

A systematic literature review of tourism dynamics in the post-covid era

Solomon Owusu Yeboah¹, Mohsin Javed², Adwoa Yeboaa Owusu Yeboah³

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly influenced the worldwide tourism sector, causing unprecedented disruptions and changes in visitor behavior. Due to the massive spread of the virus at the global level, the World Health Organization (WHO) labeled the epidemic a pandemic in March 2020, resulting in extensive travel restrictions, border closures, and dramatic changes in consumer behavior. These precautions were designed to slow the spread of the virus, but they had severe consequences for the tourism sector. This systematic literature review (SLR) aims to offer an overview of new research on tourist dynamics in the post-COVID period. The study summarizes the findings of necessary research published between 2021 and 2023, concentrating on significant issues such as tourism sector change, shifting travel patterns, destination management strategies, and the role of technology in influencing tourism's future. The SLR identifies research gaps and provides insights to policymakers, destination managers, and academics to help them navigate the changing world of post-pandemic tourism.

Keywords: Tourism Dynamics, Post-COVID era, Systematic Literature Review

JEL Classification: Q5, Q54, Q56, Q58

1 Introduction

Overview of The Tourism Industry

The tourism industry plays a crucial role in the global economy, generating substantial revenue, creating jobs, and contributing to nations' development. It encompasses a wide range of activities related to travel, accommodation, transportation, entertainment, and hospitality, catering to the needs and desires of travelers. From domestic tourism to international travel, this industry has become a primary economic sector with significant impacts on various aspects of society (Canh & Thanh 2020).

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Tourism Sector

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the global tourism landscape has undergone profound transformations, necessitating a reevaluation of traditional paradigms and the emergence of new perspectives on tourism dynamics. The pandemic disrupted international travel, leading to unprecedented challenges for the tourism industry worldwide (Sigala, 2020). As nations gradually recover from the acute phase of the crisis, attention turns to understanding the nuanced and complex dynamics that shape post-COVID tourism.

The recovery and prospects of the tourism industry heavily depend on the virus's effective containment and global immunization efforts. While certain places have begun to reopen and gradually recover, there are still concerns about the appearance of new variants and changes in travel restrictions. To travel in the post-pandemic era, travelers' trust and confidence must be reestablished, and novel techniques and stakeholder cooperation are necessary (UNWTO, 2021). The far-reaching impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the performance and development of the tourism industry can be seen in the discussion below:

Travel limitation and border closures: To prevent the virus from spreading across international borders, governments worldwide instituted travel restrictions and border closures. These restrictions drastically hampered international and local travel, resulting in a significant drop in tourist arrivals. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization

¹ Tomas Bata University in Zlin, Faculty of Management and Economics, Mostní 5139, 76001 Zlín, Czech Republic, s_yeboah@utb.cz

² Tomas Bata University in Zlin, Faculty of Management and Economics, Mostní 5139, 76001 Zlín, Czech Republic, javed@utb.cz

³ Department of marketing and supply chain Management, School of BUSINESS, University of Cape Coast, Ghana, adwoa.yeboah@ucc.edu.gh

(UNWTO), international visitor arrivals would be 74% lower in 2020 than the previous year, resulting in a \$1.3 trillion loss in global tourism earnings (UNWTO, 2021).

Economic impact: Tourism contributes significantly to global GDP and jobs. Travel limitations caused by the epidemic and a drop in tourist arrivals resulted in a substantial economic downturn in the industry. Many firms, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) reliant on tourism, were forced to close due to financial difficulties. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the pandemic would cost the equivalent of 255 million full-time jobs in 2020, with the tourist and hospitality industries among the most impacted (ILO, 2020).

Challenges for the airline and cruise industries: The pandemic significantly impacted the airline and cruise industries. Many airlines had financial difficulties due to decreasing travel demand and numerous cancellations, resulting in layoffs, furloughs, and even bankruptcy. According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), worldwide airline passenger revenues will fall by \$371 billion in 2020 (IATA, 2021). Similarly, the cruise sector suffered considerable interruptions due to port closures and a drop in reservations, resulting in substantial financial losses (Cruise Lines International Association, 2020).

