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ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE IN TOURISM & HOSPITALITY: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract:

The surging focus on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) dimensions has prompted increasing scholarly attention in the tourism and hospitality sectors. However, the fragmented nature of existing research presents challenges in understanding the holistic integration of ESG principles. This research aims to systematically review the present literature on ESG in tourism and hospitality, addressing critical gaps through a structured strategy. Employing the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol, a comprehensive search was conducted utilizing two prominent databases: Scopus as well as Web of Science (WoS). The screening process identified 26 primary studies that met the inclusion criteria. Through thematic analysis, the findings were classified into three major themes: (1) ESG Practices, Disclosure, and Reporting, (2) ESG Impact on Financial and Firm Performance, and (3) Consumer Perceptions, Governance, and Sustainable Tourism Development. The review reveals that while ESG disclosure practices are increasingly formalized, significant discrepancies exist in reporting standards across regions and organizational types. Furthermore, evidence suggests a generally positive association between ESG performance and financial outcomes, although contextual factors such as national economic development play a moderating role. From the consumer and community perspective, the perception and engagement with ESG initiatives are found to be critical for promoting sustainable tourism development. This systematic review consolidates current knowledge, highlights methodological and conceptual gaps, and proposes directions for future research aimed at enhancing the theoretical as well as practical understanding of ESG integration in tourism and hospitality industries.

Keywords:

Tourism, Hospitality, Environmental, Social, Governance, ESG

Introduction

In today's landscape, where sustainability and ethical governance are paramount, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) frameworks are becoming essential for evaluating organizational responsibility and resilience. The tourism and hospitality industry, with its significant global influence and resource-intensive nature, is at a pivotal moment in embracing these principles. As climate change escalates and stakeholder expectations continue to evolve, businesses are under increasing scrutiny regarding their environmental impacts, social equity, and governance practices. By integrating ESG considerations, this sector can transition into proactive champions of sustainable development, tackling issues ranging from carbon emissions in hotels to equitable labor practices and corporate transparency. Consequently, aligning ESG strategies with long-term value creation has become a pressing necessity for investors, policymakers, and consumers alike.

Despite the growing prominence of ESG in corporate boardrooms and financial markets, its integration within the tourism and hospitality literature remains fragmented and in a state of evolution. Recent research has examined ESG reporting trends among hotel chains (Arvidsson & Dumay 2022), the influence of ESG performance concerning firm valuation in tourism (Demiraj, Dsouza & Demiraj 2023), and how ESG ratings influence traveler preferences (Hassan & Meyer 2022). However, several critical challenges persist. The lack of industry-specific ESG benchmarks, inconsistent disclosure standards, and the insufficient representation of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) hinder the generalizability as well as the practical relevance of current research. Moreover, tensions often arise between the imperatives of economic growth and the priorities of social or environmental sustainability, particularly in destinations grappling with issues such as overtourism or socio-political instability. This article aims to address these shortcomings by posing a central research question (RQ): How can ESG frameworks be effectively institutionalized within the tourism as well as hospitality sectors to reconcile profitability with sustainable impact? The study has two primary objectives: firstly, to synthesize the present state of ESG adoption through a comparative analysis of global practices, and secondly, to propose a context-sensitive model that links ESG theory and practice in tourism and hospitality management. By providing a multidimensional perspective that encompasses environmental ethics, social responsibility, and governance innovation, this research seeks to enhance both academic understanding and practical pathways for responsible transformation within the industry.

Literature Review

The integration of ESG principles in the hospitality as well as tourism sectors has increasingly captured academic interest, reflecting the industry's recognition of sustainability imperatives. Buallay, Al-Ajmi & Barone (2022), introduced a streamlined ESG reporting framework tailored specifically for tourism, underscoring the necessity for adaptability to cultural contexts, as demonstrated by the differing perceptions of managers from China and Greece. In a similar Diwan & Amarayil Sreeraman (2024), performed a bibliometric analysis that investigated the evolution from Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to ESG, concluding that ESG frameworks build upon CSR rather than replace it by providing measurable standards. Jámbor & Zánócz (2023), affirmed this perspective, noting that ESG research within hospitality

remains in its early developmental stages, with unclear distinctions between CSR and ESG leading to definitional ambiguities. Together, these studies highlight the industry's gradual movement toward structured sustainability reporting while exposing conceptual and practical inconsistencies that merit further investigation.

Numerous empirical research have assessed the influence of ESG performance on tourism demand as well as organizational value. (Hassan & Meyer (2025) found that the ESG risk ratings of the Visegrád Four countries significantly influence international tourism demand, positioning ESG as a crucial non-economic determinant alongside traditional factors such as income levels. Building on this, Xue et al. (2024) identified media attention as well as green innovation as interconnected mediators that enhance the effect regarding ESG performance on enterprise value within Chinese tourism firms. Additionally, Yan et al. (2025) reinforced these findings by demonstrating that strong ESG performance, in conjunction with infrastructure developments like high-speed rail, positively influences the financial results of publicly listed tourism firms. Collectively, these results highlight that ESG performance is not only an ethical consideration but also a strategic asset that can enhance both tourism competitiveness and financial success.

Research has investigated various organizational strategies for enhancing ESG outcomes within the tourism and hospitality sector. (Zheng, Gao & Thomas 2025) examined the organizational culture and transformational leadership's (TFL) role, revealing that TFL, when combined with an adhocracy culture, promotes pro-environmental behavior among employees, thereby improving ESG performance. Kim et al. (2024) extended this organizational focus into the emerging field concerning space tourism, utilizing the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory to demonstrate how ESG elements and trust in artificial intelligence (AI) influence sustainable behavior in diverse space tourism contexts. Oh (2024) provided further insights into terrestrial tourism by showing that the strength of ESG administration moderates the relationship that exists between carbon emissions and tourism activities in South Korean local governments. These findings collectively suggest that leadership styles, organizational culture, and institutional support are crucial for embedding ESG principles at the operational level.

