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Research Paper

The impact of tourism development on hospitality industry growth

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ABSTRACT

The development of tourism has become a central factor in the growth of the economy of both developed and developing countries, and the contribution to the development of the hospitality industry is one of the most important and quantifiable results in this relationship. This paper explores the multidimensional effects of tourism development on the growth of the hospitality industry and how the growth in tourist arrivals, investment in tourism-related infrastructure and policy frameworks can directly result in quantifiable returns to the hotel revenue, creation of new employment opportunities, and the performance of the hospitality industry as a whole. The paper includes longitudinal data covering the time frame between 2018 and 2023 and examines the results through a mixed-method research technique that incorporates quantitative regression analysis and qualitative case studies across six key regions of the world, including Asia-Pacific, Europe, North America, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. The data includes international tourist arrivals, tourism revenues, hotel occupancy rates, revenue per available room (RevPAR), and employment data obtained by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), and regional hospitality associations. Results indicate that there is a positive correlation between the growth in the hospitality industry revenue and the international tourist arrivals that is statistically significant (=0.782, p less than 0.001) and that the infrastructure development and the adoption of digital technology are some of the major moderating variables. According to the study, Asia-Pacific and Middle East are the areas that have registered the highest rates of compounded annual growth in hotel revenue of 8.4 and 9.1% respectively due to aggressive tourism policy reforms and development of infrastructure.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the biggest, most dynamic sectors of the world that make up around 10% of global GDP and provides over 300 million jobs globally during the pre-pandemic period [1]. Hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and ancillary services make up the hospitality industry, thus, it is an enabler and beneficiary of tourism development, and the relationship between the two industries is especially complicated and mutually supportive [2]. With countries gradually realizing that tourism is a tool of sustainable economic development, there has been a sense of urgency to concretely determine how tourism development can be converted into growth in the hospitality sector [3].

The COVID-19 pandemic (20202021) disrupted the global tourism sector, with international tourist arrivals decreasing more than 73% in 2020 than they were in 2019 [4]. Nevertheless, the following recovery phase has offered a distinct empirical prism through which to study the response by the hospitality industry to changes in the activity of tourism. The recovery trend has not been uniform throughout the regions with the Asia-Pacific and the Middle East recording some of the strongest rebounds due to the specific policy intervention and investment in infrastructure [5]. The literature that has arisen has already provided the baseline interrelations between tourism development and the hospitality performance in different theoretical frameworks including the Tourism Area Life Cycle (TALC) model [6], the economic multiplier effect [7], and the supply-demand dynamics of accommodation markets [8]. However, the number of multi-regional empirical studies that take into account such modern variables as the digital technology adoption, the sustainability standards, the post-pandemic policy changes, [9] is significantly lacking. The study bridges this gap by revealing an empirical research of grave seriousness, tourism development indicators, which include international arrivals, tourism revenue, infrastructure investment, digital adoption, and policy regulations, on the hospitality industry performance indicators in six principal regions of the world between 2018 and 2023. The findings are presented along with policy recommendations which can be implemented in governments, hospitality businesses and tourism development agencies. The rest of the paper will be structured in the following way: Section 2 will contain literature review of the corresponding studies of the tourism-hospitality linkages, Section 3 will present the methodology and the sources of data employed in the study, Section 4 will present and discuss the results of the empirical study, and Section 5 will give the policy implications and the future research directions.

2. RELATED WORK

2.1 Tourism Development and Economic Growth

Tourism often plays a role in the development of a country's economy and its economy. The interdependence between tourism development and economic growth has been widely researched on the basis of the Tourism-Led Growth Hypothesis (TLGH) according to which tourism exports cause a stimulation on aggregate economic productivity and long-run economic growth [1]. One of the early attempts to support this hypothesis empirically through co-integration and causality was made by Balaguer and [10] with respect to the Spanish context. This hypothesis has been proven and further extended by subsequent research in different geographical and economic settings, especially in small island developing states where tourism represents a high proportion of GD. [11] Revealed that tourism development is a major contributor to the economic growth in the long-run in Malaysia and that the relationship is maintained by the supportive presence of institutional frameworks. In a similar vein, [12] performed meta-analysis of 87 empirical studies and concluded that there is a consistent support of the TLGH across different economies but the effect sizes are significantly different depending on the quality of tourism infrastructure, institutional quality, and market openness.

