

# L'IMPACTE DE LES PRÀCTIQUES DE QUALITAT I MEDIAMBIENTALS EN EL SECTOR DE L'HOSTALERIA

**Marc Oliveras Villanueva**

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TESI DOCTORAL

L'IMPACTE DE LES PRÀCTIQUES DE QUALITAT I  
MEDIAMBIENTALS EN EL SECTOR DE L'HOSTALERIA

MARC OLIVERAS VILLANUEVA

2021





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L'IMPACTE DE LES PRÀCTIQUES DE QUALITAT I  
MEDIAMBIENTALS EN EL SECTOR DE L'HOSTALERIA

MARC OLIVERAS VILLANUEVA

2021

PROGRAMA DE DOCTORAT EN DRET, ECONOMIA I EMPRESA

Director: Josep Llach Pagès PhD

Co-Directors: Jordi Perramon PhD

Memòria presentada per optar al títol de doctor/a per la Universitat de Girona





**Josep Llach Pagès** (PhD) de la Universitat de Girona i **Jordi Perramon** (PhD) de la UPF Barcelona School of Management com director i co-director,

DECLAREM:

Que el treball titulat *L'impacte de les pràctiques de qualitat i mediambientals en el sector de l'hostaleria*, que presenta el Sr. Marc Oliveras Villanueva per a l'obtenció del títol de doctor, ha estat realitzat sota la meva direcció i que compleix els requisits per poder ser presentada en el format de tesi com a compendi d'articles.

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Dr. Josep Llach Pagès

Dr. Jordi Perramon

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Girona, 29 de juliol del 2021.



**Josep Llach Pagès** (PhD) com a coautor dels articles següents:

- Oliveras-Villanueva, M.; Llach, J.; Perramon, J. Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda. *Sustainability* 2020, *12*, 8152. [**published**]
- Perramon, J., Oliveras-Villanueva, M., Llach, J. Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel sector: An empirical approach. [Submitted to *International Journal of Hospitality Management*].

Accepto que el Sr. Marc Oliveras Villanueva presenti els articles esmentats com a autor principal i com a part de la seva tesi doctoral, i que aquests articles no puguin, per tant, formar part de cap altra tesi doctoral.

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- Oliveras-Villanueva, M.; Llach, J.; Perramon, J. Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda. *Sustainability* 2020, *12*, 8152. **[published]**
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## Tesi Doctoral per compendi de publicacions

### Llista de publicacions derivades de la tesi:

- Bagur-Femenías, L.; Perramon, J.; Oliveras-Villanueva, M. Effects of Service Quality Policies in the Tourism Sector Performance: An Empirical Analysis of Spanish Hotels and Restaurants. *Sustainability*, 2019, 11, 872. **[published]** DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11030872>
- Oliveras-Villanueva, M.; Llach, J.; Perramon, J. Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda. *Sustainability* 2020, 12, 8152. **[published]** DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12198152>
- Perramon, J., Oliveras-Villanueva, M., Llach, J. Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel sector: An empirical approach. [Submitted to *International Journal of Hospitality Management*].



*<<Però hui ja passe del drama*

*L'auto-compassió és una condemna*

*Jo tinc set de vida, no de fama*

*No vull ni la reixa, ni la pena>>*

*Estiu*

*ZOO*

A tots els que m'envolten i em fan costat,  
perquè gràcies a la gent que t'estima tot és possible.





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## **Llista d'abreviacions**

COMP	Competitiveness
EMP	Environmental management practices
FINP	Financial performance
FP	Firm performance
ODS	Objectius de desenvolupament sostenible
QMP	Quality management practices
QP	Quality performance
SQ	Service quality

## **Llista de figures**

Figura 1. Estructura de la Introducció.....	7
Figura 2. Diagrama de l'abast de la tesis.....	13



## **Llista de taules**

Taula 1. Estructura de la Tesi.....	12
Taula 2. Estudis de la tesi doctoral.....	14
Taula 3. Objectius, preguntes de recerca i hipòtesis.....	26
Taula 4. Perfil de les empreses de la mostra.....	30
Taula 5. Model de mesura de la mostra.....	31
Taula 6. Model de mesura de la mostra ampliada.....	33



## Índex general

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Resum</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Resumen</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Capítol 1. Introducció</b> .....	<b>7</b>
1.1. Resum executiu .....	7
1.2. Estructura de la tesi .....	11
1.3. Estudis de la tesi doctoral.....	14
<b>Capítol 2. Revisió de la literatura</b> .....	<b>15</b>
2.1. Pràctiques de qualitat del servei en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria.....	15
2.2. Desenvolupament de la qualitat versus desenvolupament de l'empresa.....	17
2.3. Sostenibilitat en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria.....	18
2.4. Relació entre pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria.....	19
2.5. Relació entre pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals sobre la competitivitat en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria.....	21
2.6. Relació entre pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals sobre èxit financer en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria .....	22
2.7. Relació entre competitivitat i èxit financer en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria .....	23
<b>Capítol 3. Preguntes de recerca</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Capítol 4. Metodologia</b> .....	<b>28</b>
4.1. Revisió sistemàtica de la literatura.....	28
4.2. Estudi empíric .....	29
<b>Capítol 5. Articles de la tesi</b> .....	<b>35</b>
<b>Capítol 6. Article 1 - Effects of Service Quality Policies in the Tourism Sector Performance: An Empirical Analysis of Spanish Hotels and Restaurants</b> .....	<b>36</b>
Abstract .....	37
6.1. Introduction .....	37
6.2. Literature Review .....	38
6.3. Measures and Methods.....	40
6.4. Results .....	43
6.5. Results and Discussion.....	44
6.6. Conclusions .....	45
References .....	46
<b>Capítol 7. Article 2 - Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda.</b> .....	<b>50</b>
Abstract .....	51
7.1. Introduction .....	51
7.2. Methodology .....	52
7.3. Content Analysis Stage .....	58
7.4. Discussion .....	60
7.5. Conclusions .....	62
References .....	63



<b>Capítol 8. Article 3 - Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel companies: An empirical approach.</b> .....	<b>67</b>
Abstract .....	70
8.1. Introduction .....	70
8.2. Literature review .....	73
8.3. Methodology .....	79
8.4. Results .....	80
8.5. Discussion of the results .....	83
8.6. Conclusions .....	85
References .....	88
<b>Capítol 9. Resultats i Discussió</b> .....	<b>99</b>
<b>Capítol 10. Conclusions</b> .....	<b>104</b>
10.1. Conclusions i futures línies d'investigació.....	104
10.2. Limitacions de l'estudi .....	107
<b>References</b> .....	<b>109</b>

## **Abstract**

Tourism is one of the drivers of our economy. The importance of this sector, the high competition and the current crisis caused by Covid19 surfaced the need for the operators to gain competitive advantages. Therefore, an in-depth analysis about various practices that can be brought to them is needed. Tourism sector is mainly composed by subsectors of hotels and restaurants. That's why, through a survey of 583 hotel and restaurant managers from Madrid and Catalunya and, along with the extension of this survey to 148 hotel managers in Catalonia, the study of the effects of the implementation of service quality and environmental practices is carried out. The first article, based on an empiric methodology, obtains results that indicates a positive impact of the application of service quality practices on the quality service and the firm performance. The second article presents the state of the art about quality service and environmental practices in the hospitality sector. Finally, the third article, based on an empirical methodology, a positive correlation is obtained between environmental and service quality practices. In addition, the positive impact on competitiveness and financial results is demonstrated, particularly in hotel companies. Therefore, it is proposed to the managers of hotel companies the implementation of this type of practice to improve the firm performance and its impact on the environment. In the academic field, it is proposed that in the future investigations about business management and results, the effect of environmental practices should be considered. And, on the area of policymakers, it is proposed to implement policies that encourage the implementation of these types of practices. Finally, new lines of research can be opened up in order to apply the same empirical model in different territories and sectors, since the geographical limitation is the main one in the study.

## **Keywords**

Hospitality, hotels, restaurants, service quality practices, environmental practices, financial performance, competitiveness, firm performance, service quality, quality performance, sustainability, Spain, Catalonia.



## **Resum**

El turisme és un dels motors de l'economia en el nostre territori. La importància d'aquest sector, l'alta competència i l'actual crisi causada per la Covid19 fan aflorar la necessitat dels operadors d'obtenir avantatges competitius. Per tant, és necessària una anàlisi profunda sobre les diverses pràctiques que els poden aportar. El sector del turisme està compost principalment pels subsectors de l'hostaleria i la restauració. És per això que mitjançant l'enquesta realitzada a 583 mànagers d'hotels i restaurants de Madrid i Catalunya i, junt amb l'ampliació d'aquesta enquesta a 148 mànagers d'hotels a Catalunya, es realitza l'estudi dels efectes de la implementació de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals. El primer article, basant-se en una metodologia empírica, obté uns resultats que indiquen un impacte positiu de l'aplicació de pràctiques de qualitat del servei sobre la qualitat del servei i el bon desenvolupament de l'empresa. En el segon article, es presenta l'estat de l'art fins al moment sobre pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals en el sector de l'hostaleria. Per últim, en el tercer article, basant-se en una metodologia empírica, s'obté com a resultat una correlació positiva entre les pràctiques mediambientals i de qualitat del servei. A part, es demostra l'impacte positiu envers la competitivitat i els resultats financers, concretament en empreses hoteleres. Per tant, es proposa als mànagers de les empreses hoteleres la implementació d'aquesta tipologia de pràctiques per millorar el desenvolupament de l'empresa i el seu impacte en l'entorn. En l'àmbit acadèmic, es proposa que en les futures investigacions sobre gestió i resultats de l'empresa caldrà tenir en compte l'efecte de les pràctiques mediambientals. I, en l'àmbit de la gestió pública, es proposa dur a terme polítiques que incentivin la implementació d'aquestes tipologies de pràctiques. Finalment, s'obren noves línies d'investigació en poder aplicar el mateix model empíric en diferents entorns i sectors empresarials, ja que, la limitació en termes geogràfics és la principal en l'estudi realitzat.

## **Mots clau**

Hostaleria, hotels, restaurants, pràctiques de qualitat del servei, pràctiques mediambientals, desenvolupament financer, competitivitat, desenvolupament de l'empresa, qualitat del servei, desenvolupament de la qualitat, sostenibilitat, Espanya, Catalunya.



## **Resumen**

El turismo es uno de los motores de la economía en nuestro territorio. La importancia de este sector, la alta competencia y la actual crisis causada por la Covid19 hacen aflorar la necesidad de los operadores de obtener ventajas competitivas. Por lo tanto, es necesario un análisis profundo sobre las diversas prácticas que los pueden aportar. El sector del turismo está compuesto principalmente por los subsectores de la hostelería y la restauración. Es por eso por lo que mediante la encuesta realizada a 583 managers de hoteles y restaurantes de Madrid y Cataluña y, junto con la ampliación de esta encuesta a 148 managers de hoteles en Cataluña, se realiza el estudio de los efectos de la implementación de las prácticas de calidad del servicio y medioambientales. El primer artículo, basándose en una metodología empírica, obtiene unos resultados que indican un impacto positivo de la aplicación de prácticas de calidad del servicio sobre la calidad del servicio y el buen desarrollo de la empresa. En el segundo artículo, se presenta el estado del arte hasta el momento sobre prácticas de calidad del servicio y medioambientales en el sector de la hostelería. Por último, en el tercer artículo, basándose en una metodología empírica, se obtiene como resultado una correlación positiva entre las prácticas medioambientales y de calidad del servicio. Aparte, se demuestra el impacto positivo hacia la competitividad y los resultados financieros, concretamente en empresas hoteleras. Por lo tanto, se propone a los managers de las empresas hoteleras la implementación de esta tipología de prácticas para mejorar el desarrollo de la empresa y su impacto en el entorno. En el ámbito académico, se propone que en las futuras investigaciones sobre gestión y resultados de la empresa habrá que tener en cuenta el efecto de las prácticas medioambientales. Y, en el ámbito de la gestión pública, se propone llevar a cabo políticas que incentiven la implementación de estas tipologías de prácticas. Finalmente, se abren nuevas líneas de investigación al poder aplicar el mismo modelo empírico en diferentes entornos y sectores empresariales, puesto que, la limitación en términos geográficos es la principal en el estudio realizado.

## **Palabras clave**

Hostelería, hoteles, restaurantes, prácticas de calidad del servicio, prácticas medioambientales, desarrollo financiero, competitividad, desarrollo de la empresa, calidad del servicio, desarrollo de la calidad, sostenibilidad, España, Cataluña.



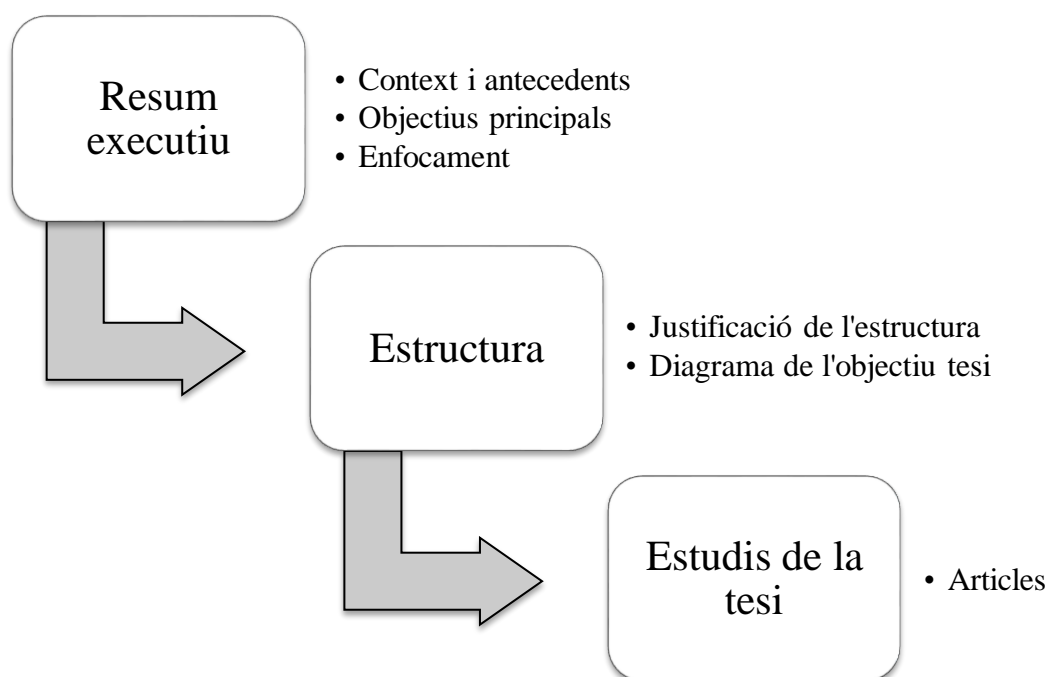
## Capítol 1. Introducció

Aquest primer capítol té com a objectiu explicar l'estructura d'aquesta tesi, el seu context i antecedents. Tanmateix, s'explica l'enfocament de la tesi establint els límits del seu abast.

El resum executiu presenta el context, antecedents i objectius generals de la investigació. Després, s'introdueix la justificació i descripció de l'estructura final de la tesi.

Per últim, per tancar la introducció, es mostren els articles realitzats a partir d'aquesta investigació.

**Figura 1.** Estructura de la Introducció.



### 1.1. Resum executiu

#### 1.1.1. Context i antecedents

Actualment, la composició de la producció econòmica d'Espanya destaca per l'alt impacte del sector turístic en el PIB. Concretament, se situa al voltant del 12,4% d'aportació al PIB i en un 12,9% de llocs de treball (INE, 2020), i està compost principalment pels subsectors de l'hostaleria i la restauració. Aquests dos subsectors són claus en l'economia del país. A part, es considera Espanya com una de les potències turístiques mundials, sent el segon país del món en nombre de visitants amb uns 83



milions de turistes (OMT, 2019) i on van gastar el 2019 més de 91.912 milions d'euros. (IDESCAT, 2019).

Tot i que, les dades que s'estudien en aquesta tesi són abans de la Covid-19, cal destacar que l'arribada de la pandèmia ha afectat greument al sector turístic, on les restriccions s'han centrat a limitar la mobilitat i vida social de les persones. Com a conseqüència, l'hostaleria i la restauració han vist com la seva activitat s'ha reduït (IDESCAT, 2021). De la mateixa manera que es pot afirmar que aquest sector és un dels motors econòmics del país, també es pot afirmar que, la crisi que s'està vivint a escala global es veu agreujada en el nostre territori per aquest fet. En moments difícils, on hi ha una demanda reduïda en el sector turístic, encara pren més importància la diferenciació en les empreses per guanyar avantatges competitius.

Un dels factors clau per millorar la competitivitat és la qualitat del servei (SQ – *Service Quality*) (Casadesus, Marimon, & Alonso, 2010). A part, no només té efectes externs sinó que de forma interna la SQ millora els processos (Tarí, Heras-Saizarbitoria, & Dick, 2014). És per això, que la gestió de les pràctiques de qualitat (QMP – *Quality Management Practices*) pot fer que el client consumeixi i es fidelitzi en major o menor grau, i per tant, que el resultat financer augmenti (FINP – *Financial Performance*). Tanmateix, pot tenir un efecte, positiu o no, sobre el desenvolupament empresarial (FP – *Firm Performance*) també anomenat desenvolupament de l'empresa envers la competència (COMP – *Competitiveness*). Juntament amb aquest factor, en trobem un altre: la sostenibilitat. La població cada vegada està més conscienciada i valora de forma positiva que l'empresa tingui una bona gestió de les pràctiques mediambientals (EMP – *Environmental Management Practices*) (Moise, Gil-Saura, Šerić, & Ruiz Molina, 2019). No només això, sinó que també estan disposats a pagar un preu superior pel servei si es realitzen aquesta tipologia de pràctiques (Modica, Altinay, Farmaki, Gursoy, & Zenga, 2020; Xu & Gursoy, 2015).

Anteriorment, diversos investigadors han realitzat estudis per demostrar empíricament la relació entre les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i el desenvolupament i bon rendiment empresarial (Akbaba, 2006; Chen, 2013; Cheng, Zabid, & Rashid, 2013). Tanmateix, alguns estudis han arribat a provar aquesta relació positiva, però amb limitacions, deixant clar que per aquesta tipologia d'estudis influeixen de forma clara factors de l'entorn (Fernández-Robin, Celemín-Pedroche, Santander-Astorga, & Alonso-Almeida, 2019), la

zona d'estudi i el sector (Buffa, Franch, & Rizio, 2018; Fernández-Robin et al., 2019), la dimensió de les empreses (Alonso-Almeida, Bagur-Femenias, Llach, & Perramon, 2018; Buffa et al., 2018; Doh, Park, & Kim, 2017), entre d'altres.

Tot i que s'han obtingut resultats robustos, les limitacions esmentades dels estudis anteriors són la principal dificultat per poder determinar conclusions i extreure resultats vàlids de qualsevol entorn o sector. Per tant, per estudiar amb profunditat un sector i entorn, és imprescindible realitzar aquest anàlisi per comprovar la relació entre aquests factors. És per això, que la primera contribució original prevista és l'estudi dels efectes de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat (QP – *Quality Performance*) i de l'empresa en un sector específic com el turístic. Concretament en el seus principals subsectors, en hotels i restaurants. Aquest estudi es realitza en un entorn concret, com són les províncies i voltants de Barcelona i Madrid, seleccionades perquè són les que tenen més volum de turistes d'Espanya (INE, 2021). És per aquests motius que la tesi estudia aquesta relació en el primer article, i on també, busca contribuir amb resultats empírics que ho avalin en el entorn i sector estudiat.

Les pràctiques mediambientals estan guanyant en importància dins el món empresarial donat el seu impacte a la societat (Hall, 2019; UN, 2015, 2019). No obstant això, pocs estudis combinen les pràctiques mediambientals amb les de qualitat del servei, i els autors ho analitzen de forma individualitzada. Per tant, és difícil identificar quins efectes tenen quan actuen de forma conjunta i quina correlació tenen entre si aquestes tipologies de pràctiques.

Una segona contribució que aporta aquesta tesi és l'anàlisi de l'estat de l'art fins al moment sobre les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals. Amb aquest pas previ, es poden identificar diferents *gaps* en la investigació existent i proposar una agenda per a la investigació futura.

Per últim, com a tercera contribució original, aquesta tesi aporta l'estudi de la correlació i l'impacte conjunt de les dues tipologies de pràctiques en el desenvolupament de l'empresa en el sector hotelier. Contribueix clarament a la literatura proporcionant resultats específics en una àrea determinada, en aquest cas Catalunya, convertint-la en un punt de referència per a altres destinacions turístiques. A part, la contribució tanca un buit en la literatura sobre el subsector específic de les empreses hoteleres respecte a l'impacte

conjunt de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i les pràctiques mediambientals en dos factors empresarials clau com són la competitivitat i el rendiment financer.

En el context actual aquestes dues tipologies de pràctiques afecten als principals actors de la societat, com les empreses i professionals, l'entorn i els ciutadans, el món acadèmic i la gestió pública. Per aquest motiu, l'objectiu principal de la tesi és l'estudi de l'impacte de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei amb la introducció de les pràctiques mediambientals sobre el desenvolupament de l'empresa en el sector de l'hostaleria, analitzant la correlació entre les dues tipologies de pràctiques.

Amb els resultats i les conclusions de l'estudi, es vol aportar més informació sobre l'aplicació i gestió d'aquestes pràctiques i unes recomanacions pels diferents actors implicats en la societat.

### *1.1.2. Objectiu principal i subobjectius de la investigació*

En aquest apartat es presenten l'objectiu principal i els subobjectius de la investigació que serveixen com a base pel treball de recerca realitzat en la tesi, i permeten formular les preguntes de recerca del capítol 3.

Com s'ha definit en el punt anterior, l'objectiu principal de la tesi és l'estudi de l'impacte de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei amb la introducció de les pràctiques mediambientals sobre el desenvolupament de l'empresa en el sector de l'hostaleria, analitzant la correlació entre les dues tipologies de pràctiques.

Basant-se en el context i antecedents plantejats anteriorment, els primers subobjectius de la tesi són;

- Identificar l'efecte d'implementar pràctiques de gestió de la qualitat del servei sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat en l'empresa.
- Analitzar la relació entre pràctiques de gestió de la qualitat del servei sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat.
- Estudiar la relació entre pràctiques de gestió de la qualitat del servei sobre el desenvolupament de l'empresa mitjançant el desenvolupament de la qualitat.

- Explorar les diferències entre tipologies d'empreses dins el sector de l'hostaleria.

La implementació i gestió de les pràctiques mediambientals està guanyant importància com a factor clau en l'empresa. Per això, en segon lloc, s'introdueix aquest concepte amb les pràctiques de qualitat del servei, ja que no hi ha molts estudis previs on contextualitzi la literatura que parla dels dos factors conjuntament en el sector de l'hostaleria. S'estableixen els subobjectius següents:

- Contribuir a identificar *gaps* en la literatura i aportar noves preguntes d'investigació.
- Explorar quines característiques componen les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i les mediambientals en el sector de l'hostaleria.

Un cop plantejats els subobjectius anteriors, s'estudia empíricament la introducció de la implementació de les pràctiques mediambientals. Atès a aquest estudi, es plantegen els últims subobjectius de la tesi, aquest cop específicament sobre empreses hoteleres.

- Conèixer la correlació entre la implementació de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i les pràctiques de gestió mediambiental.
- Estudiar la relació que tenen les pràctiques tant de qualitat del servei com mediambientals sobre el desenvolupament de la competitivitat en l'empresa.
- Comprendre la relació que tenen les pràctiques tant de qualitat del servei com mediambientals sobre el resultat i desenvolupament financer en l'empresa.
- Identificar quina tipologia de relació té el desenvolupament de la competitivitat en l'empresa sobre l'evolució del resultat financer.