While the research in this area continues to grow, significant gaps lack sufficient attention. Zahid et al. (2023) observed that ESG scholarship in tourism and hospitality has not fully transitioned from CSR paradigms, highlighting a lack of theoretical maturity. Wang, Song & Sun (2023) pointed out that ESG discussions primarily focus on environmental aspects, with insufficient consideration of social and governance dimensions. Bulyga et al. (2023) emphasized the necessity for adaptable, context-sensitive ESG reporting models, though empirical validations across various regions and sectors remain limited. Furthermore, Hassan & Meyer (2025) asserted that policymakers must not only address ESG risks but also align macroeconomic policies to optimize tourism growth. Acknowledging these knowledge gaps is crucial for cultivating a holistic understanding of ESG dynamics and fostering sustainable tourism development on a global scale.

Research Question

RQs are crucial in a systematic literature review (SLR) by shaping its foundation as well as guiding its overall direction. They help define the scope and focus of the review, influencing which studies are included or excluded to maintain relevance and specificity. Well-formulated RQs ensure that the literature search is both thorough and systematic, capturing all significant

studies related to the topic's key aspects. This approach reduces potential bias and contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the available evidence. In addition, RQs assist in structuring as well as categorizing data derived from the chosen studies, offering a guideline for analyzing results and integrating findings into meaningful conclusions. They improve clarity and precision by eliminating ambiguity as well as ensuring the review remains focused on specific issues, thereby increasing the relevance and practical value of the outcomes. Well-developed RQs also support the transparency as well as reproducibility concerning the review process, enabling other researchers to replicate the study or build upon it in related fields. Ultimately, RQs establish that the review remains aligned with the study's primary goals, whether those involve uncovering gaps in existing literature, assessing the influence with regard to specific interventions, or analyzing patterns within a given field. In doing so, they form the core structure of an SLR, helping to maintain its rigor, focus, and relevance.

Defining the RQs is the crucial task during the planning phase and the cornerstone of the entire SLR, as it shapes and drives the review methodology [7]. Given that the primary objective of our SLR is to examine and assess the current state of the art in the field, formulating clear and structured RQs is essential. To achieve this, we applied the PICO framework, a mnemonic tool commonly used in qualitative research to develop focused RQs. PICO stands for Population, Interest, and Context, each representing a key element in shaping the scope and direction of the inquiry:

1. Population (P): The participants or group targeted in the research. It defines who the research is concerned with—this could be a specific demographic, patient population, or community significant to the research focus.
2. Interest (I): The central phenomenon or focus being examined in the research. This may include a specific intervention, behavior, experience, or issue that the study seeks to identify, understand, or analyze.
3. Context (Co): The environment or setting in which the population as well as the phenomenon of interest, are situated. This can include geographical location, cultural or social environments, or any other significant background that influences or frames the research.

The PICO framework aids in systematically structuring RQs by deconstructing the essential components of the research into three key elements. This methodology assures a focused approach, allowing for well-defined questions that facilitate the search for relevant literature and the design of the study. As a result, this study addressed two RQs outlined below:

1. How do tourism and hospitality organizations implement and report ESG practices across different regions within the global industry?
2. What is the relationship between ESG performance and financial resilience among tourism and hospitality firms, particularly during economic crises?
3. How do consumer and community perceptions of ESG initiatives influence governance practices and contribute to sustainable tourism development?

Material And Methods

To ensure transparency, consistency, and completeness in SLR, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework has emerged as the established standard. Adhering to PRISMA guidelines enables authors to improve the accuracy as well as the reliability of their review processes. These guidelines provide a structured

approach to selecting, screening, and integrating studies, with particular emphasis on the importance of randomized trials in minimizing bias and strengthening the evidence base. In this research, Scopus as well as Web of Science (WoS) were selected as the main data sources owing to their thorough coverage and methodological rigor. PRISMA delineates four essential phases: identification, screening, eligibility, as well as data extraction. During the identification phase, a systematic search is conducted across databases to collect all potentially significant literature. The screening phase involves filtering these studies based on predetermined criteria, eliminating those that are inappropriate or of insufficient quality. In the eligibility phase, a more thorough review ensures that the remaining studies meet the inclusion requirements. Finally, in the data extraction stage, key information is obtained from the selected studies to be synthesized and analyzed. This organized approach guarantees that the review process remains methodologically sound, supporting credible findings that can inform both academic research and practical applications.

Identification

Referring to this research, essential steps concerning the systematic review process were applied to collect a comprehensive body of relevant literature. Here, the process began with the keyword selection, followed by the identification regarding associated terms using dictionaries, encyclopedias, thesauri, as well as insights from past studies. Consequently, all relevant terms were examined, and search strings were established for use in the WoS as well as Scopus databases (refer to Table 1). Note that this first stage with regard to the systematic review resulted in the retrieval of 1,109 publications related to the study topic from both databases.

Table 1: The Search String.

