A systematic literature review of tourism demand and future research agenda

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Abstract: The aim of this research is to provide a comprehensive understanding of tourism demand, its various trends, factors, and highlight future research directions. The research method used is the systematic literature review (SLR), involves analyzing existing studies to identify patterns and gaps in understanding tourism demand. The study also highlights the growing trends of experiential and immersive travel, and the emergence of smart tourism. Various economic indicators, such as income levels, exchange rates, and overall economic stability, significantly influence tourism demand. The demographic characteristics, social trends, cultural values, and the influence of social media as well play a role in shaping tourism demand. Factors related to the environment, including climate change, sustainability concerns, and the promotion of ecotourism, have an impact on tourism choices. Noticeably, the use of technology, such as online platforms and emerging technologies, affects tourism demand and shapes the overall tourist experience. The research identifies several research gaps and proposes future directions, including the study of sustainable tourism practices, community-centered tourism, and the interplay between tourism demand and sustainable development. Overall, this research provides valuable insights for practitioners and academics in the tourism industry.

Keywords: tourism demand, tourism demand factors, tourism industry, tourism demand forecasting

JEL Classification: Q01; Q53; Q57

1 Introduction

Tourism is a dynamic and continuously evolving industry that has influenced global economies in a significant way due to widespread traveling by millions and billions of people every year. In modern days, the ease of traveling associated with better facilities related to infrastructural and technological advancements, and changing consumer preferences - the concept of tourism demand has become pivotal for various entities including destinations themselves and policymakers and businesses involved with it. The dynamics of tourism demand are complex, influenced by a wide range of factors spanning from economic, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and political aspects. These factors interact and shape the behaviors and motivations of travelers, determining their preferences, destination choices, and travel patterns.

Moreover, tourism demand makes enormous impacts across all stakeholders within the travel sector. Economic growth stimulation, creation of job opportunities and infrastructural development all depend massively upon steady influxes of tourist visits. Different businesses in the hospitality industry, such as hotels, tour operators, and restaurants, rely strongly on encouraging and catering to the demands related to their respective services. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the complexities and interdependencies that shape tourism demand is essential for industry professionals, policymakers, and academics.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of tourism demand, the systematic literature review (SLR) will provide insight on the complexities and interdependencies that shape the demand for travel and tourism experiences by looking at a wide variety of elements affecting tourism demand, including economic, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and political concerns. The increasing interest and research focused on tourism and hotel demand modelling and forecasting indicate the significance of understanding tourism demand. Moreover, the adoption of technology, including online platforms and mobile applications, have had a substantial impact on shaping tourism demand. These trends and factors provide valuable insights into the ever-evolving field of understanding tourism demand and can guide future research and decision-making in the tourism industry.

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The results of this SLR will have an impact on policymakers, practitioners in the sector, and academics. Academically, it will solidify the current understanding of tourism demand and point out areas that require more study. The review will provide insightful information to industry professionals on the variables affecting visitor behaviour, allowing them to create efficient marketing plans, initiatives for destination branding, and infrastructure planning. A deeper comprehension of the socioeconomic and environmental effects of tourism demand will help policymakers make wise decisions for the development of a sustainable tourism industry.

There is a noticeable increase in interest and research focused on tourism and hotel demand modeling and forecasting, evident from the rising number of published studies in this field. The adoption of technology, including online platforms and mobile applications, has had a significant impact on shaping tourism demand. These trends and factors provide valuable insights into the ever-evolving field of understanding tourism demand and can guide future research and decision-making in the tourism industry.

In this paper, we begin by introducing the concept of tourism demand, research questions and objectives for this systematic literature review, aiming to uncover trends, factors, and future directions in tourism demand. To ensure a rigorous approach, we provide insights into our methodology, including search techniques and the selection process, while also utilizing the PRISMA framework for a comprehensive review. In section three we analyze trends in tourism demand, highlighting global and regional patterns, factors that shape demand, the impact of technology on travel preferences, and the allure of different destinations. Section four discusses the impact of tourism. Finally, we conclude by summarizing our key findings and their implications for academia, industry, and policy-making. We also identify research gaps and propose future directions to advance our understanding of tourism demand in a rapidly evolving landscape.

