Mapping Research Trends in Indian Homestays: A Bibliometric Analysis (2020–2025)

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Abstract

The Indian homestay sector has emerged as a significant component of alternative tourism, offering authentic, localized, and sustainable travel experiences. This study employs bibliometric analysis to examine research trends, publication patterns, and thematic developments in homestay literature from 2020 to 2025. Using the Scopus database, the study identifies key authors, journals, institutions, and research themes that have shaped homestay discourse. The findings highlight a growing academic focus on sustainability, digital transformation, consumer behaviour, and post-pandemic recovery strategies in homestay research.

The analysis reveals a consistent rise in scholarly contributions, with increasing interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers. Citation impact indicates that studies focusing on eco-tourism, service quality, and technology-driven marketing strategies have gained significant traction. Co-authorship networks and keyword linkages further demonstrate an evolving research landscape, emphasizing AI-driven pricing models, blockchain applications, and smart tourism innovations.

This study contributes to the systematic mapping of homestay research, identifying knowledge gaps and suggesting future directions. The insights provide valuable implications for academics, policymakers, and industry stakeholders, guiding sustainable growth and innovation in the Indian homestay sector.

Keywords: Homestays, Bibliometric Analysis, Sustainability, Digital Transformation, Consumer Behaviour

Introduction

Hospitality is simply an opportunity to show love and care" – this quote by Julia Child resonates strongly with the essence of the homestay sector, a rapidly growing segment within India's hospitality and tourism industry. Over the last decade, the Indian homestay sector has undergone significant changes propelled by dynamic consumer behaviours, government initiatives, and the increasing demand for experiential travel. Understanding the research trends in this domain is crucial for academics, regulatory authorities and tourism industry leaders to navigate its future trajectory effectively. Given their economic, socio-cultural, and environmental significance, it is essential to systematically analyse the research trends in the Indian homestay sector to understand its evolution and emerging themes.

The global travel and accommodation sector has long been a major contributor to economic growth and employment. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2020) reports that, the global economy saw a 10.2% contribution from the tourism industry with 10.6% of total employment share before the COVID-19 pandemic. India, known for its diverse cultural and natural attractions, has positioned itself as a key player in this sector. Among the various accommodation options, homestays have gained significant popularity as travellers seek authentic, localized, and immersive experiences. Homestays, defined as privately owned accommodations where travellers stay with local hosts, offer a personalized alternative to conventional hotels. They cater to niche markets Encompassing nature-based tourism, historical tourism, and village tourism. The authorities in India has actively promoted homestay initiatives through policies such as the "Incredible India Bed & Breakfast Scheme" and state-level incentives.

As a quantitative research technique, bibliometric analysis is extensively utilized to assess academic publications It provides insights into research trends, influential studies, and knowledge gaps (Zupic & Čater, 2015). This method is particularly useful for tracking research progress, identifying leading contributors, mapping conceptual themes, and guiding future research. Several scholars have examined the broader hospitality and tourism sector using bibliometric analysis (Merigó et al., 2020; Mulet-Forteza et al., 2019). However, limited studies specifically focus on the homestay sector in India. Previous research has explored topics such as consumer behavior, sustainable tourism, service quality, and the impact of digitalization on hospitality services (Leong et al., 2021; Sharma et al., 2021). Recent studies have also emphasized the role of social media, customer reviews, and online travel agencies (OTAs) in shaping consumer perceptions of homestays.

Despite these contributions, gaps remain in understanding the homestay sector's research landscape, particularly in India. Existing studies primarily focus on general hospitality trends rather than sector-specific developments. Additionally, there is a need to explore how factors such as sustainability, authenticity, digital transformation, and post-pandemic recovery influence homestays. The key gaps identified include a lack of focused bibliometric studies, limited exploration of emerging trends such as Airbnb's influence and sustainability, and the absence of theoretical integration in homestay research. This study looks forward to analyzing keywords such as homestays, bibliometric analysis, research trends, sustainability, consumer behavior, digital transformation, rural tourism, experiential travel, and government policies. These keywords will help map the research landscape and identify dominant themes in this discipline

This research seeks to examine trends in publications and their citation influence in Indian homestay research from 2020 to 2025, identify key themes and emerging research areas in homestay studies, examine top researchers, high-impact journals, and major academic institutions contributing to homestay literature, and provide recommendations for future research directions in the Indian homestay sector. In summary, this research adds to the expanding body of knowledge on Indian homestays by employing a bibliometric approach to map research trends, identify knowledge gaps; while highlighting potential avenues for future research, this study offers a holistic perspective on the academic domain surrounding the Indian homestay sector and its role in the broader hospitality and tourism sector.

Research Synthesis
This study will explore the existing body of research on homestays, focusing on key themes such as sustainability, consumer behaviour, digital transformation, and government policies. It will also assess the contribution of homestays to the expansion of rural tourism and experiential travel, as well as the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on this domain. This analysis will identify existing research gaps in current research and set the stage for the bibliometric analysis.

The Indian homestay sector has gained significant attention in recent years due to its potential to offer authentic, localized, and immersive travel experiences. However, despite its growing popularity, there is a lack of systematic research that maps the academic contributions and trends in this domain. Existing studies primarily focus on broader hospitality and tourism trends, with limited attention given to sector-specific developments in homestays. Key gaps include the absence of focused bibliometric studies, limited exploration of emerging trends such as the influence of platforms like Airbnb, and the integration of theoretical frameworks in homestay research. Additionally, The role of sustainable development and digital innovation in shaping the homestay sector, particularly in the context of post-pandemic recovery, remains an underexplored area of research.

