thus, the purpose of this study was to establish the contribution of each construct under investigation on restaurant tipping in the selected two and three star hotels within Kisumu County.

Design - The study applied a descriptive research survey design. This design was chosen based on its suitability for describing gratuities based on responses from the selected respondents within two and three star hotels.

Methodology - The study was carried out within Kisumu County, in Kenya. A census of two- and three-star hotels was taken, while questionnaires were self-administered to 384 respondents who were selected by simple random sampling method. Data was organized by skillfully coding and cleaning in order to correct any potential errors and thereafter fed into spreadsheets. The data was further transformed for purposes of conducting specific analysis. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences-Analysis of Moment Structures (SPSS-AMOS) was applied. The study respondents were assured confidentiality, privacy and anonymity in addition to the data collection tools being destroyed after report writing.

Approach - The study was carried out in nine hotels within Kisumu County, among which one hotel was selected for pre-testing. On the other hand, respondents constituted food service clients and managers. Questionnaires and content analysis were used in the collection of data. Reliability was determined by Cronbach's coefficient Alpha test (> 0.70) while content validity was used to assess the internal validity of the research instruments.

Findings - The study results gave factor loadings > 0.70 which indicates that the factors under investigation extracts sufficient variance from the dependent variables. Further, the study results show that alcohol consumption gave the highest prediction (91.2%) and thus unique contribution to the independent variable. Finally, the study established a positive significant relationship (at 95% confidence level) between superior service, frequency of patronage, alcohol consumption as well as weather and gratuity.

Originality of the research - The act of giving gratuities is prevalent across the global hospitality environment, with a myriad of economic importance to the industry. However, very minimal studies have been carried out, though not related to this study. Most of previous studies are on the service quality-tipping relationship, while this study focused on tipping-service quality relationship. Therefore in the best of our knowledge, no similar study has ever been carried out, and thus this is a unique and original study that has addressed the topic.

Keywords Tip, Alcohol, Weather, Bill size, Dining Experience, Superior Service.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TOURISM DESTINATION COMPETITIVENESS: CROATIA VS. SERBIA

Abstract

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The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the tourism destination competitiveness of Croatia and Serbia from the perspective of tourism industry stakeholders, and subsequently compare their perceptions. Using the convenience sampling method and the snowball approach, tourism stakeholders in both countries were asked to assess 47 competitiveness indicators across four dimensions on a 5-point Likert scale. Comparative analysis of survey results revealed commonalities and disparities in stakeholders' viewpoints. The findings indicate that both Croatia and Serbia should focus on addressing perceived weaknesses and leveraging strengths to enhance their competitiveness. Notably, both countries receive positive evaluations for their natural and cultural resources, suggesting their potential for tourism development. Stakeholders in Croatia perceive their country as more competitive than Serbia, particularly in marketing, experience, and infrastructure. However, Serbia faces challenges in these areas, indicating the need for improvement, especially in quality of tourism offerings and infrastructure. Also, Serbia struggles with international awareness, destination positioning, and brand perception. Croatia should continue investing in sustaining and enhancing its competitive advantages, while Serbia should focus on improving infrastructure, refining tourism policies, and enhancing marketing initiatives. Both countries should prioritize stakeholder consultations to gather insights and foster collaborative decision-making, along with establishing systems for continuous monitoring of competitiveness indicators and adapting strategies to changing market dynamics. The study highlights implications for DMOs and tourism businesses in each country, emphasizing the importance of cross-country comparisons to understand the significance of competitiveness attributes and the efficacy of strategies within the tourism industry context. This research offers both theoretical and practical contributions, providing policymakers and stakeholders with insights to tailor strategies aligned with stakeholder perceptions and to boost competitiveness in the tourism industries of Croatia and Serbia.

Keywords tourism destination competitiveness, tourism industry stakeholders, Croatia, Serbia, comparative analysis

QUALITY MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES IN HOTEL COMPANIES – A MANAGER'S PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Purpose – The article focuses on the implementation of Quality Management Principles in hotel companies. The purpose of this article is to identify the dimensions of a Quality Management System (QMS) that determine the implementation of Quality Management Principles from the managers' perspective in medium-sized and large hotel companies in the Republic of Croatia.

