A systematic review of the sex trafficking–related literature: Lessons for tourism and hospitality research

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Abstract

Human trafficking research has drawn increasing attention since the early 1980s. As the volume of human trafficking literature continues to expand, it is essential to examine the scope and challenges of this research area through a systematic review. Our review is based on a scientometric analysis of 2,830 research articles (1982–2019) using VOSviewer. The Scopus database was utilised to retrieve bibliographic records as the core dataset to systematically review the literature on human trafficking. The overall structure of the scientometric landscape is illustrated through a three-stage process (planning/outlining a review protocol, executing the protocol, and reporting) to ensure a granular, transparent, and reliable systematic review. Our results reveal three clusters: (1) sex commercialisation, migration, and modern slavery; (2) child exploitation, sexual abuse, and health; and (3) human trafficking and institutional environments. Practical implications and future research directions are also discussed.

Keywords: human trafficking; sex trafficking; systematic review; scientometrics; tourism and hospitality

1. Introduction

Human trafficking refers to the "illegal trade [of] human beings through abduction, the use or treat of force, deception, fraud or sale for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labour" (Texas Association Against Sexual Assault, 2009). This form of trafficking generally includes sex trafficking and labour trafficking, wherein victims are dispositioned through brutal force, psychological coercion, or abuse for sexual or labour manipulation (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018a). Sex tourism, including that involving children, has been a topic of public debate from ethical, legal, and moral perspectives. Bernat and Zhilina (2010) pointed out that human trafficking is distinct from sex work. If sexual services are provided consensually, then the acts do not fall under trafficking; the label only applies when individuals are held against their will and forced to participate in prostitution (Bhabha, 2005; Laczko, 2005). Conversely, if children are engaged in such activities, then they are considered trafficked regardless of any evidence of coercion.

Human trafficking, including sex trafficking, is a form of modern-day slavery (Europol, 2016). This criminal clandestine business has reached epidemic proportions, affecting more than 40 million victims (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2017) in an underground industry worth $150 billion annually (ILO, 2014). Despite concerted pressure from key governmental stakeholders to address this pertinent issue, many cases go undetected due to chronic fear from victims who suffer in silence. Yet sex trafficking is an important topic to consider in various industries including tourism and hospitality. This paper provides a systematic review of the relevant literature to map sex trafficking–related issues and offer insight so that stakeholders may control, resolve, and prevent these illegal activities.

Most trafficked victims are women and children; one-third of trafficked children are below the age of 18 (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014). Correspondingly, an estimated 10 million children are

prostituted every day. Sexual exploitation is a major driver behind human trafficking, comprising 59% of the industry (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014). For example, Romo (2017) reported that Karla Jacinto was lured into a brothel at the age of 12 and forced into prostitution in Mexico City before being rescued by authorities. During her 4 years of enslavement, she was raped and sexually assaulted 43,200 times – by 30 men per day, 7 days a week for 2,555 days in the name of sex tourism.

Unfortunately, hospitality and tourism businesses play a supporting role in human trafficking activities indirectly and sometimes knowingly through logistical, accommodation, and hospitality services (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018b). This dark side of tourism and hospitality involves innocent people being stolen from their loved ones, disenfranchised, and robbed of their dignity. From a legal standpoint, the United Nations and various regional organisations have sought to eradicate sex trafficking through enactments such as Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings; and the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP). Despite international efforts to cast a silver bullet, sex trafficking has permeated too many industries to be extinguished by law alone. Breakdowns in international law are partially to blame for its spread. Bilateral and multilateral treaties and UN conventions have engendered minimal change, and national competencies underpinning efforts to combat sex trafficking are neither uniform nor universal. These discrepancies are exacerbated by ineffective enforcement and a lack of political will to respond forcefully to the problem, framing sex trafficking legislation as a paper tiger.

An initial scan of academic articles related to human trafficking in tourism and hospitality journals revealed a paucity of work: fewer than 10 papers had been published in scholarly journals as of 2018. These sources can be categorised into two main groups based on methodology: qualitative studies and descriptive/exploratory literature reviews. The first group of studies (Matheson & Finkel, 2013; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018a, 2018b) relied on qualitative techniques, mainly interviews, with small samples of key stakeholders such as hotel managers, policy experts, law enforcement officers, and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs). This approach is understandable given the sensitive nature of the topic and difficulties gathering primary data (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018a, 2018b). In a study exploring sex trafficking and sporting mega-events, Matheson and Finkel (2013) interviewed 23 key stakeholders such as police and NGOs in Vancouver, Canada. The Olympic Games were identified as a potential catalyst for human trafficking due to the surge in visitation associated with this event, which could lead to increased sex trafficking to accommodate a spike in sexual services. Using qualitative in-depth interviews ($n = 29$) with stakeholders such as governors and hotel managers, Paraskevas and Brookes (2018a, 2018b) examined human trafficking in the hotel sector in the UK, Finland, and Romania. Their study delineated how front- and back-of-house operations in hotels can help identify and report sex trafficking activities to disrupt opportunities for human trafficking in this setting.