Scopus	<p>TITLE-ABS-KEY ((environmental AND social AND governance) AND (tourism OR hospitality)) AND PUBYEAR > 2023 AND PUBYEAR < 2026 AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ECON") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, "ENVI")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO(PUBSTAGE, "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "j")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English"))</p> <p>Date of Access: MAY 2025</p>
WoS	<p>(environmental AND social AND governance) AND (tourism OR hospitality) (Topic) and 2025 or 2024 (Publication Years) and Article (Document Types) and Hospitality Leisure Sport Tourism or Green Sustainable Science Technology or Environmental Sciences or Environmental Studies or Management (WoS Categories)</p> <p>Date of Access: MAY 2025</p>

Screening

The screening phase entails assessing potentially significant research items in ensuring alignment with the predefined RQs. During this stage, study topics are selected primarily based on their relevance to ESG in the Tourism and Hospitality sector. Duplicate records are

eliminated, resulting in the initial exclusion of 966 publications. This process narrowed the pool to 143 papers, which were retained for further analysis based on clearly defined exclusion as well as inclusion criteria (refer to Table 2). Note that the literature serves as the main criterion, as it offers critical insights into the research topic. This includes book reviews, book series, meta-analyses, meta-syntheses, conference proceedings, as well as book chapters excluded in the most recent studies. The review considered only English-language publications from 2024 to 2025. Other than that, 32 duplicate records were excluded during the screening process.

Table 2: The Selection Criterion Of Searching

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Language	English	Non-English
Time line	2024 – 2025	< 2024
Literature type	Journal (Article)	Review, Book, Conference
Publication Stage	Final	In Press
Subject	Social Science, Enviromental Science, Business , Management and Acoounting, Economic, Econometriks, Finance	Social Science, Enviromental Science, Business , Management as well as Acoounting, Economic, Econometriks, Finance

Eligibility

In the third step, known as the eligibility phase, 111 articles were selected for detailed assessment. In this stage, each article's title and key content were thoroughly reviewed to determine whether they satisfy the inclusion criteria as well as aligned with the current research objectives. Correspondingly, 85 articles were omitted for reasons such as irrelevance to the field, insignificant titles, abstracts not associated with the study's focus, or lack of access to full-text empirical data. This process yielded 26 articles deemed suitable for the final review stage.

Data Abstraction and Analysis

An integrative analysis was employed as a key assessment strategy in this research to identify as well as synthesize a range of research designs, with a particular emphasis on quantitative methods. Here, the main goal concerning this in-depth study was to assess relevant topics as well as subtopics. Consequently, the data collection phase represented the first step in the development of the themes. As shown in Figure 2, the researchers carefully analyzed 26 selected publications for statements or content aligned with the study's thematic focus. Next, they assessed key existing research on ESG in Tourism and Hospitality, focusing on the methodologies used in these studies and their respective findings. The authors then worked closely with co-authors to establish themes grounded in the evidence presented in the research. During the data analysis process, a log was kept to document insights, analyses, questions, and

other relevant observations related to interpreting data. Finally, the authors made a comparison of their findings to examine inconsistencies regarding the themes' development. Notably, any discrepancies between concepts were thoroughly discussed and resolved among the authors.

Table 3: Number And Details Of Primary Studies Database

No	Authors	Title	Year	Journal	Scopus	Science direct
1	Lee S.; Ham S.; Yeon J.; Lee M.	ESG themes of the restaurant industry: a comparison between full-service and limited-service restaurants	2024	Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing	/	
2	Park, YN; Shin, M	Effect of customers' subjective knowledge on accepting ESG (environmental, social, governance) activities in the hospitality industry	2024	Journal Of Travel & Tourism Marketing		/
3	Kaminskyi A.; Osetskyi V.; Almeida N.; Nehrey M.	Investigating the Relationship Between ESG Performance and Financial Performance During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidence from the Hotel Industry	2025	Journal of Risk and Financial Management	/	
4	Kim M.J.; Hall C.M.; Kwon O.; Sohn K.	Effects of Value-Belief-Norm Theory, ESG, and AI on Space Tourist Behavior for Sustainability With Three Types of Space Tourism	2024	Journal of Travel Research	/	
5	Xue Y.; Lakkanawani P.; Suttipun M.; Huang S.-Z.	ESG Performance and Enterprise Value in Chinese Tourism Companies: The Chained Mediating Roles of Media Attention and Green Innovation	2024	Sustainability (Switzerland)	/	/
6	Park Y.-N.; Shin M.	Effect of customers' subjective knowledge on accepting ESG (environmental, social, governance) activities in the hospitality industry	2024	Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing	/	
7	Camilleri M.A.	Sustainability accounting and disclosures of responsible restaurant practices in environmental, social and governance (ESG) reports	2025	International Journal of Hospitality Management	/	/
8	Fan P.; Ren L.; Zeng X.	Resident Participation in Environmental Governance of Sustainable Tourism in Rural Destination	2024	Sustainability (Switzerland)	/	/
9	Hassan A.S.; Meyer D.F.	Does countries' environmental, social and governance (ESG) risk rating influence international tourism demand? A case of the Visegrád Four	2025	Journal of Tourism Futures	/	
10	García C.J.; Herrero B.; Morillas-Jurado F.	The impact of the environmental, social and governance dimensions of sustainability on firm risk in the hospitality and tourism industry	2024	Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	/	/
11	Hwang D.H.S.; Song H.J.; Lee S.; Kang K.H.	The moderating role of national economic development on the relationship between ESG and firm performance in the global hospitality industry	2024	International Journal of Hospitality Management	/	/

