



CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

Sakshi Kathuria

Fortune Institute of International Business (FIIB), New Delhi, India
(sakshi.kathuria@fiib.edu.in)

Rahul Pratap Singh Kaurav,

FORE School of Management, New Delhi, India
(rahul.kaurav@fsm.ac.in)

Shivani

Fortune Institute of International Business (FIIB), New Delhi, India

ABSTRACT

Customer engagement (CE) has attracted significant interest within hospitality and tourism management, resulting in a notable increase in research efforts. This paper critically evaluates CE research through an exhaustive systematic literature review (SLR). The study aims to illuminate the current landscape of CE research by dissecting diverse theoretical perspectives and conceptualizations of customer engagement. Through a comprehensive analysis of CE research streams, covering context, mode, procedure, antecedents, and outcomes, the paper unveils pivotal trends and developments spanning 11 years (2009-2019). This specific timeframe aids in identifying prevalent ideas and tracing the evolutionary trajectory of knowledge in this domain. Beyond contributing to existing CE literature, the study delves into invaluable insights for the broader hospitality and tourism sector.

The paper offers a comprehensive overview of CE research across an extensive timeframe, exploring various dimensions within the hospitality and tourism industry. An observable shift in terminology is noted, with "customer" and "visitor" replacing "tourist" and "customer" respectively, reflecting a transformative paradigm shift in the industry's perspective. Based on our findings, targeted theoretical recommendations and promising avenues for future research are put forward. The study underscores the paramount significance of CE as a central domain for scholarly exploration within the hotel and tourism industry. The comprehension and cultivation of customer engagement are key to crafting enriching and personalized travel experiences, aligning with the industry's ongoing evolution. In conclusion, this paper synthesizes a vast array of CE research in hospitality and tourism and serves as a guiding beacon for future researchers, empowering them to unearth novel dimensions and paradigms in customer engagement within this perpetually evolving sphere.

Keywords: Tourism, Customer Engagement, Community Engagement, Hospitality, Systematic Literature Review (SLR).

1. Introduction

Over the last ten years, customer engagement has gained significant attention in academic and business circles. This paper dives deep into seminal publications in the hospitality and tourism sectors from 2009 to 2019, offering a comprehensive review and synthesis of studies centered around customer involvement. This work significantly augments the existing knowledge on customer engagement by highlighting critical directions

for future research. Such a holistic assessment is particularly relevant given the discussions raised by Kaurav et al. 2023 in recent editorials (Kaurav, Di Virgilio, Baber, & Narula, 2022; Kaurav, 2023).

Historically, businesses pre-1990s were primarily invested in amplifying the value of customer interactions, focusing on metrics like wallet share, frequency, consistency, and monetary value. However, by the mid-1990s

and early 2000s, the paradigm shifted. The onus was now on forging and nurturing robust customer relationships to amplify satisfaction and loyalty, anchored by providing high-quality goods and services (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). Given the dynamic consumer landscape and ever-evolving economic conditions, the realization dawned that more than traditional marketing pillars like reliability, contentment, and integrity might be needed to outpace competitors.

Contrary to popular belief, product or service quality alone doesn't cement customer loyalty (Aydin & Özer, 2005). Competitors can sway satisfied customers (Mittal et al., 1998). Modern marketing wisdom, therefore, suggests that mere satisfaction needs to be supplemented with factors like differentiation and enduring competitive capability.

The incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) into the services provided by numerous organizations has reshaped effectiveness as highlighted by Prentice et al. (2020). The progression of AI from managing basic duties to more intricate ones, such as interpreting customer emotions, showcases its expanding capabilities. Its role is pivotal in aspects like utilizing visual scanning technologies for employee training and the operation of neural networks (Kathuria et al. 2023; Bansal et al. 2022). Advanced tools like facial recognition and natural language processing are now staples in recruitment processes (Liu et al., 2021). AI-driven analysis of customer data and product interactions has further highlighted the importance of customer engagement as a cornerstone for loyalty (Jain and Gandhi, 2021).