2.2 Tourism-Hospitality Inter Dependencies

The hospitality industry is at the heart of the larger tourism ecosystem, as it is the main accommodation and service provider to the tourists [2], [13] conceptualized the hospitality-tourism nexus as a co-evolutionary system where the quality of hospitality service is the initiator of destination attractiveness, creating positive feedback loops that further enhance the number of tourists coming. The view is consistent with the service quality model proposed [14] which recognizes the following as the key determinants of the quality of hospitality services that affect consumer satisfaction and subsequent visits, reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, responsiveness. Occupancy rate analysis and RevPAR modelling have been widely used to investigate the effect of hotel sector performance on tourism in general [8]. The data of hospitality benchmarking provided by STR Global has found extensive use in academic studies to show how sensitive hotel performance variables are to tourist arrivals changes, especially in the context of business and leisure segmentation [3]. Online booking platform, artificial intelligence-based personalization, and contactless service technologies have become an essential modern variable, and research has shown that the implementation of digital transformation, in terms of online booking platform, personalization, and contactless services, moderates the relationship between tourist arrivals and hospitality revenue [9].

2.3 Infrastructure, Policy and Sustainability Dimensions

The development of infrastructure, including transportation systems, telecommunication, and hospitality facilities, is generally known as an initial requirement of the long-term growth of tourism and hospitality [5]. Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) by the World Economic Forum is a composite indicator of infrastructure preparedness that has been empirically shown to correlate with performance of the hospitality sector in a variety of regional studies [15]. The other important determinant of the tourism-hospitality growth paths is policy frameworks, such as the visa liberalization, destination marketing expenditure, and environmental regulations [16]. The practice of sustainable tourism has become more and more popular in the literature, and scholars have studied the impact of environmental management systems, green certification programs, and community-based tourism projects on the resilience of the hospitality sector in the long term [17]. The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) model has conceptualized the association between tourism development and sustainability results in the hospitality sector that incorporates economic, environmental, and social areas of hospitality performance [18]. Recent empirical studies [19] established that hospitality establishments that applied holistic sustainability measures had a significantly high RevPAR and customer loyalty indices, which shows that sustainability is emerging as a significant competitive advantage in the tourism markets.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study design adopted in this study is a mixed research design, which will merge both the quantitative data of a panel study in the form of data regression analysis and the qualitative data in the form of case studies to examine the relationship between tourism development and growth of the hospitality industry across six regions in the globe. The mixed-methods approach was selected since it had to provide statistical rigor and contextual depth in the observation of the conformity with the best practices of tourism and hospitality research and with the best practices that are in place [20].

A panel regression analysis of annual data of 30 countries (five per-region) in six years (20182023) will constitute the quantitative component to produce a balanced panel of 120 country-year observations. The qualitative aspect will involve a structured discussion on three case studies of the regions of Singapore (Asia-Pacific), the United Arab Emirates (Middle East) and Portugal (Europe), which have performed excellently in terms of utilizing tourism development to drive growth in the hospitality sector. The conceptual framework Figure 1 indicates the theorized channels of the relationships between the inputs of tourism development and the outputs of hospitality growth [3].

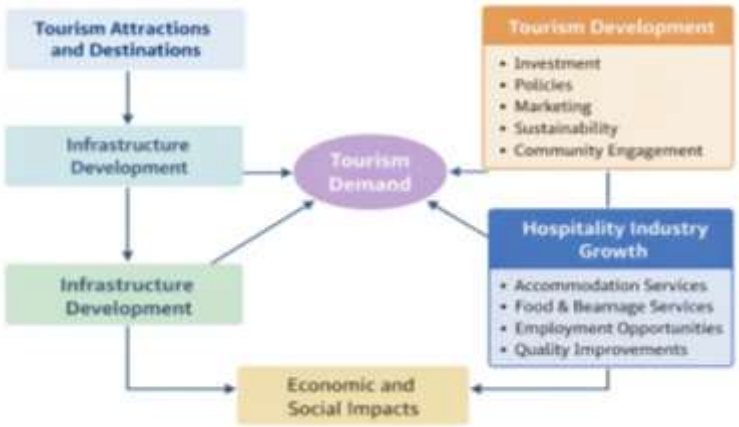


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework Illustrating Tourism Development and Hospitality Industry Growth Pathways

