Do We Have an 'Akshaypatra' (Inexhaustible Vessel)? A Systematic Literature Review in Responsible Food Consumption within the Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

Purpose – The approaching conclusion of UN-Agenda 2030 expedites us to address 'Zero Hunger' through 'Responsible Consumption and Production.' This paper attempts to uncover the extent of global efforts towards sustainable practices in the hospitality industry since the launch of 'UN-Agenda 2030' by identifying prominent research gaps that determine what needs to be done.

Design/methodology/approach – This systematic literature review on responsible consumption in the hospitality industry, by dissecting 31 qualifying records, presents 16 distinct thematic gaps.

Findings – Gradually, the themes intertwine SDG 12.3 with SDG 2.1 to imprint the important relationship between responsible consumption and production with zero hunger by recognising the role of reducing food waste, which is central to the study.

Practical implications – The study impresses the absence of an infinite source of food and accentuates a call for action to academicians, industry and policymakers to hasten consumer awareness and food management along with forecasting and measurement methods to achieve UN-Agenda 2030

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Originality/value – This paper points to the precise voids in extant literature. It aims to present an opportunity for future research for academia and industry from the standpoint of the exact research required in sustainable consumption for society.

Introduction

Path to Sustainable Consumption

Human desires are unlimited, but resources aren't. Unlike '*The Akshaypatra'* in the epic 'Mahabharata,' the world does not have an infinite food supply. '*The Akshaypatra'* is a legendary divine utensil with an inexhaustible source of food. Quoting Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), "Food waste is a global tragedy. Millions will go hungry today as food is wasted across the world"; she believes that food wastage can be satisfactorily reversed if countries place it at the forefront of their policies but only 21 countries have included policies on food waste reduction in their national climate plans (*World Squanders over 1 Billion Meals a Day - UN Report*, 2024).

The UN Agenda 2030 calls for SDG-12 'Responsible Consumption and Production' (RCP) to be implemented to fulfil SDG-2 'Zero Hunger' (ZH). Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) (also RCP from here on) as defined by the UN-Oslo Symposium 1994: "the use of services and related products, respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life while minimising the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle of the service or product so as not to jeopardise the needs of future generation" (Sustainable Consumption and Production: Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform). It describes RCP as a practice where products and services can fulfil basic human needs. The use of resources should help improve quality of life by not exploiting the environment of its resources because irresponsible consumption represents a loss of valuable resources. In contrast, irresponsible waste management contributes significantly to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. RCP underscores the use of natural resources and toxic materials to a minimum and maintains the emission of wastes and pollutants within manageable levels so as not to cause irreparable damage to the environment. It emphasises the importance of preserving the environment for future generations.

Furthermore, SDG-2 'Zero Hunger' is defined as "the objective to ensure that everyone has access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary

needs and preferences and that all people can acquire the food they need, without compromising their economic, social, and environmental well-being" (Zero Hunger: Close the Gap Foundation, 2024). It necessitates the development of food security legislation through feeding programs and sustainable agriculture, to name a few. With better access to nutritious food, SDG-2 attempts to address the economic, social, environmental, and personal well-being of those suffering from malnutrition. It gives paramount importance to better access to healthy and safe food, improved health, reduced poverty, and greater environmental sustainability.

Food is an integral part of the hospitality and tourism industry (HTI) because it fulfils the biological as well as experiential needs of customers (Goolaup et al., 2018; Sharma et al., 2023). The HTI includes various food service establishments, such as restaurants, hotels, catering units, canteens, and others that play a significant role in global food production and consumption. However, it also generates a substantial amount of FW. This FW raises concerns about resource utilisation impacting environmental sustainability and the survival of impoverished communities. The UNEP 2024 reports significant figures of global food waste of 115 kg generated per capita per year in developed countries, where the global food service industry contributes to 28% of 1.05 billion tonnes annually; all this when 783 million people are affected by hunger furthered by a net burden of $1 trillion by contributing to 8-10% of greenhouse gases and 30% agricultural land waste per year.

Moreover, each year, 4 million metric tonnes of food is produced in the global agricultural systems, and 1.05 billion tonnes of food waste is generated annually (*UNEP's Food Waste Index Report 2024: Implications for the Foodservice Industry*). 'The Food, (2014)' defines food waste (FW) as "the discard of edible foods at the retail and consumer levels, mostly in developed countries". This FW is the result of inefficiencies throughout the value chain and unsustainable consumption patterns, which the UN aims to reduce through the sub-goals SDG-12.3 and SDG-2.1. Together, the sub-goals aspire to bring global FW down by 50% by 2030 at all levels in the value chain, from production, supply, and retail to consumption, to accomplish access to safe, nutritious and ample food for those from the impoverished and vulnerable communities.

Against the backdrop of UN-agenda 2030 to create a world free of hunger by 2030, the concept of *'Akshaypatra'* serves as a meaningful metaphor for a future where responsible consumption ensures food security for all. Focussing on SDG 12, this study attempts to uncover the depth and breadth of current research in the global HTI (Moyle et al., 2020). It investigates prevalent practices of

responsible consumption (RC) and FW indicative of potential measures for adopting sustainable practices (SP).

Responsible Consumption for Sustainability

By addressing the following research questions, the goal is to identify lacunae in existing literature explored by academicians:

a) RQ1. What is the coverage and trend of research on RC in the HTI since the launch of UN-Agenda 2030?

b) RQ2. What are the prominent gaps in extant research, and how do they lead to future research?

To fulfil the research objectives, this study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) to explore trends and gaps in research since the launch of 'UN-Agenda 2030'(Pahlevan-Sharif et al., 2019). Acknowledging the guiding principles of the comprehensive reporting protocol of 'Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis' (PRISMA) developed by (Moher et al., 2009) the SLR follows it to arrive at relevant articles for review. PRISMA provides a transparent and replicable structure for literature searches. The 31 high-quality articles obtained from the systematic search uncover the dynamics of research in the context of RC and FW mediated through consumer behaviour. The study is presented in five sections following the introduction in section 1. Section 2 details the methodology and review protocol that leads and controls the study. The results discussed in section 2 cover bibliometric analysis, qualitative analysis of theories and the thematic analysis of the gaps explored in the literature. Section 4 discusses the theoretical value that the paper offers for researchers and its implications for industry practitioners. It also covers the limitations faced during the study and the scope for future research. Section 5 concludes the study.

