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A systematic literature review on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and hotels: past achievements and future promises in the hospitality sector

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ABSTRACT
The study offers a comprehensive and critical systematic literature review (SLR) alongside an analysis of recent literature regarding the significance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) within the hotel industry.The study utilizes the SLR method to consolidate the relevant literature on CSR initiatives in the hotel industry context. Content analysis led to the identification of 100 pertinent studies, which contributed to the formation of diverse research themes, identification of research gaps, exploration of potential future research paths, and the creation of a research framework. The five thematic areas of research are the role of (1) employees in CSR initiatives, (2) customers in CSR initiatives, (3) CSR and business performance, (4) CSR and reporting, and (5) CSR and sustainability. The findings are synthesized into a hotel-based CSR research framework. By providing valuable insights on strengthening CSR in the hotel industry, this study is one of the first SLR study that focuses explicitly on CSR in hotels and will be valuable for both practitioners and researchers.

KEYWORDS
Hotel; corporate social responsibility (CSR); systematic literature review (SLR); stakeholders

Introduction

Due to greater awareness and alertness toward environmental and social issues, society has started to demand pro-environmental management practices from organizations (Guzzo et al., 2020). Therefore, the hospitality sector has begun to raise awareness regarding environmental and social practices (e.g. reducing water consumption and utilizing recycling bins) among its different stakeholders (e.g. customers and employees) (Gonzalez-Rodrıguez et al., 2019). Further, scholars suggest that the hotel sector, an important component of the hospitality sector, is generally more devoted to fulfilling its societal

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and environmental responsibilities than ever before (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2020; Stylos & Vassiliadis, 2015).

The pursuit of businesses and service providers to address the demand for social and environmental performance has motivated them to engage in corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices (Bolton et al., 2011). CSR is defined as the various voluntary initiatives taken by businesses to address the diverse social and environmental concerns of their stakeholders (Lii & Lee, 2012; Wong et al., 2020). CSR thus represents different prosocial behavioral activities taken by organizations toward the betterment of society (Jauhari & Manaktola, 2007). Interestingly, while CSR was regarded as a charitable activity in the early twentieth century, it is now considered an important strategic tool for businesses and organizations (Yang et al., 2020).

Over the past few decades, hotels have started taking cognizance of environmental and social issues from a broader perspective (Wolff et al., 2018). The hotel industry is energy-intensive and generates a large amount of waste. Therefore, to offset their environmental and social impact, hotels must implement CSR initiatives to benefit society as a whole (Hervani et al., 2005). The literature suggests that CSR practices are highly significant and essential for the hotel industry due to three major reasons. Firstly, CSR practices provide intangible services to the hotel industry (e.g. goodwill, brand awareness, and loyalty to customers), with the hotel industry being judged on the quality and goodwill of their social initiatives within environmental, social, and economic settings (Bello et al., 2017). Secondly, CSR-based social initiatives provide reputational benefits to hotels which, in turn, lead to several positive outcomes (e.g. customer loyalty (Martínez & del Bosque, 2013), the willingness of customers to pay higher prices at sustainable hotels (Farrington et al., 2017; Sahu et al., 2020), and influencing customers to choose specific hotels (Su et al., 2020). For example, a recent study by Farmaki et al. (2022) suggested that customers are becoming more educated regarding CSR practices and have started valuing hotels that are involved in CSR initiatives. Thirdly, in addition to generating more value in terms of reputational benefits, CSR initiatives have been associated with increased financial performance (Chen, 2019; Singjai et al., 2018; Theodoulidis et al., 2017; Youn et al., 2015). Based on these collective reasons, more and more hotels are adopting innovative business practices by encouraging their employees to engage in CSR initiatives – ultimately contributing to a greener environment and more sustainable communities (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Suganthi, 2019).

The hotel industry's increased CSR awareness has induced an exponential growth of various CSR initiatives taken in this sector (as illustrated by an ever-increasing number of annual publications on CSR-related empirical studies in the hotel industry). However, despite the massive growth of CSR initiatives and an increasing academic interest in this topic, there is a dearth of attempts to comprehensively review the prior literature on this subject (Kaur et al., 2022). While there are some relevant literature reviews, they all focus on the entire hospitality and/or tourism sector. For example, while reviewing the prior literature on CSR initiatives in the entire hospitality and/or tourism sectors, Serra-Cantallops et al. (2018) considered data from 2006 to 2015 without specifically focusing on hotels whereas Rhou and Singal (2020) considered data from 1992 to 2017 which included data from hotels, casinos, restaurants, cruises, and airlines. In contrast, Guzzo et al. (2020) reviewed the prior literature on CSR initiatives in hospitality with a specific focus on customers and employees. Thus, to the best of our knowledge, no

prior review study has exclusively focused on CSR-related initiatives in the hotel industry. Moreover, the three existing reviews mentioned above only provided limited suggestions for future research directions and did not propose any research framework. Therefore, it is essential to undertake a systematic literature review (SLR) specifically focusing on CSR in the context of hotels to gain a comprehensive and critical understanding of the advancements in CSR-related research. An SLR centered on this topic can shed light on diverse thematic areas explored in previous research, establish a research profile of the relevant literature, identify existing research gaps, propose potential directions for future research, and even present a guiding research framework based on the obtained insights.

To this end, the current study pursues three pertinent research questions (RQs): What is the research profile of relevant studies that examined CSR-related issues in hotels (RQ1)? What different thematic research areas have been examined in the prior literature (RQ2)? What are the gaps and future research possibilities (or avenues of research) for this topic (RQ3)? The current study adopted the SLR protocol and steps advised by the prior research (Kushwah et al., 2019; Sahu et al., 2020; Seth et al., 2020). Firstly, 100 empirical studies were selected for review. Secondly, to rigorously profile these studies, various statistics were recorded (e.g. the frequency of publications and the geographical scope of the selected studies). Thirdly, a manual thematic content analysis of the review articles was conducted, allowing us to propose different thematic areas of research. Five distinct thematic areas could be identified and were subsequently analyzed for associated research gaps, theme-based research questions, and associated avenues of future research. We thus developed a review framework of the key findings, i.e. thematic areas, gaps, and future directions. Lastly, theoretical and managerial implications, as well as limitations, were discussed. After completing these steps to answer the current study's RQs, our practical inferences may help hotel managers to formulate and establish new CSR initiatives and to achieve their long-term objectives.

The novelty and significance of this study include (a) being one of the first SLRs with a specific focus on CSR in hotels; (b) being the most up-to-date review study on the topic (considering all relevant studies published between 2009 and 2022); and (c) identified key emerging thematic research areas , gaps, and avenues of future research as well as developing an important research framework.

The rest of the review is structured as follows. The scope of the review (second section) will be followed by the methodology used in the review (third section) and the research profile (fourth section). This is followed by a thematic analysis of the research areas, research gaps, and future research questions (fifth section). We then present the research framework for hotel-related CSR research (sixth section). The last two sections discuss implications, the scope of future research, limitations, and conclusions.

Scope of the review

The current study intends to review prior relevant literature that has examined CSR initiatives in the hotel sector which contributes to environmental and social degradation. The study also attempts to differentiate "green practices" and "sustainability" from CSR. Notably, while some scholars have used these terms synonymously in the prior literature on CSR (Kim et al., 2017; Zoogah, 2018), others have suggested that these concepts have certain differences and must be differentially defined. Keeping with this observation, "Green

practices" may be more concerned about environmentally friendly behaviors (i.e. reducing waste, conserving energy, and promoting environmental health) (Kim et al., 2017; Rahman et al., 2012), while "sustainability" or "environmental sustainability" refers to processes and practices used by organizations to improve the quality of the environment (Zoogah, 2018). Sustainability can also be referred to as a part of the environmental practices of green organizations (Haden et al., 2009). On the other hand, CSR is a multifaceted concept that cannot be considered a *one-size-fits-all* concept for organizations (Abaeian et al., 2019) and has three dimensions. The first, an integrated dimension, aims to establish a proper synchronization between organizations and society (Porter & Kramer, 2006). The second dimension focuses on establishing a good relationship between various stakeholders (i.e. customers, employees, government, investors, society, and suppliers) and obtaining a good reputation and longstanding associations (Porter & Kramer, 2006). The third dimension focuses on ethical perspectives, suggesting that CSR is based on the ethics and value systems of an organization and its obligations toward society (Carroll, 1979; Reidenbach & Robin, 1991). The seminal literature on CSR suggests that it covers ethical standards and discretionary expectations in addition to various economic and legal obligations (Carroll, 1979). Based on this prior work of Carroll (1979), Schwartz and Carroll (2003) have since proposed a *three-domain* model that consists of economic, legal, and ethical activities. "Economic domain" refers to the economic impact on organizations, whereas "legal domain" refers to the legal expectations of society. "Ethical domain" then refers to how an organization responds to the various ethical business responsibilities that society expects from them.

