





CHARTING THE TRAJECTORY OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM: A PRISMA-COMPLIANT SYSTEMATIC REVIEW AND VISUALIZATION OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA

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Abstract

Purpose – Tourism was affected by recent monumental disruptions, making performance management critical for staying afloat and maximizing efficiency and workforce productivity. Thus, the purpose of this study is to synthesize the dominant performance management literature in tourism and provide a critical review and directions for future research.

Methodology/Design/Approach – The authors use the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (PRISMA)-compliant systematic literature review approach paired with visualization of relevant bibliometric data as an additional value.

Findings – The review and the bibliometric analysis are based on 51 articles from peer-reviewed journals and proceedings indexed in the Scopus database. The authors present the annual publishing trends, keyword co-occurrence, and visualization analysis followed by a review of the major themes and avenues for future research, based on the topic hotspots. Research progress and key findings are presented for the identified seven themes. The findings carry implications for practitioners, tourism leaders, and the scientific community.

Originality of the research – After a search query in the Scopus database, it was found that no similar study exists on the topic of interest. The study contributes to existing knowledge accumulation by analysing information relating to performance management practices in tourism.

Keywords Tourism; Performance management; Systematic literature review; Bibliometric data.

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INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has undergone unprecedented disruptions, faced by the two-fold impact of the global pandemic and rapid digitalization processes (Gretzel et al., 2020; Alfaro-Navarro & Andrés-Martínez, 2024). Illustratively, the economic contribution of the industry, which is recognized as the third biggest growing industry, has been reduced by around 80% due to the pandemic (Fatima & Elbanna, 2020). These events have compelled businesses to reassess their strategies for sustainable operation and enhanced performance (Bazargani & Kiliç, 2021). Navigating the contemporary challenges necessitates a robust understanding and implementation of performance management practices, which has often been the domain of the human resource management (HRM) department in tourism organizations (Friedman, 2019).

Understood as a continuous process of performance improvement through setting and monitoring individual, team, and organizational objectives aligned to the entity's strategic direction (Brown et al., 2019), performance management in the tourism context has the crucial role of planning, reviewing, and evaluating the work of a diverse set of professions with the ultimate goal of developing their knowledge, skills, and abilities (Fatima & Elbanna, 2020). In this sense, tourism, as a sector, is highly dynamic, influenced by diverse factors ranging from micro and macroeconomic and social events to technological advancements (Barišić & Cvetkoska, 2020). The appearances of contemporary subtypes like virtual and e-tourism exceedingly make the industry even more complex and captivating to research in the context of scaling up and measuring performance (Hamid et al., 2023; Gretzel et al., 2020).

This underscores the importance of effective HRM practices first (Meira et al., 2023), and then comprehensive performance management in ensuring the resilience and competitiveness of tourism-related businesses (Prayag & Dassanayake, 2023). Hence, in many research contexts, performance management is understood by tourism managers as one of the crucial HRM functions that need to be implemented besides the size and priorities of the organization in question (Costa et al., 2021). Despite the effort to make organizational performance multidimensional, researchers have mostly focused on financial measures (Bento et al., 2017). As a result, tools, like the balanced scorecard (BSC), which considers non-financial parameters, have gained prominence, opening the door for more research development in the field of performance management (Wang et al., 2020).

Moreover, limited quality review and conceptual articles exist on the topic with a search in the Scopus database revealing a gap in the literature about a comprehensive systematic review of performance management activities in the tourism context. In turn, several other efforts for analysing HR-related topics in the tourism research context through bibliometric analyses exist. Researchers investigated the current status of HRM studies in tourism (Pelit & Katircioglu, 2022), work engagement of the tourism workforce (Han et al., 2023), employees and innovation in tourism (Shin & Perdue, 2022), green HRM and employee creativity in tourism (Choudhary & Datta, 2024), and more. This signals the growing interest in exploring the soft people management side in tourism organizations through the lens of a more objective, bird's-eye view bibliometric analysis, which represented an additional motivation for the authors to carry out this research.

Subsequently, this study aims to address the critical need for a comprehensive synthesis of the existing literature on performance management in the context of tourism, offering a thorough review and insights for future research directions. Through this study, we seek to consolidate and critically evaluate the dominant literature in the field, providing a holistic view of current practices and identifying areas for further exploration. Stemming from this, we propose three research questions that will attempt to fulfil said objective:

- RQ1.* What are the publication trends in the literature pertaining to performance management practices in tourism?
- RQ2.* What are the key concepts and hotspots in performance management practices in tourism?
- RQ3.* Which emerging themes signal the future interest of the scientific community regarding performance management practices in tourism?

To achieve the research objective, our methodology employs a systematic literature review approach coupled with the visualization of bibliometric data following the rigorous Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (PRISMA) (Moher et al., 2015). This combination not only enhances the rigor of the review process but also provides valuable insights into the scientific landscape surrounding performance management in tourism. The inclusion of bibliometric analysis, as an added value to the systematic literature review, allowed us to uncover annual publishing trends, identify keyword co-occurrences, and visually map the interconnected themes within the literature.

Drawing from a selection of 51 articles indexed in the Scopus database, our findings present a comprehensive overview of the current state of performance management research in tourism. The synthesis encompasses an exploration of major themes, research progress, and key findings, organized around five identified thematic clusters, including 1) service performance and quality, 2) business analytics in performance management, 3) key performance indicators, 4) developing and rewarding star employees, and 5) performance management in small and medium-sized tourism enterprises. Considering this, the article's implications are twofold, offering practical ones for industry practitioners, and tourism leaders, while also contributing to the ongoing discourse within the scientific community. On one hand, the former can use the accumulated knowledge presented in the article for strategic decision-making in the tourism sector, while on the other hand, researchers can use the pathways for current and future studies to further explore the field of tourism performance management.

In the following paragraphs, the article presents an in-depth description of the methodology and an explanation of searching, retrieving, cleaning, and analysing data. Afterward, we outline the findings from the descriptive analysis, the analysis of keyword co-occurrence and hotspots and trends followed by a review and discussion of the milestone concepts. Eventually, the pathways for future research are identified.

1. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

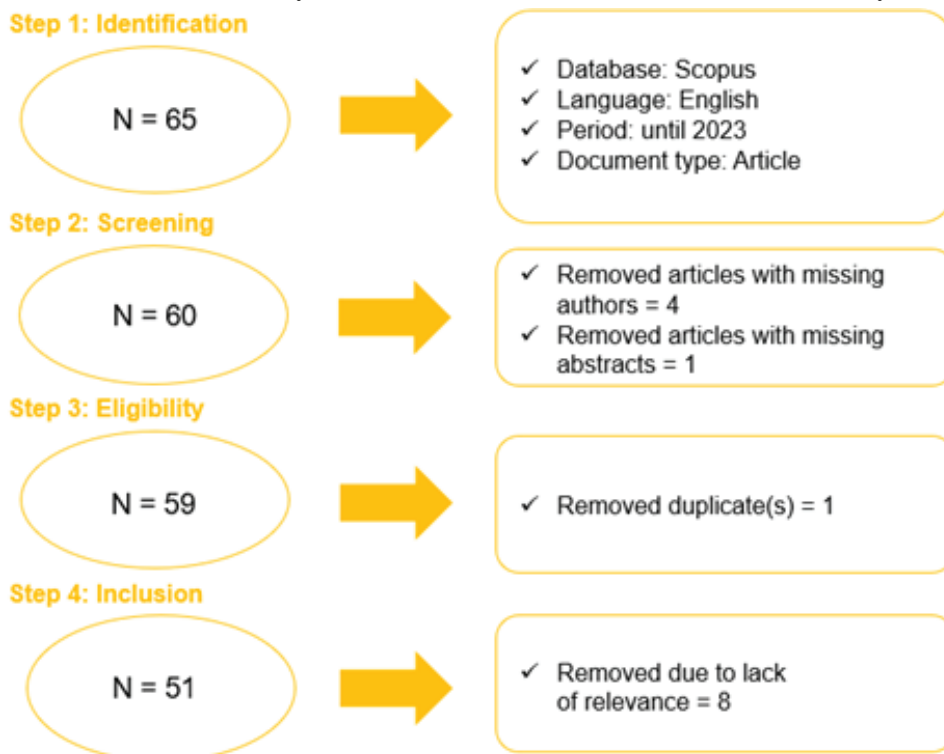
To explore the evolutionary development of performance management practices in human resources departments (HRDs) in tourism organizations, a bibliometric analysis was conducted followed by a comprehensive literature review. This method is deemed suitable for tracing how a certain topic has changed over time and which intellectual relationships and key terms have shaped scientific discourse (Zupic & Čater, 2015).

Even though bibliometric analyses are commonly used for larger sample sizes, review articles can benefit from such analysis when it comes to niche and emerging topics that include performance management in the tourism industry (Roger et al., 2020). This is why, in this article, bibliometric analysis is considered an additional review tool besides the systematic literature review, enabling the authors to present the main findings, trends, and hotspots of the topic.

Moreover, the data for the bibliometric analysis and the systematic literature review was retrieved from the Scopus database, one of the leading databases where global quality research articles are indexed. The search query was based on the keywords "performance management" AND "tourism". The authors decided to include published articles published in scientific peer-reviewed journals and proceedings, which are indexed in Scopus, in the analysis. The articles had to be written in English to be included in the data sample, which all of them were. Regarding the period of publication, the authors considered all articles published until the end of 2023 as this year was the last completely finished at the time of writing. In other words, there was no beginning year indicated in the search period so that the authors could trace the evolutionary development of the field since its very beginnings, which in this case was the late 1990s.

Initially, 65 articles were the output of the identification phase. Each of these articles was accompanied by relevant supporting data, including authors, title, source title, year of publication, abstract, keywords, number of citations, authors' affiliations, and similar. This data was downloaded from the Scopus database on October 3, 2023.

Figure 1: Applied PRISMA Protocol for a Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis



Source: Authors' work, based on Moher et al. (2015)

The authors employed the PRISMA protocol (Moher et al., 2015) for identifying relevant data, screening it, assessing its eligibility, and eventually including it in the sample for analysis and review (Figure 1). To begin with, five articles were removed due to missing values – four due to missing authors and one because of a lack of abstract. After one duplicate article was deleted, the authors moved on to manually evaluate the relevance of each paper. Thus, eight articles were removed since they were deemed irrelevant. These eight articles were not included in the final corpus of articles to be analysed because they tackled performance management in different sectors such as healthcare (Bhatti et al., 2015), or completely did not research performance management practices but measured the performance of marketing or accounting related areas such as marketing assets and destination benchmarking, thus just using performance management and tourism as keywords in the abstract. Eventually, fifty-one articles were included in the analysis and the review.

For conducting a keyword co-occurrence analysis, the authors used the VOSviewer software (version 1.6.20), which finds wide adoption in studies that build and visualize networks and maps based on textual and bibliometric data (Van Eck & Waltman, 2014). The program has been used in a variety of studies about topics pertaining to organizational sciences and management.

2. RESULTS

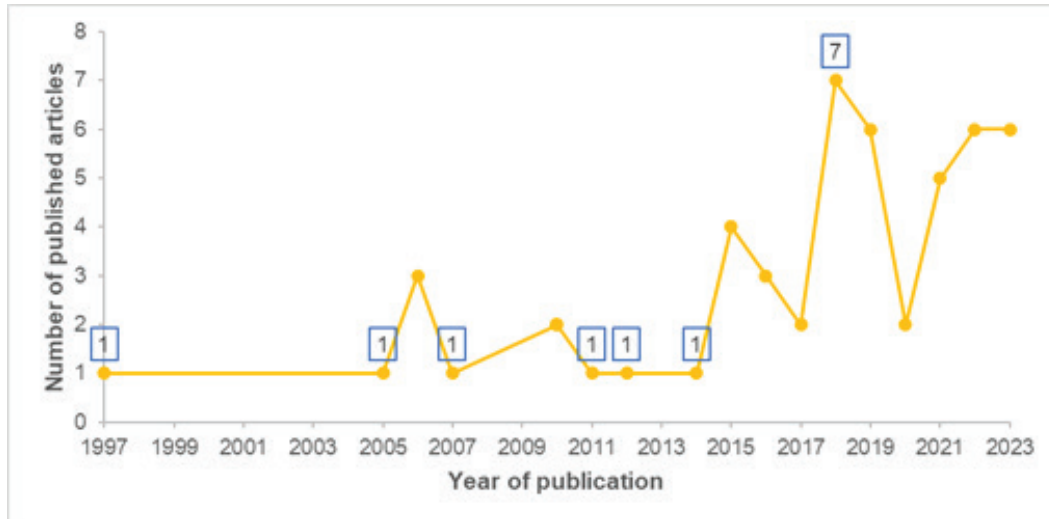
2.1. Descriptive analysis

This section overviews the findings from the descriptive analysis of the bibliometric data detailing performance management practices in tourism. It presents annual trends, most cited authors and articles, top-performing journals, and similar.

