

Rating tourism and hospitality journals[☆]

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Abstract

This paper reports on the findings of a global study of tourism and hospitality academics asking them to rate their collective literature. The study adopted a peer assessment method, using a snowball sample to maximize response rates. Overall, 70 tourism and hospitality journals were assessed (40 tourism and 30 hospitality) by 314 tourism and 191 hospitality experts. The study revealed that tourism and hospitality community, collectively, rates its journals in a clear hierarchy based on a combination of awareness and perceived quality rating.

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1. Introduction

Academics are, increasingly, being required to publish in “quality” journals to comply with institutional or nation-wide research assessment exercises, gain promotion or be granted tenure. Unlike established disciplines that have widely accepted hierarchical ratings of journals, no such list exists in tourism and hospitality. University administrators and higher education funding agencies have to rely on their own hierarchical lists to fill this void. Apparently, the process is at best arbitrary, often biased, exclusive and not reflective of the dynamic nature of tourism and hospitality publishing where new journals are being introduced and younger ones establish quality reputations. The issue is complicated further by the absence of most tourism and hospitality journals from citation indices. Whereas 15 years ago, less than 30

English-language journals in tourism and hospitality were published, today more than 70, and some commentators suggest more than 100, journals serve this field of study. As a consequence, the hospitality and tourism community is placed in the unenviable position where it must continually inform higher education administrators about the breadth and depth of its academic literature.

A number of studies have tried to rate or rank journals over the past 15 years, but as discussed elsewhere, their utility is limited by small sample size, limited scope, and geographic specificity. This paper seeks to fill the need by presenting the results of a global study of tourism and hospitality journals using a peer assessment method. More than 500 academics from 103 universities in 15 jurisdictions participated. The intent of this paper is to report on the findings of the study and not to make value judgments about any of the journals assessed. Also, the authors do not attempt to rank the journals or group them in a hierarchical classification system (A, B, C grade, etc.).

2. Methods used to rate and rank journals

The ranking and rating of academic journals is a contentious issue for both emerging and established

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fields of study. The authors identified more than 40 studies on this topic written in the past 15 years. The main reasons why the issue is so topical is that, in spite of the best efforts to rate journals, no single, absolute, infallible method exists. Instead, a variety of techniques using proxy indicators of quality are used. The five most common are: citation indices and impact factors; acceptance rates; downloads from electronic websites or libraries; the use of expert panels; and peer review. Each has its merits but each also has its deficiencies. These methods are discussed briefly in this section.

2.1. Citation indices

The most widely used, yet most controversial method is citation indices. The authors have identified numerous studies over the past 10 years utilizing or commenting on this method in the areas of operations management (Vokurka, 1996), decision sciences (Holsapple, Johnson, Manakyan, & Tanner, 1995), business computing (Holsapple, Johnson, Manakyan, & Tanner, 1993), advertising (Zinkhan & Leigh, 1999), international business (Dubois & Reeb, 2000), real estate (Redman, Manakyan, & Tanner, 1999), technology innovation (Linton & Thongpapanl, 2004), medicine (Joseph & Hoey, 1999), dentistry (Linde, 1998; Sloan & Needleman, 2000), management (Tahai & Meyer, 1999), finance (McNulty & Boekeloo, 1999), and hospitality (Howey, Savage, Verbeeten, & van Hoof, 1999; Schmidgall & Woods, 1997/1998).

Citation indices measure the frequency that an article or articles in a journal are cited in other papers/journals over a particular period of time (Garfield, 1994a). Garfield (1994a, b) argues that the frequency of citations for certain journals implies their scholarly importance and by evaluating citations, it is possible to rank, evaluate, categorize, and compare journals. The more frequently a journal is cited, the greater its impact is on the field and, thus one can argue that the higher the quality of the journal. This method provides a quantifiable means to evaluate journals (Thomson, 2004) and has the added advantages of being objective and independent (Schmidgall & Woods, 1997/1998). The Thomson ISI scale (Thomson, 2004), housing the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and others, is the best known citation method, assessing more than 8750 journals.

The use of citation indices is not without its critics, though. Morgan and Janca (2000) identify a number of major limitations in the use of impact factors, including the limited source of the database (limited to certain journals and excluding books), a strong bias to English-language journals published in North America and the fact that citation indices cannot discriminate between positive or negative citations. They, Joseph and Hoey (1999) and Sloan and Needleman (2000) further add

that citation systems favor older, more established journals that cover generalist themes and publish more papers than newer, specialist journals that publish fewer papers. Journals that publish narrative review articles with extensive bibliographies are cited more frequently as is research in disciplines that are growing rapidly (Morgan & Janca, 2000; Sloan & Needleman, 2000). Popular or well-known authors also tend to be cited proportionately more than unknown authors (Brown, 2003). In other words, the system enables the rich to get richer.

The method is also arbitrary and, perhaps open to manipulation. Impact factors are determined by dividing the number of citations of articles published in the two previous years by the total number of papers published in the journal during those 2 years (Linde, 1998). Papers thus need to be cited soon after publication to have an 'impact'. Such a system favors journals with quick turn around times and discriminates against those where the publication queue is long (as in the case of many tourism and hospitality journals). The calculated impact factor score depends on the size of the denominator. In principle, the denominator is 'substantive citable articles' (Morgan & Janca, 2000) but the definition of what constitutes a substantive citable article may be difficult to classify. The editors of the Canadian Medical Association Journal (Joseph & Hoey, 1999), argue that the denominator used in the Science Citation Index overstated their own count of the number of substantive scientific papers by some 75%, resulting in a concomitant reduction in the impact figure for the journal from their own estimate of 3.2 to the published score of 1.6.

Moreover, citation indices are only valid providing that a critical mass of journals in a subject area is assessed, especially in 'silo' fields of study where few people from outside the field consult its literature. This issue is especially prescient in tourism and hospitality research where only three titles are included in the SSCI, and one of them, the *Journal of Travel Medicine*, is a medical journal. The lack of broad representation limits the rated impact of the small number of journals that are included.