Design – The primary research was conducted from May 21st to July 12th 2023. A total of 154 valid questionnaires were collected. The respondents were managers (CEOs, general managers and/or their deputies or assistants) of large and medium-sized hotel companies in Croatia.

Methodology – A survey method using a structured questionnaire was performed. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to identify the dimensions that, according to the respondents, determine the implementation of QMS principles. The Kaiser – Meyer – Olkin (KMO) test was performed as a statistical measure to identify data suitability for factor analysis, and the result of the KMO test was greater than 0.6.

Findings – Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed to determine the dimensions that, according to the respondents, best define the implementation of QMS principles. The exploratory factor analysis (EFA) identified three dimensions (factors) that according to the respondents' perception, best describe and determine the implementation of QMS principles in hotel companies. The generated 3 factors explain 56.04% of the total variance. The reliability of each generated dimension was determined by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient which was greater than 0.700.

Originality of the research – The results identify which factors are relevant for hotel managers in determining the implementation of the quality management principles in hotel companies. The results of the research can help hotel managers in creating guidelines for the efficient integration of QMSs into everyday business practice.

Keywords quality, quality management principles, hotel companies

SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN NORTHERN THAILAND

Abstract

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Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore the dynamics of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) in Northern Thailand, examining its impact on sustainable development within the region. *Methodology* – Through a qualitative design, this study utilizes an interpretative approach to analyze the principal factors that shape the evolution of CBT from the perspectives of various stakeholders—local communities, government agencies, tourists, industry professionals, and academic experts. Conducted from January to November 2023, the methodology comprises in-depth interviews across the provinces of Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, utilizing a set of 20-30 open-ended questions categorized into 15 key areas such as economic impacts, environmental sustainability, social dynamics, and cultural preservation.

Findings – The findings reveal that CBT serves as an additional economic stream complementing traditional agriculture, engages communities in preserving their cultural heritage, and emphasizes environmental conservation. However, it also faces challenges such as financial difficulties, lack of awareness, and conflicts within communities. Notably, the research identifies the significant role of social capital and local leadership in empowering communities to manage CBT initiatives effectively.

Originality of the research – This study’s originality lies in its comprehensive examination of CBT’s role in fostering sustainable development in a unique socio-cultural and ecological setting, providing valuable insights for other regions implementing similar sustainable tourism models.

Keywords Community-Based Tourism, Sustainable Development, Northern Thailand, Social Capital, Cultural Preservation, Environmental Conservation.

GASTRONOMY AS DESTINATION ATTRACTION FACTOR: A DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

Abstract

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Purpose – In a competitive environment tourist destination are challenged to meet the changing consumer needs. Tourism demand has experienced significant changes in the value system, with an emphasis on individualization in the approach to travel, highlighting individual needs that manifest the individual's lifestyle and the desire for new and authentic experiences. Diversification of the destination product through activation of various destination resources is required. Whereby destination management organizations, as crucial driver of the destination product, are essential stakeholders in the development process. Tourists desire to seek for new authentic experience is contributing to the usage of gastronomy as destination resource within the development of gastronomic tourism. The aim of this paper is to summarize present findings about the relationship between gastronomy as destination resource and tourism demand travel behavior with the purpose to analyze the destination management perspective towards the observed relationship.

Design – An introductory section is followed by a literature review to tourist attractions and gastronomy in tourism demand travel behavior. Insights into the research methodology are provided before results presentation and discussion. The paper ends with conclusion remarks.

Methodology and approach – A thorough review of existing literature was conducted to identify relevant constructs, theories, and previous research findings pertinent to the research topic. Based on the literature review, key gastronomy and destination attractiveness relationship constructs were identified. A qualitative analysis with a questionnaire-based approach was performed on a focus group for the purpose to investigate the expert attitudes towards observed gastronomy and destination attractiveness relationship constructs. Purposive sampling technic was used, based on the population of interest. The research was conducted on a focus group, selected group of tourism experts, directors of tourist destination management organizations in the area of Split-Dalmatia County. Collected surveys were summarized, presented and interpreted.