Performance management is one of the core HRM functions with its prehistoric roots dating from the eighteenth century (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). Yet, the modern revolution of performance management occurred at the end of the twentieth century from the 1980s and onwards (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). Hence, the annual publishing trends are presented in Figure 2. In the graph, it can be noticed that 1997 saw the publication of the first article describing performance management processes, which can be used in the tourism and hospitality industry. This research dynamic followed in the upcoming years, so until the middle of 2010s, this research niche was enriched with one article a year, some years two articles, while none were published in some years. Yet, the popularity of this particular research context reached a peak in recent years, peaking during the end of the 2010s. This trend continued onward into the 2020s.

In this sense, the last five years saw the publication of more than 25 articles which is as much as the total number of published articles before 2017. Figure 2 highlights the years with the lowest number of publications on the topic of performance management in tourism, i.e., one article as well as the year with the highest number of published articles, which is 2018. This demonstrates the rising interest in studying performance management practices in organizations that work in this service-based sector. Evidently, very few articles on the topic were published in 2020, which can most likely be attributed to the huge disruptive impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 2: Annual Trends of Published Articles



Source: Authors' work

40 peer-reviewed journals and proceedings were identified as sources that have published articles about managing employees' performances in tourism and hospitality. The top journals in this study were included based on a set of criteria such as the highest number of citations for articles on the topic of interest, the highest number of published articles on the topic of interest, the highest new SCImago Journal ranking, and the highest impact factor. Some of this data was retrieved from the Scopus database, while the rest of it was accessed from the web portal SCImago Journal & Country Rank (SCImago, n.d.), which is in the public domain.

Considering this, *the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* was singled out as the journal with the highest number of published articles on the topic, the highest total citations, and the highest impact ratings. An overview of the five most impactful journals is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Top Journals Where Articles about the Use of Performance Management in Tourism Are Published

Journal	Key Metrics
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	Number of citations: 199 Number of published articles: 4 SCImago Journal Rank (SJR 2022): 2.5 Impact Factor (2022 release): 11.1
Benchmarking	Number of citations: 144 Number of published articles: 3 SCImago Journal Rank (SJR 2022): 1.185 Impact Factor (2022 release): 5.6
Tourism Management Perspectives	Number of citations: 35 Number of published articles: 2 SCImago Journal Rank (SJR 2022): 1.92 Impact Factor (2022 release): 8.7
Tourism and Hospitality Research	Number of citations: 32 Number of published articles: 1 SCImago Journal Rank (SJR 2022): 0.795 Impact Factor of the Journal (2021 release): 1.1
Economics and Sociology	Number of citations: 27 Number of published articles: 1 SCImago Journal Rank (SJR 2022): 0.439

Source: Authors' work

Of the 51 included articles, 72.5% (37 articles) have been cited at least once, while 31.4% (16 articles) have more than 10 citations. The only article, which has been cited more than a hundred times is “Performance Measurement in Tourism: A Value Chain Model” by Yilmaz and Bititci (2006), published in the previously identified top journal.

With that being said, most of the journals with the highest citations were published in the aforementioned journals. The first article that mentions the application of performance management as a crucial HRM function in the context of tourism was “Performance Management: Processes, Quality and Teamworking” published by Ingram (1997).

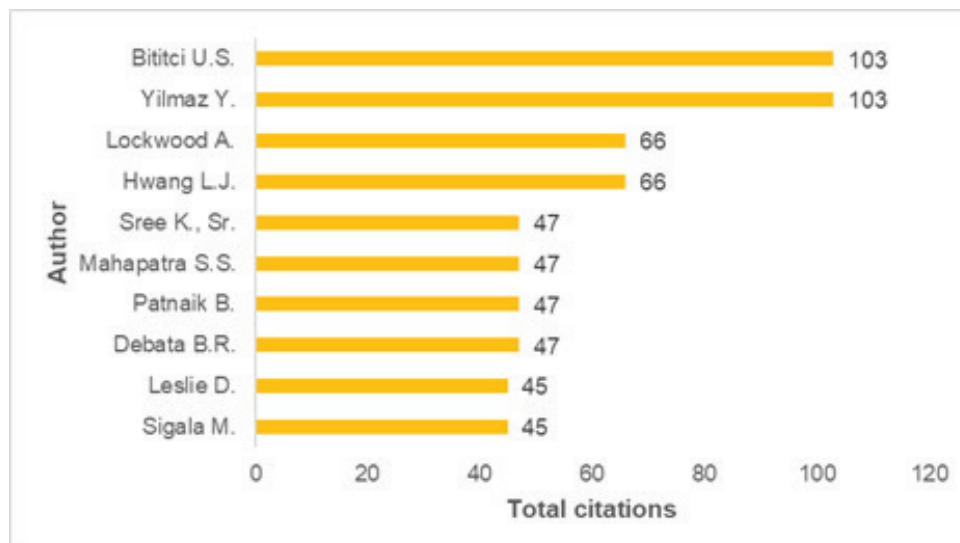
Table 2: **Most-Cited Articles about the Use of Performance Management in Tourism**

Title	Author(s) and Year	Source Title	Citations
Performance measurement in tourism: A value chain model	Yilmaz & Bititci, 2006	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	103
Understanding the challenges of implementing best practices in hospitality and tourism SMEs	Jessica Hwang & Lockwood, 2006	<i>Benchmarking</i>	66
Interrelations of service quality and service loyalty dimensions in medical tourism: A structural equation modeling approach	Debata et al., 2015	<i>Benchmarking</i>	47
Improving efficiency in international tourist hotels in Taipei using a non-radial DEA model	Wu et al., 2011	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	43
Performance measurement and management research in the hospitality and tourism industry	Altin et al., 2018	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	40
Application of business intelligence in the tourism industry: A case study of a local food festival in Thailand	Vajirakachorn & Chongwatpol, 2017	<i>Tourism Management Perspectives</i>	35
Performance Measurement in Small Motels in Australia: (Funded by the Sustainable Tourism Co-operative Research Centre)	Bergin-Seers & Jago, 2007	<i>Tourism and Hospitality Research</i>	32
Key performance indicators in the Kenyan hospitality industry: A managerial perspective	Wadongo et al., 2010	<i>Benchmarking</i>	31

Source: Authors' work

Furthermore, eight articles from the dataset were written by a single author, meaning that the majority of articles analysing the topic of interest have a research team behind them that collaborates from different corners of the world. In this regard, the most-cited authors individually are highlighted in Figure 3. Interestingly, most of the co-authorship teams are made up of individuals who have worked together on a single article and haven't continued researching the topic.

Figure 3: **Most-Cited Authors**



Source: Authors' work

The current research landscape on the use of performance management techniques in tourism has been spread globally to 29 different countries, covering most of the continents. This results in a culturally diverse research context, which still leaves space for application in other lesser-studied regions. To assess the impact of the countries where the co-authorship teams stem from, the article displays the countries with the highest number of articles (Table 3) and the ones with the highest number of total citations attributed to them (Table 4).

