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LGBTIQ+ Identities in Tourism and Leisure Research: A Systematic Qualitative Literature Review

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Abstract

Tourism research on the LGBTIQ+ communities has grown over the years, entering mainstream discussions as a segment of interest. This growing focus reflects greater societal acceptance and acknowledgement of the systemic inequalities that challenge their rights. The landscape of current scholarship, though important to academic literature, policy and practice, has not been explored. On this premise, and under the umbrella of social sustainability, a systematic qualitative review of scholarship on the LGBTIQ+ community and tourism was conducted with Q1- and Q2-ranked travel and tourism journals (Scimago Journal & Country Rank) as a basis. Articles were analysed to identify the sampling parameters and their topic foci. The findings suggest the literature focuses on sexually diverse groups (gays and lesbians) who are open about their identity, with limited consideration given to bisexual or gender diverse travellers (intersex and transgender). The topics and language used have also evolved in recent years, transforming from earlier fixations on the sexual, to the exploration of other experiences related to the LGBTIQ+ communities. This research reflects on this evolution, the implications for the broader queer communities, and proposes a research agenda for more robust inquiry concerning LGBTIQ+ travel and leisure.

Keywords

LGBTIQ+, tourism, queer, inclusivity, leisure, social sustainability

Introduction

In recent decades, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and other sexually and gender diverse (LGBTIQ+) communities have received significant attention concerning their liberties in the global community. While this has culminated in the right of same-sex marriage being recognised in many countries during the past decade, particularly in the Global North (Ford & Markwell, 2017; Monterrubio, 2019), it has yet to translate into true equality for the LGBTIQ+ communities. Similarly, the study of tourism, leisure, hospitality, and events (referred to hereafter as ‘tourism and leisure’) has often been viewed through a heteronormative lens (Johnston, 2001; Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2020), but the growing interest in LGBTIQ+ communities as consumers and integral members of society has opened a fertile yet relatively unexplored area for research.

The marginalisation experienced by the LGBTIQ+ communities is well documented. Despite homosexuality being depathologised in 1990 by the World Health Organization (Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2016), LGBTIQ+ people are still criminalised in 73 jurisdictions across the world. Even in countries with generally tolerant climates, a degree of prejudice still exists within specific areas based on their socio-demographic composition and geographic rurality (Gottschalk & Newton, 2009; Pini, Mayes, & Boyer, 2013). This prejudice can result in minority stress, which Hughes (2002) explains as physical and mental stress caused by stigmatisation and abuse based on membership of a marginal group. Such stress is associated with reduced wellbeing and mental health outcomes and a higher incidence of depression and suicide (Kaniuka et al., 2019). It is within this context that leisure and tourism can provide a means for temporary escape and create environments where the individual can experience, build, and express their identity (e.g., Hughes, 1997; Markwell, 1998). Delivering these benefits, necessitates a nuanced understanding of the identities represented within the LGBTIQ+ acronym – as distinct consumers and participants of leisure and tourism (Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2016), however, as researchers in this area, we have found a tendency in the literature to focus on gay and lesbian individuals. It is here where research can play a role by exploring this nuance through a critical lens.

In this paper, we take the position that for research to make meaningful contributions to academic literature, policy and practice focusing on LGBTIQ+ tourism and leisure, we need to begin by reviewing the current state of knowledge to identify boundaries and gaps. The

need for this review is echoed in the Second Global Report on LGBT Tourism by the United Nations World Tourism Organization, which recognises the diversity within the LGBT communities (UNWTO, 2017). The report warns against assuming LGBT communities are homogenous and notes how specific groups may be more disadvantaged compared to others – for instance, transgender people often experience greater economic discrimination (UNWTO, 2017). At the same time, we are reminded that social inclusion, peace and understanding are catalysts in advancing the universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and underpin the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2014). Although the SDGs do not discuss LGBTIQ+ inclusivity directly, they address several facets of this notion. For instance, Goals 5 and 10 target gender equality and inequalities across communities, respectively; while Goal 11 talks about inclusively improving urban planning and management; Goal 16 discusses human rights and the need for safe neighbourhoods, and finally Goal 3 explicitly notes that “Multi-sectoral, rights-based and gender-sensitive approaches are essential to address inequalities and to build good health for all”. Following the mission of ensuring that “no one is left behind” (United Nations, 2014, p. 9), these goals demonstrate the centrality of inclusivity to the development of sustainable communities where all people enjoy peace and prosperity (United Nations, 2020). As researchers, this call makes it imperative that we critically examine our disciplines to ensure robust scholarship that considers diverse perspectives and provides a voice for underrepresented minorities to enhance their inclusion, and consequently their wellbeing, within their communities.

In line with McCabe’s (2019) call for greater diversity in constructing a “Tourism for all”, herein we present a systematic qualitative literature review on the LGBTIQ+ communities in tourism and leisure. Specifically, this review interrogates how the LGBTIQ+ communities have been examined in the literature focusing on the methods and samples; as well as the foci and topics of that examination. This enables us to establish the current state of literature in this area and propose an agenda for future research that will have significant impacts on our understanding of LGBTIQ+ involvement in tourism and leisure. In doing so, we position this paper under the pillar of social sustainability that advocates for equal opportunity and human rights underpinned by considerations of individual and social wellbeing (Dangi & Jamal, 2016). In the context of this paper, we argue that such rights and

opportunities can only be recognised if we understand the voices that have been hitherto underrepresented in the literature and use those voices to guide the development of policy and practice. Boluk, Cavaliere and Higgins-Desbiolles (2019) explain that sustainable tourism requires the exploration and deconstruction of power and privilege. Accordingly, in this paper, we challenge the heteronormativity of tourism enquiry (Johnston, 2001; Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2020), and call for a greater understanding of the diversities encapsulated under the LGBTIQ+ umbrella. In doing so, we position leisure research as a medium for social change and explain the role researchers can play (Mair & Reid, 2007) by investigating how the LGBTIQ+ communities could more holistically benefit from the wellbeing afforded by leisure and tourism. By understanding these benefits and how they are encouraged, these can play an educative role to encourage the leisure and tourism industries in addressing the needs of the LGBTIQ+ communities.

We begin first with a discussion of the methods used to gather and analyse data for this research paper, followed by the results, and finally, a critical discussion of the state of literature accompanied by suggestions for future research.

Methods

A systematic literature search with an explicit search strategy was used to explore the LGBTIQ+ identities in tourism and leisure research. The search included specific inclusion/exclusion criteria (Gingerich & Peterson, 2013; Yang, Khoo-Lattimore, & Arcodia, 2017; Yang & Ong, 2020). The literature search was conducted using Q1 and Q2 journals from the 'Hospitality, Leisure and Hospitality Management' category in Scimago (2019), a worldwide journal ranking tool that serves as an alternative to the Web of Science metrics (Hall, 2011). To narrow the list, only journals with the following terms in their titles were included: 'tourism', 'leisure', 'travel', 'hospitality', 'vacation', and 'events'. Within the resulting set of journals, searches were performed to identify articles with specific key terms in the title, keywords, or abstracts without restriction on the year range. The search terms were: 'LGB*', 'GLB*', 'Gay', 'Lesbian', 'Homosexual', 'Bisexual', 'Transgender', 'Transsexual', 'Transvestite', and 'Queer'. Wildcards (*) were used in light of the dynamic and evolving collection of genders and sexualities represented in the spectrum, ranging from LGB only (representing Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual) to LGBTQIA+ (representing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Asexual and "+" denoting others). Care was also

taken to include terms that are currently obsolete – for instance, although the term ‘Transvestite’ has now become less acceptable, it was included in the search terms to ensure research from years past would not be excluded. As one of the objectives of this study was to examine the methods and topics of study in the areas of tourism and leisure over time, no restrictions were imposed on the publication year.