Methodology

Methodological Approach: Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis

Following the future research suggestions from Molina-Collado et al., (2022), the exploration takes a microscopic view of understanding the specific literature on SGD-12 within the purview of HTI. Therefore, this research attempts to extract extensive qualitative information from extant literature to fulfil the research objectives. Moreover, the "robustness of evidence" is the essence of an SLR (Mohamed Shaffril et al., 2021) which this paper develops. Page et al., (2021) and Tranfield et al., (2003) assert that transparency, reliability and

replicability are vital to any literature review; attributing the research with depth and breadth (Farooque et al., 2019). Furthermore, the SLR provides a systematic and explicit process: first, to establish a review protocol; second, to collect the literature; and third, to identify, select, and critically appraise the extracted literature in concurrence with the research questions (Moher et al., 2009). It also helps to avoid the deficiencies of other review methods and reduces researcher biases as it essentially involves at least two researchers verifying the eligibility of the data (Mulrow, 1994). Also, bibliometric analysis, being a domain-based SLR, provides valuable insights through visual representations about key authors, countries, journals, themes and production, etc., in terms of currency and development of publication around a predefined topic or theme (Paul & Criado, 2020a). Therefore, reiterating that, to locate evolving trends and research elements and to extract the essence from the intellectual landscape of published scholarly works (Donthu et al., 2021), this study also presents a bibliometric analysis prepared using pivot tables and graphs in Microsoft Excel.

The review protocols

Pahlevan-Sharif et al. (2019) claim that the SLR is the most efficient in reporting transparent and replicable results out of the fourteen types of literature reviews. Here, we establish the review protocol (Fig. 1) to define the scope of the search and record the inclusion/exclusion criteria as well as the method of analysis. The review protocol was adapted from PRISMA to ensure parity of understanding between the authors, which followed the four steps of identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion illustrated in Fig. 2. The protocol was strictly adhered to, and a final collection of records was made available for review (Paul & Criado, 2020a).

The search was executed on June 6, 2024, on Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) databases, as these are known to provide advanced search options that yield extensive results (Goyal et al., 2021). The first step was, following the work of Leung et al., (2013), to define keywords as 'responsible consumption and production' maintaining focus towards UNSDG-12 and UNSDG-2 and aligning with the research questions. Search string with Boolean: TITLE-ABS-KEY 'responsible consumption' OR 'responsible production' OR 'responsible consumption and production' helped contract the expansive search results. The keywords 'food wastage' OR 'food waste' and 'hospitality' AND 'hospitality industry' were intentionally kept out of the keyword search to detect the attention component in aggregate research towards the concept of FW. The publication period was taken from 2014 onwards, timing it with the launch of UN-Agenda 2030 (Molina-Collado et al., 2022). Limitation criteria were established about

document type: article, language: English, source type: journals. We gathered only those articles from Scopus and WoS in 'open access'. We also specified the subject area as 'business, management and accounting' as works from other areas would be irrelevant to our research objective. This search resulted in $n=174$ records, of which 124 were from WoS and 50 from Scopus. The records were merged and cleaned to remove 28 duplicates using the R-studio program developed by Aria & Cuccurullo, (2017), followed by the manual removal of 3 more records. 143 records were screened, and those published in book chapters (n=3) and full texts (n=3) (Leung et al., 2013) unavailable in Research Gate, Google Scholar and Science Direct (Buhalis & Law, 2008) were excluded. The remaining records (n=137) were assessed for relevance to SDG-12: RCP and within the purview of the hospitality industry and tourism sector, from which 103 records were excluded for non-concurrence with the research objective. Finally, (n=3) records not indexed in Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) or Journal quality list, 2022 of Australian Business Deans Council (ABDC) listed journals were excluded as these are comprehensive in journal rankings for management and business fields (Paul & Criado, 2020b). Knowing that quality input determined quality output, this consideration was essential, resulting in 31 full-text records; however, this step was intentionally performed last, to prioritize relevance criteria over quality criteria. This process is reported in detail in the flowchart adapted from PRISMA (fig. 2).