Table 3: Countries with the Most Productive Authors on the Topic

Country	Number of Articles
United Kingdom	7
Malaysia	7
Thailand	6
China	5
Greece	4

Source: Authors' work

Table 4: Countries with the Most Cited Authors

Country	Total Citations
United Kingdom	283
Turkey	104
China	86
Hong Kong	84
Greece	61

Source: Authors' work

Evidently, the ranking of the countries varies between the total number of published articles and citations. Namely, only the United Kingdom has retained its spot, while the rest of the countries have changed places. For example, countries like Hong Kong and Turkey build their impact with more citations of fewer published articles. Also, the countries with the most productive authors are from Asia and Europe.

In this sense, the authors developed a country co-authorship map (Figure 4). The authors who research performance management in the tourism context mostly collaborate within their own cluster such as authors from Greece with their peers from Italy or authors from the United States with their Chinese counterparts. Yet, some cross-cluster collaborations are evident, too. To illustrate, Wadongo et al., (2010) analysed the key performance indicators in Kenya's hospitality industry while the research team was composed of authors from the United Kingdom, Romania, and Kenya.

Figure 4: Country Co-Authorship Map



Source: Authors' work

In the next section, the article presents the cluster-by-cluster analysis, which is foundational for the systematic literature review of the topic of interest.

2.2. Keyword co-occurrence analysis

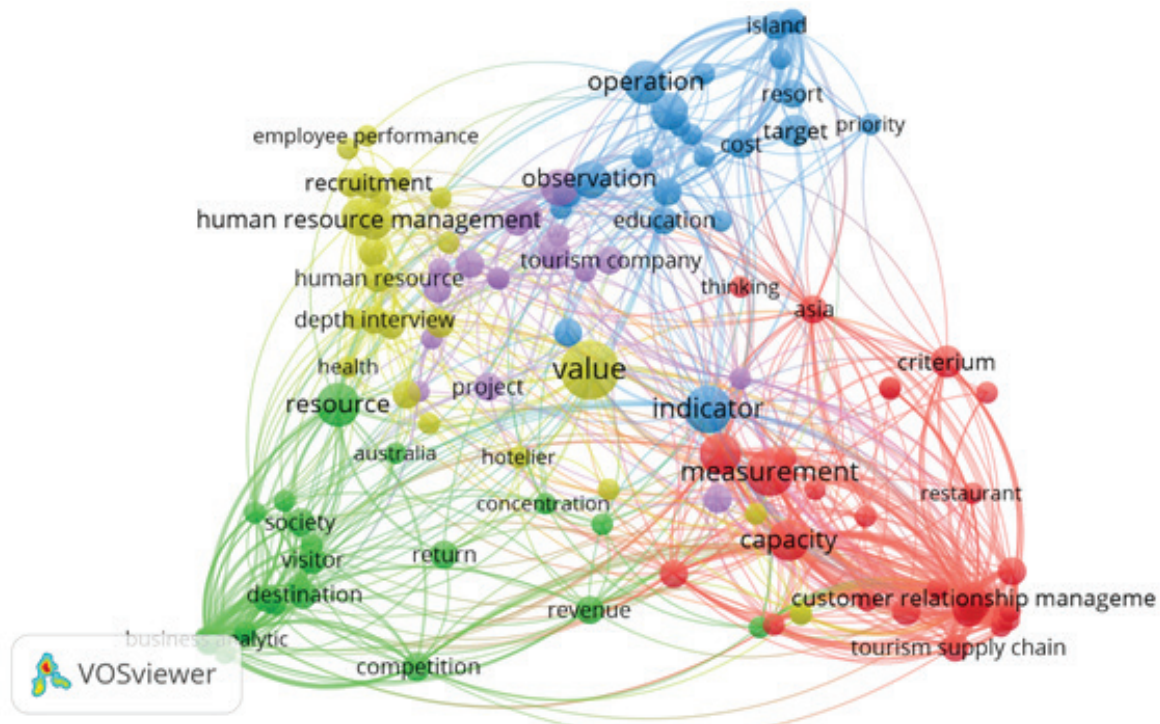
As one of the essential bibliometric techniques, keyword co-occurrence or co-word analysis is utilized for investigating the content of the publications (Bunjak et al., 2022). Hence, it is the single bibliometric method that constructs a measure for similarity among the content by using the actual content in the publications (Zupic & Čater, 2015). So, the keywords that appear often and are co-occurring among the analysed publications can be considered good indicators for establishing a relationship with a certain topic (Bunjak et al., 2022). In other words, if there are more publications in which certain two keywords appear, the relation between the two concepts in question described by the two keywords is stronger and the keywords appear closely on a network map.

Based on the identified articles, the authors created a network of keyword co-occurrence (Figure 5), using VOSviewer. Network maps like this one help with gaining new insight into the linked content as the keywords represent the core of the research and the focus of the researchers, as they carefully select them (Oraee et al., 2017). On the map, the used method uses the important words or keywords, which Scopus extracts from the title, abstract, and author keywords for establishing connections, thus outlining the topic's inherent intellectual structure (Ülker et al., 2023). Hence, the keyword co-occurrence analysis sheds light on the frequency of the mentioned keywords and the strength of the relationships between the different fields.

After conducting abstract mining, a total of 1594 items were identified, out of which 281 appeared at least twice, thus meeting the threshold. Relevance scores were calculated for all terms, selecting 60% of the most relevant items for the keyword co-occurrence analysis as a rule of thumb in this type of analysis. This meant that 169 items were selected which then underwent a manual relevancy check.

As a result, 123 items or keywords were the basis of the analysis, separated into five clusters. The irrelevant terms, which were removed are provided in the Appendix. With 1331 links between these items, the total link strength was 1625. The keyword "value" appears the most with 12 occurrences (total link strength = 82), followed by other keywords like "measurement" (occurrences = 8, total link strength = 68), "indicator" (occurrences = 8, total link strength = 56), "resource" (occurrences = 7, total link strength = 46), "operation" (occurrences = 7, total link strength = 36), and similar.

Figure 5: Network Visualization Map of Most Frequently Occurring Keywords



Source: Authors' work

Cluster 1 (red) "Service performance and quality" encompasses 30 keywords with the terms "measurement" (total link strength = 68) and "capacity" (total link strength = 83) appearing eight and six times respectively. These keywords were linked with similar in this area including "business performance", "customer relationship management", "resource management", "service performance management", "supplier relationship management", "tourism supply chain", and similar. One of the heavily researched contexts in this cluster is Asia, and Thailand in particular, while structural equation modelling appears as one of the most dominant methodologies for analysing the use of performance management.