The second group of studies (Brown, 1999; Saarinen, 2006; Tepelus, 2008) examined human trafficking issues in tourism and hospitality based on descriptive, exploratory, and/or non-empirical literature reviews. These sources tended to identify gaps related to policy and intervention. Brown (1999) focused on the sex crimes and tourism nexus in Nepal from female tourist victims' perspectives. Brown's (1999) research produced several preventative strategies, such as implementing online activism and promoting a better understanding of women's human rights to end sex trafficking. In a review of sustainability tourism studies, Saarinen (2006) analysed the limits of tourism development and suggested that human

trafficking and prostitution may be linked to tourism sustainability. In a study on child sex tourism, Tepelus (2008) reviewed policy options and pointed out gaps between social responsibility and innovation regarding trafficking and child sex tourism.

With the exception of the aforementioned studies, scarce attention has been paid to tourism's role in the sex trafficking industry. This relative absence of work unveils several avenues to explore (Matheson & Finkel, 2013). For instance, the lacuna in this area can be overcome by combining theories in social science and criminology to examine trafficking in a tourism and hospitality context (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018a). In young disciplines such as tourism, it is common to lean on more established disciplines to explore new topics (Tepelus, 2008; Winterdyk & Reichel, 2010). Another issue to consider is that most trafficking studies in tourism and hospitality have involved small samples in specific regions (e.g., Europe) and possess limited generalisability (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018b). Further, trafficking studies have often suffered from inadequate baseline data, which presents measurement and comparison concerns (Matheson & Finkel, 2013).

Given these research limitations and calls for future studies, the main objective of this work is to present a systematic literature review of human trafficking scholarship in tourism and hospitality and closely related areas (such as sex studies, gender studies, child studies, social science, human trafficking, and criminology) to provide a comprehensive coverage of human trafficking. The impetus behind adopting a systematic literature review is twofold. First, a systematic literature review has been deemed effective in determining the state of academic research in tourism and hospitality by synthesising findings and spurring discussion around subsequent work (Kim, Bai, Kim, & Chon, 2018; Omerzel, 2016; Yang, Khoo-Lattimore, & Arcodia, 2017). In this case, such a review offers insight from a broad literature base to be applied to tourism and hospitality. Second, considering the dearth of research on human trafficking topics in tourism and hospitality, it is necessary to explore published data via a systematic scientometric review to identify key themes associated with this crime. More importantly, our study aims to bolster the human trafficking literature in tourism and hospitality, namely by highlighting future research directions and trends to help vanquish human trafficking in this industry.

The remainder of this paper is organised as follows. The second section explains our methodology along with a detailed overview of the functionality of VOSviewer software used to conduct the literature review. Results of key themes are presented in Section 3 and divided into three clusters: (1) sex commercialisation, migration, and modern slavery; (2) child exploitation, sexual abuse, and health; and (3) human trafficking and institutional environments. Finally, the conclusions and limitations of our study are presented.

2. Materials and Methods

Given that the purpose of this study was to systematically review the literature on human trafficking, an optimal method involves a scientometric process to generate key themes and visualisation maps (Liu, Liu, Wang, & Pan, 2019). Creating maps based on complete scholarship of a topic provides a holistic understanding and facilitates connections among diverse knowledge domains. The key benefit of using science maps is that they enable different disciplines to cross boundaries and create value by collaborating for knowledge advancement (Hu & Zhang, 2017; Rafols, Leydesdorff, O'Hare, Nightingale, & Stirling, 2012).

This study presents a mixed-methods review of the literature based on systematic search criteria, a mapping review categorising current literature, and a state-of-the-art review (Grant

& Booth, 2009). We evaluated extant scholarship as well as industry insights into human trafficking in tourism and hospitality. This mixed-methods review was necessary to provide a robust, comprehensive, and breakthrough evaluation of the literature on this emergent theme. Systematic reviews apply scientific methods that explicitly aim to limit systematic errors or bias through identifying, appraising, and synthesising all relevant studies (depending on the design) to address a question or set of questions (Schlosser, Wendt, & Sigafoos, 2007). Our literature review adopted Tranfield, Denyer, and Smart's (2003) recommended three-stage process (planning/outlining a review protocol, executing the protocol, and reporting) to ensure a granular, transparent, and reliable systematic review.

