

# The ecosystem of disability inclusion in hospitality and tourism organisations: an integrative review and research agenda

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – This paper reviews the literature on disability inclusion (DI) in supply and demand chains of hospitality and tourism (H&T) organisations. The purpose of this study is to assess disability support and interventions within H&T organisations. Through the assessment, we identified gaps to recommend H&T scholars' and practitioners' knowledge of DI from new perspectives.

**Design/methodology/approach** – An integrative review was conducted to examine the published evidence on DI in H&T organisations. This study used high-ranking H&T journals from the Scopus and Web of Science databases between 2001 and 2023. In total, 101 empirical papers met the criteria for the review analysis.

**Findings** – DI focuses heavily on customer disabilities, with scant research on DI in H&T employment. The review emphasises the critical need for empirical research into the varied disability employment ecosystem within H&T organisations, focusing on social integration for inclusive workplaces.

**Originality/value** – This study contributes to the H&T literature, which previously overlooked the disability context in diversity. The research offers strategies for creating inclusive environments in the H&T industry for disabled consumers and producers.

**Keywords** Disability inclusion (DI), Employees with disabilities (EWDs), Tourists with disabilities (TWDs), Integrative review

**Paper type** Literature review

## 1. Introduction

Disability inclusion (DI) ensures equitable engagement of people with disabilities, increasing the hospitality and tourism (H&T) sectors' interest concerning their travel experiences,

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This research was supported by Bournemouth University, United Kingdom and the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia.



employment prospects and well-being (Cloquet *et al.*, 2018; Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2023). Many H&T leaders value successful DI, as it involves socially conscious organisations that actively encourage participation by marginalised communities, ultimately lowering barriers for underrepresented groups to participate meaningfully as producers or consumers (Singh *et al.*, 2023; Russen and Dawson, 2024). The approach is reflected in the social development of sustainability (Vallance *et al.*, 2011), promoting human welfare, social and cultural justice and empowering potential (Boström, 2012). Social sustainability is vital in DI by harnessing social and moral benefits and fostering acceptance, support and empowerment (Gould *et al.*, 2022).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that 16% of the global population has mobility/physical, vision, psychological, hearing, cognitive/learning and invisible disabilities (WHO, 2023). Because of chronic health conditions and an ageing population, the prevalence of disabilities is also increasing (Benjamin *et al.*, 2021). Although disability has long-term effects on daily activities, a universally applicable definition of disability is limited. Generally, disability is divided into visible and invisible. Visible disabilities include physical and mental impairments such as movement, vision, hearing and communication (Loi and Kong, 2017), while invisible disabilities are hidden physical conditions such as cancer and mental health (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2023).

People with disabilities often seem invisible stakeholders in H&T organisations, rarely being tourists and employees. Tourists with disabilities (TWDs) experience several obstacles, such as accessibility constraints, limited knowledge and information, physical or psychological impediments and personnel attitudes that hinder their ability to travel (Fennell and Garrod, 2022; De Pascale *et al.*, 2023). Likewise, despite beneficial government legislation and financial benefits to hiring employees with disabilities (EWDs), the employment rate remains low. The biases and stigmas fostering negative attitudes regarding disability employment among employers and co-workers are the leading causes of the low employment rate of EWDs (Hui *et al.*, 2021). Customers' feedback and service assessments also hinder EWDs in H&T employment (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2020b). DI implementations in H&T organisations are also limited (Russen and Dawson, 2024). Inclusive environments frequently use intervention tactics targeting specific groups such as service providers and TWDs or employers and EWDs. However, they failed to include multiple stakeholders or address the relationships between actors within the ecosystem. Scholars must understand how a multi-actor system influences the organisational ecosystem among DI (Nyanjom *et al.*, 2018). As H&T organisations deal with disability from different perspectives, understanding diverse stakeholders who encourage inclusion is crucial.

Despite addressing disability issues, literature reviews in H&T primarily focus on diversity-related topics, while DI receives little attention (Madera *et al.*, 2023). Tlili *et al.* (2021) explored technologies to support TWDs and identified technological empowerment needs. Doan *et al.* (2021) investigated disability employment in H&T organisations, suggesting adopting an emancipatory technique in qualitative studies. Singh *et al.* (2023) conducted a bibliometric review of disability research in tourism, focusing on visualising trends and patterns but providing limited exploration of gaps and future research goals. This study pioneers the discussion of strategies for DI in H&T organisations. Studies examining DI investigations from various organisational ecosystems and disability participation in H&T organisations were reviewed. Several categories (national context, stakeholder category and type of disability) and research themes were assessed to highlight requirement to effective DI. Then, we propose a research strategy for future studies aspiring theoretical advances for DI in H&T organisations. The research questions are:

- RQ1.* What Chartered Association of Business Schools Academic Journal Guide (CABS) publications on DI in the H&T research were published between 2001 and 2023, covering national contexts, disability categories, H&T sectors, types of disability and methodologies used?
- RQ2.* To what extent have the trends, patterns or gaps been identified across different studies exploring the perspective of DI of people with disabilities in H&T organisations?
- RQ3.* How do various interventions addressing DI issues compare effectiveness and outcomes based on the existing literature?