Prima facie, the cluster expresses the application of performance management practices for a variety of stakeholders as crucial human resources and other aspects that contribute to the overall service quality. Palang and Tippayawong (2016) developed a tourism supply chain performance management model that considers several dimensions such as relationships with suppliers and customers, demand management, order process management, service performance and capacity management, IT management, tour finance supply chain, hierarchical structure, and similar. Considering the uniqueness of the industry where the end product is the tourists' personal satisfaction and experiences, the performance management systems should consider comprehensive aspects from managing relationships and service quality to the tour finance supply chain (Lim & Ok, 2021). The latter means that suppliers in the industry can utilize tech-based or tool-based initiatives and financial processes that lower the costs and improve efficiency such as early invoices to the customers, but also, more broadly, tourism financial management that enables fast, hassle-free transactions between all stakeholders in the tourism supply chain (Palang & Tippayawong, 2016). Additionally, Cheunkamon et al. (2023) built upon this research and found that sustainability management, too, should be evaluated as it impacts the supply chain of tourism organizations.

Cluster 2 (green) "Business analytics in performance management" comprises 26 distinct terms. The keywords "resource" (total link strength = 46) leads the pack with seven occurrences, and it is closely connected to related keywords such as "local community", "competitive advantage", "data envelopment analysis (DEA)", "business analytic", "tourism development", and others. These topics have been researched in the Australian context with the use the data envelopment analysis.

As a non-parametric type of analysis, it is widely used in contemporary studies to assess the efficiency and performance of so-called decision-making units, thus becoming a vital tool for performance management in the tourism sector (Cvetkoska et al., 2023). The articles in the cluster also touched upon the performance of destination management organizations (DMOs), which can increase the rates of return of local tourists and minimize the instability with the help of assessing best-performing strategies thanks to suitable performance management (Botti et al., 2012). Klepers and Ābols (2024) also reaffirmed the need for increasing the performance of DMOs with the help of business analytics, data visualizations, geographic information system database management, and performance management of tourism development. Their proposed framework can help DMO tourism specialists gain new insights, upskill them, and boost their competitive advantage (Klepers & Ābols, 2024).

Cluster 3 (blue) "Key performance indicators" brings together 25 keywords out of which "indicator" (total link strength = 56), "operation" (total link strength = 36), and "target" (total link strength = 21) appear eight, seven, and four times respectively. In turn, they are connected with other keywords including "beach resort", "cost", "key performance indicator", "production", "smart business arrangement", "education", "government", and others. While quantitative research is present, this cluster is characterized by qualitative methods such as interviews to acquire new knowledge on the topic. Indonesia and tourist resorts are mentioned as a dominant research context for these keywords.

Researchers in the third cluster have grappled with the debate of which and how many performance indicators should be used for assessing the progress of the business processes and the employees themselves. When it comes to employees in motels, Bergin-Seers and Jago (2007) consider both financial and non-financial aspects including customer service, levels of efficiency and accuracy, as well as the skills and demonstrated knowledge of the employees. Researchers have championed the use of tools like the balanced scorecard for hotels and other types of organizations working in the tourism and hospitality sector for streamlining operations, curbing costs, and improving the development and strategic direction of human resources and the organizations in general (Meilani & Anugrah, 2015).

Cluster 4 (yellow) "Developing and rewarding star employees" connects 25 terms, including some highlight ones like "value" (occurrences = 12, total link strength = 82), "training" (occurrences = 5, total link strength = 35), "human resource management" (occurrences = 5, total link strength = 27), and similar. Other notable keywords in the cluster are "award", "health system", "monitoring", "recruitment", "training", and others. The research methodologies reflect this diversity of themes as both quantitative methodologies like exploratory factor analyses and qualitative data collection approaches like in-depth interviews are used.

The research landscape in this cluster points to a recent shift in the focus of human resource professionals where employees are carefully recruited, selected, and monitored – often using contemporary 4.0 technologies – to be rewarded and promoted (Kankaew et al., 2023). Performance management plays a crucial role in identifying the employees that bring the most value to the organization and those that HRDs should focus on developing, thus affecting enterprise competitiveness, the workforce's attitudes and enthusiasm at work, and the use and capacities of tourism HRM (Wei, 2022). It was found that coping competencies, social support, and certain personality traits like conscientiousness and agreeableness can act as significant antecedents to said employee performance (Shahreki et al., 2021; Arubayi & Ejeta, 2022). So, it is up to human resource professionals to utilize such determinants and shape the workforce's performance. This can be done through transformational leadership practiced by the managers, which has even more impactful effects on employees with lower self-efficacy (Kusumah et al., 2021). Performance management practices have gained a new meaning with the spread of the COVID-19 crisis and the mitigation of its negative effects. To illustrate, studies have identified this particular HRM function as key to providing the needed service quality that drives tourism recovery forward (Ngoc Su et al., 2021).

Cluster 5 (violet) "Performance management in small and medium-sized tourism enterprises" factors in 17 keywords. "SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises)" (occurrences = 5, total link strength) and "promotion" (occurrences = 4, total link