Findings – From a destination management perspective gastronomy has an increasing role in tourist motivation to travel. In order attract tourists with the gastronomic offer, gastronomic resources have to be existing, valorized and as such perceived by tourism demand. Gastronomy is acting as an attraction factor. Quality of gastronomy contribute to guest satisfaction, intention for repeated visit, loyalty and increased revenues.

Originality of the research – The paper provides a destination management perspective to present knowledge about the relationship between gastronomy and destination attractiveness. The research fills the literature gap of a destination management perspective on an intensively growing form of tourism, namely gastronomic tourism, in a tourist region focused on beach tourism. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of the research topic and offer implications for destination management decision making.

Keywords gastronomy, tourist destination, attraction factor, destination management organization

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTICIPATORY STRATEGIC PLANNING: CAYO LAS BRUJAS, CUBA

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Abstract

Sustainability, participatory processes, and group training should be considered the basis of the strategic planning of tourist destinations. This study's purpose is to understand the perspectives of interested stakeholders on the tourism development of Cayo Las Brujas (Cuba) and involve them in the participatory construction of strategic planning carried out by tourism entrepreneurs in correspondence with the development of a training consulting. The methodological design corresponds to a qualitative–quantitative, deductive, and multidisciplinary research of a diagnostic–propositional and applied approach. Empirical methods were implemented, including participant observation, case studies, group work, field trips, and modeling. Findings show the diagnosis and strategic projection towards the future horizons of Cayo Las Brujas based on the perceptions and proposals of the different trained stakeholders regarding the sustainable planning of the tourist destination. The originality of the research is related to the high training and practical value of the research experience developed for the first time for this destination through training consulting, which made it possible for tourism workers to construct knowledge in a participatory manner to develop and validate the strategic plan for the sustainable development.

Keywords: tourism, sustainability, planning, strategic, participation, training consulting, Cayo Las Brujas (Cuba).

WILL THE GOALS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BE ACHIEVED IN THE EUROPEAN UNION?

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Abstract

Purpose - To harmonize diverse aspects of development, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development outlined three dimensions of sustainable development: economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection. The goals of the 2030 Agenda cover a wide range of different development issues in which the principles of sustainability are applied at international, national, regional, and local levels. According to the Sustainable Development Goals Report (SDGR, 2023), the European Union is on track to achieve approximately 66% of the Sustainable Development Goals and is making limited progress on an additional 20% of the goals based on key indicators. However, it is falling behind on 13% of the stated goals. The aim of this study is to analyze selected indicators in relation to specific Sustainable Development Goals in targeted countries of the European Union in order to answer the research question: Are the Sustainable Development Goals being achieved in the European Union?

Methodology - Eurostat data was analyzed against selected 2030 Agenda indicators to determine progress towards achieving the sustainable development goals in selected European Union countries.

Results - Localization of the SDGs is the process of translating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into the local context. This includes identifying challenges, as well as defining, implementing and monitoring local actions and policies that contribute to the global achievement of the SDGs. The analysis indicates that EU member states are making progress on some goals but most still have room for improvement.

Contribution - The analysis in this article contributes to the broader understanding of SDG indicators of the EU Member States and the importance of local actors in the successful implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The article further recommends the launch of a new EU program for the exchange of best practices between cities and regions across the EU, as well as cities in non-EU regions and continents. This would facilitate identification of global best practices and promote international cooperation. The article also identifies the need to harmonize statistical data for all EU regions.

Keywords Agenda 2030, localization of SDG-s, sustainable development, European Union

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ONLINE REPUTATION OF TOUR OPERATORS: SOURCES, COMPONENTS, AND SPECIFICS