## 2. Research methodology and procedures

A systematic literature review is used in theory-based, domain-based, method-based, meta-analytical and meta-systematic reviews (Paul *et al.*, 2021). Elsbach and van Knippenberg (2020) proposed an integrative review (IR) as an alternative. IR synthesises literature and creates new perspectives on a topic or phenomenon (Post *et al.*, 2020). It presents ideas founded in knowledge and identifies progress and significant gaps in the literature (Elsbach and van Knippenberg, 2020). The SPAR-4-SLR protocol was used to generate well-justified rationales following IR principles (Lim *et al.*, 2022). It comprises three stages (assembling, arranging and assessing) and six sub-stages (identification, acquisition, organisation, purification, evaluation and reporting). Table 1 and Figure 1 detailed the IR process based on the SPAR-4-SLR.

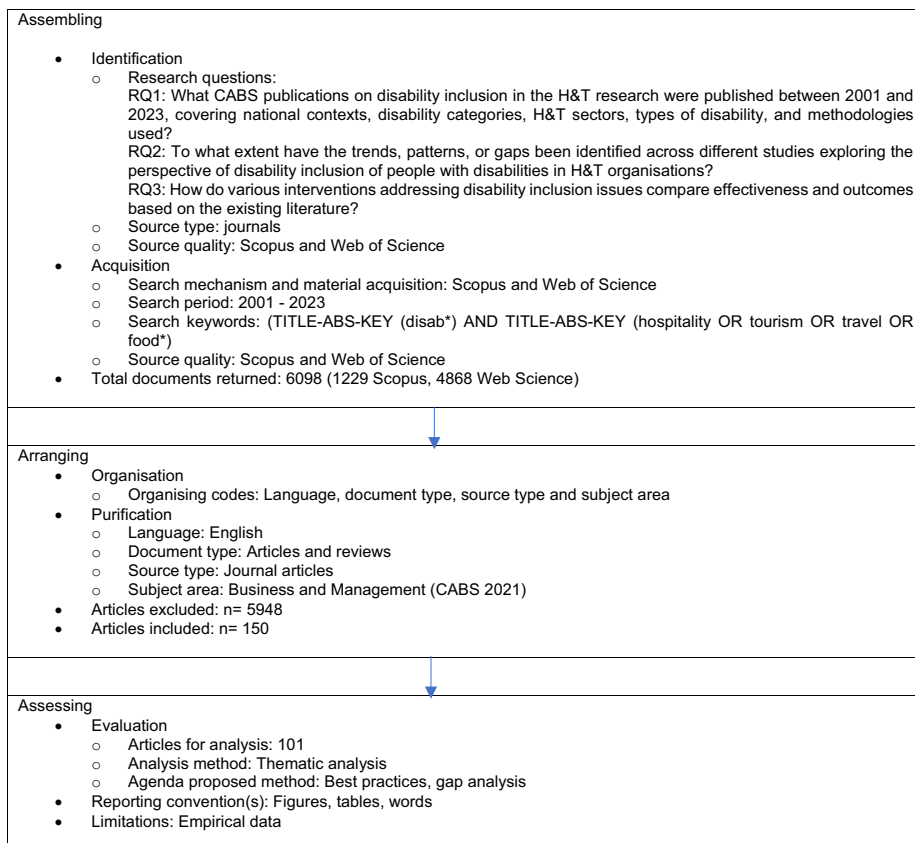
### 2.1 Assembling

It identified research questions and literature review domains to investigate DI discussions in H&T journals published by April 2023. The inclusion criteria are the keyword disability in conjunction with a set of industry-related keywords: (TITLE-ABS-KEY (disab\*) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (hospitality OR tourism OR travel OR food\*)). Relevant publications from 2001 to 2023 were collected from two major databases (Scopus and Web of Science) with enhanced data quality (Mariani and Baggio, 2022) and reputable peer-reviewed journals (Mehraliyev *et al.*, 2022). This chronology illustrates the evolution of DI in H&T organisations, emphasising the historical foundation and the current state of the research (Singh *et al.*, 2023). In total, 6,098 peer-reviewed articles were collected during the assembling stage (1,229 Scopus and 4,868 Web of Science).