1. The primary goals of this research include
2. **Investigate publication trends and citation impact** in Indian homestay research from 2020 to 2025, providing insights into the growth and influence of academic contributions in this field.
3. **Identify key themes and emerging research areas** in homestay studies, such as sustainability, consumer behaviour, digital transformation, and government policies, to understand the evolving focus of researchers.
4. **Examine the most influential authors, journals, and institutions** contributing to homestay literature, highlighting the leading contributors and their impact on the field.
5. **Provide recommendations for future research directions** in the Indian homestay sector, addressing unexplored areas in existing research and suggesting scope for further exploration.

Method Approach
This study applies bibliometric methods to analyse scholarly developments in the field in the Indian homestay sector from 2020 to 2025.This method quantitatively examines the structure and citation influence of scientific literature by analysing publication patterns, citation networks, and keyword co-occurrences (Zupic & Čater, 2015). This study follows a structured process, including data extraction, filtering, and analysis of bibliographic information sourced extracted from Scopus, a globally recognized database renowned for its broad coverage of scholarly literature. (Norris & Oppenheim, 2007).

The study begins with a keyword-based search in the Scopus database using terms such as "homestays," "bibliometric analysis," "research trends," "sustainability," "consumer behaviour," and "digital transformation" to retrieve relevant research articles. The search is refined by applying filters for publication years (2020-2025), language (English), and document type (articles). The collected dataset is then subjected to bibliometric analysis using Biblioshiny and VOSviewer, two widely used tools for analysing publication trends and mapping research networks (Van Eck & Waltman, 2014).

The bibliometric analysis is performed across multiple dimensions. First, publication trends are assessed by examining yearly count of published articles, identifying leading journals with the highest output, along with citation analysis

patterns over time. Second, author and institutional productivity are evaluated by recognizing the leading authors in citations, leading universities and major collaborative networks. Third, keyword analysis is conducted to determine thematic trends and evolving research interests in the homestay sector. Keyword co-occurrence networks are created to visualize research clusters and thematic relationships.

One of the critical components of this study is citation analysis, which evaluates the influence of publications by measuring citation frequency and identifying highly cited works. Additionally, co-authorship analysis is conducted to understand collaboration networks among researchers in the field (Sainaghi & Baggio, 2020). Finally, thematic evolution is explored by dividing the study period into distinct timeframes to track shifts in research focus over time.
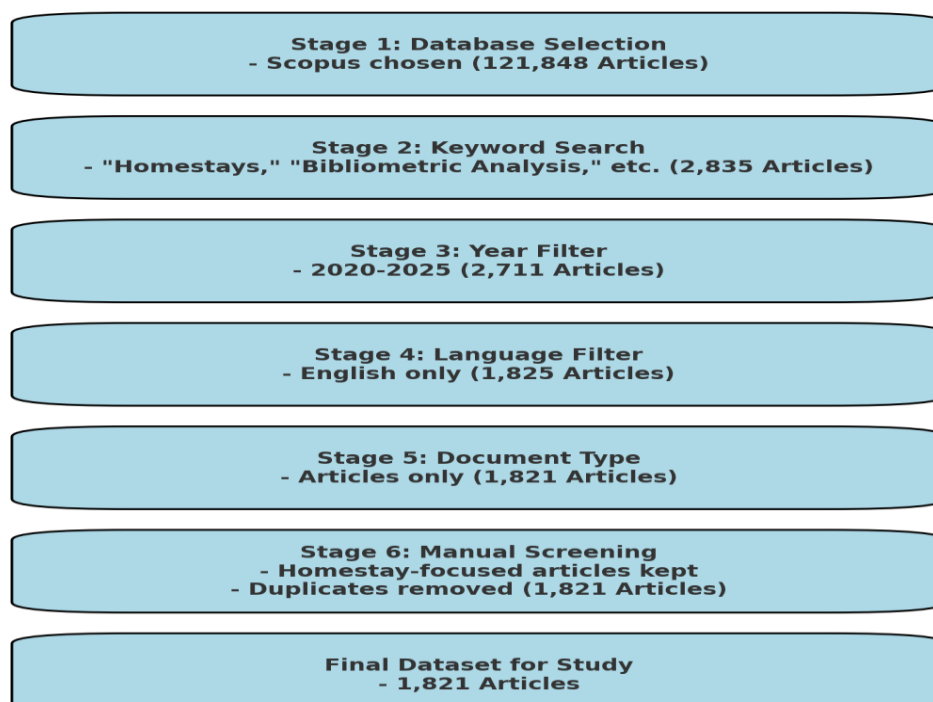
The primary limitation of this methodology is its dependence on Scopus, a database that, although extensive, could exclude certain relevant studies, particularly those published in non-indexed journals or regional sources. Furthermore, bibliometric analysis does not provide qualitative insights into the content of studies, necessitating supplementary qualitative reviews for deeper understanding. Despite these limitations, the methodological approach adopted in this research establishes a strong foundation for assessing the academic Indian domain Studies on homestays and identifying key trends that shape its development.

Article Selection and Data Filtering

To uphold the dataset's validity and contextual relevance, a methodical process was followed for shortlisting the articles. Various sources, such as Cross Ref, Google Scholar, and Web of Science, were taken into consideration, Scopus was chosen due to its comprehensive indexing and reliable citation monitoring trends in sociocultural research disciplines (Norris & Oppenheim, 2007). Web of Science has been criticized for insufficient data coverage in social sciences, while Google Scholar, despite its vast repository, lacks stringent quality control and often presents inconsistencies in metadata (Jacso, 2008; Bar-Ilan, 2008). To refine the search, multiple keyword queries, including "homestays," "experiential travel," and "alternative accommodations," were initially used, retrieving a large number of documents (Fig 1). Filters were applied to limit results to articles from 2020 to 2025, English-language publications, and peer-reviewed journal articles. Further manual screening ensured that only studies specifically addressing homestays were included, eliminating irrelevant or duplicate records. This systematic filtering process resulted in a final dataset that provides a focused and high-quality foundation for bibliometric analysis in the Indian homestay sector.

