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# The State of Academic Research Advancement in Hospitality: A 5-Year Review From 2018 To 2022 of the Jordanian Universities

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**Abstract:** Scientific research in the field of hospitality occupies a distinguished position in various research aspects, as it constitutes an important proportion of scientific research related to management, especially business administration, as well as an important aspect of practical research related to social and human sciences. For this reason, this study is presented to track the development of scientific research in the field of hospitality in Jordan and the aspects it touched upon. A comprehensive systematic review approach of five years of hospitality-published research on google scholar was carried out by tracking the official website of scholars in Jordanian universities. A total of 73 hospitality-related articles on Google Scholar by Jordanian scholars at public universities over the past five years were collected and analyzed for this review. The results showed that there is an abundance of research products for the year 2021, that researchers at the University of Jordan are the most scientifically productive in hospitality research, and that most of the research interests were related to human resource management in the field of hospitality. This study provides an important theoretical contribution to guide future researchers to future issues of interest to the hospitality sector in Jordan that were not addressed by the researchers.

**Keywords:** Hospitality, academic scholars, scientific research, aspects of hospitality, Jordan.

## 1. Introduction

The hospitality industry is one of the industries that extended through the ages, as the first man relied on it since he started in the trade movement between cities, then the commercial movement developed to become between countries and continents, and it was necessary to have boxes that provided shelter for travelers and merchants and sheltering their animals and their means of transportation [1]. The movement of inns flourished to move from serving travelers and merchants from external roads to providing housing, food and drink for merchants and guests inside cities, and flourished greatly in light of the prosperity of civilizations and neighboring cities [2].

In the modern era, the hospitality industry has developed greatly and has become one of the most important global industries, as many families depend on it as a source of income, and hotel facilities, restaurants, resorts, and event centers have diversified greatly. These facilities have become an important place to work and provide huge job opportunities, high income source and successful investment projects [3].

And because of the huge economic returns of the hospitality industry and its direct impact on the country's economy and the urgent need for the presence of these facilities, which have become the main nerve of travel and the place of residence for domestic and foreign tourists [4]. All these reasons, countries have developed laws to protect and encourage these investments and provide an ideal safe environment for guests [5]. In addition, the management of these facilities requires huge trained human staff to provide excellent service to the guests [6]. It was necessary to find centers, institutes and universities that work to provide the trained and qualified employees necessary to fill the shortage and to provide that facility continuously with human capital [7]. For this reason, these educational institutions have spread all over the world and competed with each other to provide hotels with trained human staff in various specializations and fields of work in hospitality.

Due to the fierce competition between hospitality establishments to maintain their market share and attract new customers, they had to know the desires and needs of their customers, as well as know the motives of work or the rate of employee

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turnover [8]. For this reason, academic scholars in those educational institutions provide this service to the decision makers in order to know many things related to their industry. Developing countries follow the example of developed countries in supporting scientific research and directing and encouraging scholars toward issues that benefit society, the state, and its institutions. And there has become a specialization in scientific research, where each researcher specializes in a specific field. Accordingly, scholars in the faculties of tourism and hospitality specialized in providing research in various fields related to tourism and hotel establishments, their employees, and customers [9-12].

Jordan is one of the developing countries that consider the tourism and hospitality industry as a mainstay of its economy [13, 14]. It focused heavily on supporting this industry and providing trained manpower by encouraging the development of tourism and hospitality majors in institutes and universities and supporting research related to this industry [15]. Local and international scientific journals abounded with many kinds of research conducted by Jordanian scholars on various topics related to tourism and hospitality. Therefore, there was only one study by [16] that aimed to assess the nature and quality of Jordanian tourism research published in peer-reviewed journals by reviewing the objective, theoretical, and methodological aspects of these research in the field of tourism in three major databases (Science Direct, EBSCO, and Emerald) published in 63 journals until 2020 for review. However, research that tracked the development of the scientific research related to the hospitality sector in Jordan is rare. Accordingly, this study aimed to track the academic orientation of scientific research in the hospitality industry, following up scholars in educational institutions, knowing their orientations, and the most important topics that have been addressed, while mentioning the neglected aspects. This study also aimed at directing scientific research toward aspects that still need research and investigation and providing practical and scientific advice.