The articles identified through the review were analysed using both Leximancer analyses of language as well as a manual qualitative approach. This enabled both temporal and thematic analyses of articles – allowing the researchers to explore themes related to the sample, methods, and purpose of the research; and through the use of Leximancer, the evolution of the literature. The use of Leximancer complements the traditional qualitative approach by identifying underlying themes and concepts and acting as a means of triangulation, helping to deliver robust findings.

Leximancer

Leximancer 4.5, a program-driven natural language processing software, was used to analyse the articles identified. Leximancer uses unsupervised machine-learning and algorithms to analyse the data (Cheng & Edwards, 2019; Smith & Humphreys, 2006; Wilk, Soutar, & Harrigan, 2019), bypassing preconceptions and expectation bias while supplementing manual coding results. For this part of the study, only the abstracts of the articles were used as they summarise the key components of the paper. This helped to capture the evolution of defining themes while avoiding the language noise that results from analysing full papers. Mair and Reid (2007) used a similar line of reasoning in their interrogation of leisure research.

Leximancer enables the analysis of large qualitative datasets and has been validated in diverse research contexts and fields, including tourism (e.g., Spasojevic, Lohmann, & Scott, 2018; Cheng & Edwards, 2019; Haynes et al., 2019). Consistent with its role in this research, Leximancer was used for discovering major initial themes in exploratory research through semantic information extraction (Dann, 2010), the results of which are highly reproducible and reliable (Cheng, Edwards, Darcy, & Redfern, 2018). It was also used to improve reviewing efficiency in systematic literature reviews while identifying, classifying, and summarising data for fast and effective evidence synthesis (Haynes et al., 2019). Two types

of results generated by Leximancer are used in this paper: a colour-coded concept map and a quadrant report. These are explained further in the Findings.

Qualitative analysis

Concurrently, qualitative analysis of the sample was conducted manually by two members of the research team to provide a depth to the insight generated (Gingerich & Peterson, 2013). First, content analysis was conducted on full articles within the sample; extracting relevant information about the focus, methods, approaches, and sampling techniques used. Thereon, the objectives of the articles were examined and coded through a thematic analysis process (Saldaña, 2016). This involved conducting an initial review of the sample articles to generate codes, using an open coding process. Once no new codes emerged from open-coding the articles, the codes generated were reviewed by the authors and combined into higher-order categories based on similarity. Through this process, and consistent with Tribe (2010), it became apparent that the articles could also be classified based on their foci into being either critical or business in orientation. Accordingly, following Saldaña (2016), the sample articles were re-reviewed, and the codes and foci identified were assigned to each paper using a team-coding approach. This involved discussing the objective and perspective of the paper and respectively negotiating the code or foci assigned.

Limitations

The limitations of this paper are acknowledged. First, only Scimago Q1 and Q2 journals with tourism, hospitality, or leisure in their title were considered for this review. Accordingly, articles on the LGBTIQ+ segment published in Geography or Sexuality focused journals, or those ranked as Q3 or Q4 by Scimago have been omitted. Second, given the search strategy used to find articles, it is possible that articles that considered the various gender and sexual identities but did not identify them in the title, abstract, or keywords, could have been disregarded from consideration. It is, however, likely that those articles would have referred to the LGBTIQ+ communities as opposed to being focused on them.

Findings

Our study identified 39 Scimago Q1 and Q2 journals containing the terms tourism, leisure, travel, hospitality, vacation, and events in their titles. Out of the 39 journals, 23 (59%) included research on LGBTIQ+ communities in tourism and leisure. The review identified 94 journal articles. Of these, over a third were published in leisure journals (n=37). *Leisure*

Studies, with 17 articles, published the largest number of articles in our sample, followed by *Annals of Leisure Research* (n=7) and *Leisure Sciences* (n=7). Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of articles across different journals. The dominance of the leisure journals is unsurprising as LGBTIQ+ leisure geographies encompass the nature and extent of LGBTIQ+ recreation space development and are linked to tourism consumption.

--- Insert Figure 1 here ---

Figure 2 shows the geographical distribution of authors in our sample, which shows a clear concentration around the English-speaking Global North: 31 in the United States, 28 in the United Kingdom, 12 each in Australia and Canada, and three in New Zealand. This is not surprising, considering this study has only used journals that publish in English. Non-English-speaking countries with two articles or more include Mexico (n=3), as well as Denmark, Israel, Spain and the Netherlands.

--- Insert Figure 2 here ---

Leximancer analysis

This study adopted a two-stage analysis approach using Leximancer: the ‘all-in-one’ and ‘one-in-one’ analyses. For the Leximancer analysis, only 93 out of the 94 articles were included with Cohen (1988) excluded as it was published in 1988 and would not have yielded significant findings.

The ‘all-in-one’ analysis was used for a comparative overview in the shift of the themes and concepts used over time. The analysis was created as one project and captured all 93 article abstracts. The abstracts were split into five folders corresponding to their respective quinquennial (see numbers in Table 1) to facilitate effective comparative analysis. Relatedly, the ‘one-in-one’ analysis was used to interrogate the unique characteristics of each quinquennial, with each five-yearly period captured as a separate project. This was done to address the issue of the different sample size in each folder because “if one data source contributes much more data, then this particular source will also dominate the automatic selection of concept” (Cheng & Edwards, 2019, p. 39). As such, the 2015-2019 folder with 40 abstracts would have overpowered the 1995-1999 folder with only eight abstracts.

--- Insert Table 1 here ---

All-in-one approach

The 'all-in-one' approach visualised the prevalent themes of the 93 articles published over 25 years. As illustrated in Figure 3, 10 main themes were identified and visualised for the five-yearly tags: travel, gay, sexual, discrimination, space, leisure, media, community, events, and homophobia.

--- Insert Figure 3 here ---

The **gay** theme was most prominent. This is not surprising as most of the articles used 'gay' as an overarching term to denote the nature of the studies. Interestingly, concepts that clustered together include 'lesbian' and 'bisexual', suggesting that some articles either tended to use the terms interchangeably (e.g., Chawansky, 2016; Therkelsen, Blichfeldt, Chor, & Ballegaard, 2013) or covered multiple sexual identities (e.g., Markwell & Tomsen, 2010; Ro, Choi, & Olson, 2013). Although the term 'gay' colloquially refers to a homosexual individual – not ascribed to particular genders (Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns, 1991), academic parlance has predominantly used it only to reference gay males.

The **leisure** theme encompassed concepts such as 'leisure', 'study', 'experiences', 'social', 'identity', and 'analysis'. Leisure here could be epitomised as a context in which LGBTIQ+ people are negotiating their understanding of themselves (Kivel & Kleiber, 2000), especially in sport (Davidson, 2014) and religion (Barbosa & Liechty, 2018).

The **space** theme is the third most prominent theme. Space here pertains to gay spaces or LGBTIQ+ safe havens, where people can escape from heteronormative strictures of everyday life (Vorobjovas-Pinta, 2018). Articles exploring the phenomenon of 'space' focused on the consumption of gay spaces, whether through socio-cultural touchstones (Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley, 2002), the celebration of pride and culture (Caudwell, 2018) or a collective affinity and co-creation (Vorobjovas-Pinta, 2018). The prevalence of such concepts as 'research', 'interviews' and 'findings' indicate the highly empirical nature of the studies in this theme.