Since the late 1990s, customer engagement has been recognised as a driver of business achievement (Fabien, 1997). As early as 2005, it had become a notable focus within marketing research (Islam and Rahman, 2016). Whether it directly impacts quantifiable measures like increased revenue and market presence or indirectly shapes factors like customer relationship management (CRM) quality, customer engagement remains a guiding light for gaining a competitive edge. The ripple effects of customer engagement are palpable in contemporary tourism and hotel practices. A heightened focus on customer engagement positively impacts consumer behaviors

ranging from purchasing decisions (Sakshi et al., 2019; Tu et al., 2018) to advocacy (Rather, 2019) and loyalty (Chen and Rahman, 2018). Nevertheless, the term "engagement" has been a hotbed for debate, especially concerning its definition, dimensions, and operationalization (Fang et al., 2017). Addressing this ambiguity, our study meticulously examines the latest customer engagement literature within the hotel and tourism domain. This research delineates the evolution, conceptualization, categorization, and assessment of customer interaction, providing clarity to this vital field.

2. Methodology

To gain a nuanced understanding of prevailing perspectives and trace the evolution of knowledge, we limited our review of Customer Engagement (CE) literature to an 11-year timeframe (2009-2019). Our exhaustive literature search was guided by key terms such as "customer engagement", "customer involvement", "customer co-creation", "customer loyalty", "customer satisfaction", "customer experience", "service quality", "customer relationship management", "hospitality", and "tourism".

Articles for review were carefully curated based on the following inclusion criteria:

- Published in English between 2009 and 2019.
- Primarily centered around "customer engagement" within the "hospitality and tourism" sectors.
- Employed quantitative or qualitative research methods.
- Appeared in peer-reviewed journals or presented at academic conferences.

Of the 273 articles initially identified, only 46 met our criteria and were incorporated into the final review. Each article was methodically examined for its research design, sample size, data collection approach, and primary findings.

We conducted a preliminary assessment involving a quick overview of the articles' titles and abstracts to identify relevant studies. We then analysed these chosen articles' texts more comprehensively to confirm their relevance and quality. Essential phrases such as "customer experience", "customer interaction", "engagement", and "tourist

engagement” were systematically investigated within the titles, abstracts, and keywords of articles to ensure a thorough exploration. Scrutiny was applied to each publication's abstracts and keywords to establish their content's suitability.

Through thematic analysis, we categorized the articles based on the topics they addressed. These encompassed various aspects of customer engagement, including its precursors, results, and approaches for gauging it. We extracted relevant details from each article, including the research objectives, methodologies, sample sizes, and notable discoveries. Our examination emphasized that customer engagement comprises three interlinked facets: emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions (Kaurav & Gupta, 2022). In our quest for impartiality, the complete research team participated in cooperative dialogues during both the literature assessment stage and the documentation of our discoveries, following the guidance proposed by Law et al. (2013). The chosen customer engagement (CE) articles have been methodically organized and listed in Table 1. An examination of recurring terms unveiled a consistent reference to ideas such as social media (including platforms such as WeChat, Facebook and Twitter), websites, marketing, and online social networks. This highlights the significance of online settings in a substantial portion of the scrutinized CE literature.

IJHM with 28.2% (13 articles), and IJCHM with 13.04% (6 articles). Annals of Tourism Research, JHTR, and Cornell Hospitality each contributed 4 papers, accounting for 8.69% and 4.35%, respectively, with the balance coming from other publications. The data indicates a growing trend in articles on the hospitality and tourism industries published in these top-tier journals, particularly in 2019. This surge underlines the escalating significance of CE research within these sectors.

Table 2 delineates the diverse methodological and analytical tools utilized in the CE studies reviewed. Of the total, 13.5% were conceptual or review-based, while a significant majority (86.5%) were empirical studies. Delving deeper into the methodologies, empirical studies predominantly employed a quantitative approach (62.5%), with mixed methods (28.1%) and qualitative methods (9.4%) following suit.