Further, the resultant 31 records were analysed for bibliometric knowledge on the year-wise distribution of publications, distribution of articles in journals, countries under study and citations analysis. Data analysis was conducted using pivot tables and pivot graphs in Microsoft Excel. The 'analyse data' tool in Microsoft Excel was also used in some instances. Finally, a detailed analysis was carried out on the retrieved literature to identify gaps in the extant literature using domain-based thematic analysis.
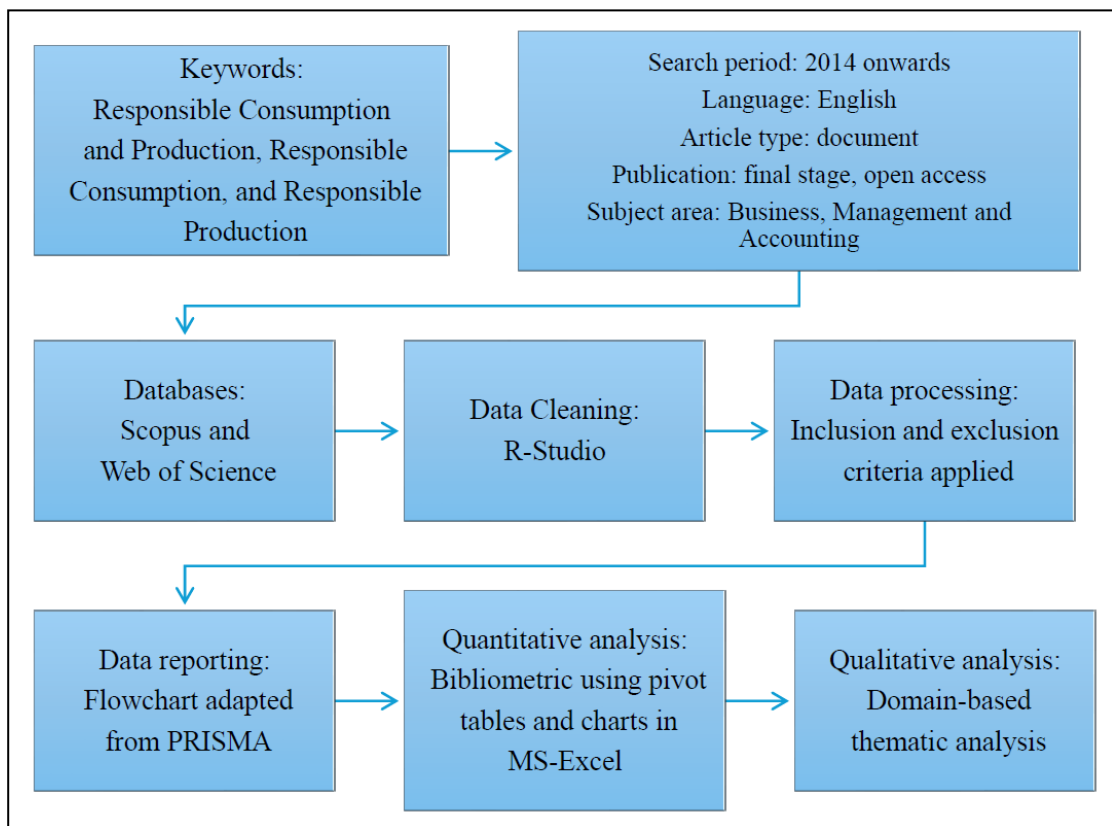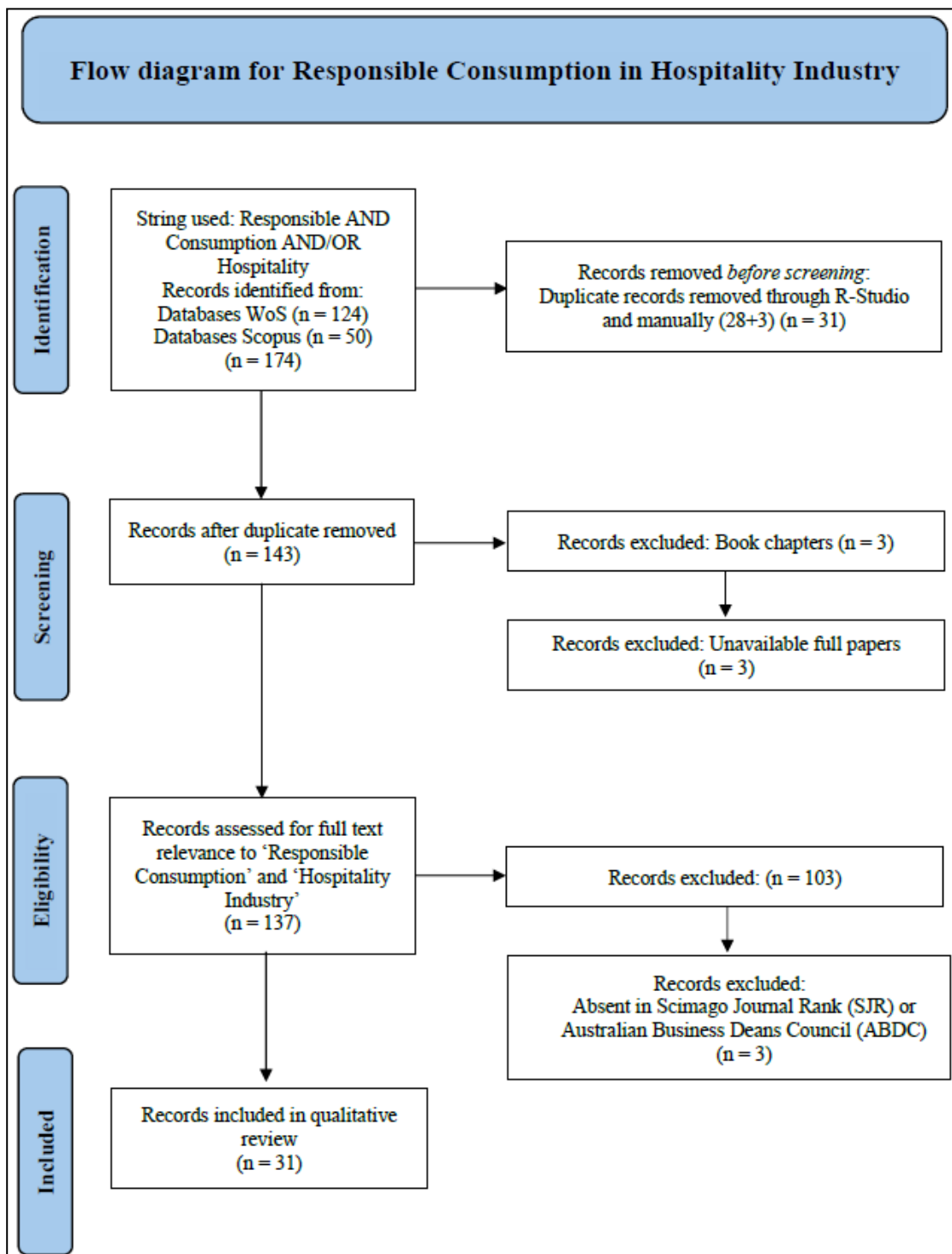
Fig. 1: Review protocol

The diagram illustrates a systematic literature review process. It begins with keyword selection and database searches (Scopus, Web of Science), followed by data cleaning (R-Studio), applying inclusion/exclusion criteria, and conducting quantitative (bibliometric) and qualitative thematic analyses.

1. Fig. 2: Adaptation of PRISMA flowchart (authors own work)

Figure 2 outlines the systematic review process for studies on Responsible Consumption in the Hospitality Industry. It starts with identifying 174 records using specific keywords from Scopus and WoS databases. After removing duplicates (31 records), 143 records underwent screening. Exclusions included book chapters (3) and unavailable full papers (3). Finally, 137 eligible records were assessed for relevance, excluding 103 irrelevant studies and 3 not indexed in Scimago Journal Rank (SJR) or ABDC. The review concluded with 31 records included for qualitative analysis.

Results

This section covers the bibliometric analysis derived from pivot tables in Microsoft Excel. Bibliometric analysis covers the year-wise distribution of publication and their contexts, distribution of articles in journals, countries under study, and citation analysis; it also adds qualitative value by including the theoretical underpinnings in the literature to explain the development and prominence of theories in the field, adding value to industry practitioners (Leung et al., 2013). The study also shows the major and minor theories relevant to the field and the development of their application over time. Further, it uncovers the gaps in the current research conducted with a thematic approach by presenting core themes and their sub-themes, emerging from the analysis of each article. The thematic approach is adopted as it emphasizes the focus of this study in divulging the currency of research in the field and what more needs to be done (Donthu et al., 2021).

Bibliometric analysis

Year-wise distribution of publications and their contexts

With the UN-Agenda 2030 coming into effect in 2014, the years 2014 and 2015 observed an initial growth of 2 publications per year in 2014, 2015 and 2018, with no publications in 2016 and 2017 and only one in 2019. A steep ascent was evident from 2020 until 2023, with a publication rate of 5.25 per year. The years 2020 and 2022 have produced 37.5 % of the total articles.