2.1. Stage 1 – Planning/outlining a review protocol

In the planning stage, we identified the value of this research as providing a holistic understanding of the interdisciplinarity of human trafficking and proposing future development within the domain. We also developed a protocol for source selection, search strategies, review methods, and analysis of accompanying data and information. In this stage, we chose to employ the entire Scopus database; it is the second largest scientific knowledge database after Google Scholar and exceeds the Web of Science (WoS) (Harzing & Alakangas, 2016). Despite the breadth of Google Scholar, the database includes many stray citations for which minor variations produce duplicates; the site is also somewhat disorganised and includes sources that may not meet strict scientific standards (Harzing & Alakangas, 2016). Meanwhile, Scopus and WoS densely overlap; as such, results between the two databases may diverge only marginally, especially when attempting to compare large numbers of articles (Vieira & Gomes, 2009).

2.2. Stage 2 – Protocol execution

In the second stage, we followed the procedures set out in the planning stage: identifying search terms, selecting studies, assessing quality, and extracting and synthesising data. The document search dates were deliberately set from the earliest available output until February 26, 2019 when the initial list of documents was extracted. Search criteria were as follows: '*"human traffick*" OR "child prostitut*" OR "sex slav*" OR "sex tour*"*' using a Boolean search in Scopus. Our search returned 2,908 documents containing any of these terms within the titles, abstracts and/or keywords of the original works. In the second phase of execution (i.e., study selection), we reviewed the 2,908 output titles, abstracts, and keywords to ensure they were relevant to our research. We consequently excluded 78 publications that did not suit our criteria, Figure 1 demonstrates the publications selection process. For mapping and identifying research clusters, we decided to use the remaining 2,830 sources in our analysis regardless of the source language (as long as the title and abstract were in English). The final sample included diverse publications: 2,150 journal sources, 533 books, 67 conference proceedings, 54 book series, 24 trade publications, and 2 undefined papers. A large-scale thematic study of scholarship requires a semantic analysis of noun terms regardless of the applied criteria (Justeson & Katz, 1995; van Eck & Waltman, 2014).

**Figure 1.** Results of the search and study selection criteria
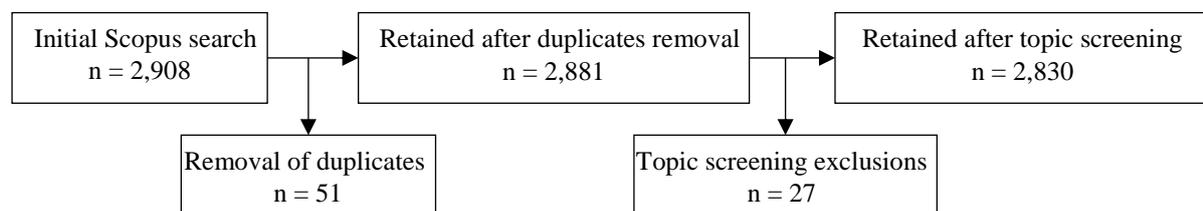
2.3. Stage 3 – Reporting

To provide a robust and visually impactful report, our study constructed mapping and state-of-the art reviews using the innovative science mapping software VOSviewer. This program utilises co-citation analysis that draws upon relationships between scientometric indicators on a visual map. Our reporting utilised advanced methods of thematic analysis by extracting commonly occurring noun phrases. This method mapped the contents of the entire body of extracted literature (2,830 documents) on human trafficking in tourism and hospitality by cluster. For map generation, VOSviewer's default settings were configured as recommended to generate an optimal scientometric mapping outcome (van Eck & Waltman, 2010). A minimum of 50 different documents with noun phrases were chosen for extraction and mapping. VOSviewer's clustering function was used to identify high-similarity terms arranged proximally on a map. Cluster alignment occurs when strongly associated terms are placed in the same cluster, providing an emergent taxonomy of the literature. This approach creates clusters by assigning nodes in the network based on relationships between terms. Publications assigned to the same clusters likely share a common theme (for a more technical explanation, please see Korom [2019] and van Eck & Waltman [2010, 2014]).