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Abstract

Reputation management is important in achieving a competitive advantage for travel agencies. This paper aims to bring more insights into the (online) reputation of tour operators and identify the specifics in this field of business. The authors approached the topic from the perspective of the tour operators. They focused on the following areas: factors influencing customers' choice according to the managers' perspective, reputation components and identification of the main internal and external sources of reputation, ICT implementation, and reputation protection through an approach to negative reviews. The research was based on the qualitative research design, using in-depth interviews was decided as appropriate and consequently, the content analysis was applied. As a result, in the framework of the research, three external sources of reputation were identified: (1) social media and networks, (2) supplier reputation and quality, and (3) media. Three internal resources were used: (1) supplier reputation and quality as part of the strategy, (2) quality of the service, and (3) education and training of employees. The main specifics of the tour operators are the following: (1) higher dependency on social networks (mainly Facebook considering the form of content and the age group of customers), (2) closed and private groups with no possible protection of the reputation or even monitoring, (3) high dependency on the supplier's reputation and quality standards, (4) fragmented market (many "no name" businesses) is often perceived as a mass by the customers, a negative case described by media can threaten the reputation of the whole sector.

Keywords online reputation, social media, reviews, tour operators

AGEING OF THE LABOUR FORCE – INSIGHTS FROM THE CROATIAN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Abstract

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Purpose - The research aims to investigate the ageing of the labour force in the Croatian hospitality industry and its implications for sustainable development. Specifically, the study seeks to determine if the ageing trend within the hospitality sector aligns with national labour market trends.

Design - The study focuses on analysing the age structure of the workforce in the hospitality industry compared to the overall national level. By examining the dynamics of ageing within this industry, the research aims to uncover any contrasting patterns and trends in the workforce composition.

Methodology - Utilizing secondary data from the Croatian Bureau of Statistics, the research conducts a regression analysis to delve into the age distribution within the hospitality industry. The analysis covers a period from 2009 to 2022, providing insights into the changes in the age structure of the labour force over time.

Approach - The study delves into the effects of global changes and crises on the labour market in Croatia. By focusing on the hospitality industry, known for its seasonality, low wages, and high proportion of unskilled labour, the research aims to understand how these factors have influenced the age composition of the workforce.

Findings - The research reveals a notable trend within the hospitality industry, showcasing a higher proportion of younger workers compared to the national average. This observation contradicts the general ageing trend observed at the national level, highlighting the unique dynamics within the hospitality industry sector.

Originality of the research - The study's originality lies in its specific focus on the ageing workforce within the Croatian hospitality industry. By shedding light on how this sector diverges from national labour market trends, the research provides valuable insights into the changing demographics of the workforce in a critical sector like the hospitality industry. This analysis contributes to a deeper understanding of the implications of age demographics on business policies and human resource management within the industry.

Keywords aging labour force, older employees, hospitality industry, tourism

PERCEPTION OF ISLANDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT APPLICATION – THE VIEWS OF RELEVANT CROATIAN ISLAND STAKEHOLDERS

Abstract

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Purpose – Research objectives are to identify important dimensions of sustainable development of an island destination that are directly observable by the stakeholders and to empirically validate those dimensions as well as to determine the level of application from the perspective of stakeholders on Croatian islands.

Design – In this study, experts in the field of sustainable development of island tourist destinations were surveyed. Experts include tourism professionals, representatives of executive and administrative bodies of local self-government units and prominent island residents. To understand their perception of the application of the concept of sustainable development on islands, four important dimensions were observed, identified based on a review of relevant literature: financing sustainable development on islands, respecting the socio-cultural authenticity of the local community, educating the local population about the concept of sustainable development, and establishing competence centers for effective cooperation on development projects and research on sustainable tourism on islands.

Methodology and approach – A highly-structured questionnaire was used for data collection and the data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, analysis of variance, correlation analysis and examining the relationships between variables using the chi-square test.

Findings – Results show different points of view, primarily from the aspect of achieved tourism development. When it comes to the respondents' attitudes towards the key elements of sustainable development of islands, the results are following. The average rating of attitudes on socio-cultural authenticity of the local community is the highest compared to other elements of sustainable development and it is quite consistent across all island categories. In contrast, the existence and role of centers of competence is rated the lowest. In the context of continuous education of the local population and the existence of an adequate system of financing sustainable development, respondents from the category A islands, gave these two elements the highest ratings, especially compared to respondents from category C islands. When comparing three groups of relevant stakeholders, the differences were found regarding the level of respect for the socio-cultural authenticity of the local community. The greatest discrepancy is found between the representatives of the local government and the islanders. Regarding education, respondents who perceive their islands as developed, believe in greater extent that this type of education is present in their area.