The illustration (Fig.3) provides insights into the development of the publication, indicating the attention that these issues have garnered. It demonstrates the exponential growth in studies concerning RC and SP (sustainable practices), focusing on FW and CB. While the initial publications concentrated on consumer behaviour towards a 'willingness-to-pay' attitude for establishments

implementing responsible and sustainable practices (Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014; Parsa et al., 2015) and implementation of water management and environment management systems (Kasim, 2015; Kasim et al., 2014), the subsequent studies had a broader perspective addressing food wastage, RC, CB, resources management, SDG2 and SDG12. Since the launch of the UN-Agenda 2030, the years 2020-24 have seen the highest production of publications, 68.75%, in a span of ten years.
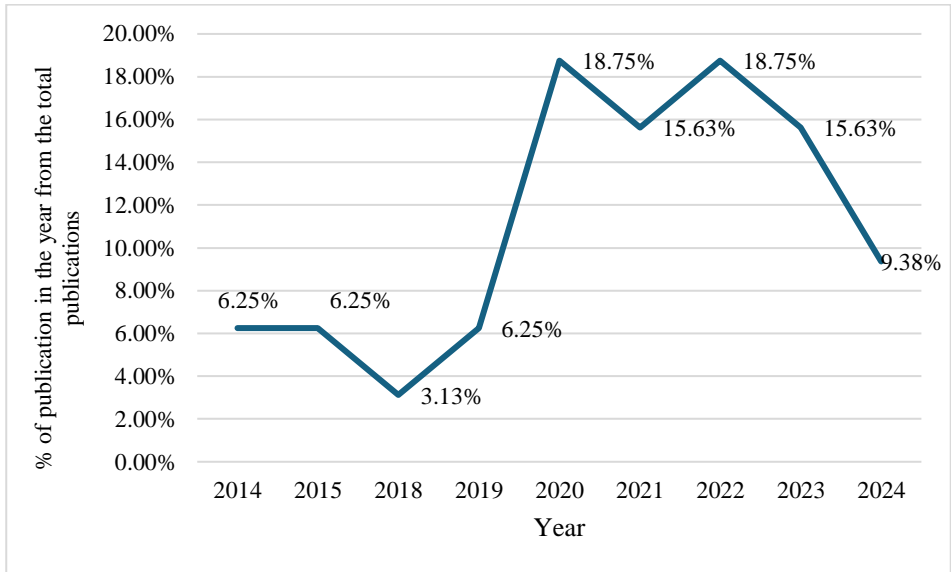

Fig. 3: Year-wise distribution of publications

Distribution of articles in journals

Analysis of article distribution (fig. 4) reveals that the 31 articles were distributed across 20 distinct journals. Sustainability and the Journal of Sustainable Tourism have an equal share of 32%. They appear as leaders in the domain of RC and FW, followed by the British Food Journal, the International Journal of Hospitality Management and the Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, sharing 18% equally. These five journals are Q1 indexed under SJR, a component of 80% of the journals in the review study. Moreover, 26.67% and 20.00% of articles are published in A* and A category of ABDC JQL, indicating the high quality of articles referred for the SLR. It may be noted that journal quality was the last criterion in the protocol, as it was decided to prioritize relevance criteria over quality criteria. The assessment of the journal list also discloses that only 32.25% of articles are published in journals from the hospitality and tourism domains.
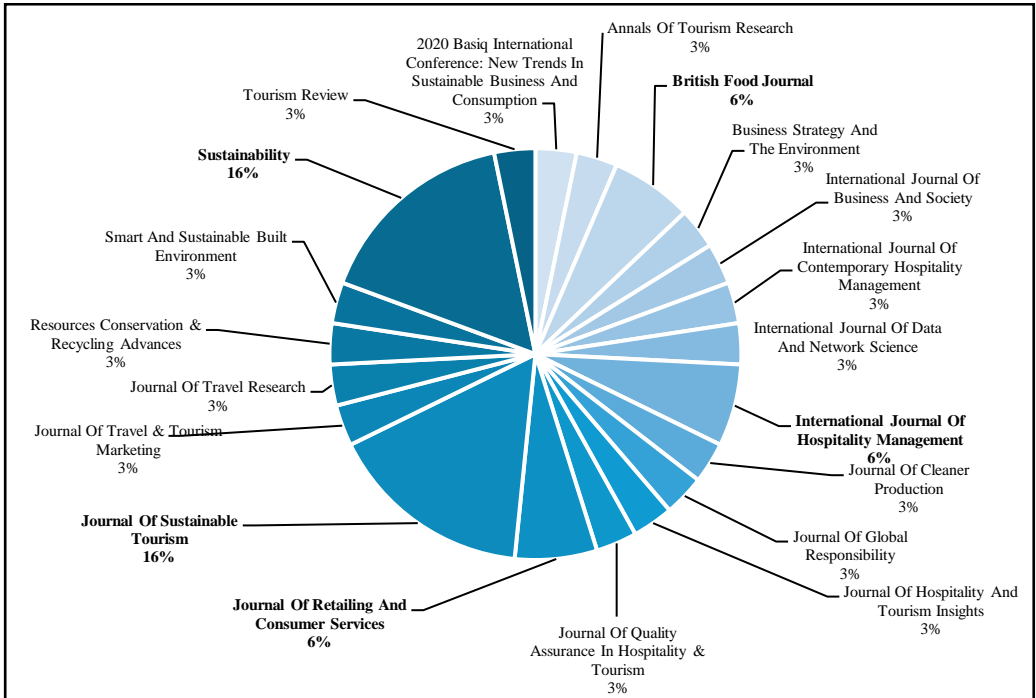
Fig.4: Distribution of articles in journals