1.2 Tourism Demand: Concepts and Measurements

Understanding tourism demand is crucial for the travel and tourism industry. Tourism demand can be seen as the collective interest of individuals or groups to engage in travel activities and explore various destinations. It encompasses the overall demand for travel experiences and the motivation to visit different places. When we talk about tourism demand, we consider factors such as the number of visitors, their characteristics, motivations, and behaviors.

Tourism demand can take on different forms based on the purpose, duration, and frequency of travel. For example, leisure tourism demand focuses on individuals seeking recreational experiences, while business tourism demand is driven by work-related travel. There are also other types of tourism demand, including cultural tourism, adventure tourism, and medical tourism. Internet big data has revolutionized tourism demand forecasting, and now the real-time and high-frequency forecasting allows adjustments in pricing and staff scheduling. (Li et al., 2020)

1.3 Research Question and Objectives

The primary research question that guided this systematic literature review on tourism demand is: "What are the trends, factors, and future directions in understanding tourism demand?"

The specific objectives of this review are as follows:

1. Identify the trends in tourism demand over time, including global and regional patterns.

2. Explore the various factors that influence tourism demand, encompassing economic, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and political aspects.

3. Identify research gaps and suggest potential avenues for future research in the field of tourism demand.

2 Methods

To ensure a systematic and comprehensive approach, a rigorous methodology was employed. This section outlines the research question and objectives, inclusion and exclusion criteria, search strategy and selection process, as well as the data extraction and analysis approach.

2.1 Search Techniques and the Selection Procedure

For this systematic review, relevant material was found using a thorough search technique. Keywords and controlled vocabulary words associated with "tourism demand" were combined. To find pertinent studies, searches were made in databases like Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and PubMed. Numerous potential publications were found during the initial search; these were then filtered based on their titles and abstracts. The chosen studies were then subjected to a full-text evaluation to determine their appropriateness for inclusion. Two reviewers separately conducted the selection process, and any disagreements were settled through discussion and consensus.

In this study, the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework was used. The PRISMA framework provides a graphical representation that visually presents the entire process, including the

total number of articles initially identified in relation to the topic, the rigorous screening process, and the final number of articles deemed eligible for data extraction. For a detailed visual representation of the PRISMA framework, please refer to Figure 1.

Figure 1 Systematic Literature Review by PRISMA Framework
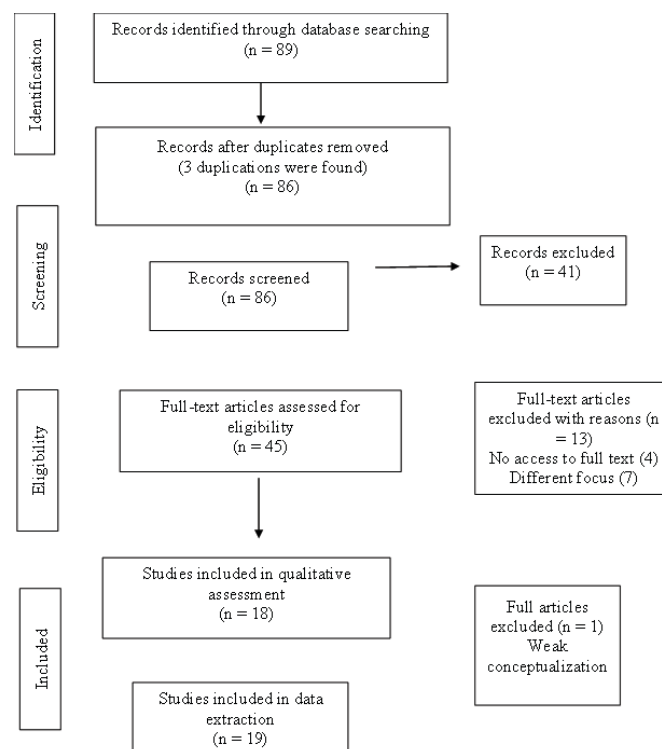
3 Research results