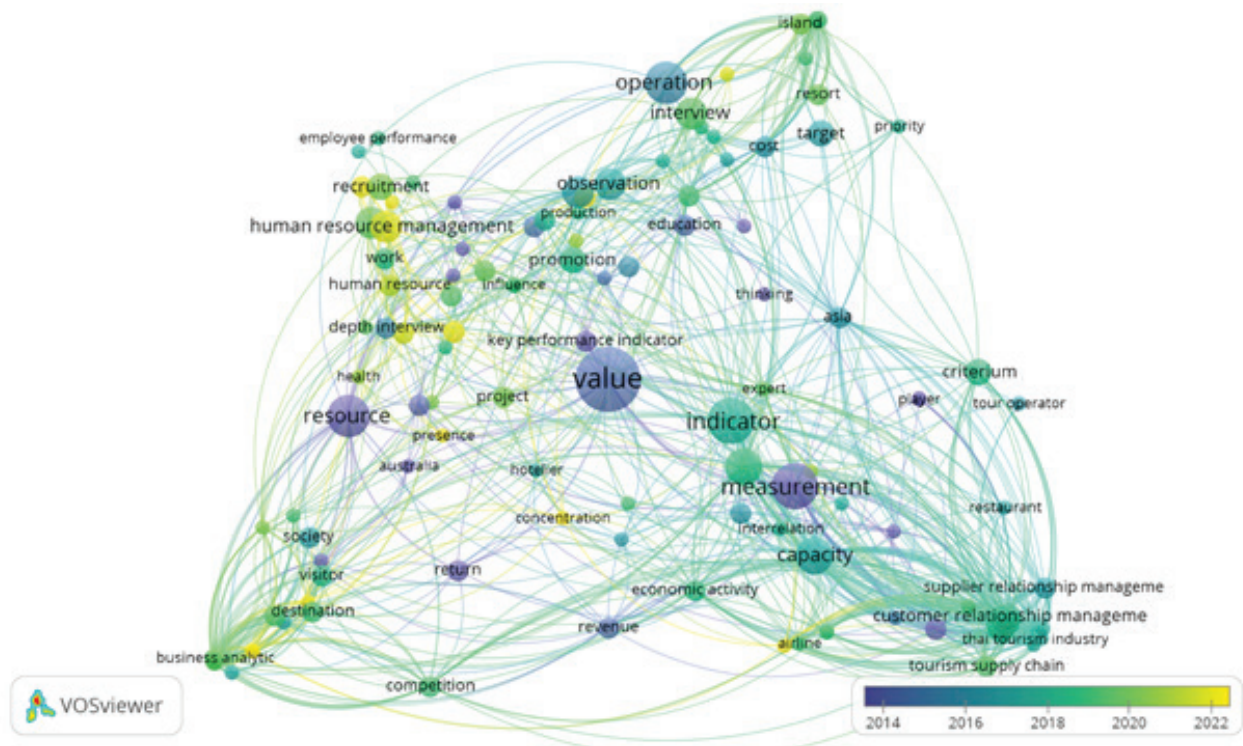
strength = 35) dominate the academic discourse and they are in turn linked with other notable terms like “comprehensive performance management system”, “innovation”, and “leadership”. Furthermore, the studies in the cluster have mainly presented new conceptual models as well as analyses using structural equation modelling.

Illustratively, performance management is found to be one of the key capabilities for hospitality and tourism in small and medium-sized enterprises (Jessica Hwang & Lockwood, 2006). Also, it was found that for many small tourism businesses, performance management activities are carried out naturally and intrinsically, while experienced owners and managers understand that a holistic, planned, and strategic approach towards performance management, which is learned formally and through trial and error, is needed (Bergin-Seers & Jago, 2007).

2.3. Research trends and hotspots

The research trends that prevailed in the academic discourse in the past five years are demonstrated through the overlay visualization map (Figure 6). The circles in yellow and lighter colours signify that these keywords appear most frequently in the newest studies.

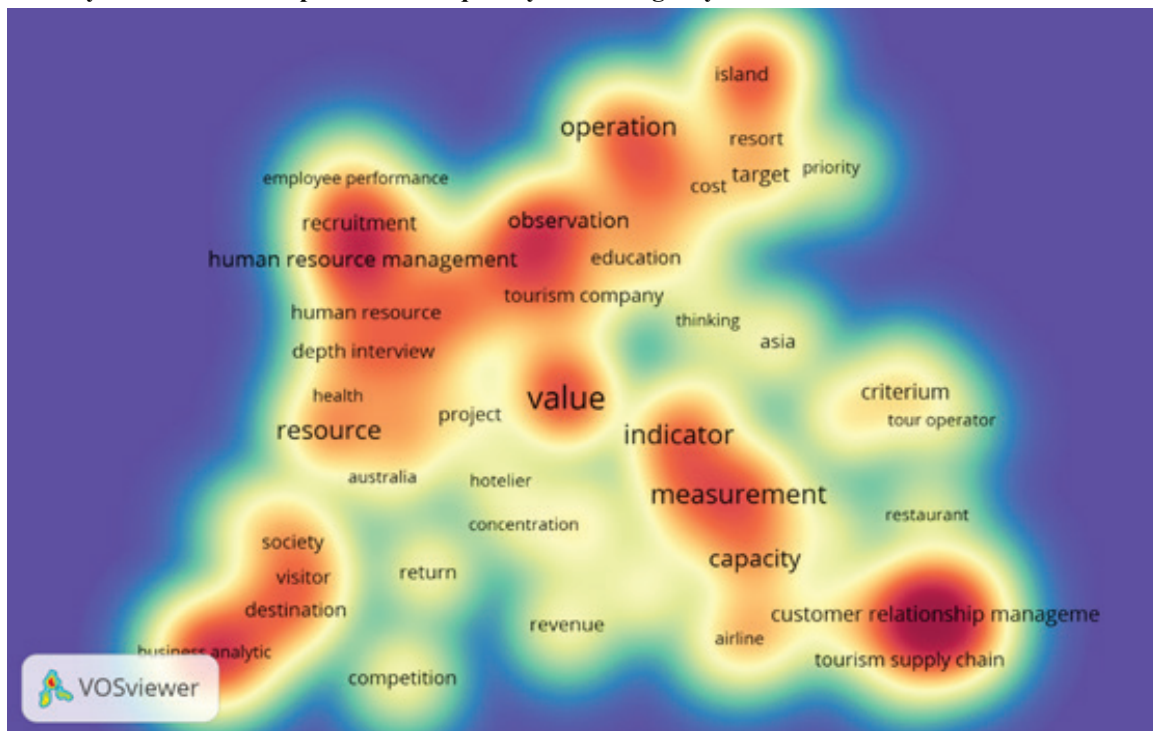
Figure 6: Overlay Visualization Map of Most Frequently Occurring Keywords



Source: Authors' work

Thus, some of the keywords that occur more frequently from 2020 onward include “technology”, “business analytic”, “work environment”, “domestic tourist”, “project”, “health”, “leadership”, “service quality”, and similar. Related to that, researchers have analysed the impact of COVID-19, the lockdown effects, and the flexible working arrangements on performance management in tourism organizations (Liu-Lastres et al., 2023). Themes of achieving greater sustainability and introducing more green practices in HR’s performance management activities through integrated smart systems have also been a priority in recent studies (Petcu et al., 2021). Sustainable performance appraisal can be elevated and mediated with the adoption of some new technologies like artificial intelligence (Palrão et al., 2023) and new methodologies like DEA, big data analytics, and fuzzy data mining (Wan-Chik & binti Hasbullah, 2022).

Figure 7: Density Visualization Map of Most Frequently Occurring Keywords



Source: Authors' work

Similar to the network visualization map, the density visualization map (Figure 7) points out the most-occurring key terms that researchers have analysed so far. The redder the circle is the more studies have focused on the term of interest. While some hotspots like “customer relationship management”, “value”, “recruitment”, “observation”, and “measurement” are often found in published literature, evidently, topics concerning the impact of performance management on revenue and competition, the criterium for performance appraisals, performance management of hoteliers and restaurant employees leave more space for further exploration.

3. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN TOURISM

This segment of the study is dedicated to a review of the findings of the most-cited articles as well as a thematic review of the most frequently occurring topics. In that sense, researchers have argued that tourism and managing the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations in the sector should be viewed from a value chain management perspective (Yılmaz & Bititci, 2006). Yılmaz and Bititci (2006) in their article developed a tourism value chain model for measuring and managing performance that can enable all the stakeholders, including the employees, to communicate and collaborate in a structured way that brings value to the customer from the first stage of win order to post-delivery support.

So, even though performance management can be considered a crucial capability for developing best practices in tourism organizations, many organizations in the sector face certain barriers including fluctuations in demand, limited capacities, and resources, which is a breeding ground for turbulences in tourism operations (Jessica Hwang & Lockwood, 2006). The size of the business can also be a considerable factor (Domi et al., 2019). Further barriers can be imposed by the employees themselves, in terms of how well they tend to accept a performance management system. Namely, a study on frontline hotel employees demonstrated that members of the hotel management should make sure that the performance appraisals are perceived as acceptable by the employees to diminish sabotage and boost innovative behaviours (Ghazi et al., 2023).

The overall business results have also relied on quality performance management in medical tourism (Debata et al., 2015) and international cultural tourism (Leslie & Sigala, 2005). To measure performance, the non-radial data envelopment analysis (DEA) has been found useful for improving efficiency by factoring in shifts in the outputs with non-proportional changes unlike more traditional methods (Wu et al., 2011). In this sense, performance management system models in tourism are grounded in a variety of internal indicators such as position analysis, salary design, and performance evaluation (Jingjiang, 2021) or external ones related to the institution, socio-economic situation, culture, and environment (Giannoukou & Beneki, 2018). This means that human resource professionals and managers can consider a wide range of inputs and outputs to assess the performance of different units, aspects, or teams.

Table 5: Major Themes, Findings, and Concepts

Theme	Source(s)	Main Findings and Concepts
Value chain-oriented performance management in tourism and supply chain performance management	Yilmaz & Bititci, 2006; Palang & Tippayawong, 2019; Zailani et al., 2015; Cheunkamon et al., 2023; Palang & Tippayawong, 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a framework for performance measurement and management based on a value chain, • Managing resources, demand, customer and supplier relationships, information technology management, order process management, and service performance management affect tourism organizations' profitability and service quality perception.
Performance management in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)	Hwang & Lockwood, 2006; Bergin-Seers & Jago, 2007; Domi et al., 2019; Alhamawndi & Almahmoud, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management is a key capability for the application of best practices in tourism and hospitality small and medium-sized companies, • Owners and managers of better-performing, small tourism organizations use a balanced approach for assessing performance with few key indicators and frequent measurements, • Innovativeness impacts SMEs' performance by stimulating innovation behaviour in terms of increased use of technology and collaboration, • Business incubators can play an important role in promoting entrepreneurial tourism SMEs and boosting their performance through increasing capacities of human resources among other things.
Use of data envelopment analysis (DEA) for measuring performance	Wu et al., 2011; Wei, 2022; Bampatsou et al., 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEA models can present different benchmarks from various angles and different performance assessments for hotels to boost their efficiency, • Fuzzy data mining can uncover talent patterns and schemes within tourism organizations, conduct cluster analysis on employees, custom-tailor performance appraisals, help decision-makers with talent planning and succession, and recommend countermeasures and suggestions.
Relying on business intelligence in performance management	Vajirakachorn & Chongwatpol, 2017; Wan-Chik & Hasbullah, 2022; Klepers & Ābols, 2024; Palrão et al., 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance management can be made swifter, more automated, and more accurate with a business intelligence framework based on business performance management, business analytics, and visualization and management of databases, • Tourism students with positive attitudes towards novelty and performance management can be more willing to work in a partial-robot environment.
Definition of key performance indicators	Wadongo et al., 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism organizations should invest in comprehensive performance management systems that will consider both financial and non-financial performance indicators.
Focus on sustainability and green HRM practices in performance management	Islam et al., 2023; Giannoukou & Beneki, 2018; Mustapha & Awang, 2018; Karagkouni & Dimitriou, 2022; Petcu et al., 2021;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green pay and rewards because of performance management can reduce turnover intentions of millennial employees, • Green performance management practices have elevated the balanced scorecard into a sustainable balanced scorecard (SBSC) combining the environmental, institutional, sociocultural, and economic aspects, • An integrated quality-performance-social responsibility system can be implemented for assessing both sustainable and workforce performance so that it can be enhanced with new policies and multisector engagement.
Performance management in times of crisis and building employee resilience	Nxumalo et al., 2018; Fatima & Elbanna, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context, organizational culture, leadership, and the level of bureaucracy can impact the implementation of performance assessment as part of a performance management system during a period of organizational change, • Health and safety can be an additional perspective in the balanced scorecard tool for performance management.

Source: Authors' work

Table 5 presents the major themes and findings that have left an impact on the scientific niche exploring performance management practices in tourism. Although some of these are considered well-established topics, it is expected that researchers will continue analysing some of these in the future. The latter are discussed in the segment for identification of paths for future research.

4. GENERAL DISCUSSION

As a one-of-a-kind industry that depends on delivering the utmost quality, services, and experiences to people, the research context of the tourism industry as a unit of analysis for performance management practices gains considerable interest. Not only scholars, but HRM professionals, employers, and members of the workforce increasingly focus on how everyone can be involved in performance appraisals as the quality of the service in the industry depends on a multitude of stakeholders (Chand & Ranga, 2018). To tackle this, this article positions performance management in tourism organizations as a vital, participatory activity and provides an objective and wholesome overview of the published literature in the particular research niche. Through the use of country co-authorship and keyword co-occurrence bibliometric techniques, the authors could tap into the evolutionary development and key research hotspots that define performance management in tourism.

4.1. Contributions and implications

The article highlights bibliometric analysis followed by a systematic literature review to map out the evolution and trends in performance management practices in the tourism industry. Besides comprehensive mapping, another contribution is linked with the identification of influential works and authors by pointing out the most cited ones, which can help other researchers with understanding the foundational literature and prominent contributors as well as with initiating collaborations and ideating for future research studies. Moreover, by analysing co-authorship networks, the article uncovers major academic and geographical hubs of research in performance management in the sector of interest. By revealing underexplored areas and potential research gaps, the article helps with suggesting future research directions.

