



Local government's role in promoting city hospitality: A meta-ethnography with a public management perspective

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Abstract

Purpose

Adopting a public-management perspective, this study aims to conduct a meta-ethnography to discern local government’s role in city hospitality in terms of promoting the welcome the city gives its guests, filling a gap in research into the subject.

Design/methodology/approach

We used the seven-step iterative approach of Noblit and Hare’s meta-ethnography. By conducting a systematic search in the major bibliographic databases, 10 qualitative studies on city hospitality were identified that met the criteria to be included. Concepts alluding to a local government’s role in city hospitality were coded in NVivo 11 software, translated and interpreted through the lens of public management. Fourteen semi-structured interviews with experts were also conducted to further validate the meta-ethnography findings.

Findings

Six interrelated, third-order constructs were developed and conceptualized into an articulated model describing local government’s role in city hospitality from a public-management perspective: advocating, co-creating, strategizing, planning, and implementing city hospitality, and promoting it into a sustainable tourism development. The model, also substantiated by expert feedback, describes local government actions to promote city hospitality and achieve sustainable tourism. It highlights a responsive, proactive, and collaborative role for local government as a key actor responsible for the strategic management and co-creation of city hospitality.

Research limitations/implications

The study introduces public governance cues into a city hospitality context, with theoretical and practical implications for hospitality and tourism researchers, businesses, politicians, public managers, city officials and destination marketing/management practitioners.

Originality/value

The study proposes an original conceptual model that serves as an overarching framework and operative tool for understanding and practicing city hospitality in a contemporary public-management perspective. This lays the foundations for the development of a broadened notion of hospitality management, extended from the traditional context of the hospitality industry to that of the city or place. The study also showcases how meta-ethnography can be an effective methodology in business, management and accounting research, within which it is still a novelty.

Keywords: city hospitality, local government, hospitality management, hospitality co-creation, public governance, sustainable tourism development, meta-ethnography

1. Introduction

The complex, interdisciplinary nature of hospitality is expressed in a range of places, moments, principles, and objects, involving a multitude of people and spaces with cultural, social, political, commercial, and managerial implications (Ali *et al.*, 2019; Bell, 2016; Morrison and O’Gorman, 2008). Although the word conjures up different meanings and metaphors, hospitality’s central idea remains sharing a host’s own home with others, taking responsibility for the guest’s well-being and comfort, and making the guest feel at home (Telfer, 2016). Accordingly, the host-guest relationship involves a mutual feeling of welcome (Lashley, 2015) between those who act as a host (e.g., any accommodation, a tourism destination or a city, its residents, and its government) and those who are acknowledged as guests (e.g., visitors, residents, and businesses). In this vein, however, hospitality traditionally developed within tourism studies in terms of commercial provision of hospitality services, becoming synonymous with the hospitality industry (Lashley, 2015; Steffen *et al.*, 2021).

More recently and going beyond the hospitality industry, Bell (2007, 2016) argued that cities are seen as places offering hospitality, giving rise to the multifaceted concept of city hospitality (Lugosi *et al.*, 2010; McNeill, 2008). From this perspective, hospitality pertains to a broadened level of welcome. In terms of services, relationship experiences and emotional well-being, a city (or other tourist destination) offers various forms of hospitality to its multiple guest stakeholders, including residents, visitors, and businesses, thereby satisfying their needs (Chau and Yan, 2021; Chávez and Rest, 2014; Del Gesso, 2022). However, when the city is the host, the host-guest relationship results in a multiplicity of dynamic social interactions within this context, since many of the city's stakeholders can act as hosts (including the local government) as well as guests. In this regard, Wiegerink and Huizing (2020) highlight how the various hosts in the city, such as the local public and private service providers, the municipality, and local residents should collaborate to co-create a city hospitality environment for tourists. Indeed, it is not only the commercial providers of hospitality services but also the government, through its policies, that can create, enhance and sustain a destination's competitiveness, in which being hospitable plays a pivotal role (Omerzel, 2006). Furthermore, some studies suggest that government policies, such as those pertaining to public safety, crisis management and sustainable consumption, can support the hospitality industry's sustainability (Hua *et al.*, 2020; Jones and Comfort, 2020; Molina-Collado *et al.*, 2022). As Ritchie and Jiang (2021) note, hospitality research needs to broaden its micro-organizational focus at a macro level by also considering government policy measures that are crucial to improving the hospitality and tourism industry's resilience to risks and crises — such as following a global health pandemic (Baum and Hai, 2020) or natural disasters caused by climate change. Notably, local governments play a recognized, crucial role in promoting tourism development at the local level, with an increasing responsibility for implementing long-lasting and sustainable tourism strategies, enhancing both their appeal as tourist destinations and the well-being of the local community (Kapera, 2018; Ruhanen, 2013). Accordingly, since local governments can facilitate or inhibit the social, economic, environmental and cultural sustainability of a city's tourism development (Ruhanen, 2013), this suggests that the local government can act as a key host by promoting the hospitality of a place toward both tourists and the local community.

