

Prioritized approaches to innovation in tourism business: A systematic review of common features and trends

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to provide a synthesis of the state of research on approaches related to innovation in tourism economic agents based on a systematic review of the literature. It examines common emerging areas of interest and research trends in innovation for their deepening in future lines of research that contribute to invigorate this sector. An analysis was performed on 125 articles published between 2018 to 2023 in journals indexed in major databases Scopus and Web Of Science. The result reveals seven prioritized approaches to innovation: sustainable development; crisis management with leadership; entrepreneurship through cultural and social tourism; cooperative work performance; technology with digital development; business-customer communication and gender approach. The common thematic pattern identified in the tourism subsectors was "sustainable innovation", "crisis management with leadership" and "entrepreneurship through cultural and social tourism". It is concluded that, although innovation in tourism businesses is being studied from different angles, the emerging approach is collaborative innovation aimed at entrepreneurship through cultural and social tourism, which is emerging as a trend in the coming years. This scenario opens the way to develop tourism businesses that integrate service users, culture and the community.

Keywords: Approach, innovation, tourism business, sustainable development, bibliometric analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

In a new world order, wracked by ongoing geopolitical tensions, resilience has been the hallmark of the tourism sector's ability to recover from adversity such as the pandemic. The surprising rebound in international travel generated revenues in excess of \$1 trillion in 2022 with a 50% growth over 2021 (World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2023).

This profitable transition opens the way for challenges and opportunities to rethink dynamic

organizational structures and processes in tourism businesses aimed at contributing to sustainable development through effective strategies in tourism investment programs for the functional fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda and the decent work and sustainable economic growth goals as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In this context, the particularity of companies in the tourism sector is that they work in saturated markets, with low barriers sensitive to imitation, changing lifestyles and where the customer's purchase is from global suppliers (Presenza et al., 2019; Bilgihan and Nejad, 2015). These critical factors generate strong competition at the level of small tourism businesses that try to achieve better competitive advantages by prioritizing price and where offers do not necessarily guarantee profitability. It is precisely in economic areas as vulnerable as the tourism sector that innovation plays a preponderant role as it generates sustainable competitive advantage (Amaya et al., 2017; Eide et al., 2017; Gomezelj, 2016). However, beliefs still persist that costly technological innovation alone will facilitate product diversification and differentiation (Carballo et al., 2021). The idea is to stimulate the simultaneous practice of various types of innovation that generate management capacity and allow the integration of factors that are difficult for competitors to imitate in order to achieve better tourism products (Carballo et al., 2023).

This study aims to answer the following questions: What are the prioritized approaches to innovation in tourism businesses? What is the thematic pattern of innovation publications shared by the tourism subsectors?

Awareness of the role of innovation has increased the interest of relevant scientific research in the last decade (Cao, et al., 2022; Chapaval and Meira 2020; Eide et al., 2017; Marasco et al., 2018; Karlsson and Tavassoli, 2015). However, despite these advances, an information gap persists on the methodologies from which innovation in the tourism sector has been approached in the last five years. Therefore, this article identifies emerging approaches to innovation in tourism subsectors for future lines of research that will allow entrepreneurs and academics to promote sustainable business and dynamize one of the key sectors of the world economy, tourism.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Conceptual framework for innovation

Innovation is understood, at a generic level, as the ability to introduce a novel concept, product, process, organizational structure, service, marketing strategies or attractive market (Brooker and Joppe, 2014; Shumpeter 1963). Business innovation is defined as "new or improved product or process (or combination thereof) that differs significantly from previous products or business processes and has been introduced into the market or put into use" (OECD Oslo Manual, 2018, p. 20). In tourism, it implies adapting to change so that the sector evolves and contributes to society significantly (Brooker and Joppe, 2014; Tidd and Bessant, 2009; Ottenbacher and Harrington 2007). Tourism as a giver of experiences, needs cooperative capacities of all the participating human link and in that line the UNWTO defines innovation as a collaborative action between public and private actors and where the development of capacities for the achievement of an entrepreneurial ecosystem is favored. Therefore, in order to enhance the economic growth of the tourism sector, it seeks to implement innovation, entrepreneurship, investment and digital transformation (UNWTO, sf).

Literature review

In the comparative study of innovation in tourism in academic and trade journals in the period 2010 to 2020, Cao, et al. (2022) showed that the interest of scientific publications revolved around innovation with sustainable development, innovation with leadership and the leading role of customers. In this line, previous studies have identified common patterns where sustainable innovation continues to be recurrent as it guarantees the survival of companies by incorporating technology and meeting the requirement of sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions (Elkhwesky et al., 2022; Reficco, et al., 2018).