To summarize, our understanding is thus that "green practices" and "sustainability" are concerned with environmental practices whereas CSR comprises ethical, social, and environmental dimensions – constituting a higher-level concept. Consequently, we suggest that CSR scholars should exercise caution in mixing these concepts that have fundamental differences and similarities. As such, we will not be classifying green or sustainability-oriented research as CSR unless they have been explicitly cited as being part of CSR. We believe this will sufficiently delineate the two intertwined concepts seeing that the green hotel concept already received substantial attention in other reviews such as those by Arun et al. (2021).

Regarding the hotel aspect, the present study incorporates data from four distinct types of hotels. These include full-service hotels, which offer a wide range of facilities and amenities such as food and beverage outlets, meeting rooms, and recreational facilities. Limited-service hotels are included, providing a subset of the amenities and services found in full-service hotels. Additionally, suite hotel with food and beverage is considered, which features rooms with separate sleeping and living areas, accompanied by a restaurant, lounge, and/or banquet services. Lastly, a suite hotel without food and beverage is included, lacking restaurant, lounge, or banquet services, although complimentary food and beverages may still be provided (PKF Hospitality Research, 2015).

Methodology

An SLR was conducted to provide a fine-grained and nuanced understanding of the prior CSR-related research in the specific context of the hotel industry. SLR is a widely used research method that aims to identify, evaluate, and analyze existing literature on a specific topic or subject in a comprehensive and critical manner. (Liberati et al., 2009), and it has been well-utilized in the discipline of hospitality (Bavik, 2019; Kaur et al.,

2022; Madanaguli et al., 2022). A clearly outlined protocol is employed by this method to identify and evaluate applicable studies for a proposed review. (Behera et al., 2019), and scholars have suggested various methodological steps to ensure transparency and rigor in such SLR studies (Kaur et al., 2022; Madanaguli et al., 2021). More specifically, hospitality research scholars have suggested the following four-step SLR process (Bavik, 2019):

Step 1: *Planning the review*: identifying keywords and databases for the study

Step 2: *Designing a* selection criteria by defining the inclusion criteria

Step 3: *Data extraction*: step by step screening to arrive at the most relevant studies

Step 4: *Data execution:* critically anlysing the literature from both a quantiative (research profile) and qualitative perspective (thematic analysis)

Figure 1 summarizes the systematic review process followed in the current study.

Planning the review

Identification of keywords

The defined conceptual boundary of CSR helped to attive at an initial list of keywords. These keywords were "CSR", "Corporate social responsibility", and "hotels". To examine if our keywords were sufficient or not, the first 100 entries of search results on Google Scholar and in leading journals in hospitality, tourism and CSR (i.e. Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, Journal of Cleaner Production, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, International Journal of Hospitality Management, International Journal of Hospitality Marketing Management, and International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management) were analyzed. Then, after consulting an expert team comprising three professors and two professionals from the hospitality sector, the keywords were finalized. As suggested by prior literature, relevant studies were identified using Scopus and Web of Science (WOS) databases as they cover majority of the journals in the field (Pahlevan-Sharif et al., 2019; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016).

Specification of the screening criteria

The current study utilized a well defined inclusion criteria for filtering the relevant studies (Table 1).

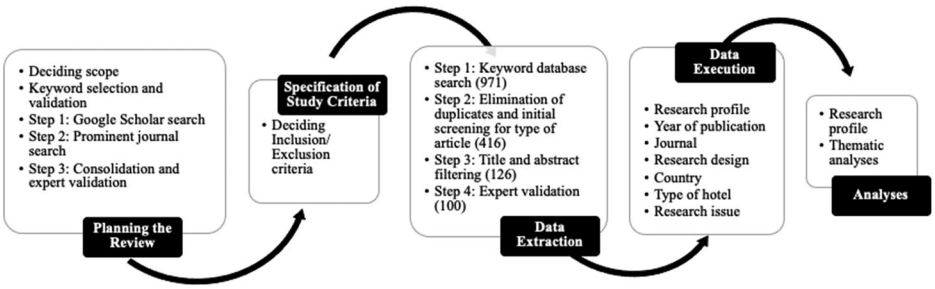

Figure 1. The SLR method followed in the current review.

Data extraction

The selected set of keywords was combined using Boolean logic operators by using logical connectors like "OR" and "AND". In both databases, a search was executed using the following syntax: (("corporate social responsibi*" OR "CSR" OR "Social Responsibi*") AND ("hotel*")). A total of 971 studies (in English) were found, with 547 and 424 studies obtained from Scopus and WOS, respectively. To confine the shortlisted studies within the conceptual boundaries of the study, inclusion and exclusion criteria were implemented. Duplicate articles were identified and screened using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets, and any duplicates found were subsequently eliminated from the analysis. In addition, non-peer-reviewed articles were removed to ensure a good quality of the review. These two steps resulted in the exclusion of 555 studies. To proceed with the next level of screening, three researchers with expertise in CSR were invited to evaluate the titles and abstracts of the gathered studies. (reviewing conceptual backgrounds in addition to inclusion and exclusion criteria). The researchers performed this task individually after which shortlisted articles were shared and 219 articles were excluded (i.e. not being congruent with the conceptual boundaries). For example, previous studies that used "Green practices" and "sustainability" in hotels (Kim et al., 2017; Rahman et al., 2012) did not fall under the purview of our conceptual boundaries as we intended to capture only those studies that had green initiatives as part of their CSR.

Similarly, studies that focused on restaurants were eliminated as our SLR aimed to focus solely on studies in the hotel industry. In the final screening stage, 126 shortlisted studies were examined by three academic and two industrial experts. They suggested the elimination of 26 studies, thus resulting in a final pool of 100 empirical studies that exclusively focused on CSR initiatives in the hotel context. Subsequent content analyses of this pool of relevant studies resulted the creation of a research profile, thematic analysis of key research themes and identification of relevant knowledge gaps that helped structure a future research agenda.

Data execution

Research profiling includes the collection of relevant information (e.g. contextual factors, geographical scope, journal of publication, methods used, publication year, study focus, and the theories used) from the selected studies. The resulting profile enables us to identify publication trends, prominent outlets, study contexts, and methodologies used. Figure 2 suggests a cyclical nature for studies currently in the surge phase. That is, if prior trends

Table 1. Inclusion/exclusion criteria matrix.

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
IC1: Peer-reviewed articles in journals	EC1: Articles on sustainability anf greening not focusing on green hotels
IC2: Articles published between January 2009 to July 2022, available on Scopus and/or WOS	EC2: Conceptual articles, discussions, editorials, proceedings, and theses
	EC3: Duplicated entries due to merging of search results

were to continue, more research articles will be published on the CSR topic in the coming years. Meanwhile, the constant publication of relevant studies with each passing year reflects the growing popularity of this topic.

In terms of publishing outlets, the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* published the highest number of studies (n = 22), followed by the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* (n = 18) (Figure 3). The studies followed an intersting pattern with more studies in developing countries including China (n = 14), Pakistan (n = 10), and India (n = 9). Company Law, i.e. to recognize and encourage CSR, as enacted by the Chinese government, may explain the increase in CSR-based studies and the sudden CSR inclinations in China's hotel industry (Yin & Zhang, 2012). Furthermore, this growing concern regarding China's environmental and societal problems has directed the focus of academicians and practitioners toward CSR in the hotel and hospitality sector (Fu et al., 2014). From a developed world perspective, countries like the USA (n = 9) and South Korea (n = 8) were investigated most often (Figure 4). In terms of hotel types, studies included service hotels (n = 53), luxury hotels (n = 20), and small or medium-scale enterprises (n = 4) operating in the hotel industry.

While numerous studies utilized a qualitative research design (n = 26), a quantitative approach proved to be the more popular (n = 74) (Figure 5). In terms of data analysis, prior literature utilized various techniques (e.g. ANOVA, cluster analysis, content analysis, Delphi technique, factor analysis, mediation analysis, moderation analysis, moderated mediated analysis, PLS, regression analysis, Structural Equation Modelling, and T-test).