In this sense, managers of tourism enterprises can use performance management to ensure their organizations meet the service quality, which is required (Hewagama et al., 2019). For this to be implemented, researchers investigating the field have signalled the importance of key performance indicators for measurement (Varelas & Tsoupros, 2024). These often include both financial and non-financial parameters to factor in the entirety of the tourism supply chain (Wei, 2022). Considering this, human resource professionals and employers are often tasked with making sense of the data and comparing it with the said indicators, which is why business analytics in tourism performance management is a large area of the research body (Enad Al-Qaralleh & Atan, 2022). The findings in the form of accumulated knowledge are relevant for both SMEs and larger organizations, with the former even dominating many tourism sectors around the world (Hermawati, 2020).

4.2. Recommendations for future research

A vital part of this study's objective was to highlight the current trends, challenges, and opportunities for future research endeavours. As a result, it presents some directions on how performance management practices can evolve and further develop in the industry of interest to boost organizational productivity and employee satisfaction. Considering that, the research results attempt to provide a contribution to the decision-making processes of tourism business leaders, managers, human resource professionals, and the wider scientific community.

Firstly, researchers can further conduct an in-depth analysis of how emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning, and data analytics can be integrated into performance management systems in tourism organizations (Seal & Gupta, 2024). This can involve the inspection of smart systems for real-time performance monitoring, personalized employee experience, predictive analytics for forecasting demand, and similar. Additionally, further studies can detect and clarify challenges related to adopting this type of technology, as well as key antecedents (Palrão et al., 2023).

Secondly, future studies can investigate how performance management frameworks can be adapted to include and measure more sustainability metrics in the tourism industry, motivated by the willingness to combat social, economic, and environmental destructive effects (Hristov et al., 2019). In this sense, researchers can analyse the effect of certain green human resource management practices in performance management on the employees' satisfaction and intention to leave the organization, the employer branding, and similar with mediating variables like trust in the management, tenure, used technologies, and so on (Islam et al., 2023). On the other hand, this can easily translate into unfair marketing and communication tricks of greenwashing if green practices are not implemented the right way (Li et al., 2022).

Thirdly, ways for performance management systems to facilitate cooperation between sectors within the tourism industry can be another topic of interest for future studies. As a multi-faceted industry that brings together various aspects like transportation, accommodation, attractions, food and beverages, destination marketing, and similar, performance metrics that can be integrated into the system can span multiple facets and reflect this diversification at the firm level as well as country level or regional level (Fong et al., 2021).

Fourthly, on this note, the research landscape has shown the growing importance of cross-cultural and global performance management. This might include examining the impact of cultural differences on performance metrics and developing strategies for managing performance in diverse international settings (Madera et al., 2023). Additionally, research on global performance management in tourism can focus on the extent of local customization vis-à-vis global standardization.

With this in mind, the importance of cultural sensitivity and respect for diversity, equity, and inclusion practices is apparent in many performance management studies, which can spill over into the mainstream literature concerning the tourism industry. Flexible working arrangements for some job positions in the industry like the model of smart work (Choi et al., 2022) may additionally make performance management processes more complex as these arrangements gain more ground.

4.3. Limitations and delimitations of the research

This study doesn't come free of some limitations, which can act as suggestions for future studies that can potentially mitigate them. As with all systematic literature reviews, a dose of subjectivity and bias may exist in elaborating the findings and the themes of existing literature per the authors' assessment. In this sense, the creation of the clusters is not based on exact science, especially when it comes to defining the threshold of minimal keywords and published articles for consideration.

Some limitations can be attributed to the citation rates. For one, bibliometric analyses cannot uncover the reasons why a certain article was cited. Thus, a frequently cited article is regarded as impactful with increasing visibility, which does not necessarily signify a good quality publication (Wallin, 2005). This leads to the claim that newer articles cannot keep up with the older ones because they did not have time to build up citations even though they may be equally quality (Bunjak et al., 2022). Self-citations can play a role in the total citations, too.

Moreover, the dataset of the article is adequate for a review of this type, yet it may be deemed smaller in scope for a sole bibliometric analysis. Still, for emerging research topics, smaller sample sizes are recommended (Rogers et al., 2020). Being aware of this, the study includes the visualization of bibliometric data in an attempt to add more value to the review of literature.

In this regard, the data of the articles was retrieved from the Scopus database, which indexes some of the highest quality global research. Other studies can pair this database with other ones like Google Scholar, IEEE, and similar.

CONCLUSION

With this study, we set out to fulfil the research objective of synthesizing the dominant performance management literature in tourism, providing a critical review, and directions for future research by answering three distinct research questions. Through a PRISMA-compliant systematic literature review approach paired with bibliometric analysis, we investigate the annual publishing trends and findings from keyword co-occurrence and visualization analysis. This served as a basis for reviewing the literature and categorizing the main advances into seven significant themes. Additionally, we present five directions for future research, based on the topic hotspots.

The results pointed out that: 1) since the first articles on the topic in 1997, over 25 articles were published in the last five years, which is as much as the total number of published articles before 2017; 2) the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* has the highest number of published articles on the topic, the most citations, and the highest impact ratings, while the article titled "Performance measurement in tourism: A value chain model" by Yilmaz and Bititci (2006) was the most cited one; 3) British authors have been both the most productive and most cited while authors from China, Turkey, Greece, Malaysia are also leading the pack; 4) the keywords which appeared most frequently in the scientific discourse about performance management practices in tourism organizations include "value", "measurement", "indicator", "resource", "operation", and similar; 5) in recent years, researchers have mostly focused on analysing "technology", "business analytic", "work environment", "domestic tourist", "health", "leadership", "service quality", and more; 6) the dominant literature is mostly separated into articles exploring service performance and quality, business analytics in performance management, key performance indicators, developing and rewarding star employees, performance management in small and medium-sized tourism enterprises, and sustainability focus and introduction of green HRM in tourism.

Considering this, the findings have potential implications for a variety of stakeholders including practitioners, managers/human resource professionals in tourism organizations, and the scientific community. Moreover, the former two categories can draw on the research synthesis for developing strategies for assessing and evaluating the performance of the tourism workforce in a more comprehensive, fair, transparent, and efficient manner. The latter, on the other hand, are interested in further advancing the research niche and coming up with new questions and hypotheses for analysing how tourism organizations can better develop their key resources – the employees. In this sense, this study is one of the first systematic literature reviews on the topic of interest.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Excluded Keywords from Bibliometric Analysis

actor; addition; adoption; amos; attention; author; configuration; descriptive; difference; effort; end; evidence; example; extent; facility; firm; form; future; future research; implementation; important role; insight; joint effort; knowledge; light; link; location; methodological approach; outcome; output; past; person; questionnaire; range; research limitation; room; sample; scale; sector; significant factor; significant impact; strength; tier; topic; type.