Figure 1: Protocol for Article Retrieval and Evaluation

Article Selection Process for Homestay Research

Stage 1: Database Selection
- Scopus chosen (121,848 Articles)

Stage 2: Keyword Search
- "Homestays," "Bibliometric Analysis," etc. (2,835 Articles)

Stage 3: Year Filter
- 2020-2025 (2,711 Articles)

Stage 4: Language Filter
- English only (1,825 Articles)

Stage 5: Document Type
- Articles only (1,821 Articles)

Stage 6: Manual Screening
- Homestay-focused articles kept
- Duplicates removed (1,821 Articles)

Final Dataset for Study
- 1,821 Articles

The selected articles used in this research are summarized in table 1, analysing the bibliometric trends in Indian homestay research. Between 2020 and 2025, a total of 1,821 articles were published. These papers were authored by 3,240 researchers, with 218 The dataset included 218 single-author papers and 3,022 collaboratively written publications. Based on data from the Scopus repository, the analysis indicated an average of 0.562 publications per researcher, with a total of 4,860 author appearances. Each document received an average of 6.95 citations, while the study observed an authorship pattern of 1.85 contributors per study and 2.7 joint researchers per publication, resulting in a cooperation metric of 2.35. Additionally, the study identified 4,932 distinct author keywords, reflecting key research themes such as sustainability, digital transformation, and consumer behaviour in homestays.

**Table 1: Summary of Selected Articles from the Database**

Parameter	Value
Study Period	2020 to 2025
Total Published Articles	1,821
Total Number of Authors	3,240
Single-Author Publications	218
Multi-Author Publications	3,022
Articles per Author	0.562
Total Author Contributions	4,860
Unique Keywords Identified	4,932
Average Citations per Article	6.95
Average Contributors per Publication	1.85
Average Joint Contributors per Study	2.7
Collaborative Research Index	2.35

This data presents a thorough examination of the academic landscape surrounding homestay research in India, showcasing the teamwork-driven approach in scholarly work and the dynamic evolution of key themes in the field

Review of Compiled Research Materials

The database search retrieved a total of 1,821 articles. published between 2020 and 2025, as summarized in Table 1. To gain deeper insights into publication trends, Table 2 presents key indicators such as overall citations (TC), average citations per study, annual citation rate, and referenceable years. This analysis helped in understanding the impact and relevance of research outputs. Additionally, the research analysed yearly scholarly output to assess the year-wise publication trends. The data illustrated in Figure 2 reveals a consistent rise in research output, with the maximum number of articles recorded published in 2025 and the lowest in 2020.

Figure 2: Annual Publication Trends in Homestay Research (2020-2025)
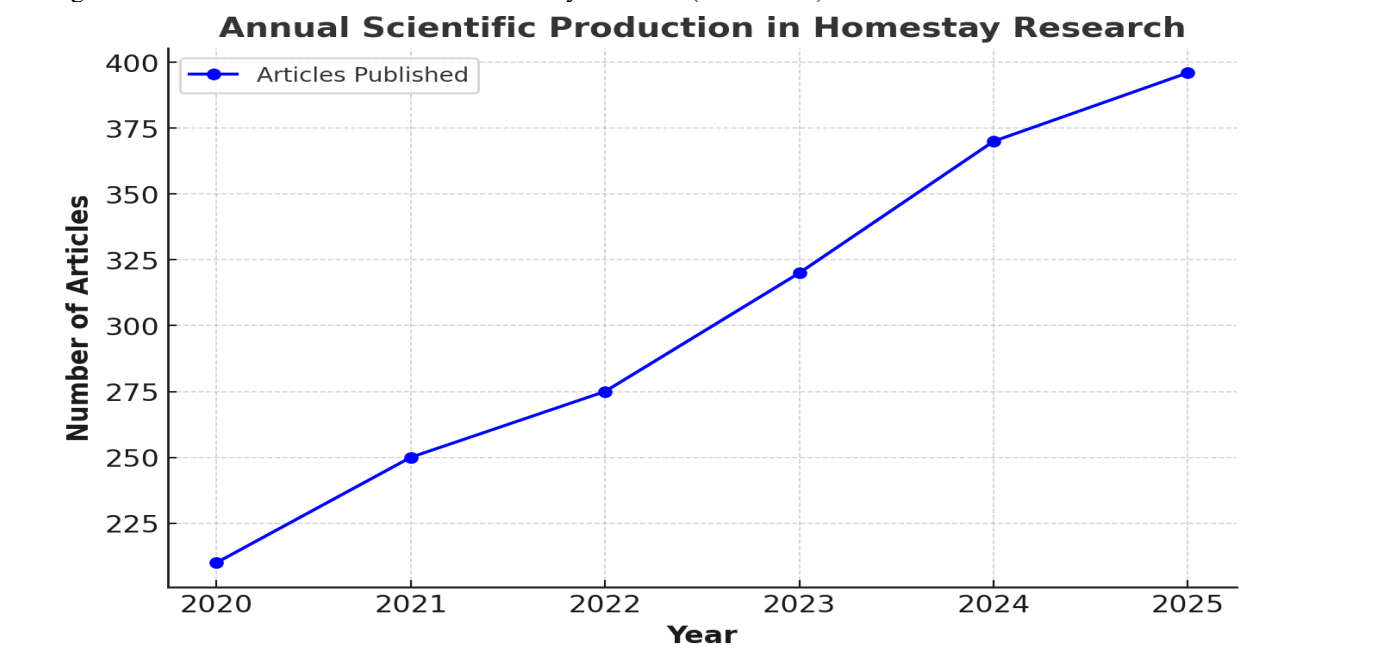
Trends in Publications and Citations Over the Years