Consumer attitudes and behavior have shifted significantly as a result of the epidemic. For passengers, health and safety concerns have taken precedence; The fear of contagion and a heightened awareness of health and safety have significantly influenced travel decisions (Robina-Ramírez et al., 2023). People, therefore, have grown more careful in their travel choices, preferring sites and services that adhere to strict health and cleanliness standards. As tourists seek outdoor and less congested experiences, there has also been an upsurge in interest in sustainable and nature-based tourism (Deloitte, 2021). This, has necessitated the need for collaboration between governments, public health agencies, and the tourism sector (Yan et al., 2023).

The rise of remote work during the pandemic has also blurred the lines between leisure and business travel, giving rise to the concept of "bleisure" travel (Pavia et al., 2023). Tourists increasingly seek destinations that offer a balance between work and leisure, reflecting a fundamental transformation in the nature and purpose of travel experiences.

Advancement of technological change: The epidemic has expedited the tourist industry's digital transformation- with technology playing a pivotal role in shaping post-COVID tourism dynamics (Trunfio & Pasquinelli, 2021). Consequently, physical travel limits, virtual experiences, contactless technology and digital platforms for booking and information dissemination have become integral components of the tourism ecosystem. This digital change will have long-term consequences for the industry (McKinsey & Company, 2023).

Navigating these dynamics presents both challenges and opportunities for stakeholders in the tourism industry as they seek to rebuild and reshape a more resilient and sustainable future.

Theoretical Background

Tourism Dynamics

The COVID-19 pandemic has left an indelible mark on the global tourism industry, prompting a paradigm shift in its dynamics. As destinations emerge from the crisis, a range of transformative trends is reshaping the way tourism is perceived and experienced.

Tourism dynamics relate to the ever-changing patterns, trends, and factors that affect the tourism sector; it is shaped by a complex interplay of economic, environmental, social, and technological influences. Understanding these dynamics is critical for decision-makers, entrepreneurs, and researchers looking to maximize the advantages while minimizing the negative consequences of tourism. Tourism dynamics begin with the interaction between supply and demand. Individual travel decisions are influenced by factors such as income, demography, and consumer preferences on the one hand and the availability and quality of tourism infrastructure, services, and attractions on the other hand. Additionally, various crises, natural disasters, health emergencies (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic), political instability, and economic downturns can hugely affect tourism dynamics. How destinations and businesses respond to and recover from these crises is a critical aspect of tourism dynamics.