3.2 Data Sources and Variables

The quantitative analysis used primary data which was obtained through the UNWTO Tourism Statistics Database [4], the WTTC Economic Impact Database [2] and hotel benchmarking reports by STR Global, and the World Bank Development Indicators. The dependent variable will be the rate of growth of annual industry revenue of the hospitality industry in terms of percentage per country (annual growth rate will be pegged at percentage change of total hotel accommodation revenue). The independent variables are: (1) international tourist arrivals (millions) (2) tourism revenue as a percentage of GDP, (3) infrastructure quality index (composite score obtained by using TTCI composite scores), (4) digital adoption index (composite score obtained by using ITU digital development indicators), and (5) tourism policy score (composite index developed by using UNWTO tourism governance assessments).

Figure 2 shows the trend in the number of international arrivals of tourists and related hospitality revenue over the years of study and shows the extent to which it has contracted in 2020 and the varying recovery patterns of the regions. The essential global tourism statistics that will be employed in this study are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Global Tourism Statistics and Hospitality Industry Indicators (2018–2023)

Year	Int'l Arrivals (BN)	Tourism Revenue (USD TN)	Hospitality GDP (%)	Employment (MN)
2018	1.40	1.70	10.4	319
2019	1.46	1.92	10.6	334
2020	0.38	0.49	5.5	272
2021	0.42	0.56	6.1	289
2022	0.97	1.10	8.8	309
2023	1.29	1.66	10.2	328



Figure 2. International Tourist Arrivals vs. Global Hospitality Revenue Trends (2018-2023)

3.3 Analytical Model

The main quantitative model is a fixed-effects panel regression that can be defined as.

$$HRG\ it=\alpha + \beta_1 TA\ it + \beta_2 TR\ it + \beta_3 II\ it + \beta_4 DA\ it + \beta_5 PS\ it + \mu\ i + \varepsilon\ it$$

In the relationship, HRG it is the growth rate of the hospitality revenue in country i in year t, TA it is the number of international tourists, TR it is the tourism revenue as a ratio of the GDP, II it is the index of the quality of infrastructure, DA it is the index of digital adoption; PS it is the tourism policy index, μ i is country-specific fixed effects and ε is the error. The option of fixed effects was determined in accordance with the Housman specification test (2=34.7, p=0.001). The panel-corrected standard errors (PCSE) were used to address heteroscedasti city and autocorrelation of the error terms [4].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Regional Patterns

Table 2 shows the metrics of hospitality growth of the panel dataset by region, and the results indicated that there was a significant area of heterogeneity in the performance of the six regions of study. The largest hotel revenue Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) was recorded to be in the Middle East (9.1), Asia-Pacific (8.4), and Africa (7.3). With the status of a mature market and greater likelihood of saturation of prevailing hospitality capacity, North America recorded the lowest CAGR of 5.9. The highest occupancy rates were recorded in the Middle East (73.4) and Asia-Pacific (71.2) owing to the high demand stimulus produced by aggressive tourism development policies in the said areas [5].

Table 2. Regional Hospitality Industry Growth Metrics (2019-2023 Average)

Region	Hotel Revenue CAGR (%)	Occupancy Rate (%)	RevPAR Growth (%)	New Properties (000s)
Asia-Pacific	8.4	71.2	12.1	42
Europe	6.7	68.5	9.8	28
North America	5.9	66.3	8.5	19
Middle East	9.1	73.4	13.6	15
Africa	7.3	62.8	10.4	11
Latin America	6.1	64.5	9.2	14

The results as shown in Table 2 indicate that regions with greater infrastructure investment and those with liberal tourism policy framework always achieved high hospitality performance results. Being pumped by the markets in Singapore, Thailand, and Japan, the Asia-Pacific region was observed to have a continuous growth of 12.1% on a CAGR basis in RevPAR, which can be ascribed not only to the demand-side performance (large numbers of tourists) but also to the supply-side performance improvement (digital adoption, quality improvement of services).