Countries under study

Research on FW concentrates on 17 distinct countries (fig. 5), wherein 7 out of 31 studies are centred in the USA, evident with the U.S. Food and Drug Association Report 2021 (Camilleri, 2021) and promoting FW as a major concern among the American people. Since the three articles are review-based works, they have a global perspective to the research. At the same time, two studies were published collaboratively between the UK and Germany, and Italy and Romania had one comparative study to their credit. European countries under the influence of the Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafes in Europe (HORECA) have contributed 16.12 % to research in the field (Camilleri, 2017). Malaysia attracts research attention to the extent of 9.09% of the 12 studies conducted in the Asian sub-continent, comprising India, South Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, and Taiwan. 38.70 % of studies covered in this region are attributed to the influence of governmental legislation and regulations emphasizing environmental sustainability from the hospitality and tourism sectors.
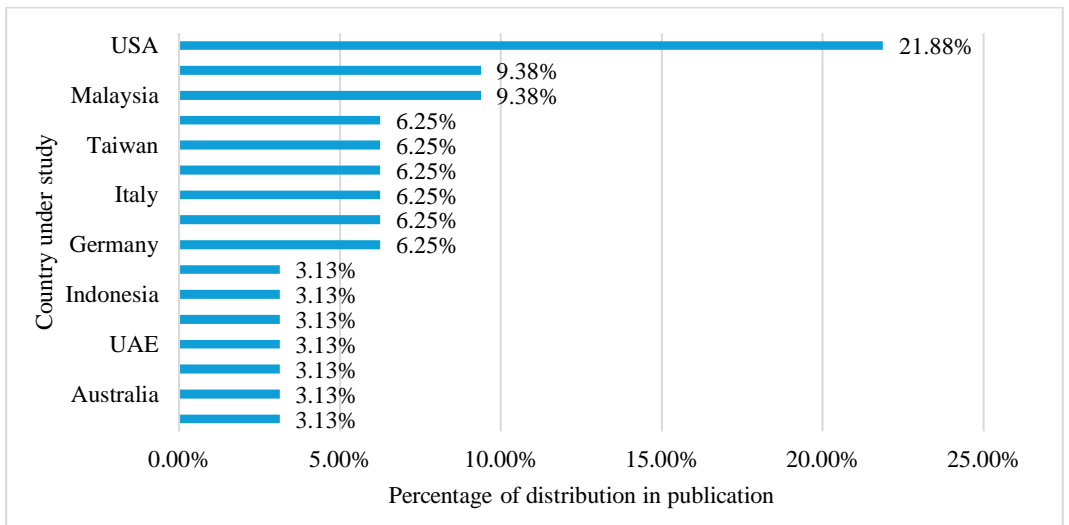
Fig.5: Percentage distribution of 'Countries under study'

Citations analysis

Citations represent a quality benchmark of scientific work (Aksnes et al., 2019) and indicate the impact of a publication within the field of research (Donthu et al., 2021). However, it is also observed that recently published works may not attract extensive citations yet. Therefore, it is a term relative to the period of publishing. Given this concept, this study identifies that the work of Han, (2021) has received 262 citations since publication. Additionally, taking from the top three citations for the works of Asadi et al., (2020); Han, (2021); and Kasim et al., (2014) led to further investigation of their works in the field (Table 2), wherein it emerged that the works of Han, (2020, 2021); Han et al., (2020) are prominent and important in the fields of sustainable tourism, hospitality marketing, green hotels, hospitality consumer's behaviour, green purchase behaviour, among others garnering total citation of 51478. His works can provide vital contributions to future research. Overall, studies in environmental theory development and a review of theories by Han (2020, 2021), green innovation by (Asadi et al., 2020), water management by (Kasim et al., 2014), willingness-to-pay by (Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014), and Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility by (Parsa et al., 2015), are providing significant contributions to the field of RC as evidenced from citation index illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Citations analysis (Ref: Google Scholar)

Sr no	Authors	Year	Title	Citations
T1	(Han, 2021)	2021	Consumer behavior and environmental sustainability in tourism and hospitality: a review of theories concepts and latest research	262
T14	(Asadi et al., 2020)	2020	Investigating influence of green innovation on sustainability performance: a case on Malaysian hotel industry	222
T28	(Han, 2020)	2020	Theory of Green Purchase Behavior (TGPB): a new theory for sustainable consumption of green hotel and green restaurant products	141
T27	(Kasim et al., 2014)	2014	The importance of water management in hotels: a framework for sustainability through innovation	105
T18	(Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014)	2014	Preferences and willingness to pay for green hotel attributes in tourist choice behavior: the case of Taiwan	84
T2	(Parsa et al., 2015)	2015	Corporate social and environmental responsibility in services: will consumers pay for it?	83

Table 2: Prominent authors (Ref: Google Scholar)

Author Name	Affiliation University	Country	TC	Author H-Index	Fields of work
Han, Heesup	Sejong University, College of Hospitality and Tourism	Seoul, South Korea	51478	107	Green hotels, hospitality consumer's behaviour, purchase behaviour,
Asadi, Shahla	University Putra, Department of Computer Science	Serdang, Malaysia	3720	32	Business analytics, Machine learning, information systems
Kasim, Azilah	University of Utara Malaysia, School of Tourism and Hospitality	Sintok, Malaysia	3342	25	Environment management, resources management

Qualitative analysis of theories

The SLR exhumes 22 distinct theories from 20 out of 31 articles (Table 3). Theoretical foundations form the basis for practical research. Since the declaration of UN-Agenda 2030, the application and occurrence of theories in research on sustainable production and consumption behaviours are evident. 18 theories occur only once in the studies, while the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), norm-activation theory (NAT), value-belief-norm theory (VBN), and theory of goal-directed behaviour (GDB) occur in 9, 6, 4, and 2 studies, respectively covering 35.48 % articles. The occurrence of these theories is

consistent with the rise in journal production from the years 2020-2023. It is observed that most studies on FW and RC are grounded in three prominent theories: TPB, NAT and VBN. Moreover, these are often combined because they offer a complementary viewpoint on factors that influence consumer decision-making. For instance, TPB emphasizes rational decision-making and helps identify consumer attitudes towards material waste, while NAT underscoring the importance of morals could raise awareness of the negative impact of wastage, and VBN justifies personal norms that influence wastage reduction. When combined, these theories promote the formation of strategies to curb the wastage of resources and encourage responsible consumption habits. The concept of goal-directed behaviour (Han, 2020, 2021) iterates consumers' drive to contribute towards environmental responsibility through sustainable consumption behaviour.

The study also observes that initial research was established on random utility, attribution, prospect, and signalling theories. The impact of these theories seems to have faded as the TPB and VBN take centre stage in 2020-2022, while VBN and GDB decline in application. However, domain theory, method theory, motivation-opportunity-ability theory, social learning theory, and situational expectancy-value theory are emerging in the context of RC and FW.