The emerging patterns in tourism companies as a conclusion of the study by Hernandez et al (2021) allowed identifying the presence of sustainable innovation (SI) as a key element in order to promote changes through the following proposed categories: in business models, in dynamic capabilities and in the role of the drivers of sustainable innovation, which generates new business models with added value and financial strength.

The systematic review by Marasco, et al. (2018) that studied collaborative innovation in tourism and hospitality identified five approaches: cooperative behavior, co-creation, collaborative network management, knowledge transfer and innovation policies. From a total of 79 articles reviewed, the study found a growing number of researches with collaborative approach that enables better performance in services and learning processes in tourism subsectors of both micro, small and medium enterprises as a

sure way to be competitive.

The mapping shows scarce research that can facilitate a simultaneous comparative analysis of tourism subsectors such as hotels, travel agencies, tourist guides, restaurants and transportation. Therefore, the central objective of the study is to know the approaches and find common thematic patterns in subsectors of the tourism business field, in high impact journals of Scopus and Web of Science database, 2018-2023. This starting point will lay the foundations to delimit the path towards new thematic lines of innovation in tourism business.

METHOD

Method of searching for and selecting information

We worked with journals specialized in tourism in the first quartile Q1, with the highest citation, according to the SCImago Journal Rank report and indexed in the two main scientific bibliographic databases such as Scopus and Web of Science (WOS). The search generated 278 potential articles managing to identify 125. For this section, the methodology of Ribes et al., (2018), who proposes seven stages for the collection of information, was used. The first stage consisted of identifying quality tourism journals in Scimago Journal Rank and filtering the journals that have obtained the highest citation in the last 3 years using the Cite Score indicator. The second stage was to search for articles with the following Boolean operators: innovation AND "tourism business" AND "small business" AND "medium business" entrepreneurship AND innovation AND "tourism industry" AND "new business" AND "start up" innovation AND entrepreneurship AND tourism AND "small business" OR "SME" tourism industry AND innovation AND entrepreneurship AND "start-up" OR "new business" ("tourism industry" OR "travel industry") AND ("innovation strategy" OR "entrepreneurial strategy"). In the third phase, we checked if there were articles that were repeated in both databases and found that there were not. In the fourth stage, the articles were categorized according to the following criteria: scientific production by year of publication; by size of tourism enterprise (micro, small, medium and large enterprises); by approaches related to innovation in tourism businesses at the general level and by tourism subsector at the enterprise level (hotels, restaurants, tour guides, travel agencies, transportation and multisubsector); this last category "multisubsector" worked with studies in which all the above-mentioned tourism agents participated simultaneously. The fifth phase allowed a rigorous reading of each article according to the inclusion criteria (Q1 articles, with high citation, in English, period 2018-2023, indexed in Scopus and the WOS and exclusion (information from conferences, books and book chapters was not considered). The sixth phase facilitated the collection of information in a synthesis and summary categorization matrix. The seventh phase allowed a final quality control in order to avoid biases that could lead to erroneous conclusions.