Prior literature also showed great diversity in the use of frameworks and theories (Table 2). This includes different theories such as the ability-motivation-opportunity theory (Pham et al., 2018), the stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theory (Ahmed et al., 2020), the social exchange theory (SET) (Hu et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2017), the stakeholder approach (Gürlek & Tuna, 2019), the self-determination theory (SDT) (Hu et al., 2019; Nazir & Islam, 2019), the signaling theory (Latif et al., 2020), the conversation of resource (COR) theory (Bavik, 2019), the social identity theory (Fatma & Rahman, 2017), and the needs satisfaction theory (Kim et al., 2020). The utilization of such varied theories supports

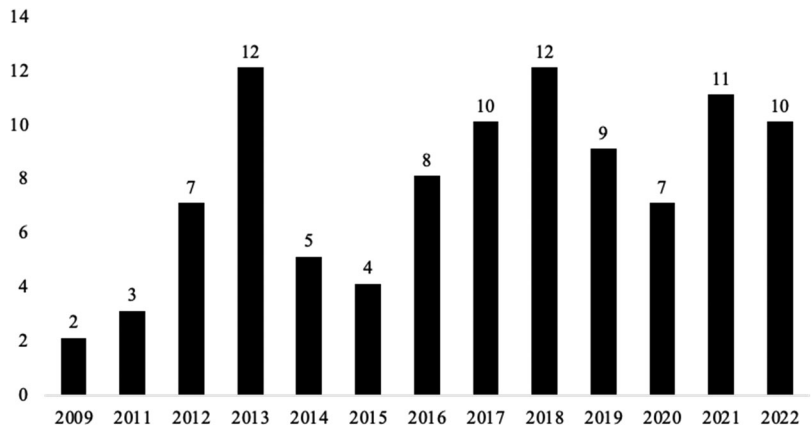

Figure 2. The year-wise trend of CSR-related publications in the hotel sector.

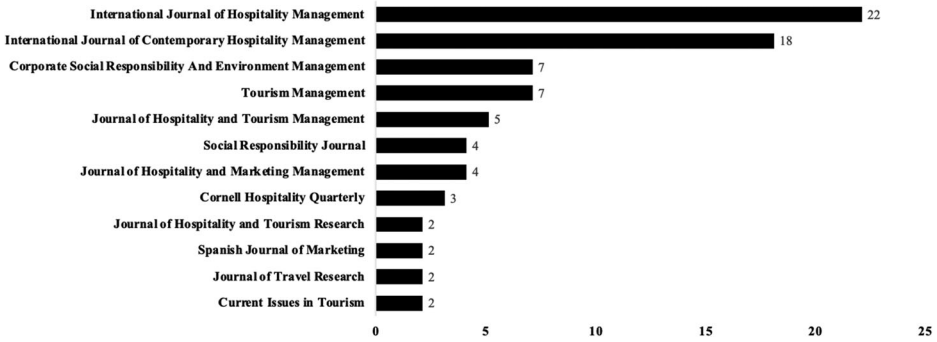

Figure 3. Journal profile of selected CSR studies.

our initial scope assessment that CSR is a multi-faceted concept that requires investigation from multiple perspectives and theoretical lenses.

Thematic foci

2 / 2To elucidate the themes of the research, a qualitative content analysis was conducted. following extant literature (Seth et al., 2020), we followed a three-step process to analyse the literature.Initially, three researchers engaged in open coding, which was subsequently followed by both deductive and inductive approaches of axial coding. Secondly, a consensus had to be reached on the presentation of the five main thematic areas of research. An expert panel consisting of three academic and two industrial experts was consulted to provide feedback and input on these five identified themes. Following their

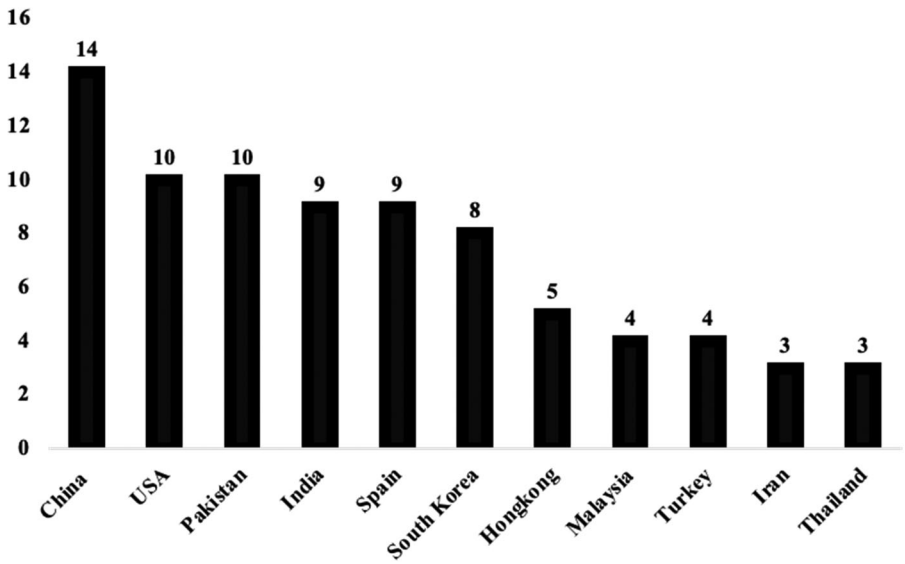

Figure 4. Geographical distribution of the CSR studies. *Other countries not illustrated here included Austria, Macao, Mauritius, the UK Vietnam, Zimbabwe (or were unspecified).

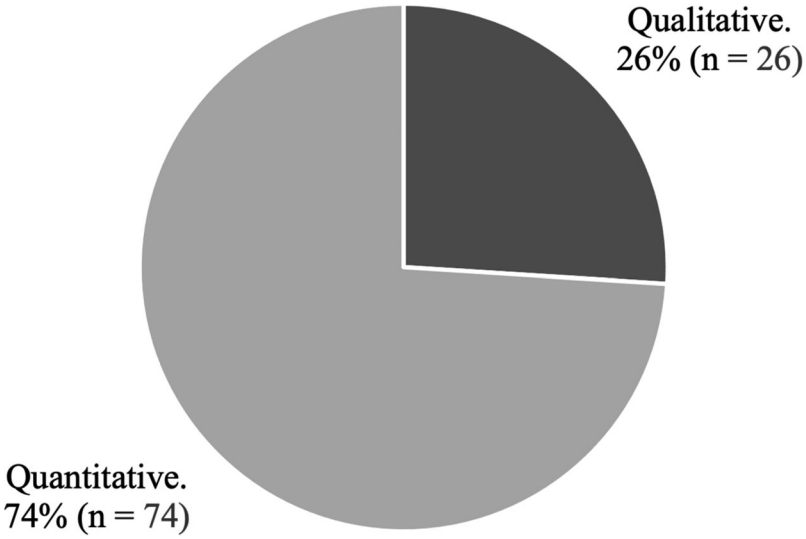

Figure 5. Methodological research design overview.

Table 2. Theoretical CSR frameworks utilized in the hotel industry.

Theory	Authors
Ability-motivation-opportunity	Pham et al., 2018
Conservation of resource (COR)	Bavik, 2019
Needs satisfaction	Kim et al., 2020
Self-determination (SDT)	Nazir & Islam, 2019
Signaling approach	Latif et al., 2020; Gürlek & Tuna, 2019
Social exchange (SET)	Fatma & Rahman, 2017
Stakeholder approach	Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2019
Stimulus-organism-response (SOR)	Ahmed et al., 2020

recommendation, the final thematic areas of research were the role of employees in CSR initiatives, customers and CSR initiatives, CSR and business performance, CSR and reporting, and CSR and the environment.

The first two research themes, regarding employees and customers, are referred to as micro initiatives within the CSR domain. The third and fourth research themes, regarding business performance and reporting, fall under meso-CSR initiatives (Jones et al., 2017). Lastly, the research theme of CSR and the environment is referred to as a macro-CSR initiative. A mind map of the five themes and their related sub-themes is presented in Figure 6. We assessed relevant studies that investigated employee-level perspectives (n = 39) and customer-level issues (n = 26), discussed CSR and business performance (n = 20), stressed the relationship between CSR and the environment (n = 9), and focused on issues regarding CSR reporting (n = 6).The subsequent sections will provide a detailed discussion of each theme.