Post-COVID Era

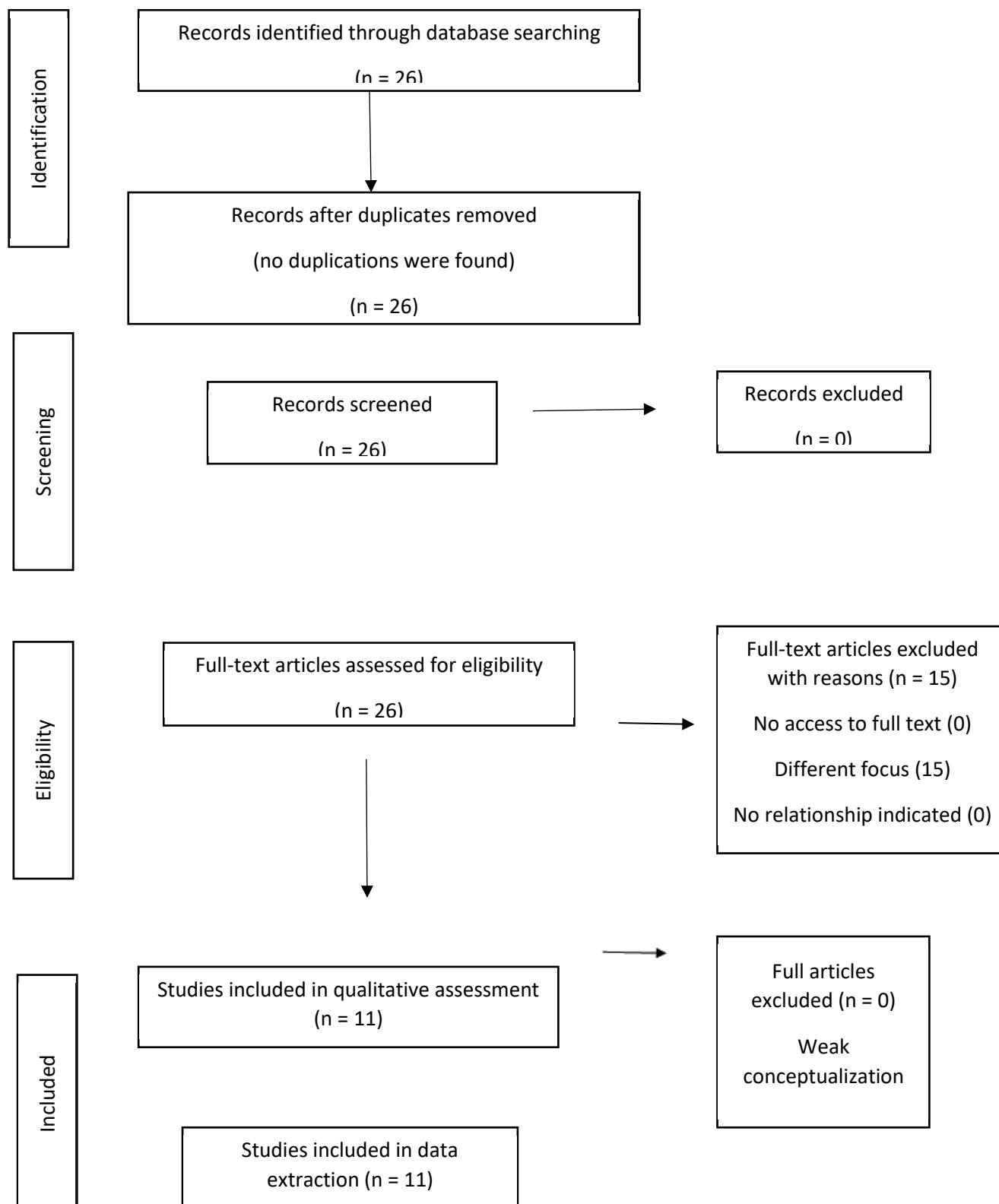
The post-COVID era represents a unique and transformative period in human history, marked by the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant societal shifts characterize this era, including healthcare, economics, technology, governance, and social behavior. Understanding the theoretical underpinnings of the post-COVID era requires interdisciplinary research, including tourism, economics, public health, sociology, and technology studies. It also involves adapting to the evolving challenges and opportunities this transformative period in human history presents.

2 Methodology

The purpose of this systematic literature review (SLR) is to look into the dynamics of tourism after COVID-19. This technique describes the SLR process, including the search strategy, study selection criteria, data extraction, and data synthesis. The SLR will be carried out to collect appropriate and up-to-date information on the effects, trends, and changes in the tourist industry due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The SCOPUS database was heavily relied on to collect the relevant scientific articles. The graphical demonstration of the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis) framework was employed. The outcome of the search is represented in the figure 1 below:

Figure 1 Systematic Literature Review by PRISMA Framework



Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the SLR:

- a. What are the primary consequences of the COVID-19 epidemic for the tourism industry?
- b. What impact has the post-COVID period had on tourism demand and behavior?
- c. What are the new trends and developments in the tourist industry following the pandemic?
- d. What initiatives and measures have been implemented to revitalize tourism in the post-COVID era?

Search Strategy

To locate relevant papers and material, a detailed search strategy was established. The search took place in the SCOPUS electronic database. The keywords and keyword combinations were used in the "Title-Abs-Key" bar as the search criteria. The keywords were tourism "dynamics" and "Post-COVID," consequently, 26 scientific records were retrieved.

Data Synthesis

The data retrieved from chosen articles will be thematically examined. Common themes and patterns in tourist dynamics will be recognized in the post-COVID period. The findings will be summarized, and the links between the various topics will be investigated.

Quality Assessment

The quality and rigor of chosen publications were evaluated to verify the findings' reliability and validity. This was accomplished by scrutinizing the scope of the subject area in light of the topic under consideration. Due to those mentioned above, all nonconforming papers were removed. As a result, of the 26 articles examined for eligibility, 15 were removed for having a different focus.

Data Extraction

As the last step, the data were extracted using a predetermined form: the PRISMA framework. The data were extracted for a thorough analysis. As a result, 11 articles were considered fit to be included in the qualitative assessment, and all 11 passed for the data extraction. The papers that passed through the PRISMA framework are crucial to achieving the aim of the SLR.

Reporting

The SLR findings will be organized and comprehensively reported. The report will include sections on the introduction, methods, results, discussion, and conclusion. The findings will be presented descriptively, with tables, graphs, and citations from the articles selected to back them up.