2.2. Acceptance rates

Acceptance rates, or more accurately rejection rates, are another proxy used to infer quality. An inverse relationship is believed to exist between acceptance rates and journal quality. The argument is that the more difficult it is to have a paper accepted, the higher the quality of the paper published and therefore, the higher the quality of the journal. Vastag and Montabon (2002) illustrate that expert panel members' opinions of the quality of journals are closely correlated to how low they perceived acceptance rates to be,

while Ferreira, deFranco and Rappole (1998) cited acceptance rates as an important factor in their study of how hospitality program directors rate journals.

While there may be some merits in this argument, the use of acceptance rates is problematic in at least four areas. First, while editors and publishers keep track of these data, they are not publicized. Indeed, acceptance rates are one of the most closely guarded secrets in academia and are only divulged by the small number of elite journals with truly extraordinarily low rates. As such, it is impossible to verify claims independently. Second, as with impact factors, the numerator and denominator can be manipulated to raise the rejection rate. The denominator can include all submissions received, including research notes and conference reports, while the numerator may be limited only to full papers published. Some editors also include informal or preliminary inquiries in the denominator, even if no paper eventuates, while rumors persist that the re-submission of revised manuscripts is counted as a 'new' submission by some editors. Third, academics themselves may unwittingly influence the system by submitting works to leading journals as part of research assessment, tenure and promotion exercise. These papers appear on individual's resume as being 'under review', even though they may have little chance of being accepted.

Finally, the rapid expansion of tourism and hospitality scholarship in the past 10 years has resulted in the inclusion of additional pages to or editions of established journals. For example, the number of full papers published in *Tourism Management* has grown from 46 in 2000 to 60 in 2004, while the number of papers published by the *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing* grew from 20 to 41 between 2000 and 2003. Similar growth has been noted in the hospitality sector where the *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, and the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* publish 15% to 20% more papers than they did 4 years ago. The addition of pages enables these journals to publish more papers, but may come at a cost of a higher acceptance rate.

2.3. Downloads from websites or libraries

Documenting the number of downloads from electronic databases provides a third, emerging, but crude quality proxy. This technique has been used recently by Ryan (2005) in an indicative study of tourism journals and has also been advocated by Brown (2003) in the field of finance and accounting. Polonsky, Jones, and Kearsley (1999) advocate a similar approach using university library holdings. The advantages are that it is demand-driven and permits analysis at a micro or

individual paper level. A further advantage is that search engines can include a wide array of journals, conference papers, and working papers, thus broadening the potential pool of papers that can be rated (Brown, 2003). The beta version of scholar.google.com, currently being trialled as this paper is being written includes many journals, as well as conference papers and academic reports that have been uploaded on partner websites.

Ryan (2005) and Brown (2003), although users and advocates of this method, respectively, also advise caution. Two obvious biases emerge: only journals listed on the database can be evaluated and the evaluation is limited only by those people who have access to the database. Downloading a paper does not mean that it will be read, so as with everything else on the Internet hits are a crude indicator of actual use. In addition, works by well-known or popular authors tend to be downloaded at disproportionately high rates (Brown, 2003), while Ryan (2005) feels bigger journals have distinct advantage over small ones because they publish more papers.

2.4. Expert panels

The use of a panel of experts represents a fourth proxy measure. This technique has been used to some success in hospitality journals (Ferreira, deFranco, & Rappole, 1994; Ferreira et al., 1998), as well as in the fields of human resource management (Caligiuri, 1999) and in management information systems (MIS) (Nord & Nord, 1995). Again, the technique has a number of merits as, in principle, experts in the field should be knowledgeable about their literature, and if independent of the jurisdiction or institution doing the ranking, should provide unbiased views. The method is apparently used widely as an internal institutional tool (Ferreira et al., 1998) and by governments implementing sector-wide Research Assessment Exercises.

However, it has a number of weaknesses. Experts are unlikely to be fully aware of and knowledgeable enough about the entire suite of journals in a field of study. Beed and Beed (1995 as cited in Vastag & Montabon, 2002) observed that the typical economist knows no more than six or eight journals out of the more than 100 journals in this discipline. Resulting lists may reveal as much about the experts' own biases and limited knowledge base than about the quality of journals (Caligiuri, 1999). Further, opinions may be influenced by intangible criteria such as the perceived rejection rate, reputation of editorial board members, the age of the journal and other factors (Ferreira et al., 1998). The biggest complaint, though, is that the use of expert panels tends to be exclusive, rather than inclusive, limiting the number of journals included in approved lists (Caligiuri, 1999).

2.5. Peer assessment

Peer assessment systems represent a fifth method. They have grown in popularity over the past 10 years, as academics themselves have sought to develop rating and ranking systems as an alternative to lists produced by external agencies. Peer assessment has been used in operations management (Soteriou, Hadjinicola, & Patsia, 1999), MIS (Mylonopoulos & Theoharakis, 2001), construction management (Wing, 1997), international business (Dubois & Reeb, 2000), and tourism and hospitality (Hsu & Yeung, 2003; Pechlaner, Zehrer, Matzler, & Abfalter, 2004; Schmidgall, Woods, & Rutherford, 1996; Sheldon, 1990). The large amount of interest from the tourism community reflects a collective frustration at both having to justify the academic credibility of tourism as a field of study and the failure of other rating systems to include a sufficiently large sample of journals.

In principle, peer assessment should be the most reliable method as it is based on the end-users' own opinions. In practice, though, a number of methodological and operationalization issues often limit the effectiveness of this technique. Many of the studies cited above include a limited number of journals, leading Brown (2003) to cite sample representation bias as a major weakness. He also highlights response bias and small sample size as other weaknesses. Others suggest that limited geographic scope of surveys (Mylonopoulos & Theoharakis, 2001), respondents' own publication history in a journal under review (Pechlaner et al., 2004) or involvement as an editorial board member, reviewer, or member of the journal's home organization may introduce bias.