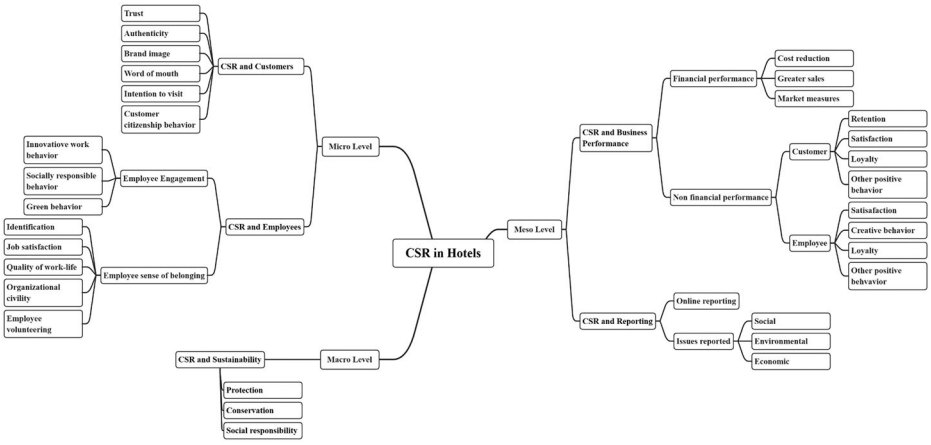

Figure 6. Mindmap of thematic foci.

CSR and employees

The extant literature on CSR agrees that employees are an essential component of CSR initiatives. Aligning with the thoughts of Mayo (1933) that employees should be considered instruments of social capital (Doerfel et al., 2013), scholars and practitioners have started focusing on the human aspect of engaging employees in CSR projects and activities, thereby helping them to appreciate the holistic view of CSR work (Aguinis & Glavas, 2012; Islam et al., 2016; Ram, 2018). In our analysis, we identified two key employee-related factors: (a) CSR and employee engagement, and (b) CSR and employees' sense of belonging. The former relates to the employees' work behavior and outcomes (i.e. customer orientation, job calls, job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)). The latter relates to the employees' identification with and civility within the organization as well as their volunteering in their hotel's CSR activities (Afridi et al., 2020).

CSR and employee engagement

Scholars suggest that when employees feel engaged in CSR-related activities, it intrinsically motivates them (Nazir & Islam, 2019) and enhances their level of engagement with their job (Gürlek & Tuna, 2019; Hu et al., 2020). Specifically, employees may showcase a variety of positive work behaviors such as (a) being more innovative (Afridi et al., 2020; Gao & Mattila, 2014; Nazir & Islam, 2019), or showing (b) increased social responsibility (Hur et al., 2018; Islam et al., 2017), and (c) "green" behavior (Ahmed et al., 2020; De Roeck & Farooq, 2018; Hu et al., 2019; Su & Swanson, 2019).

(a) Innovative work behavior can be classified as the unique and/or creative initiatives employees take in their work setting (Janssen, 2000). In addition to creative behavior, CSR has also been linked to "green" behavior (Vila-Vázquez et al., 2022) and employee satisfaction (Bibi et al., 2022). There are multiple mechanisms by which perceived CSR can lead to innovative behaviors in employees. Nazir et al. (2019) investigated upscale hotels in India and concluded that perceived CSR leads to work motivation that

subsequently results in innovative work behavior. Afridi et al. (2020) investigated Pakistani restaurants and concluded that employee authenticity and volunteerism acted as mediators for CSR and creativity. Drawing upon the theories of social exchange and social identity, Raza et al. (2021), in a study on luxury hotels, found that CSR directly affects voluntary pro-environment behaviors, employee engagement, and organizational pride. It was also concluded that these serial mediators (i.e. organization pride and employee engagement) significantly contributed to the relationship between CSR and voluntary green behavior. Meanwhile, in South Korea, Hur et al. (2018) found a positive association between CSR perception and creativity, with compassion and intrinsic motivation mediating this relationship. These differing observations suggest that contextual factors (e.g. country culture) likely influence these mechanisms – highlighting the need for more culture comparative studies.

(b) Literature indicates that CSR participation may lead to socially responsible behavior like OCB (Hur et al., 2018). OCB refers to employee behavior where employees go beyond their formal job requirements to achieve personal and organizational excellence (Fu et al., 2014; Hur et al., 2018; Moscardo, 2019; Wang et al., 2020; Yoon et al., 2016). In their study on hotel employees in China, Wang et al. (2020) found that CSR initiatives positively and significantly affected OCB. Pham et al. (2018), utilizing the ability-motivation-opportunity theory, reported a positive relationship between green human resource management (HRM) (forming part of CSR initiatives) and OCB toward the environment.

(c) Scholars also suggest that participation in CSR activities may induce "green" behavior (Ahmed et al., 2020; De Roeck & Farooq, 2018; Hu et al., 2019; Su & Swanson, 2019). Employee green behavior involves the positive approach of employees toward environmental concerns (Unsworth et al., 2013). Su and Swanson (2019), in their study on hotel employees in China, noted a positive association between CSR perception and green behavior, with trust and identification acting as mediating effects. However, different underlying mechanisms can be associated with pro-environmental and green behaviors (Cheema et al., 2020; Hu et al., 2020; Shin & Hur, 2020). For instance, in their study on Pakistani hotel employees, Cheema et al. (2020) found that CSR and pro-environmental behavior were related through the mediating mechanism of organizational identification. Using social exchange and social identity theories, Hu et al. (2020) stressed a positive association between perceived internal and external CSR leads and customer orientation (mediated through work engagement). While a plethora of research has examined the positive outcomes of CSR on employees, few studies have explored whether CSR perceptions potentially prevent the development of negative employee outcomes (e.g. deviant or counterproductive work behaviors) (Gond et al., 2017).

One interesting emerging trend is the role of leadership in CSR-related positive outcomes among employees (Patiar & Wang, 2016). Research shows that supportive and enabling leadership is essential to realize CSR-related positive effects (Bibi et al., 2022; Talwar et al., 2020). Furthermore, as shown by Vila-Vázquez et al. (2022), characteristics of the leader matter, with female leadership encouraging pro-environmental behaviors more strongly among their employees. Since hotel leadership can vary in numerous

ways (other than gender), this field is fertile ground for further research. More studies are needed to understand the impact of characteristics such as age, nationality, or any other demographics of the hotel manager. By using the upper echelons theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), we could investigate the role(s) of top management teams, their diversities, and how these characteristics vary based on hotel types or hotel regions.

CSR and employee sense of belonging

To gain organizational growth, it is pertinent to look at the employees perception on the CSR initiatives taken by their hotels. Studies have shown that employees that participate in CSR activities show a greater sense of belonging, which, in turn, results in positive work outcomes (e.g. trusting their hotels and showing more commitment) (Kim et al., 2017; Su & Swanson, 2019; Supanti et al., 2015; Yoon et al., 2016; Tsai et al., 2012; Mensah et al., 2017). For example, in their study on hotel employees in China, Su and Swanson (2019) found that CSR perception directly impacted trust, identification, and well-being. However, the impact of CSR on employee-level variables differed based on certain intervening variables. For example, some studies found that employees' participation in CSR activities led to positive behavioral and psychological consequences in terms of organizational identification and employee retention (Aminudin, 2013; Fu et al., 2014; Park & Levy, 2014; Shah et al., 2021) and that active participation (rather than passive perception) may have induced these positive outcomes. CSR could thus create a good image of an organization by strengthening bonds between the organization and its employees (Mozes et al., 2011).

Studies also found that CSR initiatives may lead to job satisfaction through meaningful work and quality of work life (QWL) (Abaeian et al., 2019; Ahmed et al., 2020; Boğan & Dedeoğlu, 2020; Hu et al., 2019; Hu et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2020; Kim & Lee, 2016; Supanti & Butcher, 2019). Specifically, a South Korean study by Kim et al. (2020) suggested that the perception of CSR by hotel employees positively impacted their QWL which, in turn, increased their job satisfaction. Using the SDT perspective in a study on luxury hotels in India, Nazir et al. (2021) found employees' active involvement in CSR initiatives had a positive impact on their sense of purpose and experienced meaningfulness. This, in turn, influenced employee engagement in a positive manner. In another study, using the SOR theory, McGinley et al. (2016) reported that CSR strengthens the voluntary behavior of employees and that this behavior is dependent on the hotel's level of involvement in CSR initiatives.

CSR and customers

The review found a rich collection of work about the relationship between hotel CSR initiatives and their impact on hotel customers. Contributions of any organization are vetted by its external stakeholders, primarily the customers (Ettinger et al., 2021; Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2019). Hence, any organization, especially those in the hotel industry, must inform customers of their latest society-driven activities, changes, or implementations (which we classify as CSR). Customers' trust and loyalty are key markers of how they contribute to assessing CSR and customer relationships (Fatma et al., 2020; García de los Salmones et al., 2009; Latif et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2019; Martínez & Del Bosque, 2013; O'Connor & Assaker, 2022). Recently, Ansari et al. (2021) also explored

the role of CSR in fostering customer pro-environmental behaviors through customer engagement.