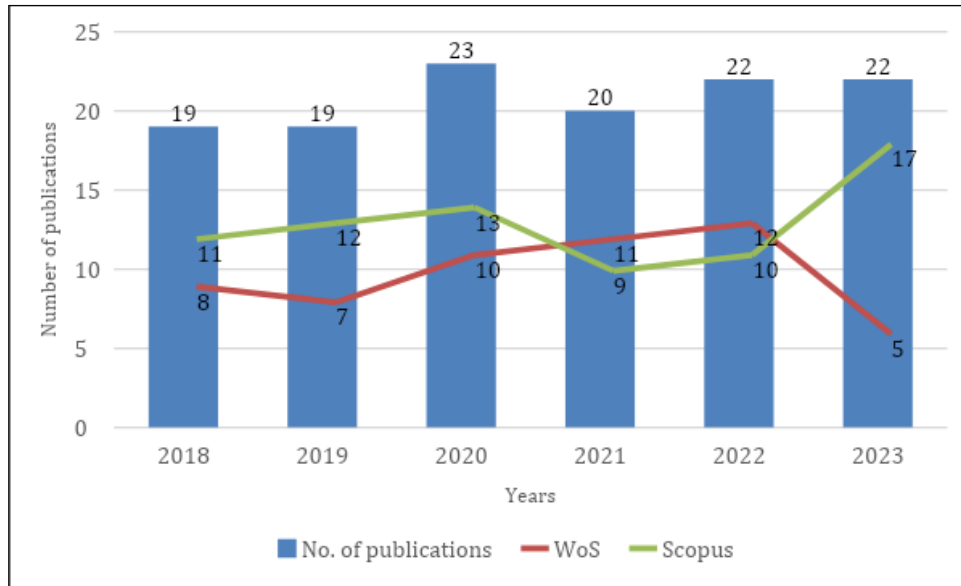
Information processing

Vertical and circular graphs and tables were used to weight the results. For the bibliometric maps, the software VOSviewer version 1.6.20 was used to build and visualize the respective semantic network in order to quickly capture the conceptual structure of the keywords "innovation approach" "tourism business" from the interrelation of nodes by frequency of keywords and co-occurrence.

RESULTS

Based on the objectives set, the results are presented considering firstly the amount of scientific production by year of publication. A maximum of 23 research studies were obtained in 2020 and a minimum of 19 studies in 2019. The average according to the total number of publications was 21 articles. A relevant point is that in 2020, 2022 and 2023 the highest production of articles on entrepreneurship and innovation in the tourism sector was obtained, with 67 research studies, representing 54% of the total, compared to 2018-2019 with 38 articles (30% of the total). From 2022 there is a trend towards continuous production of 22 researches per year. The articles indexed in Scopus decline in 2021 to rise slightly in 2023; unlike WOS which declines in the latter year. Likewise, the tourism journal with the highest number of articles published in the period 2018-2023 was Tourism Management with a sustainable production of 46 researches; on the other hand, the journal with the lowest production, in addition to empty annual periods was Tourism Geographies, which in the period analyzed only conducted three researches. See comparative historical line between Scopus and WOS in Figure 1.

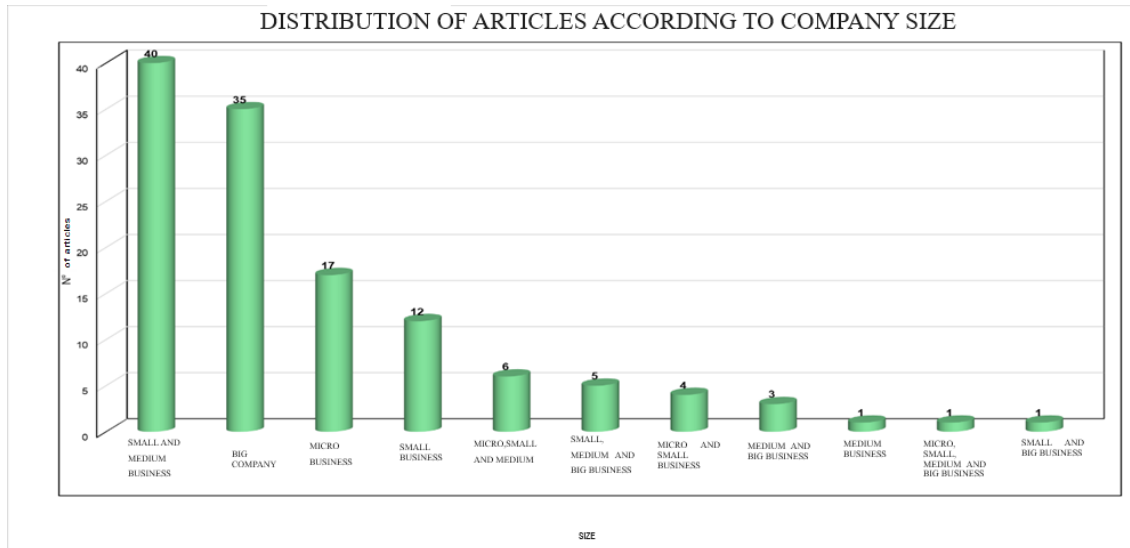
Figure 1. Production of tourism business innovation publications, 2018-2023.



Note: Own elaboration with tourism journals located in the first quartile Q1, according to Scimago Journal Rank, 2023.