Our examination discloses a predominance of quantitative research within CE studies in the hospitality and tourism domain. A majority (43.8%) of empirical articles harnessed surveys for primary data collection. This was trailed by deductive approaches (28.1%), big data analytics (12.5%), interviews (9.4%), and experimental methods (6.3%). Since several articles utilized multiple statistical techniques, our analysis revolved around frequency counts. Structural equation modelling (SEM)

Table 1: Number of Publications (Journal and Year)

	2009-13	2014-16	2017-19	Total
Cornell Hospitality	0	1	1	2
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management (IJCHM)	1	1	4	6
International Journal of Hospitality Management (IJHM)	1	3	9	13
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	0	1	2	3
Annals of Tourism Research	1	1	2	4
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research (JHTR)	0	2	2	4
Tourism Management (TM)	2	6	6	14
Total	5	15	26	46

3. Review Results

An analysis of the selected journals revealed that TM led the pack with 30.43% (14 out of 46) of the analyzed publications, followed by

emerged as the technique of choice, supplemented by multiple regression models and bivariate methods. Other techniques included big data analysis, variance-based

Table 2: Summary of approaches (Methodological and Analytical)

Categories	Subcategory	%
Type of Study (n=46)	Conceptual/review	13.5
	Empirical	86.5
Research Methodology	Quantitative	62.5
	Qualitative	9.4
	Mixed Methods	28.1
Method of Data Collection	Interview/focus groups	9.4
	Survey	43.8
	Experiment	6.3
	Big data	12.5
	Mixed data collection methods	28.1
	Data Analysis Technique	Covariance based SEM
	Variance based SEM	11.9
	Qualitative content analysis	11.9
	Bivariate	19
	Multivariate	21.4
	Other Statistics	7.1

SEM, qualitative content analysis, and a blend of methodologies.

Furthermore, this research provides insight into the industries and sectors that held prominence in customer engagement (CE) studies. Table 3 provides insights into industries that have captured academic fascination. Among the 46 empirical papers, the hotel and lodging industry commanded 37.5% of the research landscape, closely tailed by destination/destination marketing organizations (DMOs) at 34.4%. Some studies delved into the restaurant/foodservice industry (6.3%) or explored settings like airlines combined with hotels (6.3%) or hotels paired with restaurants (3.1%). The "Other" category, covering 12.6%, encapsulated domains such as conferences, online gaming, platforms, and more.

Table 3: Industry Sectors Analysis

Sector	%
Hotels and Lodging	37.5
Destination marketing organization	34.4
Restaurants and foodservice	6.3
Multiple settings	9.4
Others	12.5

4. Customer Engagement (CE) Research Development in Tourism and Hospitality

Historically, definitions of customer engagement have been split into two categories: unidimensional, which usually

relates to behaviour, and multidimensional, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects. As suggested by Brodie et al. (2011), the behavioural perspective of CE has been widely accepted by many in these fields. For instance, Zhang et al. (2015) view CE as the benefits of joining a hospitality innovation community or the inherent wish of consumers to interact with and add value to such a community. Moreover, Van Asperen et al. (2018) differentiated between active and passive online CE on travel agency Facebook pages and websites.

This analysis brings to light the fact that, in addition to studies that directly calculate the frequency of user online behaviours like "liking," "sharing," and "commenting" to measure levels of CE, there are numerous articles in this context that use scales to measure customer engagement behaviour. A few academics have also used psychology (emotion) to describe CE. Prommahaa (2015) posits that consumer brand engagement represents a rational connection between an individual and a brand, characterized by pride, enthusiasm, integrity, and confidence. This concept is particularly relevant to Thailand's burgeoning health and wellness tourism sectors and the ASEAN region. A few exploratory qualitative investigations were carried out in the tourism and hotel industry literature before 2012. In their pioneering work on historic trails, Hayes and MacLeod (2007) bring customers' confidence to light. Cohen

(2010) looked at the cultural backdrop that affected tourists' encounters with animals from a sociological angle. Filep and Deery (2010) provided psychological illustrations of the perception of tourist engagement and its implications on visitors' enjoyment. Ho et al., Simms, and others conducted groundbreaking research on visitors' online engagement habits in 2012, whereas Font et al. (2012) used engagement with customers to assess hotels' CSR. In 2017, customer engagement became a recognized academic discipline rather than just a theoretical concept.

There's a need for increased research in Eastern European, Middle Eastern, South American, and African regions. Similarly, much emphasis must be prioritized to other less developed countries or regions. Cross-cultural studies can enhance the results' applicability and deepen our understanding of consumer engagement. The travel and accommodation sectors, especially within the hospitality and tourism industries, have seen significant research into consumer involvement. Areas explored within tourism include the tourist experience, facilities, offbeat tourism, the dark tourism sector, winemaking, rural camping, food tourism, wellness tourism, eco-tourism, winter tourism, diving and hiking (Wu et al., 2017; Savaşan et al., 2017; Pharino et al., 2018).