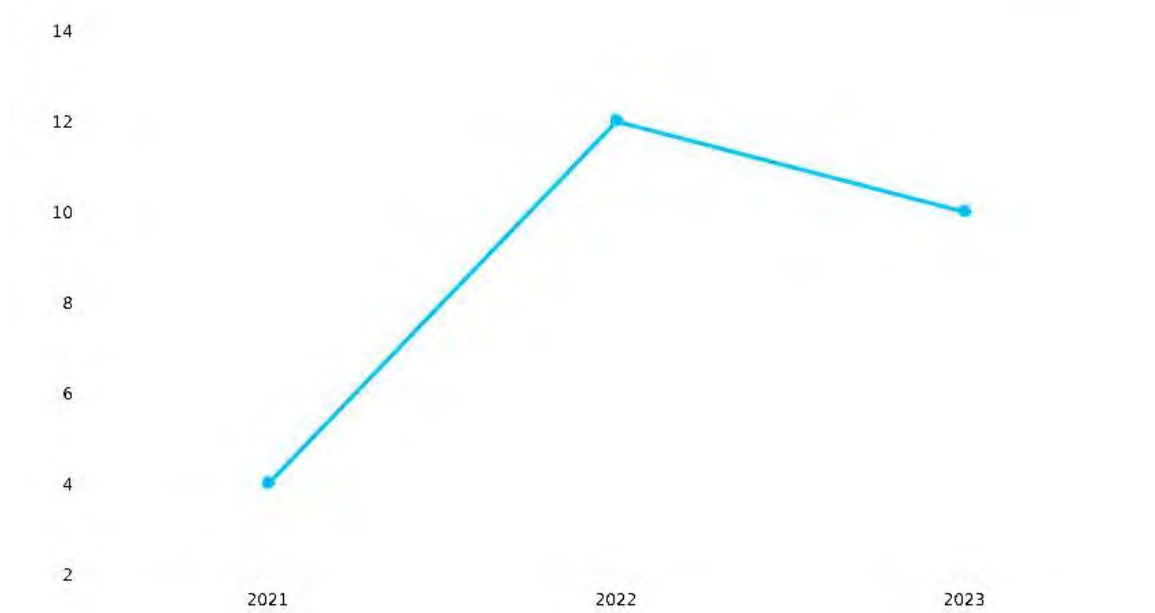
Limitations

The SLR may have limitations, including insufficient relevant literature, potential publication bias, and the exclusion of non-English articles. However, attempts have been made to reduce these constraints by a thorough search and a rigorous selection process.

3 Results and Interpretations

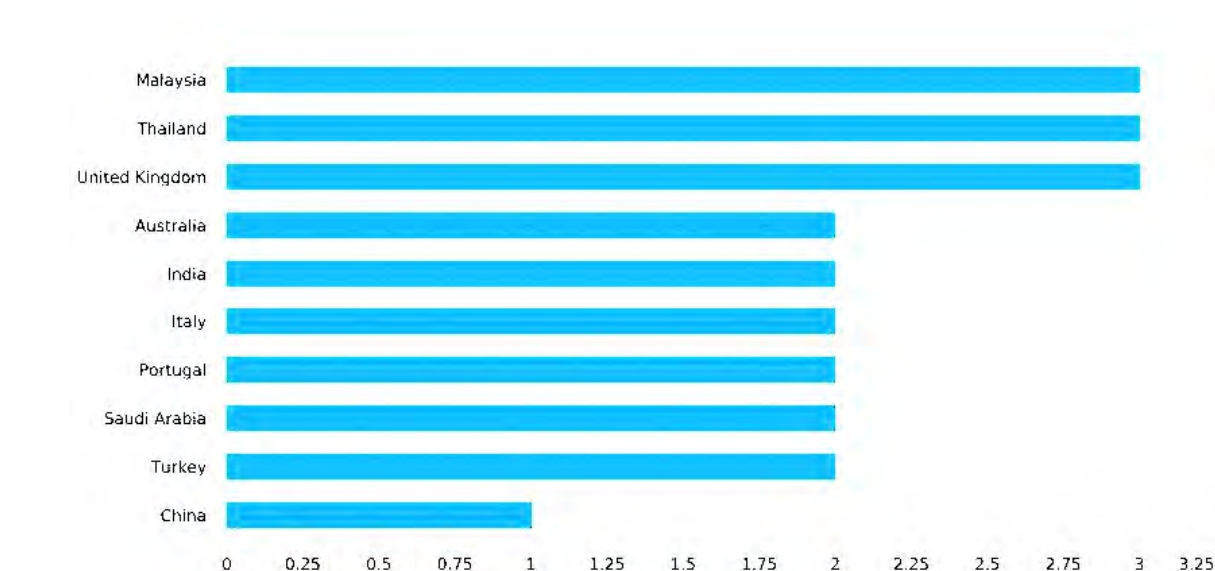
The analyses of the selected records from the SCOPUS database showed fascinating findings. It became evident that the subject under study has received considerable attention in the number of publications since 2021. As can be seen in Figure 2, the year 2021 saw only 4 Papers published; the number in 2023 skyrocketed to 12 in 2022, and as of the time of preparation of this document, 10 publications have been recorded this year (2023). This upward trend underscores the growing significance of the issues concerning tourism dynamics in the post-COVID era.