3.1 Trends in Tourism Demand

Tourism demand is constantly evolving, shaped by various factors such as global dynamics, economic conditions, technology, and changing travel preferences. Understanding tourist arrivals and expenditures provides valuable insights into the overall trends and economic impact of tourism. In recent years, the global tourism industry has experienced steady growth in both international and domestic tourist arrivals. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), international tourist arrivals reached 1.5 billion in 2019, marking a significant increase compared to previous decades. In 2019, international tourist arrivals reached 1.46 billion, representing a 4% increase compared to the previous year (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2020). Countries in regions such as Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East have witnessed rapid growth in tourism demand. Rising incomes, expanding middle-class populations, and improved connectivity have fuelled this growth. Europe continues to be a popular destination, attracting a large number of international tourists, particularly from neighbouring countries. The top international tourist destinations in terms of arrivals included France, Spain, the United States, China, and Italy (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2020). Asia-Pacific has emerged as a key contributor to global tourism demand. Countries like China, India, and Southeast Asian nations have experienced remarkable growth in outbound tourism.

When it comes to tourist expenditures, China has become one of the top spenders worldwide. Chinese tourists, with their increasing disposable incomes and evolving travel preferences, have made a significant impact on tourism industries globally. Additionally, high-income countries like the United States and Germany continue to contribute significantly to global tourism expenditures.

Travel preferences have also undergone notable changes. There is a growing emphasis on experiential and immersive travel, where tourists seek authentic cultural experiences, engage in adventure activities, and seek personal growth through their journeys. Sustainable tourism practices and eco-friendly destinations have gained traction as travellers become more conscious of their environmental impact and seek to support responsible tourism. Furthermore, advancements in technology and the sharing economy have given rise to alternative accommodation options such as vacation rentals and homestays. These cater to the preferences of travellers who desire unique and localized experiences during their trips (Hall & Page, 2014).

With the technological progress new ways of tourism and approach to tourism emerge, for example the trend of gamification of tourism and smart tourism. The gamification of tourism involves incorporating game elements and mechanics into the travel experience to enhance engagement, enjoyment, and participation. It utilizes elements like challenges, rewards, leaderboards, and interactive storytelling to make tourism more interactive and immersive. Gamification can be applied in various aspects of tourism, such as city tours, museum visits, and cultural experiences, to create memorable and engaging experiences for tourists. The use of gamification in tourism, particularly with augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), is still in its early stages and mostly focused on urban destinations. (Skinner et al., 2018). But the needs of Millennials and Generation Z, who are immersed in Web 2.0 technologies, should be addressed in the progressive development of tourism destinations. The example of gamification is also a geocaching is a location-based leisure sport where participants hide and search for hidden treasures using GPS technology. Smart tourism involves the use of mobile applications, wearable devices, location-based services, and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies to provide personalized and context-aware information and services to tourists. Smart tourism aims to improve efficiency, convenience, and sustainability in areas such as transportation, accommodation, attractions, and visitor management, ultimately enhancing the overall tourist experience.

3.2 Factors Influencing Tourism Demand

Tourism demand is influenced by a variety of factors that shape people's decisions to travel and explore different destinations. This section examines the key factors that have an impact on tourism demand, including economic, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and political factors.

As an economic factor, people's disposable income levels directly affect their ability to engage in tourism activities. When income levels rise, individuals tend to spend more on travel and are more likely to embark on trips. Exchange rates have an impact on the affordability of travel for international tourists. Favourable exchange rates can make a destination more attractive and affordable, thus increasing tourism demand. Conversely, unfavourable exchange rates may discourage travel to certain destinations (Song & Li, 2008).

Socio-cultural factors, and demographic characteristics in particular, such as age, gender, and family composition, can influence travel patterns and preferences. For instance, millennials may be more inclined towards adventure and experiential travel, while families with children may prioritize family-friendly destinations and activities.