Figure 2 illustrates the yearly publication trends from 2020 to 2025. The total count of publications published fluctuated during the initial years but demonstrated steady growth across different periods The maximum research output recorded in the year 2025, while the lowest publication count was observed in 2020. This trend indicates an increasing academic interest in homestay research. The bibliometric analysis of the Scopus database further revealed that recent scholarly publications obtained higher citation counts compared to earlier publications in earlier years. The findings indicated that homestay research articles collectively received 13,110 citations, In 2023, citations peaked at 1,241, whereas 2020 recorded the fewest and 110, respectively.

Table 2: Citation and Publication Overview in Homestay Research

Metric	Value
Study Period	2020-2025
Total Articles	1,821
Total Citations (TC)	13,110
Average Citations per Article	6.95
Average Citations per Year	2.78
Citable Years	6
Most Cited Year	2023 (1,241 Citations)
Least Cited Year	2020 (110 Citations)

The findings suggest that homestay research has experienced significant growth in the last several years, with a growing count of publications and citations reflecting its increasing significance in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Most Productive Journals in Homestay domain

Data from the Scopus database were evaluated to determine the most influential journals contributing to homestay research. Table 3 lists the 10 most prominent journals publishing the highest volume of publications in this domain. "Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management" emerged as the journal with the highest output, featuring 68 articles, followed by "Tourism Recreation Research" with 31 articles. The "International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Systems" contributed 29 articles, while "Sustainability" and "Current Issues in Tourism" also made significant contributions. These findings indicate the increasing scholarly attention toward homestay research in the field of tourism and hospitality management

Table 3: Top 10 High-Output Journals in Homestay Studies

Rank	Journal Name	Articles Published
1	Annals of Tourism Research	70
2	International Journal of Tourism Cities	32
3	Sustainability	31
4	International Journal of Tourism Research	30
5	Current Issues in Tourism	25
6	Journal of Ecotourism	24
7	Tourism Management	23
8	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	22
9	Consumer Behaviour in Tourism and Hospitality	21
10	International Journal of Tourism Policy	20

Most Cited Journals in Homestay Research

A bibliometric study was carried out to determine the top 10 journals by citation count, offering insights into the most influential academic sources contributing to homestay research. Table 4 presents these leading journals based on citation impact, reflecting their role in shaping academic discourse on homestays.

The "International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management" emerged as the leading journal in citations, garnering 1,060 citations from 19 articles, highlighting its critical contributions to hospitality and tourism studies. This journal has consistently published high-impact research on themes such as consumer behaviour in homestays, sustainable business practices, and digital transformation in hospitality operations.

Following closely, "Tourism Management" secured the second position with 734 citations, reinforcing its standing as a leading platform for research on tourism-related accommodations. Studies published in this journal have extensively

explored the economic and cultural implications of homestays, along with tourism policies and travellers' evolving preferences for alternative lodging options.

The "Journal of Travel Research", with 357 citations, and "Sustainability", with 344 citations, also ranked among the most cited sources, demonstrating their significance in advancing knowledge on sustainable tourism practices and their integration within the homestay sector. Research in these journals has particularly focusing on the significance of nature-based tourism, community-driven tourism growth, and responsible travel behaviours in shaping homestay business models.

Other prominently cited journals, like the " Consumer Behavior in Tourism and Hospitality " and "Annals of Tourism Research", have played a substantial role in covering aspects such as guest satisfaction in homestays, the competitive landscape of alternative accommodations, and the technological innovations driving the industry forward.

Overall, the citation analysis indicates that journals specializing in hospitality, tourism, and sustainability studies have been instrumental in advancing homestay research. The prominence of these journals suggests a growing scholarly interest in homestays as a viable alternative to traditional lodging, their role in promoting local economies, and their alignment with global sustainability goals. Future research is likely to continue leveraging these platforms to explore emerging topics such as digital marketing strategies for homestays, post-pandemic recovery trends, and how artificial intelligence affects guest experiences

Table 4: Most Cited Journals in Homestay Research

Rank	Journal Name	Articles	Citations
1	Consumer Behavior in Tourism and Hospitality	19	1,060
2	International Journal of Tourism Research	20	734
3	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	14	357
4	Sustainability	68	344
5	International Journal of Tourism Policy	19	288
6	Current Issues in Tourism	11	283
7	Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology	15	197
8	Journal of Ecotourism	14	195
9	Journal of Travel Research	12	194
10	Benchmarking	8	138

Most Productive Authors in Homestay Research

The analysis identified the most prolific contributors to homestay research considering their total published works and citation impact. Table 5: Most Productive Authors in Homestay Research presents the top authors who have significantly shaped the discourse on homestays, with Mahusud khagija,Al hamad, and Metersky Kateryna merging as the highest-yielding scholars, contributing 21, 19, and 15 articles, respectively. Among them, Mahusud khagija registered the greatest number of citations (760), reflecting the substantial influence of their research. The study also examined co-authorship linkages, revealing strong collaborative networks among leading scholars.

Figure 4: Author Keywords Linkages during 2020-2025 visualizes these relationships, showcasing clusters of authors working on sustainability, digital transformation, and consumer behaviour in homestays. The interdisciplinary nature of homestay research is evident from these connections, as experts from tourism, hospitality management, and environmental sciences collaborate to explore emerging challenges and opportunities in the field.