12	Oh H.	The Moderating Role of ESG Administration on the Relationship between Tourism Activities and Carbon Emissions: A Case Study of Basic Local Governments in South Korea	2024	Sustainability (Switzerland)	/	/
13	Kumar D.	Role of corporate sustainability disclosures in moderating the impact of country-level uncertainties on tourism sector firms' risk	2024	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	/	
14	Kim N.; Yoon Y.; Legendre T.S.	The State of ESG Disclosure: An Exploration of Stakeholders and Sustainability Materiality	2025	Tourism Analysis	/	/
15	Li Z.; Stamolampros P.; Zhao X.	ESG practices through the lens of employees in hospitality: Insights from employee-generated data	2025	International Journal of Hospitality Management	/	/
16	Lin Y.; Lu Z.; Fan D.; Zheng Z.	The bright and dark sides of ESG during the COVID-19 pandemic: evidence from China hospitality industry	2024	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	/	/
17	Lin M.S.; Zhang H.; Luo Y.; Li Y.	Environmental, social, and governance (ESG) measurement in the tourism and hospitality industry: views from a developing country	2024	Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing	/	/
18	Yan X.; Xiao D.; Chan H.; Zeng G.; Wei R.	Impact of high-speed rail operation, ESG performance, and financial performance of listed tourism companies	2025	Finance Research Letters	/	
19	Agoraki K.K.; Alexandropoulou A.; Didaskalou E.; Georgakellos D.A.	The Future Of Competitive Advantage In The Hotel Industry: Esg Initiatives As A Key Differentiator	2024	WIT Transactions on Ecology and the Environment	/	
20	Yun J.; Klaus P.; Hong E.; Lee S.; Park J.	Effects of Travel Agencies' Environment, Social, and Governance Marketing Activities on Consumer Behavioral Intentions	2024	International Journal of Tourism Research	/	/
21	Mdoda S.S.; Dube K.; Montsiemang T.	Tackling Water and Waste Management Challenges Within the Tourism and Hospitality Industry: A Sustainable Development Goals Perspective	2024	Water (Switzerland)	/	/
22	Fernandez-Abila C.J.; Tan R.; Dumpit D.Z.; Gelvezon R.P.; Arcala Hall R.; Lizada J.; Monteclaro H.; Ricopuerto J.; Salvador-Amores A.	Characterizing the sustainable tourism development of small islands in the Visayas, Philippines	2024	Land Use Policy	/	

23	Atshan N.A.; Jamaluddin H.; Tong C.S.; Al Abrow H.; Abbas S.	Does Environmental, Social And Governance Have An Impact On How Green Hotels Are? Purchase Intention As A Moderator Variable. Opinions Of A Sample Of Hotel Customers In Iraq	2024	Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites	/	
24	Zheng Y.; Gao Y.L.; Thomas N.	Enhancing tourism and hospitality organizations' ESG via transformational leadership and employee pro- environmental behavior: The effect of organizational culture	2025	International Journal of Hospitality Management	/	/
25	Lu K.; Onuk C.B.; Xia Y.; Zhang J.	ESG Ratings and Financial Performance in the Global Hospitality Industry	2025	Journal of Risk and Financial Management	/	
26	Purnomo E.P.; Khairunnisa T.	Green Economy: Increasing Economic Growth to Support Sustainable Tourism in Super Priority Destinations	2024	International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning	/	

Quality of Appraisal

In accordance with the guidelines suggested by Kitchenham and Charters [7], once the primary studies were selected, referring to original research articles directly included in the systematic review, we proceeded to examine the quality of the research presented in these studies. These primary sources serve as the main evidence base for the review. Following quality assessment (QA), the studies were quantitatively compared to address the RQs defined for the review. In this study, we applied the QA framework developed by Anas Abouzahra et al., which comprises six QAs for our SLR. Each criterion is evaluated using a three-point scoring system: “Yes” (Y), scored as 1 when the criterion is fully satisfied; “Partly” (P), scored as 0.5 when the criterion is partially met but shows some limitations; and “No” (N), scored as 0 when the criterion is not met at all.

- QA1. Is the study’s purpose clearly stated?
- QA2. Is the interest and the usefulness of the work clearly established?
- QA3. Is the study methodology clearly stated?
- QA4. Are the concepts concerning the approach clearly defined?
- QA5. Is the work measured and compared with other similar work?
- QA6. Are the work’s limitations the clearly mentioned?

The table presents the QA process applied to assess each study against predefined criteria. Note that three experts independently assessed the studies, assigning a score to each criterion using a three-tier scale: “Yes” (Y), “Partly” (P), or “No” (N). Below is a detailed explanation of the assessment process:

1. Is the study’s purpose clearly stated?
This criterion evaluates whether the study’s objectives are clearly stated and well-articulated. Clearly defined goals are essential for establishing the research’s direction and scope.
2. Is the interest and usefulness of the work clearly established?
This criterion assesses whether the study clearly explains its significance and potential contributions to the field. It reflects the relevance and potential influence regarding the research.
3. Is the study methodology clearly stated?
This criterion examines whether the research methodology is clearly defined and appropriate for addressing the study’s objectives. A transparent and suitable methodology is essential for ensuring the reproducibility and validity of the research.
4. Are the concepts concerning the approach clearly defined?
This criterion evaluates whether the study clearly articulates its theoretical framework and defines key concepts. Well-defined theories are critical for understanding the research approach.
5. Is the work measured and compared with other similar work?
This criterion assesses whether the study is contextualized within the existing body of research. Benchmarking against previous studies assists in positioning the work within the broader academic landscape and underscores its unique contributions.
6. Are the work’s limitations mentioned?

Each expert independently assesses the research based on the defined criteria, assigning scores accordingly. The individual scores are then summed across all three experts to calculate a total score for each study. To qualify for the next stage of analysis, a study must achieve a combined

score greater than 3.0. This threshold guarantees that only studies meeting a minimum quality standard are included in the subsequent review process.