In addition, the rise of social media platforms has had a profound impact on tourism demand. User-generated content, recommendations from influencers, and online reviews heavily influence travellers' destination choices and shape their travel experiences (Buhalis & Law, 2008).

The widespread availability of online booking platforms has made the process of researching, planning, and booking trips much more convenient for travellers. This convenience has contributed to the growth in tourism demand.

The perception of safety and security in a destination plays a crucial role in tourists' decisions to visit. Political stability, crime rates, and the presence of conflicts or civil unrest greatly influence tourism demand. Also, the visa requirements and restrictions imposed by governments can impact international tourism demand. Simplified visa processes and visa-free policies can make travel more accessible, attracting more tourists (Hall & Lew, 2009).

COVID-19 created a major disruption to tourists around the world. As an example, we can take a look on Iceland. Iceland's tourism industry experienced «miracle» growth following the 2008 Global Financial Crisis when the government decided to diversify the economy away from fishing and banking. They actively promoted tourism as a new economic driver, resulting in the outstanding increase in international visitors from 500,000 in 2010 to 2.3 million in 2018. Successful marketing campaigns and the use of social media further fueled Iceland's popularity. Nature was the primary draw for tourists visiting Iceland, with 92% citing the country's 'unspoiled' natural beauty as a driving factor (Sæþórsdóttir, Hall, & Wendt, 2020). At the same time, adventure tourism, including activities like hiking and glacier tours, also played a significant role in drawing adventure enthusiasts. Improved international flight routes and the emergence of budget airlines made Iceland easily accessible from Europe and North America. However, challenges emerged as tourism boomed. Appeared concerns about overtourism, especially in the capital and around popular natural attractions. The abrupt closure of one of Iceland's major budget airlines disrupted travel plans, leading to a reduction in incoming tourists. Then, in 2020, the global COVID-19 pandemic forced Iceland, like many other nations, to close its borders to tourists, causing a significant drop in international travel to almost 500,000 tourists again.

In summary, Iceland's tourism success story was the result of strategic economic decisions and its unique natural attractions. While COVID-19 caused a sharp decline in tourism in 2020, the gradual easing of travel restrictions and the availability of vaccines led to a rebound in tourist arrivals in 2021. Iceland actively marketed itself as a safe and appealing destination for post-pandemic travel, still focusing on its natural beauty and outdoor activities. With the resumption of

international flights Iceland saw a resurgence in international arrivals with 1.7 million tourists in 2022 (OECD Tourism Trends and Policies).

Tourism demand is interconnected with other factors that mutually impact each other. The table below shows the examples of some of those relationships. The column of Aspect of Demand describes different elements or components related to tourism that are of interest or importance. Relationships highlights the connection or correlation between each aspect of demand and other factors. Influencing Factors identifies the key factors that impact or shape each aspect of demand.

For example, Cultural Events is linked to local traditions, and its success is influenced by government support; Heritage Sites is connected to cultural events, and the preservation efforts significantly impact them; Utilization of Big Data and EPU in Forecasting enhances decision-making with a focus on data accuracy and technological infrastructure.

Table 1 The aspects of tourism demand and influencing factors

Aspect of Demand	Relationships	Influencing Factors
Cultural Events	Linked to Local Traditions	Government Support
Heritage Sites	Connected to Cultural Events	Preservation Efforts
Local Traditions	Enrich Cultural Events	Community Engagement
Digital Platforms	Amplifies Promotion	Online Presence
Data Analytics	Informs Decision-Making	Visitor Behavior Analysis
Government Policies	Shapes Cultural Framework	Funding Allocation
Community Involvement	Supports Local Events	Volunteerism
Environmental Sustainability	Affects Cultural Preservation	Eco-friendly Practices
Economic Conditions	Influences Visitor Spending	Income Levels
Experiential and Immersive Travel	Enhances Visitor Engagement	Unique Experiences
Smart Tourism	Integrates Technology	Connectivity, Innovation
Economic Stability	Influences Tourism Spending	Exchange Rates, Stability
Social Media Influence	Shapes Visitor Perception	User Engagement, Trends
Climate Change Impact	Alters Tourism Patterns	Sustainability Efforts
Sustainable Tourism Practices	Guides Responsible Tourism	Conservation, Community Support
Tourism Demand and Sustainable Development	Supports Local Economy	Sustainable Practices, Community Involvement
Utilization of Big Data and EPU in Forecasting	Enhances Decision-Making	Data Accuracy, Technological Infrastructure