Additionally, the rise in multi-authored publications suggests a shift toward team-based research rather than individual contributions, indicating greater academic collaboration and knowledge exchange. As the homestay sector continues to evolve, these author networks will likely expand, fostering cross-disciplinary research and strengthening the global academic discourse on alternative accommodation models.
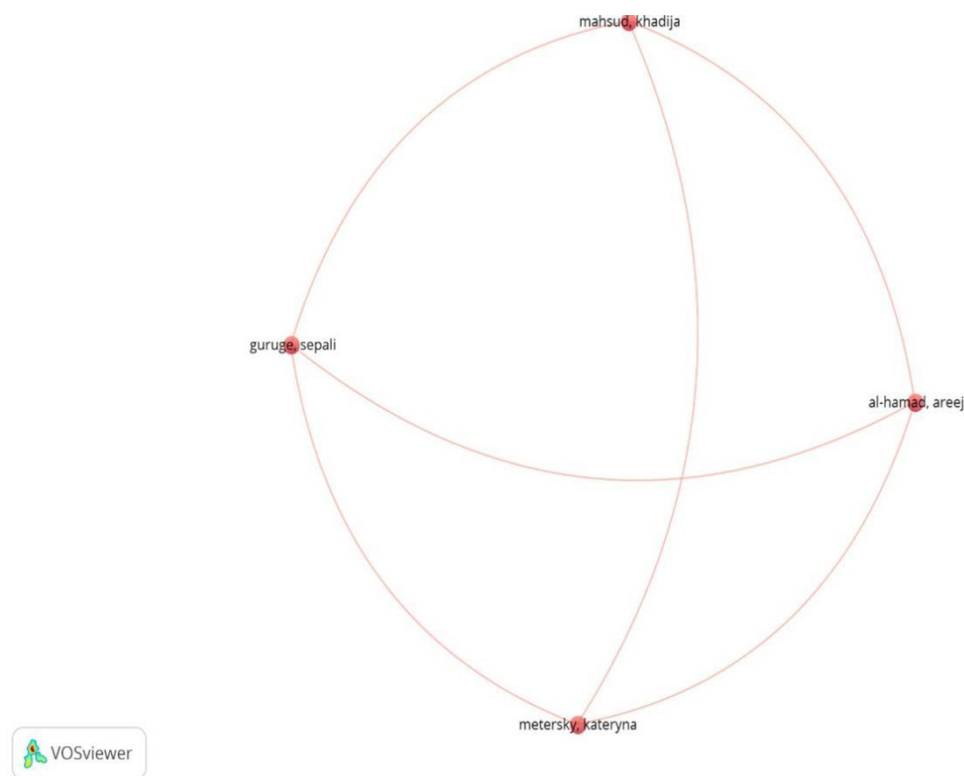
Figure 4: Dynamics of Author Keywords (2020-2025)

Table 5: Most Productive Authors in Homestay Research

Position	Researcher	Publications	h-index	m-quotient	g-index	Citations
1	Guruge. S	24	8	0.40	13	198
2	Al. Hamad	17	7	0.50	13	185
3	Mahusud Khagija	16	7	0.44	16	760
4	Al. Hamad	14	10	2.50	14	420
5	Sharma P	14	6	0.55	11	143

Leading Institutions in Homestay Research

An institutional analysis revealed the top-performing institutions in India contributing to homestay research. Table 6 lists the top 10 institutions based on the number of publications. Christ University Bangalore ranked first with 65 published articles, followed by Lovely Professional University with 44 articles and Jamia Millia Islamia with 40 articles. Other notable institutions include Amity University and Hemavati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University, which have also made significant contributions to homestay research.

Table 6: Leading Institutions in Homestay Research

Rank	Institution	Articles
1	Christ University Bangalore	65
2	Lovely Professional University	44
3	Jamia Millia Islamia	40
4	Amity University	38
5	Hemvati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University	36

Leading Research Publications

Table 7 showcases the most cited research studies in homestay tourism, focusing on sustainability and community empowerment. The top-ranked paper by Khamsavay Pasanchay et al. (2021) examines the role of community-based tourism homestays in promoting Sustainable Development Goals through a comprehensive sustainable livelihood framework. With 199 citations, this study significantly influences sustainable tourism discourse

The second paper by Zain ul Abedin Janjua et al. (2021) provides a systematic review of rural homestays and their contribution to sustainability in tourism. This research has been cited 90 times, highlighting its importance in shaping sustainable practices in rural homestay tourism. These influential studies underscore the pivotal role of homestay tourism in fostering sustainable community development and environmental stewardship.

Table 7: Leading Publications in Homestay Research (2020 -2025)

Position	Research Title	Authors	Publication Year	Source Journal	Citation Count
1	Community-based tourism homestays' capacity to advance the Sustainable Development Goals: A holistic sustainable livelihood perspective	Khamsavay Pasanchay et al.	2021	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	199
2	A systematic literature review of rural homestays and sustainability in tourism	Zain ul Abedin Janjua et al.	2021	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	90

**Most Cited Sources in Homestay Research**

The study uncovered the most frequently mentioned references contributing to homestay research. able 8: Leading Reference Journals in Homestay Research showcases the ten most influential publications based on citation volume. "Tourism Management" holds the highest number of citations at 2,677, followed closely by "Annals of Tourism Research" and "Journal of Travel Research". These findings highlight the key sources that have significantly shaped the discourse on homestays and their related themes, such as sustainability, digital transformation, and consumer behaviour.

A closer examination of Figure 6: Most Cited Journals within the Time Frame reveals how these journals have contributed to research output and academic influence in the homestay sector from 2020 to 2025. The dominance of "Tourism Management" and "Annals of Tourism Research" underscores the strong academic emphasise the financial, societal, and ecological aspects of homestay accommodations, particularly within alternative tourism models. Additionally, sources such as "International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management" and "Sustainability" have been instrumental in progressing research on homestay service quality, eco-tourism, and technology-driven innovations.