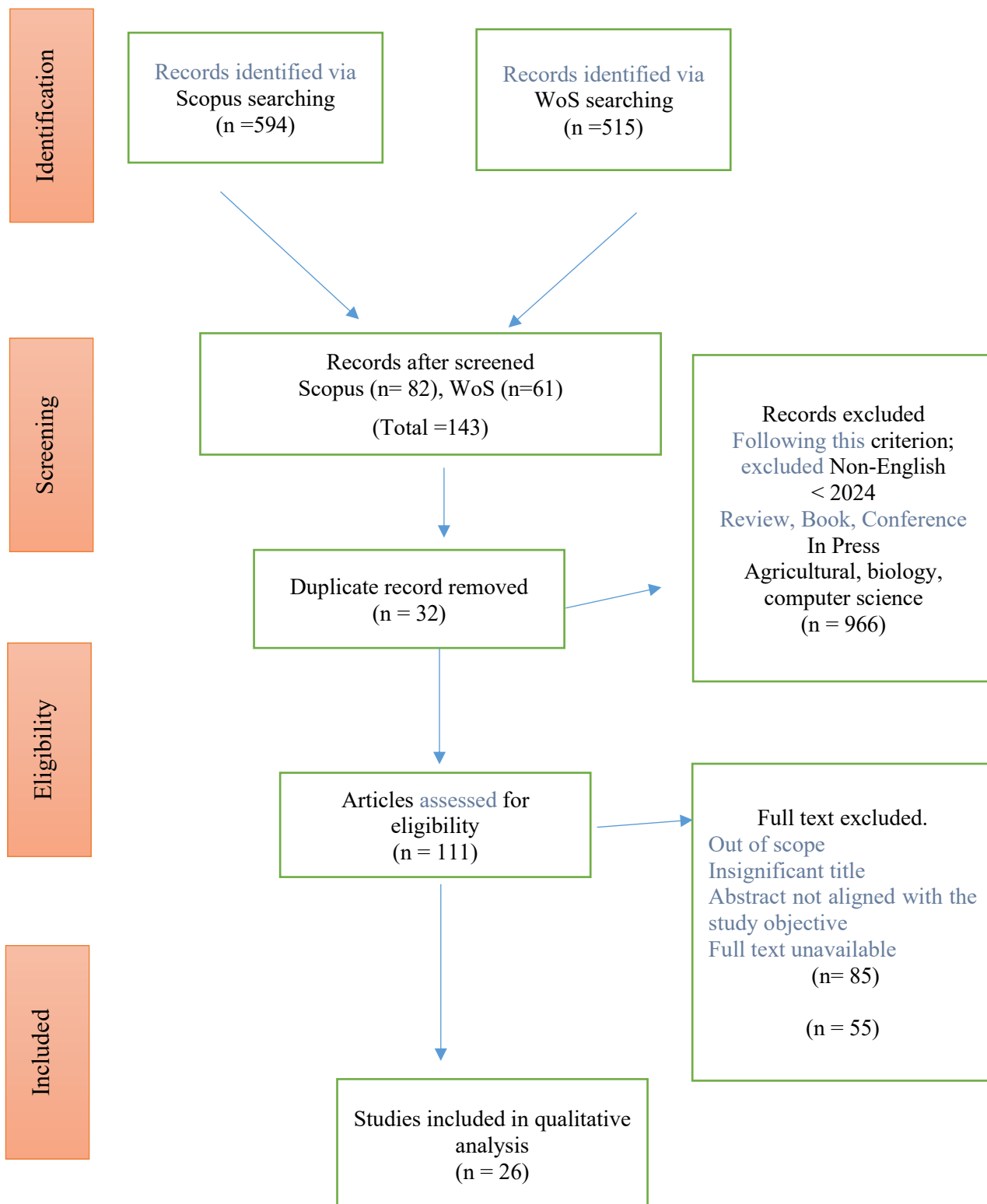


Figure 1. Flow Diagram Of The Suggested Searching Study [14]

Result and Finding

Background of chosen research: based on the QA, Table 3 presents the evaluation results concerning the selected primary studies. Note that the findings indicate a generally positive performance, with most of the 26 studies achieving high scores, particularly within the range of 83.3% to 91.7%. All studies effectively articulated their research objectives (QA1) and demonstrated the significance and applicability of their findings (QA2), which reflects a strong awareness of the increasing relevance of ESG in the tourism as well as hospitality sectors. Most research also established clear methodologies (QA3), indicative of robust research design practices. Likewise, the foundational concepts supporting these approaches were generally well-defined (QA4), although a few studies offered only partial clarity. However, a notable trend emerged concerning the comparison with similar studies (QA5); several papers engaged moderately with existing literature, missing opportunities for more in-depth critical analysis. Additionally, the acknowledgment of study limitations (QA6) was the most frequently overlooked criterion, with many papers omitting this discussion or addressing it only briefly, which limits the transparency of the findings.

The strongest studies—such as PS2, PS9, PS13, PS14, PS15, PS16, PS19, PS22, and PS23—achieved the highest marks by comprehensively meeting nearly all quality criteria. In contrast, PS6 and PS21 garnered lower scores primarily due to insufficient methodological clarity and limited discussions of comparative literature and limitations. A significant cluster of papers scored in the mid-range (75%-83.3%), typically excelling in purpose and methodology while falling short in comparative analysis or disclosure of limitations. These results suggest that while ESG research in tourism and hospitality has reached a commendable level of maturity, future studies should strive to enhance engagement with prior research and provide more thorough, critical reflections on study limitations. Addressing these areas will be essential for improving the scientific rigor, transparency, and practical relevance of ESG scholarship in the future.