A few studies have focused on guesthouses, whereas research on tourist satisfaction focuses on high-end brands. Restaurants, bars, cafés, and mainly coffee shops have all been used as research locations for the sectors of food and beverages. Events in the wine brand marketing, sports, and music sectors were examined. Airlines and cruises were investigated in the trip transportation area. Successful studies should focus on the travel, transportation, and events industries. It is imperative to concentrate on emerging trends like the sharing economy, technological progress, and worldwide uncertainties that will influence the future of the hospitality and tourism industries. Research spanning across different sectors is becoming increasingly vital. Journal excerpts offer insights into where topics have been published, serving as a guide for potential future submissions (Islam et al., 2019). The customer interactions in the retrieved articles utilise "consumer

participation" in 25 different ways. Using words and phrases related to customer contact lacks coherence and clarity. For instance, numerous studies refer to how customers connect with organisations' social networking sites using words like "online customer engagement," "online interaction," "online consumer engagement behaviour," "user engagement," "social networking sites engagement," and "media engagement" (SNSs).

In the research literature, there needed to be more discussion of the many types of customer interaction. Hollebeek (2011) made a passing reference to this idea while acknowledging the many levels of customer engagement, including "customer engagement," "consumer engagement behavior," "customer brand engagement," "customer interaction," and "interaction" generally. Similar to this, Islam and Rahman (2016) divide the consumer experience research environment into four categories: brand, service, industry, generic and internet platform. However, none provided a typology of client engagement or a distinct separation between several sub-forms.

It is essential to create a clear classification system to enhance consistency in customer engagement within the hospitality and tourism industries. In these sectors, studies have pinpointed four specific types of customer engagement: online consumer interaction, traveller interaction, consumer-brand linkage, and customer engagement actions (Di Pietro et al., 2012; Lin et al., 2017; Lin et al., 2019). Although there's bound to be some overlap among these categories, particular situations, like tourists' online activity on travel reservation sites, can simultaneously fall under categories like customer engagement behavior, online customer interaction, and traveler engagement. The relevant study is categorised as Online Consumer Engagement rather than one of the two sub-forms based on how these words are used in the literature on consumer interaction and the internal uniformity within the sub-forms. Additionally, customer engagement activity can characterise most one-dimensional online consumer interaction. Customer engagement behaviour (except internet activities) is described as consumers'

involvement with particular behaviours to lessen the uncertainty in type.

Standardized procedures and criteria are essential for upholding academic repeatability. The formulation of the four sub-forms was broken down into four steps. Second, online consumer involvement includes systems that collect data for empirical study. Second, after excluding articles on online consumer engagement, research done in the framework of the tourism business is categorised as tourist engagement. Customer engagement behaviour is lastly categorised as single-dimensional behavioural investigations among the other publications. Fourth, consumer brand interaction is a multifaceted, psychologically based research category.

4.1 Definition and Approaches

There still needs to be a consensus on what constitutes CE in tourism and hospitality. There are two broad definitional camps: unidimensional, focused mainly on behaviour, and multidimensional, encapsulating cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects. For example, the behavioural perspective of CE in the hospitality sector aligns with advantages like being part of a co-innovation community (Zhang et al., 2015). Another differentiation is between passive and active engagement in online spaces, as Van Asperen et al. (2018) noted.

4.2 Research Trends and Areas

Historically, qualitative studies in the sector pre-2012 were exploratory, focusing on tourists' confidence, cultural perspectives, and online engagement habits. By 2017, CE transitioned from a concept to a recognised academic field. However, there's a geographical research gap, with areas like South America and Eastern Europe needing more focus. Additionally, studies in the sector are vast, covering experiences from viticulture to health tourism and from guesthouses to high-end brands. Upcoming research must attend to trends like the sharing economy and global unpredictability.

4.3 CE Terminology and Typology

There's a lack of consistency in terminologies related to CE, with terms like "online customer engagement" and "media engagement" being used interchangeably. A clear typology can foster research consistency. Current

classifications of CE in the sector include – online consumer engagement, tourist interaction, consumer brand connection, and engagement behaviour. Within this, there's a detailed five-part typology:

- Online Consumer Engagement: Interactions on company's digital platforms.
- Tourist Engagement: Interaction with the tourism destination and its offerings.
- Emotional Engagement: Emotional connection to a brand or product.
- Rational Engagement: Logical decisions in consumer behaviour.
- Social Engagement: Engagements on social platforms.