The **events** theme included concepts such as 'participants' and 'queer' and was close to the theme of 'homophobia', exploring LGBTIQ+ participants' perceptions and experiences of hostility. Events have also been depicted as mediators of social change, calling for the eradication of discriminatory practices (Ong & Goh, 2018). While these concepts also

emerge in our qualitative analysis, the notion of 'homophobia', which was closely linked to a paper on discrimination in men's professional sport and fan behaviour (Caudwell, 2011), was not a specific topic of investigation and was therefore not identified through the qualitative examination.

The **community** theme encompassed concepts such as 'transgender', 'gender' and 'people'. The predominance of this theme suggests LGBTIQ+ people have often been grouped together in false conceptualisations of a homogenous market (Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2016) – a misconception which has been debunked by the diversity within the community (Therkelsen et al., 2013). The **sexual** theme was dominated by concepts like 'sexual' and 'male'. While some articles focused on the sexual aspects of (gay) male travellers (Mendoza, 2013), others examined sexual harassment either in the work environment or while on holiday (Ineson, Yap, & Whiting, 2013). This theme is closely positioned to the **discrimination** theme, where articles sought to research and understand the underlying sources of stigma and discrimination based on sexuality (Jacobson & Samdahl, 1998).

The **travel** theme contained concepts 'travel' and 'market'. Early research into gay consumers suggested that the gay travel market did not exist or was not viable; concluding that sexual orientation should not constitute a market segment (Fugate, 1993; Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2016). Lastly, the **media** theme has emerged in proximity to the theme of 'leisure', focusing on portrayals of LGBTIQ+ voices in mainstream media (e.g., Berbary & Johnson, 2017; Greey, 2018).

The quadrant report and 'one-in-one' analysis results were used to understand how LGBTIQ+ research has evolved over time. As illustrated in the quadrant report in Figure 4, the close congregation of the concepts illustrate semantically significant relationships. This implies that LGBTIQ+ tourism literature has been relatively homogenous over time in terms of the topics covered. The congregation of concepts in Quadrants 1 and 2 indicates these themes are not unique to their quinquennials. The breakaway cluster in Quadrant 3 points to concepts that occur infrequently but are unique to their quinquennials. This is dominated by the 2015-2019 category. These concepts predominantly emerged in 2015-2019, indicating that our sample's research into LGBTIQ+ issues began diversifying but had not reached critical mass. The only concept that often occurs and is unique to Quadrant 4 is 'space', predominantly about the research on the consumption of gay spaces.

--- Insert Figure 4 here ---

One-in-one approach

This section will provide a brief examination of each five-year period to explore the evolution of LGBTIQ+ literature over time. Each period is presented with its concept map. Additionally, Table 2 provides an overview of the top three ranked compound concepts for each five-yearly period. The ranked compound concept report is a quantitative analysis depicting the most prominent compound concepts (i.e. pairs of concepts), offering additional insight into trends of the LGBTIQ+ tourism and leisure literature. These compound concepts are discussed below relevant to each period.

--- Insert Table 2 here ---

1995-1999

Research published from 1995-1999 (Figure 5) came after a decade of fear fuelled by the AIDS epidemic and before an era of societal change (Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2016). The compound concepts 'male & sexual', 'gay & male', and 'male & experience' reflected this period and the under-explored dimension of sexuality, with gay men at the centre of the research (e.g., Pritchard, Morgan, Sedgley, & Jenkins, 1998; Hughes, 1997). It has been argued that travel provides homosexual men with an opportunity to construct their identity (e.g., Hughes, 1997); nonetheless, the sexual health aspects and its relation to travel were still prominent (e.g., Clift & Forrest, 1999). The 1995-1999 concept map (Figure 5) shows that research emphasised the role tourism and leisure played in escaping or resisting discrimination (e.g., Jacobson & Samdahl, 1998; Laffin, 1999).

--- Insert Figure 5 here ---

2000-2004

The period 2000-2004 experienced similar output quantities as the previous quinquennial. However, there was a notable shift towards the compound concepts of 'travel market', 'travel & tourism', and 'market & tourism'. The literature acknowledged the growing interest in the LGBTIQ+ tourism market, as illustrated by Hughes' (2003) and Visser's (2003) discussion of the advantages of promoting gay-friendly destinations. On the other hand, the 2000-2004 concept map (Figure 6) pertains to destination avoidance, which is evoked by the perceptions of risk and discrimination (e.g., Hughes, 2002). Other studies continued to perpetuate the misconceptions of the gay travel segment being somewhat richer and more

recession-proof than the 'straight' market (e.g., Ivy, 2001), which was met by challenges in the same era (Carpenter, 2004).

--- Insert Figure 6 here ---

2005-2009

2005-2009 pivoted further in terms of the identities researched. The top three compound concepts were 'sexuality & gender', 'market & tourism', and 'market & travel', reflecting the rise of research into lesbian travellers and their unique travel preferences (e.g., Hughes, 2007). The theoretical focus was on explorations of gender and sexuality and their relationship to leisure spaces, such as how the power dynamics of leisure spaces were informed by gender and sexuality (e.g., Johnson & Samdahl, 2005). This is illustrated in Figure 7, portraying the relationship between a tourism market and festival spaces (e.g., Browne, 2009).

--- Insert Figure 7 here ---

2010-2014

Research published in 2010-2014 explored similar compound concepts as in the previous quinquennials: 'tourist & male', 'sexuality & space', and 'experiences & male'. The epistemological and ontological negotiations of space and sexuality remained an important issue in this period (e.g., Browne & Bakshi, 2011). An additional focus here (Figure 8), however, was placed on LGBTIQ+ travellers as consumers exploring more subtle tourist spaces and gazes, as well as the explorations of identity through the consumption of media (e.g., Johnson & Dunlap, 2011).

--- Insert Figure 8 here ---

2015-2019

Lastly, 2015-2019 experienced an increase not only in research outputs but also in the diversification of topics. This is revealed through the concept compounds: 'transgender & gender', 'gender & identity' and 'transgender & events'. There was a notable shift from the consumeristic perspectives to more nuanced understandings of research subjects (participants). As illustrated in the 2015-2019 concept map (Figure 9), the emphasis was placed on gender and the understanding of the variety of identities in diverse contexts such

as sport (Elling-Machartzki, 2017), events (Caudwell, 2018), hospitality (Vorobjovas-Pinta, 2018) and tourism (Monterrubio, 2019).

--- Insert Figure 9 here ---

Qualitative analysis findings

In addition to the Leximancer findings, an in-depth qualitative analysis of the sample was undertaken. To assist with this, the articles identified through the review were first classified based on the sample, recruitment strategy, methodologies used, and topic foci. These are now discussed with reference to specific articles as a form of evidence, with the caveat that these references are intended as supporting examples and are not exhaustive.

Sample group focus

An understanding of the samples examined is essential to define the boundaries of LGBTIQ+ research in tourism and leisure. Out of the 94 articles reviewed, 31% (n=29) did not focus specifically on human participants as the element of research – that is, the direct object that possesses the information sought (Malhotra, 2015). These studies were either theoretical (e.g., Hughes, 1997; Sykes & Hamzeh, 2018); or were conducted using auto-ethnographic approaches focusing on the researcher's observations and experience of a phenomenon, (e.g., Caudwell, 2018; Faiman-Silva, 2009); or case study approaches relying on other published material (e.g., Davidson & McDonald, 2018; Ong & Goh, 2018). Another 14 studies focused on sampling stakeholders who were either event organisers (e.g., Binnie & Klesse, 2011; Ford & Markwell, 2017) or others who were not specifically gender or sexually diverse but would be able to provide a perspective on a phenomenon (e.g., Hughes, Monterrubio, & Miller, 2010; Paat, Torres, Morales, Srinivasan, & Sanchez, 2019; Trussell, 2017).