Figure 2 Distribution of publications by year



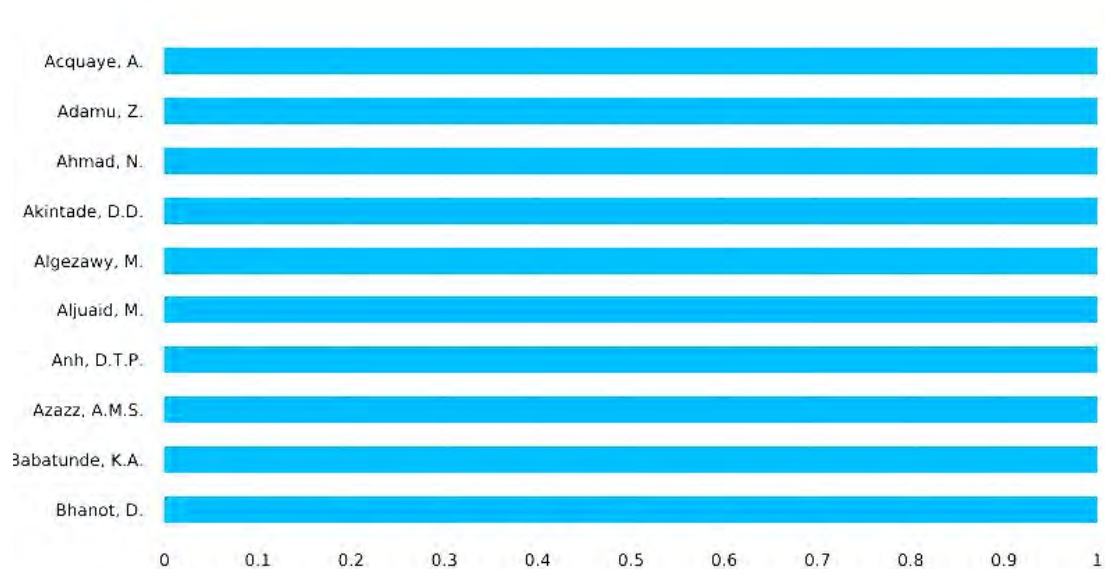
Furthermore, Figure 3 illustrates the distribution of scientific publications across various countries. Regarding tourism dynamics post-COVID era, these papers have primarily emerged from many developed nations across the globe. Malaysia, Thailand, and the United Kingdom lead in scientific publications with 3 articles each followed by Australia, India, Italy, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey with 2 publications each, and China with the least 1 publication in the body of research in this area.