Originality of the research – Given that research in this regard is generally focused on the perception of tourists, this research aims to illuminate the perspective of local stakeholders. Also, the study identified important dimensions of island sustainable development concept application based on previous research. These dimensions are in-common for all stakeholder groups and directly observable which is important both for research and for the development of local and national development strategies and policy.

Keywords islands, sustainable development concept, sustainable tourism development, stakeholders, Croatia

LUXURY HOSPITALITY IN CROATIA: THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND TOURISM IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of the paper is to comprehensively explore and understand the nuances of luxury hospitality and tourism in Croatia. It examines the characteristics and expectations associated with luxury hospitality and luxury tourism, identifies growth opportunities, and discusses challenges facing the development of luxury tourism in the country.

Methodology – Thematic analysis was employed to analyze responses from interviews with stakeholders in the Croatian hospitality industry. These interviews focused on defining luxury hotel tourism products/experiences and luxury tourism in Croatia, as well as identifying key themes and challenges in luxury tourism development.

Findings – The findings shed light on what constitutes a Croatian luxury hotel product and Croatia as a luxury tourism destination. Key characteristics include exceptional service, personalized experiences, integration with natural surroundings, architectural sophistication, and gastronomic excellence. Despite challenges like limited global luxury brands and infrastructure, Croatia's diverse culinary tradition, exclusive accommodations, and picturesque locations contribute to its allure as a luxury destination.

Originality of the research – The findings offer insights for tourism providers to tailor their offerings towards more meaningful and memorable experiences, emphasizing exceptional service, personalization, natural surroundings integration, architectural sophistication, gastronomic excellence, and exclusivity. Addressing challenges such as infrastructure limitations and overcrowding, along with strategic investments in upscale amenities and services, can elevate Croatia's competitiveness in the luxury tourism market. This paper marks the initial effort in addressing the research gap in luxury tourism, signaling the need for further exploration of luxury tourism in Croatia.

Keywords luxury hotel tourism product/experience, luxury tourism destination, challenges, Republic of Croatia

THE INFLUENCE OF ONLINE REVIEWS ON HOTEL ATTRACTIVENESS PERCEPTIONS: A GENDER-BASED COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract

Purpose - The primary aim of this research is to explore the differential impact of online hotel reviews on the perceived attractiveness of hotel, with a focus on identifying any variances between genders. It seeks to contribute to the understanding of consumer behavior in the digital age, especially how men and women differently interpret and react to online reviews.

Design - Employing a quantitative research design, this study systematically investigates the change in hotel attractiveness perceptions before and after the exposure to online reviews among a sample of male and female participants. The participants were first asked to rate the attractiveness of a one hotel based solely on set of six photographs. Subsequently, they were exposed to online reviews of the same hotel, after which they re-evaluated their perceptions of attractiveness. These repeated measures design allowed for the examination of within-subject changes in perceptions, as well as the interactions between gender and review exposure.

Findings - The analysis revealed statistically significant changes in the perceived attractiveness of hotel after reading online reviews, with these changes being more pronounced among male participants compared to female participants. Specifically, both genders exhibited an increase in perceived attractiveness post-review exposure, but the magnitude of change was significantly higher for men. Additionally, the study identified a significant interaction effect between gender and the impact of online reviews, indicating that the influence of reviews on perceived attractiveness is moderated by gender. These findings underscore the potent role of online reviews in shaping consumer perceptions and highlight gender differences in processing this information.

Originality - This research contributes to the existing body of literature by specifically addressing the gender differences in the impact of online reviews on perceived attractiveness of hotel. While previous studies have examined the influence of online reviews on consumer behaviors and decision-making, the explicit focus on gender as a moderating factor offers novel insights. This study not only adds to our understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying the processing of online reviews but also provides practical implications for marketers and hotel managers in crafting gender-sensitive strategies.

Keywords online reviews, hotel attractiveness, gender differences, consumer behavior, digital marketing.

