Guest editorial

1. Editorial note for the special issue on qualitative research in hospitality and tourism management

1.1 Introduction

One has to only look at the many thoughtful articles in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology* (*JHTT*) to see the enormous impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we all know, the virus closed the entire hospitality industry, from guesthouses to resorts and all manner of other tourism destinations and businesses. The technology sector that specializes in the hospitality industry will be a key part of its recovery, and the need for further research into how it can help is clear.

Although the pandemic is the biggest challenge, the industry faces other developments, including changes in information technologies and new trends in how consumers search for, purchase and experience hospitality products today.

This special issue of the journal on the subject of "Qualitative Research in Hospitality and Tourism Management" seeks to help address this urgent need by assembling the work of theorists, researchers, policymakers and practitioners and present the insights they have gleaned from qualitative research.

The collection's papers include the works in the major qualitative traditions of ethnography, phenomenology, in-depth case studies and resulting theories. They emphasize theoretical insights and practical applications of technology, all with convincing evidence to support them. We sought research papers that open new pathways among emerging trends and disciplines, culminating in theories and epistemological advancements in hospitality and tourism management.

We acknowledge the exceptional work of the *JHTT* and its longtime editors. Our role as guest editors was to solicit premium work and to submit it to the well-established, rigorous and yet quick peer-review system. We hope we have assembled exciting and vibrant new perspectives on the expanding edges of hospitality and tourism management thought.

To that end, we encouraged every contributor to work with real-world phenomena rather than with intuitions and hypotheses. They were asked to focus on the major issues that threaten the survival of hospitality businesses, many of them a direct result of the pandemic.

2. Qualitative research approaches in hospitality and tourism studies

The application of qualitative paradigms and methods in hospitality and tourism research is not new, and we would like to highlight the many researchers whose work has used multi-phased mixed methods and designs to develop and validate new scales/instruments with which to measure hospitality and tourism-related concepts.

Notable examples include studies by:

- Kim *et al.* (2010), which used a multi-phased study to develop a method to measure of food motivations of tourists visiting the Southwest US states.
- Omuris (2019), which conducted a multi-phase study to develop the instrument to measure workplace friendship in hospitality organizations.
- Kim *et al.* (2015), which also applied a multi-phased study to develop an instrument to measure the perceived social impacts of hosting large-scale sport tourism events in South Korea.

- Arasli *et al.* (2020), which conducted a multi-phased study to develop and validate an instrument to measure seasonal employee leadership in the hospitality and tourism industry.
- Tung and Ritchie (2011), which explored the dimensions of memorable experiences of tourists through in-depth interviews.
- Tsai *et al.* (2017), which also applied a multi-phased study to develop and validate a way to measure the career anxiety of graduates of hospitality and tourism programs.

A number of other social scientists used qualitative approaches in their evidence-based studies seeking to understand people's behaviors, attitudes and experiences in the context of hospitality and tourism. Many approaches to qualitative studies tend to be flexible and focus on retaining rich meaning when interpreting data. The most commonly used approaches are narrative, phenomenological, participatory action, ethnography and netnography, grounded theory and case study designs. These all share some similarities but emphasize different aims and perspectives because of the demands of the dynamics of the contexts.

2.1 Narrative research design in hospitality and tourism studies
Czarniawska (2004), in defining narrative research, said: "narrative is understood as a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected" (p. 17). In the same vein, Sheng and Chen (2013) conducted an empirical study that used text-narrative analysis to develop the instrument to measure tourist experience and expectations in the context of hospitality and tourism. They also examined how stories are told to understand how participants perceive and make sense of their experiences. Similarly, Tussyadiah *et al.* (2011) used narrative design in destination marketing to assess the effectiveness of tourists' stories as an innovative approach to promoting a destination. Moscardo (2010) highlighted the importance of stories and themes in shaping the tourist experience in his book titled *The Tourism and Leisure Experience*. Mura and Sharif (2017) conducted a systematic literature review and used a qualitative narrative analysis approach to identify all empirical and non-empirical evidence that fits the pre-specified inclusion criteria to answer a particular research question or questions or to test their proposition(s) about the hospitality and tourism industry.