Table 3: Year-wise occurrence of theories

Theories	2014	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total	Citations
Theory of Planned Behaviour				1	2	4	2		9	(Chawla et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2022; Han, 2020, 2021; Huang et al., 2022; Kharuhayothin et al., 2023; O'Connor, 2021; Siow May Ling et al., 2023; Tasci et al., 2022)
Norm-activation theory				2	1	2	1		6	(Gupta et al., 2022; Han, 2020; Han et al., 2020a; Han, 2021; Huang et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2023)
Value-belief-norm theory				1	2	1			4	(Gupta et al., 2022; Han, 2020; Han et al., 2020a; Tasci et al., 2022)
Theory of goal-directed behaviour				1	1				2	(Han, 2020, 2021)
Attribution Theory		1							1	(Chen & Jai, 2018)
Prospect Theory		1							1	(Chen & Jai, 2018)
Random Utility Theory	1								1	(Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014)
Signaling Theory			1						1	(Ahn, 2019)
Chicago theory					1				1	(O'Connor, 2021)
Contrual level Theory					1				1	(Cozzio et al., 2021)
Domain Theory								1	1	(Kuokkanen & Kirillova, 2024)
Expectancy Theory						1			1	(Tasci et al., 2022)
Keynesian Theory					1				1	(O'Connor, 2021)
Method Theory								1	1	(Kuokkanen & Kirillova, 2024)
Motivation-opportunity-ability theory						1			1	(Sharma et al., 2023)
Resource-based view				1					1	(Asadi et al., 2020)
Situational expectancy value theory						1			1	(Lee et al., 2023)
Social Learning Theory						1			1	(Siow May Ling et al., 2023)
Stakeholder theory					1				1	(ElShafei, 2022)
Stigma Theory				1					1	(Legendre, 2020)
Structural Theory					1				1	(O'Connor, 2021)
Theory of repurchase decision-making				1					1	(Han, 2020)

Thematic gap analysis offering future research avenues

SLR enables the identification of research gaps, in other words, opportunities for future research (Pahlevan-Sharif et al., 2019). The research employed thematic analysis by dissecting the 31 articles for research gaps. The screening process revealed 16 distinct themes comprising 45 sub-themes overlapping across the articles (Table 4). There are an average of 4.61 gaps per article.

We observe that, first, 'consumer behaviour' emerged as the most prominent theme featured in 21 of 31 articles covering attributes, awareness,

decisions, emotions, engagement, experience, intentions and perceptions. Second, 20.98% of the themes point to the gaps in specific 'demography, geography and hospitality businesses,' urging for more explorations in realms of cultural and non-cultural demographic segmentation, geographic locations and those encompassing other industries within the hospitality and tourism sector than those under study. The third most prominent theme that surfaces is 'methods of application,' specifically those calling for developing, forecasting, measuring and validating techniques for reducing FW and promoting RC. Communication, strategies and government policies account for 18.88% of the theme component, while industry practices and interventions account for 6.99%, indicating the paucity of attention given to these elements. FW and technology adoption in the industry towards managing FW and RC attract minimum consideration with only 2.10% themes to each. Integrating technology into FW and RC demands immediate attention for more research.

After the declaration of UN-Agenda 2030, most studies attributed sustainable practices, such as reducing FW and RC, to an establishment's effectiveness in implementing them and the consequences of consumer behaviours on sustainable practices. The studies that were conducted in the initial phases from 2014-15 acknowledged that there was a lacuna in understanding the reasons for specific behaviours and decisions of consumers (Amicarelli et al., 2020; Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014; Han, 2020; Han et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2022; Kharuhayothin et al., 2023; Kuokkanen & Kirillova, 2024; Parsa et al., 2015; Sharma et al., 2023) and, methods of developing systems (Kasim, 2015) and measurement scales for CB patterns (Gupta et al., 2022; Kasim, 2015) and impact of sustainable practices (Camilleri, 2021) and exploring the studies in other geographical locations unique to their demographics (Asadi et al., 2020; Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014; Cordova-Buiza et al., 2022; ElShafei, 2022; Kasim et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2023). The maximum development of research has taken place from 2020 – 2024, identifying the most prominent gaps in methods of applications, understanding CB and areas for exploring geographically, demographically and industrially. Fig.6 shows the thematic distribution of the gap identified from the literature.
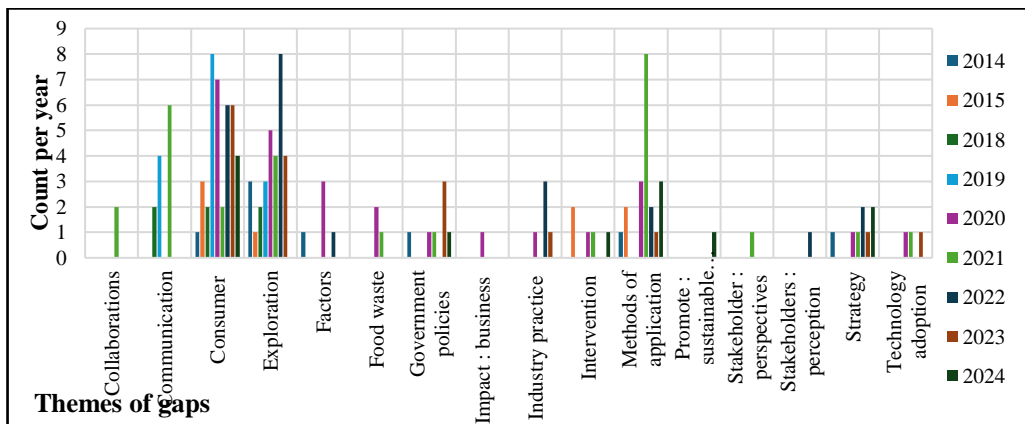
Fig.6: Thematic gap analysis offering future research avenues

Consumer

The SLR observes that consumer behaviour and intentions have a collaborative impact on environmentally sustainable behaviour displayed by consumers. Investigation of factors that cause moral judgements (Huang et al., 2022), coupled with low awareness (Parsa et al., 2015), and food wastage avoidance behaviour (Sharma et al., 2023), must be correlated with the intentions of consumers (Chen & Jai, 2018; Kharuhayothin et al., 2023), concerned with participating in environmental activities (Moscardo, 2019) and willingness-to-pay (Wang & Chen, 2024). It is crucial to address perceptions of GenZ's socially responsible behaviour (Kharuhayothin et al., 2023) and the effects of design elements in a hospitality unit that can lead to a sustainable transformation in consumer behaviour (Kuokkanen & Kirillova, 2024).