The limited sample size, both in terms of number of respondents and geographic scope, emerges as an issue in previous attempts to rate tourism and hospitality journals. Pechlaner et al.'s (2004) study relied on a sample of 142 respondents from 40 different countries. They subsequently ranked American's perceptions of their journals based on a sub-sample of, apparently, fewer than 50 respondents. Hsu and Yeung's (2003) sample was limited to 52 individuals who attended academic conferences in Macau and Hong Kong. Sheldon's (1990) study had a sample of 103 respondents, while Ferreira et al. (1994) surveyed 52 CHRIE members.

In addition, peer assessment studies consider either quality or awareness levels (reach), but not both simultaneously. Quality refers to the mean rating given to a specific journal, while reach refers to the number of respondents who can comment on the journal. The common method asks respondents to rate journals they are familiar with. Few, if any respondents, though, rate all journals suggesting that reach should also be considered as an independent variable. Wing (1997)

reported that fewer than 5% of respondents rated all 22 construction journals in his study, while the number of respondents rating 50 MIS journals ranged from a low of 79 to a high of 850 out of 979 respondents (Mylonopoulos & Theoharakis, 2001). The same situation is evident in previous studies of tourism and hospitality journals. The number of individuals identifying the 15 journals under consideration by Sheldon (1990) ranged from 14 to 65 out of a sample of 103. Likewise, the number of people rating journals varied from 24 to 44 of 52 respondents in Hsu and Yeung's (2003) study and from 49% to 74% of the sample in Schmidgall et al.'s (1996) study.

Considering quality without reach only considers part of the overall importance equation. Journals that are perceived to be of a very high quality, but with a very limited readership may have less influence on the field of study than those rated more modestly but having broad penetration. For example, DuBois and Reeb (2000) examined international business journals. Using a quality criterion alone, they identified the third most influential journal, even though only 27.5% of respondents assessed it. However, the ninth and tenth most influential journals were assessed by about 50% of the sample. One could argue that these supposed lower ranking journals actually have more influence on their field because of their higher reach than a well regarded, but less widely read journal.

The lack of familiarity of hospitality journals by tourism academics and that of tourism journals by hospitality academics raises a further methodological issue. Howey et al. (1999) observed that there are more citations within disciplines than between them. Academics who are unfamiliar with journals in the companion field will be unlikely to rate them, or may give them a discounted quality rating. Sheldon's (1990) study is the only prior study of tourism journals to consider tourism and hospitality academics as discrete groups. She revealed they expressed markedly different opinions about both the familiarity and quality of journals. As such, the authors argue it is necessary to disaggregate the population of tourism and hospitality academics based on their respective fields of study to gain a more accurate understanding of the relative importance of each group's set of journals.

3. Method

This study adopted a peer assessment method, but the authors sought to address the methodological and operational issues identified above. In particular, the study sought to extend the geographic scope, maximize the sample size, include most tourism and hospitality journals, and distinguish between tourism and hospitality experts.

The survey instrument was designed following a focus group discussion held in April 2004 with nine academics from a prominent hotel and tourism program. The survey consisted of four parts. Parts A–C listed 30 English-language hospitality and foodservice, 40 tourism, and 16 leisure and recreation journals, respectively. (The set of leisure and recreation journals was not included in this paper due to low response rates and the likelihood that non-experts were assessing them.) Part D gathered demographic details of the respondents, including academic rank, country of residence, years of service as an academic, highest educational qualification, area of expertise, etc. An open-ended question was included at the end of the survey asking participants to inform the study team “what criteria they use to distinguish high quality research journals from others”.

The list of journals and their classification as either tourism, hospitality, and foodservice or leisure journals was derived from Morrison's (2004) list, the *Lodging, Restaurant, and Tourism Index* (2004) and Egger's (2004) website of journals. The authors acknowledge that the list is not complete. However, it does represent the largest set of journals assessed, being three times larger than the sets used in other studies. Respondents could add other journals not shown on the list. Fourteen academic journals plus a number of trade and professional journals were added. These journals were not included in the analysis presented below due to the very small number of respondents who rated them.

Where journals had changed their names, both names were included in the same row to avoid confusion (i.e., *Tourism Review International/Pacific Tourism Review*). However, name changes for three journals were not incorporated in the final questionnaire, resulting in the inclusion of both the former and current names as discrete entries (*Journal of Convention & Event Tourism* which replaced *Journal of Convention and Exhibition Management*; *Journal of Foodservice Business Research* which replaced *Journal of Restaurant and Foodservice Marketing* and *Journal of Culinary Science and Technology* which replaced *Journal of Nutrition in Recipe and Menu Development*). Aggregate results are included for these three journals when one name was assessed not the other to address this anomaly and to offer a true picture of its importance. For example, the number of tourism experts deemed to have assessed *JCET* is 75, based on the total number of people who assessed either *JCET* and/or *JCEM* rather than the 58 experts who assessed *JCET* only. The same situation applied with *JFSBR* (77 hospitality experts identifying either *JRFSM* and/or *JFSBR* rather than the 51 who identified *JFSBR* and 29 hospitality experts identifying either *JCST* and/or *JNRMD* rather than the 18 who identified *JCST*).

Parts A–C asked respondents first if they were able to comment on the quality of the journals listed in each category. If the answer was no, they were directed to

Section 4 of the survey. Otherwise, they were instructed to select those journals they were familiar with and were knowledgeable enough to rate. Since some journals have similar names, respondents were instructed to be careful when rating journals. An option of “no opinion/no knowledge” was also included. The rating system used a five-point Likert scale, with five being the highest quality and one the lowest. No specific definition of ‘quality’ was provided, as it is a subjective term and, therefore, open to individual interpretation. Focus group members had a clear, though highly personalized opinion of what quality entailed. Indeed, the open-ended question at the end of the survey generated in excess of 860 comments about what constitutes quality.