In the current study, we found that the impact of perceived CSR on consumer behavior can be mediated by factors related to (a) brand image and (b) service quality. The CSR and customers theme is summarized in Figure 7. Perceived CSR is one of the important dimensions that can strengthen customers' loyalty to a hotel's brand image and reputation (Gürlek et al., 2017). In turn, this brand image can further enhance the customer's trust and loyalty toward that hotel (Boğan & Dedeoğlu, 2020; Liu et al., 2019; Martinez & Del Bosque, 2013). Studies have also highlighted the mediating effects of trust and satisfaction for this association between perceived CSR and customer loyalty (Jalilvand et al., 2018; Mohammed & Al-Swidi, 2019; Öberseder et al., 2013). Using structural equation modeling (SEM) and fuzzy-set Qualitative Comparative Analysis (fsQCA) in a study on the Kazakhstan hotel industry, Olya et al. (2021) found that social and environmental dimensions played positive roles in the satisfaction and loyalty of guests. In contrast, familiarity and the economic dimension did not significantly relate to guest loyalty (although they may likely improve guest satisfaction).

Factors of brand image and service quality can often go hand in hand and, therefore, these two factors are often studied together concerning CSR. Using social identity and social exchange theories, Jalilvand et al. (2018) and Martínez and Nishiyama (2019) found that hotel CSR initiatives had a positive association with customer trust, brand awareness, and brand loyalty. Also in the hotel setting, Mattila and Hanks (2012) found a positive association between the customer's active participation and CSR success. Customers searching for specific hotels show a direct association with the corporate reputations of those hotels (Boronat-Navarro & Pérez-Aranda, 2019), the latter being derived from CSR evaluation and support. Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al. (2019) also found that the

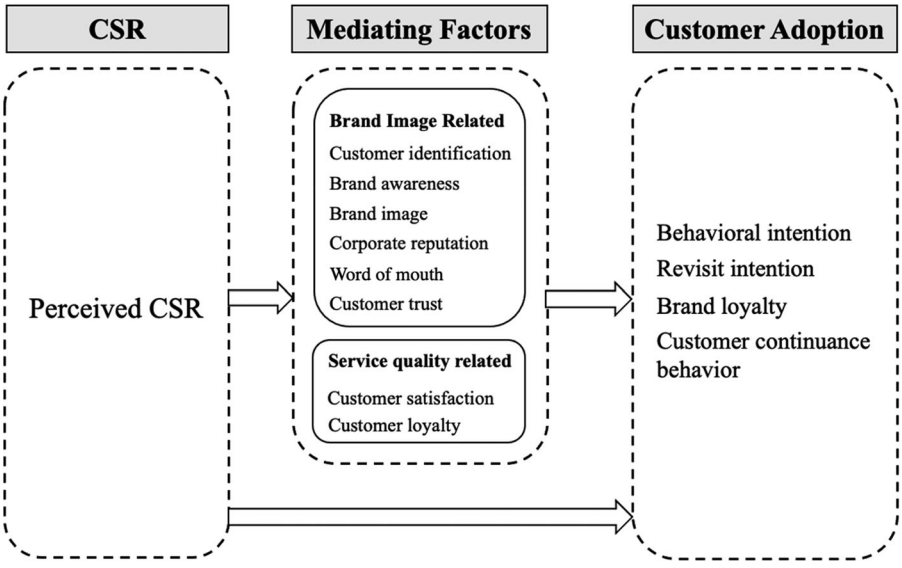

Figure 7. CSR and customers – An overview.

customer's CSR awareness has a significant relationship with the hotel's CSR engagement and perception.

Customers' preference to stay at a hotel and that hotel's CSR is strongly associated with each other (Kucukusta et al., 2016; González-Rodriguez et al., 2019). For instance, customers who are pro-environment always look for hotels that are environmentally certified and tend to revisit such hotels (Raman et al., 2012). A hotel's CSR initiatives may thus induce a higher level of trust and loyalty from certain customers, as reflected by their intention to revisit (Ahn & Kwon, 2020; Martínez & Nishiyama, 2019). The image of environmentally certified hotels supports a long and lasting relationship with their customers' behavioral intentions (Gao & Mattila, 2014; 9), while another outcome of CSR initiatives may be in terms of customer citizenship behavior (CCB) (Aljarah & Alrawashdeh, 2020).

Similar to CSR and employee engagement, the relationship with customers may be subject to country culture. For example, using signaling theory, Latif et al. (2020) found that the relationship between CSR and loyalty was positive in China but insignificant in the context of Italy and Pakistan. The role of mediating factors may, therefore, be a function of culture. Further explorations are thus needed to delineate which of the brand and/or service quality factors may be a function of culture.

It was stressed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974) that the surrounding environment has a physical and emotional impact on people. Hence, CSR stimuli may trigger the well-being of an organism, which may lead to engagement (response). If SET is deliberated upon, it can be argued that engaging in CSR activities is a mutually rewarding transaction that takes place between the organization and its employees (where the organization inspires a feeling of reciprocation from the employees that subsequently show a positive attitude toward their work) (Youn & Kim, 2022).

Customers are considered one of the most important external stakeholders for any organization. The social contribution by any organization is judged by the external stakeholders, primarily the customers (Ettinger et al., 2021; Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2019). Therefore, it is important for hotels to keep customers aware of their CSR activities. Based on the literature from the hotel industry, many organizations are trying to assess their CSR activities through their customers. Yet, ironically, many customers are unaware of the CSR activities performed by hotels in which they are regular customers. Moreover, the CSR activities showcased on hotel websites are often very different from the activities that they are doing, with some merely happening on paper. However, there are a few hotels that religiously work on their CSR initiatives to help retain old customers, attract new customers, and strengthen their brand value, and it is a fact that customer awareness and perception of green hotels' CSR impacts customer engagement. A recent study by Pérez-Aranda and Boronat-Navarro (2022) constructed a measurement for the consumer-based perception of CSR which may be useful for future studies in this field.

There is also the concern that insincere (from a customer's perspective) CSR activities may have negative outcomes. After reviewing the available literature, we only found two studies that discussed greenwashing CSR and its effect on customers' skepticism and revisit intentions (Zhang & Hanks, 2017). To minimize skepticism from their customers, hotels need to reflect their true image instead of a false one. However, more nuanced studies exploring this association between CSR and customers were not found in the review samples of the current study. This gap in data on negative impacts associated with CSR represents a promising research opportunity.

CSR and business performance

Cost reduction is very important to enhance the performance of organizations. One strategic approach of hotels (that are actively involved in reducing costs), is CSR implementation – especially CSR practices that reduce energy expenses whilst being environmentally responsible (Han et al., 2009; Mair & Jago, 2010). In their study on the hotel industry in the USA, Levy and Park (2011) found that important environment-oriented initiatives on energy, water, and waste management formed the focal point of CSR initiatives that resulted in cost reduction and better brand perception. Notably, CSR practices not only help with reducing costs but also with increasing repeat business when customers get swayed by witnessing CSR implementation in their respective hotels (Aver et al., 2009; Huimin & Ryan, 2011; McGehee et al., 2009). CSR initiatives in the hotel sector can also help strengthen profit orientations, brand positioning, employee relations, and easing societal as well as regulatory pressures (Han et al., 2009; Kasim, 2009; Mair & Jago, 2010; Tzschentke et al., 2008). For example, customer awareness of CSR initiatives will affect their buying behaviors and participation in sustainable programs (e.g. financially supporting charities on environmental problems, consuming organic foods, and recycling) (Aparna et al., 2022; Choi & Varian, 2009).

Numerous studies have also highlighted a significant association between CSR and firm performance (Babajee et al., 2022; Kang et al., 2010; Lee & Park, 2009; Talwar et al., 2022; Úbeda-García et al., 2021). Inoue and Lee (2011) and Kang et al. (2010) utilized Tobin's Q as an outcome for assessing a firm's value in various hospitality sectors, including the hotel industry. In addition to reputational benefits, CSR initiatives can support companies on a financial level when customers are willing to pay premium prices (due to the aforementioned reputational benefits) and thereby helping hotels survive unfavorable economic cycles (Al-Tuwaijri et al., 2004; Burnett & Hansen, 2008; Erhemjamts et al., 2013; Rhou and Singal, 2020; Rodgers et al., 2013). While studying the hotel industry in Thailand, Teanpitthayamas et al. (2021) found that levels of CSR-in-process practices were significantly higher than that of CSR-after-process practices. Using the Balance scorecard, the study also found that both CSR-in-process and CSR-after-process practices positively affected hotel performance. In contrast, previous studies have also highlighted the negative impact of CSR on firm performance. For example, while evaluating a company brand, people may be more affected by negative information than positive information (Baird et al., 2012). CSR can also significantly impact Balanced scorecard dimensions (Kang et al., 2015). Nevertheless, regarding CSR and business performance analyses, most studies have focused on business performance variables like innovation and competitive advantage, while only one study investigated the flip side of using CSR. Lau et al. (2021) explored how the CSR strategy of certain companies could be viewed as a "misfit", harming such companies (e.g. a casino, with an inherently bad perception, adopting CSR strategies may be seen as an attempt to "look good" in the eyes of consumers). Table 3 summarizes various research limitations and possible relevant research questions.