Of the remaining 51 articles, a dominant focus on gay males was observed with more than half of these (61%) explicitly including gay participants and only 31% focusing on lesbian participants. This confirms our impetus for this research: that there was a strong focus on gay men and lesbians in the literature. Noticeably, gender identities were underrepresented (n=6). The sample articles typically focused on examining single-gender or sexual identities (n=37 concentrate only on one gender or sexual identity) with only 29% examining more than one. Table 3 summarises the focus of existing research that included gender or sexually diverse participants and the number of groups considered. It is worth noting that studies of

transsexual and genderqueer (noted in this study as drag performers) segments are a more recent addition to the literature with the first studies appearing in 2013 looking at drag performers (Barnett & Johnson, 2013) and transsexuals in wilderness (Meyer & Borrie, 2013) and the remaining in the last three years (i.e. Barbary & Johnson, 2017; Olson & Reddy-Best, 2019) beginning to explore specific leisure experiences such as sport (Elling-Machartzki, 2017); this paralleling the growing prominence of these segments within society.

--- Insert Table 3 here ---

Sample recruitment

The approach used to recruit participants is also relevant as an indication of the boundaries of existing research. Studies have primarily adopted non-probabilistic sampling approaches, relying initially on purposive or convenience sampling techniques. This is often done because of the topic, which can be contentious, thus requiring a more targeted and personal approach to recruitment as a way of fostering trust with the participant. As such, the articles examined recruited participants based on participation or attendance at LGBTIQ+ events and spaces, participation in online or offline LGBTIQ+ groups, or personal associations through groups and referrals (e.g., Hughes & Deutsch, 2010; Wong & Tolkach, 2017), allowing researchers to collect a detailed description based on the phenomenon of interest (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Snowballing techniques have also boosted participation in the research with Pritchard, Morgan, Sedgley, Khan, and Jenkins (2000) noting that such an approach is essential given the sensitivity of the topic, which could result in low levels of participation. Snowball sampling was also used in the only study that reported including participants who were not out about their sexual identity (Pritchard et al., 2000). This shows how sampling approaches can be adapted to explore groups, such as those questioning or not-out, who would otherwise be hard to reach.

Some studies have attempted to cast a wider net to get a broader representation of the identities they were studying. For instance, Clift and Forrest (1999) used a dual process to recruit participants by approaching event attendees while also distributing their survey instrument as part of a gay magazine. And within the context of sports management, Symons, O'Sullivan, and Polman (2017) recruited from LGBTIQ+ focused sports groups and venues, but also turned their focus to mainstream sports clubs to recruit "non-community

attached LGBT people” (p. 472). Given the increasing use of online research panels, some quantitative studies have adopted such panels to source their required sample (e.g., Olson & Park, 2019; Ro & Olson, 2020), enabling a broader recruitment strategy beyond just those engaging with LGBTIQ+ media or groups.

Sample research methods

Of the 51 studies where primary data were collected from gender and sexually diverse individuals, 80% adopted qualitative approaches, generally comprising either in-depth interviews alone; or participant observations combined with in-depth interviews. Qualitative studies have typically used multiple approaches to collect data, integrating, observations, note-taking, and interviews (e.g., Blichfeldt, Chor, & Milan, 2013; Jones & McCarthy, 2010); allowing for an emic understanding of the phenomenon being investigated. Only 18% used quantitative survey methods to understand the segment as a market of travel and leisure consumers (e.g., Berezan, Raab, Krishen, & Love, 2015; Ro & Olson, 2020).

Table 4 summarises this distribution, which reflects the relatively exploratory nature of LGBTIQ+ inquiry. An explanation put forward for this qualitative focus is the constantly evolving nature of the social environment wherein LGBTIQ+ individuals have experienced increasing acceptance and in turn, participated more openly in tourism and leisure. Compounded by a better understanding of newly defined sexual and gender identities, and an acknowledgement of the influence of these identities on tourism and leisure, these societal trends have provided researchers with a green-field for diverse investigation within a changing environment. This has potential for depth of investigation to accompany the breadth of studies across topic areas. It is also worth noting that the articles in our sample overwhelmingly adopted a point-in-time approach to studying the LGBTIQ+ segment – with only Elling-Machartzki (2017) as an exception – suggesting there is an opportunity to explore how tourism and leisure interests have evolved.

--- Insert Table 4 here ---

Sample foci

Through the review process, it became apparent that the research was approached from a predominantly critical or business perspective. Most of the studies (52%) adopted a **critical** stance to examine the role of identity from an individual and space perspective and explore

how tourism and leisure constructs maintain or challenge dominant identities. In doing so, these studies align with Ren, Pritchard, and Morgan (2010), who position critical inquiry as research which questions the dominant narrative by acknowledging diverse perspectives. Literature within this domain, for instance, questioned the role of leisure and tourism in constructing the individual's identity (e.g., Hughes, 1997; Kivel & Kleiber, 2000; Markwell, 1998); challenged the heteronormative gendering and sexualisation of space (e.g., Barbary & Johnson, 2017; Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley, 2002); examined transformation of a place's gendered and sexual identity (Boyd, 2011) and how sexual identities can coexist (Johnson, 2008). It has explored the gender and sexual politics of hospitality (Binnie & Klesse, 2011), sport (Elling-Machartzki, 2017), events (e.g., Lamond, 2018; Ong & Goh, 2018), and Pride (de Jong, 2017); and called for perspectives that depart from the colonial discourse of investigation (Sykes & Hamzeh, 2018). These studies call to question the roles of researchers in understanding the phenomenon and the researched, and further our understanding of the interplay between the space or experience and the individual.

The LGBTIQ+ communities were also examined from a **business** perspective (28%). These articles take a problem-solution view (Ren et al., 2010) and define the communities as markets, understand their wants as consumers, and examined the development of services for this market. For instance, some articles profiled or defined the market and examined their needs (e.g., Berezan et al., 2015; Olson & Park, 2019; Ro, Olson, & Choi, 2017), while others explored how travel decisions were made, underlying motivations, and the resulting traveller experiences (e.g., Clift & Forrest, 1999; Poria, 2006; Poria & Taylor, 2002; Pritchard et al., 1998). Studies also explored how destinations may be marketed as 'gay' (Hughes, 2002), or repositioned as a gay destination (Melián-González, Moreno-Gil, & Araña, 2011). A final set of articles also attempted to divide the market into segments based on demographic descriptors – like the older gay segment (Hughes & Deutsch, 2010; Olson & Park, 2019), the Asian market (Coetzee, Liu, & Filep, 2019; Wong & Tolkach, 2017), and families (Lucena, Jarvis, & Weeden, 2015); and examine how the identities differ from each other (Therkelsen et al., 2013).

Sample topics

The articles identified were also analysed and classified based on their topic of investigation. Five broad topics emerged as key areas of focus within the sample, as shown in Table 5, noting that some articles were coded against multiple topics.