Database	Scopus and Web of Science
Time frame	2001–2023
Keywords	Disability in combination with a set of keywords related to the industry (hospitality, tourism, travel and food service)
Inclusion criteria	Empirical manuscripts, English language Publications from H&T journals ranked 1–4 in the Chartered Association of Business Schools Academic Journal Guide (CABS) 2021
Exclusion criteria	Book chapters and conference proceedings Secondary and review articles Disability inclusion (sport, education, obesity and ageing traits)

**Table 1.**  
General search  
criteria

**Source:** Created by author



**Source:** The SPAR-4-SLR protocol suggested by Paul *et al.* (2021)

**Figure 1.**  
The SPAR-4-SLR  
protocol

## 2.2. Arranging

It organised codes and purified article types within the business and management subject area to retrieve journal articles. We chose publications based on the CABS 2021. All journals ranking 1, 2, 3 and 4 with publications related to DI in H&T were the basis for review. Only English articles were considered, and duplicate records were removed, resulting in 150 publications and 5,948 articles being removed. The abstracts were assessed to determine appropriate DI topics, followed by exclusion procedures. We excluded secondary and review documents, disability research on sport, education, obesity and ageing traits. Ageing individuals may encounter limitations naturally, which often lead to disabilities. While older adults transitioning into disability may slowly adapt, individuals with sudden loss of function may have fewer resources to cope. These exclusions yielded 49 unrelated articles.

## 2.3 Assessment

It detailed readings reviewed the abstracts, literature, methodology, findings and summary. Data extraction was performed independently to finalise their suitability. We followed the

guidelines by [Petticrew and Roberts \(2006\)](#) to categorise articles, including high- or moderate-quality papers in the analysis. The selection was limited to articles that obtained consensus among all three authors, with any disagreement being discussed. Finally, 101 empirical publications were examined for the review analysis.

### 3. Findings

#### 3.1 Disability inclusion publications in hospitality and tourism fields

DI research has reached multiple networks in higher-ranking H&T journals in the CABS 2021 ([Table 2](#)). “Tourism Management” was the most prolific outlet for DI research in H&T organisations, with 15 publications. Publications have increased since 2010. More active discoveries were revealed between 2017 and 2023, indicating DI relevance in research. Publications in the CABS 2021 four-star and three-star ranking journals have dominated the literature. Arguably, publishing DI topics in H&T journals is an emerging study area and is expected to evolve with more publications.

[Table 3](#) shows the distribution of studies across the review’s categorisation. National contexts reveal that most studies were conducted in the Global North countries. Eleven publications used multiple countries’ environments dominated by European nations. DI research in H&T focused on TWDs, whereas EWD investigations remain sparse. The emphasis is on the general TWDs’ experience (38 publications), with 21 papers in accommodation sectors, while 19 articles examined disability employment context. Disability types mainly explored multiple disabilities (38 publications). Twenty-seven papers examined non-disabled opinions, websites and promotional material without specifying disability

No.	Journal	No. of studies	Ranking
1	<i>Tourism Management</i>	15	4*
2	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	13	3*
3	<i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	9	4*
4	<i>Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research</i>	7	1*
5	<i>Current Issues in Tourism</i>	6	2*
6	<i>Journal of Travel Research</i>	6	4*
7	<i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>	6	3*
8	<i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	5	3*
9	<i>Cornell Hospitality Quarterly</i>	4	2*
10	<i>International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration</i>	4	1*
11	<i>Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism</i>	4	1*
12	<i>Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management</i>	3	2*
13	<i>Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure, and Events</i>	3	1*
14	<i>Journal of Destination Marketing and Management</i>	2	1*
15	<i>Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing</i>	2	2*
16	<i>Tourism Planning and Development</i>	2	2*
17	<i>World Leisure Journal</i>	2	1*
18	<i>Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes</i>	2	1*
19	<i>Event Management</i>	1	2*
20	<i>Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology</i>	1	2*
21	<i>Leisure Studies</i>	1	2*
22	<i>Tourism Geographies</i>	1	2*
23	<i>Tourism Recreation Research</i>	1	2*
24	<i>Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research</i>	1	1*