Source: Own processing

3.3 Destination Attributes and Tourism Demand

The way a destination is perceived and its branding significantly influence tourism demand. These factors shape the expectations and impressions of potential tourists. Unique and captivating attractions, such as natural wonders, historical sites, cultural heritage, and entertainment venues, contribute to the allure of a destination and attract visitors. The availability and quality of accommodations, restaurants, shopping facilities, and recreational activities play a significant role in the overall experience of tourists. A well-connected and reliable transportation network, encompassing air, road, rail, and sea options, makes a destination more accessible to tourists, as well as facilitates their movement within the destination (Mill & Morrison, 2002).

The use of digital marketing platforms and social media channels has become indispensable in reaching and engaging with potential tourists. These platforms allow destinations to showcase their offerings and target specific market segments. Well-established and appealing destination brands have the potential to draw more tourists. Effective marketing and

promotion strategies play a pivotal role in stimulating tourism demand. Strategic marketing initiatives that highlight the unique selling points and experiences of a destination can shape tourists' perceptions and generate interest.

The research by Binrong Wu, Lin Wang and Yu-Rong Zeng shows that multi-source data and big data indices can help in accurately predicting tourism demand (Wu et al., 2022). The study involves collecting information on international arrivals in major European cities for 2020, tracking new COVID-19 cases and extracting data from travel forums like TripAdvisor, and analyzing search trends using Google Trends. The study explains its use of text analysis techniques like Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) and Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) to extract valuable insights from travel forum posts. The study discusses how the number of topics and their distribution are determined using the LDA model and the CNN classification to extract text features from travel forum posts. It follows that tourism practitioners and authorities can use these forecasts for crowd management and revenue management.

Also, it is important to consider economic policy uncertainty. The topic of EPU is discussed more broadly in the Journal of Travel Research (Kuok et al., 2022). The authors focus on understanding how EPU in China affects tourism in various markets around the world. While previous studies have looked at how EPU affects tourism, this research is unique because it uses a method called Global Vector Autoregression (GVAR) to analyse interdependence between multiple countries. China's economic policy uncertainty has negative effects on both inbound and outbound tourism. Moreover, EPU shocks have a more significant influence on tourism demand than shocks to GDP. Also, the study provides insights into how long the impact of an EPU shock can last, with some effects persisting for more than five years.

3.4 Analysis of Seasonal Fluctuations in Tourist Arrivals and Expenditures

Different seasons experience varying levels of tourism demand, with peak seasons attracting higher numbers of visitors. Factors such as weather conditions, school holidays, and cultural events influence seasonality. Destination management organizations may implement strategies to reduce the effects of seasonality. These strategies can include promoting off-peak travel, developing events and attractions during low seasons, or targeting niche markets.

Seasonality holds significant implications for the tourism industry. Several factors contribute to seasonality, resulting in both positive and negative outcomes. Among the natural factors, weather conditions play a role in shaping travel preferences, with pleasant climates attracting tourists during specific seasons. The timing of school breaks and holidays heavily influences tourism demand, leading to peak seasons when families can plan vacations. Special events, festivals, and cultural celebrations can draw significant crowds, creating seasonal peaks. The Tourism Climate Index (TCI) is often used to gauge tourists' perception of climate comfort and its influence on demand.

As a positive consequence, peak seasons generate substantial revenue, employment opportunities, and business activity within the tourism sector. As a negative, overcrowding, strain on infrastructure and resources, and reduced business during low seasons can adversely impact destinations and local communities.