The survey was pilot tested in May and June 2004 at four universities in Hong Kong, Australia, the US, and the UK. The large-scale survey was conducted in late 2004. A snowball sampling method was adopted to maximize the response rate. The study team identified 521 universities globally that offered degree or postgraduate programs in tourism and/or hospitality studies. A key contact person was identified at each university and contacted to see if that person would distribute the questionnaires to academic staff, collect completed questionnaires, and return them to the authors. This person, as well as prospective respondents, was reminded to complete only one questionnaire each. A total of 195 universities agreed to participate and 2370 questionnaires were mailed (about 10% more than the number of academics, to account for wastage). At the end, 577 surveys were returned from 103 universities situated in 15 countries.

The data were subsequently cleaned, reducing the usable sample to 505 respondents. Undergraduate and postgraduate students were excluded, as were respondents who felt unqualified to rate both tourism and hospitality journals. Respondents were categorized into one of the two groups, tourism experts ($N = 314$) and hospitality experts ($N = 191$), which included foodservice experts. This binary classification was based on respondents' stated primary area of expertise, their ability to comment on the journals in the respective field of study and their stated areas of expertise/interest. Many academics felt qualified to comment on journals in both fields of study, but as discussed below substantive differences existed between the two cohorts, especially in awareness levels of journals in the companion field.

The sample represents a broad spectrum of tourism and hospitality experts from around the world. As summarized in Table 1, the two cohorts are broadly similar. More than 60% are male; more than half hold PhDs or equivalent and more than half could be considered as senior academics, holding posts of Associate Professor or higher (Senior Lecturer or higher in the British system). About one-third or less have worked in academia for between 1 and 5 years, one

Table 1
Profile of respondents (%)

	Tourism experts (<i>N</i> = 314)	Hospitality experts (<i>N</i> = 191)
<i>Origin</i>	(<i>n</i> = 314)	(<i>n</i> = 191)
North America	22.6%	45.0%
Europe	30.3%	23.6%
Asia Pacific	47.1%	31.4%
<i>Academic rank</i>	(<i>n</i> = 293)	(<i>n</i> = 180)
Assoc. Prof. or above (Sr. Lecturer or above)	58.0%	52.2%
Assist. Prof/Lecturer or equivalent	37.5%	42.2%
Researcher/Research Assistant	2.7%	1.7%
Administrator (Head, Dean, etc.)	1.7%	3.9%
<i>Years of service</i>	(<i>n</i> = 278)	(<i>n</i> = 173)
1–5 years	33.1%	28.3%
6–10 years	26.3%	28.3%
11 or more years	40.6%	43.4%
<i>Publication's profile</i>		
Ever published a refereed paper in an English-language Tourism or Hospitality Journal?	(<i>n</i> = 295)	(<i>n</i> = 184)
Yes	54.2%	64.1%
No	45.8%	35.9%
<i>Gender</i>	(<i>n</i> = 301)	(<i>n</i> = 183)
Male	64.8%	62.3%
Female	35.2%	37.7%
<i>Highest qualification</i>	(<i>n</i> = 300)	(<i>n</i> = 184)
Bachelors/Masters degree	48.7%	47.3%
Doctorate	51.3%	52.7%

quarter for 6–10 years and another 40% for more than 10 years. The sample of tourism specialists was skewed somewhat toward respondents from the Asia Pacific region, including Australia and New Zealand, while the sample of hospitality experts was skewed toward North Americans, perhaps as a reflection of the greater emphasis placed on hospitality studies in the US. Interestingly, a large percentage of respondents (42% overall) have never published refereed articles in English-language hospitality and/or tourism journals. Specifically, more than half of the respondents from Asia Pacific (58%) and almost half of the Europeans (47%) who participated have not published in English-language journals, along with 16% of North Americans. The respondents' publication history, years of service and gender emerged as significant factors influencing the perceived quality of journals, especially among the set of tourism journals.

4. Results

4.1. Peer rating of tourism and hospitality journals

Tourism and hospitality journals are listed in Tables 2 and 3, respectively, in descending order based on their aggregate importance score. The first column contains

the name of the journal, while the second column shows the number of experts (*n*) in each field of study who assessed its quality. The third column shows the awareness level as a percent of the total cohort (*n/N*). The fourth column shows the mean quality rating (*m*) given by those people who rated the journal. The fifth column presents an aggregate 'importance' rating. This score is shown as a percent of the maximum score possible had all experts (*N*) identified the journal and given it the highest possible rating (5). For example, the aggregate importance score of 78.8 for *Annals of Tourism Research* was derived as follows: $(n \times m) / (N \times 5) \times 100 = (269 \times 4.6 / 314 \times 5) \times 100 = 78.8$.

The aggregate importance score must be interpreted as a relative score that assesses a journal's overall importance to its respective field of study, and not as an absolute barometer of the merits of one journal compared to another. Thus, when interpreting the difference between a journal with a score of, say, 60 and another with a score of, say 15, one can conclude that the journal with the higher score has wider reach and is seen to be of a higher quality. However, it is inappropriate to conclude that this journal is four times 'better' than the other journal. No such assertion is made, inferred, or implied by the method.

A high correlation was noted between awareness levels and quality rating ($r = .866$, $p = .000$) in the

Table 2
Rating tourism journals ($N = 314$)