Figure 3 Distribution of publications by Countries



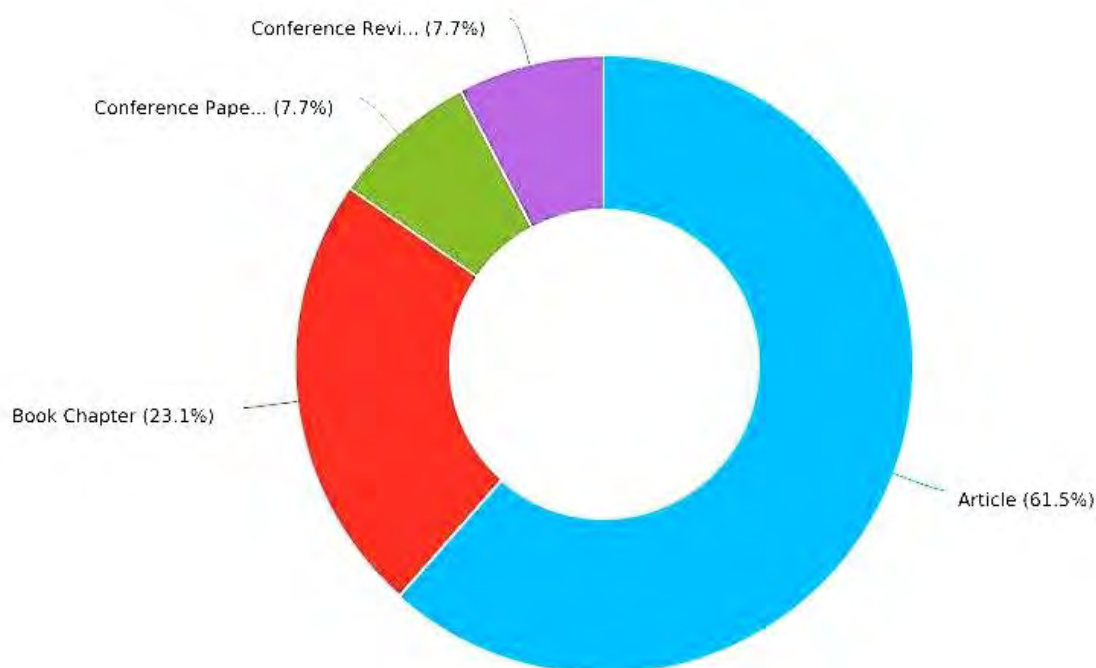
In the realm of the researched theme, scientific publications have been contributed by authors hailing from various parts of the globe. Figure 4 provides an overview of the publication frequency among different authors. Interestingly, all the listed authors have a publication each. All these contributions are published in SCOPUS-indexed journals, as depicted in Figure 4. Distribution of publications by Authors.

Figure 4 Distribution of publications by Authors



Moving forward, it's worth noting that the majority of content found in SCOPUS-indexed journals consists of articles. Among the journals listed in SCOPUS, 61.5 percent are articles, while conference papers make up 7.7 percent, conference reviews and regular reviews account for 7.7 percent, and book chapters 23.1 percent. This is illustrated in Figure 5 below.

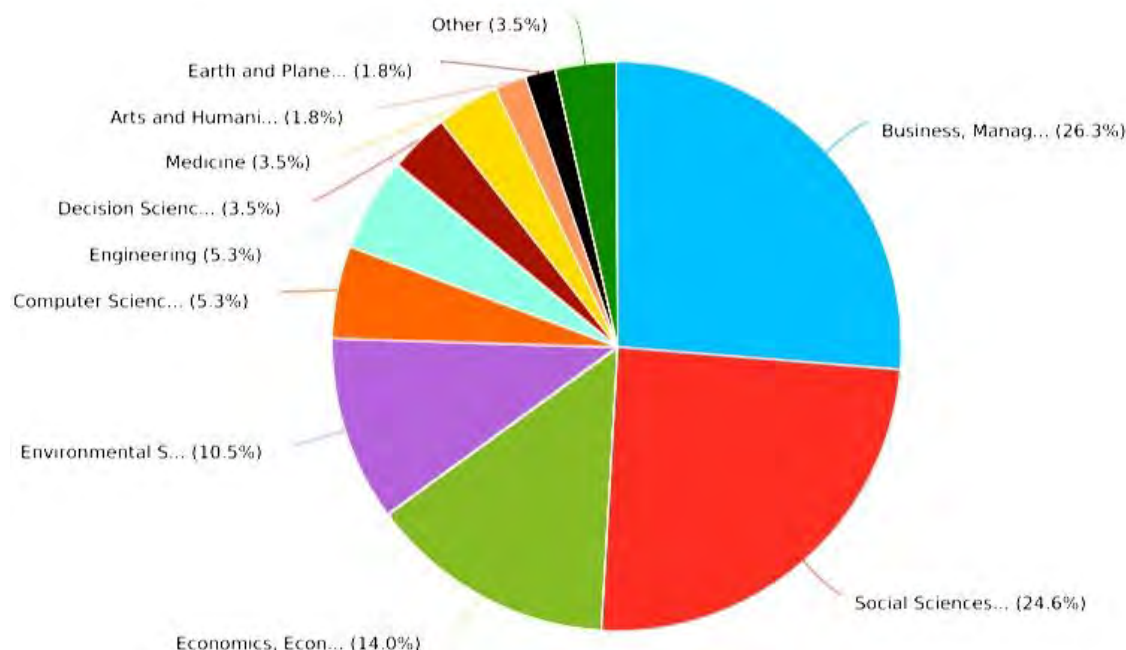
Figure 5 Distribution of publications by Type