Explorations

The dissection of the articles reveals that 90.32 % of the studies point to a lack of exploration of geography, industry and demography, of which 10 and 6 articles indicate that similar works can be attempted in other regions and cultures, respectively, as these would be co-related with each other. 8 of the 31 articles imply considering factors such as personal traits, environmental values, income and gender while exploring the influence of non-cultural, demographic factors. Furthermore, six studies point to similar studies to be conducted in other types of hospitality and tourism organizations to understand environmentally sustainable practices of organizations, CB, and responsibility towards them.

Methods of application

25% of the 31 papers give prominence to future research in developing and applying different methods of measuring the effectiveness of initiatives taken by organizations such as green innovation (Asadi et al., 2020), left-over food-sharing programs (Camilleri, 2017), environmental management systems for organizational learning (Kasim, 2015), and providing trade-offs to consumers engaging in waste reduction and RC (Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014). Moreover, studies can focus on the effects of trends, personal and situational factors, attitudes and behaviour in the personal or private sphere on consumers' ERB and purchase behaviour towards green products and services (Gupta et al., 2022; Han, 2020, 2021). Furthermore, studies call for more attention towards developing forecasting techniques to predict food ordering patterns of restaurant and hotel consumers and designing systems for inventory management to reduce wastage of resources (Camilleri, 2017; Chang et al., 2021). Studies need to address the development of frameworks to understand if consumer choices can impact the wastage of imperfect ingredients, perfect and standardized ingredients being the quality benchmarks for commercial food business (O'Connor, 2021) and to understand personal and environmental factors on FW (Siow May Ling et al., 2023). Likewise, developing methods that can investigate the impact of tourist footfalls on waste management, water consumption, and destination destruction will help manage sustainable tourism practices at destinations (Amistad & Cornell, 2024).

Building communication for brand marketing

Researchers believe communicating environmentally responsible activities with their consumers is essential as it has multi-fold advantages in causing environmental impact, company reputation, and corporate environmental responsibility (CER). While organizations make efforts to disseminate information, they fail to assess the impact of the messages in terms of message content, as in the case of dining buffets (Chen & Jai, 2018), message design (Moscardo, 2019) and the marketing campaign for environmentally responsible behaviour (ERB) (Han, 2021). Furthermore, because local cultures strongly influence communication, analysing the message content to influence RC and FW and its effectiveness in different cultures is essential for the marketing management of CER programs (Cozzio et al., 2021; Moscardo, 2019). Future research must consider assessing the effectiveness of media and marketing channels in communicating the messages and their long-term impacts (Camilleri, 2017; Chen & Jai, 2018; Moscardo, 2019).

Government policies and interventions

Sustainability is a concerted effort by all stakeholders in society and the economy. However, initiatives from the government machinery set the foundation for actions from organizations and individuals. Fig. 6 shows three articles in 2023 highlighting the urgency of government initiatives, probably due to the approaching deadline of UN-Agenda 2030. The literature suggests that rigorous research be conducted to investigate the influence and effectiveness of government regulations that impact water management (Kasim et al., 2014), waste management (Siow May Ling et al., 2023), circular economy (Camilleri, 2017), and controlling FW (Amicarelli et al., 2020) existing in USA and few European and Asian Nations, to serve as models for other regions. Integrating these issues with consumer demographics, consumer behaviour, and human resource practices (Han, 2021; Kasim, 2015), production and marketing interventions might accelerate communities towards UN-Agenda 2030.

Strategies for environmentally sustainable behaviour

Lacunas in organizational strategies are noted in 7 of the 31 articles based on marketing operations, eco-tourism, consumer education and resource management. Literature reveals that marketing strategies must build on the foundations of market segmentation of the consumers based on culture, social strata, knowledge, values, etc. (Han, 2021; Legendre, 2020). Research can address reducing FW (Huang et al., 2022), water management (Kasim et al., 2014) and resolving barriers to waste reduction (Cordova-Buiza et al., 2022). Further, studies can delve deeper into educating tourist and hospitality consumers through knowledge sharing and environmental information dissemination on eco-tourism and green development (Amistad & Cornell, 2024).

Discussions

Theoretical value

This paper exhibits the theoretical underpinnings of research concerned with RC, FW and CB as the focal point (Table 5). It highlights a shift in the application of theories in three phases. At the launch of UN-Agenda 2030, the initial studies had their foundations in attribution theory, random utility theory, prospect theory and signalling theory. These theoretical frameworks describe the process of individual decision-making across diverse circumstances. Furthermore, they elucidate the key factors that affect such decisions and illustrate the cognitive mechanisms that guide individuals towards their final choice. The subsequent period from 2020-2023, witnessed the emergence of

VBN, TPB, GDB and NAT in literature, indicating that these theoretical frameworks discuss the relationship between behavioural intentions and resultant actions as they delve deeper into the psychological factors of consumers that mediate the transformation of intentions into actual behaviour. Finally, the most recent literature concentrates on domain theory, method theory, motivation-opportunity-ability (MOA) theory, social learning theory, and situational expectancy-value theory (SEVT), wherein these theories share the core emphasis on explaining and predicting consumer behaviour pertaining to FW and RC. They analyse the connections between external and internal factors influencing consumer decisions and actions towards ERB. They discuss the psychological traits in contextual situations. Thus, understanding the gradually changing role of theoretical applications can enable researchers to pursue unexplored theories relevant to the field.

Table 5: Table of theories in the literature

Theories	Citations
Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)	(Chawla et al., 2022; Gupta et al., 2022; Han, 2020, 2021; Huang et al., 2022; Kharuhayothin et al., 2023; O'Connor, 2021; Siow May Ling et al., 2023; Tasci et al., 2022)
Norm-activation Theory (NAT)	(Gupta et al., 2022; Han, 2020, 2021; Han et al., 2020b; Huang et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2023)
Value-belief-norm Theory (VBN)	(Gupta et al., 2022; Han, 2021; Han et al., 2020b; Tasci et al., 2022)
Theory of goal-directed behaviour (GDB)	(Han, 2020, 2021)
Attribution Theory	(Chen & Jai, 2018)
Prospect Theory	(Chen & Jai, 2018)
Random Utility Theory	(Chia-Jung & Pei-Chun, 2014)
Signaling Theory	(Ahn, 2019)
Chicago Theory	(O'Connor, 2021)
Contrual level Theory	(Cozzio et al., 2021)
Domain Theory	(Kuokkanen & Kirillova, 2024)
Expectancy Theory	(Tasci et al., 2022)
Keynesian Theory	(O'Connor, 2021)
Method Theory	(Kuokkanen & Kirillova, 2024)
Motivation-opportunity-ability Theory	(Sharma et al., 2023)
Resource-based view	(Asadi et al., 2020)
Situational expectancy value Theory	(Lee et al., 2023)
Social Learning Theory	(Siow May Ling et al., 2023)
Stakeholder Theory	(ElShafei, 2022)
Stigma Theory	(Legendre, 2020)
Structural Theory	(O'Connor, 2021)
Theory of repurchase decision-making	(Han, 2020)