Journal name	Number of experts who assessed the journal (n)	% Awareness ($n/314$)	Mean quality rating (five-point scale)	Aggregate importance rating (shown as % of maximum score)
Annals of Tourism Research	269	85.7	4.6	78.8
Tourism Management	249	79.3	4.3	68.2
Journal of Travel Research	223	71.0	4.2	59.7
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	188	59.9	3.8	45.5
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	192	61.1	3.6	44.0
International Journal of Tourism Research	176	56.1	3.5	39.2
Tourism Analysis	159	50.6	3.6	36.5
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	167	53.2	3.4	36.2
Journal of Tourism Studies	168	53.5	3.3	35.3
Tourism Economics	138	43.9	3.8	33.4
Tourism Geographies	141	44.9	3.7	33.2
Current Issues in Tourism	141	44.9	3.6	32.3
Journal of Ecotourism	142	45.2	3.3	29.8
Tourism Recreation Research	132	42.0	3.4	28.6
Tourism and Hospitality Research	131	41.7	3.4	28.4
Journal of Vacation Marketing	136	43.3	3.1	26.9
Event Management	113	36.0	3.1	22.3
Tourism Review International	105	33.4	2.9	19.4
Information Technology & Tourism	86	27.4	3.3	18.1
Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change	86	27.4	3.2	17.5
Anatolia	100	31.8	2.6	16.6
Tourism, Culture & Communication	76	24.2	3.3	16.0
Tourist Studies	75	23.9	3.3	15.8
Tourism Research Journal	72	22.9	3.4	15.6
The Tourist Review	85	27.1	2.8	15.2
Journal of Sport Tourism	77	24.5	3.0	14.7
Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism	76	24.2	3.0	14.5
Journal of Convention & Event Tourism	75	23.8	3.0	14.3
Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal	67	21.3	3.0	12.8
ASEAN Journal on Hospitality and Tourism	58	18.5	3.1	11.5
Event Tourism	60	19.1	2.9	11.1
Journal of Quality Assurance in Tourism & Hospitality	58	18.5	3.0	11.1
Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	41	13.1	3.1	8.1
Tourisms Journal	43	13.7	2.9	7.9
Tourism Today	47	15.0	2.6	7.8
ACTA Turistica	45	14.3	2.7	7.7
International Travel Law Journal	39	12.4	2.9	7.2
Teoros International	30	9.6	3.1	5.9
PASOS-Journal of Tourism and Cultural Heritage	32	10.2	2.8	5.7
Problems of Tourism	28	8.9	2.8	5.0

tourism journals (Table 2), suggesting that the more well known a journal is, the more likely those people who assess it are to give it a higher quality rating. In addition, significant correlations were noted between age of tourism journals, as reflected by the volume number and awareness levels ($r = .533$, $p = .001$),

as well as between age and quality rating ($r = .593$, $p = .001$).

A similar pattern was noted with the set of hospitality journals (Table 3). A strong correlation was also found between awareness levels and perceived quality rating ($r = .746$, $p = .000$) and there was a significant correlation

Table 3
Rating hospitality journals ($N = 191$)

Journal name	Number of experts who assessed the journal (n)	% Awareness ($n/191$)	Mean quality rating (five-point scale)	Aggregate importance rating (shown as % of maximum score)
Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly	168	88.0	4.1	72.1
International Journal of Hospitality Management	161	84.3	4.0	67.4
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	136	71.2	4.2	59.8
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	135	70.7	3.6	50.9
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education	118	61.8	3.2	39.5
FIU Hospitality Review	114	59.7	3.2	38.2
Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing	104	54.5	3.4	37.0
International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration	94	49.2	3.5	34.5
Journal of Foodservice Business Research	77	40.3	3.3	26.6
Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism	66	34.6	3.2	22.1
Praxis-The Journal of Applied Hospitality Management	70	36.6	2.9	21.3
Journal of the American Dietetic Association	47	24.6	4.0	19.7
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	58	30.4	3.1	18.8
Information Technology in Hospitality	55	28.8	3.1	17.9
Journal of Hospitality Financial Management	51	26.7	3.3	17.6
Foodservice Research International	47	24.6	3.3	16.2
Journal of College & University Foodservice	53	27.7	2.9	16.1
NACUFS Journal (National Association of College & University Foodservices)	48	25.1	3.1	15.6
Journal of the International Academy of Hospitality Research	42	22.0	3.3	14.5
Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports & Tourism Education	45	23.6	3.0	14.1
British Food Journal	38	19.9	3.5	13.9
Gaming Research & Review Journal	40	20.9	3.1	13.0
Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports & Tourism	41	21.5	2.8	12.0
Journal of Culinary Science & Technology	29	15.2	2.8	8.5
School Foodservice Research Review	27	14.1	2.9	8.2
Journal of Gambling Studies	25	13.1	2.8	7.3
Journal of Food Products Marketing	25	13.1	2.6	6.8
Journal of Hospitality & Leisure for the Elderly	15	7.9	2.9	4.6
The Consortium Journal: Journal of HBCU	14	7.3	2.8	4.1
Journal of Nutrition for the Elderly	13	6.8	2.9	3.9

between age and quality rating ($r = .471$, $p = .020$). No significant correlation was noted between age of hospitality journals and awareness levels, though.

4.2. Comparison of journals between fields of study

The distinction between tourism and hospitality research and 'tourism' and 'hospitality' journals is often blurred and arbitrary. Previous studies have combined the sets of journals and not discriminated between respondents. This study made the distinction in both journals and respondents. However, it is recognized that

journals may have cross-over appeal, serving both communities. Table 4 compares the awareness levels and mean quality ratings of all journals by tourism and hospitality experts, respectively.

Three features emerge. First, a number of journals do have wide, cross-over appeal. This observation is especially true among those journals that are generally regarded as the leading journals in each field. However, second, relatively fewer academics are aware of journals outside their field of study: tourism academics are generally less aware of hospitality journals than hospitality academics and hospitality academics are

generally less aware of tourism journals than tourism academics. In general, though, the mean quality rating varies little between cohorts. The notable exceptions, and the third feature to emerge, are six hospitality journals, including four given the highest aggregate score by the hospitality community. In each case, tourism experts rated them as being of lower quality. Similarly, two tourism journals, including the one with the fourth highest composite score, were rated higher by tourism experts than by hospitality experts. This finding highlights the importance of disaggregating the sample into its constituent parts.

4.3. Factors influencing the rating of tourism and hospitality journals

As Tables 5 and 6 indicate, a number of differences were evident in the mean quality rating provided by respondents, depending on the number of years they have worked in academia, their academic rank, the origin of the respondent, his or her publications' history and gender. In general, less variance was noted in the rating of hospitality journals than tourism journals.