## 2. Literature Review

Jordan's hospitality, tourism, and events sector is an important driver of job creation and a dynamic driver of future employment opportunities, contributing 15% of GDP in a country known for its severe shortage of natural resources [17]. A review of the efforts of previous scholars helps to improve and understand the current research and to guide scholars towards future issues and away from topics that have been adequately covered in the research [18, 19]. It is useful to all decision-makers and government organizations. Where it is possible to benefit from the results of current research and understand the roles of each of them. Governments can take the required measures, especially with regard to tourists and the success of the tourism strategy. Tourism and hospitality stakeholders can understand everything about their employees to achieve higher financial performance and better business success [20]. In the field of tourism and hospitality, Jordanians' scholars have been interested in presenting studies on various topics hospitality such as marketing [21, 22] destination image [23] site management [1] accounting [24-26] planning and management and events [21, 27].

Others were interested in conducting studies on the employees of hotels and restaurants establishments, such as the factors affecting employee satisfaction [28] employees' innovation and creativity [28-30] job turnover and job burnout (Al-Badarneh et al., 2019), work stress [6] the impact of management and the leadership style on employees [22] and the factors affecting employee performance [1] etc.

While other research dealt with knowing the factors that affect customer satisfaction and expectations [21] customer behavior [31] marketing factors [22].

Due to the huge number of scientific publications and scholars' attempts to cover many aspects of the tourism and hospitality industry and shed light on some problems, very few scholars have paid attention to the importance of evaluating this number of scientific publications, tracking the stages of its emergence and development, and evaluating its content. One of the most recent studies is the study of [32] Who presented a study to find out the future research directions of scholars that address the most important challenges of the industry. They analyzed hospitality research and recent industry trends to determine which topics received the most attention. The results of the study showed that the characteristics of supply and demand, in addition to technology and environmental sustainability were the most researched industry priorities at the present time as well as the future direction of the scholars.

Another study by [33] aimed to identify and analyze the work that has been done to date regarding hospitality and tourism research in China from articles published in six major research journals. The result of his study revealed that the number of publications on Chinese tourism has been increasing over the years. Most of the articles (65%) focused on travel and tourism in general. Marketing accounts for (42%) followed by management (26%) and human resources (16%). The least researched areas were operations (3%) and finance (4%). Moreover, [34] conducted a study to reveal the state of qualitative research in the field of hospitality with regard to the methods and measurements used in these published papers in the first five journals that mainly publish articles related to the hospitality industry. A total of 197 articles were read and analyzed for this review. In addition, [35] conducted a study aimed at providing a personal view of the changes and trends in hospitality research since the formation of the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Research, and the context for these changes. Where the results of the study showed that the most party conducting hospitality research

are researchers in universities and that the largest percentage of research is through the quantitative methodology through the use of analytical software packages, and it was greatly affected by the new challenges in the industry, especially globalization.

### 3. Methodology

Comprehensive research on hospitality studies was conducted from 2018 to 2022 in order to achieve the objective of the study. This paper used academic databases located on the websites of Jordanian universities and institutes, specifically Google Scholar. Where the university provides on its website a special space for the academic staff to add their personal and academic information, such as the CV, Research Gate, Google Scholar, Scopus account, and others. Academic and administrative scholars at the university are aware of the importance of subscribing to these websites because of their importance in raising the university's global ranking, reviewing the most important published research, and the participation of specialized scholars. A systematic approach was applied to select published papers related to the hospitality industry in Jordan (hotels, restaurants, resorts, and event centers). First, the universities that study the specializations of tourism and hotels were identified, and then the name of the college was determined as it appears on the official website of the university, then the scientific publications of each faculty member were reviewed according to what is available on his Google Scholar account. The research was reviewed in chronological order from highest to lowest. Each study directly related to hospitality was selected. By way of assurance, the abstract of all papers referring directly to hospitality or more generally to the tourism industry has been reviewed to ensure that it touches on any focus on hospitality. For the review, 73 research papers related to the hospitality industry from the period 2018-2022 were selected, i.e. what was published in five years.

Secondly, a table was made with the names of universities that have an academic specialization in hospitality and tourism, and the number of faculty members in each college was counted, and faculty members were excluded in the specializations of antiquities or the maintenance of heritage resources, which are contained in some colleges of tourism. The study was limited to public universities only. The next step involved counting the number of research papers published in each university and per researcher related to hospitality. Therefore, this research study only includes journal articles and excludes doctoral theses and master's theses.

#### 3.1 Study Population:

In order to achieve the objective of the study, which is to know the number of scientific papers published related to the hospitality industry in Jordan and to know the attitudes of scholars, the study focused on colleges that study tourism and hotels at the bachelor's level, as mentioned in Table 1. The study sample was limited to faculty members in those disciplines. About the research published for all faculty members in relevant departments in colleges related to the hospitality industry.