--- Insert Table 5 here ---

Perhaps owing to the relative novelty of these communities as a research subject in tourism and leisure, **individual experiences** emerged as the most frequently researched topic. This area encompassed several articles with an identity and experience-related purpose. Sexual identity often presented and with a strong emphasis on tourism and leisure as forms of identity expression, particularly in the dichotomous relationship between heteronormative spaces and non-normative sexual and gender identities. These articles explored the notion of masculinity in gay bars (Johnson, 2008), delved into the minds of drag kings and queens (Barnett & Johnson, 2013; Barbary & Johnson, 2017), and expounded on the use of technologies within gay spaces (Vorobjovas-Pinta & Dalla-Fontana, 2019). Tourism and leisure as identity-forming experiences were explored concerning individual experience, especially about those who were creating nascent homosexual identities (Kivel & Kleiber, 2000), as well as those who used such occasions to test the waters with their families (Trussell, 2017). Several articles also explored experience from a positive or negative perspective – that is those that reinforce identity versus those that discriminate against one's identity (Jacobson & Samdahl, 1998; Symons et al., 2017). Space and place identity also emerged as an essential aspect of the experience, with research exploring gay spaces and their implication (Poria & Taylor, 2002; Vorobjovas-Pinta, 2018), as well as tracing the evolution of destinations to chart their transformation into gay-friendly spaces (Boyd, 2011; Faiman-Silva, 2009). These studies predominantly focused on how space facilitated the experience, development, and expression of identity.

Consumer behaviour and process also featured prominently within the topics coded. Of these, a market segmentation perspective on behaviour dominated, with articles looking at drawing boundaries around market characteristics (Hughes, 2005; Pritchard et al., 1998; Ro et al., 2017), niche market descriptions (Bauer & Giles, 2019; Pitts, 1999), and motivations to travel (Clift & Forrest, 1999; Lucena et al., 2015). While 15 articles were coded against tourist behaviour and decision-making under this topic, when examined through the lens of

the consumer decision process (Kotler & Keller, 2012), most of the articles fell under the *evaluation of alternatives* phase, where they determined tourism and leisure choices by primarily considering their LGBTIQ+ identity before making decisions (Caldwell, Kivel, Smith, & Hayes, 1998; Wong & Tolkach, 2017).

Events were coded separately, given their dominance in the literature and the multiple perspectives this theme encompassed. While the social outcomes of participation in events were examined (Faiman-Silva, 2009), their impact on individual experiences was also significant (e.g., Binnie & Klesse, 2011; Jones & McCarthy, 2010). The notion of gay space also garnered attention, as the transgressive potential of Pride and other LGBTIQ+-focused events has paralleled the visibility of the LGBTIQ+ communities (e.g., Ford & Markwell, 2017; Jarvis, 2018; Lamond, 2018; Markwell & Waitt, 2009). Of particular concern was the potential for political advocacy through both Pride-related events (e.g., Caudwell, 2018; Greey, 2018; Johnston, 2001; de Jong, 2017; Ong & Goh, 2018) as well as other mega-events such as the Sochi Winter Olympics (e.g., Davidson & McDonald, 2018; Van Rheenen, 2014).

Some articles took a **supply perspective** in examining the spatial distribution of gay-friendly destinations globally (Ivy, 2001), exploring services primarily provided for/by the LGBTIQ+ communities (e.g., Berezan et al., 2015; Collins, 2007; Tan, 2014). Finally, **methodologies** in researching the LGBTIQ+ communities were also a focus for some articles (Laffin, 1999; Vorobjovas-Pinta & Robards, 2017), with these studies putting forward perspectives on how the LGBTIQ+ communities should be studied given the sensitivity of the matter.

Overall, the findings from the in-depth qualitative analysis presented support those generated through Leximancer. For instance, the one-in-one Leximancer analysis results point to a progression of research participant identities, from a mono-market emphasis on gay males to the more recent diversification into lesbian and queer identities. Further, as can be observed, the context has also diversified from a fixation on the sexual to exploring the intersectionality of experiences and identities related to the LGBTIQ+ communities. We expect this diversification to continue as LGBTIQ+ individuals become more strongly integrated into society and enjoy more and different leisure and tourism experiences.

Implications and Future Directions

The paper so far has reviewed existing literature on the LGBTIQ+ segment on tourism and leisure. The implications of this review are now discussed to provide direction for future research. What is clear from the analysis is that this topic encompasses much potential for exploration, particularly into the complexities of LGBTIQ+ consumption of tourism and leisure, the associated experiences, and their impacts beyond singular encounters. Research can help challenge hegemonic perspectives, and by doing so ensure the benefits of tourism and leisure are experienced by all regardless of their gender or sexual identity and as per the sentiment of the SDGs, “no one is left behind” (United Nations, 2014, p. 9). The inclusion of diverse perspectives about gender and sexual identities is a warranted expectation in education policies. As such, the potential for greater impact of this research lies in incorporating these hegemonic challenges into tourism education, enlisting the industry’s partnership to ensure broader benefits that extend into the LGBTIQ+ communities. Such a process would arguably encourage a systemic transition to a more inclusive tourism industry.

Research that has been conducted with a sample of LGBTIQ+ individuals focuses on those who are out or within the Global North, where there is a greater acceptance of those who are sexually or gender diverse. This is consistent with the prominence of Western perspectives in research in general. However, it shines a spotlight on the paucity of research studies focused on LGBTIQ+ leisure and tourism within contexts where LGBTIQ+ behaviours are legally or socially punishable. Within that context, both the researcher and the researched may jeopardise personal freedoms by conducting or participating in such research. Given the ability of tourism and leisure to create a liminal environment where identity can be constructed, experienced, and solidified (Hughes, 1997; Markwell, 1998), those who are not out, questioning, or living in oppressive social climates may benefit the most from these experiences. However, their voices remain relatively silent and little is understood about them and their consumption behaviours. Indeed, such explorations could help foster opportunities for co-existence so that “all people enjoy peace and prosperity” (United Nations, 2020). Accordingly, we need to reflect on how we empower these individuals to participate in research in a way that is respectful and safe for both them and the researcher.

The current homogenisation of LGBTIQ+ communities also necessitates detail in exploring intra-community relations as well as intersectionality between traditional power relations and LGBTIQ+ communities' relations. The exploration of gender diversity has grown in recent years – potentially paralleling the hitherto limited but growing social discourse on non-binary gender identities. While some of the articles in this study considered the notion of genderqueer through an examination of drag kings and queens, limited attention has been paid to those who do not identify as cis-gendered. Arguably, reaching such a sample may require the use of quotas or purposive sampling methods as applied by Olson and Reddy-Best (2019), as they may not be readily apparent or available in a significant sample size using online research panels as found by Hahm, Ro, and Olson (2018). It should be noted that transgender individuals may not necessarily identify themselves as transgender but instead adopt their new gender as their identity. This has implications for how they may be recruited for research and aligns with the SDGs' Goal 3, which calls for more gender-sensitive approaches to address inclusivity (United Nations, 2014). In this context, gender extends beyond traditional binary notions with a focus on empowering individuals by referencing them through how they see themselves. Similarly, there is a palpable absence of bisexual and transgender voices in tourism research (Southall & Fallon, 2011). At the same time, research has primarily examined individual gender and sexual identities. By examining multiple gender or sexual identities, research can explain the diversity encapsulated under the LGBTIQ+ umbrella by comparing the distinct needs and motivations of each identity. Such research would align with the Second Global Report on LGBT Tourism by the United Nations World Tourism Organization, which calls for individualisation of the identities covered under the LGBTIQ+ acronym. Ensuring equity would also encourage a nuanced understanding of each identity to develop tourism experiences or policies that enable the different identities to benefit from the advantages of tourism (Dangi & Jamal, 2016; Vorobjovas-Pinta & Hardy, 2020).