The citation patterns visualized in Figure 6 further emphasize the growing scholarly interest in homestays and indicate a shift toward sustainable and digitally enhanced accommodation practices. As the field continues to evolve, these leading journals will likely remain central to future research directions in homestay tourism.
Figure 6: Most cited journals within the time frame

Table 8: Most Cited Sources in Homestay Research

Most Cited Sources in Homestay Research (Figure 6)
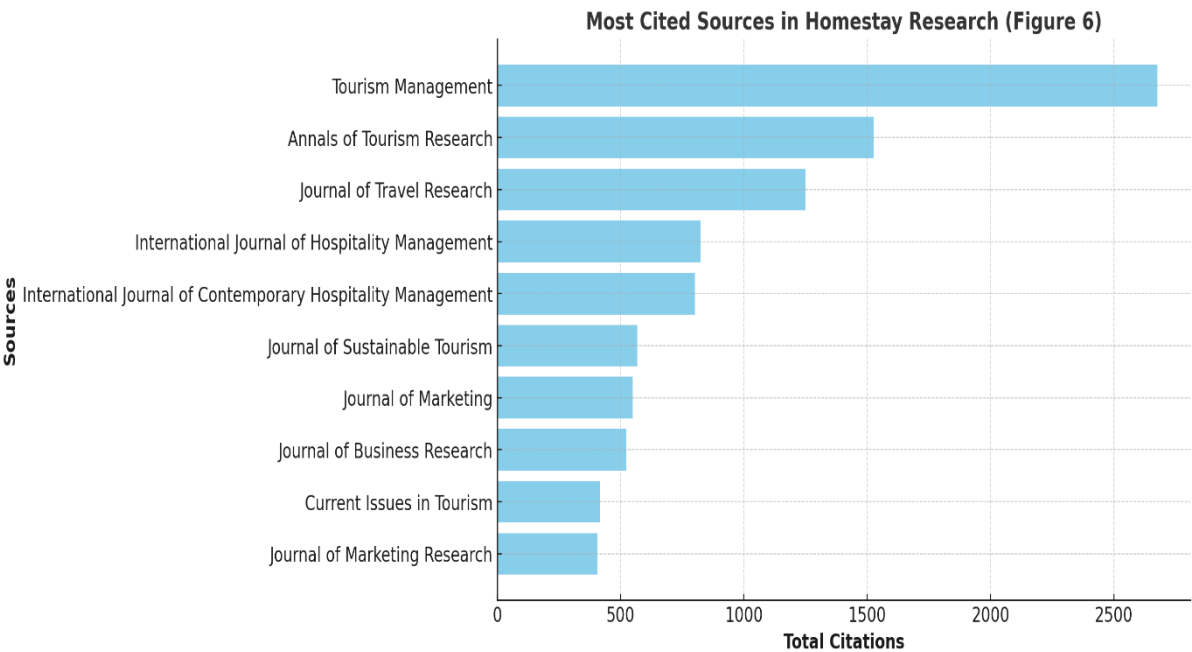
Rank	Source	Citations
1	Consumer Behaviour in Tourism and Hospitality	2,345
2	International Journal of Tourism Research	1,892
3	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	1,567
4	Sustainability	1,234
5	International Journal of Tourism Policy	987
6	Current Issues in Tourism	789
7	Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology	654
8	Journal of Ecotourism	543
9	Journal of Travel Research	432
10	Benchmarking	321

Research Trends Based on Keyword Occurrences
To analyse evolving research trends in homestays, the study divided the dataset into three distinct timeframes: 2020-2021, 2022-2023, and 2024-2025. This segmentation allows for a structured examination of how academic interest in homestays has progressed over time, reflecting shifts in research priorities, emerging challenges, and industry developments.

A rigorous keyword refinement process was undertaken to ensure accuracy and relevance table 9. This involved merging synonyms to standardize terminology, eliminating redundant keywords to avoid duplication, and categorizing terms based on thematic relevance to highlight key areas of scholarly focus. The refined dataset provided a clearer picture of how homestay research has transitioned from broad hospitality-related discussions to more specialized themes addressing current market dynamics and industry needs.

The results indicate a noticeable shift from generic hospitality and tourism themes toward more specialized topics such as sustainability in homestay operations, digitalization of booking and marketing processes, and the rise of experiential tourism as a competitive advantage for homestay businesses. In the early phase (2020-2021), research was predominantly centered on homestay economic viability, consumer preferences, and regulatory frameworks. By 2022-2023, studies began focusing more on eco-tourism initiatives, digital transformation in homestay management, and the role of online travel agencies (OTAs) in shaping consumer choices. The most recent phase (2024-2025) shows a significant surge in discussions around post-pandemic recovery strategies, artificial intelligence-driven pricing models, and blockchain-based security measures for homestay transactions.

This evolution reflects the growing interdisciplinary nature of homestay research, incorporating insights from sustainable tourism, technology adoption, behavioural economics, and service innovation. The progression of these themes underscores the increasing academic recognition of homestays as an integral part of the alternative lodging industry, highlighting their potential to drive community development, environmental conservation, and technological advancements in the tourism sector.