Another stream of emerging literature is the use of CSR to offset the adverse impacts of disasters. For instance, Baatwah et al. (2022) reported that hotels increased their CSR spending during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is counterintuitive, seeing that the COVID-19 pandemic stressed the hospitality industry and should, most likely, have resulted in reduced CSR spending. Yet, there is also the case that CSR strategies may

have served as survival enablers by enhancing the resilience of smaller hotels during the pandemic (Marco-Lajara et al., 2022). More studies need to explore this phenomenon before any conclusions or theories can be drawn.

CSR and sustainability

Organizations have started recognizing the importance of sustainability after realizing that their practices have environmental consequences (Babiak & Trendafilova, 2011; Sheth & Babiak, 2010). To achieve the "ultimate" goal of profit maximization, sustainability can be assessed based on the triple bottom line approach comprised of the three Ps (i.e. People, Profit, and Planet) (Elkington, 1998). The aim of any business should not only be in terms of economic prosperity but also other important dimensions like environmental and social aspects (Mihalič, et al., 2012). While the economic dimension can be described as focusing on corporate profits, the environmental dimension involves the preservation and protection of the planet's natural resources, while the social dimension involves cultural and social context. Based on the literature, some scholars have tried to connect CSR initiatives with economic performance (Day & Cai, 2012; Smerecnik & Andersen, 2011) while others have tried to connect it with social responsibility dimensions (Whitfield & Dioko, 2012). Bohdanowicz and Zientara (2008) reported that CSR significantly affected the local community and promoted environmental sustainability by contributing toward conservation, minimization of waste, and the use of sustainable practices (i.e. reducing, reusing, and recycling).

CSR and reporting

CSR reporting is a powerful tool to communicate with stakeholders about various issues like community impact, labor relations, and supply chain concerns (D'Acunto et al., 2020; Patten & Zhao, 2014). Furthermore, proper CSR disclosure can also help a hotel to reduce communication gaps between the organization and its stakeholders, thereby boosting its corporate reputation (Wang et al., 2013). Moreover, emerging technologies are receiving attention for CSR reporting. For example, the latter can be communicated through the Internet, social media, the hotel's website, or online customer reviews (Ettinger et al., 2018). Subsequently, some studies have performed content analysis (i.e. in-depth analysis) of CSR activities communicated by hotels (via their websites) to their stakeholders (Moyeen et al., 2019).

Contrastingly, several studies have taken a symbolic approach to CSR and argue that CSR reporting is nothing but a tool to manage the corporate image of hotels (Ettinger et al., 2018; Holcomb et al., 2007; Nyahunzvi, 2013). For example, Holcomb et al. (2007) found that details on specific CSR initiatives and their actual performance data were lacking, indicating that consumers should not accept a hotel's good image at face value just because of how they portray it. In a study by D'Acunto et al. (2020), it was found that hotel customers have become more observant regarding the CSR measures taken by hotels, especially those concerning societal and environmental benefits.

Another potential issue surrounding CSR reporting is a distortion of the CSR message. Although hotels are communicating information related to their CSR initiatives, the sharing of information through reports and websites is not organized (De Grosbois, 2012) and may be difficult to perceive as intended. Hence, as suggested by Pérez and

Del Bosque (2015), it would be advisable for the hotel industry to organize their CSR information on the Internet (e.g. hotel websites) so that it is easily accessible to all stakeholders. Informational transparency will also enhance the credibility and brand image of relevant hotels (Hur et al., 2014; Melo & Garrido-Morgado, 2012). The study by Kang and Atkinson (2021) demonstrated that specifically objective- and outcome-focused messages were more effective in reducing consumer skepticism and creating a perception of CSR being motivated by public service.

Research gaps and future research directions

Through an extensive review of pertinent studies on hotel-based CSR initiatives, several research gaps have been identified. These gaps can be categorized into two main areas: (a) thematic areas of research and (b) methodological limitations found in previous empirical studies. Research gaps and potential questions for future research directions are presented in Table 3.

Research framework

Based on the insights obtained from this systematic literature review (SLR), a research framework is proposed for CSR initiatives in the hotel industry. (see Figure 8). The systematic review revealed that the issue of CSR in hotels is complex and that it is guided by the theoretical lens related to human resources, consumer behavior, corporate governance, and strategic management. To enhance the understanding of the intricate nature of the issue, our developed framework adopts the antecedent-process-outcome model to summarize the results and findings of this review. This model allows for a comprehensive examination of the factors preceding CSR initiatives, the processes involved in their implementation, and the resulting outcomes. This type of framework is ideal for summarizing our results due to two reasons. Firstly, since CSR as a concept is multi-theoretic, adopting a theoretical framework as a base would summarize only part of the relationships. Secondly, the framework having broad components provides adequate flexibility to accommodate future changes in the literature.

The framework includes of five components, (1) the antecedent of CSR, (2) the CSR processes, (3) mediators, (4) outcomes of CSR implementation, and (5) contextual factors. However, it is important to recognize that the framework is not linear. For example, CSR perception can lead to creative behavior which, in turn, can further act as an antecedent to CSR (Afridi et al., 2020; Gao & Mattila, 2014; Nazir & Islam, 2019; Su et al., 2019). Thus, the discussion of the individual components of the framework also incorporates the relationship with other components.

Antecedents of CSR

The formulation and implementation of CSR activities in hotels are driven by different stakeholders (including top management, employees, and customers). Therefore, in the context of the hotel industry, specific actions and characteristics of all three stakeholders can act as antecedents of engaging in CSR activities and associated processes.

Research in this direction can greatly benefit by drawing inspiration from strategic management literature on corporate governance, specifically the upper echelons

Table 3. Research gaps and possible future research questions.

Theme	Gaps	Possible research questions
CSR and Employees	1. The role of employee demographic variables has not received much focus in the prior literature. 2. The examination of intervening variables, such as personality traits, to gain a deeper understanding of individual differences that influence CSR initiatives, remains largely unexplored in the current body of research. 3. Although it is pertinent for hotels to identify the CSR perceptions and expectations of their employees, and to map this data to the organization's performance, this is currently not being published. 4. Previous research has seldom explored the potential positive outcomes associated with employee involvement in the formulation of CSR strategies.	1. What impact do demographic variables such as role and position within the employee hierarchy, age, gender, and income level have on engagement in CSR activities? 2. In hotels: what role do employee personality traits play in perceiving CSR activities? 3. In what ways does the engagement of employees in hotel-based CSR activities vary based on their personality traits? 4. Can employees' perceptions and expectations of CSR influence the performance of the hotel? 5. What are the contributions of employee involvement in CSR strategy creation on employee outcomes like, retention and word of mouth?
CSR and Customers	1. Only a few studies have endeavored to grasp the significance of customer awareness regarding recent changes or implementations based on CSR. 2. The negative consequences of CSR, such as greenwashing and skepticism, which can potentially impact customers' intention to revisit, have received limited attention in existing studies	1. In what ways does customer perception of relevant hotels change as a result of shifts in customer awareness of CSR? 2. How does CSR hinder the revisit intentions of customers?
CSR and Business performance	1. The impact of CSR on factors like innovation inside the firm has received little attention. 2. Strategically implementing CSR could lower certain costs and increase revenue, thereby giving the hotel a competitive edge. The role of such an edge, and how best to achieve it using CSR, needs further investigation. 3. There is a need for additional empirical studies that examine the impact of CSR on sustainable goals.	1. What is the impact of CSR in hotels on innovation performance? 2. What role does CSR implementation play in hotels obtaining a competitive advantage? 3. To what extent do employee and customer level factors moderate or mediate the relationship between CSR implementation, firm performance, and the acquisition of competitive advantage? 4. Regarding sustainability goals: what is the effect of CSR implementation? 5. Which specific sustainability metrics are necessary to tackle the aforementioned question?
CSR and the Environment	1. Most studies only focused on regular mid-sized hotels and larger premium hotels. Future studies could incorporate other segments (e.g. upper midscale, midscale, and economy) to help generalize the findings. 2. More dimensions that predict the environmental behavior of employees should be investigated. 3. There is a dearth of studies on governmental regulation compliance (which is crucial for managing the sustainability between management and the suppliers).	1. Do the perception and implementation of CSR activities vary in different segments of hotels? 2. How do organizational structure, work environment, and environmental strategy contribute to predicting the environmental behavior of employees? 3. What is the perceived importance displayed by management and suppliers toward sustainable actions?