Analyzing the distribution of scientific publications across various subject areas is necessary. Figure 6 provides a breakdown of these percentages for each subject area. As anticipated, the data reveals that 26.3 percent of scientific documents are concentrated in Business, Management, and Accounting. The Social Sciences follows, with approximately

24.6 percent, and Environmental Science accounts for about 10.5 percent. Computer science and engineering had 5.3 percent each, and all other subject categories had below 4 percent.

Figure 6 Distribution of publications by Subject Area



4 Discussion and Conclusion

The necessity for resilience and adaptability in the tourism sector is a frequent issue in the literature. Travel limitations, health concerns, and economic downturns were all exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers and practitioners have stressed the necessity of preparing for external shocks like pandemics and natural disasters. Diversifying tourist offerings, improving health and safety standards, and increasing domestic tourism have all been mentioned as ways to adjust to the new normal.

Therefore, this research's primary objective was to conduct a comprehensive systematic literature review of scientific studies cataloged in the SCOPUS database. In pursuit of this goal, the study employed the systematic literature review (SLR) methodology, a rigorous scientific approach. The study aimed to investigate the wide-ranging implications of uncertain circumstances, particularly within the recent COVID-19 pandemic, which has profoundly impacted various facets of life. Some of the critical importance of uncertainty has changed the tourism phase, introducing new dynamics. Specific industries like travel and tourism are especially susceptible to such crises (Hall et al. 2020). Consequently, this study delved deeply into this issue, specifically within the context of the travel and tourism industry, to ascertain the current state of knowledge and lay the foundation for future research endeavors.

The literature highlights that uncertainty can have multifaceted impacts on various aspects of an economy, with a notable effect on the tourism industry, particularly on entities like hotels during periods of crisis and uncertainty. In response to tourism dynamics in the post-COVID-19 era, tourism operators employ various strategies to instill confidence in tourists. Additionally, research has indicated that during pandemics like COVID-19, individuals' perceptions of health and safety change significantly. Consequently, tourism operators become more preoccupied with compliance with the enhanced health and safety protocols, exploring different forms of tourism (Xiong & Tang 2023), putting untold financial stress on the sector, leading to the neglect of employees' welfare and continuous development.

Additionally, the digital revolution has accelerated in the post-COVID age. Contactless check-ins, online booking systems, and virtual tourism experiences have all become vital components of the traveler's journey. Many studies emphasize the importance of technology in creating a smooth and safe travel experience. Furthermore, digital marketing and social media have been critical in destination promotion and connection with travelers.

On the issue of sustainability, the pandemic has highlighted the significance of sustainable and responsible tourist practices. The lockdowns resulted in short-term improvements in environmental conditions, sparking debate about prioritizing sustainability in tourist recovery efforts. Researchers have investigated regenerative tourism, which aims to benefit both the environment and communities. In the post-COVID age, sustainable tourism strategies such as lowering carbon footprints and supporting local economies are gaining traction.

In conclusion, the systematic literature review on tourism dynamics in the post-COVID era emphasizes the industry's resilience and adaptation in the face of unprecedented obstacles. The pandemic has hastened digital transition, reaffirmed sustainability goals, and shifted travelers' preferences. Health and safety precautions are critical to restoring tourists' trust. As the tourism industry navigates the challenges of the post-COVID age, the examined literature emphasizes the importance of continued research, creative methods, and stakeholder collaboration. The tourism environment has changed, and the industry's future success depends on its capacity to accept change, promote sustainability, and fulfill the changing expectations of travelers.