Sample recruitment within the LGBTIQ+ context has been challenging due to limited social acceptance of LGBTIQ+ individuals, and fear that participation may result in a forced outing for individuals (Pritchard et al., 2000). This is particularly the case for subgroups that intersect traditionally heteronormative roles as Bauer and Giles (2019) noted when studying gay fathers. Despite challenges with sampling LGBTIQ+ individuals, if research is to provide a

voice for the underrepresented, and assist with achieving the SDGs that discuss inclusivity, greater effort is required to understand these sub-segments. Arguably, given the anonymity and reach in participation afforded by the internet, the use of online research panels may provide access to a broader representation of LGBTIQ+ individuals with different lived experiences of their gender or sexual identity.

Regarding research methods, this review found that LGBTIQ+ research in tourism and leisure tends towards being qualitative and exploratory, typically using traditional qualitative methods like in-depth interviews, participant observation, case studies, and focus groups. In this context, the use of online research methods may provide opportunities for researchers to reach and study samples of those who may wish to remain anonymous. Olson and Reddy-Best (2019) called for research to use more in-the-moment approaches. This could include the use of participant diaries facilitated by digital applications, such as blogs and vlogs, to avoid relying on the participant's memory. With the growing use of social media, blogs and vlogs, as a means of recording one's travel experience, researchers may understand the LGBTIQ+ traveller in a more natural environment, based on their posts (Lewis, 2016). And while the transformative and transgressive potential of events has been explored, they face a surfeit of empirical research to substantiate the theoretical assumptions that have underpinned previous research. Additionally, given the limited research that has adopted a longitudinal perspective, opportunities are available to explore behaviours and help explain how greater acceptance impacts the experiences of sexually and gender diverse individuals.

Conclusion

This paper presented an in-depth analysis of how the LGBTIQ+ communities have been presented and examined in the tourism and leisure literature. In our work, we placed a particular focus on the methods, samples, as well as foci and topics of examination to make meaningful contributions to academic literature, policy and practice in the area of LGBTIQ+ tourism and leisure. Significantly, this research identifies an opportunity to diversify the focus of the research. Existing literature appears focused on providing a critical perspective. While this is important as it questions the norm and paves the way for the future (Ren et al., 2010), there is scope to provide a stronger practical understanding of tourism and leisure behaviours, and to explore how these experiences can be designed to contribute towards

creating safe experiences while travelling, as per Goal 16 (United Nations, 2014). Such diversification also can act as an impetus for dialogue, and, importantly, education for industry, policymakers and societies at large. While LGBTIQ+ individuals want to be treated like other travel groups, there is a need to experience travel and leisure in a holistic sense, encapsulating the nuances of their sexuality or gender identity (Ro et al., 2013). To this end, studies that quantitatively segment the market based on motivations, lifestyles or psychographics may be appropriate, in addition to those currently in the literature. Ultimately, understanding the needs and desired experiences relevant to LGBTIQ+ identities is essential.

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Tables

Table 1 Number of journal articles by five-year period for Leximancer analysis

Period	Number of journal articles
1985-1989	1 (not used in analysis due to low count)
1990-1994	0 (not used in analysis due to lack of data)
1995-1999	8
2000-2004	9
2005-2009	11
2010-2014	25
2015-2019	40

Table 2 Top Three Leximancer-generated compound concepts for each five-year period

Compound Concept	Relative Frequency (%)	Strength (%)	Prominence
1995-1999			
Male & sexual	8	35	53.3
Male & study	4	30	24.4
Male & experience	3	29	18.3
2000-2004			
Travel & market	10	40	100.7
Travel & tourism	16	59	67.5
Market & tourism	11	35	48.3
2005-2009			
Sexuality & gender	3	42	26.9
Market & tourism	6	50	26
Market & travel	2	27	25.3
2010-2014			
Tourist & male	2	78	13.3
Sexuality & space	3	55	9.1
Experiences & male	1	71	7.8
2015-2019			
Transgender & gender	1	85	12.6
Gender & identity	2	100	8.4
Transgender & events	1	75	6.9

Table 3 Gender and sexuality focus of participants in articles from our sample

One group	Two groups	Three or more groups
Lesbian n=8	Lesbian + Gay n=6	LGBT (non-descriptive) n=6
Gay n=24	Lesbian + Transsexual n=1	Lesbian + Gay + Bisexual n=1
Transsexual n=2		
Gender Queer n=3		

Table 4 Distribution of sample across methods

Method	n=	% of total	Approach
Qualitative	41	80%	Interviews, observations, photograph analysis, ethnography, surveys, document analysis
Quantitative	9	18%	Online and offline surveys
Mixed	1	2%	Surveys and interviews

Table 5 Topics emerging from the qualitative analysis

Topics	Number of articles
Individual experiences	61
Consumer behaviour and process	44
Events	27
Supply perspective	7
Methodologies	3