(*Continued*)

Table 3. Continued.

Theme	Gaps	Possible research questions
CSR and Reporting	1. Limited work has been conducted on dimensions like hotel ratings, image, and branding (all of which help in reporting). 2. Future work should deliberate upon customers' perceptions and willingness to actively participate in CSR-driven activities. 3. Instead of just providing a generic overview, studies based on hotel websites should provide enough detail regarding CSR activities in different categories.	1. How do hotel ratings, image, and branding support a hotel's reputation? 2. Do sustainability reminders impact a hotel's image? 3. How will category-wise reporting of CSR activities by hotels affect their CSR reputation and word of mouth?
Methodological gaps	1. Prior literature utilizing a mixed-method is limited, with most studies having utilized cross-sectional data (i.e. only providing insight on the research problems but not dealing with an in-depth perspective). 2. The existing studies used quite small sample sizes, raising concerns about sample representation. 3. While many studies have treated CSR as a singular construct, only a limited number have adopted a multidimensional approach. Future studies should embrace the multidimensional perspective by considering economic, environmental, social, and stakeholder dimensions to gain a comprehensive understanding of their impact on the hotel industry. 4. There is a scarcity of theory-driven research in the field, with only a small number of studies incorporating theoretical frameworks into their research models. To address this issue, it is essential to develop and incorporate newer theories that explore CSR and its behavioral outcomes.	1. What will be the result of assessing the impact of CSR on stakeholders' behavior through in-depth interviews and content analyses? 2. In what ways does the sample size enhance the generalizability of research findings? 3. To what extent can longitudinal data and a mixed-method approach effectively assess the impact of CSR on multiple stakeholders? 4. How will extant results change if multi-dimensional constructs are used? 5. How can behavioral theories contribute to highlighting the importance of CSR in enhancing the performance of hotels?

theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). According to this theory (Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Miller et al., 1998), the CEOs or top managers act as guiding forces, strengthening values and foresight by formulating CSR actions. Then the managers act as drivers that influence organizational goals through CSR adoption which, in turn, positively influences the organization's performance.

Motivated employees help in implementing CSR initiatives, leading to innovative and "green" behavior. The attitude and consequent perception of CSR initiatives by the employees are also important as they can influence the hotel's performance. Hence, employee invovment in CSR strategy formulation should be studied (as it might contribute to employee level positive outcomes like retention and positive word of mouth). Demographics and personality traits can also act as significant employee-related antecedents, which might add a new dimension to future research. Goal setting and motivational theories may be incorporated as they can align the organizational goals with the stakeholders' creativity, commitment, motivation, and OCB.

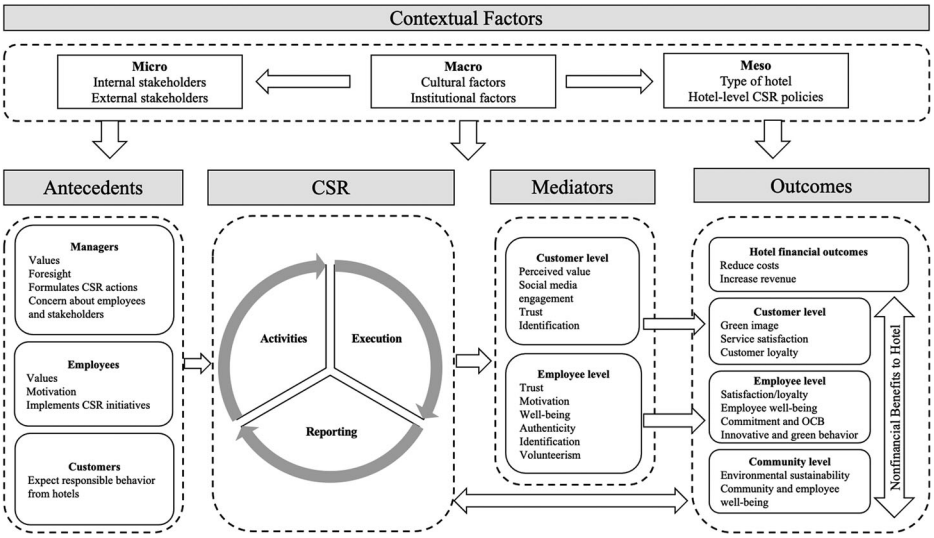

Figure 8. A research framework on CSR in hotels.

Similarly, customers aid CSR processes by taking part in CSR-driven activities or initiatives, leading to CCB. Hence, customer awareness regarding the implementation of CSR activities should be taken into consideration when conducting future research on CSR antecedents in hotels. Associating CSR initiatives with theories like social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 2004), social exchange (Ekeh, 1974), and COR (Halbesleben et al., 2014) may also help strengthen customer identification with the hotel. Lastly, barriers to CSR implementation require more attention (seeing that studies addressing the issue are currently lacking).

CSR processes

The CSR processes comprise CSR activities, CSR execution, and CSR reporting. CSR activities consist of the social initiatives taken by hotels to strengthen their credibility in the eyes of different stakeholders. Reasoning can include trying to reduce costs as well as improving brand reputation and image. This credibility is further strengthened by CSR execution which provides a "green" image, while proper reporting of CSR initiatives helps strengthen clientele relationships, thereby increasing revenue. It is thus suggested that hotels should try to adopt CSR measures that will help reduce costs and increase profitability. Future work should deliberate upon the perception and willingness of customers to actively participate in CSR-driven activities as well as how customers select hotels based on CSR perception. Based on previous works related to hotel sustainability, the relevant information is communicated towards customers, with less evidence of communication to employees and other stakeholder likesuppliers, and shareholders. It is, therefore, also advisable that hotels aim for 360-degree reporting feedback, finding a balanced focus on all the stakeholders.

Mediators

Future researchers should take into account the influence of moderating, mediating, and control variables when conducting their studies. Future studies should aim to understand

how participation in CSR activities is influenced by demographic variables such as age, gender, income level, and role or position in the employee hierarchy.These variables can be taken as mediators to understand the role of individual differences and personality traits (e.g. the role of personality traits as CSR antecedents and their subsequent impact on CSR outcomes). To create a more robust conceptual framework, future research might also incorporate potential moderators such as leadership style and ownership structure. From a customer's perspective, mediating factors like customer company identification, engagement, perceived value, and trust can play a significant role in aligning CSR initiatives with positive outcomes.

Similarly, from an employee's perspective, variables like authenticity, identification, motivation, trust, and well-being (serving as CSR-associated mediators) can significantly contribute to the nonfinancial benefits of their hotel. A variety of potential relationships between these factors remains to be addressed and may be supported by the research questions proposed in the previous section.

Outcomes of CSR

CSR activities can lead to several positive outcomes for all stakeholders including the hotel, employees, customers, and the community at large. In our thematic analysis, we observed that positive perception, due to CSR, provided the hotel with both financial and nonfinancial performance outcomes. The hotel can gain a competitive edge by strategically implementing CSR, as it can lead to cost reduction and revenue increase on the financial side. On the nonfinancial side, positive outcomes for the hotel arise from the positive outcomes experienced by its stakeholders. For instance, customers who are satisfied with the hotel's CSR performance demonstrate greater loyalty and frequent revisits. Similarly, employees in organizations with commendable CSR performance are more inclined to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB). However, we also observed that the impact of CSR, as well as employee and customer-centric mediators, on nonfinancial outcomes like innovation and sustainability, did not receive adequate attention and need further research. Such future work could significantly benefit from innovation management theory adoption, like open innovation and value co-creation (Chesbrough, 2003). Furthermore, to fully gauge the outcomes of CSR on different stakeholders (including employees, customers, and the community) future studies must be guided by stakeholder theory (Freeman & McVea, 2005).

Contextual factors

Our analysis of the literature shows that contextual factors play a major moderating role in both CSR antecedents and consequences. For easier comprehension, we divided the contextual factors into three levels of focus: (a) micro, (b) meso, and (c) macro. The literature suggests that all three levels of contextual factors (individual, organizational, and societal) play a critical role in establishing a connection between antecedents and consequences through CSR initiatives and reporting.