**Table 2.**  
Journal publications  
(*n* = 101)

Source: Created by author

No.	Categorisation	No. of studies
1	<i>National context</i>	
	USA	29
	Australia	12
	UK	6
	South Korea	5
	Spain	5
	Hong Kong	4
	New Zealand	4
	China	4
	Israel	3
	Turkey	3
	United Arab Emirates	2
	Italy	2
	Canada	1
	Poland	1
	Denmark	1
	Sweden	1
	Cyprus	1
	Ghana	1
	Taiwan	1
Philippines	1	
Brazil	1	
Netherlands	1	
Germany	1	
Multiple countries	11	
2	<i>Disability category</i>	
	Tourists with disabilities (TWDs)	77
	Employees with disabilities (EWDs)	24
3	<i>Sectors</i>	
	General travel experiences	38
	Accommodation	21
	Disability employment	19
	Foodservice	7
	Tourist attractions	4
	Air travel	4
	Hospitality website	4
	Event	2
	Tour operators/travel agents	1
	Casino	1
	4	<i>Type of disabilities</i>
Multiple disabilities		38
Physical		20
Visual		10
Intellectual		2
Hearing		2
Cancer		1
Epilepsy		1
Not stated	27	
5	<i>Research methodology</i>	
	Quantitative	48
	Qualitative	43
	Mixed methods	10

**Table 3.**  
Publication category  
(*n* = 101)

Source: Created by author

kinds. The research methodology includes 48 quantitative approach papers, 43 qualitative approach papers and 10 mixed-method approach papers.

### 3.2 *Disability inclusion themes in hospitality and tourism research*

We used thematic analysis to understand and represent textual data (Nowell *et al.*, 2017), generating three major research themes approved by the expert panels. These include DI enablers, TWD experiences and EWD employment (Table 4). We present our findings by outlining the research themes and a discussion.

#### 3.2.1 *Disability inclusion enablers*

3.2.1.1 Disability discrimination acts. The literature reveals that anti-discrimination acts and their compliance are essential (Darcy and Taylor, 2009). The United Nations disability efforts, such as the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and Disability Acts at the national level, signify their inclusive right. While previous studies concentrated on Global North countries, they still struggle to meet disability support requirements. These ineffective policies hinder TWD accommodations (Freeman and Selmi, 2010).

3.2.1.2 Inclusive marketing. The marketing, imagery and representation of TWDs in promotional materials are vital for inclusion. The literature shows that marketing materials are invisible or unclear among TWDs and their families (Cloquet *et al.*, 2018), creating an unwelcoming tourism environment (Benjamin *et al.*, 2021). While accessibility marketing has been mainly discussed in TWDs, significant gaps exist in addressing the marketing representation of disability employment in H&T organisations.

3.2.1.3 Stakeholders' collaboration. Previous studies examined stakeholders' collaboration to foster DI in H&T organisations. Nyanjom *et al.* (2018) assessed multiple key stakeholders supporting DI in the H&T industry, suggesting an innovative developmental strategy for stakeholder involvement. Walters *et al.* (2021) evaluated the positive outcomes of power relationships among stakeholders in H&T organisations by investigating the importance of events for marginalised groups, revealing that psychological empowerment benefited TWDs and stakeholders.

#### 3.2.2 *Travel experience of tourists with disabilities*

3.2.2.1 Service provisions for tourists with disabilities. DI within H&T organisations has centred on the TWDs' experiences. Although disability travel is considered new in some countries, there is a significant willingness to serve TWDs (Ozturk *et al.*, 2008). Numerous trials and errors with TWDs in the H&T business still exist (Patterson *et al.*, 2012). Prominent barriers to supporting TWDs are attitudes among personnel in H&T organisations (Sy and Chang, 2019). Negative attitudes to serve vary by gender, formal educational attainment and organisational category (Adam, 2019). To understand how attitudinal barriers affect TWDs, researchers should use existing models to systematically study the TWDs' experience (Card *et al.*, 2006). Service providers are encouraged to prioritise duty and justice over conventional business practices because serving TWDs necessitates specialised adaptations (Fennell and Garrod, 2022).

3.2.2.2 Physical accessibilities. Multiple studies investigated the importance of physical accessibility in H&T facilities (Darcy and Pegg, 2011; Morris and Kazi, 2014). Significant physical factors affecting TWDs were the accessibility of public areas, recreation and hotel room facilities (Lyu, 2017). Israeli (2002) developed a model assessing the relative significance of accessibility factors in tourist sites to enhance physical accessibility. Darcy (2010) suggested the preferred format for providing accessible accommodation information (combining textual descriptions, floorplans and digital photography).