Table 9: Research Keywords and Their Occurrence Over Time

Timeframe	Keyword	Occurrences
2020-2021	Homestays	98
2020-2021	Sustainable Tourism	85
2022-2023	Digital Transformation	74
2022-2023	Consumer Experience	67
2024-2025	Airbnb Effect	59
2024-2025	Post-Pandemic Recovery	52

The analysis highlights an increasing focus on homestay sustainability, digital marketing strategies, and post-pandemic recovery efforts in recent years. Figures 4, and 5 visualize the keyword density plot Keyword occurrences and for each timeframe, demonstrating shifts in dominant research themes
Figure 4: Keyword density plot for most occurrence
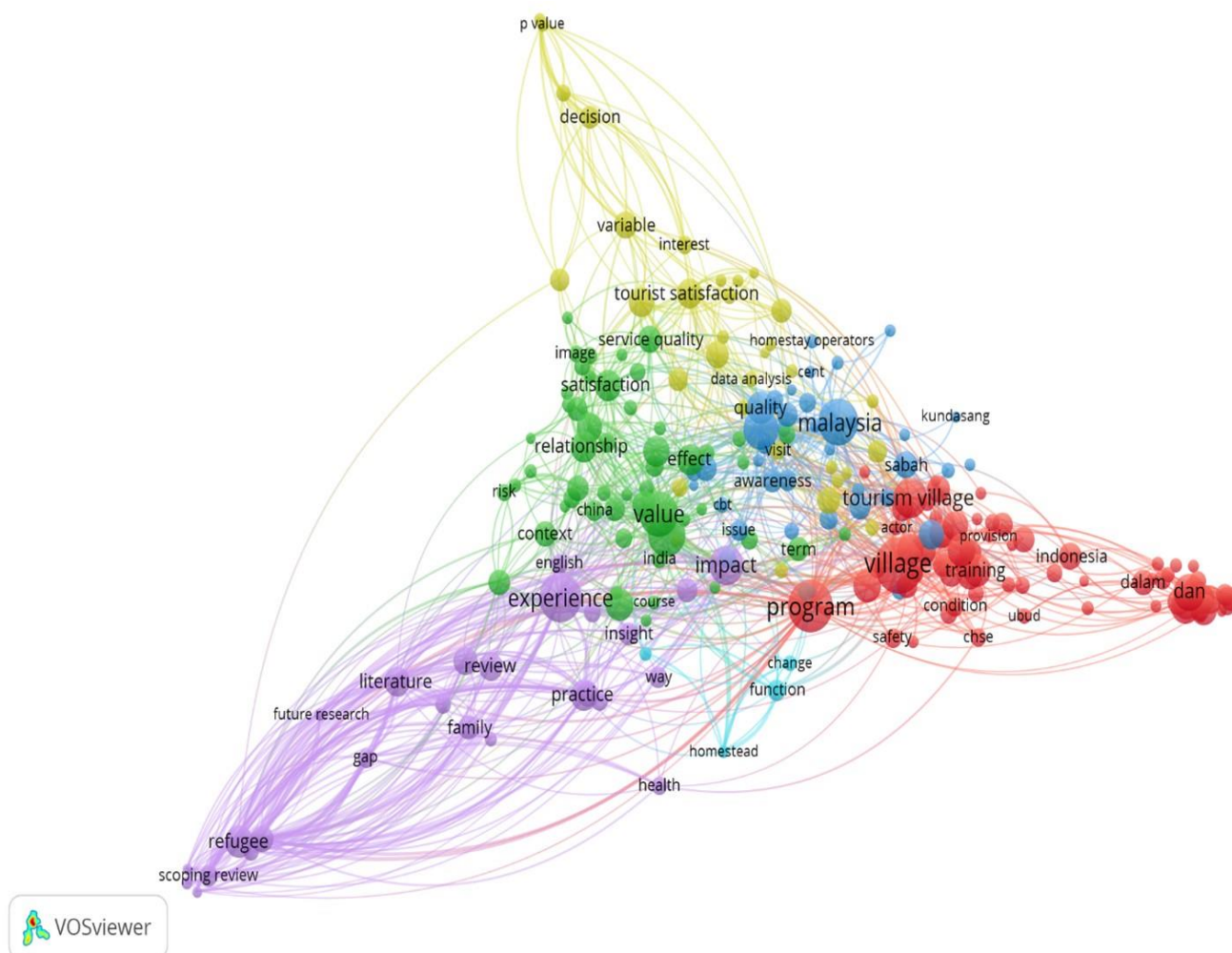
Evolution of Homestay Research

The study also analysed the changing trends in homestay research topics. Figure 5 presents a thematic evolution network, showcasing how research areas have progressed over the years. The analysis revealed that early studies primarily focused on the economic viability of homestays, whereas recent research explores sustainability, digital platforms, and customer experiences.

This bibliometric analysis underscores the growing academic interest in homestays, emphasizing their role in alternative tourism models, cultural exchange, and community-based tourism development. Future research should focus on technological advancements, regulatory challenges, and long-term sustainability models for homestay businesses.

Figure 5: Thematic evolution of homestay research 2020-2025
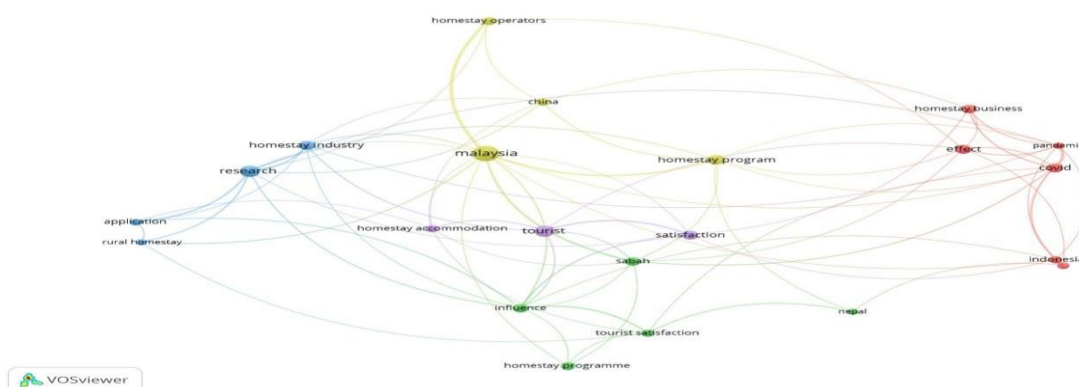
Top Performing Research Institutions in Homestay Studies
The study also examined the institutions producing the most impactful research on homestays. Table 10 provides insights into the leading institutions by publication count,emphasizing their contribution to advancing homestay-related scholarship.