## 1.2. Estructura de la tesi

La present tesi doctoral es presenta en els Estudis de Doctora del Programa de Dret, Economia i Empresa en format de compendi d'articles. En aquesta tesi consten tres estudis, dos d'aquests publicats en revistes científiques i un en procés de revisió. El compendi d'aquests articles recull els resultats d'un projecte d'investigació únic.

Els articles s'han inclòs com a capítols específics en la secció de resultats a mesura que s'han anat publicant, sempre respectant el contingut i els requisits de la revista específica en termes de format. La bibliografia de cada estudi manté el seu format original. A part, s'afegeix un capítol final específic de la bibliografia inclosa en els altres capítols de la tesi.

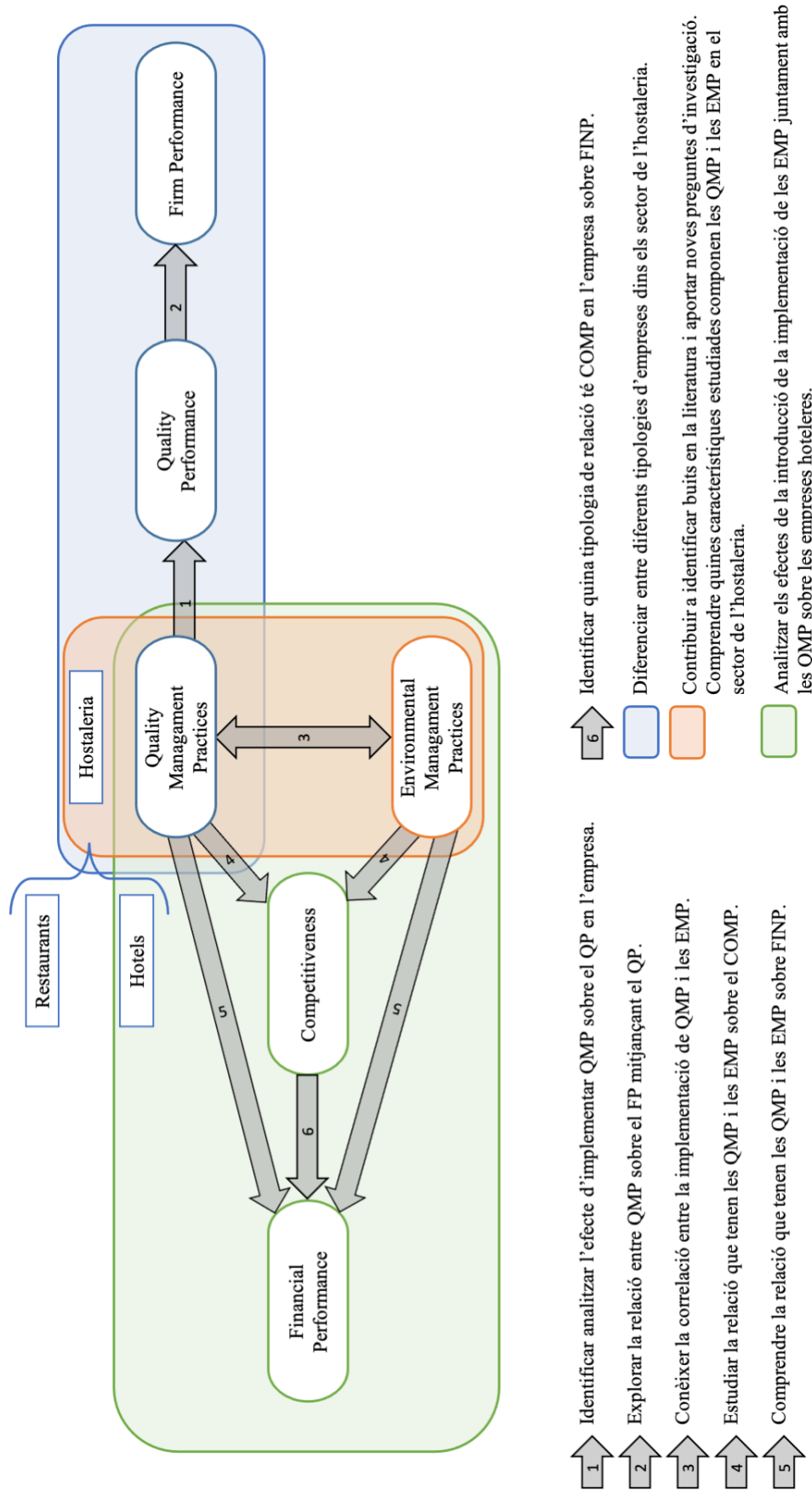
La numeració de taules i figures és diferent en aquests capítols específics referents als articles inclosos en els resultats. La resta de taules i figures segueixen un sistema de numeració continu en la resta de tesi.

A la Taula 1 es presenta l'estructura de la tesi diferenciant els diferents apartats que la formen. En la Figura 2 en canvi, es proporciona una visió gràfica de l'abast i factors de l'estudi d'aquesta tesi.

**Taula 1.** Estructura de la Tesi.

REVISIÓ DE LA LITERATURA	La literatura s'organitza en diferents punts segons l'aspecte estudiat en cada cas. Conté les revisions bibliogràfiques de cada estudi inclòs en el capítol de resultats.
OBJECTIUS	Aquest apartat presenta els objectius, les preguntes recerca i les hipòtesis d'aquesta tesi classificats per articles.
METODOLOGIA	Es resumeix la metodologia utilitzada en cadascun dels estudis del capítol de resultats. També es presenten les dades de la mostra i les variables utilitzades.
RESULTATS	Es presenten en forma d'estudis, els quals s'han publicat en revistes indexades. Un total de tres estudis.
DISCUSSIÓ	S'interpreten els resultats obtinguts i la seva rellevància. Ordenant els principals descobriments en forma de resposta a les preguntes de recerca plantejades.
CONCLUSIONS	Aquest últim apartat presenta les conclusions més importants de la tesi tenint en compte la seva implicació per acadèmics, per professionals i per la gestió pública.

**Figura 2.** Diagrama de l'abast de la tesis.



### 1.3. Estudis de la tesi doctoral

A continuació es presenten en la Taula 2, els articles derivats de la tesi.

**Taula 2.** Estudis de la tesi doctoral.

<b>Estudi 1</b>	<i>Effects of Service Quality Policies in the Tourism Sector Performance: An Empirical Analysis of Spanish Hotels and Restaurants.</i>
<b>Estudi 2</b>	<i>Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda.</i>
<b>Estudi 3</b>	<i>Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel sector: An empirical approach.</i>

En el capítol 5 es detallen les característiques de cada article. Aquests, tant els dos publicats com l'article en procés de revisió, es troben íntegrament en els capítols 6, 7 i 8 de la tesi.

## Capítol 2. Revisió de la literatura

Aquest capítol presenta la revisió de la literatura, inclosa en l'estudi d'aquesta tesi, de forma organitzada en diferents seccions per analitzar cadascun dels elements i/o relacions que s'estudien.

### 2.1. Pràctiques de qualitat del servei en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria

En l'actualitat, les xarxes socials, les noves plataformes *online*, la competència intensificada i un augment de l'oferta han creat nous reptes i dificultats per les empreses del sector turístic. Durant els pròxims anys hauran d'afrontar aquests reptes que posaran a prova la seva capacitat per sobreviure a aquests canvis. Des d'una visió empresarial, la gerència serà la responsable de gestionar totes les variables i la informació per prendre les decisions correctes, per tal d'assegurar la supervivència a llarg termini. Justament en aquesta presa de decisions és on la gestió de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei ha de jugar un paper clau com a facilitador (Bagur-Femenías, Perramon, & Amat, 2015).

Investigacions prèvies que se centren en el sector dels serveis, estableixen que la qualitat, i per tant la seva gestió, és clau per la supervivència (Alonso-Almeida, Bagur-Femenías, & Llach, 2015; Lee, To, & Yu, 2009; Singh, Garg, & Deshmukh, 2008; Yang, 2006). Tanmateix, hi ha autors que han demostrat que no totes les pràctiques de qualitat són adequades per a totes les empreses (Zhao, Yeung, & Lee, 2004), i que no hi ha una única via cap a l'èxit (Leonard & McAdam, 2003).

Per tant, a partir d'aquests estudis se suggereix que el sector turístic i el de l'hostaleria no es pot tractar com una entitat única, i que per obtenir resultats i conclusions més robustes, cal analitzar els subsectors que conformen la indústria per separat. Per això, aquesta tesi doctoral estudia un subsector concret, com és l'hostaleria, i si hi ha diferències degudes a la tipologia de l'empresa pel que fa als efectes derivats de la implementació de pràctiques de qualitat.

Estudis previs discuteixen sobre els factors que influeixen en les pràctiques de qualitat del servei en l'hostaleria. Els primers factors són els ambientals, que impacten a través dels components ecològics de l'entorn (Bastič & Gojčič, 2012; Slevitch, Mathe, Karpova, & Scott-Halsell, 2013), dels equipaments utilitzats pel servei (Blesic, Cerovic, & Dragicevic, 2011), el mateix producte o servei que s'ofereix que sigui respectuós amb el



medi ambient (Bastič & Gojčič, 2012; Chou, Horng, Liu, Huang, & Chung, 2016), i per últim, les pràctiques sostenibles que duen a terme l'empresa (George I. Kassinis & Soteriou, 2015).

Uns altres factors són els del negoci, que expliquen la relació entre l'èxit en qualitat del servei amb la gestió dels recursos humans en aspectes com la formació i el benestar del treballador, i això repercuteix en la percepció de qualitat per part del client (Al-Refaie, 2015; Cairncross, Wilde, & Hutchinson, 2008).

Seguidament es troben els factors humans que, d'acord amb el gènere i el capital intel·lectual, expliquen que unes millors pràctiques de qualitat i millor comportament ambiental incideixen en la millora de la competitivitat i satisfacció del client, i com a resultat millora de la percepció de qualitat (Metaxas, Chatzoglou, & Koulouriotis, 2019; Wilkins, 2010).

Per últim, es troben els factors relacionats segons la tipologia de client. Hi ha el factor econòmic, que segmenta al client segons capacitat econòmica, classe social i ocupació (Blesic et al., 2011). També apareix el factor motivacional, que segmenta al client segons el propòsit de l'ús, l'objectiu i la motivació per un servei amb enfocament sostenible i de major qualitat (Wilkins, 2010). I el factor relacional, que estudien els efectes de satisfacció i fidelització del client amb una tipologia de pràctiques de qualitat del servei (Kassinis & Soteriou, 2015; Slevitch et al., 2013), i aquest factor té un impacte positiu en el desenvolupament de l'empresa (Metaxas et al., 2019).

Altres estudis previs s'han enfocat a detectar la millora del rendiment de les empreses del sector de l'hostaleria com restaurants i hotels (Lai & Hitchcock, 2015; Tseng, 2009). A part, hi ha varies investigacions que determinen una relació positiva entre les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i la satisfacció del client en la indústria hostalera (Mhlanga, 2018; Mhlanga, Hattingh, & Moolman, 2015; Wilkins, Merrilees, & Herington, 2007), i també d'altres amb la percepció de qualitat que té el consumidor (Tsaur & Lin, 2004). En conseqüència, per assolir l'èxit i la supervivència empresarial, la millora d'aquesta qualitat del servei és clau en un sector tan competitiu com és el de l'hostaleria (Akbaba, 2006; Chen, 2013; Cheng et al., 2013). Per aquest motiu en la present tesi, s'intentarà demostrar si la bona gestió d'aquestes pràctiques de qualitat del servei, en empreses d'hostaleria d'un entorn concret, permet i facilita el seu desenvolupament i èxit empresarial.

## 2.2. Desenvolupament de la qualitat versus desenvolupament de l'empresa

Com s'ha vist en el punt anterior, hi ha diversos estudis que se centren a investigar la millora del rendiment de l'empresa. Malgrat això, hi ha algun autor que determinava que no s'arribava a conclusions definitives sobre l'èxit i bon desenvolupament de l'empresa a causa de la implementació de QMP (Nair, 2006). Però, la majoria d'autors (Alonso-Almeida, Rodríguez-Antón, & Rubio-Andrada, 2012; Bäckström, Ingelsson, & Johansson, 2016; Viada-Stenger, Balbastre-Benavent, & Redondo-Cano, 2010), afirmen que adoptar polítiques de qualitat com a part d'una estratègia empresarial global millora la competitivitat. Aquestes polítiques de qualitat que expliquen i estandarditzen processos, i que detecten els elements valuosos pel client, també es focalitzen en la formació de processos clau. Aquests processos clau milloren el rendiment del treballador i la satisfacció del client amb l'empresa comparada amb els seus competidors (Molina-Azorín, Claver-Cortés, Pereira-Moliner, & Tarí, 2009; Sadikoglu & Zehir, 2010), i això genera lleialtat (Yee, Yeung, & Edwin Cheng, 2010).

Per tant, l'empresa, a causa de la cadena de factors interconnectats, pot obtenir un avantatge competitiva que millora la seva imatge (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2012; Rodríguez Antón, Alonso Almeida, & Rubio Andrada, 2011) i farà augmentar les vendes a partir de maximitzar el rendiment dels clients actuals i l'obtenció de nous (Douglas & Judge, 2001). Tanmateix, un millor posicionament en el mercat també pot permetre a l'empresa una millor resistència davant possibles crisis i un augment de la capacitat de mantenir-se dins el mercat (Alonso-Almeida & Bremser, 2013; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2012; Rubio-Andrada, Alonso-Almeida, & Rodríguez-Antón, 2011).

Altres investigadors han trobat altres vies per millorar el desenvolupament de l'empresa en el sector de l'hostaleria. En primer lloc, hi ha estudis que determinen que les QMP permeten progressar cap a sistemes d'informació més avançats, i així, facilitar la presa de decisions (Claver-Cortés, Pertusa Ortega, & Zaragoza-Sáez, 2008; Ruiz-Molina, Gil-Saura, & Moliner-Velázquez, 2011). En segon lloc, altres investigacions expliquen que, el desenvolupament de la qualitat i les seves pràctiques no només pot generar més vendes, sinó que pot provocar una reducció de costos a través d'eliminar activitats que no generen valor i millorant l'eficiència de tasques clau, i per tant, a la millora del desenvolupament de l'empresa (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2012; Rodríguez-Antón & Alonso-Almeida, 2011; Rubio-Andrada et al., 2011; Terlaak & King, 2006).

Seguint amb la línia d'aquests estudis, sembla clar que la majoria d'autors aposten pel desenvolupament de la qualitat com a via per millorar del desenvolupament empresarial, i justifica la millora de la competitivitat a través d'aquesta millora integral de factors i processos de l'empresa. És per això, que en aquesta tesi, s'estudia la relació entre QP i FP, de forma empírica en un sector i entorn concret, per poder corroborar i aportar més informació en les investigacions prèvies.

### 2.3. Sostenibilitat en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria

Un dels elements que en els últims anys ha guanyat més importància en la indústria del turisme i els serveis és la sostenibilitat, que s'integra mitjançant les pràctiques mediambientals que duen a terme les empreses. Per això, la importància del turisme sostenible ja es reflecteix amb la seva inclusió en els Objectius de Desenvolupament Sostenible (ODS) establerts per les Nacions Unides (ONU) per a l'any 2030 (Hall, 2019; UN, 2015). Concretament, l'ODS 8 tracta sobre el creixement econòmic sostenible i una de les seves metes és la plena ocupació que inclou polítiques per ajudar a promoure el turisme sostenible i crear ocupació local (UN, 2019). No només això, sinó que les qüestions relacionades amb la contaminació, el consum d'energia i la reducció de residus, entre altres pràctiques mediambientals són un àmbit important en la investigació acadèmica (Li, Wu, & Gao, 2019; Stavropoulos, Wall, & Xu, 2018).

Concretament, el sector turístic ha arribat a representar el 8% de les emissions de gasos d'efecte hivernacle (Lenzen et al., 2018). D'aquesta dada no se'n tenia constància fins ara, ja que els impactes del sector es dividien en múltiples proveïdors de serveis i això provocava molta dificultat per mesurar els impactes (El Dief & Font, 2010; González-Benito & González-Benito, 2006). Per aquest motiu, des de fa uns anys, existeix una preocupació creixent pels efectes negatius del desenvolupament turístic. S'assenyala com a culpables a les empreses del sector turístic per les pràctiques amb impacte mediambiental i social que duen a terme (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Camilleri, 2014; Kornilaki & Font, 2019).

Per això, un dels efectes que es vol estudiar és el de la inclusió de les pràctiques sostenibles combinades amb la gestió de la qualitat, les quals haurien d'incidir de forma

positiva en els resultats i el desenvolupament de l'empresa, i no comportar una reducció de la qualitat dels serveis.

A més, les pràctiques sostenibles, com les pràctiques de qualitat, es consideren un element important en termes de reputació. Concretament, en el sector de l'hostaleria les certificacions de pràctiques sostenibles constitueixen un avantatge competitiu (Cavero-Rubio & Amorós-Martínez, 2020) i donen a les empreses una millor reputació entre els clients (Falkenberg & Brunsæl, 2011; Jones, Hillier, & Comfort, 2016). A part, investigacions prèvies mostren una associació positiva entre les pràctiques mediambientals i l'èxit empresarial en el sector de l'hostaleria (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Llach, Perramon, Alonso-Almeida, & Bagur-Femenías, 2013). Per això, en l'estudi realitzat s'investigarà l'impacte de l'aplicació i gestió de pràctiques sostenibles en un segment concret del sector de l'hostaleria.

#### 2.4. Relació entre pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria

Com s'ha determinat en estudis anteriors, ja fa uns anys que les empreses intenten ser cada vegada més sostenibles i respectuoses amb el medi ambient (Bini, Bellucci, & Giunta, 2018; Figge, Hahn, Schaltegger, & Wagner, 2002; Lo & Sheu, 2007). Però no és un element nou, sinó que des d'inicis dels anys noranta el concepte sostenibilitat i les seves pràctiques s'incorporen al sector de l'hostaleria (Legrand, Chen, & Sloan, 2013).

Aquest creixement de la preocupació per la sostenibilitat i les pràctiques mediambientals en el sector de l'hostaleria afecten un dels factors clau del sector, com són les pràctiques de qualitat del servei, i això té un impacte positiu en els consumidors (Kassinis & Soteriou, 2015; Slevitch et al., 2013). A part, trobem autors que determinen que la implantació de bones QMP beneficien significativament la promoció i el desenvolupament de les EMP (Yang & Kang, 2019).

Els dos factors són claus en el sector, i aquest fet ha provocat l'interès per l'estudi sobre les QMP i EMP i la seva influència positiva sobre la competitivitat de l'empresa (Bernardo, Simon, Tarí, & Molina-Azorín, 2015; Llach et al., 2013; Prajogo, Tang, & Lai, 2012; Sun, Zhao, & Yau, 2009). Investigant els dos factors en el sector turístic, s'han realitzat estudis sobre la relació positiva que poden tenir els QMP sobre la competitivitat

i el rendiment financer de l'empresa (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2012; Bagur-Femenías, Perramon, & Oliveras-Villanueva, 2019a; Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017; Rodríguez Antón et al., 2011; Rubio-Andrada et al., 2011) i també els EMP (Gürlek, Düzgün, & Meydan Uygur, 2017; Kassinis & Soteriou, 2015; Perramon, Alonso-Almeida, Llach, & Bagur-Femenías, 2014; Rodríguez-Antón & Alonso-Almeida, 2011).

Com veiem, aquests estudis plantejaven l'efecte de forma separada, no obstant això, en els últims anys, han anat apareixent en menor quantitat estudis combinant els dos factors. Com en el cas de les petites empreses del sector turístic, concretament en la restauració (María del Mar Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Cheng, Chang, Tsai, Chen, & Tseng, 2019; Llach et al., 2013). Sobre les empreses hoteleres, l'altre gran subsector del sector turístic, la literatura indica que el comportament respecte a aquests factors ve determinat per l'entorn on operen (Fernández-Robin et al., 2019) i per la mida del negoci (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Buffa et al., 2018; Doh et al., 2017). Això, a causa de que aquest sector s'ha d'estudiar tenint en compte la diferenciació entre tipus de negoci (Bagur-Femenías, Llach, & del Mar Alonso-Almeida, 2013; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2015; Rodríguez-Antón, Alonso-Almeida, Celemín, & Rubio, 2012), la categoria (Alonso-Almeida & Rodríguez-Antón, 2011; Rodríguez-Antón et al., 2012), les característiques i pràctiques ecològiques (Best & Thapa, 2013; Tamajón & Aulet, 2013), i el tipus de viatger (Alonso-Almeida, Rodríguez-Antón, & Rubio-Andrada, 2012; Lee & Park, 2009).

Per aquest motiu, en aquesta tesi s'ha decidit estudiar l'efecte conjunt dels dos factors esmentats sobre la competitivitat de l'empresa i el seu desenvolupament financer en un subsector i una zona concreta. Com s'ha vist en estudis anteriors (Buffa et al., 2018; Fernández-Robin et al., 2019), l'entorn i les característiques concretes del sector afecten al comportament d'aquests factors i al seu impacte. Concretament podem trobar aquest estudi en el tercer article de la tesi.

## 2.5. Relació entre pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals sobre la competitivitat en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria

En termes de qualitat, la gestió d'aquesta, està vinculada a millores en l'àmbit d'operacions internes i al manteniment de l'empresa i els seus recursos (Angell & Klassen, 1999; Yang, Hong, & Modi, 2011). Per tant, les pràctiques de qualitat són plans dissenyats amb l'objectiu d'aconseguir aquestes millores. Investigacions anteriors defineixen que, plans com planificar processos, establir objectius, definir tasques i assignar gerents, ajuden a millorar en termes d'eficiència i reduir costos operatius (Iyer, Saranga, & Seshadri, 2013).

Altres estudis expliquen una relació positiva entre les pràctiques de qualitat i l'eficiència operativa, la reducció de costos, la qualitat, la flexibilitat i el desenvolupament de l'empresa (Al-Refaie, 2015; Yang, Lin, Chan, & Sheu, 2010; Yang et al., 2011), igual que també milloren els resultats operatius i els avantatges competitius (Dortyol, Varinli, & Kitapci, 2014; Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017; Prajogo, 2011). Tanmateix, les QMP ajuden a eliminar defectes en processos organitzacionals amb l'objectiu d'augmentar l'eficiència (Jabbour, Jabbour, Latan, Teixeira, & de Oliveira, 2014; Pereira-Moliner, Claver-Cortés, Molina-Azorín, & José Tarí, 2012).

Estudis recents vinculats amb el sector turístic, concretament amb l'hostaleria, indiquen que cada cop són més les empreses que apliquen estàndards i pràctiques de qualitat del servei per a millorar la competitivitat (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso, Ariza, Hernández-Calvento, & Pérez-Chacón, 2018; Shafiq, Lasrado, & Hafeez, 2019).

Tot i que les QMP tenen un efecte directe en la competitivitat, es veu com en la implementació de EMP també té un efecte positiu en la millora d'aquesta (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018), i apart, genera activitats més sostenibles que ens ajuden a tenir una economia més verda (Kraus, Burtscher, Niemand, Roig-Tierno, & Syrjä, 2017). Malgrat això, s'ha vist en estudis que per integrar aquesta tipologia de pràctiques, les raons de la gerència no només són la reputació de l'empresa i l'estalvi en costos, sinó que, també els seus valors personals, les seves actituds i reconèixer els problemes mediambientals (Best & Thapa, 2013; Kornilaki & Font, 2019).