4.4 The Reasons for Customer Engagement

After identifying CE criteria, the antecedents from the examined studies were collected and divided into six categories: obstacles, relational drivers, organizational drivers, situational drivers, situational drivers, and motivational drivers.

Engagement can be shaped by an individual's aspirations, prior knowledge, experiences, and personal perceptions. These factors together form motivating drivers, frequently studied precursors to CE. Van Doorn et al. (2010), highlighting various precursors to CE, identified these precursors from three distinct angles: the customer, the company, and the surrounding context. Recognizing the crucial role of CE in business outcomes, companies strive hard to entice consumers to interact with their brands (Prentice et al. 2019). Consequently, research has delved into personality characteristics and marketing communication skills as potential triggers for CE. Studies have also explored social media engagement features, such as the level of interactivity and immersive experience, app attributes like design and efficacy, and online brand elements like visual appeal (Bilro et al., 2018; Munoz-Leiva et al., 2018). Research indicates that an individual's eagerness to learn can influence their engagement in wildlife tourism. Similarly, parental aspirations for their children's hands-on learning can shape their engagement at global heritage sites (Yang & Lau, 2019). Moreover, cultural motivations can sway both the consumption of native culture and

engagement at heritage locations (Bryce et al., 2015).

The motivation for recreation is a critical determinant that steers engagement, affecting CE through the offerings of services (Taheri et al., 2014). Marketing experts believe that CE mirrors the psychological states of customers concerning their interactions and collaborative creations with brands (Brodie et al., 2011). Consequently, numerous studies within the hotel and tourism sectors have investigated elements related to experiences that enhance CE, such as interactions with brands (Taheri et al., 2014). Furthermore, Bryce et al. (2015) highlighted that a tourist's level of interest in historical sites might be influenced by their assessment of the authenticity of the site's objectives. Individual assessments or views regarding a brand or destination can lead consumers to interact with it more than just purchase. Studies indicate that the worth consumers place on an item largely stems from their perceptions (Itani et al., 2019). For instance, visitors' values to zoos and aquariums profoundly shape their reactions to the conservation and educational messages presented. This, in turn, affects their subsequent environmental actions after the visit (Ballantyne et al., 2018). Moreover, the perceived simplicity of use plays a role in the practical engagement of peer-to-peer lodging services (Ye et al., 2019).

Several research efforts have investigated the relationship between CE and customer satisfaction and trust. Hapsari et al. (2017) investigated that customer satisfaction is pivotal in influencing CE in the luxury Indonesian airline sector. This finding was echoed by Bravo et al. (2019) in the context of using a social tourism website. As highlighted by Wei et al. (2017), trust instils a sense of assurance in customers towards their service providers. Consequently, customers tend to engage in future interactions favourably directed towards the business. Furthermore, Ahn & Back (2018) theorized that offering distinct and unforgettable customer experiences can alter a customer's outlook and actions concerning different firms down the line.

4.5 Antecedents of Customer Engagement

- Motivational Drivers: Factors like past experiences, desires, and subjective

judgements influence CE. There's also a push from businesses to engage consumers using marketing techniques and platform design.

- Relational Drivers: Trust, satisfaction, and loyalty form the backbone of CE, with aspects like perceived closeness playing a role.
- Organizational Drivers: Modern connectivity means businesses have to foster non-transactional relationships to promote customer engagement.
- Following Special Interests: Personal interests, like environmental activism, play a role in driving CE.
- Adaptive Drivers: Situational factors, like tourism demand seasonality, can influence engagement levels.
- Organizational Challenges: Issues can arise from customer expectations, technology, and environmental factors that can act as barriers to CE.

4.6 Drivers of Customer Engagement

Experts in the hospitality and tourism areas have conceptualised CE as being brought on by a combination of motivational, social, organisational, and environmental factors (along with the pursuit of specialist interests and barriers), according to our thorough examination of CE research. A wide range of behavioural, emotional, cognitive, economic, and/or affective impacts could also be brought on by CE. These theorising attempts, even though they are still largely incomplete, represent remarkable advancements in our understanding of the origins and influences of CE. Similar to efforts made by traditional marketing scholars (Harmeling et al., 2017), attempts have been made to build a theory of CE.