3. Results

As depicted in Figure 2 (the interactive map of the scholarship is available via the following link: https://bit.ly/traffickingresearch), scholarly attention to human trafficking in tourism grew from 1982 to 2018 with a marked jump in the early 2000s. Upon searching for keywords such as "*human trafficking*", "*sex tourism*", "*sex slavery*", and "*child prostitution*" in the literature, fewer than 20 articles were published annually between 1982 and 2003. This pace increased dramatically from 2004 to 2018, during which period 334 papers were published per year. Clearly, researchers have begun to place more emphasis on human trafficking and its tourism impacts, including those related to sex tourism and child prostitution.

Figure 2. Total number of published articles on human trafficking, sex tourism, sex slavery, and child prostitution by year.
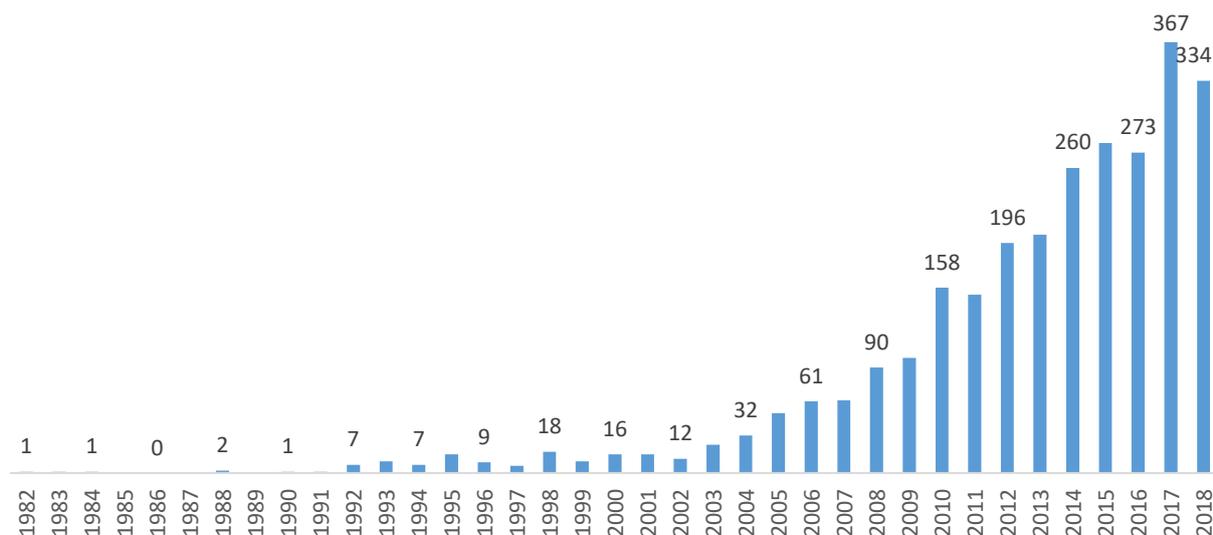
The scientometric review identified three clusters of existing literature on human trafficking, coded in red, green, and blue. The red cluster is associated with s*ex commercialization, migration, and modern slavery;* the green cluster is related to *child exploitation, sexual*

abuse, and health; and the blue cluster is associated with *human trafficking and institutional environments.* To conduct a thorough investigation of these main clusters, each was analysed according to the themes within it. Thematic analysis results are depicted in Figure 3. In the map, the frequency of occurrence is represented by the size of the noun phrase, such that larger circles represent a higher number of publications citing the term with at least 50 publications referring to each term.

As identified in the literature, limited attention has been paid to human trafficking in tourism and hospitality; thus, we performed a systematic literature review assuming a broader scope. Notably, the clusters appearing in Figure 3 are based on a broad literature review related to human trafficking in general rather than in the tourism and hospitality industry specifically. Again, these results highlight the lack of tourism-specific research on human trafficking. The map presents three clusters color-coded by topic (red, green, and blue). Salient terms identified in the map are included to summarise key findings related to human trafficking.