Prior publication history in an English-language tourism and hospitality journal appears to have the greatest influence on the perceived quality rating ascribed, with statistically significant differences noted in fully 24 of the 40 tourism journals and seven of the 30 hospitality journals. Academics who have not published in the field tended to provide more generous quality ratings than those who have. The notable exceptions to this pattern are the *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Travel Research*, and *Tourism Management*, where academics who have published rated these journals more favorably.

The number of years working as an academic and respondent's academic rank emerged as other variables influencing perceived importance, especially in relation to tourism journals. Again, statistically significant differences in the quality rating were noted in 14 tourism journals based on years of service and 10 journals based on the academic rank of the respondent. In virtually all cases, longer serving academics rated journals lower than newer scholars. Likewise, senior academics were also likely to be more critical of the certain journals than junior academics. This observation highlights the dynamic nature of perceived quality of journals, where senior academics might have certain biases toward well-established journals and against newer journals, highlighting the risk associated with the use of a panel of experts. In addition, it also highlights the dynamic nature of quality ratings. Over time, the opinions of newer academics may gain in importance as senior staff retire, suggesting that the ratings could change significantly over the next 5–10 years.

Interestingly, gender has some influence, as statistically significant differences were noted in 10 tourism and two hospitality journals. Women gave a higher mean rating than men in all instances.

4.4. Comparison with other studies

Seven other studies of tourism and hospitality journals that were conducted since 1990 were identified. A comparison of the results between these studies and this one is shown in Table 7. Three of the studies used peer assessment (Hsu & Yeung, 2003; Pechlaner et al., 2004; Sheldon, 1990); Ryan (2005) assessed hits on *leisuretourism.com*; Schmidgall and Woods (1997/1998) employed citation analysis; and Ferreira et al. (1994, 1998) relied on expert panels. The peer review and expert panel assessments relied on a small sample size and all but Pechlaner et al.'s (2004) study had a narrow geographic focus. All studies also provided respondents with a small number of journals (less than 25) and made no distinction between hospitality- and tourism-orientation. Admittedly, fewer journals were published in the early to mid-1990s. Sheldon's (1990) pioneering study disaggregated the sample into tourism and hospitality experts when ranking the journals, but none of the other studies did so.

While the results are largely consistent for the top 3–5 journals in each category, significant differences emerge when other journals are considered. The failure to distinguish between tourism and hospitality experts, coupled with the small sample size, narrow geographic focus, and a limited number of journals affect the results. Studies that did not disaggregate tourism from hospitality academics revealed a stronger bias against journals outside of the respondents' areas of expertise. Tourism academics consistently produced discounted ratings of hospitality journals, while a similar pattern was noted among hospitality academics when rating tourism journals. The limited number of journals included raised the perceived quality profile of certain journals, when compared to the more comprehensive list used in this study. This study also highlights the emergence of a number of newer journals as significant players in the field, when compared to studies completed in the early to mid-1990s. The small and geographically narrow sample size also increased the potential for respondent bias affecting niche journals or those with a geographic focus adversely or positively.

5. Discussion and conclusion

This paper sought to assess tourism and hospitality journals based on peer review. The method used differed from other studies in four major areas:

Table 4
Comparison of journals between experts ($N = 505$)

	Tourism experts ($N = 314$)		Hospitality experts ($N = 191$)		Difference in quality rating
	% Awareness	Mean quality rating	% Awareness	Mean quality rating	
<i>Tourism journals</i>					
ACTA Turistica	14.3	2.7	3.1	3.3	
Anatolia	31.8	2.6	14.7	3.0	Hospitality experts rated higher*
Annals of Tourism Research	85.7	4.6	53.4	4.8	
ASEAN Journal on Hospitality and Tourism	18.5	3.1	11.0	3.0	
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	53.2	3.4	34.0	3.5	
Current Issues in Tourism	44.9	3.6	17.3	3.2	
Event Management	36.0	3.1	19.4	3.1	
Event Tourism	19.1	2.9	11.5	2.9	
Information Technology & Tourism	27.4	3.3	11.0	3.3	
International Journal of Tourism Research	56.1	3.5	29.8	3.5	
International Travel Law Journal	12.4	2.9	5.2	3.3	
Journal of Convention & Event Tourism	23.8	3.0	20.0	3.0	
Journal of Ecotourism	45.2	3.3	11.0	3.4	
Journal of Quality Assurance in Tourism & Hospitality	18.5	3.0	15.2	3.1	
Journal of Sport Tourism	24.5	3.0	10.5	2.6	
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	59.9	3.8	20.9	3.3	Tourism experts rated higher**
Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism	24.2	3.0	19.4	3	
Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change	27.4	3.2	6.8	3.2	
Journal of Tourism Studies	53.5	3.3	15.7	3.4	
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	61.1	3.6	19.9	3.7	
Journal of Travel Research	71.0	4.2	37.7	4.4	
Journal of Vacation Marketing	43.3	3.1	24.6	3.0	
PASOS-Journal of Tourism and Cultural Heritage	10.2	2.8	2.1	3.0	
Problems of Tourism	8.9	2.8	2.1	2.8	
Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	13.1	3.1	5.8	2.8	
Teoros International	9.6	3.1	1.6	3.3	
The Tourist Review	27.1	2.8	8.9	3.4	
Tourism Analysis	50.6	3.6	19.4	3.4	
Tourism and Hospitality Research	41.7	3.4	23.6	3.6	
Tourism Economics	43.9	3.8	14.7	3.5	
Tourism Geographies	44.9	3.7	7.3	3.0	Tourism experts rated higher*
Tourism Management	79.3	4.3	38.7	4.0	
Tourism Recreation Research	42.0	3.4	5.8	3.6	
Tourism Research Journal	22.9	3.4	9.9	3.7	
Tourism Review International	33.4	2.9	15.2	3.0	
Tourism Today	15.0	2.6	5.2	3.2	
Tourism, Culture & Communication	24.2	3.3	6.3	3.1	
Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal	21.3	3.0	5.8	3.2	
Tourisms Journal	13.7	2.9	3.1	3.7	
Tourist Studies	23.9	3.3	4.7	2.7	
<i>Hospitality journals</i>					
British Food Journal	6.4	3.1	19.9	3.5	
Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly	43.0	3.8	88.0	4.1	Hospitality experts rated higher**
FIU Hospitality Review	20.7	2.9	59.7	3.2	
Foodservice Research International	7.0	3.2	24.6	3.3	
Gaming Research & Review Journal	9.6	3	20.9	3.1	
Information Technology in Hospitality	15.3	3.2	28.8	3.1	
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	30.6	3.5	70.7	3.6	
International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration	25.2	3.4	49.2	3.5	