2.2 Phenomenological research design in hospitality and tourism studies
Phenomenological research explains the "common meaning" of a concept of a phenomenon coming from many individuals with their own lived experiences (Creswell and Poth, 2016). Most commonly, this research design is used by theorists, researchers and policymakers and decision-makers to investigate an occurrence to describe and interpret participants' lived experiences. Along the same lines, Kirillova (2018) described the possible applications of phenomenology in hospitality studies to investigate holistic experiences. He also described the different types of phenomenology used in hospitality studies and possible challenges associated with applying phenomenology in hospitality and tourism studies.

In 2014, Robinson *et al.* (2014) conducted a qualitative study in hotels by using the phenomenological approach to explore the shared values and beliefs associated with the occupational commitment of chefs. Similarly, Alfakhri *et al.* (2018) applied an interpretive

phenomenological approach to explore the lived experience of aesthetics of the design of hotel landscapes. Based on their findings, they argued that aesthetics and landscape design can be used as strategic marketing tools in hospitality. Li *et al.* (2021) also used a phenomenological approach to conceptualize consumers' lifestyles and hotel experience to develop a scale with which to measure these two critical aspects of the field of hospitality and the tourism industry.

Vasquez (2014) explored the factors behind employee retention in the hospitality sector by applying a qualitative phenomenological approach to acquire the lived experiences of the hospitality employees in South Florida. Vij *et al.* (2021), in their empirical study, also used interpretative phenomenological analysis to find out the sentiments and recovery of the hospitality industry from the pandemic in the Emirate of Sharjah. Wijesinghe (2009) described the possible applications of expressive phenomenological design in hospitality and tourism studies to gain the real-life experiences of different stakeholders in the discipline of hospitality and tourism.

2.3 Participatory action research design in hospitality and tourism studies
In the qualitative paradigm, Participatory Action Research is a study design in which researchers and participants collaboratively conduct research to drive particular changes that improve existing practices. It is undertaken with the participation of both researchers and participants who want to understand and improve the specific topic by changing the existing practices in which they participate (Baum *et al.*, 2006).

Musarò and Moralli (2019) conducted Participatory Action Research to develop innovative Italian hospitality and tourism practices to promote social coexistence among citizens and newcomers. Perkins *et al.* (2021) used Participatory Action Research techniques in their evidence-based study to demonstrate the business collaboration and cluster formation framework for the destination branding of their region. In the same line, Wang *et al.* (2019) used Participatory Action Research in their empirical study that proposed a six-dimensional framework for implementing internal branding in the hospitality and tourism industry.

2.4 Ethnography/netnography research design in hospitality and tourism studies
Ethnography is the study of shared patterns of the behaviors, beliefs and languages of an entire culture-sharing group (Creswell and Poth, 2016), whereas, netnography is a portmanteau of "internet" and "ethnography" and is online cultural research commonly done in social-media groups or the sites where people of a specific community or group share their views, experiences, etc. (Kozinets *et al.*, 2014).

In the recent studies, netnography was more commonly used than traditional ethnography, particularly in the field of hospitality and tourism management. Whalen (2018) compared the application of traditional ethnography and netnogrpahy in hospitality and tourism studies, arguing that netnography has matured into a full-fledged methodology. Tavakoli and Wijesinghe (2019) conducted a systematic literature review of netnography studies in hospitality and tourism contexts. They found that most of the researchers conducted their studies on Web 2.0. Wu and Pearce (2014) suggested ways to apply netnography in the tourism industry to understand rapid changes in tourist markets, the perspectives of cultural groups and the growth of new markets.

Lugosi (2009) identified institutional and cultural forces that could represent the future of ethnography in hospitality and tourism studies. Hughes (1997) identified the possible applications and key methodological challenges of applying ethnography in

hospitality-research studies. Sandiford and Seymour (2007) discussed the possible application of qualitative data analysis in hospitality studies while applying ethnography to English public houses. Mkono (2013) used netnography to explore the marketing of "authentic African" dining experiences. In another study, Mkono (2013) also used netnography in the reviews of two cultural restaurants to find out the different interpretations of the food. Rageh et al. (2013) applied netnography to exploring the customer experience in Egypt's hospitality and tourism industry. Based on the Quan and Wang structural model of tourist food experience, Mkono, Markwell and Wilson (2013) also used netnography to explore the tourist experience in a chain of restaurants in Zimbabwe.