Figure 3. Three research clusters (based on human trafficking, child prostitution, sex slavery, and sex tourism) and associated themes in the academic literature.
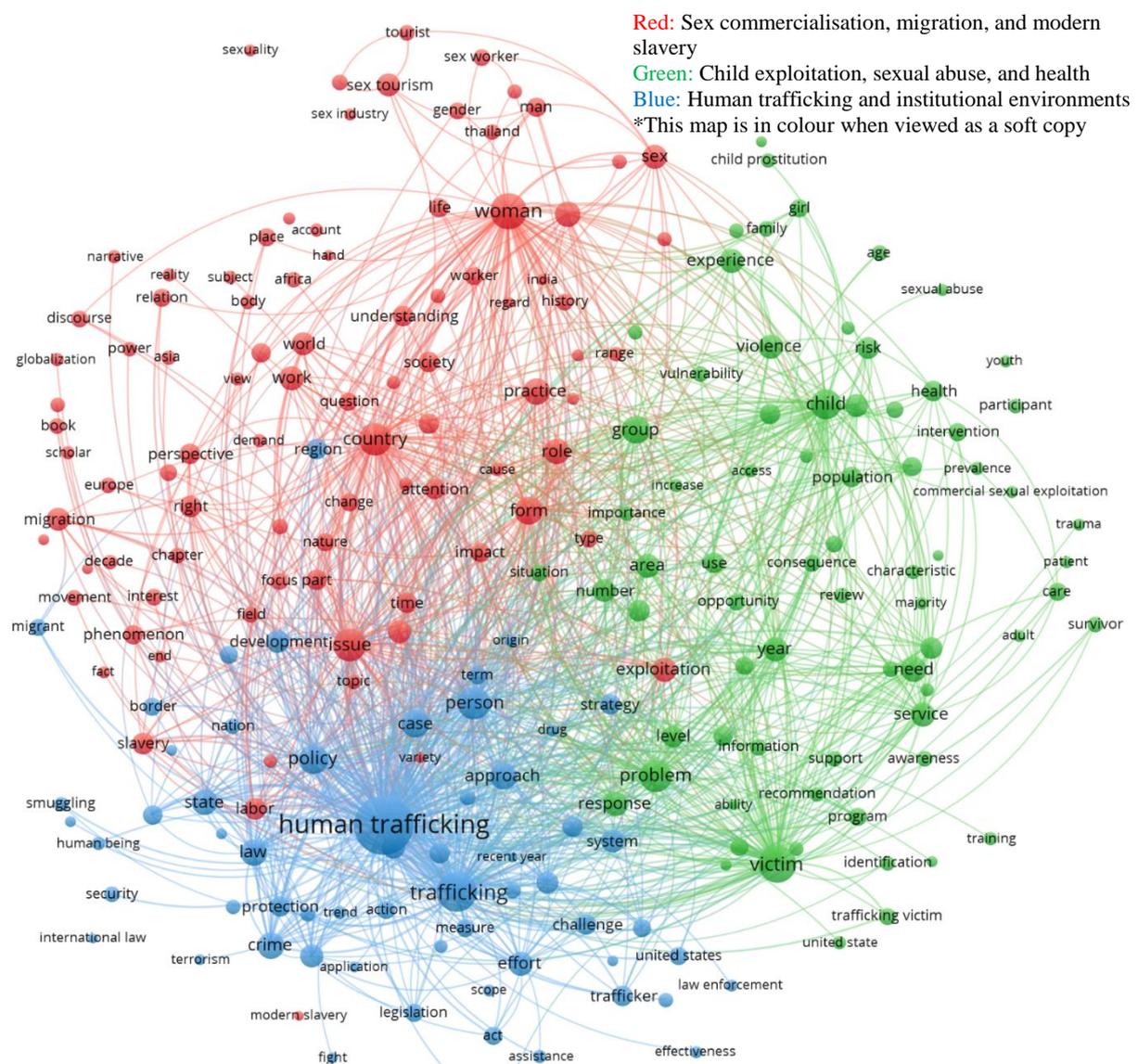
3.1. Cluster 1 (Red): Sex commercialisation, migration, and modern slavery

In our map, the *sex commercialisation, migration, and modern slavery* cluster (red) is largest. The key terms in Figure 3 and Table 1 suggest that modern slavery exploitation is a global problem (Androff, 2010). This complex social issue is closely tied to migration, which is a major social phenomenon (Mahmound & Trebesch, 2010). According to Mahmound and Trebesch (2010), who analysed the economics of human trafficking and labour migration based on micro-data, individual trafficking risks are much higher in regions with large emigration flows. In addition, Mahmound and Trebesch (2010) indicated that illegal migration increases trafficking risks and that more effective information dissemination (e.g., through awareness campaigns) may help reduce related crime. These suggestions echoed those of Chemin and Mbiekop (2015) and Brown (1999). For Cluster 1 (red), the map clearly illustrates a relationship between modern slavery and tourism. Compared to modern slavery exploitation that has been deemed a global problem, sex commercialisation in tourism is intertwined with sex tourism, particularly women's roles as sex workers. Figure 3 highlights Thailand as a typical example of a popular sex tourism destination (Nuttavuthisit, 2007) in which tourists, especially men, participate heavily in the sex industry; however, other sex tourism studies have focused on different areas of the world (Ying & Wen, 2019). Cluster 1 thus exemplifies the impact of human trafficking on the tourism industry, particularly through sex tourism.