MANAGEMENT OF ELECTRONIC MEDICAL WASTE DISPOSAL AND ITS IMPACT ON THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE TOURISM DESTINATION

Abstract

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Purpose - The management of electronic medical waste (e-waste) represents a significant challenge and an opportunity for sustainability in the health tourism industry. As large companies in tourist destinations increasingly use electronic devices for medical purposes, the disposal of these items becomes crucial for the health of the environment and the sustainable development of the destination. This paper examines the impact of healthcare e-waste disposal in destinations and discusses strategies for effective management to improve sustainability.

Findings-Research - This study is based on a mixed methods design that includes a quantitative analysis of e-waste generation and qualitative case studies at major healthcare providers in leading tourism destinations. The paper evaluates different strategies for e-waste management, including Design for Environment (DfE) principles, the use of environmentally friendly materials, energy efficient practices, data security measures, recycling and reuse, and more. A multi-perspective approach will be used to discuss the challenges and opportunities of e-waste management that promotes sustainable tourism development.

Design/methodology/approach - This study examines the management of electronic medical waste (e-waste) and its impact on sustainability in tourism destinations. With the increasing integration of technology into the healthcare services offered there, the proper disposal and recycling of e-waste is proving critical to maintaining environmental health and ensuring sustainable development of the tourism economy. This study aims to identify effective e-waste management strategies that can be implemented by large companies operating in tourism destinations and analyse their impact on the environmental sustainability and overall attractiveness of these places for tourists.

Findings/ Originality of the research - This study not only represents an intersection between the healthcare industry's management practices regarding the disposal of average-life devices by hospitals and sustainability in tourism, but also provides insights for policy makers, healthcare managers and tourism stakeholders regarding effective e-waste management approaches. The study highlights the role that sustainable e-waste management can play as a key differentiator for destinations, while ensuring the health and safety of tourists and the wellbeing of the host community. The argument of this study is therefore that the current management of e-waste in healthcare facilities needs an alternative approach to improve their attractiveness and sustainability.

Keywords medical e-waste, e-waste, impact of health tourism on the destination, hospital e-waste.

A BIBLIOMETRIC EXAMINATION OF DOMESTIC TOURISM LITERATURE: UNVEILING RESEARCH PATTERNS AND TRENDS

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Abstract

Purpose – This study aims to analyse the current state of domestic tourism research through a bibliometric analysis.

Design – A bibliometric approach is employed to evaluate the landscape of domestic tourism research published between 1990 and February 2024 using the Web of Science (WoS) database as the primary source.

Methodology – The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 framework guided the overall method selection process. Boolean search strings were used to retrieve relevant articles on domestic tourism and related topics in titles, abstracts, or author keywords. Bibliometric software VOSviewer was utilized to analyse and visualize keyword co-occurrence and thematic clusters.

Approach – The analysis focused on identifying current trends, influential contributors, prominent thematic clusters, and future research directions.

Findings – The research has identified a consistent increase in publications on domestic tourism since 1990, with a significant surge following the COVID-19 pandemic. Thematic clusters have emerged around the analysis of domestic tourism demand, tourist decision-making and behaviour, tourist experience and satisfaction, and lastly, tourist behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper's results suggest potential research avenues, including changing travel behaviour during pandemics, examining risk perception and travel decisions, using domestic tourism as a crisis relief strategy, and adapting marketing strategies during crises.

Originality of the research – The study is original in its comprehensive overview of the domestic tourism research landscape, identifying trends, influential contributors, thematic areas, and promising future research directions. This text provides insights for researchers, policymakers, and industry professionals interested in domestic tourism.

Keywords domestic tourism, bibliometric analysis, trends and patterns, COVID-19

EXPLORING TRENDS IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS

Abstract

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The tourism industry is vital for many countries' economies and social progress. Its rapid growth can harm the environment, local communities, and cultural heritage, so innovative and sustainable tourism management is urgently needed to resolve these issues.

This research paper presents a bibliometric analysis to explore current research trends in leadership and management for sustainable tourism.

The primary aim of this research is to identify and analyze the key themes, emerging trends, and potential research gaps within the existing literature on leadership and management practices in the context of sustainable tourism development.