Investigacions anteriors ja van concloure que les empreses veurien afectada cada vegada més la seva capacitat de competir en el mercat per la seva relació amb la sostenibilitat

(Hitchens, Thankappan, Trainor, Clausen, & De Marchi, 2005). Per tant, ja feia preveure la importància creixent de l'adopció de pràctiques mediambientals per part de les empreses. Aquestes pràctiques, com determinen alguns estudis en hotels, afecten la societat i l'economia, ja que tenen impacte sobre el consum d'energia i recursos, i afecten l'empresa, ja que milloren la seva imatge i generen avantatges competitiu (Best & Thapa, 2013; Hsiao & Chuang, 2016; Leonidou, Leonidou, Fotiadis, & Zeriti, 2013; Llach, Perramon, Alonso-Almeida, & Bagur-Femenías, 2013; Perramon et al., 2014). Amb tot això, una de les recomanacions que es transmeten a la gerència i directiva de les empreses és implantar i millorar aquesta tipologia de pràctiques, ja que, poden impactar de forma positiva sobre el desenvolupament de l'empresa (Annunziata, Pucci, Frey, & Zanni, 2018; Babu, Kaur, & Rajendran, 2018).

En aquesta tesi s'intenta abordar empíricament els efectes d'aquesta tipologia de pràctiques en el sector de l'hostaleria i concretament en empreses hoteleres. D'aquesta manera intentar aportar més informació i confirmar els estudis previs en un entorn i situació geogràfica diferent.

## 2.6. Relació entre pràctiques de qualitat del servei i mediambientals sobre èxit financer en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria

Com s'ha vist en el punt anterior, les QMP s'implementen en l'empresa per millorar aspectes com el servei, el producte, la productivitat, i que aquests millorin l'eficiència de l'empresa i la reducció de costos (Al-Refaie, 2015; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Shafiq et al., 2019). Donada aquesta millora operativa, hi ha estudis que indiquen una relació positiva entre l'èxit financer i la implementació de les QMP (Yang et al., 2010; Yang & Kang, 2019). Estudis previs afirmen que en el sector de l'hostaleria s'adopten les QMP per a millorar el desenvolupament de la qualitat i financer de l'empresa (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018), i que determinen que hi ha una relació positiva entre aquestes pràctiques i el resultat financer (Arbelo-Pérez, Arbelo, & Pérez-Gómez, 2017; Llach et al., 2013; Nair & Choudhary, 2016).

Tanmateix, en aquest sector es troba dins de les tres prioritats més importants per la gerència la gestió i aplicació de pràctiques mediambientals (Agyeiwaah, 2019; Coles, Dinan, & Warren, 2016). Per tant, alguns estudis recomanen que s'implementin aquesta

tipologia de pràctiques, no només per la millora social i ambiental, sinó per la millora que suposa sobre el resultat financer (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Annunziata et al., 2018; Bell & Ruhanen, 2016; Jiang, Chai, Shao, & Feng, 2018). Ja que, com confirmen altres estudis, existeix una relació directa entre EMP i el desenvolupament financer de l'empresa (de Almeida & de Melo, 2017; Eccles, Ioannou, & Serafeim, 2014; Grewatsch & Kleindienst, 2017; Zhang, Khan, Lee, & Salik, 2019). No obstant això, hi ha investigacions que determinen una relació positiva però de forma indirecta (Gao, Li, & Khan, 2019; Yang & Kang, 2019).

Per això, aquesta tesi intenta aportar més informació sobre la relació d'aquesta tipologia de pràctiques i la seva gestió amb l'èxit financer de l'empresa. Ja que, com indiquen alguns estudis (Garay, Font, & Corrons, 2019; Papagiannakis & Lioukas, 2012), hi ha la necessitat d'investigar de forma profunda les característiques de l'entorn i el context del sector de l'hostaleria per veure com afecta el comportament sostenible de l'empresa amb la implementació de EMP. A més, s'ha de tenir en compte que implementar QMP en empreses diferents pot portar a diferents resultats i efectes sobre l'èxit financer de l'empresa. Per aquests motius, l'actual tesi presenta un estudi empíric en un entorn i subsector d'empreses concret per així estudiar els impactes d'aquestes pràctiques.

## 2.7. Relació entre competitivitat i èxit financer en el sector del turisme i l'hostaleria

Anteriorment, s'han vist estudis que indicaven que les QMP i EMP tenen un efecte positiu sobre la competitivitat en el sector de l'hostaleria (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Shafiq et al., 2019). Estudis previs demostraven que les EMP ajuden a reduir el consum d'energia i recursos, i que a part, milloren la seva imatge corporativa i poden guanyar un avantatge competitiu (Best & Thapa, 2013; Hsiao & Chuang, 2016; Leonidou et al., 2013; Llach et al., 2013; Perramon et al., 2014). També s'ha estudiat com les QMP tenen una relació positiva i beneficien a l'eficiència operativa, la reducció de costos millorant la qualitat i la flexibilitat, i beneficiant així al desenvolupament de l'empresa (Dortyol et al., 2014; Mmutle & Shonhe, 2017; Prajogo, 2011). Malgrat això, tot i que totes aquestes pràctiques poden millorar la competitivitat, no es veu un impacte que assegurí una millora directa de l'èxit financer de l'empresa. Sí que, en alguns estudis en hotels, s'indica un efecte positiu entre competitivitat i desenvolupament financer



(González-Rodríguez, Jiménez-Caballero, Martín-Samper, Köseoglu, & Okumus, 2018; Turner, Way, Hodari, & Witteman, 2017; Wilke, Costa, Freire, & Ferreira, 2019), però aquests estudis són molt segmentats en uns hotels amb unes característiques i situació geogràfica molt concreta que no permet extrapolar. Per aquests motius, la present tesi presenta l'estudi de la relació entre competitivitat i èxit financer en un entorn concret per poder aportar més informació i validesa als estudis anteriors realitzats.

### **Capítol 3. Preguntes de recerca**

Derivat de la revisió de la literatura corresponent de cada article, s'han plantejat les següents preguntes de recerca i hipòtesis per tal d'assolir els objectius específics que es presenten a la Taula 3. El primer article se centra en l'anàlisi i estudi de la implementació de les pràctiques de qualitat i els seus efectes en la qualitat i desenvolupament de l'empresa en el sector de l'hostaleria. En aquest mateix article també s'estudia si entre diferents tipologies d'empreses dins de l'hostaleria s'obtenen resultats diferents. A continuació, el segon article, se centra en la revisió de la literatura sobre les pràctiques de qualitat en el sector de l'hostaleria, però introduint també les pràctiques mediambientals i els seus efectes. Finalment, el tercer article planteja l'estudi empíric dels efectes de la implementació de les dues tipologies de pràctiques, anteriorment estudiades, en l'hostaleria, concretament en empreses hoteleres.

**Taula 3.** Objectius, preguntes de recerca i hipòtesis.

<b>Objectiu principal</b>			
L' estudi de l' impacte de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei amb la introducció de les pràctiques mediambientals sobre el desenvolupament de l' empresa en el sector de l' hostaleria, analitzant la correlació entre les dues tipologies de pràctiques.			
<b>Objectiu del primer article</b>	<b>Subobjectius</b>	<b>Preguntes de recerca</b>	<b>Hipòtesis</b>
Anализar els efectes de la implementació de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei sobre les empreses del sector de l' hostaleria, i els seus efectes sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat i de l' empresa.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Identificar l' efecte d' implementar pràctiques de gestió de la qualitat del servei sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat en l' empresa.</li> <li>2) Analitzar la relació entre pràctiques de gestió de la qualitat del servei sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat.</li> <li>3) Estudiar la relació entre pràctiques de gestió de la qualitat del servei sobre el desenvolupament de l' empresa mitjançant el desenvolupament de la qualitat.</li> <li>4) Explorar les diferències entre tipologies d' empreses dins el sector de l' hostaleria.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) La implementació de pràctiques de gestió de la qualitat del servei, pot provocar un impacte directe i positiu sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat en l' empresa?</li> <li>2) Quin impacte tenen les QMP sobre el FP, mitjançant el QP?</li> <li>3) En les relacions estudiades, hi ha diferències entre les tipologies d' empreses dins del sector de l' hostaleria?</li> </ol>	<p><b>H<sub>1</sub>: La implementació de QMP és probable que tingui un impacte positiu i directe sobre QP.</b></p> <p><b>H<sub>2</sub>: Les QMP tenen un impacte positiu en el FP, que es produeix mitjançant el QP.</b></p> <p><b>H<sub>3</sub>: Els hotels i restaurants obtenen diferents resultats de la implementació de les QMP.</b></p>
<b>Objectiu del segon article</b>	<b>Subobjectius</b>	<b>Preguntes de recerca</b>	
Contextualitzar i estudiar la literatura prèvia sobre les pràctiques mediambientals i de qualitat en el sector de l'hostaleria.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Contribuir a identificar <i>gaps</i> en la literatura i aportar noves preguntes d' investigació.</li> <li>2) Explorar quines característiques componen les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i les mediambientals en el sector de l' hostaleria.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Quins són els buits en la literatura prèvia sobre QMP i EMP en el sector de l' hostaleria?</li> <li>2) Quines són les característiques estudiades fins al moment que componen les QMP i les EMP en l' hostaleria?</li> </ol>	

Objectiu del tercer article	Subobjectius	Preguntes de recerca	Hipòtesis
<p>Analitzar els efectes de la introducció de la implementació de les pràctiques mediambientals juntament amb les pràctiques de qualitat del servei sobre les empreses hoteleres, i els seus efectes sobre la competitivitat i el rendiment financer.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Conèixer la correlació entre la implementació de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei i les pràctiques de gestió mediambiental.</li> <li>2) Estudiar la relació que tenen les pràctiques tant de qualitat del servei com mediambientals sobre el desenvolupament de la competitivitat en l' empresa.</li> <li>3) Comprendre la relació que tenen les pràctiques tant de qualitat del servei com mediambientals sobre el resultat i desenvolupament financer en l' empresa.</li> <li>4) Identificar quina tipologia de relació té el desenvolupament de la competitivitat en l' empresa sobre l' evolució del resultat financer.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Quina correlació hi ha entre QMP i EMP en els hotels?</li> <li>2) Quin efecte tenen les QMP i les EMP sobre la competitivitat?</li> <li>3) Quin efecte tenen les QMP i les EMP sobre el rendiment financer?</li> <li>4) Quina relació hi ha entre competitivitat i rendiment financer?</li> </ol>	<p><b>H<sub>1</sub>: És probable que els hotels implementin QMP implementin EMP, i viceversa.</b></p> <p><b>H<sub>2</sub>: És probable que les QMP tinguin un efecte positiu i directe sobre la competitivitat.</b></p> <p><b>H<sub>3</sub>: És probable que les EMP tinguin un efecte positiu i directe sobre la competitivitat.</b></p> <p><b>H<sub>4</sub>: És probable que les QMP tinguin un efecte positiu i directe sobre el rendiment financer.</b></p> <p><b>H<sub>5</sub>: És probable que les EMP tinguin un efecte positiu i directe sobre el rendiment financer.</b></p> <p><b>H<sub>6</sub>: És probable que la competitivitat tingui un efecte positiu i directe sobre el rendiment financer.</b></p>

## Capítol 4. Metodologia

L'objectiu principal d'aquesta tesi és estudiar la literatura prèvia realitzada i analitzar i identificar de forma empírica les interaccions entre els diferents factors crítics estudiats. Per assolir aquest objectiu principal en Capítol 1 s'han determinat els diferents subobjectius per respondre a les preguntes de recerca. Aquest capítol de metodologia recull els passos principals a realitzar per assolir l'objectiu principal i els subobjectius.

En aquesta tesi podem diferenciar entre el segon article, on hi ha una revisió sistemàtica de la literatura, i el primer i tercer article, on s'han aplicat mètodes estadístics.

En els estudis empírics s'ha adoptat el mètode d'enquesta per aconseguir les dades necessàries. La mostra és explicada en aquest capítol.

### 4.1. Revisió sistemàtica de la literatura

Aquesta revisió sistemàtica de la literatura està centrada a assolir els subobjectius del segon article de la tesi que s'han definit en el capítol 1.

Després de l'estudi de literatura, relacionada amb metodologies per la revisió sistemàtica, que es pot trobar a la metodologia del segon article, es va organitzar la revisió en dues etapes diferenciades (Centobelli, Cerchione, & Esposito, 2017; Cerchione & Esposito, 2016).

La primera etapa, mitjançant el mètode PRISMA que permet fer un diagrama de revisions sistemàtiques i de metanàlisis per seleccionar articles (Pickering, Grignon, Steven, Guitart, & Byrne, 2014). Aquest mètode també permet identificar i seleccionar els articles de major qualitat i interès a través de 4 fases: identificació, selecció, elegibilitat i inclusió (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009). Aquesta primera etapa té dos passos clau:

- a) Cerca d'articles científics: es defineixen les paraules clau i les bases de dades en què es realitzarà la cerca i selecció.
- b) Selecció d'articles científics: es defineixen els criteris per incloure o excloure articles que es troben en les bases de dades i es realitza la selecció basant-se en els criteris definits.

La segona etapa tracta de la descripció i anàlisi del contingut dels articles seleccionats. També té dos passos clau:

- a) Descripció: els articles es classifiquen segons diferents perspectives per obtenir un resum.
- b) Anàlisi del contingut: els articles seleccionats i classificats, es revisen i s'estudien de forma exhaustiva. En aquest punt s'ha de posar de manifest els punts forts i febles de la literatura i, identificar i definir línies de recerca futures.

Els articles que s'han inclòs en aquest mètode han estat seleccionats de les bases d e dades de *Scopus* i *Web of Science*. Aplicant búsqueda avançada a partir de. operadors booleans i les següents paraules clau; "*service quality*", "*quality service*", "*service quality management*", "*service quality practices*" o "*service quality polices*", *combined with* "*hospitality*", "*restaurants*" o "*hotels*", i combinat amb "*sustainability*", "*sustainable*" o "*sustain\**". Tot això va resultar en 172 articles identificats, en un total de 26 revistes, vàlids per classificar amb aquest mètode.

## 4.2. Estudi empíric

Referent a l'estudi empíric, es busca assolir els subobjectius vinculats al primer article, i també als subobjectius relacionats amb el tercer article, ambdós han estat fixats en el capítol 1. Tant el primer com tercer article es basen en models empírics.

En l'estudi empíric podem diferenciar dues etapes. En la primera d'aquestes, l'objectiu principal era determinar a partir de les variables del qüestionari les diferents dimensions que integren el model a estudiar. Per això s'ha utilitzat una rotació Varimax, per tal de definir les dimensions, amb una restricció preliminar de validesa d'una càrrega mínima de 0,4. Després per comprovar la consistència del model s'ha elaborat una anàlisi factorial confirmatori on només s'accepten els elements amb un factor de càrrega superior al 0,7.

Un cop definits els elements de cada dimensió, s'ha estudiat el coeficient alfa de Cronbach's, el qual en les dimensions ha de ser superior a 0,7 (Malhotra, 2004; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994) i la variància mitjana extreta (AVE) ha de superar el 0,5 (Barclay, Higgins, & Thompson, 1995; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). A part, es va comprovar que els

resultats de validesa discriminants confirmessin que totes les correlacions fossin inferiors a l'arrel quadrada de l'AVE.

En la segona, una vegada definides i validades les dimensions, l'objectiu era validar la bondat i fiabilitat del model proposat mitjançant equacions estructurals. Per validar la relació causa-efecte entre les dimensions s'ha utilitzat un model robust d'equacions estructurals amb el software EQS. Observants els principals estadístics calculats, com són BB-NNFI (índex d'ajust no normal Bentler-Bonett), CFI (índex d'ajust comparatiu) i RMSEA (error d'aproximació de la mitjana del quadrat), ha quedat validada la bondat i la idoneïtat del model.

Per poder contrastar les diferents hipòtesis plantejades i per poder assolir els objectius plantejats en la tesi s'ha analitzat una mostra de mànagers d'empreses de l'hostaleria per a realitzar les investigacions del primer i tercer article.

Pel que fa a la mostra de l'estudi del primer article podem veure com al 2018 s'han entrevistat a un total de 583 mànagers d'hotels (390) i restaurants (190) ampliant l'estudi previ realitzat el 2017 i 2015 (Bagur-Femenias, Celma, & Patau, 2016; Bagur-Femenías, Martí, & Rocafort, 2015). Aquests qüestionaris s'han realitzat mitjançant correu electrònic o via telefònica. Les principals característiques dels hotels i restaurants de la mostra en termes de propietat, treballadors o categoria es poden veure en la Taula 4.

**Taula 4.** Perfil de les empreses de la mostra.

Classificació	Nº	%	Mitjana empleats
<b>HOTELS</b>			
Hotels 4* o més	141	36.15	54
Hotels amb menys de 4*	249	63.85	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>RESTAURANTS</b>			
Independent	117	60.62	11
Nacional, Estranger & Franquícia	76	39.38	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Tipologia</b>	<b>Hotels</b>		<b>Mitjana empleats</b>
Independent	199	51.03	28
Grup Nacional	139	35.64	46
Grup Estranger	36	9.23	70
Franquícia	16	4.10	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>39</b>

Veiem com a la mostra els hotels enquestats tenen de mitjana 39 treballadors i 3,33 estrelles, no obstant això, s'observa com els grups estrangers presenten una qualitat lleugerament superior (4 estrelles) que els independents (3 estrelles). Respecte als restaurants, de mitjana tenen uns 14 empleats, però la majoria (60,62%) són empreses independents i presenten una mitjana d'11 treballadors. Per tant la resta de restaurants franquiciats, nacionals i estrangers tenen 18 treballadors de mitjana.

Els mànagers van emplenar una enquesta amb els diferents ítems que serveixen per valorar les diferents variables que ens permeten analitzar els factors QMP, QP i FP. L'enquesta es va dissenyar d'acord amb la literatura acadèmica prèvia d'aquest àmbit i que es pot veure en la Taula 5. Les respostes de l'enquesta s'estableixen mitjançant una escala de Likert amb valors d'1 a 7, representant el 7 el grau màxim d'acord amb la pregunta plantejada i l'1 el grau màxim de desacord. En la Taula 5 podem veure la mitjana i la desviació estàndard de les diferents preguntes que permeten definir els tres factors de l'estudi.

**Taula 5.** Model de mesura de la mostra.

Codi	Definició	Mitjana	Desv.Est.
<b>Quality Management Practices – QMPs.</b> (Anttila & Jussila, 2017; Conca, Llopis, & Tarí, 2004; Flynn, Schroeder, & Sakakibara, 1994; Forgas-Coll, Palau-Saumell, Matute, & Tárrega, 2017; Lilja, Hansen, Fredrikson, & Richardsson, 2017; Marimon, Alonso-Almeida, Bernardo, & Llach, 2015; Molina-Azorín et al., 2009; Naor, Goldstein, Linderman, & Schroeder, 2008; Sadikoglu & Zehir, 2010; Saraph, Benson, & Schroeder, 1989; Siva, Gremyr, Halldorsson, & Halldórsson, 2018)			
<b>QMP1</b>	La direcció està compromesa amb la qualitat del producte i servei.	6,22	1,19
<b>QMP2</b>	Es coneixen les necessitats actuals i futures dels clients.	5,77	1,23
<b>QMP3</b>	L'empresa treballa amb els clients per millorar el producte/servei.	5,86	1,39
<b>QMP4</b>	L'empresa treballa amb proveïdors per millorar el producte.	5,75	1,31
<b>QMP5</b>	Tot el personal participa en la creació del producte /servei.	5,73	1,48
<b>QMP6</b>	S'han identificat millores en el procés de prestació de serveis.	5,80	1,29
<b>QMP7</b>	Es realitza el control de la consecució dels objectius i es modifiquen les variacions detectades.	5,87	1,34
<b>QMP8</b>	Hi ha una cultura de qualitat enfocada a la millora contínua.	5,88	1,34
<b>Quality Performance - QP.</b> (Beheshti & Lollar, 2003; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2015; Duran, Bikfalvi, & Llach, 2014; Flynn et al., 1994; Kaynak, 2003; Marimon & Berbegal-Mirabent, 2018; Monferrer-Tirado, Estrada-Guillén, Fandos-Roig, Moliner-Tena, & Sánchez García, 2016; Tarí et al., 2014; Viada-Stenger et al., 2010)			



<b>QP1</b>	La qualitat del servei global ha millorat.	5,60	1,38
<b>QP2</b>	Els empleats aprenen més ràpidament sobre el funcionament de les instal·lacions.	5,45	1,54
<b>QP3</b>	Els treballadors són més autònoms en el seu treball.	5,29	1,63
<b>QP4</b>	Els clients estan més satisfets amb el servei, ja que s'han reduït les queixes.	5,67	1,47
<b>QP5</b>	Els clients venen a les nostres instal·lacions amb més freqüència que abans.	5,32	1,70
<b>QP6</b>	El boca-orella sobre la qualitat del nostre servei ha atret nous clients.	5,67	1,48
<b>Firm Performance – FP.</b> (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2012; Bagur-Femenías, Martí, et al., 2015; Bagur-Femenías, Perramon, et al., 2015; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2013; Celma-Benaiges, Martínez-García, & Raya, 2016; Espino-Rodríguez & Ramírez-Fierro, 2018; Kumar, Maiti, & Gunasekaran, 2018; Molina-Azorín et al., 2009; Rodrigues Quesado, Fernandes Branco, & Rodrigues, 2017; Rodríguez-Antón & Alonso-Almeida, 2011; Zhao et al., 2004)			
<b>FP1</b>	Millora de la imatge de mercat de les instal·lacions.	5,68	1,47
<b>FP2</b>	El nivell de satisfacció del client és superior al de la competència.	5,60	1,36
<b>FP3</b>	El nivell de satisfacció dels empleats és superior al de la competència.	5,49	1,50
<b>FP4</b>	Millora de la capacitat de permanència al mercat en temps de crisi.	5,54	1,42
<b>FP5</b>	Les vendes han augmentat més que la competència.	4,91	1,74

Els valors mitjans de les preguntes que formen l'enquesta mostren valors superiors a 5, per una escala de Likert d'1 a 7, en tots els casos a excepció de la pregunta vinculada amb el creixement de les vendes respecte la competència que és lleugerament inferior a 5.

En el tercer article es va ampliar al 2019 una part de la mostra utilitzada en el primer article (Bagur-Femenías et al., 2019a). Aquesta enquesta es va realitzar mitjançant correu electrònic o via telefònica. No obstant això, d'acord amb els objectius, es va realitzar específicament a 148 mànagers d'hotels de Catalunya, i modificant l'enquesta amb els factors a estudiar en aquest cas com són QMP, EMP, COMP i FINP. Cal destacar de la mostra que els mànagers majoritàriament eren homes (73,6%) amb una trajectòria inferior a deu anys com a mànager de l'hotel (74,1%).

Els gestors van respondre les diferents preguntes que serveixen per valorar les diferents variables dels factors QMP, EMP, COMP i FINP. L'enquesta es va dissenyar d'acord amb la literatura acadèmica prèvia d'aquest àmbit i que es pot veure en la Taula 6. Les respostes de l'enquesta s'estableixen mitjançant una escala de Likert amb valors d'1 a 5,

representant el 5 el grau màxim d'acord amb la pregunta plantejada i l'1 el grau màxim de desacord. Per altre costat, en el constructor FINP les mesures estan basades també en una escala de Likert amb valors d'1 a 5, però amb els següents valors; 1 = menys del 5%; 2 = 5-10%; 3 = 10-15%; 4 = 15-20%, 5 = més del 20%. En la Taula 6 podem veure la mitjana i la desviació estàndard de les diferents preguntes que permeten definir els tres factors de l'estudi.