3.2. Cluster 2 (Green): Child exploitation, sexual abuse, and health

The second cluster (green portion of Figure 3) and corresponding terms in Table 1 focus on children as victims of human trafficking, especially those exploited through child prostitution. This cluster includes terms such as *commercial sexual exploitation* and *health*, implying the vulnerability of teenage girls as prime victims (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014). This cluster overlaps to some extent with human trafficking in tourism, namely in terms of children being victimised via child sex tourism (Davidson, 2004; Tepelus, 2008). The terms included in Cluster 2, such as *support*, *problem*, *victim*, *awareness*, and *recommendation*, align with Davidson's (2004) statement, "One form of movement from affluent to developing countries that has been a focus of anxiety over the past decade is the phenomenon known as 'child sex tourism'" (p. 31). Cluster 2 also shows the importance of awareness-raising and lobby campaigns mounted by governments and NGOs such as End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (Davidson, 2004).

Undoubtedly, child sex tourism represents another dark side of the tourism industry; it is illegal, whereas sex tourism has been legalised in countries such as New Zealand, Australia, and the Netherlands (Ying & Wen, 2019). Comparatively, child prostitution and relevant commercial sexual exploitation targeting children occur under cover. *Intervention* thus appeared as another key term, suggesting that effective steps must be taken to intervene in child prostitution following from human trafficking. In addition, terms in the far-right part of this cluster, such as *trauma, intervention,* and *survivor,* underscore the need for social support of human trafficking victims; specifically, relevant physical and mental healthcare appear essential (Dovydaitis, 2010; Tsutsumi, Izutsu, Poudyal, Kato, & Marui, 2008).

3.3. Cluster 3 (Blue): Human trafficking and institutional environments

The third cluster in Figure 3 (blue) and accompanying key terms in Table 1 suggest that human trafficking is a primary source of modern slavery, sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, and sex tourism, particularly for women and children (Matheson & Finkel, 2013; Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018a, 2018b). Key terms such as *policy*, *approach*, *strategy*, *crime*, *challenge*, and

effort, indicate that human trafficking is a complicated issue requiring diverse strategies to aid victims. Although previous research (e.g., Brown, 1999; Chemin & Mbiekop, 2015; Goodey, 2008) advocated for enacting more effective strategies and policies to reduce human trafficking worldwide, more efforts appear needed to fully assess the impact of human trafficking in various industries and why it persists without any apparent decline. As shown in the map, terms related to law and legislation also appeared frequently, suggesting law enforcement as a potentially useful weapon in combatting human trafficking (Wilson & Dalton, 2008). This cluster helps to outline the institutional environment of human trafficking and its myriad triggers. Collectively, the map clearly illustrates the close and complex relationships among human trafficking and its effects in various areas such as modern slavery, sexual and labour exploitation, and especially sex tourism and child prostitution.

Table 1. Top trending[a] and top impact terms[b] by cluster

Cluster	Top trending terms	Top impact terms
Red: Sex commercialisation and modern slavery	Perception; modern slavery; narrative; exploitation; variety; value; process; practice; understanding; perspective; labor; reality; interest; condition; body; impact; light; nature; extent; slavery; subject; complexity; gender; attention; involvement; account; migration; order; history; debate; range; freedom	Modern slavery; tourism; sex work; tourist; globalization; sex worker; sex tourism; India; Thailand; sexuality; history; prostitute; sex industry; gender; relation; change; decade; world; demand; Asia; account; man; range; body; prostitution; cause; sex; Europe; complexity; worker; country; slavery; freedom; woman
Green: Child exploitation, sexual abuse, and health	Survivor; trauma; youth; identification; participant; sex trafficking; model; trafficked person; care; vulnerability; recommendation; commercial sexual exploitation; intervention; characteristic; experience; training; victim; trafficking victim; knowledge; adult; patient; service; awareness; consequence; support; individual; prevalence; violence; abuse; response; treatment; community; risk; health; prevention; factor; behavior; opportunity; sexual exploitation; problem; minor	Intervention; care; individual; HIV; violence; behaviour; trafficked person; health; factor; child prostitution; experience; age; girl; training; knowledge; community; prevalence; problem; sexual abuse; characteristic; consequence; treatment; risk; ability; commercial sexual exploitation; trafficking victim; sexual exploitation; sex trafficking; resource; participant; situation; trauma; identification; patient; education; service; minor; response; awareness; abuse
Blue: Human trafficking and institutional environments	Application; implementation; investigation; refugee; challenge; approach; human trafficking; system; coercion; crime; law enforcement; fight; prosecution; trafficking; international law; United States; smuggling; agency; trafficker; strategy; migrant; threat; protection; terrorism; concern; policy; scope; act; control; organised crime; force; human being; legislation; human right; action; security; border; person; assistance; activity; government; women	Investigation; organization; migrant; origin; strategy; trafficker; law enforcement; refugee; effort; border; policy; region; development; person; smuggling; trafficking; approach; United States; nation; human right; government; threat; state; agency; control; challenge; coercion; law; prosecution; drug; human trafficking; concern; international law; crime; recent year; protection; measure; security; legislation; assistance; terrorism