##### 3.1.1 Academic Institutions

Table (1) shows that there is a recent interest in developing academic programs for bachelor's degrees in the tourism and hospitality sector in Jordanian public universities. Where a bachelor's program was introduced to specialize in hotel management at four public universities: Al-Hussein Bin Talal University, Al-Balqa University, Aqaba Branch, the University of Jordan, Aqaba Branch, and Yarmouk University.

**Table 1:** Public university, names of colleges, and years of foundation

| University                                     | College                                       | Years of establishment |
|--|---|------------------------|
| University of Jordan                           | College of Tourism and Hospitality Management | 2009                   |
| Yarmouk University                             | College of Tourism and Hotel Management       | 2011                   |
| Hashemite University                           | Queen Rania Faculty of Tourism & Heritage     | 1995                   |
| <a href="#">AlHussain Bin Talal University</a> | Petra College for Tourism and Archeology      | 2004                   |
| Al-Balqa Applied University                    | Aqaba University College                      | 2001                   |

##### 3.1.2 Academic staff

Public universities are constantly developing their own official websites, as they allocate a special staff of employees affiliated with the Computer Department or the Faculty of Information Technology. This site also allocates a special space for a faculty member in colleges to add his personal information, research interests, activities, and his own websites such as Google Scholar, Research gate, Scopes account, and others. Universities oblige every faculty member to add all of these things on the official website dedicated to faculty members on the college website.

The website of each college shows comprehensive information about the college, its vision, mission, goals, departments,

academic programs, plans, news, activities and other information in both Arabic and English. The site also contains a section for faculty members on each site and electronic links for each of them.

#### 4. Results

The number of faculty members in each of the colleges of the study population was counted between the information attached to each faculty member, his academic rank, methods of communication with him, and his research interests, in addition to the electronic links that we mentioned earlier.

**Table 2:** The number of faculty members and the number of research papers

| College of the University                     | Number of academic staff |        | Percent |
|---|--------------------------|--------|---------|
|   | Male                     | Female |         |
| College of Tourism and Hospitality Management | 10                       | 1      | 25%     |
| College of Tourism and Hotel Management       | 11                       | 4      | 34%     |
| Queen Rania Faculty of Tourism & Heritage     | 3                        | 2      | 11%     |
| Petra College for Tourism and Archeology      | 5                        | 0      | 11%     |
| Aqaba University College                      | 7                        | 1      | 19%     |
| Total   | 44                       |        |         |

The results of the second table showed that the Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management at Yarmouk University contains the highest percentage of faculty members, and this may be due to the presence of three programs at the bachelor's level, which are tourism management, hotel management, and the tour guide program, and the presence of a tourism program that grants a master's degree. This was followed by the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management at the University of Jordan, Aqaba Branch. The results also showed that the number of female faculty members is very small, i.e. 18% of the percentage of faculty members in colleges, and this was confirmed by previous studies, that Jordanian society is part of the conservative eastern Islamic society, which until recently prevented females from working in Tourism and hotels, as well as refusing to let the girl study tourism and hotels majors in Jordanian universities and institutes.

**Table 3:** percentage of publication each year

| Year  | 2018 | percent |
|-------|------|---------|
| 2018  | 13   | 17.8%   |
| 2019  | 11   | 15%     |
| 2020  | 15   | 20.5%   |
| 2021  | 20   | 27.4%   |
| 2022  | 14   | 19.3%   |
| Total | 73   | 100%    |

The results of the third.3 show the ratio of publication to year, as the results indicate that the highest rate of publishing scientific research on hospitality topics was in 2021, at a rate of 27.4%. This may be due to the closure and conversion of teaching to an online system due to COVID-19, so faculty members have taken advantage of government decisions to impose curfews and closures to prepare for scientific research. The results also indicate a decrease in the number of research related to the hospitality sector in 2022, reaching 19.3%, indicating a decrease of 8.1% from 2021.