A systematic search will be conducted within prominent academic databases, through Scopus. Relevant articles published past 20 years will be identified using search terms like "leadership," "management," "tourism," "hospitality," "sustainability". Bibliometric software VOS will be utilized to analyze the retrieved data, focusing on parameters such as publication volume, authorship patterns, top-cited journals, publication trends over time, and keyword co-occurrence analysis.

Utilizing network visualization, this study reveals strong collaborative networks among researchers exploring leadership and management for sustainable tourism.

This research provides an up-to-date and comprehensive overview of leadership and management practices for sustainable tourism through a bibliometric analysis.

By analyzing publication trends, authorship patterns, and keyword co-occurrence, this study sheds light on the current research landscape within this domain. The identification of research gaps will offer valuable insights for researchers and practitioners, contributing to the development of more effective leadership and management approaches for achieving sustainability goals in the tourism industry.

Keywords leadership, management, sustainable tourism, hospitality industry

TALENT MANAGEMENT IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND CHANGES IN THE WORKFORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Abstract

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In contemporary business environment many organizations are faced with HRM challenges, including the problem of attracting and retaining talented individuals. Some of the more significant reasons of this issue are related to the liberalization of the labour market in global frameworks and changes in the characteristics of the workforce. The upcoming generation of professionals has a different attitude towards work. They want greater autonomy, flexibility, the possibility of career advancement and identification with the company's values and culture. For young professionals, technology is an integral part of their lives. Main purpose of this paper is to explore whether modern achievements such as artificial intelligence and electronic human resource management can help organizations to overcome problems of attracting and retaining of new age talent. This is conceptual paper based on systematic exploration of literature in three subjects, which are talent management, digitalization of HRM and changing workforce. Research results indicate that digitalisation of HRM has potential to change primary model of recruiting and retaining talented young professionals. Also, results show which digital tools can improve and adapt process of attracting and retaining the new generation of talents. This paper integrates research from three fields and gives specific contribution to the human resource management literature.

Keywords talent management, artificial intelligence, HRM digitalization, generation Z

OVERVIEW OF DIFFERENT IT SOLUTIONS FOR REDUCING NO-SHOWS AND UNEXPLAINED PATIENT CANCELLATIONS IN HEALTH TOURISM

Abstract

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Purpose - In the dynamic world of health tourism, where more and more patients are travelling across different countries in search of healthcare and wellness services, missed appointments and unexpected cancellations, known as no-shows, have become a major challenge for this type of industry. These incidents affect the expansion of infrastructure, result in loss of revenue and negatively impact the waiting list and quality of care for other patients. This paper is an overview and review of 10 years of personal experience and different papers and articles that address these pressing health tourism challenges, their causes and possible solutions that could help minimise the number of no-shows. Therefore, the following hypothesis is put forward: H1 The integration of modern information and communication technology solutions can have a positive impact on the problem of patient no-shows and unexplained cancellations.

Findings - Research shows that missed appointments and no-shows have multiple reasons, such as: "forgetfulness", "transportation issues" and "time off work". They also differ by type of health tourism, medical specialty, socioeconomic status, gender, age, place of residence, etc. Research also shows that no-shows cost the healthcare industry over 150 billion dollars annually.

Design/methodology/approach - This paper reviews the existing literature and examines various tools, methods, strategies and techniques used to predict patient no-shows. It identifies the key factors that can help reduce the incidence of no-shows, optimise the scheduling process, and identify the current state of the art. It also describes ways to integrate advanced technologies such as patient management systems, mobile health apps, blockchain for secure data exchange and artificial intelligence (AI) for predictive analytics.

Findings/Originality of the research - Correctly identifying whether scheduled patients will attend or miss their appointments allows clinics to strategically schedule patients, minimising the negative impact of patient no-shows. The number of patient no-shows in healthcare tourism and the constant search for solutions to minimise them demonstrate the difficulty of this problem and the need for further research.

Keywords patient no-show, patient cancellation, health tourism, electronic solution for no-show, no-show statistics

RURAL TOURISM IN THE COUNTRIES OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA: LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to summarize and analyze research on the development of rural tourism in the last 30 years in the countries of former Yugoslavia and the most common topics in each country.