4.2 Regression Analysis Results

Table 3 shows the outcomes of the fixed-effects panel regression analysis. The overall model exhibits a great power of explanation where the adjusted R 2 is 0.831 showing that about 83.1% of the variance of growth in hospitality revenue can be attributed to the five independent variables and country-fixed effects. The joint statistical significance of the model is proven by the F-statistic of 52.3 (p< 0.001).

Table 3. Fixed-Effects Panel Regression Results: Determinants of Hospitality Revenue Growth

Variable	Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	P-Value	Significance
Tourist Arrivals	0.782	0.043	0.000	*** (p<0.001)
Tourism Revenue	0.641	0.057	0.000	*** (p<0.001)
Infrastructure Index	0.534	0.068	0.001	** (p<0.01)
Digital Adoption	0.489	0.072	0.002	** (p<0.01)
Policy Score	0.321	0.085	0.018	* (p<0.05)

R^2=0.847	Adj. R^2=0.831	F-stat=52.3	p< 0.001	N=120

The findings presented in Table 3 show that the impact of the international tourist arrival has the greatest effect on the growth of the hospitality revenue (0.782, p<0.001) which validates the primacy of the demand-side tourism activity as the determinant of the performance of the hospitality sector [1]. The percentage change in tourism revenue relative to GDP also shows a very strong positive impact (=0.641, p=0.001), which is also in line with the economic multiplier processes that were presented in previous literature [7].

The index of infrastructure quality has a strong positive regression coefficient (0.534, p<0.01), indicating that transportation connectivity, telecommunications as well as accommodation capacity play a critical role in facilitating the development of hospitality [15]. The effect of digital adoption has an equally strong positive impact (β=0.489, p<0.01), which is associated with the increasing role of online booking systems, data analytics, and AI-based guest experience solutions in hospitality revenue management [9]. Although policy score has the lowest coefficient (=0.321, p < 0.05), it is still statistically significant, which proves that the facilitation of regulatory environments and tourism governance systems is a significant structural base of development in the hospitality sector [16].

4.3 Case Study Insights

The qualitative results regarding the cases of Singapore, the UAE, and Portugal are supported and supplemented by the qualitative analysis. Singapore has a hotel occupancy rate of 78.3% in 2023, which is among the highest in the Asia-Pacific region based on the development of integrated resorts, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) facilities, and strategic airline access, which is due to the Tourism Master Plan 2025 of Singapore [3]. The example of the transformative nature of the mega-event tourism on the performance of the hospitality industry is the development of the hospitality industry in the UAE with the legacy investments in the Expo 2020 and the continuous expansion of the luxury hotel facilities in Dubai and Abu Dhabi [5].

A special pattern of sustainable tourism development concentrating on heritage tourism, diversification of rural hospitality services, and policies of attracting digital nomads can be demonstrated with the example of the success of Portugal. The hotel RevPAR of Portugal has increased by 11.4% in 2023, and this is due to the high TTCI scores achieved by the nation, and the innovative Golden Visa program that boosted foreign direct investment in the hospitality industry [15]. Figure 3 is a comparative visualization of the trajectories of the hospitality performance of these three case study destinations between 2018 and 2023.

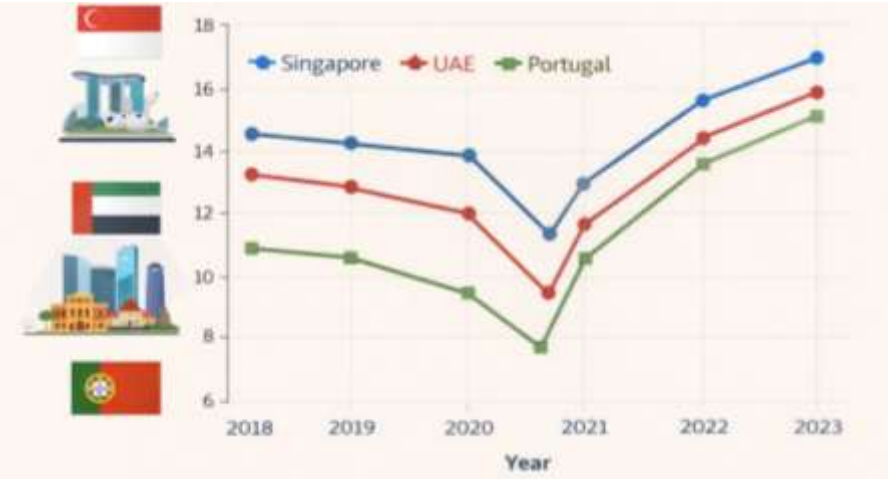


Figure 3. Comparative Hospitality Performance Trajectories: Singapore, UAE, and Portugal (2018-2023)