**Taula 6.** Model de mesura de la mostra ampliada.

<b>Definició</b>	<b>Mitjana</b>	<b>Desv.Est.</b>
<b>Quality management practices – QMP: e.g.</b> (Alonso-Almeida & Bremser, 2013; Anttila & Jussila, 2017; Bagur-Femenías, Perramon, & Oliveras-Villanueva, 2019b; Chou, Horng, Liu, & Gan, 2018; Conca et al., 2004; Duran et al., 2014; Forgas-Coll et al., 2017; Kaynak, 2003; Lilja et al., 2017; Marimon et al., 2015; Naor et al., 2008; Roger, 1992; Saraph et al., 1989; Wikhamn, 2019)		
5. Tot el personal participa en la creació del producte/servei.	4.18	0.91
6. S'han identificat millores en el procés de prestació de serveis	4.12	0.92
7. Es realitza el control de la consecució dels objectius i es modifiquen les variacions	4.26	0.81
8. Hi ha una cultura de qualitat centrada en la millora contínua	4.27	0.83
<b>Environmental management practices – EMP: e.g.</b> (Álvarez Gil, Burgos Jiménez, & Céspedes Lorente, 2001; Bagur-Femenías, Martí, et al., 2015; Bagur-Femenías, Perramon, et al., 2015; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2013; Carmona-Moreno, Céspedes-Lorente, & de Burgos-Jiménez, 2004; C.-C. Cheng et al., 2019; Chou et al., 2016; Côté, Booth, & Louis, 2006; Fernández-Robin et al., 2019; Molina-Azorín et al., 2009; Prud'homme & Raymond, 2013; Vij, 2016)		
4. L'empresa quantifica l'estalvi mediambiental	3.97	0.92
5. L'empresa utilitza factors ecològics en les campanyes de màrqueting	3.84	1.03
6. L'empresa té un focus estratègic mediambiental a llarg termini	4.09	0.82
7. L'empresa utilitza un criteri verd en la política de compres	4.02	0.99
<b>Competitiveness – COMP: e.g.</b> (Al-Refaie, 2015; Bäckström et al., 2016; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2016; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2013; Celma-Benaiges et al., 2016; Espino-Rodríguez & Ramírez-Fierro, 2018; Jones et al., 2016; Leonard & McAdam, 2003; Pereira-Moliner et al., 2012; Rodrigues Quesado et al., 2017; Roger, 1992)		
1. Millora de la imatge de mercat de les instal·lacions	4.07	0.95
2. El nivell de satisfacció del client és superior al de la competència	4.07	0.88
3. El nivell de satisfacció dels empleats és superior al de la competència	4.03	0.92
4. Millora de la capacitat de permanència al mercat en temps de crisi	4.01	0.91
<b>Financial performance – FP: e.g.</b> (Arawati, 2005; Bagur-Femenías, Martí, et al., 2015; Bagur-Femenías, Perramon, et al., 2015; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2013; Das, Handfield, Calantone, & Ghosh, 2000; Douglas & Judge, 2001; Kassinis & Soteriou, 2003; Molina-Azorín et al., 2009; Rodríguez Antón et al., 2011; Rubio-Andrada et al., 2011; Zeng, Meng, Yin, Tam, & Sun, 2010)		
1. Les vendes han augmentat en els darrers dos anys	4.03	0.86
2. Els beneficis han augmentat en els darrers dos anys	4.01	0.82
3. L'ocupació ha augmentat en els darrers dos anys	4.00	0.87

Els valors mitjans de les preguntes que formen l'enquesta mostren valors superiors a 4, per una escala de Likert d'1 a 5, en tots els casos a excepció de dues preguntes vinculades a EMP que és lleugerament inferior a 4.

## Capítol 5. Articles de la tesi

En la present tesi doctoral es presenta com a compendi de tres articles, els quals estan referenciats a continuació;

**Autors:** Llorenç Bagur-Femenías, Jordi Perramon i Marc Oliveras-Villanueva.

**Títol:** Effects of Service Quality Policies in the Tourism Sector Performance: An Empirical Analysis of Spanish Hotels and Restaurants.

**Jornal:** Sustainability.

**Status:** Publicat.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11030872>.

Any, volum, pàgines: 2019, 11(3), 872.

**Social Science Citation Index (SSCI):** I.F.: 2.576, Q2.

**Autors:** Marc Oliveras-Villanueva, Josep Llach i Jordi Perramon.

**Títol:** Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda.

**Jornal:** Sustainability.

**Status:** Publicat.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12198152>.

Any, volum, pàgines: 2020, 12(19), 8152.

**Social Science Citation Index (SSCI):** I.F.: 2.576, Q2.

**Autors:** Jordi Perramon, Marc Oliveras-Villanueva i Josep Llach.

**Títol:** Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel sector: An empirical approach.

**Jornal:** International Journal of Hospitality Management.

**Status:** En procés de revisió.

**Social Science Citation Index (SSCI):** I.F.: 6.701, Q1

**Capítol 6. Article 1 - Effects of Service Quality Policies in the Tourism Sector Performance: An Empirical Analysis of Spanish Hotels and Restaurants**

Article

# Effects of Service Quality Policies in the Tourism Sector Performance: An Empirical Analysis of Spanish Hotels and Restaurants

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**Abstract:** In the last few years, it has become essential, in order for companies to ensure their survival, to approach the customer and bet on quality. This is due to the importance of tourism in many economies and the increase in supply and demand. For this reason, there are numerous studies found in literature that evaluate the extent to which quality practices impact finances and competitiveness of tourism companies. Furthermore, the usual practice in many of these studies is to classify all types of tourism businesses in the same category, even though there seem to be significant a priori differences between them. The main objects of scrutiny in this study are restaurants and hospitality. The analysis of the aggregate results of two surveys carried out among executives in Spain that employed SEM methodology demonstrates that quality practices have influence, albeit indirectly, on a firm's performance in a positive way. However, separate analysis of subsamples show disparities between hotels and restaurants. This paper illustrates that, although both subgroups operate in the same sector, they obtain different results from implementing quality policies. Therefore, the specific features and typology of the selected tourism company should be considered.

**Keywords:** quality management practices; firm performance; tourism sector; hotels; restaurants

## 1. Introduction

The appearance of social networks and the Internet, heightened competition, and increased supply have all provided the client with new tools to facilitate their decision when it comes to purchasing. These factors have created new challenges and difficulties for companies in the tourism sector. They will have to face these challenges over the next few years, which will test the ability of companies to remain in the market and survive these changes. From the point of view of the company, the manager will be responsible for managing all the variables and information in order to take decisions that secure its long-term survival. This decision-making is precisely where quality management practices should play their role as facilitators [1]. The importance of quality practices and sustainability in the hospitality sector has increased its relevance during the past 10 years. For this reason, sustainability and quality have been included and its presence has been enlarged into corporate strategies of the companies [2,3]. Sustainability implications have no negative impact on a country's economic tourism indicators and neither constrain companies' profitability and competitiveness. Nevertheless, it can reduce resource costs and create a market differentiation [4]. There are many prior papers that focus on the service sector and establish quality as the key to survival [5–8]. However, it is also true that certain authors have demonstrated that not all quality practices are adequate for all firms [9] and that there is no single route to success [10]. This starting point suggests that the tourism sector should not be

treated as a single entity and, to obtain more robust results and conclusions, it is necessary to analyze each of the separate subsectors that make up the industry. This paper will try to determine whether there are differences due to company typology regarding the effects derived from the implementation of quality in a firm. This study analyzes hospitality and restaurants, both of which are important subsectors in the industry.

The study contributes to the field of research in various ways. First, it describes the main quality practices adopted in the tourism sector and their effects on company performance. Second, it helps to recognize the dissimilarity in terms of quality management practices between hotels and restaurants. Third, it focuses on a sector where the impact of quality management practices (QMPs) on company performance has been studied, but the differences among company typologies have not. Fourth, the paper analyzes the tourism sector, which is viewed as a highly competitive sector. That characteristic is very helpful in analyzing whether investing in quality is a good management practice in order to stay alive in complex sectors.

The remaining sections of the paper are organized in the following way. Section 2 brings together the theoretical arguments on the use of QMPs and their relation to company performance. Section 3 outlines the methodology used in the empirical study. Section 4 provides the quantitative analysis. Section 5 shows the analysis of the results and the conclusions reached from the research carried out, which offers suggestions for scholars and professionals alike.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Adoption of Quality Management and Quality Performance Practices

The positive effects of quality on a firm have been widely studied, as can be easily confirmed by looking at the literature from the last 20 years [11–15]. The majority of authors agree that quality can activate various levers, both internal and external, that improve company competitiveness [16]. Regarding the internal effects of quality, the literature stresses improvement in workers and processes [17]. The main external effect was found to be increased customer satisfaction [18]. These three levers of improvement will be analyzed individually in this section.

Much has been written in the literature about the relationship between QMPs and workers, and the consensus is broad [19–21]. The majority of authors state that a motivated and prepared worker is the key to operating in sectors with a high degree of contact with the client, which is the case for hotels and restaurants [22–24]. In this context, certain authors have demonstrated that the implementation of QMPs can improve staff working conditions as much as it can improve their training and promotion prospects, which, in turn, lead to more motivated and more prepared workers [25–28].

The majority of previous empirical literature shows that QMPs benefit internal company processes [12,29,30], efficiency [8,31], the process of decision-making, and error reduction [32].

Lastly, it is worth noting that the quality facilitates a focus on the customer and continuous improvement [33,34] through long-term supervision in very dynamic surroundings with high degrees of competitiveness, such as the tourism sector. A firm's focus on quality can become a market trend signal [35] and can have positive effects both on current clients, by increasing their loyalty, and on potential clients, by improving their acquisition [27,36]. Many other studies confirm that the implementation of QMPs helps address client needs and adapt to demand [11,26,37].

Following the above reasoning and considering that the improvements analyzed in this section are a direct consequence of the adopted quality practices, the paper hereinafter refers to them as Quality Performance (QP).

### 2.2. Quality Performance Versus Firm Performance

Some authors, such as Nair [38], do not reach definitive conclusions about the success of QMP implementation in companies. Nair concludes that, in certain cases, the cost reductions resulting from QMPs are cancelled out by the investment necessary to put them in place and the expenditure on

follow-ups and quality control. However, the majority of authors take the opposite view and state that adopting quality policies as part of a global company strategy improves the competitiveness of firms ways.

Quality policies explaining and standardizing processes and tasks, which detect those items considered as valuable by the client, also focus on the formation of key processes, which improve worker performance and customer satisfaction with the company in comparison with its competitors [11,39], which also breeds loyalty [37]. As a consequence of this interlinked chain of factors, through a series of cause-effect relationships, the company can generate a competitive advantage that will improve its image [27,40,41] and increase sales by maximizing the yield from current clients and by acquiring new consumers [42]. Better positioning in the market can also allow a company to be more resilient when faced with potential crises and increase a company's capacity to remain in the market [26,27,30]. Other researchers have found yet more routes for improving competitiveness in hospitality. First, the QMPs allow progress to more advanced information systems, which facilitate decision-making [43,44]. Second, quality practices can generate not only increased sales but also reduced costs whether through the elimination of activities that do not create value but do create costs or, via improved efficiency in key task performance, the same workload with less resources are dedicated to the process [23,26,27,35].

Following this line of argument, it seems clear that the majority of authors focus on quality as a path towards firm performance (FP), which justifies improved competitiveness through the integral improvement of the company via external factors and internal processes.

Concerning the hypotheses, it is worth noting that the main goal and contribution of this paper is to determine whether there are differences between the typologies of tourism companies with regard to the effects of QMPs on the firm. Below, the third and final hypothesis of the paper is proposed, given that some authors argue that each sector is different and that there is no single path to the implementation of standard effects derived from the QMPs [9,10].

To summarize, according to the previous research and the state of the art, the following hypothesis has been proposed.

**Hypothesis 1 (H1).** *The adoption of Quality Management Practices (QMPs) is likely to have a direct positive impact on Quality Performance (QP).*

**Hypothesis 2 (H2).** *Quality Management Practices (QMPs) have a positive impact on Firm Performance (FP) mediated by Quality Performance (QP).*

**Hypothesis 3 (H3).** *Hotels and restaurants obtain different results from the implementation of quality practices in their firms.*

Figure 1 shows the model used in the study. The model presented by Figure 1 will be the same model used to contrast significant differences between hotels and restaurants (H3) with prior sample segmentation.



Figure 1. Ultimate model and hypothesis.



### 3. Measures and Methods

#### 3.1. Sample and Data Collection

The data used to prepare this article were obtained from a survey conducted among managers of tourism companies (390 hotels managers and 193 restaurants managers). The survey was complemented with, direct or by phone, personal interviews with businesses' managers. This study is the second and amplified wave of a previous study in 2015 and 2017 [24,45].

The principal reason for concentrating our study on the tourism sector is because this industry represents 10.2% of the total GDP of Spain and more than 11.8% of total national employment [46]. This data illustrates the significance of the tourism sector in Spain. International tourism has become one of the fastest-growing industries and is widely believed to contribute to economic growth [47]. Recently, quality labels for the Spanish tourism sector have been developed as part of a competitive strategy [48].

The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: quality management practices, quality performance, and firm performance. A fourth section was also included in order to know the companies' characteristics. The relevant aspects of this fourth section is of employees, number of stars, and location of the business. The methodology used to carry through the questionnaire, that interviewers adopted, was directly or by phone depending of the manager accessibility. The questionnaire classified the hotels and restaurants by origin and type of business. The classification and typology of the companies are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Profile of the companies included in the sample.

Classification	N°	%	Employees Mean
<b>HOTELS</b>			
Hotels 4 * or more	141	36.15	54
Hotels less than 4 *	249	63.85	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>RESTAURANTS</b>			
Independent	117	60.62	11
National, Foreign & Franchise	76	39.38	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>14</b>
Typology	Hotels		Employees Mean
Independent	199	51.03	28
National Group	139	35.64	46
Foreign Group	36	9.23	70
Franchise	16	4.10	52
<b>Total</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>39</b>

Some qualitative characteristics are as follows: hotels surveyed have an average of 39 employees and, on average, hotels have 3.36 stars. However, the foreign groups present a slightly higher quality (4 stars) than the independent ones (3 stars).

Regarding restaurants, on average, have 14 employees. Most of the restaurants are independent (60.62%), employing 11 employees on average. Franchised, National, and Foreign restaurants represent the 39.38% of the sample and employs 18 workers on average.

The location of the sample is basically Madrid, but there are also some Catalan companies located in Costa Brava (Girona) and Costa Daurada (Tarragona) and Barcelona downtown.

### 3.2. Measures

In this paper, three constructs have been analyzed, according to the literature review in order to examine the hypotheses presented.

Table 2 summarizes the analyzed dimensions, their constituent variables, and each construct together with its representation in the literature that supports using each of these variables in the designed questionnaire. These three constructs were validated by survey participants using a 7-value Likert scale, with 1 being “completely disagree” and 7 being “completely agree”.

**Table 2.** Constructs and variables.

Code	Definition	Mean	Standard Deviation
<b>Quality Management Practices—QMPs. [11,29,39,49–56]</b>			
QMP1	The management is committed to the quality of the product and service.	6.22	1.19
QMP2	Current and future client needs are known.	5.77	1.23
QMP3	The company works with clients to improve the product/service.	5.86	1.39
QMP4	The company works with suppliers to improve the product.	5.75	1.31
QMP5	All staff is involved in the creation of the product /service.	5.73	1.48
QMP6	Improvements have been identified in the process of service provision.	5.80	1.29
QMP7	Goal achievement control is conducted, and variations are amended.	5.87	1.34
QMP8	There is a quality culture with a focus on continuous improvement.	5.88	1.34
<b>Quality Performance—QP. [8,12,18,29,31,32,57–59]</b>			
QP1	The global service quality has improved.	5.60	1.38
QP2	Employees learn about the functioning of the facilities more rapidly.	5.45	1.54
QP3	Employees are more autonomous in their work.	5.29	1.63
QP4	Clients are more satisfied with the service since complaints have been reduced.	5.67	1.47
QP5	Clients come to our facilities more often than before.	5.32	1.70
QP6	The word of mouth regarding our service quality has attracted new clients.	5.67	1.48
<b>Firm Performance—FP. [1,9,13,23,27,39,45,60–63]</b>			
FP1	Improved market image of the facilities.	5.68	1.47
FP2	Client satisfaction level is greater than among the competition.	5.60	1.36
FP3	Employee satisfaction level is greater than among the competition.	5.49	1.50
FP4	Improved capacity of staying in the market in times of crisis.	5.54	1.42
FP5	Sales have increased more than the competition.	4.91	1.74

### 3.3. Methodology

The model has been studied using a Varimax rotation in order to classify the dimensions. Three dimensions have been found: QMP, QP, and FP. In order to identify the items that belonged to each dimension, a preliminary restriction of a minimum loading of 0.4 has been used. Then, in order to check the consistency of the model, a confirmatory factor analysis using the maximum likelihood has been taken into account, where only the items with a loading factor greater than 0.7 were accepted.

The next step once the dimensions were constructed and validated was to verify the internal consistency and the reliability of the model. Both the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) confirmed the goodness of fit of the dimensions. For all the dimensions, Cronbach’s alpha was greater than 0.7 [64] and the AVE exceeded 0.5 [65]. Furthermore, the discriminant validity results confirmed that all the correlations were less than the square root of the AVE.

Next, after the dimensions were established, the relationship between the dimensions was validated. In order to verify the cause-effect relationships, the robust model of the EQS software has been used. To conclude the goodness of fit, it has been used as the BB-NNFI (Bentler-Bonett non-normed fit index), CFI (comparative fit index), and RMSEA (root mean-square error of approximation). The results are shown in Tables 3–5.

**Table 3.** Factor analyses of the dimensions.

Dimension	Code	Confirmatory Factor Analysis	Internal Consistency and Reliability Statistics
Quality Management Practices	QMP1	0.79	Cronbach's alpha: 0.91 Composite reliability: 0.93 AVE: 0.61
	QMP2	0.71	
	QMP3	0.79	
	QMP4	0.76	
	QMP5	0.74	
	QMP6	0.84	
	QMP7	0.80	
	QMP8	0.83	
Quality Performance	QP1	0.72	Cronbach's alpha: 0.85 Composite reliability: 0.89 AVE: 0.57
	QP2	0.77	
	QP3	0.73	
	QP4	0.80	
	QP5	0.76	
	QP6	0.75	
Firm Performance	FP1	0.83	Cronbach's alpha: 0.88 Composite reliability: 0.92 AVE: 0.69
	FP2	0.90	
	FP3	0.87	
	FP4	0.85	
	FP5	0.70	

**Table 4.** Discriminant validity.

	QMP	QP	FP
QMP	0.78		
QP	0.63 **	0.76	
FP	0.58 **	0.57 **	0.83

Square root of AVE in the diagonal. \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral).

**Table 5.** Goodness of fit of the model.

Assessment Item	Values	Ideal Value
$\chi^2$ —(chi-squared) *	422.24	
$\chi^2/df$ —(normed chi-squared)	2.81	<3
BB-NNFI—(Bentler-Bonett non-normed fit index)	0.84	>0.9
CFI—(comparative fit index)	0.89	>0.9
RMSEA—(root mean square error of approximation)	0.06	<0.08

\* Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-squared.

#### 4. Results

The results have been split in two sections. First, the results for the comprehensive sample are shown. Second, the divergences between sub-sectors have been analyzed.

##### 4.1. Tourism Sector Analysis (Complete Sample)

First, the whole sample was analyzed. As shown in Table 3, after the items that did not meet the standards of the previous section were removed, each item presented in the model showed a loading factor beyond 0.7. As shown in Tables 3 and 4, the comprehensive model presented a high consistency and internal reliability, as the values of Cronbach’s alpha, Composite reliability, and AVE were beyond those accepted by the literature.

Table 4 confirms the discriminant validity of the constructs. In all cases, it is shown that each construct is more closely related to its own dimensions than to the dimensions of other constructs.

Lastly, Table 5 shows the main indices that allow validation of the goodness of fit for the model. For the four selected indices, the model returns values within the ranges recommended by the literature [66–68], which confirms the reliability and robustness of the results showed by the model. In fact, according to Schermelleh-Engel [69], obtaining three statistics within their recommended values shows the goodness of fit of the model.

Lastly, the standardized solution of the causal model is presented in Figure 2. All of the hypotheses are supported at the 0.05 significance level.



Figure 2. Standardized solution of the causal model (full sample).

As shown by the comprehensive sample in Figure 2, Quality Management Practices influence Firm Performance in a positive way by means of enhancing the Quality Performance of the company.

##### 4.2. Differences Between Hotel and Restaurant Sub-Sectors

The next step has been to conduct a multi-group analysis in order to detect divergences between the sub-sectors.

As shown in this section, differences have been found in hotels and restaurants when they are analyzed individually. Table 6 illustrates the invariance test results for each relationship and Figure 3 shows the standardized values by the sub-sample.

Table 6. Invariance test for all relationships.

	QMP→QP	QP→FP
$\Delta\chi^2$	4.905	1.007
p-value	0.026	0.315

As shown in Table 6, the data obtained shows disparity between hotels and restaurants in the relationship between QMP and QP, but the sub-samples did not present disparity when the relationship between QP and FP is analyzed. Figure 3 presents the standardized values for the complete model by sub-sector.

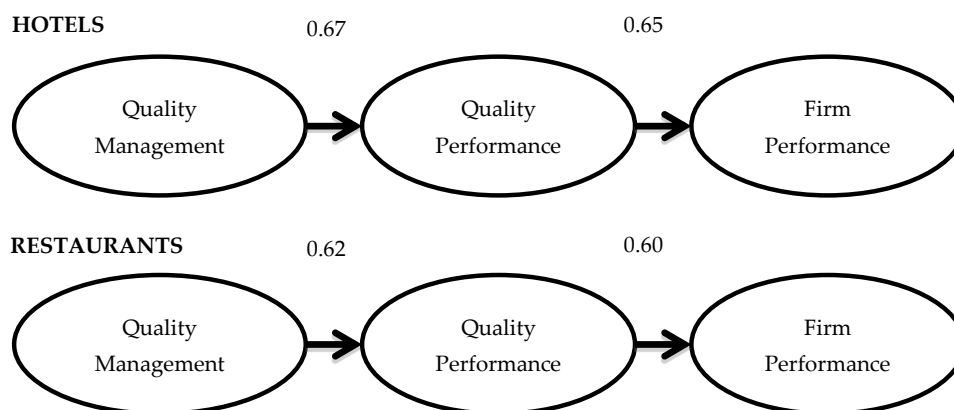


Figure 3. Standardized solution of the causal model by the sub-sector.

## 5. Results and Discussion

The results obtained confirm the hypotheses and offer a large number of conclusions and proposals for tourism service companies and, more specifically, for hotels and restaurants. Below, the results of the study are considered one hypothesis at a time.

Regarding the entire sample, statistical analysis validates H1 and confirms the direct positive effect of QMPs on tourism companies. It is possible to confirm that quality should be part of the global company strategy in the tourism sector [33,34]. Quality management in hotels and restaurants is indispensable since they are businesses with a high degree of client contact [22,23]. In this sense, QMPs activate three Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the hotel sector including two internal and one external. First, internally, they improve human resources [25–27] and, second, they make internal processes more efficient [8,12,29,31,32]. Third, externally, they increase customer satisfaction [11,26,37] and generate a competitive advantage in comparison with the competition.

It is worth noting that the three levers activated by QMPs coincide with three of the four perspectives used by Kaplan and Norton [70] to define the process of company value creation in the design of their famous *Balanced Scorecard*. In this context, and given the similarities, it is possible to state that the tourism sector's focus on QMPs creates value for the company that implements them from the inside out, internally to externally, from internal improvement of the firm to improved competitiveness and finances compared to its surroundings. The results obtained in this first section are very much in line with the results obtained for another subsector of the tourism industry, travel agencies, by Alonso Almeida [8].