5 Future Research Agenda

This systematic literature review sought to open up existing knowledge. Due to this discussion, the following ideas have been identified for future research:

First, Examine the long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourist behavior. Investigate how changes in travel preferences, safety concerns, and adopting technology-driven experiences affect destination selections and tourism trends. Second, Delve deeper into regenerative tourism and its implementation in the post-COVID era. Explore how destinations can go beyond sustainability to positively impact the environment, culture, and communities, and assess the economic feasibility of regenerative tourism practices. Third, research the unique issues that small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) encountered in the post-COVID era tourism sector. Investigate methods that allow SMEs to adapt, recover, and grow, such as digitization, access to financial support, and collaboration within local ecosystems. Fourth, investigate new ways to destination branding and marketing in the post-COVID era. Analyze the efficacy of digital marketing techniques, storytelling, and destination resilience in attracting tourists and fostering destination loyalty. Fifth, examine how well destinations and the tourism sector are prepared for disasters in the future. Examine the creation of crisis management strategies, the use of technology in crisis communication, and international collaboration in dealing with global crises that affect tourism.

Acknowledgments

This research was supported by the Internal Grant Agency of FaME, TBU under Grant No. IGA/FaME/2023/017, titled "Analýza poptávky po cestovním ruchu v post-Covidových a rusko-ukrajinských válečných scénářích", by the FaME, TBU under Grant No. FSR FORD 5-6 /2022-23/FaME/006, and by the FaME, TBU under Grant No. RO/FaME/2022/02.

References

- Canh, N. P., & Thanh, S. D. (2020). Domestic tourism spending and economic vulnerability. *Annals of tourism research*, 85, 103063. DOI 10.1016/j.annals.2020.103063.
- Hall, C., Scott, D., & Gössling, S. (2020). Pandemics, transformations and tourism: be careful what you wish for. *Tourism Geographies*, 22. DOI 10.1080/14616688.2020.1759131.
- Cruise Line International Association (2020). 2020 State of The Cruise Industry Outlook. Available at: <https://cruising.org/-/media/research-updates/research/2020-state-of-the-cruise-industry-outlook.pdf>. Retrieved on: 19 June 2023.
- Deloitte (2021). Travel and Hospitality Industry Outlook. Available at <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/travel-hospitality-industry-outlook.html>. Retrieved on 19 June 2023
- Pavia, N., Floricic, T. & Mrnjavac, E. (2023). Flexible workspaces and remote work in hotel accommodation offer – competitiveness context. 227-243. DOI 10.20867/thi.26.10.
- IATA (2021). COVID-19: Economic Impact on Aviation. Available at <https://www.iata.org/en/programs/covid>. Retrieved on: 19 June 2023.
- ILO (2020). COVID-19 and the world of work. Available at https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/dgreports/dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_745963.pdf. Retrieved on: 19 June 2023

- McKinsey & Company (2023). Future of tourism: Tech, staff and customers. Available at <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/travel-logistics-and-infrastructure/our-insights/future-of-tourism-bridging-the-labor-gap-enhancing-customer-experience>. Retrieved on: 25 November 2023.
- Robina-Ramírez, R., Ravina-Ripoll, R. & Castellano-Álvarez, F.J. (2023). The trinomial health, safety and happiness promote rural tourism. *BMC Public Health* **23**, 1177, DOI 10.1186/s12889-023-15849-8.
- Sigala M. (2020). Tourism and COVID-19: Impacts and implications for advancing and resetting industry and research. *Journal of business research*, *117*, 312–321. DOI 10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.06.015.
- Trunfio, M. & Pasquinelli, C. (2021). Smart technologies in the Covid-19 crisis: Managing tourism flows and shaping visitors' behavior. *European Journal of Tourism Research*. *29*. 2910. DOI 10.54055/ejtr.v29i.2437.
- UNWTO (2021). Tourism Highlights 2021 Edition. Available at <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-highlights-2021>. Retrieved on 19 June 2023.
- UNWTO (2021). Global Tourism Crisis Committee. Available at <https://www.unwto.org/global-tourism-crisis-committee>. Retrieved on 21 June 2023.
- Volo, S. (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on tourism: the new normalcy of the European tourist industry. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, *38*, 100890.
- Xiong, Yu & Tang, Xiaohan. (2023). Tourism during health disasters: Exploring the role of health system quality, transport infrastructure, and environmental expenditures in the revival of the global tourism industry. *PloS one*. *18*. e0290252, DOI 10.1371/journal.pone.0290252.
- Yan L., Xian C., Liao S. S., & Feng Y. (2023) The impact of COVID-19 on the tourism and hospitality Industry: Evidence from international stock markets, *The North American Journal of Economics and Finance*, *64*. DOI /10.1016/j.najef.2022.101875.