2.5 Grounded theory research design in hospitality and tourism studies
Corbin and Strauss (2007) stated that a Grounded Theory Study moves beyond description to generate or discover a "unified theoretical explanation" (p. 107) for a process to collect rich data on the subject of an investigation, using the researchers' inclinations, curiosity, inspirations and creativity to develop theories inductively.

Most commonly, researchers conducting qualitative studies used Grounded Theory research design; this was particularly true in the context of hospitality and tourism empirical and non-empirical studies. For example, Mehmetoglu and Altinay (2006) described the importance and application of Grounded Theory to understand how people experience hospitality and tourism. Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2016) used a Grounded Theory approach to investigate enclave tourism in the context of the Mauritius hospitality and leisure industry. Similarly, Kim et al. (2009) used a Grounded Theory approach to get insight into the local food experience and to propose a local-food-consumption model. Their model was based on three constructs that influence local fast-food consumption: motivational factors, demographic factors and psychological factors.

2.6 Case-study research design in hospitality and tourism studies
Yin (2014) defined case-study research design as: "an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (p. 16). In the hospitality sector, Torres and Momsen (2004) used in-depth case-study design to understand the challenges of linking tourism and agriculture in Mexico. Likewise, Bohdanowicz and Zientara (2008) followed the in-depth case-study approach to identify the effects of different corporate social responsibility initiatives in the Scandic Hotels chain. Ioannides and Petersen (2003) also used case-study research design in the context of small and medium tourism enterprises in Denmark to explore the role of innovation activities. Darcy et al. (2010) also followed case-study design to explore accessible tourism and its relationship with triple-bottom-line sustainability. Neuhofer et al. (2015) also used a case-study approach to explore how smart mobile technologies in the hospitality and leisure industry can facilitate individuals' personalized experiences. And Chan and Hawkins (2012) used a case-study approach to identify different factors influencing the formulation and application of environmental management systems in hotels.

Using a qualitative research approach, Çakar and Aykol (2021) conducted a systematic review of the 871 studies published in the leading hospitality and tourism journals from 1974 to 2020. They used Leximancer Software to conduct a thematic analysis and found general mislabeling and misuse of the case-study method in hospitality and tourism studies.

In a nutshell, each qualitative-research approach involves one or more competent data collection techniques. In hospitality and tourism studies, the most common methods used by researchers to collect qualitative data are as follows:

- *Observations* – recording in detailed field notes what individuals have seen, heard or encountered.
- *Interviews* – asking people, in person and in one-on-one conversations, questions about their experiences on the topic being studied.
- *Focus groups* – asking questions and generating discussion about the subject of investigation among a group of people.
- *Surveys* – distributing questionnaires with open-ended questions.
- *Secondary records* – collecting existing data in the form of texts, images and audio and video recordings about the subject of the investigation.

In the interpretivist school of thought, qualitative researchers considered themselves as an instrumental tool in the whole research process because they have to filter the data through their own personal lens based on their theoretical insights and technology. For this reason, when researchers, novice or experienced, write up their qualitative studies, it is important for them to include their own theory and practice of research – i.e. external validity and unit of analysis/sampling, construct validity and measurement, internal validity and design, conclusion validity and analysis – to systematically explain the choices they made on the collection and analysis of data to generate a new theory.

3. The Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology call for special issue to promote qualitative research in hospitality and tourism management

From the contemporary perspective of hospitality and tourism management, researchers and practitioners have been encouraged to use qualitative research in their methodical inquiries to contribute to the journal. Establishing this rationale and communicating it to potential contributors and researchers made this special issue especially interesting and informative because it focuses exclusively on excellence in qualitative research and gives them an outlet in which to publish their high-quality interpretive qualitative studies in the context of hospitality and tourism management.

The new developments in inductive methods are not limited to social sciences and related areas. They are shifting equally into every field of the digital economy, including hospitality and tourism management. We firmly believe that the stipulation of pluralism is evident in this special issue of the journal. Diversity and a unique intersection of qualitative-research approaches and modern methods are evident in these papers. For example, we received studies that used:

- Digital qualitative methods and computer-aided qualitative data analysis.
- Narrative research of personal-experience stories.
- Phenomenology of tourism shared experiences and ethnography to understand the culture, language and beliefs of various geographical areas.
- Organizational ethnography and netnography in fully digital forms to analyze the contents of social media and to put it in the context of local social norms.
- Participatory Action Research to resolve the contemporary issues of society. This included in-depth case-study analysis of single or multiple comparative cases of individuals, groups, tribes, organizations or countries.