Design/Methodology – To create a systematic literature review, the authors analyzed articles from the national library information systems and Google Scholar. Based on a keyword search and content analysis, 647 research articles were identified as relevant to this study. To interpret secondary data sources, general scientific methods such as deduction and desk analysis were used.

Approach – The paper aims to provide insight into recent trends in rural tourism literature regarding former Yugoslavia's countries. A detailed review of relevant literature identified the predominant interests of authors and dominant research niches. This study focused on the scholarly perspective to study and analyze the rural tourism literature and its link with sustainable development and special forms of rural tourism.

Findings – Countries that were once a part of Yugoslavia have different levels of rural tourism development and the authors research rural tourism from different perspectives. There are many authors that study rural tourism and an emerging number of those that include sustainable development of rural tourism as key.

Originality of the research – This research contributes to the theory by presenting relevant literature on rural tourism in the area of former Yugoslavia. Literature reviews on rural tourism are many, but there are no papers focusing only on former Yugoslav republics or collecting data from the national library information systems and Google Scholar.

Keywords rural tourism, sustainable development, former Yugoslavia, literature review

SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: THE ROLE OF MODERN ANALYTICS IN FINANCIAL PLANNING


Abstract

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Purpose - In order to simultaneously improve production and reduce financial risks in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), effective financial management models are essential. This study explores how sustainability is incorporated into financial management and its role in supporting sustainable business practices.

Methodology - Employing descriptive and deductive research approaches, this research employs secondary data analysis to examine how financial models impact sustainable development. Utilizing scholarly sources, it investigates how environmental and sustainable factors might be included into financial risk modelling.

Findings - The study emphasizes how important it is to include sustainability into financial management in order to maintain long-term profitability and sustainability for businesses. It emphasizes how important financial models are to reaching goals for sustainable development and offers in-depth knowledge of environmentally friendly and sustainable financing techniques.

Contribution of Research - This study adds to the discussion on sustainable business practices by highlighting the need to include sustainability into financial management techniques. It suggests incorporating ecological elements into financial risk modelling in order to correspond with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and supports the use of capital budgeting strategies to support sustainable development initiatives.

Keywords Sustainable Financial Management, Sustainable Development, Modern Data Analytics, ESG Integration

DEVELOPING A COBOTIC MODEL FOR EMPLOYEE AND CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

Abstract

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Purpose – The utilisation of artificial intelligence (AI) and service robots within organisations is perceived as a two-fold transformation. While it streamlines processes, enhances quality, and boosts profits, it also poses a threat to job security for employees, potentially leading to a reluctance to collaborate in service creation, resulting in increased turnover and reduced overall involvement. Additionally, customers may experience discomfort during interactions with service robots, leading to perceptions of poor service quality in certain instances. This study aims to explore the dynamic between robots and employees within the service sector and develop a cobotic (collaborative employee-robot model) that enhances employee and customer engagement.

Design – Three studies will be conducted to address the research questions. Study 1 will focus on research question 1, Study 2 will address research question 2, and Study 3 will address research question 3.

Methodology—Study 1 will employ grounded theory through a qualitative focus group, semi-structured interviews, and participant unstructured observations; Study 2 will use a quantitative online and on-site survey employing a scenario-based approach; and Study 3 will use a quantitative online survey employing a scenario-based approach.

Approach – This study will investigate the employee-robot relationship within the service industry, with a particular emphasis on the hospitality sector. The choice of this focus is prompted by the increasing adoption of robotics in this field and its direct relevance to the researcher's professional background.

Findings – This study's findings will address the research objectives and questions: 1. Explore the relationship between employees and robots - What is the relationship between employees and robots in the service industry? 2. Examine how employee-robot relationships can address employee engagement - How does the robot-employee relationship affect employee engagement? 3. Examine how employee-robot relationships can address customer engagement - How does the robot-employee relationship affect customer engagement?

Originality of the research – The research will contribute to engagement, artificial intelligence, human resources, and Value Co-Creation literature.

Keywords Employee-Robot Collaborative relationship; Employee Engagement; Customer Engagement; Service Robots; Value Co-Creation.