According to the category of company size, it is striking that the largest number of research studies on innovation in tourism businesses is concentrated in comparative studies between small and medium-sized tourism companies with 40 articles. This was followed by interest in large companies with 35 articles, followed by 17 articles focused on microenterprises. In addition, 12 articles studied small enterprises. On the other hand, there are comparative studies with two or more sizes of companies at the same time, totaling 20 in all. Note the priority, on the one hand, in comparative studies in which the analysis of small companies versus medium-sized companies stands out and, on the other hand, to learn more about large companies (e.g., world-class hotel chains). Figure 2

Figure 2: Ranking of Innovation items in tourism businesses, according to company size, period 2018-2023.



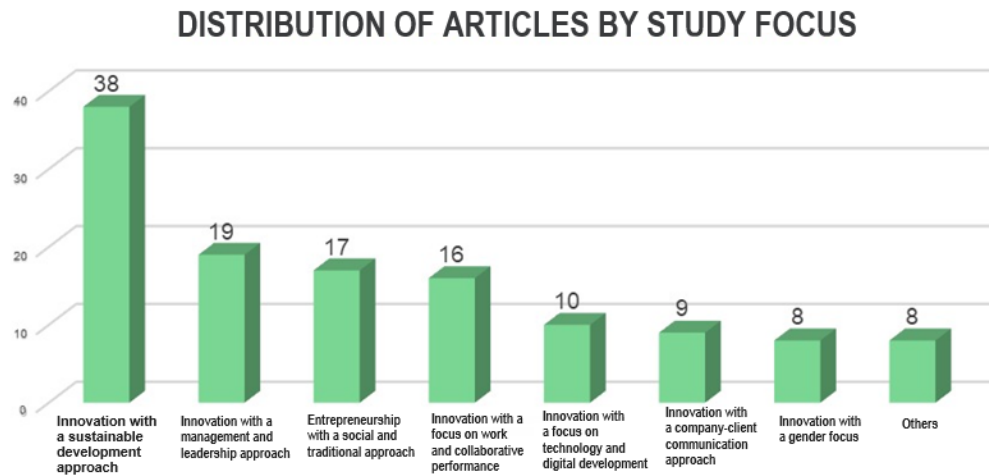
Note: Prepared by the authors with information from tourism journals ranked in the first quartile Q1, according to Scimago Journal Ranking, 2023.

The result of the innovation approaches is based on the interest given by the researchers of the scientific articles analyzed. In first place is the sustainable development approach with a total of 38 publications, followed by the management and leadership approach with 19 papers; in turn, innovation with a focus on social and traditional entrepreneurship adds up to 17; the perspective of personal performance, cooperation and competition registers 16 papers; likewise, the digital-technology theme

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presents 10 papers; the company-client communication approach obtained 9 publications; innovation research with gender influence counts with 8 studies; and others with 8 articles. See figure 3.

Figure 3: Ranking of Innovation in tourism business articles, according to study focus, period, 2018-2023.

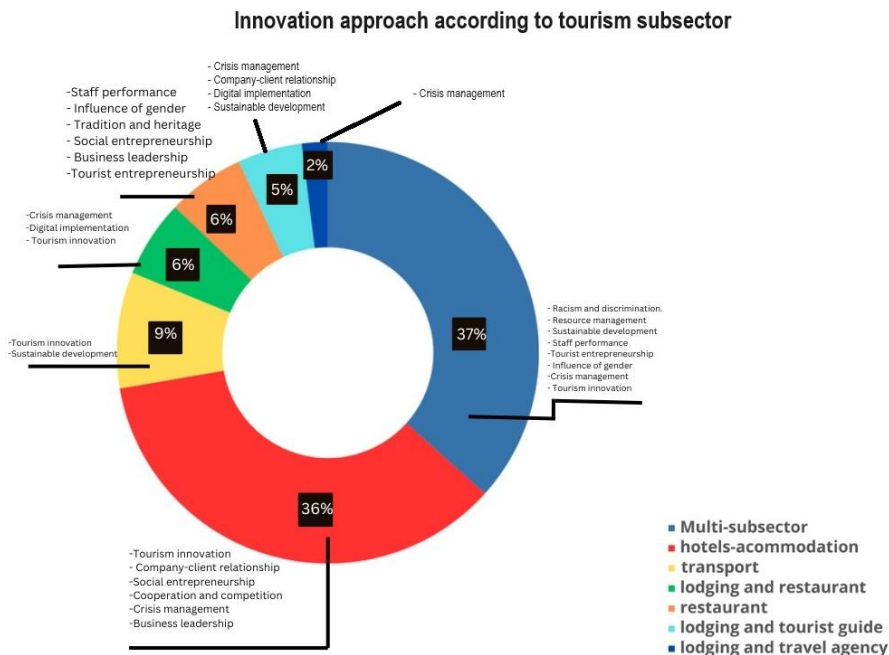


Note. Own elaboration with information from the six best Marketing journals ranked in the first quartile Q1, according to SCImago Journal Ranking, 2023.