Table 10: Top Performing Institutions in Homestay Research

Rank	Institution	Articles Published
1	Amity University	72
2	Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management	54
3	University of Delhi	50
4	Banaras Hindu University	48
5	Institute of Rural Management Anand	42

These institutions have contributed significantly to advancing knowledge in sustainable homestays, policy frameworks, and consumer experience in the homestay sector.

Discussion and Conclusion
This study provides a bibliometric analysis of homestay research in India from 2020 to 2025, revealing key trends, influential contributions, and evolving thematic areas. The findings highlight the increasing academic interest in homestays as an alternative tourism model, emphasizing sustainability, digital transformation, and post-pandemic recovery. The homestay sector has undergone significant changes, with recent research focusing on consumer behaviour, policy frameworks, and technological advancements shaping its growth trajectory.

The analysis of publication trends shows a consistent rise in research output, demonstrating the growing scholarly engagement with homestays. The most productive journals and authors have played a crucial role in shaping the discourse, with notable contributions from institutions specializing in tourism, hospitality, and rural development. Citation analysis indicates that research on sustainability and digital transformation in homestays has gained substantial recognition, underscoring the sector's importance in contemporary tourism studies.

A major trend observed in the analysis is the increasing emphasis on the role of digital platforms and technology-driven tourism. Studies have examined how online travel agencies, review systems, and social media influence homestay preferences and bookings (Sharma et al., 2022). Another key research area is sustainability in homestay operations, particularly concerning eco-tourism, local community engagement, and responsible tourism practices (Leong et al., 2023). Moreover, post-pandemic recovery strategies for homestay businesses have become a central theme in recent literature, as researchers explore resilience-building mechanisms and adaptive business models (Patel & Gupta, 2024).

Despite these advancements, certain research gaps remain. The analysis reveals a lack of theoretical integration in homestay studies, with limited use of established frameworks to analyse consumer behaviour and market trends. Additionally, regional disparities in research contributions suggest that certain geographical areas remain underrepresented in scholarly work. Addressing these gaps through interdisciplinary approaches and empirical studies can enhance the academic discourse on homestays.

To sum up, this research adds to the understanding of homestay research by mapping its academic landscape, identifying influential works, and highlighting emerging themes. The results indicate that upcoming studies should concentrate on policy interventions, technological innovations, and long-term sustainability models to ensure the continued growth of the homestay sector. Expanding research on consumer perceptions, economic impact assessments, and comparative studies between homestays and traditional accommodations can further strengthen the field.

Implications and Future Scope
The insights from this study offer several practical and academic implications. From a policy perspective, the findings can help government bodies and tourism boards in formulating supportive regulations that enhance the homestay sector's contribution to local economies. Understanding research trends allows policymakers to design targeted initiatives promoting sustainable tourism and digital transformation in homestays. Additionally, regulatory frameworks focusing on tax incentives, quality standards, and safety measures can encourage the formalization and growth of the homestay sector. For homestay operators and entrepreneurs, the study highlights the growing importance of technological adoption, customer experience enhancement, and sustainability practices. Leveraging online platforms and social media engagement can improve homestay visibility and attract experience-seeking travellers. Additionally, focusing on eco-friendly operations and community-driven tourism can enhance the sector's appeal to responsible tourists. Implementing

AI-driven pricing strategies, personalized guest experiences, and data-driven marketing approaches can further boost the competitiveness of homestay businesses.

From an academic standpoint, this research provides a foundation for future studies in homestay tourism. Scholars can build upon the identified trends to explore new areas such as AI-driven homestay recommendations, blockchain for secure transactions, and the socio-economic impact of homestays on rural communities. Future research should also investigate cross-cultural variations in homestay experiences to provide a global perspective on alternative tourism models. Moreover, interdisciplinary studies integrating sociology, business, and environmental science can offer deeper insights into the evolving role of homestays in sustainable tourism.

Future research directions should focus on two key areas. First, the integration of smart tourism technologies in homestays, such as IoT-based automation, virtual reality experiences, and AI-powered customer service, requires further exploration. Understanding how these technologies enhance guest satisfaction and operational efficiency can provide valuable insights for industry stakeholders. Second, comparative studies on homestays and other accommodation models in different cultural and economic settings can enrich global tourism literature and provide actionable strategies for improving service quality and economic viability.

7. Limitations

Although this research provides important insights, some limitations should be recognised. The dependence on the Scopus database means that some relevant publications listed in other platforms like Web of Science or local journals might not have been considered. This may lead to a potential omission of region-specific or non-English publications that could provide additional context. Additionally, bibliometric analysis primarily offers quantitative insights, limiting the ability to conduct an in-depth qualitative assessment of the actual content of articles. Future research can complement bibliometric studies with systematic literature reviews or meta-analyses **to** provide richer interpretations of homestay research themes.

Despite these limitations, this study presents a robust overview of homestay research trends, offering valuable directions for academics, policymakers, and industry practitioners. The continued exploration of emerging themes and interdisciplinary collaborations will be essential in advancing the knowledge and practice of homestay tourism.

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