Concluding our analysis of the complete model, in contrast to the findings of authors such as Nair [38], statistical analysis confirms that H2 is accepted including the immediate and direct benefits of quality performance (QP) that positively impact firm performance. The effects of the quality on hotels and restaurants lead to greater client satisfaction with the company compared to the competition. Quality standardizes key internal processes and allows focus on tasks truly valued by the client, which increases their satisfaction [11,39]. This fact, together with the improved image generated by this improved satisfaction, creates a virtuous economic circle, which makes it possible to outsell the competition and, in times of crisis, reduces suffering due to lower demand. Ultimately, based on the above reasoning, it is possible to say that quality helps focus workers and processes on what is truly important, which generates synergies that improve efficiency, efficacy, and long term sustainability [26,27,30,71].

Despite the argument provided above, perhaps the best contribution to the literature of this paper is the acceptance of H3 and the affirmation that hotels and restaurants differ when it comes to the results obtained from implementing QMPs, which empirically confirms that the effect of quality practices is not standard but depends on the typology, sector, and various other individual factors for each firm.

It is worth noting that, when the sample is segmented, it is possible to observe differences in terms of the immediate effects of firm quality performance (QP), according to the company typology. The effect of implementing quality practices is positive both in hotels and restaurants. However, it is significantly higher for hotels than for restaurants. Ultimately, hotels obtain better immediate results (QP) from the implementation of QMPs than restaurants. This result allows us to accept H3.

The causes for these differences could be due to the operational differences between hotels and restaurants. Despite requiring further research, this study suggests two factors as possible sources of these differences.

First, as observed in Section 3.1, hotels operate, on average, with a higher number of employees than restaurants. This fact leads to a greater need for control of both processes and workers. An informal control system is clearly insufficient to guarantee quality service in hotels. The need for quality policies that standardize processes, train workers, make them more autonomous, and set the firm on a path toward a customer focus is much more clear in large firms than in small companies and more clear in hotels than in restaurants. Restaurants, however, do not see much of a positive effect from QMP implementation. As for small firms, informal management systems can be more efficient than in large companies. In these cases, it is easier for a manager to control by direct oversight, than where the number of variables to be controlled expands significantly. In this context, it is logical to think that hotels should obtain more QP from the implementation of QMPs than restaurants.

Second, to an increasing extent, tourists require more services at a lower price, which not only is accommodation required, but also entertainment and other services that provide added value to the visit [72–74]. Hotels have tried to adapt to these new demand requirements to remain competitive and not fall out of the market. In this context, hotels are becoming multi-service companies par excellence for the tourism sector. This transformation and the need to maintain competitiveness has led to increased organizational complexity and the need to develop and control a multitude of processes in addition to the traditional tasks. Logically, with greater complexity comes a greater need for a quality system that channels the firm towards efficiency and competitiveness.

It is possible to argue that it is logical that greater benefits are derived from the implementation of QMPs for firms with a higher number of employees and a higher number of processes to control. In this context, it seems logical that hotels obtain better results (QP) from the implementation of QMPs than restaurants.

To conclude this section, it is necessary to mention two additional key aspects derived from the analysis of the statistical results. First, while it is true that hotels obtain better quality performance (QP) from QMPs, this does not mean that implementing quality policies is not a priority for restaurants. As observed in the statistics calculated for restaurants, QMPs do positively impact QP, as in hotels, although with lower intensity. Second, no significant differences are observed for the effects of the QP on FP. QMPs, regardless of the company typology, indirectly and positively influence company competitiveness.

## 6. Conclusions

As a final summary of the study, it should be stated that investing in quality is profitable both for hotels and restaurants since it improves company competitiveness (FP). Therefore, any tourism manager who is worth his salary, both in hotels and restaurants, should include the implementation of quality policies as part of their firm portfolio. However, it is true that the proposed model shows that hotels obtained better results from implementation (QP) than restaurants, which led to the conclusion that more research is needed due to the differences in size and organizational complexity. This last conclusion paves the way for new future lines of research. For example, this paper is focused on the managers' point of view. We could also study the differences in size, organization, and other business policies. Additionally, it is necessary to remark that this study only includes hotels and restaurants in one specific country and it would be useful to verify the model for other tourism subsectors and other geographical areas.



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**Capítol 7. Article 2 - Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect:  
Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda.**

Article

# Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda

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**Abstract:** This article presents a systematic review of the literature on quality of service and sustainable practices in the hospitality sector with the objective of analyzing the state of the art, identifying gaps for future lines of research, and defining a future research agenda. The number of articles on these topics, although not particularly high, does demonstrate a growing trend. Despite this growth, however, several untreated lines of research were detected in three specific areas. In the first area, emphasis is placed on the critical factors that affect the quality of service. In the second area are the specific practices and tools of sustainability and quality of service that affect development and business success. Finally, the third section analyses the impact of strategies and the management of sustainable practices and quality of service with respect to business development. Research questions have been defined for each area.

**Keywords:** service quality; sustainability; hospitality; tourism; sustainable practices

## 1. Introduction

In global terms, with respect to rapid growth and social, economic, and environmental impact, the tourism industry is one of the most important industries in the world [1–3]. In recent years, the hospitality sector has faced the challenges that come with being part of the trends of globalization, localization, personalization, and concern for the environment [4,5]. Many studies have focused on improving the performance of tourism and hotels [6,7]. In addition, there is a positive relationship between quality of service and customer satisfaction in the hotel industry [8–10], as well as between quality of service and the consumer's perception of quality [11]. Consequently, to survive and achieve successful results, quality improvement is key in a sector as competitive as the hospitality industry [12–14]. Therefore, hospitality companies' good management of these quality of service practices will allow their development and success [15].

Additionally, sustainability is considered an important element in terms of reputation. In the hospitality sector, certifications of sustainable practices form a competitive advantage [16], and they give businesses a better reputation among customers [17,18]. Previous studies show a positive association between environmental practices and business success in the hospitality sector [19,20]. Sustainable development has been a growing topic in the years since the origination of this concept in 1987 from the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) [21].

The importance of this sector is reflected in the global economy, as it accounts for 10.4% of all global economic activity; moreover, it represents one in ten jobs worldwide [3]. The importance of sustainable tourism is reflected by its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by

the United Nations (UN) for the year 2030 [22,23]. Specifically, SDG 8 deals with sustainable economic growth, and full occupation is one of its indicators, including policies that help promote sustainable tourism and create local employment [24].

The inclusion of sustainability in quality management should have a positive impact on the results of the company, but in no case should it lead to a reduction in the quality of other services.

Given the aspects described above, the present systematic review of the literature aims to identify the main factors and sustainable practices of quality of service to determine how they impact the development and success of companies in the hospitality sector (hotels and restaurants). In addition, the findings in this study will allow us to detect future lines of research to explore and provide a research agenda for future researchers.

This paper is divided into five sections. The introduction describes the theoretical framework of the topic. The second section explains the methodology used: a qualitative research was done through a systematic literature review. The content analysis of the selected literature review is described in the third section which is divided in three areas. Then, a discussion is provided through the topic and several research questions are identified for creating a future research agenda. Lastly, conclusions are presented with implication for academics and practitioners.

## 2. Methodology

In this study, we propose a systematic review that addresses the management of service quality and the effect of sustainable practices in the hospitality sector. This review offers a general description of the different scientific contributions made to date that adopt reproducible methods [25]. Defining this systematic methodology in ten steps, beginning with the identification of keywords and even validating the documents with the citation method [26]. Petticrew and Roberts suggest a conceptualization of the systematic review focused on striving to identify, evaluate, and synthesize all relevant studies on the defined topic; they propose a structured review in twelve steps [27]. Easterby-Smith et al. define two main processes for the systematic review [28]. The first attempts to define the review protocol and the relevance of the research studies in its specific field of research. The second process identifies the main findings to define gaps in research in this field of knowledge. Aiming to see the complete panorama, excluding these methodologies, the diagram of systemic revisions and metanalysis PRISMA were taken in consideration in order to select the articles [29]. The PRISMA method allows us to identify and select the paper with a higher quality and interest, through 4 phases: identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion [30].

After the previous contributions and in accordance with Centobelli et al. [31] and Cerchione and Esposito [32], and with the contributions of the previous authors, the literature review was organized in two stages. In the first stage, by PRISMA, a flow chart was built in order to identify and select the articles included in the analysis. In the second stage, the analysis of the included papers was carried out.

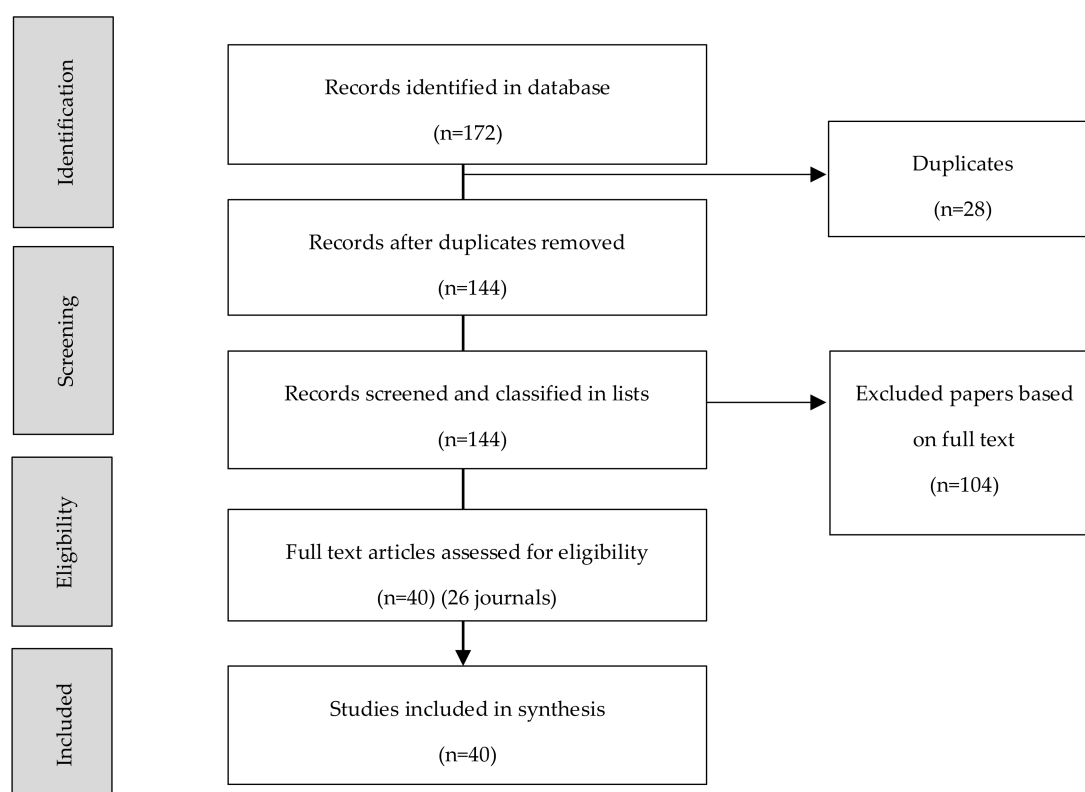
The first stage, searching for and selecting articles, had two key steps:

Searching for scientific articles: This section defines the keywords and selects the databases in which the search will be performed.

Selection of scientific articles: Criteria are defined to include or exclude articles found in the databases, and the selection of these articles is performed according to the criteria. This step is shown in Figure 1 through the PRISMA Flow diagram.

In the second stage, content description and analysis, there were also two key steps:

- a) Description: Articles are classified according to different perspectives to obtain a summary image.
- b) Analysis of content: The articles are selected and classified based on the defined criteria are reviewed and exhaustively studied. The analysis should highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the literature and identify and define future lines of research.



**Figure 1.** PRISMA flow diagram [30].

### 2.1. Search Stage

The articles were selected from the Scopus and Web of Science databases between 1990 and February 2019, although the oldest article found was from 2004. The keywords set to perform the search were "service quality", "quality service", "service quality management", "service quality practices" or "service quality polices", combined with "hospitality", "restaurants" or "hotels", and combined with "sustainability", "sustainable" or "sustain\*". In the latter, the use of the asterisk allows us to also find those variations of "sustain" with other endings that may be related to the topic of study. We added one final criterion to refine the search: we selected only scientific articles that were available in English or Spanish.

A total of 144 articles were found with our criteria in the two databases (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Search.

Keywords Used	
Date range	Published from 1990 to present
Scopus database	81
Web of Science database	91
Total hits in two databases	172
Duplicates	28
Hits excluding duplicates	144

### 2.2. Selection Stage

Two selection criteria were defined to identify the articles that allowed us to focus and approach the subject under investigation in a clear way. These criteria are found in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Selection criteria.

Criterion	Definition
First criterion: Title and Abstract	Selection of papers that their titles and abstracts focus on the keywords of the research.
Second criterion: Focus of the papers	Selection of the papers that the content focus on topics related to the keywords of the research.

With the first criterion in Table 2, we delimit the selection of articles to only those whose titles and abstracts focus on the management of service quality with reference to sustainable practices in the hospitality sector. The 144 articles were classified into the following four lists in Table 3:

- List A includes articles that discuss the two main concepts, service quality management and sustainable practices, in the hospitality sector.
- List B includes articles that focus only on service quality without considering sustainable practices and the sector.
- List C includes articles that focus only on sustainable practices without considering the quality of service and the sector.
- List D includes articles that focus on the hospitality sector without determining key aspects regarding service quality and/or sustainable practices.

**Table 3.** Selection.

List	Description	Number of Papers
A	Papers with a focus on both topics and sector of the research	40
B	Papers with prevalent focus on service quality	40
C	Papers with prevalent focus on sustainability practices	23
D	Papers with prevalent focus on hospitality sector	41
Total		144

The articles included in list B (40 articles), list C (23 articles), and list D (41 articles) are excluded because they are not focused on the scope of the research. The articles included comply completely with criterion 2, which allows us to view and analyze the content of each article to determine whether they fall within this article's scope of research. Through this process, a total of 40 articles was selected for the next stage of analysis.

### 2.3. Descriptive Analysis of the Results

The main objective of the descriptive analysis stage was to offer an overview of the articles analyzed that focus on service quality in the field of hospitality and that address sustainability. To carry out this analysis, four perspectives were defined as follows:

#### 2.3.1. Articles by Time

In Figure 2, we see that the year with the largest number of articles published is the year 2017. Furthermore, only six articles were published before 2010. Most of the articles were produced between 2010 and 2020, and thus, we observe a growing trend of contributions on this topic in recent years.

#### 2.3.2. Articles by Journals

Through the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) platform, eight thematic areas can be identified, which are identified by journal in Table 4. These areas are as follows: Business, Management, and Accounting; Decision Sciences; Economics, Econometrics, and Finance; Environmental Science; Social Sciences; Computer Science; Psychology; Agricultural and Biological Sciences.

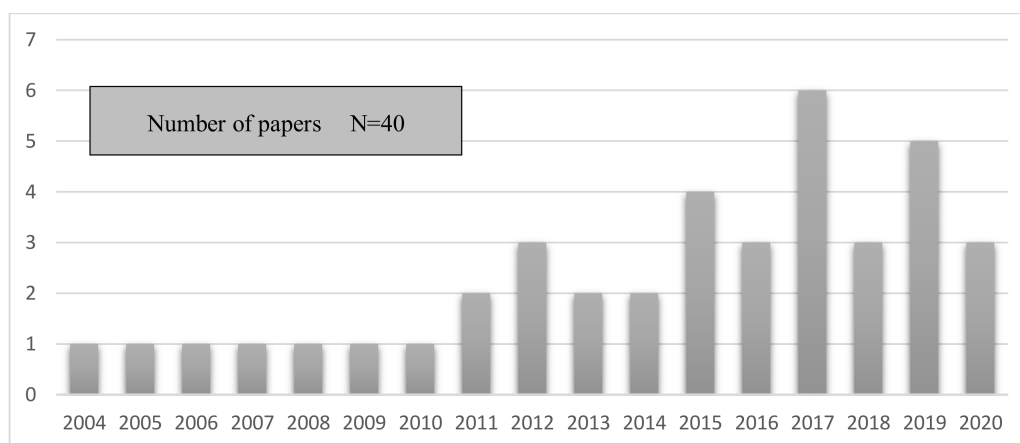
Table 4. Distribution by journals.

Journal	No. Articles	Business, Management and Accounting	Decision Sciences	Economics, Econometrics and Finance	Environmental Science	Social Sciences	Computer Science	Psychology	Agricultural and Biological Sciences
African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure	3(8%)	X				X			
Amfiteatru Economic Journal	1(3%)			X					
Benchmarking: An International Journal	1(3%)	X							
British Food Journal	1(3%)	X							X
Computers in Human Behavior	1(3%)						X	X	
Current Issues in Tourism	1(3%)	X				X			
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	3(8%)	X							
International Journal of Environmental Research	1(3%)				X				
International Journal of Hospitality Management	5(13%)	X							
International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration	2(5%)	X							
International Journal of Services Economics and Management	1(3%)	X		X					
International Journal of Tourism Research	1(3%)	X			X	X			
Journal of Brand Management	1(3%)	X							
Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management	5(13%)	X							
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	1(3%)	X							
Journal of Service Theory and Practice	1(3%)	X							
Operations Management Research	1(3%)	X	X						
Sage Open	1(3%)					X			
Social Responsibility Journal	1(3%)	X				X			
Sustainability	2(5%)				X	X			



Table 4. Cont.

Journal	No. Articles	Business, Management and Accounting	Decision Sciences	Economics, Econometrics and Finance	Environmental Science	Social Sciences	Computer Science	Psychology	Agricultural and Biological Sciences
The Journal of Hospitality Financial Management	1(3%)	X							
The Service Industries Journal	1(3%)					X			
Total Quality Management & Business Excellence	1(3%)	X							
Tourism and Hospitality Planning & Development	1(3%)	X				X			
Tourism Management	1(3%)	X				X			
Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes	1(3%)	X			X	X			



**Figure 2.** Papers distribution over time.

Table 4 shows that the vast majority of articles share the category of Business, Management, and Accounting, but we also see that this research topic has an important cross-sectional aspect and involves journals focused on different topics, such as Psychology, Computer Science, and Environmental Science, among other categories.

### 2.3.3. Articles by Methodology

Table 5 shows the distribution of the articles by methodology used. As shown, the quantitative methodology is the most commonly used in most articles, well ahead of qualitative and mixed methodologies.

**Table 5.** Data collection method.

Data Collection Method	No. of Articles
Quantitative	29
<i>Surveys</i>	10
<i>Model</i>	17
<i>Mathematical model</i>	2
Qualitative	2
Mixed (Survey + Interview)	9

Of the 40 articles, 29 were based on a quantitative methodology. The 29 quantitative articles were into ten surveys, seventeen models and two mathematical models. The two qualitative articles contain a theoretical section and a case study. The nine articles based on mixed methodology combine quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

### 2.3.4. Articles by Areas

To obtain a complete overview of the body of the literature studied, the documents were divided into three thematic areas. These three areas are analyzed in the content analysis section.

1. "Factors influencing service quality in hospitality", where the main critical success factors linked to sustainability in the management of service quality in the hospitality sector are identified. Nine articles were selected.
2. "Service quality and sustainability practices for hospitality", where sustainable practices for service quality in hospitality are analyzed. Ten articles were selected.
3. "Impact of service quality and sustainability on hospitality performance", which shows the relationship and impact of quality of service on different types of successes and improvements. Twenty-one articles were selected.

### 3. Content Analysis Stage

The content analysis stage provides us with a detailed overview of the content of the 40 articles. This overview illustrates the various problems covered by the literature on service quality and sustainability in the hospitality sector. The articles are classified into three content areas: Area 1—factors influencing service quality in hospitality; Area 2—service quality and sustainability practices for hospitality; Area 3—impact of service quality and sustainability on hospitality performance. The three sections are shown in detail in the following paragraphs.

#### 3.1. Factors Influencing Service Quality in Hospitality

The first area contains nine articles that discuss factors influencing the quality of service in hospitality, defining an area of study by quantitative and qualitative methods. In this first section, a main trend of the literature is analyzing the critical factors of sustainable success that affect the quality of service in the hospitality sector. The factors found can be classified as follows:

The first group of factors identified are (1) Environmental factors, which explain their impact through the ecological components of the surroundings [33,34], the equipment used for the service [35] as well as the product itself that is served must be environmentally friendly [33,36], such as other sustainable practices that the company carry out [37]. The second group of factors can be classified as (2) Business factors, that explain the relationship with the success of the service quality based on the management of the Human Resources, the settlement and formation adapted in order to improve their environmental behavior, and that have a positive effect on the customer perception of the service quality [38,39]. Another group of factors is composed by the (3) Human Factors, these demarcate, according to their gender and intellectual capital, better practices accompanied with an improvement in their environmental behavior and have an impact on the enhancement of their competitiveness and the satisfaction of the customer, as a result of a higher quality perception [40,41].

Aside from these factors gathered in these three categories, in the literature is also mentioned the impacts that are determined according to the type of customer. It is possible to identify in the client different factors, such as the economic and motivational ones that cannot be classified as sustainable but have influence on the success of the company. The economical factor can divide into segments the customers, according to their economic capacity, social class, occupation [35]. The motivational factors explain the purpose of the trip [41], the aim and the motivation for a service with a sustainable approach and a higher quality.

Due to all the previous factors explained, relational factors appear. These relational factors study the effects of the satisfaction and the loyalty of the customer with a typology of practices and the quality of the service [34,37]. These relational factors have a positive impact on the development of the company [40].

However, the literature does focus on several specific key factors but does not go into great detail with others, such as environmental factors and sustainable practices. Other, more sociopolitical factors that do not appear in the literature could also be analyzed. In this area, many more concrete factors could be differentiated and analyzed. In addition, it is not determined whether or not these factors are pure; that is, if their presence has a positive impact but their absence is not negative for the quality of the service, or if their presence has a positive impact, but their absence exerts negative impact.

This section indicates that it is necessary to delve into key factors and determine their impact to implement a clearer classification.

#### 3.2. Service Quality and Sustainability Practices for Hospitality

In the second area, 10 articles were analyzed—the articles focus on the practices that are carried out to create the quality of sustainable service in the hospitality sector.

For some years, there have been studies, all of which conclude that the behavior of the consumer and the green practices of the hospitality sector have a positive relationship, because they influence

the purchase decision of the customer and their satisfaction [42,43]. Prud'homme and Raymond (2013) are the first to detail the influential green practices on the satisfaction and decision of the customer. The practices of the 3Rs, recycle–reuse–reduce, have a positive influence on the quality and the satisfaction [44]. These practices also have an impact on the cost and the internal processes of the company. It is for this reason that it is determined that internal process practices, the learning of the organization, the quality increase and the cost reduction, and sustainable and effective practices, have a positive influence on the reputation and the results of the company [45].

Another studied practice is more linked to the product that is offered in the service itself, in which the product has a very positive influence on consumer decision, considering the sustainable proximity products that have respected the environment for its production are appreciated [46]. Nevertheless, for obtaining these products it should be considered the supply chain, and in this stage also appear the sustainable practices, such as the reuse of products, social practices, the information, communication and technology, as well as the environmental monitoring [47].

Many of the practices mentioned above have influence for obtaining environmental protection certificates. Therefore, the fact is that these types of practices and obtaining the certificates have a positive influence on the business performance [48].