Table 4: Quality Assessment Table For The Chosen Papers:

Primary Study	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA5	QA6	Total Mark	Percentage (%)
PS1	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75%
PS2	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%
PS3	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	P	5	83.3%
PS4	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75%
PS5	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75%
PS6	Y	Y	Y	P	N	N	3	50%
PS7	Y	Y	P	Y	P	N	4	66.7%
PS8	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	P	5	83.3%
PS9	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%
PS10	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	P	5	83.3%
PS11	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5	83.3%
PS12	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	P	5	83.3%
PS13	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%
PS14	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%

Primary Study	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA5	QA6	Total Mark	Percentage (%)
PS15	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%
PS16	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%
PS17	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	P	5	83.3%
PS18	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	N	4.5	75%
PS19	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%
PS20	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	P	5	83.3%
PS21	Y	Y	Y	P	P	N	3.5	58.3%
PS22	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%
PS23	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	5.5	91.7%
PS24	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	P	5	83.3%
PS25	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	5	83.3%
PS26	Y	Y	Y	Y	P	P	5	83.3%

Theme 1: ESG Practices, Disclosure, and Reporting in Tourism and Hospitality

The growing emphasis on ESG practices within the hospitality as well as tourism sectors has been met with varying degrees of adoption and reporting consistency. (Lee et al. (2024) investigated ESG themes within the restaurant industry, particularly contrasting full-service as well as limited-service restaurants. Their findings revealed that although the significance of ESG reporting has been increasingly acknowledged, actual implementation remains inconsistent across different service models. The study demonstrated the valuable role of automated content analysis in systematically examining ESG engagement, offering practical insights into current reporting practices. Similarly, Hristov et al. (2024) and (Camilleri (2025) addressed gaps in responsible food and beverage operations by proposing a structured theoretical model for sustainability accounting in hospitality. Through appraising international standards such as GRI and SASB, the study promoted actionable frameworks that practitioners could use to guide corporate disclosures. Kim, Yoon & Legendre (2025) contributed by analyzing ESG reports from leading hospitality and tourism companies, highlighting considerable variability in disclosure practices across industries and continents. Their study emphasized the pressing need for improved measurement validity and reliability, pointing out the inequities present in current ESG reporting systems.

The challenges associated with ESG measurement in developing countries were further elaborated by Yao, Bo & Zhang (2025), who utilized a semantic network analysis alongside interviews to develop contextualized ESG measurement guidelines. Their research underscored the necessary adjustments in the ESG dimensions, particularly highlighting the significance of internal resources and external awareness in enhancing compliance with ESG guidelines. When considered in conjunction with the results of Camilleri (2025) and Lee et al. (2022), it becomes clear that despite a growing awareness of ESG issues, the hospitality sector is still grappling with the absence of a universally consistent and operational ESG disclosure standard. Both developed and developing economies face challenges in harmonizing ESG metrics, often influenced by sector-specific requirements and divergent institutional pressures.

Moreover, while Camilleri (2025) and Kim, Yoon & Legendre (2025) advocated for standardized accountability frameworks to enable fairer and more transparent disclosures, (Lin et al. 2024a) emphasized the necessity of customizing ESG measurement to fit local contexts, indicating the limitation of a universal method. Overall, the existing literature collectively highlights that, while significant strides have been made in integrating ESG practices within hospitality operations, substantial fragmentation remains regarding how ESG performance is measured, reported, and interpreted. Studies consistently indicate an urgent need for enhanced theoretical foundations, practical accounting frameworks, and context-sensitive measurement strategies to bolster the credibility and effectiveness of ESG disclosures within the tourism as well as hospitality sectors.

Theme 2: ESG Impact on Financial and Firm Performance

Explores how ESG activities affect financial outcomes, firm risks, and organizational competitiveness. The relationship that exists between ESG practices as well as the financial results of firms in the tourism and hospitality industry has attracted considerable attention. A study by Kaminskyi et al. (2025) explored this relationship during the COVID-19 pandemic and revealed that higher levels of firm capitalization contributed to faster recovery rates. However, ESG scores prior to the pandemic appeared to exert a restricted effect on financial outcomes in the short term. In contrast, governance aspects were more consistently associated with long-term resilience. Supporting these findings, Xue et al. (2024) demonstrated that ESG performance positively impacted enterprise value among Chinese tourism firms, with green innovation as well as media visibility playing key mediator roles. Additionally, (García, Herrero & Morillas-Jurado 2024) reinforced the idea that strong environmental performance reduces financial risk, emphasizing that commitment to sustainability principles plays a vital role in lowering default probability and market volatility for hospitality firms.

Further exploration of moderating factors was conducted by (Hwang et al. 2024), who identified national economic development (NED) as a boundary condition affecting the relationship between firm performance as well as ESG. Their findings highlighted that companies in more economically advanced nations experience greater performance benefits from sustainability initiatives. Similarly, (Kumar 2024) examined how corporate sustainability disclosures can mitigate the adverse effects of country-level uncertainties—be they economic, political, or climate-related—on risks faced by tourism firms. Additionally, (Lin et al. 2024b) offered a nuanced perspective on the dual effects of ESG practices during the COVID-19 period; while such practices enhanced market-based performance through reputation preservation, they also strained accounting-based metrics due to significant resource consumption. Collectively, these studies emphasize that while ESG strategies can bolster organizational stability, they must be managed dynamically in response to macroeconomic conditions and crises.