Implications for practitioners

Industry applicability should be the cornerstone of research relating to SDGs. This study urges the industry to hasten their sustainable practices and align with UN-Agenda 2030 goals. First, bibliometric and thematic analysis identify the knowledge gaps that can allow business owners to innovate and develop new sustainable practices. For instance, in the context of communicating CER to consumers (Moscardo, 2019), organizations can explore the effectiveness of previous communication strategies, the message content (Chen & Jai, 2018; Moscardo, 2019), and media and channel of communication used prior to embarking on future CER programs. It can help them develop suitable strategies to communicate their environmentally sustainable actions to attract environmentally-conscious consumers, resulting in building brand loyalty (Ahn, 2019). Second, the theoretical foundations discussed can be utilized in understanding consumer behaviours through several lenses; for example, understanding the implications of the theory of motivation-opportunity-ability informs the industry practitioner that the likelihood that a consumer exhibits any behaviour is if he believes that it serves some societal purpose (his motivation), he can participate in it (opportunity to associate) and he has the means to execute it (ability) (Sharma et al., 2023). Third, by understanding the gaps in the literature, the industry can collaborate with policymakers to develop regulations that can support the implementation, monitoring and controlling, and documentation of sustainable practices. Investigating the role of government in controlling FW (Amicarelli et al., 2020), evaluating the policies in energy efficiency (Sosiadi et al., 2023), water management (Kasim et al., 2014) and natural resource management for infrastructure development (Amistad & Cornell, 2024) and providing incentives for developing best practices can encourage circular economy (Camilleri, 2021; Cordova-Buiza et al., 2022; Legendre, 2020) and sustainable practices. Overall, by focusing on research aligned with UN-Agenda 2030, the industry can not only promote RC but also actively engage its consumers thus leading to a sustainability-oriented competitive, and reputable brand.

Limitations of the study and scope for future research

The study maintained a focussed perspective of RC towards reducing FW, centring on the hospitality and tourism sector. It attempts to investigate global actions in line with SDG12 and SDG2, wherein the review process considers articles published after the launch of UN-Agenda 2030. The focus is on understanding the impact of UN-Agenda 2030 on academia and industry. Further, it focused on comprehending the influence of CB on environmentally sustainable

practices but exploring the impact of various interventions on consumer psychology contributes valuable inputs in encouraging RC behaviour. Identifying gaps in extant literature was the prime goal of the SLR. Future research could adopt a wider approach that aligns with SDG7- affordable and clean energy, SDG9- industry, innovation and infrastructure, SDG11- sustainable cities and communities, and SDG13- climate action.

Academic research emphasizes theoretical findings over practical applications; it overlooks real-world solutions in practice within the industry across the globe. For instance, internet resources illustrate that many hotel chains like the Hilton Hotels, Accor group, Marriott International, Armani Hotel Dubai and food service units like IKEA, the list being non-exhaustive, have adopted several measures to reduce FW throughout their value-chain. This paper identifies a notable gap between academia and industry practices that the former fail to record and acknowledge in publications. This paper argues that while there is no dearth of studies regarding employee and organisation behaviour in the context of RC and sustainable consumption (SC), academic research overlooks the hospitality industry as a significant contributor to food waste orientated towards consumer behaviour and production stages.

While researchers discuss the 3Ps (purchase, preparation and presentation) of food management and environmentally unsustainable food consumption by tourists (Gössling et al., 2011), future research can involve studies on environmentally sustainable foods and food management concerning it. Furthermore, there is research covering FW, energy wastage and conservation, and these can be broadened by addressing RC towards other guest and non-guest consumables that consume natural resources.

Research in hospitality, especially the hotel segment, which is a premium service, encounters hurdles while assessing the willingness of high-end consumers towards sustainable consumption behaviour. This domain of study can provide vital information to business owners of the high-end luxury segment which is left untouched by extant literature. Therefore, an assessment of the spending capacity of different segments of hotel guests can provide valuable insights into the complex sustainable consumption behaviour dynamics at play.

Conclusion

The study addresses the coverage and trend of research on RC in the HTI since the launch of 'UN-Agenda 2030' through an SLR. The process involved identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion, resulting in 31 final records

from an initial 174 records. The research spanned 17 distinct countries, with significant contributions from the USA and European countries, while Malaysia was the prominent Asian country found in the study. The articles were published across 20 journals, with a significant number in high-impact journals like 'Sustainability' and 'the Journal of Sustainable Tourism'. The bibliometric analysis shows a growth trend in publications from 2014 onwards, with a noticeable increase from 2020 to 2023, indicating heightened research interest in RC. 10 out of 31 articles have addressed FW post-UN-Agenda 2030. Initial studies focused on consumer behaviour and sustainable practices, while later studies addressed issues such as food wastage, resource management, and environmental sustainability. The review identified 22 distinct theories used in the articles, with theories like the TPB and NAT prominent in recent research that highlight the evolving theoretical landscape. Thematic analysis identified research gaps in consumer behaviour, geographical and demographic explorations, application methods, communication strategies, government policies, and organizational strategies. Future research avenues should progress towards developing methods for measuring effectiveness, exploring different geographical and demographic contexts, and enhancing communication and marketing strategies for promoting RC, FW and sustainable practices.

UNEP statistics show that developed nations assume the tendency to waste 115kg of food per year per person, which can feed one person conservatively for at least two months. The business world is attentive towards FW but maintains it to the extent of soliciting commercial advantages achieved by reducing food costs and increasing profit margins. Therefore, to increase sensitivity and application towards RC and FW, 'UN-Agenda 2030' can be achieved with concerted efforts from industry and academia, which this study aims to bring to light. Moreover, this SLR reveals that 10 out of 31 articles have addressed FW, which, given the UN-Agenda 2030 for SDG2, is insufficient to address FW issues. Thus, through this paper, we highlight that *'The Akshaypatra*,' after all, a mythical utensil, does not exist in the real world. The sooner we implement measures to reduce food wastage, the sooner we might be able to provide a real-world '*Akshaypatra'* to the hunger-stricken parts of the world.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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