3.2.2.3 Information accessibilities. Information availability issues for TWDs remained unresolved (Park *et al.*, 2022). Information accessibility and designs should accommodate

No.	Themes	Sub-theme	No. of studies	Source
1	<i>Disability inclusion enablers</i>	Disability discrimination acts	2	Miller and Kirk (2002), Darcy and Taylor (2009)
		Inclusive marketing	2	Cloquet <i>et al.</i> (2018), Benjamin <i>et al.</i> (2021)
		Stakeholders' collaboration	2	Nyanjom <i>et al.</i> (2018), Walters <i>et al.</i> (2021)
2	<i>Travel experience of TWDs</i>	Service provisions to serve TWDs	19	Takeda and Card (2002), Ray and Ryder (2003), McKercher <i>et al.</i> (2003), Card <i>et al.</i> (2006), Ozturk <i>et al.</i> (2008), Freeman and Selmi (2010), Bizjak <i>et al.</i> (2011), Darcy and Pegg (2011), Patterson <i>et al.</i> (2012), Nicolaisen <i>et al.</i> (2012), Schitko and Simpson (2012), Morris and Kazi (2014), Cole <i>et al.</i> (2014), Zhang and Cole (2016), Boxall <i>et al.</i> (2018), Sy and Chang (2019), Adam (2019), Randle and Dolnicar (2019), Fennell and Garrod (2022)
		Physical accessibilities	3	Israeli (2002), Darcy (2010), Tutuncu (2017)
		Information accessibilities	9	Williams and Rattray (2005), Shi (2006), Mills <i>et al.</i> (2008), Eichhorn <i>et al.</i> (2008), Buhalis and Michopouloub (2011), Zajadacz (2014), Casais and Castro (2020), Lam <i>et al.</i> (2020), Park <i>et al.</i> (2022)
		Barriers to travel	8	Hunter-Jones (2004), Daniels <i>et al.</i> (2005), Poria <i>et al.</i> (2011), Lee <i>et al.</i> (2012), Wan (2013), Loi and Kong (2017), Kong and Loi (2017), De Pascale <i>et al.</i> (2023)
		Motivation and experience	28	Burnett and Baker (2001), Yau <i>et al.</i> (2004), Shaw and Coles (2004), Lane (2007), Lovelock (2010), Poria <i>et al.</i> (2010), Chang and Chen (2011), Blichfeldt and Nicolaisen (2011), Var <i>et al.</i> (2011), Darcy (2012), Joo and Cho (2012), Dias de Faria <i>et al.</i> (2012), Small <i>et al.</i> (2012), Pagan (2012), Lyu (2017), Oiya <i>et al.</i> (2018), Moura <i>et al.</i> (2018), Tchetchik <i>et al.</i> (2018), Devile and Kastenholz (2018), Chikuta <i>et al.</i> (2019), Cole <i>et al.</i> (2019), Zhang <i>et al.</i> (2019b), Zhang <i>et al.</i> (2019a), McIntosh (2020), Pagan (2020), Cerdan Chiscano and Darcy (2021), Gillovic <i>et al.</i> (2021), Ali <i>et al.</i> (2023)
		Caregiver's experience	5	Kim and Lehto (2013), Sedgley <i>et al.</i> (2017), Nyman <i>et al.</i> (2018), Lehto <i>et al.</i> (2018), Kang <i>et al.</i> (2020)
		3	<i>The employment of EWDs</i>	Challenges of hiring EWDs
Employers' attitudes toward hiring	5			Chi and Qu (2004a), Chi and Qu (2004b), Jasper and Waldhart (2013), Houtenville and Kalargyrou (2015), Kalargyrou <i>et al.</i> (2020a)
Human resource practices	6			Harris and Durocher (2003), Daruwalla and Darcy (2005), Kalargyrou and Volis (2014), Kalargyrou (2014), Luu (2021), Bellucci <i>et al.</i> (2023)
Employees' treatments	4			Ross (2004), Paez and Arendt (2014), Hui <i>et al.</i> (2021), Kalargyrou <i>et al.</i> (2023)
Customers' evaluation	4			Kuo and Kalargyrou (2014), Kalargyrou <i>et al.</i> (2018), Madera <i>et al.</i> (2020), Kalargyrou <i>et al.</i> (2020b)

Source: Created by author

**Table 4.**  
Research themes  
(*n* = 101)

inclusive engagement (Williams and Rattray, 2005). An inclusive H&T environment necessitates accessible built conditions and online information accessibility (Buhalis and Michopouloub, 2011). However, online content targeting TWDs is too generic and limited (Casais and Castro, 2020). Eichhorn *et al.* (2008) demonstrate how varied needs and



perceptions of the quality of information sources result in diverse search outcomes. The available information mainly targets physical disabilities (Ali *et al.*, 2023), while tourists with visual impairments typically struggle with online visual content (Shi, 2006).