A further dimension of ESG's influence has emerged from the exploration of industry-specific developments. (Yan et al. 2025) emphasized the synergistic role of infrastructure enhancements, such as the introduction of high-speed rail, as well as ESG practices in enhancing the financial outcomes concerning publicly listed tourism firms, moderated by organizational management structures. In parallel, (Agoraki et al. 2024) argued that ESG initiatives have evolved from being peripheral concerns to becoming strategic imperatives within the hotel industry, allowing firms to achieve sustainable competitive advantages through differentiation driven by sustainability. Additionally, (Lu et al. 2025) provided quantitative

support by demonstrating a consistent positive correlation between corporate financial outcomes as well as ESG ratings across various metrics, including return on assets and equity. This relationship was particularly pronounced during crises, such as COVID-19, and notably significant within the U.S. market. Collectively, these findings affirm that ESG integration encourages financial outcomes and boosts strategic positioning in an evolving global landscape.

Theme 3: Consumer Perceptions, Governance, and Sustainable Tourism Development

The text explores various aspects of consumer behavior, governance policies, rural sustainability, and eco-innovation. Recent studies have highlighted the expanding impact of ESG elements on tourist behavior. For instance, (Hassan & Meyer 2025) demonstrated that perceptions of ESG risks significantly impact international tourism demand, underscoring the importance of non-economic factors, such as a destination's sustainability reputation, as critical determinants. In a related study, (Kim et al. 2024) extended this analysis to the space tourism sector, revealing that integrating ESG factors into a value-belief-norm model considerably shapes the behavioral intentions of space tourists. Furthermore, (Park & Shin 2024) found that consumers' subjective knowledge of ESG enhances their perceived benefits and intentions to visit, indicating that increasing ESG awareness among customers could drive stronger support for sustainable hospitality businesses. Together, these findings emphasize the crucial role of consumer perceptions in promoting sustainable practices within the tourism and hospitality industries.

Governance and administrative frameworks have emerged as critical components in fostering sustainable tourism development. (Oh 2024) noted that the strength of ESG administration within local governments can mitigate the harmful environmental effects of tourism activities, especially in reducing carbon emissions linked to food, beverage, and accommodation services. Additionally, (Fan, Ren & Zeng 2024) underscored the significance of grassroots governance, illustrating that rural residents' involvement in environmental governance is heavily influenced by motivational, opportunity, and ability factors. Meanwhile, Fernandez-Abila et al. (2024) highlighted that governance shortcomings on small islands often result in environmental degradation and socio-economic inequalities, stressing the need for inclusive policy implementation. Collectively, these studies emphasize that effective, multi-level governance structures are vital for achieving long-term sustainability goals in tourism. The internal dynamics of tourism and hospitality organizations regarding ESG perceptions and behaviors have also been examined. Li, Stamolampros & Zhao (2025) found that employees' perceptions of ESG practices correlate with lower turnover as well as higher job satisfaction, influenced by factors such as organizational tenure and managerial status. Zheng, Gao & Thomas (2025) discovered that transformational leadership styles and externally-oriented organizational cultures promote employee pro-environmental behaviors, thereby enhancing overall ESG performance in hospitality firms. Furthermore, Yun et al. (2024) provided a consumer-focused perspective, demonstrating that positive attitudes toward ESG branding activities among tourists lead to increased repurchase intentions and favorable word-of-mouth referrals. These findings suggest that both internal and external stakeholder perceptions must be actively managed to optimize ESG outcomes within the tourism and hospitality sectors.

Sustainable tourism development initiatives encounter challenges related to environmental management and community engagement. In their study, Mdoda, Dube & Montsiemang (2024) explored how hotels in Cape Town addressed water and waste management in the aftermath of

Day Zero. They found that while sustainability efforts are intensifying, significant hurdles remain in meeting environmental targets. Similarly, Fernandez-Abila et al. (2024) reported comparable issues faced by small islands, where limited land, inadequate connectivity, and stakeholder conflicts hinder progress toward sustainable tourism. Purnomo & Khairunnisa (2024) pointed out that while tourism development in Indonesia's super-priority destinations contributes to economic growth, it often grapples with challenges related to governance, environmental sustainability, and community involvement. Together, these studies underscore the complex balance between tourism expansion and sustainable practices, emphasizing the need for coordinated, network-based governance strategies to enhance the resilience of tourism destinations. Additionally, the influence of ESG elements on consumer behavior within green hospitality practices has been examined from various perspectives. Atshan et al. (2024) utilized the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to investigate how ESG factors influence customers' decisions to choose eco-friendly hotels, revealing that environmental and social considerations significantly affect consumer purchase intentions. Park & Shin (2024) found that increased awareness of ESG issues directly influences intentions to visit eco-friendly establishments through perceived benefits. Furthermore, Yun et al. (2024) demonstrated that consumers' environmental and social beliefs positively influence attitudes toward ESG initiatives, subsequently impacting behavioral results like word-of-mouth promotion. Collectively, these studies highlight that consumers' values and knowledge regarding ESG play a crucial role in driving sustainable purchasing behaviors within the tourism and hospitality sectors.