Lastly, there are the practices linked to human resources matters, in which the employers training focused on these sustainable practices, is linked to an increase in quality service and consequently on the company's sustainability [49,50]. The employers' motivation and consciousness-raising are important to promote sustainable practices on the product or service offered. Good sustainable consumption practices, for example on food, have a positive impact on the sustainability [51], and therefore on the perceived quality by the customer and on the business success.

One weakness found in the literature is the lack of differentiation in the size of hospitality businesses and whether such differences exert different influences in the implementation of the practices and their impact. Likewise, it does not examine the star classification of hotels in depth or in a quantification of its real impact on company results.

### *3.3. Impact of Service Quality and Sustainability on Hospitality Performance*

In the third area, the literature shows us which aspects of environmental practice strategies and the management of service quality have an impact. After analyzing the 21 articles that make up this section, it was determined separately that environmental and the service quality practices have a direct effect on different elements.

Regarding environmental practices, the elements which are impacted can be classified as follows: economic and financial performance, environmental and relational performance. Concerning the impact on economic and financial performance, it is proven that a higher environmental strategy implementation has a positive impact on occupation and incomes [52]. This association is due to one of the most influential factors on purchasing decision is the customer perception of the green quality, green value and information of cost savings [53]. Furthermore, sustainable factors make customers willing to pay a higher price [54]. As we can determinate the relationship with the customer is an important aspect that should be considered—it is for this reason that the impact on relational performance is the key to the success of the company. Considering that environmental practices have a positive effect on the consumer's satisfaction and on customer's loyalty [55], the customer is willing to pay more if the service offered is done with these kinds of practices [56]. Therefore, if the company wants to increase the result indicators and the customer's loyalty, it should make more practices related to sustainability [57,58]. All these practices, besides the implications on business factors, as we have seen, have a very positive effect on environmental performance [52].

On the other hand, we find service quality practices that impact the following performances: economic and financial performance, relational performance and innovation performance. In regard to the impact on economic and financial performance it is noted that the service quality is the most important reason why a hotel is chosen [59,60]. The previous statement is understandable considering

that a better service quality increases the perceived quality by the customer [61,62]. Therefore, an improvement in service quality will have a positive impact on the company performance [63,64]. Furthermore, within the five dimensions, safety, empathy, trust, sensitivity and tangibility of quality service [65], those with a higher impact are trust, tangibility and empathy. This fact concurs with the importance of the impact on the relational performance, inasmuch service quality practice affects directly and positively the corporate image and, through these, impact indirectly on customer loyalty [66–68]. These practices not only have an effect on consumer loyalty, but also impact satisfaction [69,70] and reputation [71]. Both the quality of the tangible elements and the service of the staff increase the perceived satisfaction of the clients. The quality of the tangible elements has more impact on local companies while the quality of the service of the staff affects global companies more [72]. In the studies of Kandampully et al. (2011) and Cham and Easvaralingam (2012) it is determined that constant improvement and innovation on the factors that influence on the quality of service must occur. This shows us that it should also be considered the innovation and improvement performance, since it is essential that the different service quality practices are improved and innovated in order to improve quality [68]. This growth will positively affect company competitiveness [73]. Aside from the constant improvement and innovation, the relationship between market orientation and organizational success should be considered, since the quality of the service has a direct and positive connection with this relationship.

Although there are several positive impacts of each of the practices, we find only that the combination of environmental practices and service quality have a positive impact on (1) purchase decision making and (2) customer satisfaction. Due to the importance of both practices in the development of the company and its improvement in the result, this limitation is very significant. This limitation reflects the need to investigate the combined effect of the two practices on different elements of the business. This fact is key to decision making of the companies' managers.

#### 4. Discussion

Once the content of the literature had been analyzed, we could identify the strengths and weaknesses that each area presents, and they will be discussed in the following section.

Regarding the first area, in which critical success factors that positively impact the quality of service in the hospitality sector stand out, the literature highlights five factors: (1) environmental factors, (2) business factors, (3) human factors, (4) motivational and customer factors, and (5) relational factors. The latter factor is influenced by the above factors because they have a positive effect on the relationship between the company and the customer and are relevant to the managers and the decision makers, considering that the relational factors have repercussions in the development and results of the company. However, the correlation among these five factors jointly it is not identified in the literature and it can be an important gap to solve that will allow practitioners to make decisions about the company.

RQ1: Which correlation has critical success factors jointly in the quality of service?

Moreover, the literature does not clearly determine if these factors are pure factors; such factors exert positive impacts when present, but their absence does not negatively impact the quality of service. In contrast, other factors exert positive impact, but their absence exerts negative impact. Furthermore, the literature does not delve into determining the possible relationships and consequent influence among the factors themselves and their combinations. Investigating this fact is of utmost importance, since knowing if several factors are correlated could help determine which business decision to make in order to implement a typology of practices or both of them. Therefore, to find out if the implementation of environmental practices combined with the implementation of service quality practices cause an improvement on both, the correlation between them should also be studied.

Such omissions indicate that it is necessary to delve into key factors and determine their impact to create a clearer classification. This study allows us to formulate these questions for future research.

RQ2: Could it be determined if factors are pure and exert a positive impact on the quality of service in hospitality?

Nevertheless, in the literature, we do not find that socio-political factors (partners' power, socialization, behavior, orientation) are analyzed in depth. The literature, in consequence, focuses on the above factors. However, environmental factors and sustainable practices are not covered in detail by the literature, which treats them more broadly. The next step will be to shed light in the relation within the socio-political factors because of their importance in the hospitality that is not shown in the literature. Therefore, a more detailed study of these factors would bring light both academic and professional level in order to study its effects and put into practice.

RQ3: How do sociopolitical factors influence sustainability and quality of service in the hospitality sector?

Concerning the second area, which contains articles focused on the practices and tools used in the hospitality sector, the literature analyses the specific practices of sustainability and quality of service that influence business success within the hospitality sector. The practices that are found and analyzed are as follows: (1) the 3Rs (reduce, recycle, and reuse); (2) ecological concern; (3) sustainability in internal operations; (4) increased quality and reduction in costs; (5) sustainable organizational learning; (6) sustainability and effective cost management; (7) sustainable food; (8) environmental certifications; environmental monitoring; (9) social practices; (10) sustainability in human resources. All these practices discussed in the literature exert positive influence, albeit to differing degrees, on customer's perception of quality and on business success.

The main weakness in the literature is that practices are only examined individually, and it does not take into account their impact jointly, as we could also see in the first area. These practices must be studied in depth to differentiate and detect the different degree of influence among them and to conclude which practices are more effective for business.

RQ4: What is the impact of the application of sustainability and quality service practice on business and financial performance of the company?

However, despite all these practices found in the literature, there is no comprehensive system of practices regarding the environment and quality of service to achieve a positive perception of quality from the customer and good business results, nor is there a comprehensive system that is differentiated by the various characteristics of companies. Therefore, based on our content analysis, we view as a weakness this lack of differentiation by characteristics such as company size, the hotel's number of stars, and other segmentation characteristics in the performance of sustainable practices and quality of service that help companies achieve success. There is also a lack of studies examining how these practices impact financial performance. In addition, there is no model to quantify the real impact of such practices on companies' results, this would be important for the companies because it would allow an optimal decision making. These gaps in the literature allow us to identify the following lines for future research.

RQ5: According to the segmentation by characteristics such as size of the company, stars, location, are there differences in the impact of practices of quality service and sustainability?

Regarding the third area, the knowledge on the relationship between strategies of environmental practices and the management of service quality practices regarding the development of the company shows different factors and effects in each topic.

On the one side, the literature highlights that environmental practices have a positive influence on six development factors such as: (1) purchase decision making, (2) customer loyalty, (3) customer satisfaction, (4) willingness to pay a higher price, (5) occupation and (6) results indicators.

On the other side, the quality of the service has a positive impact on nine factors of business development: (1) competitiveness, (2) corporate image, (3) customer loyalty, (4) purchase decision making, (4) market orientation, (5) organizational success, (6) customer satisfaction, (7) performance of the company, (8) reputation, and (9) perceived quality.

The content analysis of this area reveals the necessity to investigate and discover other factors which together have a positive overall impact. We find that only (1) decision-making in the purchase and (2) customer satisfaction positively influenced development factors. What is more, decision-making and customer satisfaction have only been studied individually and also it is important to know which the effects are to apply them jointly and to know if this positive impact is bigger together than individually. This fact will allow companies to apply (or not) strategies together. However, other factors should have a positive impact in the development of the company. Knowing the importance for practitioners in this topic, academics must extend the actual literature for solving that important and practical gaps.

This analysis also opens the field to more empirical research of what type and what degree of impact such practices have on company development. From these gaps, the following questions can be formulated for future research.

RQ6: What impact do environmental and quality of service practices have when they are applied together in the development of the company?

Finally, after analyzing the three areas detected in the literature, it is shown how there are several gaps where more thorough investigation should be done. First of all, it must be analyzed what kind of correlation exists between the two types of practices, in order to determine if the implementation of both will have effects on the same direction. Once done, the effects that they have jointly must be deeply analyzed, as well as the different concrete practices both of service quality and sustainability.

## 5. Conclusions

This article conducted a systematic review of the literature on service quality management and sustainability in the field of hospitality. This review has allowed us to present a unified contextual framework in which certain gaps in the literature can be identified and with which we can define new lines of research to expand the literature.

Regarding the research question, this review's main objective is to identify the sustainable factors that positively influence the quality of hospitality service, sustainable practices, and service quality and the impact of service quality and sustainability in service on the success of hospitality.

A descriptive analysis was carried out that provides an overview of the articles selected in the literature review. This analysis offers a summary of the documents that address the subject of the study. In reference to the methodology used, most articles are based on quantitative methodologies, and a few have a more qualitative or mixed point of view. This content analysis of the articles included has provided a description of the main problems covered by the research on quality of service and sustainability in the hospitality sector. The research agenda proposed based on our analysis allows us to provide guidance for future lines of research and to draw conclusions for academics and professionals.

A content analysis has also been performed, that allows us to detect and delimit literature in three areas. The first one refers to critical factors of sustainable success that affect the quality of service in the hospitality sector; five have been identified: (1) environmental factors, (2) business factors, (3) human factors, (4) motivational and customer factors, and (5) relational factors. The second area refers to ten main practices that companies do to improve their quality of sustainable services in the hospitality sectors. Finally, in the third area critical factors of environmental practices and quality of service are analyzed. We can determine that the only factors that can be found in both categories are (1) decision-making in the purchase and (2) customer satisfaction.

For academics, the highlighted and identified research gaps and the consequent questions proposed represent possible lines of research to improve and contribute knowledge to the content of these research areas. Studies in these research areas should not only investigate the impact of sustainable practices and quality of service in a company in a generic way but should also consider differentiation according to the companies' differing characteristics.

Therefore, the proposed research agenda with 6 research questions should offer future researchers the opportunity to develop a comprehensive framework of sustainable practices and quality of

service, in addition to the ability to study the impact and influence such practices have on companies' development.

Regarding professionals, the review of the literature has shown that there are joint environmental practices and quality of service that positively influence (1) purchase decision making and (2) customer satisfaction. However, there remains much to demonstrate from other practices and key factors of the company that can positively influence development factors. This study has shown how such practices influence company development factors, but not in conjunction with sustainable practices and service quality. This avenue can mark the future lines of action that companies in the hospitality sector must pursue to obtain greater success from these practices, which are increasingly important in the sector. However, the professional will also be interested in the results of studies of practices and impacts segmented by size of the company, quality, and other characteristics, to implement those that best suit the company and sector.

All these conclusions invite us to pursue these new lines of research to obtain results and thus expand knowledge in the area and sector of the hotel trade, specifically in restaurants and hotels.

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**Capítol 8. Article 3 - Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel companies: An empirical approach.**

## **Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel companies: An empirical approach**

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# 1 **Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel companies: An** 2 **empirical approach**

3

## 4 Abstract

5 Interest in sustainability and service quality practices in hospitality is increasing in  
6 professional and academic communities. Most of the existing literature about hotel  
7 companies is focused on a single practice at a time and does not combine service quality  
8 and environmental practices in the same study. This study investigates the effects of  
9 service quality and environmental practices on the competitiveness and financial  
10 performance of hotels. The research population consisted of 148 hotel managers from  
11 Catalonia. The impacts between the dimensions were analysed using structural equation  
12 modelling. The investigation revealed that there is a positive impact on the financial  
13 performance and competitiveness of the hotel managers that have adopted these  
14 practices. A correlation between service quality and environmental practices was also  
15 demonstrated. The implications and recommendations stemming from the research are  
16 exposed.

17

## 18 Keywords

19 Hospitality, Hotels, Quality management practices, Environmental management  
20 practices, Financial performance, Competitiveness

21

## 22 1. Introduction

23 Issues related to pollution, energy consumption, and the reduction of waste, among other  
24 practices connected with environmental protection, are nowadays an important area of  
25 academic research (Li et al., 2019; Stavropoulos et al., 2018). The tourism sector has  
26 come to represent 8% of greenhouse gas emissions (Lenzen et al., 2018), a perturbing  
27 fact which, until few years ago, did not take on such importance because the impacts of  
28 this sector were divided between multiple service suppliers, making both the impacts and

29 liabilities difficult to measure (El Dief and Font, 2010; González-Benito and González-  
30 Benito, 2006).

31 However, the growing urgency of sustainability also affects the tourism sector. For some  
32 years there has been growing concern about the negative effects of tourism  
33 development, leading to companies being blamed for the practices they employ that have  
34 an environmental and social impact on the tourism sector (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018;  
35 Camilleri, 2014; Kornilaki and Font, 2019), and explaining why companies are  
36 increasingly trying to become more sustainable (Bini et al., 2018; Figge et al., 2002; Lo  
37 and Sheu, 2007). Although this may appear to be something new, principles of  
38 sustainability started to be incorporated into the hospitality and tourism sector at the  
39 beginning of the nineties (Legrand et al., 2013). Since then it has been one of the most  
40 imperative issues as much on a local level as on an international level (Alonso-Almeida  
41 et al., 2018), as confirmed by the UN General Assembly (UN, 2015).

42 These practices and the concern about sustainability affect one of the key factors of the  
43 sector, the management of service quality practices (QMPs) (Babu et al., 2018; Slevitch  
44 et al., 2013; Wikhamn, 2019), which impacts positively on consumers (Kassinis and  
45 Soteriou, 2015a; Slevitch et al., 2013). There are other studies that likewise determine  
46 that the implementation of QMPs has a positive impact, assisting with the implementation  
47 of environmental practices. (Hamdoun et al., 2018; Llach et al., 2013; Pereira-Moliner et  
48 al., 2012; Pipatprapa et al., 2017; Teixeira et al., 2019; Yang and Kang, 2019).

49 These two key factors, QMPs and environmental practices management (EMPs), have  
50 aroused significant research interest because they have been recognized as factors that  
51 have a positive influence on company competitiveness (Bernardo et al., 2015; Llach et  
52 al., 2013; Prajogo et al., 2012; Sun et al., 2009). To this effect, it is certain that QMPs  
53 significantly benefit the promotion and development of EMPs (Yang and Kang, 2019).

54 Regarding previous research on these two factors in the tourism sector, studies have  
55 been conducted on their positive impact on both the competitiveness and the financial

56 performance of QMPs (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2012; Bagur-Femenías et al., 2019;  
57 Mmutle and Shonhe, 2017; Rodríguez Antón et al., 2011; Rubio-Andrada et al., 2011)  
58 and EMPs (Gürlek et al., 2017; Kassinis and Soteriou, 2015a; Perramon et al., 2014;  
59 Rodríguez-Antón and Alonso-Almeida, 2011). Furthermore, in recent years, some  
60 studies have started to combine the two factors, as is the case for small businesses in  
61 the tourism sector, and more specifically catering businesses (Alonso-Almeida et al.,  
62 2018; Cheng et al., 2019; Llach et al., 2013). With reference to hotels, the literature  
63 indicates that their behaviour with respect to these factors is determined by the  
64 environment in which they operate (Fernández-Robin et al., 2019) and by business size  
65 (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Buffa et al., 2018; Del Mar Alonso-Almeida and Rodríguez-  
66 Antón, 2011; Doh et al., 2017), differentiating by business type (Bagur- Femenias et al.,  
67 2013; del Alonso-Almeida et al., 2015; Rodríguez-Antón et al., 2012), category (Del Mar  
68 Alonso-Almeida and Rodríguez-Antón, 2011; Rodríguez-Antón et al., 2012), ecological  
69 characteristics of the hotel (Best and Thapa, 2013; Garay and Font, 2013), and type of  
70 traveller (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2012; Lee and Park, 2009).

71 The previous literature also determines that more research is needed because of the  
72 importance of examining and studying each case in a particular way. Due to different  
73 kinds of business environments, companies develop different QMPs and EMPs at  
74 different degrees of implementation and with different results on key factors of the  
75 company, including competitiveness and financial performance.

76 Hotel companies have been selected from the tourism sector considering that previous  
77 studies (Bagur-Femenías et al., 2019) have established a stronger positive relation with  
78 quality factors in this sector than in other subsectors. In this regard, and as some authors  
79 determine, specific subsectors need to be analyzed as there may be different results or  
80 there could be bias. (Agyeiwaah, 2019; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Garay and Font,  
81 2013; Llach et al., 2013;).



82 Therefore, while this research indicates the contribution of these practices to  
83 performance, there is still much to discover about the combined effect of these practices  
84 on achieving varied business goals within the hotel subsector. The current study  
85 contributes to this research gap. The study purpose is to investigate the combined effect  
86 of quality management practices and environmental management practices on firm goals  
87 to achieve competitiveness and business financial performance.

88 The selected environment is Catalonia (Spain), because it is the country's leading region  
89 in terms of number of tourists, receiving 13.6 million visitors, or 23.5% of the total number  
90 of tourists coming to Spain (INE, 2019). As detailed later, Catalonia is one of the leading  
91 areas in the world in terms of tourism, with a well consolidated market, making it a  
92 benchmark for other tourist destinations.

93 The results may help managers to decide what strategy to follow when implementing  
94 practices to improve competitiveness and financial performance. They may also be  
95 useful for policymakers to encourage the implementation of quality and environmental  
96 practices by public policies, which will positively impact on society.

97 The paper is divided into 6 sections. In Section 1, we review the theoretical background  
98 to complete the introduction to the topic studied. Section 2 develops a discussion of the  
99 different theoretical arguments between EMPs and QMPs and the different relationships  
100 with competitiveness and financial performance. Section 3 addresses the empirical  
101 design of the present study. Section 4 presents the results and quantitative analysis.  
102 Section 5 shows the findings of the study. And last, Section 6 addresses the different  
103 conclusions found in the research.

104

105 2. Literature review

106 2.1 Relationship between EMPs and QMPs

107 Regarding the relationship between EMPs and QMPs, these two factors have been  
108 recognized as internal mechanisms that provide companies with combined competitive  
109 advantages, explaining why they have caught researchers' attention (Prajogo et al.,  
110 2012; Sun et al., 2009). Several studies combining these two factors have concluded  
111 that making good QMPs promotes good EMPs, resulting in a positive effect on the  
112 development of the company (Bernardo et al., 2015; Llach et al., 2013). Apart from this  
113 positive effect, several of the most recent studies state that the QMPs have a direct  
114 positive relationship with and are facilitators for implementing pertinent EMPs (Hamdoun  
115 et al., 2018; Llach et al., 2013; Pereira-Moliner et al., 2012; Pipatprapa et al., 2017;  
116 Teixeira et al., 2019; Yang and Kang, 2019). However, one study determined that some  
117 quality management practices should be investigated in greater depth to determine their  
118 effect on EMPs (Allur et al., 2018).

119 The effect on QMPs when aiming to implement good EMPs in the company to improve  
120 quality, productivity, and cost reduction should also be studied (Li et al., 2018). In this  
121 regard, some studies have analysed the effect of environmental practices on the quality  
122 of the services in the hospitality industry. Environmental practices and factors, including  
123 tangible elements, intangible elements, organizational behaviour, resource efficiency,  
124 and organic food (Bastič and Gojčič, 2012; Blesic et al., 2011; Kassinis and Soteriou,  
125 2015a; Metaxas et al., 2019), have a direct, positive effect on the quality of the services  
126 of a hospitality company. Other studies also conclude that EMPs affect customer  
127 satisfaction, loyalty, and the perception of quality, thus improving the perception of the  
128 quality of the services (Babu et al., 2018; Slevitch et al., 2013; Wikhamn, 2019).

129 To this effect, the complementarity between quality management and the environment  
130 is an important issue for both academics and professionals (Molina-Azorín et al., 2015).  
131 Since most previous studies conclude that QMPs have a positive effect on the  
132 implementation of EMPs and vice versa, the correlation between these two factors is  
133 analysed in this study and the following hypothesis proposed.

134 *H1: Hotels that have adopted QMPs are likely to adopt EMPs, and vice versa.*

135

## 136 2.2 Impact on the competitiveness of EMPs and QMPs

137 Quality management is linked to improvements in internal operations and to the  
138 maintenance of the company and its resources (Angell and Klassen, 1999; Yang et al.,  
139 2011). Therefore, QMPs are plans designed by the company that aim to improve  
140 products, services, processes, and productivity. The plans and guidelines for QMPs,  
141 including process planning, establishing objectives, defining tasks, and assigning  
142 managers, help improve the company in terms of efficiency and operating cost  
143 reductions (Iyer et al., 2013). Some studies show that there is a positive relationship  
144 between QMPs and operational efficiency, cost reduction, quality, flexibility, and  
145 company development (Al-Refaie, 2015; Yang et al., 2010, 2011).

146 Similarly, we observe how QMPs can improve not only financial results but also operating  
147 results and competitive advantages, thus strengthening the competitiveness of service  
148 companies (Dortyol et al., 2014; Mmutle and Shonhe, 2017; Prajogo, 2011). As (Jabbour  
149 et al., 2014; Pereira-Moliner et al., 2012) point out, QMPs also serve to eliminate defects  
150 in organizational processes by seeking to improve their efficiency. In the tourism sector,  
151 which is analysed in this article, the most recent studies indicate that an increasing  
152 number of companies integrate quality standards and QMPs to improve competitiveness  
153 (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Shafiq et al., 2019). For these  
154 reasons, the following hypothesis is proposed.

155 *H2: QMPs are likely to have a positive and direct effect on competitiveness.*

156

157 QMPs can directly affect competitiveness, and the implementation of good EMPs not  
158 only has a positive effect on improving competitiveness (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018) but  
159 they also generate sustainable activities for a greener economy (Kraus et al., 2017). The

160 reasons for integrating these environmental practices are the attitudes of the manager-  
161 owners, their personal values, recognition of environmental problems, the company's  
162 reputation, and cost savings (Best and Thapa, 2013; Kornilaki and Font, 2019).

163 Some years ago, a study by (Hitchens et al., 2005) concluded that companies' ability to  
164 compete in the market is increasingly affected by its relationship with sustainability.  
165 Sustainable practices in hotels impact on society and the economy by affecting the  
166 consumption of energy and resources, improving the hotel's image, and generating a  
167 competitive advantage by positioning themselves alongside these sustainability policies  
168 (Best and Thapa, 2013; Hsiao and Chuang, 2016; Leonidou et al., 2013; Llach et al.,  
169 2013; Perramon et al., 2014). Given all these factors, the recommendation, which is  
170 transmitted to company managers-operators, is to work to continuously improve  
171 sustainable practices because they can positively impact the development of  
172 competitiveness (Annunziata et al., 2018; Babu et al., 2018). Given that most studies  
173 determine that the integration of EMPs by companies is a key factor and improves  
174 competitiveness, the following hypothesis is proposed.