Table 4 (continued)

	Tourism experts (<i>N</i> = 314)		Hospitality experts (<i>N</i> = 191)		Difference in quality rating
	% Awareness	Mean quality rating	% Awareness	Mean quality rating	
International Journal of Hospitality Management	40.4	3.7	84.3	4.0	Hospitality experts rated higher**
Journal of College & University Foodservice	6.1	3	27.7	2.9	
Journal of Culinary Science & Technology	4.8	2.7	14.1	2.8	
Journal of Food Products Marketing	5.7	2.7	13.1	2.6	
Journal of Foodservice Business Research	9.6	3.1	40.3	3.3	
Journal of Gambling Studies	9.2	3.2	13.1	2.8	
Journal of Hospitality & Leisure for the Elderly	8.9	3.5	7.9	2.9	
Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing	28.3	3.4	54.5	3.4	
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education	25.2	2.9	61.8	3.2	Hospitality experts rated higher**
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	29.6	3.7	71.2	4.2	Hospitality experts rated higher**
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	22.6	3.3	30.4	3.1	
Journal of Hospitality Financial Management	10.8	3.3	26.7	3.3	
Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports & Tourism	18.5	3	21.5	2.8	
Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports & Tourism Education	21.3	3.1	23.6	3.0	
Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism	14.3	3.2	34.6	3.2	
Journal of Nutrition for the Elderly	4.8	2.9	6.8	2.9	
Journal of the American Dietetic Association	6.1	3.3	24.6	4.0	Hospitality experts rated higher*
Journal of the International Academy of Hospitality Research	10.2	3.3	22.0	3.3	
NACUFS Journal (National Association of College & University Foodservices)	5.7	2.9	25.1	3.1	
Praxis-The Journal of Applied Hospitality Management	10.2	2.5	36.6	2.9	
School Foodservice Research Review	5.1	2.8	14.1	2.9	
The Consortium Journal: Journal of HBCU	6.1	3.2	7.3	2.8	

*Statistically significant differences at $p = .05$.

**Statistically significant differences at $p = .01$.

- the overall rating was derived as a function of both awareness and perceived quality;
- a large set of journals was considered;
- a distinction was made between tourism and hospitality experts; and
- the sample was not bounded geographically or by membership in any organization.

The study revealed that tourism and hospitality academics rate their respective journals along a clear importance continuum based on a combination of awareness levels and perceived quality. Overall, the pattern noted in Tables 2 and 3 was largely consistent, with the leading journal scoring an importance rating of greater than 70 and the three top journals in each field scoring about 60 or more. A close correlation was noted between awareness and perceived quality, indicating

that, as a rule, the better known a journal is, the more likely it is to be seen to be of high quality. The study also revealed the benefits of disaggregating tourism and hospitality academics into their respective sub-populations and having each consider their respective journals discretely. This technique avoided the discounted rating often seen in other studies and, instead, offers a truer picture of the relative overall importance of any single journal to its core field of study.

The findings also suggest that ratings are dynamic, with younger and more junior academics expressing differing opinions than more senior ones. Over time, therefore, the ratings will change as newer journals establish their own reputations. Finally, a cultural dimension also emerged, where respondents who had not published in English-language tourism and hospitality journals consistently offered a higher mean quality

Table 5
Factors influencing the quality rating of tourism journals (N = 314)

Journal name	Mean quality	Differences by years of service	Differences by academic rank	Differences by origin	Differences by ever published in English-language Tourism or Hospitality Journals	Differences by gender
ACTA Turistica	2.7			Asia Pacific rates highest**	Non-published rate higher**	
Anatolia	2.6	6–10 years rate highest, 11+ years rate lowest*			Non-published rate higher**	
Annals of Tourism Research	4.6				Published authors rate higher**	
ASEAN Journal on Hospitality and Tourism	3.1				Non-published rate higher**	
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	3.4				Non-published rate higher**	
Current Issues in Tourism	3.6		Assistant Professors and Lecturers rate highest*			
Event Management	3.1	1–5 years rate highest, 11+ years rate lowest**			Non-published rate higher**	Women rate higher**
Event Tourism	2.9			Asia Pacific rates highest*		
Information Technology & Tourism	3.3	1–5 years rate highest, 11+ years rate lowest*			Non-published rate higher*	Women rate higher**
International Journal of Tourism Research	3.5					
International Travel Law Journal	2.9				Non-published rate higher**	
Journal of Convention & Event Tourism	2.8	11+ years rate lowest, others equal*	Assistant Professors and Lecturers rate highest*		Non-published rate higher**	
Journal of Ecotourism	3.3				Non-published rate higher**	
Journal of Quality Assurance in Tourism & Hospitality	3.0	1–5 years rate highest, 11+ years rate lowest*			Non-published rate higher**	
Journal of Sport Tourism	3.0				Non-published rate higher**	
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	3.8	1–5 years rate highest, 11+ years rate lowest*	Assistant Professors and Lecturers rate highest*		Non-published rate higher**	Women rate higher*
Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism	3.0				Non-published rate higher*	
Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change	3.2	1–5 years rate highest, 11+ years serving lowest*	Researchers/Administrators rate highest**			Women rate higher*
Journal of Tourism Studies	3.3				Non-published rate higher**	Women rate higher*
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	3.6	11+ years rate lowest, others equal*			Non-published rate higher**	
Journal of Travel Research	4.2			North Americans rate highest**	Published authors rate higher**	
Journal of Vacation Marketing	3.1				Non-published rate higher**	Women rate higher*