- Grounded Theory as a method of developing theories.
- Online interviews and focus-group discussions and data analysis of sound, vision and multimedia.
- Computer-assisted direct observation of human behaviors to analyze words and discover emerging themes and patterns.
- Web content analysis of pictures and documents to develop instruments for measuring hospitality and tourism-related concepts.

4. The papers in this special issue

The *raison d'être* of the journal is to publish up-to-date, high-quality and original research papers that are relevant to the field and insightful. In our special issue, we have published a selection of stimulating articles by well-known scholars, researchers and practitioners. The diverse range of articles reflects Eastern and Western philosophical approaches to the discipline of hospitality and tourism management. We feel that this great variety of studies make substantial contributions to the field of hospitality and tourism management, particularly from the perspective of technology. A comprehensive overview of the published papers is given in the following sections.

4.1 Responding to organizational identity change: ethnographic insights from multinational hotel subsidiaries

Sandra Sun-Ah Ponting conducted qualitative empirical research and rigorously applied organizational ethnography to explore the experience of organizational identity change in multinational hotel subsidiaries. In a three-year, longitudinal study, theoretical and empirical explorations of organizational identity change from subsidiary perspectives were conducted to identify the dynamic and temporal elements of change management in the tourism and hospitality industry.

The author collected data through in-depth interviews, observations, photographs and internal communication materials. She used relevant computational techniques to present interpretive explorations of organizational identity change. Based on empirical evidence, she also suggests areas for future studies.

4.2 Unfolding visual characteristics of social-media communication: reflections of smart tourism destinations

Emel Adamış and Fatih Pınarbaşı, in their qualitative study, unfolded visual characteristics of social-media communication from the perspectives of Destination Marketing/Management Organizations and User Generated Content. They explored this phenomenon within smart destination occurrences by focusing on the visual contents and the mode of communications. The authors aimed to determine the frequency of visual traits of social-media communication that allows them to form parameters through which larger data sets can be observed or to quantify the world around them. For this purpose, they picked up 6,000 posts from Instagram and analyzed them using a netnography design, thematic analysis, visual analysis, object detection and text mining. They proposed a visual content framework for evaluating content as a whole, highlighting the importance of using integrated methods as well as revealing the characteristics of visual communication in terms of the projected image and the perceived image of smart destinations.

In the same vein, Emel Adamis and Faith Pinarbasi answer their context-oriented questions based on empirical evidence. The questions they explored include who their

customers are, what issues or problems do they face, where do they need to focus their attention, and how problems or issues might be addressed.

4.3 Evolution of hospitality and tourism technology research from the journal of hospitality and tourism technology: a computer-assisted qualitative-data analysis

This paper by Minwoo Lee looked at the existing state of technological support for qualitative studies in the field of hospitality and tourism management. He used computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDA), using Leximancer Software, on the recent studies published in *JHTT*, to explore the new trends and thematic concepts of hospitality and tourism technology research that emerged after the radical changes in information and communication technologies in the industry. Minwoo Lee concluded that technology helps various aspects of qualitative research, e.g. data collection, preparation, transcription, bibliographic organization, systematic literature reviews and data handling and analysis.

4.4 Developing a strategic viability-fit model of mobile technology adoption in hotels

Hyunjeong Spring Han, Jungwoo Lee, Bo Edvardsson and Rohit Verma identified the opportunities and challenges involved in adopting mobile technologies in the hotel industry. They contemplated mobile technology that is supposed to offer innovative solutions to deal with daily expected or unexpected challenges and to provide new opportunities for both hotels and customers' positive perceptions. To validate this proposition, the authors collected qualitative data through focus-group interviews and used a Grounded Theory approach. Based on the empirical evidence, they developed a Strategic Viability-Fit Model to analyze a hotel's strategic positioning and provide a framework for the successful adoption and implementation of mobile technologies in hotels.