175 *H3: EMPs are likely to have a positive and direct effect on competitiveness.*

176

### 177 2.3 Impact on the financial performance of EMPs and QMPs

178 According to (Iyer et al., 2013) and as previously mentioned, QMPs are integrated to  
179 improve certain aspects of the company, such as the service or the product and  
180 productivity, with this improvement helping to develop the company's efficiency and  
181 reduce costs. Some studies demonstrate this statement, including (Al-Refaie, 2015;  
182 Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Shafiq et al., 2019). More  
183 precisely, some studies indicate that there is a positive relationship between QMPs and  
184 FP because of this operational improvement in the company through the implementation  
185 of QMPs (Yang et al., 2010; Yang and Kang, 2019).

186 In the tourism sector, QMPs are being adopted to improve the quality and FP of the  
187 company (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018). Some studies  
188 determine that the relationship between QMPs and FP is positive in this sector (Arbelo-  
189 Pérez et al., 2017; Llach et al., 2013; Nair and Choudhary, 2016). Nevertheless, the fact  
190 that different organizations adopting QMPs can have different results and impacts on FP  
191 should be taken into account (Prajogo, 2011). Therefore, the following hypothesis is  
192 proposed.

193 *H4: QMPs are likely to have a positive and direct effect on financial performance.*

194

195 In a tourist market where environmental practices are among the three most important  
196 priorities of managers and business owners, the increasingly strong recommendation,  
197 according to (Agyeiwaah, 2019; Coles et al., 2016), is that they must implement and  
198 guide EMPs in the company, not only for social and environmental improvement but also  
199 to improve FP (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Annunziata et al., 2018; Bell and Ruhanen,  
200 2016; Jiang et al., 2018).

201 Several studies confirm that there is a direct and positive relationship between EMPs  
202 and FP (de Almeida and de Melo, 2017; Eccles et al., 2014; Grewatsch and Kleindienst,  
203 2017; Zhang et al., 2019), including the most recent research conducted in the tourism  
204 sector (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018). Similarly, and different from previous studies, some  
205 authors determined that EMPs have a positive but indirect impact on FP (Gao et al.,  
206 2019; Yang and Kang, 2019). In addition, some studies highlight the need to investigate  
207 the characteristics of the environment and the tourism sector context in greater depth,  
208 including how the sustainable behaviour of the company is affected (Garay et al., 2019;  
209 Papagiannakis and Lioukas, 2012), and thus how EMPs are affected. Therefore, the  
210 following hypothesis is proposed.

211 *H5: EMPs are likely to have a positive and direct effect on financial performance.*

212

213 2.4 Effect of competitiveness on financial performance

214 As previously seen, QMPs and EMPs have a positive relationship with competitiveness  
215 (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Shafiq et al., 2019). QMPs  
216 demonstrate a positive relationship with operational efficiency, reducing costs, improving  
217 quality and flexibility, and benefiting the company's development (Dortyol et al., 2014;  
218 Mmutle and Shonhe, 2017; Prajogo, 2011). EMPs reduce the consumption of energy  
219 and resources through a positive effect and improve the corporate image and  
220 sustainability policies to generate a competitive advantage (Best and Thapa, 2013; Hsiao  
221 and Chuang, 2016; Leonidou et al., 2013; Llach et al., 2013; Perramon et al., 2014).

222 However, although all these practices improve competitiveness, we do not see that this  
223 competitive advantage guarantees a direct improvement in FP. Some studies on hotels  
224 show a positive effect between competitiveness and FP (González-Rodríguez et al.,  
225 2018; Turner et al., 2017; Wilke et al., 2019), but these studies have very specific  
226 characteristics in terms of the location of the hotels. Nonetheless, the following  
227 hypothesis is proposed for validation.

228 *H6: Competitiveness is likely to have a positive and direct effect on financial*  
229 *performance.*

230

231 Figure 1. Working model

232

233

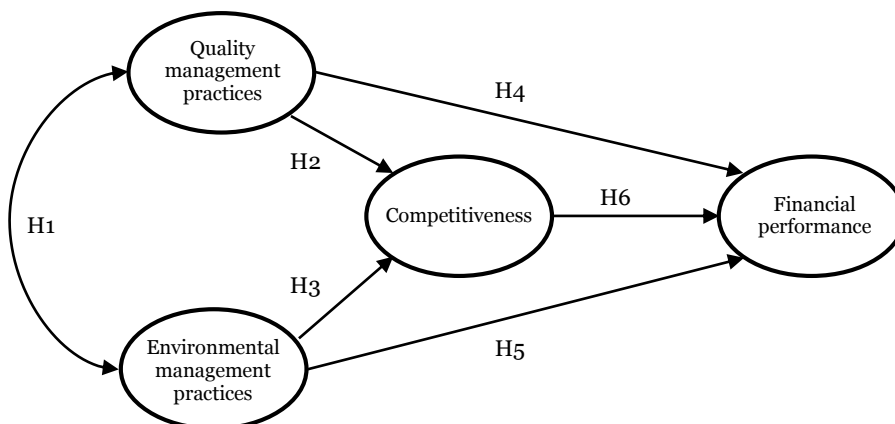
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### 241 3. Methodology

242

#### 243 3.1. Sample and method

244 The data used for the purpose of this paper consist in a sample of 148 hotels from the  
245 region of Catalonia (Spain). The sample was conducted in 2017 and is part of a wider  
246 sample used in a previous work by Bagur-Femenías et al. (2019). In their study, the  
247 authors investigated differences in behaviour between hotels and restaurants in terms of  
248 quality policies. Therefore, in this paper, only the surveys referring to business managers  
249 of hotels in Catalonia are included.

250 The survey was randomly sent to more than 1,000 hotels via email and phone call, with  
251 the aim of receiving answers from one manager per hotel. This resulted in a valid  
252 response rate of approximately 14%. Notably, the total number of hotel establishments  
253 in Catalonia is 2,028 (IDESCAT, 2020).

254 Concerning the profile of the respondents, the vast majority were male (73.6%) with less  
255 than 10 years' experience (74.1%) as hotel managers. As for the profile of  
256 establishments, there were 87 hotels categorized as less than 4 stars (58.79%), and the  
257 remaining 61 (41.21%) were more than 4 stars. No bias was detected among the  
258 responses gathered from the hotel managers. A Harman's single-factor test was carried  
259 out and, according to the results, the covariance explained by a single factor accounted  
260 for 44.59%, exceeding the commonly accepted cut-off point (25%) in the area (Ayyagari  
261 *et al.*, 2011). Thus, we were certain that there was no bias in the data that was  
262 attributable to a unique factor in the collected responses.

263 The tourism sector in Spain today represents 12% of the national GDP and generates  
264 around 13% of employment. Within the Spanish context, Catalonia is the leading region  
265 in terms of number of tourists, received 13.6 million tourist out of the total 58 million for  
266 the country in 2019 (INE, 2019). Also of note, among the NUTS 2 regions of Europe,

267 Spain is the country with the most arrivals in hotel establishments (Eurostat, 2021), with  
268 Catalonia placed among the top 5 in terms of number of nights spent in them (Eurostat,  
269 2021). Catalonia is therefore one of the leading areas in the world in terms of tourism,  
270 with a well consolidated market, making it a benchmark for other tourist destinations. For  
271 these reasons, we strongly believe that the Catalan region is an optimal testing ground  
272 for this type of study.

273

### 274 *3.2. Measurements*

275 The four constructs explored in the study were based on the contents of the previous  
276 literature review to ensure face and content validity. Appendix 1 presents the definitions  
277 of the key constructs, the sources from where they were adopted, and the distribution  
278 and index of consensus of the responses. The index of consensus reveals the weight of  
279 the respondent's perception towards the issue being assessed (Getz, 1994). Index  
280 values reveal that global perceptions towards the quality and environmental practices  
281 and the firm's competitiveness are highly positive. Notably, the mean and index values  
282 for quality practices were somewhat higher than for environmental practices.

283 The quality management practices, environmental management practices, and  
284 competitiveness dimension items were perceptual measurements based on a five-point  
285 Likert scale (1 = totally disagree; 5 = totally agree). The items of financial performance  
286 dimensions were empirical measurements, also based on a five-point Likert scale (1 =  
287 less than 5%; 2 = 5-10%; 3 = 10-15%; 4 = 15-20%, 5 = higher than 20%). Following the  
288 previous literature (see Appendix 1), we considered financial performance in terms of  
289 sales, profits, and hotel occupation.

290

## 291 4. Results



292 The results are presented in two subsections. First, the validity and reliability of the  
 293 measurement scales are analysed, and second the working model is analysed using a  
 294 structural equation model.

295

296 4.1. Assessment of the measurement model: validity and consistency

297 Table 1 presents the factor loadings on their posited underlying dimensions, the result of  
 298 the four principal component analyses conducted using varimax rotation. All the loading  
 299 values were greater than the cut-off level of 0.7, indicating convergent validity. Table 2  
 300 reports the internal consistency of the scales using Cronbach's alpha and Average  
 301 Variance Extracted (AVE). Since both values are higher than the cut-off levels of 0.7  
 302 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994) and 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), respectively, the  
 303 validity of the dimensions are demonstrated.

304 Table 1. Measurement model

	Convergent validity loading	Internal consistency
<b>Quality management practices (QMPs)</b>		
1. All the staff are involved in the creation of the product /service	.792	α: .859 AVE: .707
2. Improvements have been identified in the service provision process	.829	
3. Goal achievement control is conducted and variations are amended	.855	
4. There is a quality culture with a focus on continuous improvement	.885	
<b>Environmental management practices (EMPs)</b>		
1. The company quantifies environmental savings	.751	α: .735 AVE: .561
2. The company uses ecological factors in marketing campaigns	.711	
3. The company has a long-term environmental strategic focus	.777	
4. The company uses a green criterion in its purchasing policy	.756	
<b>Competitiveness (CO)</b>		
1. Improved market image of the facilities	.871	α: .888 AVE: .751
2. Client satisfaction level is greater than among the competition	.916	
3. Employee satisfaction level is greater than among the competition	.818	
4. Improved capacity to stay in the market in times of crisis	.860	
<b>Financial performance (FP)</b>		
1. Sales have increased in the last two years	.825	α: .780 AVE: .695
2. Profits have increased in the last two years	.839	
3. Occupation has increased in the last two years	.837	

305  
 306  
 307

*α: Cronbach's alpha*  
*AVE: average variance extracted*

308 Table 2 also shows an adequate discriminant validity of the dimensions since the square  
 309 root of average variance extracted (AVE) of each dimension was greater than the  
 310 Pearson's correlations in the off-diagonal between two constructs, which were all  
 311 significant at a p-value < 0.01.

312 Table 2. Correlation matrix and discriminant validity  
 313

	QMPs	EMPs	CO	FP
QMPs	.840*			
EMPs	.443	.749		
CO	.699	.485	.866	
FP	.596	.557	.484	.833

314 *\*square root of AVE in the diagonal; Pearson's correlation values in the off-diagonal.*  
 315

316

#### 317 4.2. Assessment of the structural model

318 Structural equation modelling (SEM) is widely used among social sciences researchers  
 319 because the models to test are gaining complexity. In fact, nowadays it is the most  
 320 frequently used approach for causal analysis in the social sciences (Bollen and Pearl,  
 321 2013). However, this wide use must not preclude rigorous statistical treatment. In this  
 322 study, the authors consider that SEM is a suitable method to test the working model for  
 323 several reasons. The main one is because SEM allows the full model embodying certain  
 324 latent dimensions that are connected by one-way arrows to be analysed. The  
 325 directionality of these arrows reflects hypotheses bearing on the causal structure of  
 326 variables in the model (Byrne, 1994). In addition, SEM offers more flexible assumptions,  
 327 compared with other methods, such as allowing both the measurement and structural  
 328 path of the model to be analysed in one step and non-normal data to be processed  
 329 (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004), which is the case with the present database.

330 The software used to perform SEM was EQS software, version 6.4 (Bentler, 1995). Table  
 331 3 presents the fit indices of the measurement model using the maximum likelihood  
 332 estimation method.

333 Table 3. Fit indices of the measurement model

Index*	Value	Cut-off value	Source
Chi-square/degree of freedom	1.07	<5	Hair et al., 1998
Bentler-Bonett non-normed fit index (BBNNFI)	.990	.90	
Joreskog-Sorbom goodness-of-fit index (GFI)	.898	.90	Hu and Bentler, 1999
Comparative fit index (CFI)	.992	.95	Hu and Bentler, 2009
Root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA)	.027	<.06	Hu and Bentler, 2009

334 \*using maximum likelihood estimation method

335 Based on the statistics in Table 3, and following the recommendations proposed by  
 336 Schermelleh-Engel et al. (2003) who claim that at least three measures must be  
 337 complied with, these measures of overall fitness reflect the explanatory power of the  
 338 model. Next, Figure 2 presents the standard solutions of the causal model. On examining  
 339 the results for the specific hypotheses, it can be observed that they are all supported at  
 340 the 0.05 level except for the relationship between competitiveness and financial  
 341 performance.

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346 Figure 2. Standardized solutions of the causal model

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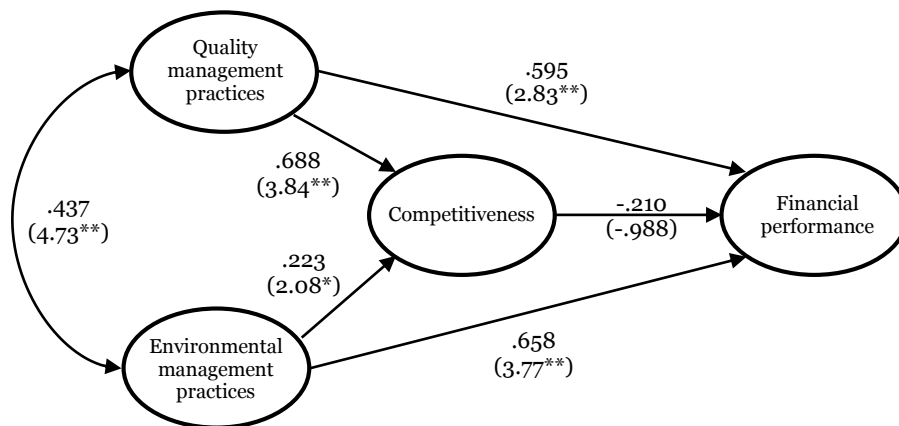
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Note: Robust statistics in brackets (\*p-value < 0.05; \*\*p-value < 0.01)

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## 5. Discussion of the results

368

369

The following section analyses the proposed hypotheses. The results of the statistical

370

analysis validated the vast majority of the parts of the previously proposed model.

371 This research focuses on studying the combined effects of QMPs and EMPs and their  
372 relationship with factors such as COMP and FP, specifically in the tourism sector of hotel  
373 companies.

374 The first hypothesis proposes a correlation between QMPs and EMPs and an  
375 improvement in QMPs was demonstrated to positively affect EMPs, thus validating  
376 previous research (Hamdoun et al., 2018; Llach et al., 2013; Pipatprapa et al., 2017;  
377 Teixeira et al., 2019; Yang and Kang, 2019), Moreover, an improvement in EMPs  
378 positively impacts QMPs, thus validating other previous studies (Babu et al., 2018; Bastič  
379 and Gojčič, 2012; Blesic et al., 2011; Kassinis and Soteriou, 2015b; Metaxas et al., 2019;  
380 Slevitch et al., 2013; Wikhamn, 2019). The present study aims to analyse the correlation  
381 between these two factors, proposing the hypothesis that an improvement in EMPs has  
382 a direct positive effect on QMPs and vice versa. The results show a significant positive  
383 correlation. Consequently, hypothesis 1 is confirmed.

384 Previous research has confirmed that QMPs have a link with internal improvements in  
385 operations (Angell and Klassen, 1999; Yang et al., 2011), in addition to a positive  
386 relationship with operational efficiency, cost reduction, and company development (Al-  
387 Refaie, 2015; Yang et al., 2011). In recent studies, QMPs has been demonstrated to  
388 improve COMP (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Shafiq et al.,  
389 2019). In addition, as validated in hypothesis 1, QMPs is correlated with EMPs. Likewise,  
390 previous studies have determined that the implementation and improvement of EMPs  
391 has a direct and positive impact on COMP (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Annunziata et  
392 al., 2018; Babu et al., 2018; Best and Thapa, 2013; Hsiao and Chuang, 2016; Kornilaki  
393 and Font, 2019; Kraus et al., 2017; Leonidou et al., 2013; Llach et al., 2013; Perramon  
394 et al., 2014). In line with previous studies, the results of this study confirm a direct positive  
395 relationship between QMPs and EMPs and COMP. Therefore, hypotheses H2 and H3  
396 are validated.

397 In contrast, with respect to QMPs, previous studies have shown a positive relationship  
398 with FP from the operational improvements resulting from the implementation of these  
399 practices (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Arbelo-Pérez et al., 2017; Llach et al., 2013; Nair  
400 and Choudhary, 2016; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Yang and Kang, 2019). The correlation  
401 demonstrated in hypothesis 1 indicates that the improvement in QMPs implies an  
402 improvement in EMPs. Therefore, and as observed in previous studies, an improvement  
403 in EMPs has a direct and positive impact on FP (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; de Almeida  
404 and de Melo, 2017; Eccles et al., 2014; Grewatsch and Kleindienst, 2017; Zhang et al.,  
405 2019). Previous studies are validated through the results obtained in the present  
406 investigation, and hypotheses H4 and H5 are confirmed.

407 Last, although previous studies have shown that COMP has a positive effect on FP  
408 (González-Rodríguez et al., 2018; Turner et al., 2017; Wilke et al., 2019), this relationship  
409 was not shown to be significant in the present study. Therefore, H6 is rejected. One  
410 possible explanation for this relationship is that a reasonable time must elapse between  
411 the implementation of the actions to gain competitiveness and their impact on the  
412 financial results. Until the company does not amortize the high direct costs of the  
413 implementation of these actions, the results are not disclosed in the company's income  
414 statement.

415

## 416 6. Conclusions

417

418 Previous research has demonstrated that both quality and environmental practices  
419 encourage the competitive and financial success of a company. However, not all  
420 previous studies have included both factors and an analysis of their correlation. In  
421 addition, these previous investigations were carried out in a generic manner for a specific  
422 sector – either services or hospitality – or for segments of companies differentiated by  
423 size. Very little research has been conducted in relation to companies of a very similar

424 type in a specific territory, such as hotels. This section continues with the different  
425 conclusions that can be drawn from the present study.

426 With reference to academics, three main conclusions were reached. The first refers to  
427 environmental practices because of the growing trend of practice of this type in  
428 companies in recent years. In addition, these practices have a direct correlation with  
429 other key practices of the company, as demonstrated in this article with quality practices.  
430 Therefore, the factor of environmental practices and its effect should always be taken  
431 into account in future research on the management and results of the company.

432 Second, both environmental and service quality practices are shown to have a significant  
433 and positive relationship with competitiveness and financial performance. Nevertheless,  
434 the management of service quality practices, which implies improving the processes and  
435 eliminating defects for the purpose of continuously improving quality, is observed to have  
436 a stronger influence on competitiveness than on environmental practices. In contrast, the  
437 management of environmental practices has a stronger impact on financial performance  
438 because it includes practices that impact the reduction of costs such as energy savings.

439 The third and last conclusion for academics is the non-significant relationship between  
440 competitiveness and financial performance, as indicated by the results, and for which it  
441 can be argued that competitiveness does not positively influence financial performance  
442 because not all practices that are more competitive provide elements for better financial  
443 results. This may be due to the fact that some of the practices to gain competitiveness  
444 may have a high direct cost in the short term, causing financial results to be reduced.  
445 Therefore, we believe that in the long term the financial results could be positively  
446 affected by increasing competitiveness, and for this reason H6 is now not supported.  
447 However, in this study we asked about the results in a short term of just two years. Taking  
448 this into consideration, it would be interesting to expand the time horizon and undertake  
449 the study again after a few years to collect long-term results and make a possible  
450 contribution to the literature on these two factors.

451 The conclusions related to the professional world will now be presented. First,  
452 sustainability and, consequently, environmental practices encourage an improvement in  
453 quality practices, and vice versa. Their combination strengthens the company's  
454 competitiveness in the market. Therefore, we recommend that hotel managers and  
455 executives implement these practices because, along with proper management, they  
456 represent a competitive advantage for the company. Moreover, the recommendation to  
457 implement environmental and quality practices provide the company with resource  
458 efficiency, cost reductions, care of environmental factors, improvements in productivity,  
459 and continuous improvements in processes and products, which have a positive impact  
460 on the development and economic results of the company.

461 Last, and notable for policymakers, the implementation of these practices has an impact  
462 at the business level and a positive impact on society as a whole. Concern for the  
463 environment and sustainable practices is growing, which is why we recommend the  
464 creation and subsequent application of public policies and regulations that facilitate the  
465 implementation of environmental and quality practices in companies and that can  
466 simultaneously have a beneficial impact on them.

467 Considering all these conclusions, the study clearly contributes to the literature by  
468 providing specific results in a given area, in this case Catalonia, making it a benchmark  
469 for other tourist destinations. The contribution closes a gap in the literature on the specific  
470 subsector of hotel companies regarding the joint impact of the management of service  
471 quality practices and environmental practices on two key business factors,  
472 competitiveness and financial performance. As previously mentioned, the results will  
473 help managers to make decisions to improve competitiveness and financial performance  
474 through implementing the practices studied. They also indicate that policymakers should  
475 encourage the implementation of quality and environmental practices with public  
476 policies, which will positively impact on society society.

477 Last, the research has some limitations, including a geographical one, because  
478 surveying a given region implies that extrapolating the results to other regions or  
479 countries may be difficult. Nevertheless, the survey is considered representative of the  
480 region analysed in the study and, as such, sheds light on the hotel sector in the  
481 geographical area.

482 Drawing on these limitations, new lines of research can be explored by applying the  
483 aforementioned practices in other sectors to verify whether the behaviour is the same or  
484 similar to that obtained in this study or if, on the contrary, the particular characteristics of  
485 each sector prevent the same results from being obtained. In contrast, the application of  
486 this methodology could be the origin of another line of research in the same hotel sector  
487 in other geographical areas to verify whether the different factors have the same  
488 behaviour.