On the other hand, the results of the innovation approach by tourism subsector report interest in the multisubsector and hotel groups. The simultaneous research work on all tourism agents (hotels-hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, tour guides), called multisubsectoral, manages to occupy the first place with 37% of research followed closely with 36% for the hotel subsector; between them they add up to 73%. Likewise, the transportation business registers 9 %; the lodging-restaurants subsector continues with 6 %; the restaurants subsector with 6 %; the lodging-tourist guide subsector with 5 %; finally, the lodging-travel agency subsectors only register 2 % of publications.

The common thematic pattern identified in the tourism subsectors was "sustainable innovation", "crisis management with leadership" and "entrepreneurship through cultural and social tourism".

Figure 4: Innovation approach by tourism subsector, period 2018-2023.



Note: Prepared by the authors with information from six tourism journals ranked in the first quartile Q1, according to Scimago Journal Rank, 2023.

Table 1 shows a long list of authors specialized in tourism business grouped according to categorized approaches, which facilitate the continuity of more studies focused on following the interest of the scientific community in the tourism sector.

References of articles reviewed and classified by focus in Innovation in tourism business, period 2018-2023.

FOCUS	BIBLIOGRAPHY .
Innovation with a focus on Sustainable Development	Weaver, D., Moyle, B., Casali, L., and McLennan, C. (2022); Ruiz, M., Parra, G., and Garcia, P. (2021); Nolan, C. T., Garavan, T. N., and Lynch, P. (2020); Zhang, L., and Zhang, J. (2018); Szromek, A., Herman, K., and Naramski, M. (2021); Halkier, H., Müller, D., Goncharova, N., Kiriyanova, L., Kolupanova, I. A., Yumatov, K., and Yakimova, N. S. (2019); Córcoles, M., Parra Requena, G., García, P., and Ruiz, M. (2023); Thomsen, B., Thomsen, J., Copeland, K., Coose, S., Arnold, E., Bryan, H., Prokop, K., Cullen, K., Vaughn, C., Rodriguez, B., Muha, R., Arnold, N., Winger, H., and Chalich, G. (2023); Rasoolimanesh, S. M., Ramakrishna, S., Hall, C. M., Esfandiar, K., and Seyfi, S. (2023); Kornilaki, M., Thomas, R., and Font, X. (2019); Kallmuenzer, A., Nikolakis, W., Peters, M. and Zanon, J. (2018); Memili, E., Fang, H., Koç, B., Yildirim-Öktem, Ö. and Sonmez, S. (2018); Alos-Simo, L., Verdu-Jover, A. and Gomez-Gras, J. (2023); McTiernan, C., Musgrave, J. and Cooper, C. (2023); Hopkins, D. (2020); Ngo, T., Lohmann, G. and Hales, R. (2018); Sørensen, F. and Grindsted, T. S. (2021); Scheyvens, R., Carr, A., Movono, A., Hughes, E., Higgins-Desbiolles, F. and Mika, J. P. (2021); Sørensen, F. and Bærenholdt, J. O. (2020); Liu, A. and Wu, D. C. (2019); Aquino, R. S., Lück, M. and