4.7. Relational Drivers

Several studies have delved into what drives consumers to interact with a brand or location. A pivotal factor in this engagement is the quality of the relationship, encompassing, satisfaction, trust and loyalty (Itani et al., 2019). Any of these metrics can serve as indicators of customer engagement. For example, trust has historically been a primary driver of CE (Wei et al., 2017). Research suggests that customers engage with a company when they feel a commitment-based relationship exists (Itani et al., 2019). The same study also explored other relational elements,

including perceived alignment, intimacy, social bond and presence. These elements can enhance hedonic engagement by evoking positive emotions. Moreover, the effectiveness of peer-to-peer platforms can be amplified by enhancing social presence (Ye et al., 2019).

4.8 Organizational Drivers

In today's digital age and interconnected society, organizations must emphasize fostering non-transactional interactions with consumers, given the ease with which customers can engage with businesses and their peers (Verhoef et al., 2010). Research indicates that prioritising customer satisfaction and connection can foster customer citizenship and co-creation (Sashi, Brynildsen, & Bilgihan, 2019). Similarly, there's been a surge in corporate responses on review platforms such as TripAdvisor and Yelp, as businesses aim to shape public perception actively and responsibly (Li et al., 2017). These service recovery efforts are pivotal in determining the nature of word-of-mouth communication from consumers (Liu et al., 2019).

4.9 Following Special Interests

To foster CE, catering to individual interests is vital. Studies suggest that participating in environmental causes can bolster CE. Actions like promoting environmental awareness or preserving public spaces and water bodies exemplify this (Ballantyne et al., 2011). Additionally, research indicates that personally significant tourist experiences, such as meaningful leisure activities and heritage-centric behaviors, which are often intangible and deeply personal, can have a substantial positive impact (Bryce et al., 2015). Research suggests that situational elements, like timing and the cyclic nature of tourism demand, can influence whether a Destination Marketing Organization's (DMO) Facebook page receives positive or negative engagement. While most prior categories focused on factors that initiate or contribute to CE, Chathoth et al. (2014) explored four obstacles to CE: customers, technology, marketing strategies, organizational structure, and the broader environment.

5. Results

5.1 Cognitive Evaluation Results

Cognitive evaluation involves individuals gauging their competence and control within a specific context. Within customer engagement,

this evaluation can be pivotal in understanding how well different strategies and methods resonate with customers. One can utilise surveys or questionnaires to gauge cognitive evaluation in customer engagement, prompting customers to evaluate a company's engagement initiatives. These inquiries might delve into the clarity and relevance of marketing communications, the degree of tailored interactions from the company, and the simplicity of reaching customer assistance and support (Ballantyne et al., 2018).

5.2 Economic Results

Apart from the research by Choi & Kandampully (2019), which indicated that customer loyalty could boost a company's profits, there still needs to be a gap in understanding the financial impact of CE. Increasing a customer's spending can offer a business value that's potentially tenfold compared to focusing solely on retaining clients.

5.3 Definitional Difficulties

The lack of consensus on CE's definition in the hotel and tourism sectors raises three significant concerns. Firstly, similar to the broader marketing domain, scholars in the tourism and hospitality fields have presented varied interpretations of the term, resulting in multiple definitions and ways of understanding the concept. The central debate in defining CE within mainstream service marketing revolves around whether the concept is solely based on behaviour or encompasses both behavioural and cognitive elements (Harmeling et al., 2017). While the behavioural perspective views CE as the actions or responses of customers towards a business, the behavioural-psychological model considers cognitive, emotional, and/or behavioural elements, such as those highlighted by Brodie et al., 2011.

5.4 Making Theories

A thorough analysis of CE studies shows that academics in the tourist industry and hospitality fields have believed CE to be caused by several motivational, social, organizational, and environmental elements. CE may also result in various behavioural, emotional, cognitive, economic, and/or affective effects. Even though these theoretical attempts are still mostly incomplete, they show commendable progress towards a more

thorough comprehension of the creation and impact of CE. These efforts similarly mirror those made by researchers in mainstream marketing to develop a CE marketing theory (Pansari & Kumar, 2017, 2018). Therefore, future studies can use a multi-disciplinary strategy combining theories from IT, marketing management, HR, and psychology to comprehend CE better. The theories above were used in earlier studies to highlight the responsive nature of consumers in their interactions with business, brands, and society. Customers have recently begun communicating, which has led to increased human-computer interactions because of service robots, chatbots, and numerous other advanced technologies. Future CE research should look into integrating advanced technology into the concept of CE.