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Definition	a.	SD	D	U	A	SA	i.
<b>Quality management practices (QMPs):</b> QMPs refers to a continuous improvement of the services and products, that involves all levels of the company and can be clearly controlled and adapted. Sources: e.g. (Alonso-Almeida and Bremser, 2013; Anttila and Jussila, 2017; Bagur-Femenías et al., 2019; Chou et al., 2018; Conca et al., 2004; Duran et al., 2014; Forgas-Coll et al., 2017; Kaynak, 2003; Lilja et al., 2017; Marimon et al., 2015; Naor et al., 2008; Roger, 1992; Saraph et al., 1989; Wikhamn, 2019)							
All staff is involved in the creation of the product /service	4.18	4	5	10	67	58	0.81
Improvements have been identified in the process of service provision	4.12	5	3	14	70	52	0.79
Goal achievement control is conducted, and variations are amended	4.26	2	6	4	76	60	0.86
There is a quality culture with a focus on continuous improvement	4.27	3	3	9	69	63	0.86
<b>Environmental management practices (EMP):</b> EMP references to all actions that companies take to include environmentally related questions in their strategy. Sources: e.g. (Álvarez Gil et al., 2001; Bagur-Femenías et al., 2015a, 2015b; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2013; Carmona-Moreno et al., 2004; Cheng et al., 2019; Chou et al., 2016; Côté et al., 2006; Fernández-Robin et al., 2019; Molina-Azorín et al., 2009; Prud'homme and Raymond, 2013; Vij, 2016)							
The company quantifies environmental savings	3.97	5	5	18	77	39	0.74
The company uses ecological factors in marketing campaigns	3.84	8	6	23	72	36	0.65
The company has a long-term environmental strategic focus	4.09	2	5	16	78	45	0.79
The company uses a green criterion in purchases policy	4.02	6	4	18	64	47	0.73
<b>Competitiveness (COMP):</b> COMP refers to the differentiation and satisfaction of their stakeholders that the company creates among others of the same sector. Sources: e.g. (Al-Refaie, 2015; Bäckström et al., 2016; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2016; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2013; Celma-Benaiges et al., 2016; Espino-Rodríguez and Ramírez-Fierro, 2018; Jones et al., 2016; Leonard and McAdam, 2003; Pereira-Moliner et al., 2012; Rodrigues Quesado et al., 2017; Roger, 1992)							
Improved market image of the facilities	4.07	4	6	19	65	53	0.73
Client satisfaction level is greater than among the competition	4.07	3	6	16	75	47	0.77
Employee satisfaction level is greater than among the competition	4.03	4	6	18	72	47	0.74
Improved capacity of staying in the market in times of crisis	4.01	5	3	20	76	42	0.75
<b>Financial performance (FP):</b> FP analysed the evolution of the most reliable finance variables of the company as profitability net profit and return on equity. Sources: e.g. (Arawati, 2005; Bagur-Femenías et al., 2015a, 2015b; Bagur-Femenias et al., 2013; Das et al., 2000; Douglas and Judge, 2001; Kassinis and Soteriou, 2003; Molina-Azorín et al., 2009; Rodríguez Antón et al., 2011; Rubio-Andrada et al., 2011; Zeng et al., 2010)							
	Mean	<5%	5-10%	10-15%	15-20%	>20%	i.
Sales have increased in the last 2 years	4.03	1	10	15	76	42	N/A
Profits have increased in the last 2 years	4.01	1	6	22	73	38	N/A
Hotel occupation has increased in the last 2 years	4.00	4	3	22	76	40	N/A

## Capítol 9. Resultats i Discussió

Els tres articles de la tesi mitjançant mètodes empírics i de revisió sistemàtica de la literatura exploren l'estat de les relacions entre les QMP i EMP i aspectes de vital importància dins l'empresa com el desenvolupament de la qualitat, la competitivitat i l'èxit financer. Al llarg de la tesi, s'ha identificat com dins el sector de l'hostaleria, en els hotels concretament, hi havia una relació més robusta entre la gestió de les pràctiques de qualitat i el desenvolupament de l'empresa i per això s'ha decidit investigar en aquesta tipologia d'empreses en el tercer article. La introducció de les EMP era clau analitzar-ho perquè actualment ha guanyat importància en la gestió de qualsevol empresa. Per assolir l'objectiu principal de l'article, mitjançant l'objectiu de cada article, els subobjectius plantejats en aquesta tesi i juntament amb les preguntes de recerca s'han obtingut els resultats que s'exposen a continuació.

El primer article, *“Effects of Service Quality Policies in the Tourism Sector Performance: An Empirical Analysis of Spanish Hotels and Restaurants”* té com a objectiu de l'article analitzar els efectes de la implementació de les pràctiques de qualitat del servei sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat i l'empresa en el sector de l'hostaleria. Per assolir aquest objectiu es van plantejar quatre subobjectius, i tres preguntes de recerca a respondre per assolir-los.

El primer resultat obtingut dona resposta a la primera pregunta de recerca del primer article, vinculada al primer i segon subobjectius, que planteja si la implementació de les QMP pot provocar un impacte directe i positiu sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat. D'aquesta pregunta de recerca deriva la primera hipòtesi de l'article que indica que aquesta implementació provoca un impacte directe i positiu sobre QP. Els descobriments del primer article confirmen la primera hipòtesi, per tant, el primer i el segon subobjectiu s'accepten. Com en estudis anteriors s'indicava (Molina-Azorín et al., 2009; Sadikoglu & Zehir, 2010; Yee et al., 2010) les QMP tenen un efecte positiu sobre la QP a partir de millorar diferents aspectes que afecten el desenvolupament de la qualitat. Aquesta tesi ho corrobora també en la zona geogràfica i entorn estudiat. Tanmateix, es confirma que les pràctiques de qualitat han de formar part de l'estratègia global de l'empresa en aquest sector, com ja deien altres estudis fa uns anys (Testa & Sipe, 2012). Les QMP en hotels i restaurants seran de vital importància, ja que són empreses amb un grau molt elevat de contacte amb el client. Aquestes pràctiques activen tres indicadors clau de rendiment, i aquests coincideixen en tres de les quatre perspectives utilitzades per Kaplan i Norton

(Kaplan & Norton, 1992) per definir el procés de creació de valor a l'empresa en el seu BSC.

La segona pregunta de recerca plantejada en el primer article va vinculada al tercer subobjectiu, que com es pot observar en la taula 3 planteja estudiar quin impacte té QMP sobre el desenvolupament de l'empresa mitjançant el QP. Vinculada a aquesta pregunta de recerca, es formula la segona hipòtesi del primer article, que afirma que les QMP tenen un impacte positiu sobre el desenvolupament de l'empresa mitjançant el QP. La tesi confirma aquesta hipòtesi, i per tant, queda acceptada. En aquest primer article, es mostra com a resultat que els beneficis immediats i directes del QP afecten positivament al desenvolupament de l'empresa. La qualitat en hotels i restaurants té un efecte positiu en la satisfacció per part del client amb l'empresa i ajuda millorar el rendiment dels treballadors i dels processos, creant sinergies per a millorar l'eficiència i eficàcia (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2012; Rodríguez-Antón & Alonso-Almeida, 2011; Rubio-Andrada et al., 2011; Terlaak & King, 2006).

Com a última pregunta de recerca en el primer article, i vinculada al quart subobjectiu, es presenta l'estudi de les diferències en les relacions estudiades segons la tipologia d'empreses dins del sector de l'hostaleria. Amb això, es vincula la tercera hipòtesi del article que afirma que sí que s'obtenen diferents resultats de la implementació de les QMP. Amb els resultats obtinguts es veu com difereixen els resultats entre hotels i restaurants, tot i que ambdós tenen efectes positius, en els hotels és significativament superior que en els restaurants. Fet que confirma que l'efecte de les QMP no és estàndard i que depèn de la tipologia, del sector, de l'entorn i d'altres factors de les empreses (Buffa et al., 2018; Doh et al., 2017; Fernández-Robin et al., 2019; Leonard & McAdam, 2003; Zhao et al., 2004). Per tant, la tercera hipòtesi i el quart subobjectiu queden acceptats.

En el segon article, "*Service Quality in Hospitality and the Sustainability Effect: Systematic Literature Review and Future Research Agenda*" hi ha l'objectiu de contextualitzar i estudiar la literatura prèvia sobre les pràctiques de qualitat amb la introducció de les pràctiques mediambientals en el sector de l'hostaleria. Amb la idea d'assolir l'objectiu del segon article es van plantejar dos subobjectius vinculats a les dues preguntes de recerca del segon article.

El primer resultat dona resposta a la primera pregunta de recerca del segon article, vinculada al primer subobjectiu, que proposa identificar els buits en la literatura sobre QMP i EMP en l'hostaleria. Com a resultat es detecta que per poder estudiar la relació

conjunta entre QMP i EMP sobre un altre element, cal estudiar també la correlació entre elles. Els resultats d'aquesta pregunta de recerca obren el camp a investigacions futures més empíriques de quin tipus i quin grau d'impacte tenen aquestes pràctiques en el desenvolupament de l'empresa i èxit financer. Algunes d'aquestes investigacions futures es realitzen en el tercer article de la tesi. També com a resultat, s'extreu a partir de l'estudi la necessitat d'investigar i descobrir factors que, junts, tinguin un impacte global positiu. En aquest segon article s'identifiquen diferents factors en què impacten positivament tant les EMP com les QMP.

A continuació es planteja la segona pregunta de recerca de l'article, que planteja saber quines són les característiques estudiades fins al moment que componen QMP i EMP en el sector hostaler. Aquesta pregunta va vinculada en el segon subobjectiu d'aquest segon article. Com a resultat d'aquesta pregunta s'observa en l'estudi com hi ha diferències en els factors que impacten tant QMP com EMP i que coincideixen de forma conjunta en pocs ítems. És per això que es requereix un estudi amb més profunditat de les relacions conjuntes d'aquestes dues tipologies. Tanmateix, com a resultats també s'obté l'anàlisi de l'impacte de diferents pràctiques concretes, tant de qualitat del servei com mediambientals, i diferències entre aquestes. I per últim en aquest article, s'identifiquen diferents tipologies de factors que influeixen a la qualitat del servei en l'hostaleria. Per tots els resultats i conclusions extretes en el segon article, es dona per respostes les preguntes de recerca plantejades i acceptats els dos subobjectius.

Per últim el tercer article, "*Impact of service quality and environmental practices on hotel sector: An empirical approach*" té com a objectiu analitzar els efectes de la introducció de la implementació de les EMP juntament amb les QMP i el seu efecte sobre la competitivitat i rendiment financer de les empreses hoteleres. Per assolir aquest objectiu principal es van plantejar quatre subobjectius, i quatre preguntes de recerca per assolir-los.

El primer resultat dona resposta a la primera pregunta de recerca del tercer article, vinculada al primer subobjectiu, que planteja investigar sobre quina correlació hi ha entre QMP i EMP en hotels. Donada la pregunta, es presenta la primera hipòtesi del tercer article, que indica que hi hagi una correlació positiva i els hotels que implementen QMP implementin EMP, i viceversa. Com a resultat s'ha obtingut la validació de què QMP i EMP tenen una correlació positiva i que, per tant també, una implementació i millora en QMP afecta positivament a EMP i viceversa, validant així també la investigació prèvia

(Babu et al., 2018; Hamdoun, Chiappetta Jabbour, & Ben Othman, 2018; Metaxas et al., 2019; Teixeira et al., 2019; Wikhamn, 2019; Yang & Kang, 2019). I per tant, acceptant la primera hipòtesi i el primer subobjectiu del tercer article.

La segona pregunta de recerca del tercer article posa sobre la taula l'estudi de quin efecte tenen les QMP i les EMP sobre la competitivitat. Per donar resposta a la pregunta de recerca, trobem el segon resultat del tercer article. Aquesta pregunta va vinculada al segon subobjectiu i a la hipòtesi dos i tres del tercer article. La hipòtesi dos indica que entre QMP i la competitivitat hi ha una relació positiva i directe, i la hipòtesi tres el mateix tipus de relació però entre EMP i la competitivitat. El resultat que s'obté, com en estudis anteriors, que de forma individual la implementació de QMP afecta positivament a la COMP (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Shafiq et al., 2019) i que les EMP també tenen un impacte positiu sobre COMP (Annunziata et al., 2018; Babu et al., 2018; Kornilaki & Font, 2019; Llach, Perramon, Alonso-Almeida, & Bagur-Femenías, 2013; Perramon et al., 2014). En la present tesi doctoral, els resultats demostren, en l'entorn concret d'estudi, una relació positiva i conjunta de la implementació de QMP i EMP sobre la competitivitat. Per aquest motiu, s'accepten les hipòtesis dos i tres, i el segon subobjectiu del tercer article.

Posteriorment, el tercer resultat dona resposta a la tercera pregunta de recerca del tercer article que investiga quin efecte tenen les QMP i les EMP sobre l'èxit financer. Aquesta pregunta es vincula amb el tercer subobjectiu i les hipòtesis quatre i cinc del tercer article. La quarta hipòtesi indica que QMP té un impacte positiu i directes sobre el rendiment financer. Tanmateix, la cinquena hipòtesi indica que EMP té impacte positiu i directa també sobre el rendiment financer. De l'estudi s'obté un resultat que valida investigacions prèvies que han determinat una relació positiva i directa entre QMP i l'èxit financer (Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Arbelo-Pérez et al., 2017; Nair & Choudhary, 2016; Peña-Alonso et al., 2018; Yang & Kang, 2019). Seguidament, com en estudis previs, també es demostra la relació directa i positiva de forma individual entre EMP i FINP (de Almeida & de Melo, 2017; Eccles et al., 2014; Grewatsch & Kleindienst, 2017; Zhang et al., 2019). En l'estudi realitzat en el tercer article es comprova l'efecte conjunt sobre el rendiment financer de la implementació de QMP i EMP. I per tant, es pot acceptar les hipòtesis quatre i cinc, i el tercer subobjectiu del tercer article.

Finalment, es troba l'últim resultat, que correspon a la quarta pregunta de recerca plantejada en el tercer article per respondre a quina relació hi ha entre la competitivitat i

el rendiment financer. Aquesta pregunta va relacionada amb el quart subobjectiu i també amb la sisena hipòtesi del tercer article, que indica que la competitivitat té un efecte positiu i directe sobre el rendiment financer. En l'estudi realitzat en el tercer article no s'ha pogut validar aquesta relació directa i positiva com en estudis anteriors s'indicava (González-Rodríguez et al., 2018; Turner et al., 2017; Wilke et al., 2019), ja que, el resultat obtingut no és rellevant. Per tant, es dóna resposta a la pregunta de recerca i al quart subobjectiu, però en aquest cas, rebutjant la sisena hipòtesi plantejada en el tercer article.



## Capítol 10. Conclusions

El tema d'estudi de la present tesi doctoral contribueix a comprendre de forma més profunda l'impacte en els resultats de l'empresa de la implementació de pràctiques clau com són les de qualitat i mediambientals. Primer de tot, l'estudi aporta validesa a models anteriors estudiant la relació entre la introducció i desenvolupament de pràctiques de qualitat del servei i el desenvolupament exitós de la qualitat i l'empresa. Per seguir amb la recerca, s'introdueix, per l'estudi de la literatura de forma conjunta, les pràctiques mediambientals. De manera que s'extreuen buits en la literatura i preguntes de recerca que contenen de forma conjunta la gestió de les dues tipologies de pràctiques. I per últim, l'estudi contribueix amb resultats empírics sobre les relacions que tenen entre EMP i QMP, i també sobre factors com la competitivitat i el rendiment financer de l'empresa.

### 10.1. Conclusions i futures línies d'investigació

En la investigació d'aquesta tesi doctoral, s'han pogut validar quasi totes les hipòtesis plantejades i s'ha donat resposta a les diferents preguntes de recerca. És per això que l'estudi mostra com una millora i desenvolupament de les QMP aporta millor desenvolupament de qualitat i de l'empresa. Tanmateix, es valida una correlació positiva entre QMP i EMP en el sector de l'hostaleria, concretament en empreses hoteleres de Catalunya. I, per últim, contribueix afirmant que impactes positius de la implementació i millora de EMP i QMP sobre la competitivitat i rendiment financer en el segment d'empreses esmentat. És per això que, tenint en compte aquestes aportacions, es realitzen una sèrie de conclusions per l'àmbit acadèmic, l'àmbit professional i l'àmbit de la gestió pública.

Per l'àmbit acadèmic es proposen les següents conclusions. En primer lloc, es conclou que una implementació i millora de les QMP tenen una relació positiva i directe sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat en l'empresa. Relacionat amb això, es demostra que les QMP tenen un impacte positiu sobre el desenvolupament de l'empresa mitjançant el desenvolupament positiu en qualitat. No obstant això, hi ha diferents factors de l'entorn i de la tipologia que hi influeixen, com es conclou en la diferència entre hotels i restaurants. És en els hotels on aquestes pràctiques tenen un impacte més fort sobre el desenvolupament de la qualitat, i per tant, de l'empresa. Això obre la porta, als acadèmics, a seguir investigant en diferents entorns i característiques.

Tanmateix, en segon lloc, en la present tesi doctoral es veu com cal vincular les QMP amb altres tipologies de pràctiques com són les EMP, incloent-hi així el factor sostenible i la preocupació creixent pel medi ambient. En el segon article, es proposa als acadèmics una contínua investigació sobre tres àmbits que s'han pogut determinar a partir de l'estudi de la literatura prèvia sobre qualitat i sostenibilitat en aquest sector. El primer àmbit fa referència a l'estudi dels factors crítics d'èxit sostenible que afecten a la qualitat del servei, el segon referent a les pràctiques principals de l'empresa per la millora de la qualitat dels seus serveis sostenibles, i l'últim àmbit fa referència als factors crítics tant de QMP com de EMP. En aquest segon article, es conclou que hi ha encara buits clars a estudiar sobre la implementació conjunta de QMP i EMP, i els seus efectes sobre els factors claus i resultats de l'empresa. És per això que es presenten un seguit de preguntes de recerca futura, obrint la porta a noves investigacions en el món acadèmic. A part, vinculat amb la implementació i millora de les EMP en les empreses, cal dir que tenen una tendència creixent en els últims anys, i una relació directa amb altres pràctiques i elements clau de l'empresa. Per aquest motiu, en l'àmbit acadèmic, cal estudiar en futures investigacions sobre la gestió i resultats de l'empresa tenint en compte les pràctiques ambientals.

En tercer lloc, es conclou en el tercer article, que existeix una correlació positiva entre QMP i EMP. Per tant, la implementació i millora de QMP portarà a implementar i millorar EMP, i viceversa. Per tant, es conclou, que en el sector hotelier aquests dos factors tenen una correlació positiva, això porta a la possibilitat de l'estudi acadèmic d'aquesta correlació en altres àmbits empresarials. Tanmateix, en el tercer article, també s'arriba a la conclusió i demostració empírica que tant EMP com QMP tenen una relació positiva i significativa sobre COMP i FINP. Malgrat això, es pot observar com QMP té una influència més forta sobre COMP que l'EMP, i en canvi, EMP té un impacte més fort sobre FINP perquè inclou pràctiques que afecten a la reducció de costos, l'estalvi energètic i les polítiques de compra verda.

Cal afegir també pels acadèmics, la relació no significativa trobada en el tercer article entre COMP i FINP, on es pot argumentar que és degut al fet que no necessàriament totes les pràctiques més competitives influeixen positivament als resultats financers. Per tant, aquesta relació en el sector hostaler, concretament en els hotels, necessitarà més investigacions per trobar un resultat amb prou qualitat i que sigui significatiu.

En l'àmbit professional, una primera conclusió que s'extreu, ve derivada del primer estudi, i es recomana a la gerència de les empreses la implementació i millora de les QMP per ajudar a millorar la qualitat de l'empresa i així augmentar el seu desenvolupament. Aquesta conclusió, com hem vist anteriorment, és validada per la literatura prèvia i per tant reforça la importància d'aquestes pràctiques i la seva gestió en l'empresa.

Una segona conclusió pels professionals que es pot extreure de l'estudi realitzat en el segon article d'aquesta tesi, és el fet que de forma conjunta les EMP i QMP influeixen positivament en la presa de decisió de compra i en la satisfacció del client. Fet que fa recomanar a la gerència de les empreses del sector implementar aquestes pràctiques, ja que influeixen en el desenvolupament i resultat de l'empresa. D'aquesta segona conclusió també es determina la necessitat de profunditzar més en l'estudi de l'impacte d'aquestes pràctiques per ajudar a l'empresari gestor.

Per últim, una tercera conclusió pels professionals que cal tenir en compte en l'àmbit professional, és la correlació positiva entre EMP i QMP que porta recomanar a la directiva i la gerència d'hotels la implementació d'aquestes pràctiques, ja que poden oferir uns avantatges competitiu interessants per l'empresa, guanyant en qualitat del servei i imatge cap al client. No només això, sinó que la implantació i bona gestió d'aquesta tipologia de pràctiques proporciona a l'empresa una millor eficiència dels recursos, reducció de costos, millor cura dels factors ambientals, millores en productivitat i processos de forma continuada, i un impacte positiu en el desenvolupament i resultat econòmic de l'empresa.

En l'àmbit de la gestió pública, es proposa la següent conclusió. Cal destacar que la implementació d'aquestes pràctiques no té només un impacte en l'àmbit empresarial, sinó que, té un impacte positiu al conjunt de la societat. Sobretot pel que fa a les pràctiques lligades amb el medi ambient, ja que la preocupació per la sostenibilitat està creixent any rere any. Pel que fa a les pràctiques vinculades amb la qualitat del servei ajuden al desenvolupament empresarial i aquest ajuda a la creació d'ofertes laborals de millor qualitat, i com a conseqüència repercuteix de forma positiva a l'entorn on està ubicat. Per tant es pot concloure que cal recomanar als gestors públics la creació i posterior aplicació de polítiques i regulacions públiques que facilitin la implementació de pràctiques ambientals i de qualitat a les empreses, ja que alhora aquestes tindran un impacte beneficiós sobre la societat.

A part de les diferents conclusions, derivat de la present tesi doctoral podem extreure noves línies d'investigació. Aquestes noves línies estan vinculades amb els estudis realitzats i els resultats i conclusions obtinguts, i per això, es proposen les següents línies d'investigació futura.

Una primera línia d'investigació que obri les portes a l'estudi de la implementació de les pràctiques esmentades però en altres sectors diferents. Per tal de verificar si el comportament que segueixen en el sector hostaler és el mateix o similar o si, al contrari, els factors particulars de cadascun dels sectors impedeixen obtenir els mateixos resultats.

Una segona línia d'investigació és causada per l'aplicació de la metodologia utilitzada en aquest estudi, que pot ser aplicada en el mateix sector hotelier, però en altres àrees geogràfiques per tal de verificar si els diferents factors tenen el mateix comportament en diferents entorns.

Una tercera línia d'investigació es pot enfocar en la vinculació de les pràctiques estudiades en la present tesi doctoral amb altres factors que tenen influència en l'empresa com ho podrien ser els sociopolítics, com ja es planteja en el segon article de la tesi.

Una quarta línia d'investigació podria apuntar a estudiar la inclusió del factor social o pràctiques socials en l'empres i el seu impacte en la implementació d'aquestes pràctiques sobre la competitivitat i el rendiment financer de la empresa hotelera.

Per últim, una cinquena possible línia d'investigació pot focalitzar-se no només en les diferents pràctiques i impacte en diversos factors, sinó que, també en la tipologia de gerències que tenen les empreses estudiades i analitzar el factor de gènere, entre d'altres.

## 10.2. Limitacions de l'estudi

Finalment, és important destacar que aquesta tesi presenta algunes limitacions. Primer de tot, s'ha de tenir en compte que en la revisió bibliogràfica es va restringir la cerca a les publicacions fetes en anglès i castellà. A part, es va seguir l'estratègia de restringir per paraules clau descrites a la metodologia. No obstant això, es van seleccionar alguns articles rellevants que no apareixien en el resultat de la cerca. Tot i això, no es pot garantir que s'hagin capturat tots els estudis relacionats amb els temes tractats.

També és important recordar, que els estudis d'aquesta tesi doctoral estan vinculats culturalment, ja que, presenta una limitació en termes geogràfics. Això, és degut al fet

que les dades recollides són d'una regió determinada i pot dificultar l'extrapolació dels resultats a altres regions o països. Les futures investigacions s'haurien de considerar amb l'obtenció de més dades per continuar amb l'anàlisi.

D'igual forma a la limitació anterior, també es presenta com a limitació què es realitza l'estudi en el sector del turisme, concretament a l'hostaleria i de forma específica a restaurants i hotels. Per tant, es pot parlar d'una limitació sectorial degut a la recollida de dades en un sector concret. Per aquest motiu en futures investigacions per seguir amb l'anàlisi dels factors, però en altres tipologies d'empreses i sectors caldrà l'obtenció de noves dades. I així, verificar si aplicant les mateix pràctiques el comportament és el mateix o similar que el obtingut en aquest estudi.

Tot i aquestes limitacions, l'estudi realitzat en la present tesi doctoral es considera representatiu en la regió i en els subsectors analitzats i, per tant, aporta llum sobre l'estudi de EMP i QMP en el sector de l'hostaleria i concretament en el sector hotelier de l'àrea geogràfica estudiada.

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