Schänzel, H. A. (2018); Eichelberger, S., Peters, M., Pikkemaat, B. and Chan, C. (2020); Martin, C. and Ciobanu, T. (2019); Divisekera, S. and Nguyen, V. (2018); Verreyne, M., Williams, A., Ritchie, B., Gronuma, S. and Betts, K. (2019); Raad, J., Sharma, A. and Nicolau, J. (2023); Kallmuenzer, A., Kraus, S., Peters, M., Steiner, J. and Cheng, C. F. (2019); Buijtenlijk, H., Van-Heiningen, J. and Duineveld, M. (2021); Henderson, I., Avis, M. and Tsui, W. (2018); Kallmuenzer, A. and Peters, M. (2018); Fu, H., Okumus, F., Wu, K. and Köseoglu, M. (2019); Sardo, F., Serrasqueiro, Z. and Alves, H. (2018); Pavlatos, O. (2021); Hameed, W., Nisar, Q. and Wu, H. (2021); Çakmak, E., Lie, R., and McCabe, S. (2018); Çakmak, E., Lie, R., Selwyn, T., and Leeuwis, C. (2021); Bianco, S., Zach, F., and Liu, A. (2022).
Innovation with a management and leadership approach	Zhang, W., Williams, A., Li, G., and Liu, A. (2022); Jiang, Y., Ritchie, B., and Verreyne, M. (2021); Faisal, A., Albrecht, J., and Coetzee, W. (2020); Vivel-Búa, M., Lado-Sestayo, R., and Otero-González, L. (2019); Luu, T. (2019); Jiang, Y., Ritchie, B. and Verreyne, M. (2023); Rastrollo-Horrillo, M. and Rivero, M. (2019); Breier, M., Kallmuenzer, A., Clauss, T., Gast, J., Kraus, S. and Tiberius, V. (2021); Memili, E., Fang, H. and Koç, B. (2023); Alonso, A., Bressan, A., Kok, S., Sakellarios, N., Thi Kim Vu, O., O'Shea, M., Koresis, A., Solis, M., and Santoni, L. (2022); Sakellarios, N., Alonso, A., Kok, S., O'Brien, S., Fillis, I., and Vu, O. (2022); García-Villaverde, P., Elche, D., and Martínez-Pérez, Á. (2020); Kim, M., Lee, S. K., and Roehl, W. S. (2018); Dias, Á., Silva, G., Patuleia, M., and González-Rodríguez, M. (2023); Yachin, J., and Ioannides, D. (2020); Usman, M., Ali, M., Ogbonnaya, C., and Babalola, M.T. (2021); Hoang, G., Luu, T., Nguyen, T., Du, T., and Le, L. (2022); Liu, C., and Lee, T. (2019); Castañeda, J., Rey, J., Elkhwesky, Z., and Salem, I. (2023).
Innovation with a focus on social and traditional entrepreneurship	Falk, M. and Hagsten, E. (2018); Vu, O., Alonso, A., Martens, W., Ha, L., Tran, T. and Nguyen, T. (2022); Randolph, R. V., Memili, E., Koç, B., Young, S. L., Yildirim-Öktem, Ö. and Sönmez, S. (2022a); Jorgensen, M., Hansen, A., Sorensen, F., Fuglsang, L., Sundbo, J., Jensen, J. (2021); Mottiar, Z., Boluk, K. and Kline, C. (2018); Aquino, R. (2022); Romão, J. (2020); Kallmuenzer, A. and Peters, M. (2018); Yachin, J. (2021); Zhang, H., Lu, L., and Sun, F. (2021); Fu, H., Chen, W., Huang, X., Li, M., and Köseoglu, M. (2020); Moyle, C. lee, Moyle, B., and Burgers, H. (2020); Aquino, R., Lück, M., and Schänzel, H. (2018); Verreyne, M., Williams, A., Ritchie, B., Gronum, S., and Betts, K. (2019); Lee, C., Hallak, R., and Sardeshmukh, S. (2019); Prima Lita, R., Fitriana Faisal, R., and Meuthia, M. (2020); Jung, T., Lee, H., Chung, N., and Tom Dieck, M. (2018).