[a] Top trending terms are the terms that appear in the most recent articles, arranged in descending order from the most recent publication date.

[b] Top impact terms are the terms that appear in the highest average normalised citation articles, arranged in descending order.

3.4. Uncovered gaps

The map depicts research areas covered in the literature on human trafficking, sex trafficking, and issues in tourism and hospitality and other relevant areas. To identify topics warranting further exploration, Table 2 lists the methodologies characterising each cluster in Figure 3. Findings from our broad literature review related to human trafficking indicate that more attention has been paid to two clusters: *sex commercialization, migration, and modern slavery* and *child exploitation, sexual abuse, and health*. Comparatively less research has considered methodologically the third cluster, human *trafficking and institutional environments*. Systematic literature reviews solely appeared in Cluster 2 vis-à-vis child prostitution and sexual exploitation. However, the fundamental reasons behind human trafficking, sex commercialisation, and modern slavery – especially in sex tourism and child sex tourism – have not been comprehensively examined. The sensitivity of human trafficking as a research area has thus far lent itself to qualitative approaches focusing on individuals' subjective opinions or experiences. No studies appear to have included quantitative methods or methodical literature reviews to provide a full-bodied understanding of human trafficking and its impact on the tourism and hospitality industry. More research on human trafficking is therefore warranted, both to quantitatively estimate its prevalence and incidence and to examine the dynamics underlying the diverse causes, nature, and consequences of modern slavery (Androff, 2010). These needs represent valuable channels for future research on the role of human trafficking in tourism.

Table 2. Methodology-related words in 10 + publications*

	Cluster	**Publications**
Case study	Red	**109**
In-depth interview	Red	**44**
Ethnographic research	Red	**39**
Empirical research	Red	**36**
Fieldwork	Red	**16**
Participant observation	Red	**11**
Interview	Green	**157**
Qualitative study	Green	**50**
Questionnaire	Green	**29**
Exploratory study	Green	**16**
Systematic review	Green	**15**
Empirical study	Blue	**20**
Comparative analysis	Blue	**16**
Empirical evidence	Blue	**12**

*Note: The appearance of a term in a cluster does not mean it was limited to that cluster; rather, the term is most prevalent in that cluster.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Using a novel science mapping approach, we constructed a map of the human trafficking literature within tourism across the social sciences. Distinct topic areas emerged based on term co-occurrence in the abstracts and titles of scientific publications.

To the best of our knowledge, this article presents the first empirically grounded taxonomy of human trafficking studies with a focus on tourism contexts. We identified three clusters within

academic publications: *sex commercialisation, migration, and modern slavery*; *child exploitation, sexual abuse, and health*; and *human trafficking and institutional environments*. Importantly, few tourism studies appear to have focused on topics related to human trafficking or sex trafficking, indicating that tourism scholars may want to consider the extent of social issues in this industry. Of the three identified clusters, in terms of size (Figure 3) and number of publications (Table 2), the *human trafficking and institutional environments* cluster remains underexplored. Human trafficking problems in the tourism industry tend to centre on sex tourism, namely women's positions in destinations such as Thailand. In addition, child prostitution was reflected in the *child exploitation, sexual abuse, and health* cluster and is a source of dire consequences among human trafficking activities.

Our taxonomy provides a framework to expose the intricacies of human trafficking research and relevant activities' social effects as they relate to modern slavery, sex tourism, sex exploitation, child prostitution, and other disturbing trends. Our findings also offer tourism stakeholders a detailed picture of the depths of human trafficking in tourism and hospitality. This information is particularly valuable for governmental entities, such as in developing policies and regulations to eradicate crimes involving human trafficking. Moreover, these maps can help scholars from various disciplines explore human trafficking and identify knowledge gaps in the literature.