Figures

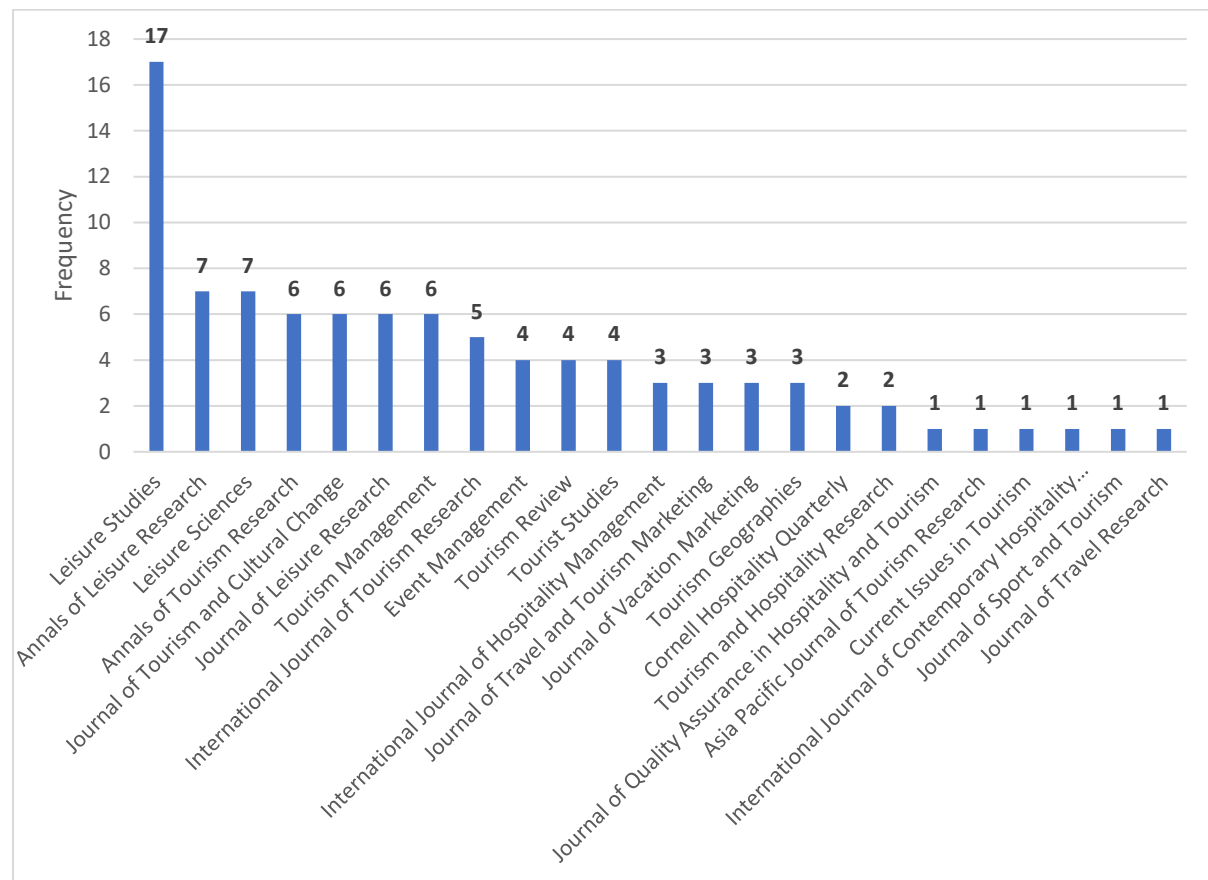


Figure 1 Number of published articles per journal in our sample

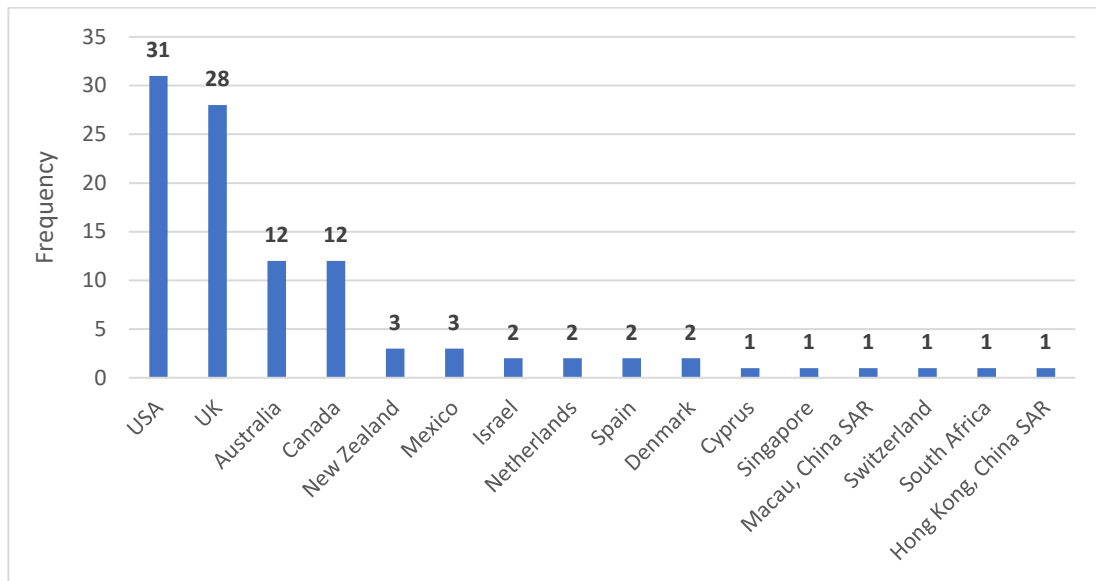


Figure 2 Geographical distribution of the authors publishing on LGBTIQ+ issues in tourism and leisure.