3.2.2.4 Barriers to travel. The literature shows that women with disabilities are doubly disadvantaged because of gender and disability-related exclusion (De Pascale *et al.*, 2023). Major travel barriers among TWDs were accessibility and intrapersonal and interpersonal aspects (Wan, 2013; Kong and Loi, 2017). Lee *et al.* (2012) discovered that the intrinsic and environmental factors positively and significantly influenced TWDs' travel decisions. Studies on accessibility expectations also found that TWDs prioritise their treatment over physical accommodations (Chikuta *et al.*, 2019; Lam *et al.*, 2020). Unpleasant interactions with services create helplessness among TWDs, erecting intrapersonal barriers to participation (Kong and Loi, 2017). Emphasising H&T offerings accessible to TWDs, fostering stakeholder engagement and nurturing positive relationships can lead to higher travel satisfaction (Loi and Kong, 2017; Cole *et al.*, 2019).

3.2.2.5 Motivations and experience. TWDs travel for self-care, overcoming self-doubt and redefining themselves (Blichfeldt and Nicolaisen, 2011). Travelling minimises loneliness and expands their social interaction possibilities and experiences (Pagan, 2020). Although TWDs travel for multiple intrinsic and extrinsic reasons (Small *et al.*, 2012), Moura *et al.* (2018) suggested that accessible tourism can be a new stress-coping resource for TWDs. It rebalances their personal and social resources. Yau *et al.* (2004) agreed that personal courage, family support and the tourist industry's precise information can create active tourism among TWDs. Comprehensive information and disability awareness training would enhance service providers' preparedness (Agovino *et al.*, 2017), while continuous social interactions between employees and TWDs reduce disability travelling concerns (Casais and Castro, 2020).

3.2.2.6 Caregivers' experience. The psychological well-being and experiences of carers of TWDs have attracted attention. The burden on carers prompted more studies (Lehto *et al.*, 2018). Other than caring for children or family members with disabilities, carers typically travel with TWDs for various reasons such as the intellectual and physical development of the children/TWDs, relaxation, socialisation and strengthening the family relationship (Kim and Lehto, 2013; Nyman *et al.*, 2018). However, carers encounter emotional challenges while planning trips, leading to stress and feelings of escape during vacations (Sedgley *et al.*, 2017). Kang *et al.* (2020) found a significant correlation between caregivers' satisfaction and the quality of the service environment provided to their cared individuals. Travelling for families with multiple family members with disabilities and without disabilities also presents unique challenges requiring careful planning and consideration. Suitable transportation, accommodations and activities are necessary for a smooth trip (Kang *et al.*, 2020). Communication and coordination among family members are crucial, whereas adaptability and readiness for unforeseen circumstances are essential (Nyman *et al.*, 2018).

### 3.2.3 *Employees with disabilities employments*

3.2.3.1 Challenges of hiring employees with disabilities. DI in disability employment is the least researched topic in H&T literature. Gröschl (2007) found that employers' preferences for physical attractiveness and industry-specific qualities hinder EWDs hiring in H&T organisations, followed by limited legal pressure and awareness. Bengisu and Balta (2011) claimed that employers mostly agree that EWDs may perform any duty in the H&T business when their professional knowledge and skills match the requirements. While larger organisations are likelier to hire EWDs (Houtenville and Kalargyrou, 2012; Jasper and Waldhart, 2013), employers concur that increased efforts to accommodate the EWDs market

through accessible workplaces, public perception shifts and enacting unified laws and regulations are necessary (Al Fardan and Morris, 2019).

3.2.3.2 Employers' attitudes towards hiring. Employers' attitudes towards hiring EWDs dominate previous attitudinal investigations on disability employment. Though employers are generally worried about the costs and accommodations for hiring EWDs, those with experience are optimistic about EWD prospects (Chi and Qu, 2004b). Negative attitudes among employers stemmed from their concerns about the acceptability of other employees and customers (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2020a). Employers' attitudes towards physical and sensory-challenged employees positively affected the likelihood of hiring EWDs compared to other disabilities (Chi and Qu, 2004a).

3.2.3.3 Human resource practices. Human resource processes should allow EWDs to demonstrate competence during selection, training, fair performance reviews and rewards (Luu, 2021). Challenges for EWDs include limited quality training, restricted business performance standards and inadequate support in operational policies (Harris and Durocher, 2003). Luu (2021) revealed that disability-inclusive leadership mediated between disability-inclusive HRM practices, work-family conflict and work-family enrichment for EWDs. Kalargyrou and Volis (2014) proposed three initiatives to enhance human resource practices in H&T organisations: promoting awareness and integration techniques among stakeholders, alliances with vocational rehabilitation organisations and financial support from state health and human services ministries for DI strategies. Advanced human resource practices yield a positive social return, benefiting employees, the social cooperative and customers through increased satisfaction, improved reputation and heightened exposure to disability issues (Bellucci *et al.*, 2023).