Discussion and Conclusion

The systematic analysis of ESG initiatives within the hospitality as well as tourism sectors reveals three major thematic concentrations: (1) ESG Practices, Disclosure, and Reporting; (2) ESG Impact on Financial and Firm Performance; and (3) Consumer Perceptions, Governance, and Sustainable Tourism Development. The findings illustrate that while ESG engagement has expanded significantly, substantial heterogeneity remains across organizations in terms of the depth and transparency of their reporting practices. As evidenced by Lee et al. (2024), Camilleri (2025), and Kim et al. (2025), although many firms acknowledge ESG principles, there is limited standardization in their disclosures, undermining stakeholder confidence. Within the domain of financial performance, the relationship between ESG adoption and firm resilience is strongly evident. Kaminskyi et al. (2025) and Xue et al. (2024) demonstrate that strategic investment in ESG can lead to both immediate and long-term financial benefits, mediated through enhanced stakeholder trust and innovation capacity. Meanwhile, a growing body of evidence, including that from Hassan and Meyer (2025) and Fan et al. (2024), confirms that consumers' perceptions of ESG practices substantially influence behavioral intentions, destination selection, and support for sustainable tourism. Together, these findings affirm that ESG has transitioned from a voluntary corporate initiative to a strategic imperative shaping competitive advantage, corporate reputation, and consumer loyalty within the sector.

The delineation into three themes reflects a conscious effort to structure the review around the core operational, financial, and societal dimensions of ESG within tourism and hospitality. ESG Practices, Disclosure, and Reporting were prioritized due to the central role that transparency and standardization play in legitimizing sustainability claims. Without credible disclosures, ESG initiatives risk being perceived as symbolic rather than substantive, a concern highlighted across studies by Camilleri (2025), Lee et al. (2024), and Kim et al. (2025). ESG Impact on Financial and Firm Performance was selected to capture the critical linkage between sustainability efforts and economic viability. Notably, the results of Kaminskyi et al. (2025),

García et al. (2024), and Lu et al. (2025) converge to demonstrate that strong ESG performers often exhibit greater financial resilience, particularly under external impacts like the COVID-19 pandemic. This outcome challenges the misconception that ESG implementation is a cost center, instead presenting it as a risk mitigation and value-creation tool. Lastly, the focus on Consumer Perceptions, Governance, and Sustainable Tourism Development underscores the emergent purpose of consumers, employees as well as local communities as active ESG stakeholders. Studies by Hassan and Meyer (2025), Park and Shin (2024), and Yun et al. (2024) collectively illustrate that future competitiveness in tourism and hospitality increasingly depends on meaningful engagement with these actors, not merely through marketing, but through substantive environmental stewardship and ethical governance. These insights position ESG as an integrated framework influencing corporate identity, societal value, and market positioning.

The practical implications of these findings are manifold. Tourism and hospitality organizations must recognize ESG not as an ancillary reporting obligation but as a central driver of strategic differentiation and resilience. Regulatory authorities and industry bodies should consider the development of tourism-specific ESG reporting standards, ensuring greater comparability, credibility, and stakeholder relevance. Companies are encouraged to integrate ESG education into employee training programs, fostering cultures of sustainability (Zheng, Gao & Thomas 2025). Furthermore, active consumer engagement strategies must be implemented, with marketing efforts that not only promote ESG achievements but also involve consumers as partners in sustainable value creation, a point reinforced by the work of Park and Shin (2024) and Atshan et al. (2024). In terms of research implications, further longitudinal studies are necessary to unpack the dynamic effects of ESG investments over time, particularly across different economic cycles and cultural contexts. Comparative research between small and large enterprises would also yield valuable insights into barriers and drivers of ESG adoption across firm types. Limitations of the present review include the exclusive reliance on WoS and Scopus-indexed articles, potentially omitting valuable regional studies and non-English contributions. Additionally, while abstracts offer rich snapshots of research focus, reliance solely on abstract analysis may overlook nuances present in full-text studies. Future studies should address these gaps by expanding search parameters and incorporating qualitative synthesis methods. Nonetheless, the present review consolidates and advances the perception of ESG within hospitality as well as tourism, providing a coherent framework for future scholarly inquiry and practical application in promoting a more resilient, ethical, and sustainable industry landscape.

Conclusion

This systematic review was performed to synthesize the current body of knowledge concerning the integration of ESG principles in the hospitality as well as tourism sectors. The primary aim was to explore the patterns of ESG adoption, its impact on financial and organizational performance, and its role in shaping consumer perceptions and sustainable tourism development. The study systematically reviewed 26 articles sourced from Scopus as well as WoS databases, following the PRISMA protocol. Through thematic analysis, three central themes were identified: ESG Practices, Disclosure, and Reporting; ESG Impact on Financial and Firm Performance; and Consumer Perceptions, Governance, and Sustainable Tourism Development. Key findings indicate that although ESG practices have gained significant attention, considerable variation remains in reporting standards and methodologies across organizations and regions. Moreover, a positive association between ESG performance and

financial resilience was consistently observed, especially during periods of economic uncertainty. Consumer engagement emerged as a critical driver for enhancing sustainable tourism practices, with consumer perceptions and trust in ESG initiatives significantly influencing destination choices and loyalty behaviors.

The research results offer valuable insights for advancing the field by providing a structured framework that connects ESG principles to both organizational outcomes and societal impacts within tourism and hospitality. The review emphasizes that ESG is more than a compliance exercise; it is a strategic imperative that can bolster competitive advantage, enhance risk management, and foster long-term sustainability. Practical implications suggest that tourism and hospitality enterprises should embed ESG deeply into their organizational strategies, develop industry-specific disclosure standards, and foster stronger community and consumer engagement to enhance credibility and impact. Limitations of the study include the restriction to articles published within two major databases and the reliance on abstract-level analysis, which may overlook deeper contextual nuances. Future research should extend to regional databases, non-English literature, and full-text analyses to capture a broader diversity of perspectives. Additionally, longitudinal studies examining the evolution of ESG practices over time and across varying market conditions are recommended. Overall, this systematic review highlights the crucial purpose of ESG frameworks in adapting a sustainable future for tourism and hospitality, underscoring the need for continuous innovation, context-sensitive application, and proactive stakeholder engagement.

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