4.5 A picture is worth a thousand words: a photo-thematic analysis of city hospitality in municipal popular reporting

In this paper, Carla Del Gesso made a unique contribution to the mainstream literature of hospitality and tourism management. She explored visual disclosures of information concerning hospitality from the perspective of municipal government. By using an innovative qualitative-research approach, this paper explored and captured municipal information through a photo-thematic analysis of 495 photographs contained in a sample of 30 US municipal popular reporting documents. Del Gesso identified multiple key types of information in municipal government disclosures available to local citizens and visitors. This information was presented pictorially or ornamentally and included information on environmental and landscape resources, services, infrastructure, safety, hospitality facilities, activities, events, culture, history, sociability and innovation. The empirical evidence of Del Gesso's study indicated how significant pictures are as a viable tool for supplementing information disclosures to the general public and for attracting more visitors.

4.6 Exploring post-pandemic struggles and recoveries in the rural tourism based on Chinese situation: a perspective from the Institute Analysis and Development framework

This qualitative study was conducted by Haiying Pan, Meihong Chen and Wen-Lung Shiau to explore post-pandemic tussles and recovery of Chinese rural hospitality and tourism. In this paper, the authors used the Institute Analysis and Development framework to analyze the behaviors of various stakeholders' countryside hospitality and tourism experiences and to alleviate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study used different levels of coding on the textual data gathered through in-depth interviews and work reports of the rural hospitality and

tourism communities of China. They ascertained that critical elements are quite consistent with an IDA framework and concluded that it might become a source of post pandemic recovery of the Chinese countryside hospitality and tourism localities.

4.7 Boosting the pre-purchase experience through virtual reality. Insights from the cruise industry

Michele Simoni, Annarita Sorrentino, Daniele Leone and Andrea Caporuscio conducted an empirical study using a qualitative-exploratory approach to understand tourists' pre-purchase experiences through virtual reality in the context of the cruise industry. The main focus of this paper was to explore technology-based tourist insights, such as virtual reality, and customers' pre-purchase knowledge. In this study, the authors concluded that cruise companies might need to pay attention to new technology that can be used to improve the quality of tourists' trips. They conducted an in-depth case study to identify the critical factors in which virtual reality contributed to beefing up tourists' pre-purchase experience. The authors analyzed virtual catalogues, which is consistent with the Mediterranean Shipping Co.'s methodical approach, to develop their own perspective on their subject. They concluded with discussions of the significant theoretical and practical implications that arose from their research.

4.8 Determination of managerial resourcefulness in the Turkish hospitality industry: a Grounded Theory study

This purpose of this paper by Aslı Ersoy and Rüya Ehtiyar was to inform those in the hospitality industry about how the industry functions in Turkey. The authors' inductive research approach used Grounded Theory to analyze data from the Turkish hospitality industry. The authors explored the theoretical understandings of managerial resourcefulness in Turkish culture, particularly in the hospitality industry. They conducted semi-structured interviews at five-stars hotels. The collected data was analyzed with NVivo 10 qualitative data analysis software. Based on the data findings, they identified the critical determinants for managerial levels and developed their theoretical perspectives specifically for Turkish hospitality but also the general tourism industry.

4.9 Geocaching in Texas state parks: a technology readiness analysis

Birendra KC and Xi Y. Leung used a qualitative-study design to explore the application of the triangle model of technology and the technology readiness index, as they relate to geocaching in Texas state parks. The study used thematic analysis to derive insights from semi-structured interviews of state park officials. Thematically, they identified three types of interactions; park-visitor, visitor-technology and park-technology. Based on their assessment of interactions, the findings suggested that Texas state parks fall within the "Avoiders" stage of technology readiness. They concluded that officials should have a low level of optimism and innovation and a high level of discomfort and insecurity about geocaching technology.

4.10 Assessing technology adoption practices in Chinese theme parks: text mining and sentiment analysis

Tingting Zhang, Bin Li, Ady Milman and Nan Hua used text mining and sentiment analysis techniques on customers' online reviews to examine technology adoption practices in Chinese theme parks. They analyzed a total of 65,518 reviews of 490 Chinese theme parks. They discovered that supporting and experiential technologies

are the two major dimensions of technology applications in theme parks. The groundbreaking findings of this study provide substantial practical implications to the theme park practitioners and tourism experts to improve customer experience by providing high technology solutions.

5. Guidelines for effective qualitative research writing

After presenting the overview of the papers published in this special issue, we would like to make some suggestions for the best ways to write qualitative research papers. Obviously, it requires critical skill to convey a paper's vantage-point or perspective through the "logic," "emotional connection with viewpoint," and "authenticity and credibility" that are necessary to engage and influence the reader. Writing compellingly about qualitative research always demands that the authors obey the edicts to "write to understand and write to be understood" and convey the researchers' curiosity about the field of inquiry. Writing purposefully and convincingly is essential when producing persuasive manuscripts aimed at audiences, such as decision-makers and policymakers or practitioners who are less conversant with qualitative-research studies.