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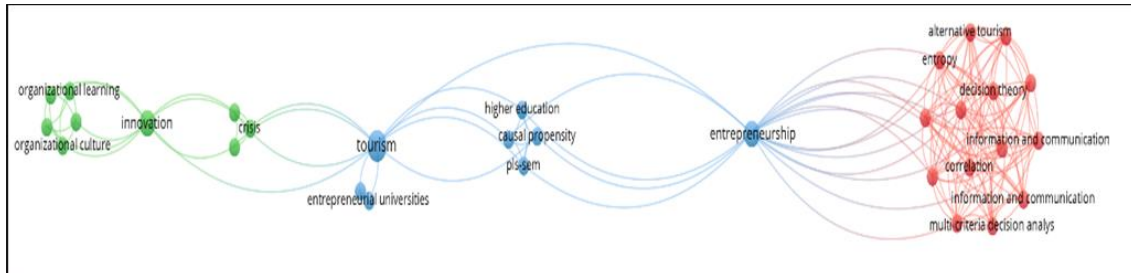
Innovation with a focus on labor and cooperative performance	Gamage, T. and Tajeddini, K. (2022); Seo, K., Woo, L., Mun, S. and Soh, J. (2021); Martínez-Pérez, Á., Elche, D. and García-Villaverde, P. (2021); Elbaz, A., Haddoud, M. and Shehawy, Y. (2018); Liu, C. (2018); Rao, Y., Fang, M. and Liu, C. (2023); Prayag, G. and Dassanayake, D. (2023); Sanchez-Medina, A., Arteaga-Ortiz, J., Naumchik, R. and Pellejero, M. (2020); Manoharan, A., Sardeshmukh, S. and Gross, M. (2019); Wang, S., Hung, K. and Huang, W. J. (2019); Fong, V., Wong, I. and Hong, J. (2018); Bahar, V., Nenonen, S. and Starr, R. (2022); Kim, M., Roehl, W., and Lee, S. (2020); Wilke, E., Costa, B., Freire, O., and Ferreira, M. (2019); Kallmuenzer, A., Zach, F. J., Wachter, T., Kraus, S., and Salner, P. (2021); Jooss, S., Lenz, J., and Burbach, R. (2023).
Innovation with a focus on technology and digital development	Lee, C. and Hallak, R. (2020); Oliveira, T., Araujo, B. and Tam, C. (2020); Ditta-Apichai, M., Gretzel, U. and Kattiyapornpong, U. (2023); Tajeddini, K., Martin, E. and Ali, A. (2020); Mcleod, M., Vaughan, D., Edwards, J. and Moital, M. (2022); Perelygina, M., Kucukusta, D. and Law, R. (2022); Pizam, A., Ozturk, A. B., Balderas-Cejudo, A., Buhalis, D., Fuchs, G., Hara, T., Meira, J., Revilla, R. G. M., Sethi, D., Shen, Y., State, O., Hacikara, A. and Chaulagain, S. (2022); Zach, F., Nicolau, J. and Sharma, A. (2020); Filieri, R., D'Amico, E., Destefanis, A., Paolucci, E. and Raguseo, E. (2021); Chapa, P., Lojano, J. and Ceballos, G. (2023).
Innovation with a focus on company-customer communication	Gonzalez, O., Gloria Berenguer, G., and Serra, A. (2019); Albayrak, T., Herstein, R., Caber, M., Drori, N., Bideci, M., and Berger, R. (2018); Lin, M., Sharma, A., Pan, B., and Quadri-Felitti, D. (2023); Alford, P., and Jones, R. (2020); Line, N. D., Dogru, T., El-Manstrly, D., Buoye, A., Malthouse, E. and Kandampully, J. (2020); Afaq, A., Gaur, L. and Singh, G. (2023); González-Reverté, F., Gomis-López, J. and Díaz-Luque, P. (2023); Marcher, A., Kofler, I., Innerhofer, E. and Pechlaner, H. (2022); Filieri, R., Milone, F. L., Paolucci, E. and Raguseo, E. (2023).
Innovation with a gender approach	Ribeiro, M., Adam, I., Kimbu, A., Afenyo-Agbe, E., Adeola, O., Figueroa-Domecq, C. and Jong, A. (2021); Kutlu, G. and Ngoasong, M. (2023); Khoo, C., Yang, E., Tan, R., Alonso-Vazquez, M., Ricaurte-Quijano, C., Pécot, M. and Barahona-Canales, D. (2023); Maliva, N., Anderson, W., Buchmann, A. and Dashper, K. (2023); Figueroa-Domecq, C., De Jong, A., Kimbu, A. and Williams, A. (2022); Filimonau, V., Matyakubov, U., Matniyozov, M., Shaken, A., and Mika, M. (2022); Lindvert, M., Laven, D., and Gelbman, A. (2022); Figueroa-Domecq, C., De Jong, A., and Williams, A. (2020).
Others	Song, S. and Lee, S. (2020); Holder, A., Ruhanen, L., Walters, G. and Mkono, M. (2023); Sharma, A., Shin, H., Santa-Maria, M. and Nicolau, J. (2021); Dogru, T., Mody, M. and Suess, C. (2019); Zopiatis, A., Savva, C. and Lambertides, N. (2020); Presenza, A., Messeni, A. and Sheehan, L. (2019); Lee, C., Pung, J. and Del Chiappa, G. (2022); Wang, W., Ding, L., Chan, J. and Qi, X. (2022).