PASOS-Journal of Tourism and Cultural Heritage Problems of Tourism	2.8		Asia Pacific rates highest*	
Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	2.8	1–5 years rate highest, 11+ years rate lowest*		
Teoros International	3.1	1–5 years rate highest, 11+ years rate lowest*		
The Tourist Review	3.1	1–5 years rate highest, 11+ years rate lowest*	North Americans rate highest*	Women rate higher*
Tourism Analysis	2.8		Assistant Professors and Lecturers rate highest* Assistant Professors and Lecturers rate highest* Assistant Professors and Lecturers and Researchers/Administrators rate highest*	Non-published rate higher**
Tourism and Hospitality Research	3.6			Non-published rate higher**
Tourism Economics	3.4	11+ rate lowest, others equal*		Non-published rate higher**
Tourism Geographies	3.8			Published authors rate higher*
Tourism Management	3.7			Non-published rate higher**
Tourism Recreation Research	4.3	5–10 and 11+ rate highest, 1–5 rate lowest*		Non-published rate higher**
Tourism Research Journal	3.4		Assistant Professors and Lecturers rate highest* Researchers/Administrators rate highest*	Women rate higher*
Tourism Review International	2.9			Non-published rate higher**
Tourism Today	2.6	11+ years rate lowest, others equal*		Non-published rate higher**
Tourism, Culture & Communication	3.3		Researchers/Administrators rate highest*	Women rate higher*
Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal	3.0			Non-published rate higher*
Tourisms Journal	2.9	11+ years rate lowest, others equal*		Non-published rate higher**
Tourist Studies	3.3			Non-published rate higher**

*Statistically significant differences at $p = .05$.

**Statistically significant differences at $p = .01$.

Table 6
Factors influencing the quality rating of hospitality journals ($N = 191$)

Journal name	Mean quality	Differences by years of service	Differences by academic rank	Differences by origin	Differences by ever published in English-language Tourism or Hospitality Journals	Differences by gender
British Food Journal	3.5					
Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly	4.1		Researchers/Administrators rated lowest*		Non-published rated higher*	
FIU Hospitality Review	3.2					
Foodservice Research International	3.3					
Gaming Research & Review Journal	3.1		Assistant Professors and Lecturers rated highest*			
Information Technology in Hospitality	3.1					
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	3.6			Europeans, Asia Pacific rated highest*	Non-published rated higher*	
International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration	3.5				Non-published rated higher*	
International Journal of Hospitality Management	4.0					
Journal of College & University Foodservice	2.9					
Journal of Culinary Science & Technology	2.4					
Journal of Food Products Marketing	2.6					Women rate higher*
Journal of Foodservice Business Research	3.5	6–10 years rate highest*		Asia Pacific rated highest*		
Journal of Gambling Studies	2.8					
Journal of Hospitality & Leisure for the Elderly	2.9					
Journal of Hospitality & Leisure Marketing	3.4					
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education	3.2					
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	4.2				Published authors rated higher**	
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	3.1				Non-published rated higher*	
Journal of Hospitality Financial Management	3.3					
Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports & Tourism	2.8					
Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sports & Tourism Education	3.0		Assistant Professors and Lecturers rated highest*		Non-published rated higher*	
Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism	3.2					
Journal of Nutrition for the Elderly	2.9					
Journal of the American Dietetic Association	4.0					
Journal of the International Academy of Hospitality Research	3.3	6–10 years rate highest, 11+ years rated lowest**		North Americans, Asia Pacific rated highest**	Non-published rated higher*	
NACUFS Journal (National Association of College & University Foodservices)	3.1					
Praxis-The Journal of Applied Hospitality Management	2.9					
School Foodservice Research Review	2.9					
The Consortium Journal: Journal of HBCU	2.8					Women rate higher*

*Statistically significant differences at $p = .05$.
 **Statistically significant differences at $p = .01$.

Tourism Research Journal	24					
The Tourist Review	25					8
Journal of Sport Tourism	26					
Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism	27			17		
Journal of Convention & Event Tourism	28					
Tourism: An International Interdisciplinary Journal	29			21		
ASEAN Journal on Hospitality and Tourism	30		22			
Event Tourism	31					
Journal of Quality Assurance in Tourism & Hospitality	32					
Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	33					
Tourisms Journal	34					
Tourism Today	35					
ACTA Turistica	36					
International Travel Law Journal	37					
Teoros International	38					
PASOS-Journal of Tourism and Cultural Heritage	39					
Problems of Tourism	40					

^aAccording to 'hits' on leisetourism.com; 35 journals listed, including leisure journals.

^b*n* approximately 50 respondents (exact figures not shown); 22 journals listed.

^c*n* approximately 90 respondents from about 40 countries (exact figures not shown); 22 journals listed.

^d*n* = 52 conference delegates at Macau Forum for Graduate Student Research in Tourism and Hong Kong Biennial Conference on the Tourism Industry in Asia; 21 journals listed.

^e*n* = 44 gathered from TTRA membership, AMHA directory of educators and Society of Travel and Tourism Educators membership list; 15 journals listed.

^f*n* = 44 gathered from TTRA membership, AMHA directory of educators and Society of Travel and Tourism Educators membership list; 15 journals listed.

^g*n* = 53 members of CHRIE who were directors of 4-year hospitality programs; 20 journals listed.

^hCitation analysis of five hospitality journals; 53 journals cited 30 or more times.

ⁱ*n* = 52 members of CHRIE who were directors of 4-year hospitality programs; 13 journals listed.

rating than those who had published, with the notable exception of the regarded leaders in the field, where the reverse situation was noted.

While the authors do not pretend that this study presents a definitive rating of our collective academic literature, the global nature of the study, large sample size, inclusiveness of the list of journals considered, and the recognition that tourism and hospitality academics value their own journals differently makes this study the most comprehensive analysis of the literature to date. The authors hope the findings progress the debate about rating tourism and hospitality journals.

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