Dopfer et al. (2004) refer to the micro perspective as the alignment of thoughts from individual and organizational members with the local environment for decision-making. Here, the micro perspective includes characteristics of top managers, employees, and

customers, thus relating to the psychological bases among different stakeholders. The macro perspective constitutes political, economic, and societal dynamics. It includes the sector in which the firm operates, the embedded culture of the hotels, the legal framework, and technological aspects (all of which help to shape the organizational goals). Geographical coverage also plays a significant role in the implementation of CSR practices. For instance, in this review, we observed that CSR practices are more dominant in developed countries than in developing countries. This may be due to the latter's focus on economic growth instead of environmental protection (which may be a lower priority). If hotels in developing countries would focus more on CSR activities, it could enhance hotel reputation and lead to increased footfall, thereby boosting revenue. Nevertheless, the role that cultural differences play in CSR dynamics should be explored in future studies. Researchers should also widen their geographical coverage.

The meso perspective comprises the type of hotels, their policies, and financial performances (all playing a crucial role in the implementation of CSR practices). This perspective relates to organizational-level factors (e.g. ownership and governance) which aid the selection and implementation of organizational goals including the selection and implementation of CSR activities. While most studies have focused on luxury and upscale hotels, researchers need to study the impact of CSR implementation on medium- and low-scale hotels in the future (CSR implementation often being linked to the top manager's values and ethical standards to help enhance cost-savings and the hotel's reputation). To align the macro, micro, and meso perspectives, the CSR practices of hotels must focus on balancing economic development of the hotel and also in the local community through strengthening altruistic intentions (e.g. societal well-being or environmental protection).

Implications

Theoretical implications

The objective of this SLR was to examine the research articles from 2009 to 2022 and gain insights into the study of CSR in the hotel industry. Our analysis indicates that CSR has emerged as a crucial factor contributing to the success and expansion of the hotel industry. Our findings also reveal that, apart from government regulations on CSR practices in the hotel industry, the latter must understand CSR relevance and better regulate it by involving different stakeholders in its initiatives. This will only be possible when the hotel industry sufficiently raised CSR awareness among its different stakeholders.

Our study has made a significant theoretical contribution by identifying and recognizing major research themes on CSR (i.e. CSR and employees; CSR and customers; CSR and business performance; CSR and the environment; and CSR and reporting). These research themes can act as guides to refining and strengthening future research in CSR as well as identify important research gaps in the literature. We defined CSR as a sincere and committed effort of an organization to aim toward societal and environmental well-being while not regarding profit orientation as the only important criterion of organizational success, and catering to the needs and expectations of different stakeholders. For the hotel industry, needs and expectations can be viewed in terms of providing the best customer service, understanding the concerns of employees and involving them during CSR

implementations, envisioning societal expectations and fulfilling them by engaging in philanthropic activities, reducing waste for sustainability, and enhancing performance for profitability.

In conclusion, we propose the CSR in hotels research framework as a valuable tool for future researchers to obtain a comprehensive overview of the research field. Additionally, the research profiling section can guide future researchers in determining the suitable contextual, methodological, and theoretical settings for their studies within this field. The profiling information can also assist in identifying and targeting appropriate research outputs

Managerial implications

The holistic work done in the current study and the resulting hotel-based CSR framework that we developed, present five key managerial implications. Firstly, the consolidation of results as to how CST impacts employees and customers could assist hotel practitioners in developing strategies that may help enhance their organizational performance. Numerous organizations have started to recognize the importance of harmonizing economic performance with the creation of a positive brand image through environmentally and socially responsible behaviors (Lee & Heo, 2009). Although CSR activities should relate to business, they must also cater to long-term nonfinancial outcomes such as employee and consumer loyalty. Our study suggests that the hotel industry should strive for simple, specific, measurable, and achievable CSR activities to achieve the financial and nonfinancial outcomes associated with implementing CSR.

Secondly, we highlighted that communication of CSR activities to relevant internal stakeholders is currently insufficient. For a better linkage between CSR and the internal stakeholders, with special reference to employees, economic and philanthropic CSR initiatives (the latter involving donations to build a better community) must be given weightage as they impact employees' quality of life (Kim et al., 2018). Being important internal stakeholders, employees should be made aware of their hotel's philanthropic CSR initiatives (i.e. contributing to society in an environmentally responsible manner). Some initiatives, like regular meetings, may be needed to drive home CSR messages to employees. To better transparency and awareness, a company's CSR definition should be embedded in the training courses presented to its employees, as well as being uploaded on the hotel website and other social media sites. In a nutshell, the success of CSR formulation, which is only possible with support from all the stakeholders(Park & Levy, 2014).

Thirdly, regarding CSR communication to other stakeholders, we suggest that hotels very carefully discuss their CSR policies and initiatives to minimize greenwashing and consumer skepticism. It has been observed that, although various hotel companies declare commitment toward CSR, the reporting of such activities and initiatives remains lacking (De Grosbois, 2012). Indeed, only a few hotels were able to provide comprehensive CSR data during audits, although many more announced their hypothetical CSR activities (Holcomb et al., 2007). The lack of consistency regarding the methodologies used in undertaking CSR activities as well as accounting for and reporting these activities have resulted in a communication gap between CSR commitments and their actual practices (Bonilla-Priego et al., 2014; Burns & Cowlishaw, 2014; Font et al., 2012; De Grosbois,

2012). Greater transparency in terms of business performance and financial benefits is also pertinent for maintaining a long-term relationship with external stakeholders. Recent research observed that customers are now more interested to participate in CSR activities (Musgrave, 2011). Therfore, their role should be recognized by the hotel industry, and hotels should strive to encourage their participation in activities and initiatives. Furthermore, customer feedback and opinions matter a lot in the implementation of CSR policies. Based on our review, consumers demand environmentally friendly policies, goals and activities of hotels (Boğan et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2019; Martinez & Del Bosque, 2013; Pal, 2021).

Fourthly, considering that CSR has the potential to induce competitive advantage, CSR implementation should consider possible synergies with strategies in other functional areas like marketing and operations for lasting effectiveness and credibility. Apart from moral, social, and ethical work done by hotels, philanthropic activities require Social Return on Investment (SROI) reports (Nicholls, 2009). Therefore, hotels need to keep their records about CSR policies, initiatives, and implementations updated. As deliberated earlier, CSR activities should not be considered a supplement for good business practices but rather a complement to already responsible business practices that are fully aware of their responsibilities toward stakeholders.

Finally, studies found that the CSR activities of most hotels were done through charitable donations (Holcomb et al., 2007). Though hotels may exhibit altruistic motives through such donations, the role of donations in CSR communication is important and hotel should aim to exploit that opportunity.

Limitations, future work, and conclusions

The current review has some limitations. For instance, the SLR has not considered reviews and proceedings. These studies may have added to the discussion in CSr in hotels. To enhance the robustness of future studies, researchers could also consider article sources mentioned in our exclusion criteria. Similarly, the current study only considered articles in the English language, whereas future studies may incorporate non-English works. Although we were meticulous with three researchers working on the coding process, inadvertent mistakes might have occurred. To introduce a different structure to their reviews, future research could explore alternative coding and validation techniques. The SLR is subject to interpretation and subjectivity, allowing for the possibility that other scholars may organize and interpret the literature in alternative ways. Considering this, conducting a review from a different perspective, distinct from antecedents, processes, and outcomes, could contribute to the generation of a differnt novel framework.

In future studies, it is crucial to reassess the concept of CSR in the context of the hotel industry and evaluate the effectiveness of CSR activities within specific contextual settings, taking into account the availability of resources. Apart from focusing on stakeholders (e.g. consumers, management, employees, community, and the ecosystem), there needs to be emphasis on other stakeholders who are not directly involved in the hotel business like NGOs and the government.

The purpose of the current SLR was to understand CSR initiatives and their implementations in the hotel industry. We were guided by three research questions. RQ1 asked

about the research profile related to CSR in hotels. The research profile analysis showed a shifting trend of work toward developing countries, representing a fertile field for research. We implore researchers to engage in more comparative studies that examine how CSR works in the context of hotels in developed countries compared to hotels in developing countries. RQ2 asked what the key thematic areas of research in hotel CSR literature were. After reviewing the literature, the current study identified five themes pertinent to CSR perceptions and initiatives that were taken by various stakeholders (e.g. management, employees, and customers) for societal benefits. The study proposes a research framework constituting micro, macro, and meso factors and aligns themes with the antecedents and outcomes of CSR initiatives and their implementations. This framework provides a bird's-eye view of the present findings. Finally, RQ3 sought to explicate the gaps in current research and formulate associated research questions. The rigorous review and content analysis identified certain gaps that are crucial for a better understanding of CSR practices, and which should be bridged by researchers in future studies.

Declaration of interest statement

The authors do not have any competing interests to declare.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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