3.2.3.4 Employees' treatments. Ross (2004) confirmed that societal and personal ethical factors are essential in determining employees' treatment. Organisational characteristics affect the managers' attitudes towards EWDs (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2023). Hui *et al.* (2021) found challenges managers and employees face engaging with EWDs concerning work fairness and environment. EWDs encounter challenges in workforce integration, like dealing with their employers and co-workers (Paez and Arendt, 2014). Therefore, exploring employees' competencies and personal ethical beliefs among employees is required to understand EWDs' working expression (Ross, 2004).

3.2.3.5 Customers' evaluation. Previous studies examined how customers evaluated EWDs in H&T organisations, yielding varied outcomes. Kalargyrou *et al.* (2018) found no significant differences in the perceived service quality offered by EWDs in food service establishments, indicating that people with family members or close friends with disabilities were less stereotypical. Kuo and Kalargyrou (2014) discovered that customers demonstrated a moderately positive purchase intention for a restaurant employing EWDs. Madera *et al.* (2020) showed that customers evaluate EWDs lower than employees without disabilities in hotel sectors. The negative evaluation and stereotyping are influenced by customer characteristics such as ethnicity, religiosity and relationship to people with disabilities (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2020b).

We incorporated summaries from the reviewed articles in the supplementary material.

#### 4. Conclusions and practical implications

Our IR advances the knowledge of DI through a rigorous and transparent process by assembling, arranging and assessing literature published in H&T academic journals. Using the CABS 2021 guidelines, 150 papers were generated, with 101 meeting the selection criteria. The data search process followed the SPAR-4-SLR protocol and specific inclusion criteria, prioritising high-ranking journal publications to guarantee credibility and high-quality data.

Drawing on the articles reviewed in H&T organisations, we present practical implications and recommendations for H&T stakeholders to enhance the strategies to include people with disabilities in H&T sectors.

#### 4.1 Embracing the representation of *tourists with disabilities* in travel marketing

The guidelines established by the Disability Discrimination Acts ensure that all H&T establishments are accessible to TWDs (Darcy and Taylor, 2009). However, TWDs are overlooked or underrepresented in travel marketing campaigns, promotional materials and imagery (Benjamin *et al.*, 2021). Promoting diversity and inclusivity in travel marketing is a moral necessity and an intelligent economic approach (Cloquet *et al.*, 2018). Service providers can reach a broader market by promoting accessibility and acceptance by incorporating TWDs in marketing tactics. Various TWDs' portrayals break down barriers and give positive inclusivity messages. Advocating for marginalised groups, eradicating negative perceptions and forming new alliances foster a greater understanding of these communities (Walters *et al.*, 2021). When represented, TWDs will feel accepted and inspired to explore new destinations and activities (Benjamin *et al.*, 2021).

#### 4.2 Empowering families with disabled children

Despite substantial studies on service provision and TWDs' experiences in the H&T literature, families and guardians of children with disabilities report low satisfaction. Families with disabled children face obstacles in H&T activities, prompting more assistance, accessibility and inclusive services (Nyman *et al.*, 2018). These families encounter positive emotions, such as exuberance, pride and awe, alongside negative emotions, such as distress, frustration and humiliation (Lehto *et al.*, 2018). Spontaneity is often a desirable aspect of holidays, but it can significantly distress families with autism spectrum children (Sedgley *et al.*, 2017). Addressing their needs and supporting inclusive H&T can create an environment where impaired children can engage and reach their potential (Nyman *et al.*, 2018). Travelling can be a rewarding experience for families with disabled children through thoughtful planning and support (Sedgley *et al.*, 2017). Tailoring tour packages to accommodate diverse needs, including sensory-friendly tours and activities, can create an inclusive environment (Lehto *et al.*, 2018). A convenient location for rental and well-equipped assistive devices is critical for a high-quality service environment for this group (Kang *et al.*, 2020). Because socialising was preferred for families with disabled children travelling (Kang *et al.*, 2020), H&T operators should train their personnel on disability awareness and sensitivity.