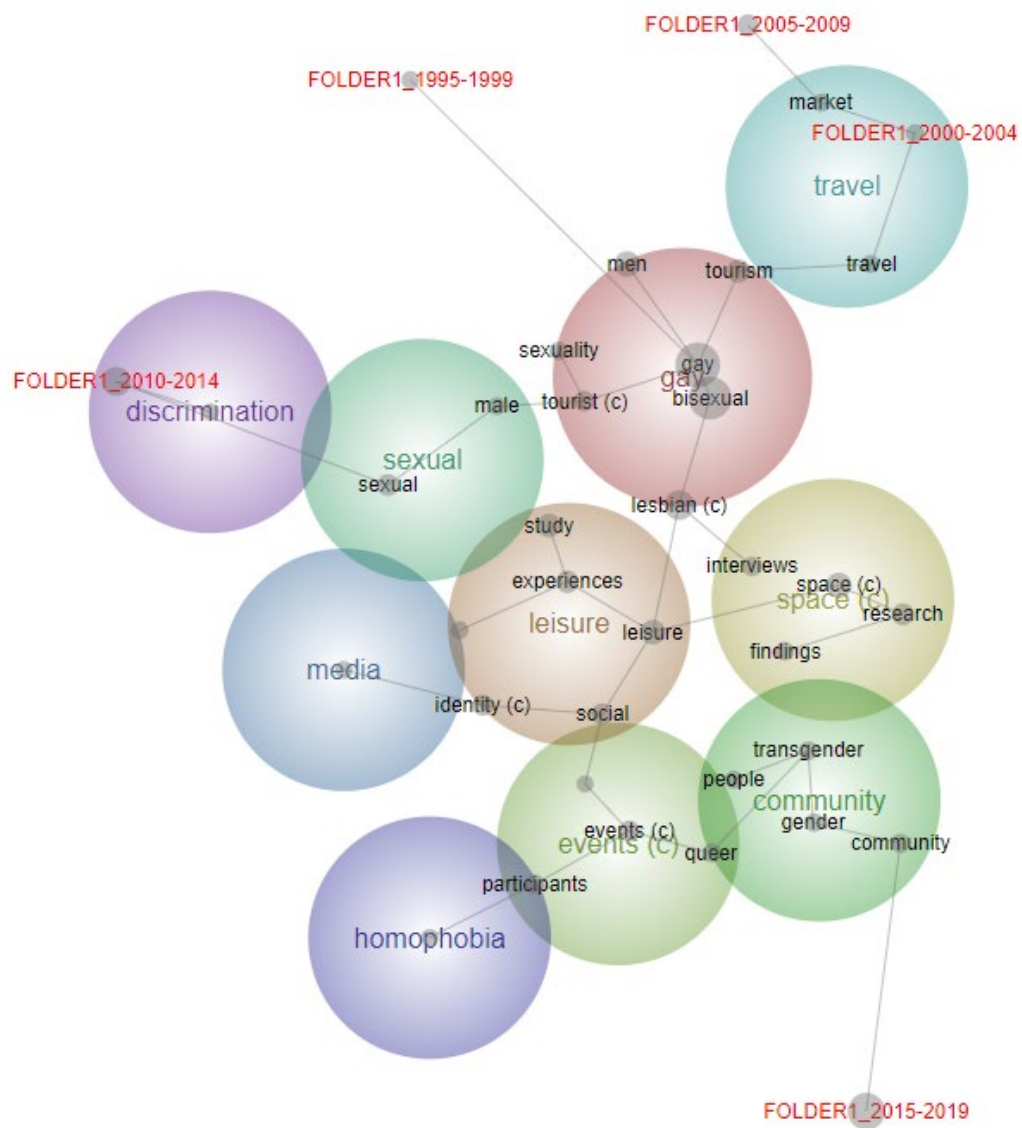


Figure 3 The Leximancer 'all-in-one' concept map

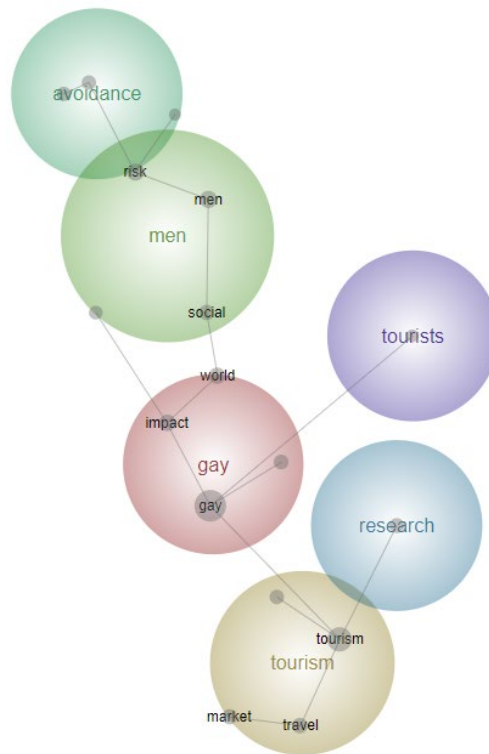


Figure 6 The Leximancer 'one-in-one' concept map: 2000-2004

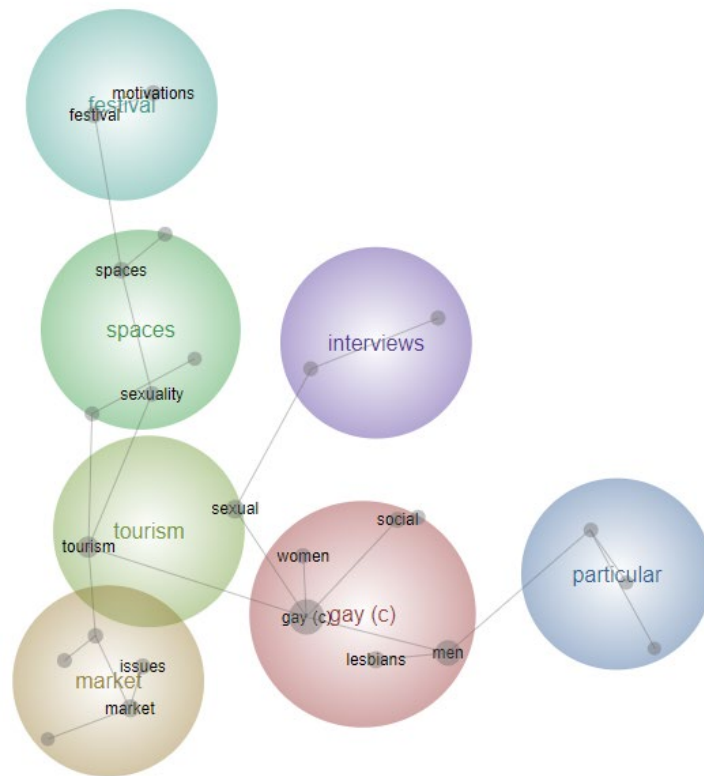


Figure 7 The Leximancer 'one-in-one' concept map: 2005-2009

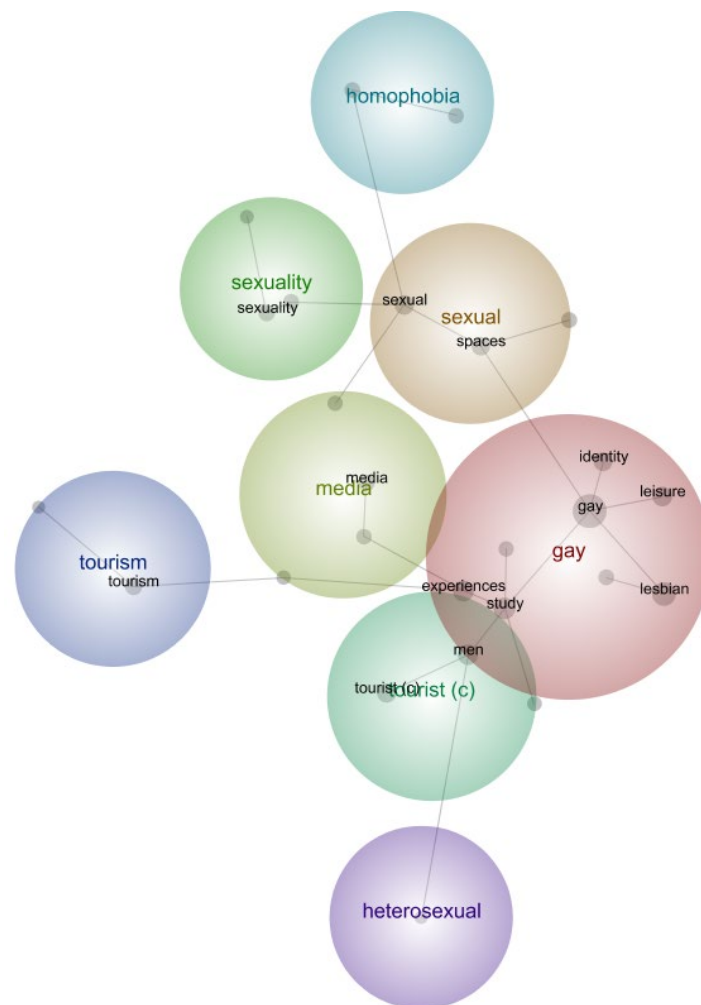


Figure 8 The Leximancer 'one-in-one' concept map: 2010-2014

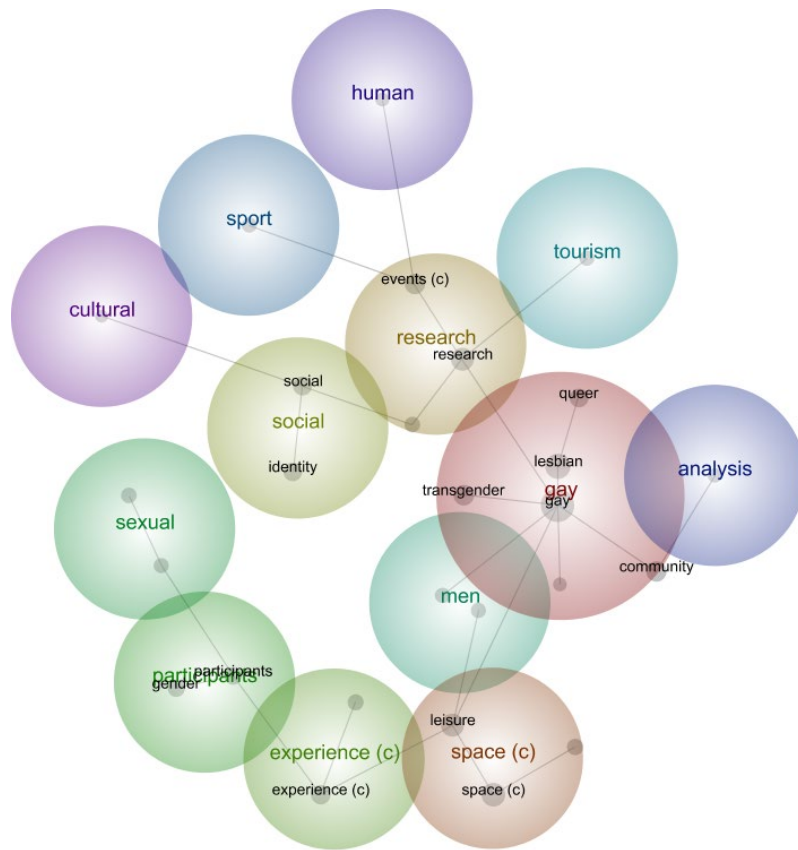


Figure 9 The Leximancer 'one-in-one' concept map: 2015-2019