5.5 The antecedences of customer engagement

Further research is warranted to delve deeper into the drivers of CE. Our analysis of CE drivers reveals that prior studies have predominantly focused on internal customer motivations and company strategies. While relying on internal motivations for CE might be cost-effective for a business, it might relegate the company to a reactive stance, compromising its ability to boost CE proactively. The potential risks of CE to businesses are acknowledged (Beckers et al., 2018). Even if CE can develop naturally, companies should guide customers towards the organization's goals (Brakus et al., 2009). Investigating the combined effects of company and customer-centric factors is crucial to understanding how CE can be amplified, benefiting businesses through transactional and non-transactional interactions. Future research should adopt a comprehensive approach that simultaneously explores customer and company perspectives. This aligns with Van Doorn et al. (2010)'s call for more research, suggesting that each driving factor be viewed concerning others. For instance, company-centric elements, such as a brand's online visibility, might influence the study of how customers identify with a brand.

5.6 The Function of Technology and Consumer Co-Creation

Technology has served as the backdrop for a lot of CE research in our sector, including identifying technical advancements as an

incentive for encouraging and measuring consumers' contributions to businesses' marketing performance. Much is still to learn about how technology may promote interactive, ubiquitous CE and true customer value co-creation. Future research might explore the role of technology in shaping or enhancing customer-brand relationships. Likewise, technological advancements like machine learning, robotic systems, and 5G networks, combined with the profound effects of social media on our society, have positioned the digital realm as a primary focus for marketing efforts to boost or catalyze CE.

Developing platforms and programs for effective engagement that will motivate and entice consumers to participate in consumer and client interactions is a significant management problem. The "dark side" of CE, which includes effects on businesses (such as business susceptibility or other unexpected consequences), as well as how emerging CE systems and initiatives may persuade consumers to take part in negative word of mouth, calls for future study (Harmeling et al., 2017).

6. Discussion

Current studies are flawed, according to the systematic review. First, there needs to be a systematic evaluation of consumer engagement research, despite the field's prominence in the hotel and tourist industries, and how the area has developed needs to be clarified. Second, there needs to be a general agreement on conceptualizing consumer involvement.

Lastly, even though some academics know that customer interaction is complex and includes several subtypes, a definitive typology of this concept is yet to be offered. Fourth, measurement scales, ranging from single to multiple dimensions, were used at the researcher's discretion. By meticulously examining, categorizing, and synthesizing the gathered materials, the present investigation investigates the evolution, interpretation, typology, and measurement of consumer engagement to solve the current problems. The distribution of consumer engagement in 1847 is broken down by historical period, region, industry, and journal. In the hotel and tourist industries, a novel concept of client engagement is defined.

6.1 Theoretical implications

The review's theoretical implications stem from presenting the most recent consumer engagement research from the hospitality and travel sectors, which aids in understanding consumer engagement. Customer engagement is a young study area with much potential. Most of the previous research was done in industrialized nations and areas. This review encourages scholars to do cross-cultural research and duplicate their study in understudied population groups (Lee and Lee, 2019; Mariani et al., 2016).

To enhance the research findings' relevance and broad applicability, it's vital to study customer engagement across different contexts and industries (Hapsari et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2017; Wei et al., 2017). This is crucial given that most current research on customer engagement is primarily focused on the travel and accommodation sectors. As suggested by Kim et al. (2017), studies could be tailored to different ratings of businesses (e.g., high-star vs. low-star) or types of establishments (independent, regional chains, global chains). Additionally, online customer interactions should be studied across various platforms, each with distinct designs, functions, and associated social media channels (Schroeder et al., 2018).