Our experience throughout preparing this special issue demonstrated the number of elements that are the bare bones requirements to promote the best writing styles on qualitative analysis to capture the "truth" or "to find reality and develop perspective" on the topic. We believe that researchers, whether novice or experienced, should include in their writing certain elements necessary to convey the process of their discovery and to advocate for their conclusions .For example:

- One or more theme (logic) – the key issues, concepts, questions and propositions to identify as relevant and interesting.
- An order to convey the emotional connection with a viewpoint of both the pre-empirical and empirical phases of qualitative study. It is important to set out your argument in stages and to break it down into chunks manageable for the targeted audience.
- Linkages, such as authenticity and credibility). How do you help the readers and audiences find their way through the pre-empirical and empirical phases of your qualitative study?

Qualitative researchers might also want to follow a structure in their writing that could help the investigators present their key argument/case more explicitly and in a more easily understandable way for all readers. The following steps should be considered:

- Choose a topic for qualitative study, which could be selected from daily life or societal issues and then narrowed down into the particular field to which you intend to contribute something new. For this purpose, researchers might need to generate ideas by homing in on their own curiosity, creativity and inspiration. They also might explore their options with an eye toward practicalities.
- Include a literature review section of the manuscript, which should provide proof of scholarship and reflect the researchers' ability to criticize earlier studies constructively. For example, by exploring what others have contributed to the area of researchers' interest and by highlighting what is already known, they can identify research gaps and present a comprehensive review of the proposition and its context.
- Choose context-oriented study question(s)/proposition(s) that reflect the deficiencies in the existing state of knowledge and that reveal the researchers' philosophical assumptions and values about the subject of the investigation. Then use the appropriate qualitative

research design (e.g. ethnography, case study or any other design). For this determination, standard steps should be followed. To conduct case-study research, follow the five components of the design proposed by the well-known methodologist Robert K. Yin.

- Collect the data, through interviews, focus-group discussions, pictures, document reviews, social media, etc., and proceed to apply to it thematic analysis, content analysis, Grounded Theory, discourse analysis, etc. Then consider applying the standard steps of a particular approach, e.g. the six steps proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), for the thematic analysis of qualitative data.

- Apply a CAQDA tool, e.g. Leximancer, QSR NVivo, MAXQDA, ATLAS.ti, etc. This will help rigorously conceptualize the ground-breaking findings with more detailed and visualized ways to show the substantial contributions of your research.

- Quote statements, set off with quote marks, to present significant findings. They might be from the transcribed data of interviews or focus-group discussions.

- Diagram the final model to depict the new theory.

- Present the narrative structure of the study in the conclusions, driven by the qualitative empirical findings.

- Finally, highlight possible future directions for validating the findings or extending the field of inquiry.

6. Conclusions

The quantitative research paradigm was dominant until the late 20th century for conducting scientific research in the hard and soft sciences. At the end of 20th and start of 21st century, the qualitative research paradigm gained significant attention among theorists, researchers, practitioners and policymakers and decision-makers due to the dynamism of the corporate world and the fact that the drawbacks of quantitative research became more apparent. For studying the unique data from the social reality of people's experiences and beliefs – the idiosyncrasies of humankind – the qualitative research paradigm is far more effective.

JHTT is dedicated to understanding human behavior and it stresses the subjective aspects of human activity. It works to show that the qualitative paradigm focuses on the meaning, rather than the measurement, of social phenomena in the context of hospitality and tourism industry.

The hospitality and tourism technology field may need to expand the horizons of its research. As mentioned earlier, COVID-19 not only shook the industry but also offers fertile ground and challenges for qualitative methodologies. This special issue has worked to present a range of qualitative research, hopefully contributing to the dynamic discipline of hospitality and tourism management.

The journal has benefited from rich and diverse research traditions from multiple disciplines that have addressed a huge variety of important topics. The scholarly underpinnings of this special issue and the embedded academic values of the journal's longtime editors have set the stage for it to broaden its scope and become the leading journal centered on inductive theories and qualitative empirical research.

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