**Table 4:** Percentage of publication for each college

| College of the University                     | No. of Publication in Hospitality | Percent |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------|
| College of Tourism and Hospitality Management | 27                                | 36.98%  |
| College of Tourism and Hotel Management       | 15                                | 20.85%  |
| Queen Rania Faculty of Tourism & Heritage     | 1                                 | 1.36%   |
| Petra College for Tourism and Archeology      | 16                                | 21.91%  |
| Aqaba University College                      | 14                                | 19.17%  |
| Total   | 73                                | 100%    |

Table.4 also shows the number of research published for each faculty, where the website was browsed on the Google Scholar account for each faculty member, and the research that talks about hospitality was limited, for the sake of credibility and not to repeat the search again, because most of the research is participatory between a number of scholars for that and to avoid repetition The research that talks about hospitality was calculated and calculated for the researcher if he was alone or the first researcher among the scholars, and in this way it was avoided to repeat the calculation of any research again. Therefore, the results showed that the faculty members at the University of Jordan, Aqaba branch, were the most active and published during the past five years with a rate of 36.98%, followed by the Petra College of Tourism

and Antiquities at Al-Hussein Bin Talal University with a rate of 21.91, then followed by the Faculty of Tourism and Hotel Management at Yarmouk University. with a percentage of 20.85, then followed by Aqaba University College at Al-Balqa Applied University with a percentage of 19.17. Queen Rania College of Tourism and Heritage came last, with a score of 1.36%, because the college does not have a hotel management major among its three departments: Department of Conservation Science, Department of Sustainable Tourism, and Department of Cultural Resources Management and Museology.

**Table 5:** The main themes of the published research

| Themes  | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Accounting<br>(Revenue, cost, pricing, financial performance)   | 10        | 13.70%     |
| Marketing and Promotion<br>(Pricing strategies, promotion strategies, menu planning, marketing destinations, technology, social media)                            | 12        | 16.43%     |
| Human Resources Management<br>(Performance, loyalty, satisfaction, turnover, job burnout, motivation, creativity and innovation, management and leadership style) | 24        | 32.87%     |
| Customer<br>(Satisfaction, safety and security, loyalty, quality of service, interaction, values, customer management, experience)                                | 19        | 26.02%     |
| Others<br>(Green events, Artificial Intelligence (AI), supply chain management, gender, internship)   | 8         | 10.98%     |
| Total   | 73        | 100%       |

The results of Table 5 show that most of the research interests in research published by faculty members in the faculties of tourism and hospitality in Jordanian public universities were about human resources in hotels in terms of job satisfaction, employee turnover, burnout, and impact of leadership and management, and others, as the percentage reached 32.87%. This was followed by research on hotel customers who reported their desires, satisfaction and awareness by 26.02%. It was followed by scholars' interests in marketing and promotion topics and their impact on the hotel, with a rate of 16.43%. There was an interest of 13.70% in the topics of accounting and income management. Finally, the research touched on other topics such as gender, artificial intelligence, and training, with a rate of 10.98% such as the studies [36, 37].

As for the scholars themselves who are members of the academic staff in the aforementioned colleges, it was found during browsing, tabulation and classification that the most active scholars, the most published research and the most scientifically productive in hospitality in the period specified in the study from 2018 to 2022 is Dr. Omar Jawabreh from the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management at the University of Jordan Aqaba branch, followed by Dr. Mokhles Al-Ababneh from Petra College for Tourism and Archeology, then Dr. Omar Alananzeh from the College of Tourism and Hotel Management at Yarmouk University came in third place.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to shed light on scientific publishing in the hospitality industry, to highlight the most important themes and topics targeted by scholars, to uncover their research interests, to show the faculties that carry out scientific publishing in the field of hospitality, and to indicate the abundance of scientific production on the Google Scholar website for each researcher in the aforementioned faculties. The results concluded that the number of male scholars is more than that of females, and that there is a disparity in the number of research published in the last years, and that the year 2021 was the most important scientific production, and that the following year 2022 witnessed a decline in scientific evil, as well as the disparity in the percentage of publication among the faculties of the universities specified in the study. This was proven by the results of the study of [32] which confirmed that the disruptions in the global hospitality industry have accelerated, especially after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in addition to the fact that most of the research topics revolved around the employees in hotels, then followed by research related to the satisfaction of hotel customers, and others in marketing and promotion, and simple percentages about the accountant revenue management.

This study is unique in the field, in that the scholars tried to go to great lengths to collect all the data related to the published research, but every study should have its limitations. The limits of this study were to identify research related

to hospitality by scholars in the faculties of tourism and hospitality only, noting that there are some scholars from other faculties who dealt in their research with topics related to hotels. The study also neglected the research methodology, and this is what the study recommended other scholars to pay attention to. The study also aimed to provide advice to expand the areas of research in other new and modern topics.

## Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict regarding the publication of this paper.

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