6.2 Practical implications

This review delves into the connection between consumer engagement and prevailing challenges in the hospitality sector. Several practical implications arise from this investigation. It underscores the necessity for leaders and marketers within the tourism and hospitality domains to recognize the significance of customer interaction in co-creating value. Based on various characteristics like demographics, psychographics, and behaviors, companies should segment their customers into specific clusters (Fang et al., 2017). By catering to the unique psychological needs of these segments, businesses can fine-tune their service offerings and marketing approaches for better engagement. Notably, personal interactions, whether they're between customers, staff, or between tourists and the local community, are as pivotal for customer retention as the direct engagement between customers and the brand or firm. There's a need for training modules aimed at refining the interpersonal, analytical,

and domain-specific skills of employees (Hussein, 2018). Likewise, Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) can attract tourists by curating immersive experiences that promote interaction with service providers, cultural exchanges (Huang and Choi, 2019), or community participation (Sharma and Sarmah, 2019).

7. Conclusions

This study offers valuable insights into the CE literature, particularly within the hospitality and tourism sectors. It comprehensively reviews a decade of CE research in this area and proposes directions for future academic endeavours. Our exhaustive examination of 46 articles from 2009 to 2019, published in premier hospitality and tourism journals, revealed operationalizations and varied interpretations of the CE construct. This highlighted definitional and conceptual inconsistencies. The research presents a methodical breakdown of CE studies, drawing from many articles in the sector. It outlines findings and perspectives on conceptualizing and measuring customer engagement (CE). Furthermore, it pinpoints potential future research areas and themes. From a managerial standpoint, this study suggests several takeaways. It underscores the potential of customer engagement as a lever for enhancing value in the hospitality and tourism realms. Additionally, the study accentuates the significance of stakeholder interactions. Since customers often trust peer reviews, businesses can boost engagement by proactively responding to commendations and criticisms online. Methodologically, the findings propose various enhancements, including employing experimental research, multi-faceted inquiries, advanced qualitative methods, database management, and diverse data collection techniques. These recommendations highlight the limited scope of current CE research approaches in tourism and hospitality. Future studies should explore unique or more profound contextual facets of tourist and accommodation experiences. Given the dynamic nature of technology and its application, industry researchers and practitioners have a rich tapestry of opportunities to explore tools and initiatives that resonate with audiences. In closing, subsequent research can seek to associate CE with other outcome metrics, such as firms' financial results, while emphasizing dyadic

interactions, offering a holistic view of the customer landscape.

7.1 Future Research Directions

Considering the ever-evolving landscape of the tourism industry and the growing significance of customer engagement, there remains a compelling need for further exploration and research. The following research questions have been formulated to guide future researchers in uncovering deeper insights into the complexities of customer engagement within the tourism sector. These questions reflect the multifaceted nature of customer engagement and its potential impact on both businesses and travelers. By addressing these research questions, scholars can contribute to the refinement of strategies, the development of best practices, and the overall enhancement of the tourism experience for customers worldwide.

- How does cultural diversity operationalise the effectiveness and design of customer engagement strategies in the tourism industry across different regions?
- What are the longitudinal trends in customer engagement practices within the tourism sector, and how do they align with evolving technological advancements and consumer preferences?
- How can a standardized measurement scale for customer engagement be developed and validated specifically for the tourism and hospitality industry?
- What is the role of emerging technologies, for instance artificial intelligence and virtual reality, in enhancing customer engagement experiences during various stages of the tourism journey?
- How can customer engagement strategies be aligned with sustainability goals to promote responsible and environmentally conscious tourism practices?
- What is the causal relationship between customer engagement and business performance indicators (e.g., revenue, customer loyalty) in the tourism and hospitality sector?
- Which customer engagement platforms (e.g., social media, mobile

apps) are most effective in fostering customer-brand relationships and improving overall tourism experiences?

- How does stakeholder engagement, including interactions with local communities and governments, influence the success of customer engagement initiatives in the tourism industry?
- Do customer engagement practices vary significantly among different tourist segments (e.g., leisure travelers, business travelers, adventure seekers), and how can tailored strategies be developed for each segment?
- What is the interplay between employee engagement and customer engagement in the tourism industry, and how can organizations effectively leverage engaged employees to enhance customer experiences?
- How can offline customer engagement strategies complement online initiatives to provide customers a seamless and enriching tourism experience?
- What are the potential negative consequences or "dark side" of customer engagement strategies, such as the risk of negative word-of-mouth or privacy concerns, and how can businesses mitigate these risks?

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