4 Discussion

The impacts of tourism demand extend to various aspects of destinations, including their economy, socio-cultural fabric, environment, and political landscape. Tourism plays a pivotal role in driving economic growth and development in destinations. It has significant implications for employment and revenue generation. The tourism industry creates numerous job opportunities across sectors such as accommodations, food services, transportation, and entertainment. This leads to a reduction in unemployment rates and improved livelihoods for local communities (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

As well, the influx of tourists and their expenditures contribute to the growth of local businesses, infrastructure development, and tax revenues. The travel and tourism sector contributed 10.4% of global GDP and supported 334 million jobs, or 1 in 10 jobs worldwide, in 2019 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2020). Tourism expenditure accounted for 8.9% of global exports and generated USD 1.5 trillion in international tourism receipts in 2019 (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2020).

According to the article by Doris Chenguang Wu, Haiyan Song, Shujie Shen, New Developments in Tourism and Hotel Demand Modelling and Forecasting despite facing challenges like wars, epidemics, and financial crises, the tourism industry has consistently grown and diversified over the past sixty years. Moreover, there is a noticeable shift in consumer preferences towards experiential travel, sustainable tourism practices, and personalized travel experiences.

Tourism can have profound socio-cultural effects on destinations, shaping their identity, heritage, and community dynamics. By attracting visitors and creating awareness and appreciation for local traditions, customs, and heritage, tourism can play a role in the preservation and promotion of cultural assets. It helps in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and reviving traditional practices (Timothy & Boyd, 2006).

The environmental impacts of tourism demand are a subject of increasing concern and require careful management. High levels of tourism demand can strain local resources such as water, energy, and land. It is crucial to monitor and

manage resource consumption to ensure the sustainability of destinations and mitigate negative environmental impacts. Transportation, accommodation, and recreational facilities, can contribute to pollution through waste generation, carbon emissions, and habitat degradation. Sustainable practices and responsible tourism management are essential to minimize these environmental footprints.

5 Conclusion

Throughout the review, we have identified several key findings. We have observed that tourism demand is influenced by a complex interplay of economic, socio-cultural, technological, environmental, and political factors. Additionally, seasonality emerges as a significant phenomenon affecting tourist arrivals and expenditures, with various causes and consequences. The role of destination attributes, such as image, branding, attractions, amenities, infrastructure, accessibility, transportation, marketing, and seasonality, has been highlighted as crucial in shaping tourism demand.

The implications of our findings extend to academia, industry, and policy-making. Academically, our review provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing tourism demand, emphasizing the need for further methodological advancements and research in emerging areas. Industry practitioners can leverage the insights gained from this review to better understand and respond to changing tourism demand patterns. In the realm of policy-making, policymakers can utilize the findings to inform evidence-based policies and regulations that promote sustainable tourism development, address economic inequalities, enhance safety and security, and mitigate the impacts of seasonality. Furthermore, the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic and war highlight the necessity for robust crisis management and recovery plans, as well as the importance of utilizing big data and EPU during tourism demand forecasting.

5.1 Research Gaps and Future Research Directions

While significant research exists on the impacts of tourism demand, there are several areas that require further investigation. Future studies should focus on understanding and promoting sustainable tourism practices that minimize the negative impacts on the environment and maximize socio-economic benefits. The community-centred tourism is also worth the exploring the socio-cultural impacts on local communities and their attitudes, perceptions, and experiences. Also, investigating the impacts of tourism demand on emerging destinations and their unique socio-economic and environmental contexts can enrich our understanding of the dynamics between tourism and development.

Examining the interplay between tourism demand and sustainable development is critical. This includes investigating the measurement of sustainable tourism indicators, assessing the effectiveness of sustainable tourism policies and practices, and understanding the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders in promoting responsible tourism.

Undoubtedly, understanding the implications of technological advancements, such as artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and blockchain, on tourism demand and the overall tourist experience is an important research area. Exploring how technology shapes traveler behavior, destination choices, and industry practices can provide valuable insights.

Acknowledgement

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