#### 4.3 Social integration in disability employment

Although policies and anti-discrimination rights solidly set objectives to minimise exclusion, the reality shows a societal limitation in handling disability engagement in employment. Accessibility and human resource practices are not the sole means of promoting DI. Organisational practice must focus on social interaction within a disability environment. Social value creation is critical, emphasising understanding how EWDs co-create value in an environment shared with others and how the organisations can facilitate inclusive experiences (Cerdan Chiscano and Darcy, 2021). Stereotypes that hamper the growth of interactions can be addressed when EWDs engage with co-workers (Hui *et al.*, 2021). These experiences may increase an individual's self-efficacy for engaging with EWDs, linked with better attitudes regarding disability (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2023). Promoting social transformation can increase participation, benefiting EWDs and employees, while neglecting societal expectations of disability may increase injustice.

## 5. Theoretical implications and future research directions

Our analysis found DI research in H&T concentrated on inclusive environments for TWDs covering multi-actor systems. Although some agendas might be addressed in the future, positive engagements from H&T players to accommodate TWDs are more important than accessibility. Conversely, the global recognition of employment issues in H&T organisations, such as talent shortages, has underscored the importance of empowering EWDs in the workforce, with benefits such as lower absenteeism and greater loyalty (Kalargyrou, 2014). Advances in medical, technology and legal frameworks have increased employment opportunities for EWDs (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2020a). EWDs should have equal employment opportunities and growth based on performance and organisational contributions (Luu, 2021).

The review reveals that disability employment has challenges, including limited accessibility, accommodation and social barriers, contributing to lower employment rates of EWDs and low satisfaction among internal stakeholders. Achieving success in disability employment necessitates internal and external organisational factors, including leadership, co-workers and customers (Mohsin *et al.*, 2023). Stakeholders' engagement and participation with policies and practises about DI would help the organisation enhance its financial performance (Lim *et al.*, 2023) and foster greater job satisfaction (Mohsin *et al.*, 2023). Adopting a holistic approach to strengthen the inclusive organisational ecosystem is imperative. Considering this, we offer recommendations for future research, providing valuable insights into the H&T organisations.

Colella and Bruyère (2011) identified three areas of disability employment: accommodation, selection and workplace integration. However, the co-creation of social integrations related to disability employment among organisational stakeholders is limited. Some research revealed positive attitudes among leaders towards hiring EWDs, although occasional interactions between managerial-level individuals and EWDs restrict this conclusion (Houtenville and Kalargyrou, 2015). Employers and managers may be concerned with the economic value of disability employment, customer feedback and service quality, while co-workers may be more worried about the impact of working with EWDs (Hui *et al.*, 2021). Disability-related behavioural research that assesses attitudes and interactions of disability employment to increase collaboration between co-workers and EWDs is critical. It should focus on individuals representing the internal ecosystem of the organisation and individuals working directly with EWDs. Hui *et al.* (2021) highlighted the advantages and difficulties of disability employment experienced by work groups and individuals dealing with EWDs. Understanding the elements of positive work behaviour is vital to guaranteeing the long-term viability of disability employment. Further investigations into the disability employment model by Stone and Colella (1996) must consider EWDs' traits, observers' characteristics, legal requirements, organisational norms and policies to understand the treatments towards EWDs.

Moreover, DI research usually treats disabled individuals as a homogenous group. Many disability employment studies used an undifferentiated disability approach, but disability does not constitute a unified group and should not be regarded as such (Darcy, 2010). Prior research neglects invisible disabilities such as cancer and mental illness, which elicit distinct reactions from co-workers and unique disability management. They might face obstacles that prevent full engagement, inability to cope, lack of confidence and therapy effects (Hunter-Jones, 2004). Managers and the organisation must work together to help employees with invisible impairments (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2023). Further investigations are needed to embrace social responsibility and contribute to enabling invisible EWDs' working conditions.

Finally, H&T organisations frequently prioritise DI strategies among EWDs for lower-level positions, particularly in the back office (Kalargyrou *et al.*, 2020a). As more EWDs have advanced degrees and work experience, comprehending their contributions and job satisfaction to meet their self-actualisation requirements is essential (Baldwin *et al.*, 2014). Future research should focus on understanding the experiences and needs of EWDs in higher-status positions and examining the potential positive effects of having such positions within H&T organisations.

## 6. Limitations

The literature review examined past publications on DI in H&T organisations from the perspectives of customers and employees with disabilities. The review debated existing literature surrounding DI across different ecosystems. However, the relationship between DI and other issues, which need to be considered, is not explained. For instance, a review could be done on how DI affects the tourists' satisfaction or how DI practices affect organisational performance or corporate social responsibility goals. Despite these limitations, the current study has carefully reviewed DI in H&T research from a collaborative ecosystem's perspective.

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### Supplementary material

The supplementary material of this article can be found online.

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