Note: Prepared by the authors with information from tourism journals ranked in the first quartile Q1, according to SCImago Journal Rank.

Figure 5 presents the keyword co-occurrence graph as part of the bibliometric analysis. We sought to demonstrate how key terms are related to each other in the tourism business innovation literature of articles indexed in Scopus databases, period 2028-2023. Larger nodes suggest more preponderant terms. Thus the size and position of the nodes "entrepreneurship" and "information and communication" are very frequent and central areas in the tourism literature. Smaller nodes, such as "causal propensity" and "pls-sem", are specialized and emerging terms that are beginning to gain traction in the literature. Analysis at the level of the density of connections around "entrepreneurship" shows that this is an interdisciplinary topic that intersects with other key topics such as "higher education", "alternative tourism", and "decision theory". In other words, innovation in tourism entrepreneurship is being studied from multiple angles, including education, sustainable development and executive decision making. On the other hand, the grouping of terms "alternative tourism", "entropy", "decision theory", "correlation", and "multi-criteria decision analysis" suggests a subfield of research focused on the analysis and methodology of decisions in tourism. These terms are related to studies that use quantitative approaches to evaluate patterns and effects of tourism in various contexts. The green nodes represent a relevant thematic area at the organizational level, while the blue and red nodes represent emerging areas. The flows between the nodes show the relationships between the terms; along these lines, the analysis suggests that there is a strong intersection between tourism and entrepreneurship, which is a key theme in

current research. Entrepreneurial universities also play a significant role, indicating an interest in how higher education can foster innovation in tourism. Technical terms such as "multi-criteria decision analysis" and "entropy" refer to the approach to complex decision making in difficult or crisis situations and systems modeling applied to tourism planning and management. The presence of the term "alternative tourism" suggests an emerging approach related to forms of tourism that deviate from traditional models, focusing on sustainability, ecological or cultural tourism.

Figure 5: Outcome of most and least addressed trends in relation to innovation in tourism businesses.



Note. Keywords with the highest incidence

Source: Own elaboration with bibliographic data from Scopus.

DISCUSSION

Based on the objectives and results, seven approaches to innovation in tourism companies have been identified: sustainable development; crisis management with leadership; entrepreneurship towards cultural and social tourism; cooperative work performance; technology with digital development; company-customer communication and gender approach. In this regard, these findings are partially consistent with the literature review by Cao, et al. (2022), which revealed three approaches: innovation with sustainable development, innovation with leadership and the approach related to the leading role of customers. Regarding common thematic patterns in tourism subsectors, the present literature review study detected as recurrent themes "business innovation with sustainable development", "crisis management with leadership" and the pattern "entrepreneurship related to cultural and social tourism" result similar to authors who reveal the presence of sustainable innovation (SI) as a key piece that promotes changes in business models (Elkhwesky et al., 2022; Hernandez et al., 2021; Reficco, et al., 2018). The aforementioned studies identified sustainable innovation in the hotel sector as a central area, unlike the present study, which focused on analyzing all economic agents, including hotels, restaurants, transportation, tour guides, travel agencies, among others. Likewise, the present study detected the interest of researchers in studying companies according to their size and found that small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which represent the vast majority of companies in the tourism sector, generated interest in the publications reviewed. This result coincides with the review of Marasco, et al., (2018) that a total of 79 articles reviewed, the study found research with collaborative approach in tourism subsectors of both micro, small and medium enterprises, specifying the relevance for the latter.

CONCLUSIONS

1. In the 2018-2023 period, tourism journals prioritized seven thematic axes in order of citation: sustainable development; crisis management with leadership; entrepreneurship through cultural and social tourism; cooperative work performance; technology with digital development; company-customer communication and gender approach.
2. The common pattern reflected in the analyzed studies of innovation from tourism businesses is "sustainable development, "crisis management with leadership" and "entrepreneurship related to cultural and social tourism".
Although innovation in tourism businesses is being studied from different angles, the emerging approach is collaborative innovation aimed at cultural and social tourism ventures, which is emerging as a trend in the coming years, according to the bibliometric analysis.
3. Priority is given to research on two economic agents of the tourism sector. The first of these is the so-called multisubsectoral, which involves simultaneous research on all tourism agents (hotel-hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, tour guides), and the second is focused on the hotel subsector; both segments are centered on small and medium-sized enterprises.

LIMITATIONS AND LINES OF RESEARCH

This study contributes to better organize the body of knowledge on innovation in tourism businesses in recent years. One of the limitations of this work is that it does not include journals from a larger number of bibliographic databases, as well as from other sources such as papers and book chapters. Future research can include, in addition to these aspects, the criterion of making a comparison by regions or countries regarding the current state of innovation in tourism businesses.

Other studies should also delve into emerging themes that will set trends in the coming years, such as "entrepreneurship related to cultural and social tourism", which seeks the integral development of communities.

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