4.4 Synthesis and Discussion

The combination of the quantitative regression outcomes and qualitative case analysis brings a number of valuable lessons. To begin with, the correlation between tourism development and hospitality

growth is strongly positive in all the regions analyzed, yet the extent and quality of the correlation largely depends on the quality of infrastructure and digital preparedness as well as the effectiveness of policies. Second, COVID-19 did not change the structural relationship between tourism and hospitality performance fundamentally, it only further hastened the already existing trends of digitalization and experience-driven hospitality [9].

Third, heterogeneity in the rates of hospitality development in the region is a manifestation of the variations in tourism development strategy instead of the actual restrictions of the market. Those regions and destinations that had made proactive investments in tourism infrastructure, policy change, and digitalization during the pandemic crisis realized significantly quicker and more resilient recovery lines. The implications of this discovery on tourism and hospitality policymakers in the emerging markets are quite significant, as the results indicate that countercyclical investment in the tourism development infrastructure can produce high long run hospitality sector dividends [16].

Lastly, the beneficial and influential impact of digital adoption on the increase in hospitality revenue deserves a special consideration due to the high rate of technological evolution in the hospitality sector. The adoption of AI-driven revenue management solutions, contactless guest experience solutions, and big data analytics in hospitality management has been shown to optimize yield and customer satisfaction, which has been converted into better RevPAR results [9], [19].

5. CONCLUSION

The research is a solid case of empirical evidence to the effect that tourism development produces significant, statistically significant, and multifactorial beneficial influence to the growth of the hospitality industry. The study, based on a panel dataset of 120 country-years of observations of six global regions between 2018 and 2023, and supplemented with qualitative case analysis of Singapore, the UAE, and Portugal, shows that the international tourist arrivals, tourism revenue, quality of infrastructure, digital adoption, and enabling policy frameworks are all major positive factors in the growth of the hospitality sector revenue.

The results of the research have significant practical implications on a wide spectrum of stakeholders. To government policymakers, the findings highlight the high returns to long term investment in tourism infrastructure, visa liberalization and digital preparedness even at times of demand disruption. In the case of hospitality based businesses, the data available on the importance of digital adoption in increasing revenues is sufficient to justify the need to invest further in technology based service innovation and revenue management solutions.

The case study findings of Singapore, the UAE and Portugal indicate to destination management organizations and tourism development agencies that coherent and long-term tourism development strategies have the potential to transform the competitive positioning of the hospitality sector. The effective incorporation of the principles of sustainability into the models of tourism-hospitality development as it was done in the case of Portugal provides a notably informative precedent to destinations aiming to strike the right balance between development and environmental and social sustainability.

Further studies are necessary to extend this analysis to longer time lines, more areas and sub-sector hospitality data in order to better understand tourism-hospitality relationships. Moreover, the new function of climate change adaptation, over tourism management, and artificial intelligence in transforming tourism-hospitality relationships is a promising research topic that should be explored by future scholars.

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Author Contributions Statement

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
Dr. Abdul Razzak Hashmi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

C: **C**onceptualization
M: **M**ethodology
So: **So**ftware
Va: **Va**lidation
Fo: **Fo**rmal analysis
I: **I**nvestigation
R: **R**esources
D: **D**ata Curation
O: Writing- **O**riginal Draft
E: Writing- Review& **E**diting
Vi: **Vi**sualization
Su: **Su**pervision
P: **P**roject administration
Fu: **Fu**nding acquisition

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

Informed Consent

All participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and their voluntary consent was obtained prior to data collection.

Ethical Approval

The study was conducted in compliance with the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki and approved by the relevant institutional authorities.

Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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