A major objective of this study was to gain insight from a broad literature base to apply to tourism and hospitality. As shown in Figure 3, interrelationships were identified among the three clusters and the role of sex tourism. Close associations among human trafficking – specifically sex trafficking and sex commercialisation in tourism – have been discussed in the literature (Huda, 2006; McClain & Garrity, 2011; Tepelus, 2008; Troshynski & Blank, 2008; Yeoman & Mars, 2012). More importantly, most trafficked victims are women and children forced to participate in sex tourism or child sex tourism (Aronowitz & Koning, 2014). Thus, when considering the tourism-focused area in Figure 3, sex tourism appears closely related to human trafficking. Given the complex and sensitive nature of sex tourism in light of various factors such as culture, legality, and social norms (Ying & Wen, 2019), it is important to emphasise the distinction between legal and trafficked sex tourism workers. For example, Dame Catherine Healy advocated for legal sex workers to be recognised as employees with human rights and occupational safety conditions similar to any other legal profession (Manson, 2018). Conversely, the patronisation of trafficked prostitutes is highly criminal and tarnishes the sex tourism industry – and tourism and hospitality establishments may provide avenues for such behaviour. Travellers are end consumers who may inadvertently – or deliberately – reinforce exploitation by purchasing activities and services with little thought to the consequences. Child sex tourism is perhaps the most blatant example of tourists' complicity, as travellers knowingly engage in prohibited sexual intercourse with (trafficked) children. Tourists are also partially supporting exploitation by procuring sex. Some may contend that prostitution is the "world's oldest profession", suggesting that human rights advocates' condemnation of individuals who purchase prostitution is unwarranted – despite promoting the expansion of 'Red Light' districts. This rationale simply perpetuates the sex trade and its unwilling victims ensnared by traffickers.

The scope of sex tourism calls for widespread awareness among potentially involved parties; the effects of purchased sex can be far-reaching and sinister. Sex tourism undoubtedly contributes to the trafficking of women and children around the globe, and we argue that tourists should be more vigilant in their sexual patronisation. We implore tourists to consider how direct or indirect sex purchases unwittingly benefit sex traffickers and further enslave

victims. We hope this introspection ignites a moral obligation to boycott activities related to sex trafficking. We also encourage stakeholders to establish regulations that restrict tourists' engagement in certain illicit activities to increase accountability. Sustainable tourism policies must be enacted to heighten tourists' social responsibility to fight human trafficking adjacent to the travel industry.

Lastly, vulnerabilities that human traffickers can exploit were identified in the hotel sector. Many use hotels as conduits for human trafficking (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018b). Even worse, hotel employees and managers may unknowingly serve as 'guardians' of human traffickers and victims due to a lack of awareness around this criminal activity within tourism and hospitality businesses, largely due to an absence of training or authority (Paraskevas & Brookes, 2018a). Therefore, we urge the tourism and hospitality industry to shift from being an accomplice by association to offering a supportive landscape for sex-trafficked victims. Intervention-related efforts can be educational and practical. For instance, hotel staff and management could receive formal training to handle cases of suspected sex trafficking. Practitioners could also partner with organisations that provide services to sex trafficking victims to offer support. Given the relatively basic skill requirements for jobs in the hospitality industry, survivors of sex trafficking could be trained to work in this sector. By providing legitimate jobs to sex-trafficked victims, affected persons can become more independent and legally integrated into the hospitality and tourism workforce. Under growing pressure to mitigate sex trafficking, tourism authorities and travellers must ask themselves, "How can we be more responsible and help prevent sex trafficking?"

With an eye toward human trafficking in tourism and hospitality, our trafficking map highlights several concepts and methods that could be productively adopted by scholars in tourism and other disciplines. Overall, human trafficking warrants greater attention from industry and academia. The results of future studies may uncover ways to protect current and potential victims and bring traffickers to justice. Such practical implications could help bring an end to this form of crime.

5. Limitations and Future Research

Although this study provides a systematic literature review of human trafficking and its links to hospitality and tourism, several limitations should be noted for future consideration. First, the literature search was limited to the Scopus database. Second, a linguistic bias may exist, as only English-language titles, abstracts, and/or keywords were included in the sample; important articles in other languages may have been omitted. Third, vocabulary mismatches in keyword searches may have occurred because researchers often present similar information using different terminology. Fourth, the parameter settings for the top 50 research articles may have restricted the generation of networks that could have manifested under a different threshold. Last but not least, this paper focused specifically on sex trafficking. The other common form of human trafficking, labour trafficking, should also be addressed more closely. Thus, future research should explore labour trafficking to comprehensively examine the presence of human trafficking in various industries.

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