The concept of city hospitality recently has been associated with other emerging urban concepts, such as the sustainable city and the smart city, and with issues of city livability (Koens *et al.*, 2019; Park and Wiegerink, 2020; Pasquinelli and Trunfio, 2020). According to Koens *et al.* (2019, p. 2), “a sustainable city needs to act as a good host to both its visitors and its residents and other local stakeholders.” Indeed, city hospitality has been acknowledged to be among the effects of sustainable urban development (Pasquinelli and Trunfio, 2020). City hospitality is an emerging concept, however, and an under-investigated area of hospitality and tourism-management that has not yet been addressed in the context of public management and governance. Accordingly, the local government's role as a key host promoting the hospitality of a city toward its guests remains virtually unexplored within the new research strand addressing hospitality issues in the city/destination (e.g., Chávez and Rest, 2014; Morton and Johnson, 2019; Park and Wiegerink, 2020). This strand often refers to some involvement of the local government in the city hospitality context, without however fully grasping its essence from a public management view.

In light of this knowledge gap and adopting a public-management perspective, this study aims to conduct a meta-ethnography to discern the local government's role in city hospitality in terms of promoting the welcome the city gives its guests. To achieve this, we used the Noblit and Hare's meta-ethnographic approach and followed up-to-date methodological guidance (France *et al.*, 2019; Noblit and Hare, 1988). Ten qualitative city hospitality studies were identified as eligible among those published as of the date of this study. These then were analyzed according to the rules and techniques of meta-ethnography, and the results thus obtained were further validated using expert interviews. The results of meta-ethnography provide a higher-order interpretation of original constructs through the public-management lens, conceptualizing and articulating a model — then substantiated by expert

feedback — that helps us understand the rationale for local government responsibilities in city hospitality governance (see de Bruyn and Alonso, 2012, for the significance of *governance* in tourism destination).

The significance of this study is at least twofold. First, it contributes to the interdisciplinary, scholarly discussion of city hospitality by developing an original and reliable conceptual model that furthers an understanding of the strategic role the local government plays in co-creating the hospitality of a city or any tourist destination. The study thus serves as an overarching framework and operative tool for understanding and practicing city hospitality in a contemporary public-management perspective. Public-governance cues are introduced in such a perspective, providing inputs for local government collaborations and interactions with the various actors in the city (including hospitality organizations and practitioners) to co-create hospitality as a value for all. The key contribution of this paper, therefore, is that it lays the foundations for the development of a broadened notion of hospitality management, extended from the traditional context of the hospitality industry to that of the city or place that encompasses it. Second, this study showcases how meta-ethnography, a qualitative approach widely used in health research, also can be an effective methodology in business, management and accounting research, within which it is still a novelty.

After this introduction, the remainder of the article unfolds as follows. Section 2 briefly reports on the change in the role of local government as public policymaker and service provider under the lens of public-sector management and governance. Section 3 explains the meta-ethnographic approach and its use in this study and its support from validation interviews. Section 4 presents the findings, showing the development of the conceptual model that highlights a responsive, proactive and collaborative role of local government in promoting city hospitality, resulting in sustainable tourism. Finally, Section 6 discusses the findings and concludes the article with an outline of the study's implications and the directions of future research.

2. Local government's role in public policymaking and service delivery evolves: the public-management perspective

Knowledge of public policy implementation and service delivery has evolved across the three main stages through which public administration has gone: traditional bureaucratic public administration (until the late 1970s/early 1980s), New Public Management – NPM (until early 2000), and New Public Governance – NPG (until present) (Osborne, 2010; Pestoff, 2019). The NPM movement first introduced business-management techniques into public administration and values, with a focus on measuring output performance to improve government efficiency and make public-service delivery more responsive and accountable to citizens and other users (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). Further innovations aimed at improving public service quality and outcomes for communities resulted from the NPG movement, which emphasized networked inter-organizational relationships, multi-stakeholder interactions, and forms of collaboration and participation in government decision-making processes, thus outlining an open-system context of public service delivery (Osborne, 2010; Torfing and Triantafyllou, 2016). Indeed, the co-production of public services is considered the main contemporary public-governance innovation, which brings together governments; citizens; service users; private-, state- and third-sector providers; and all community members to cooperate to improve public outcomes (Bovaird and Loeffler, 2013; Pestoff, 2019). More generally, the role of local government has been radically reinterpreted as a public policymaker and service provider no longer framed in a traditional context of top-down, hierarchical administration but rather in an interactive and collaborative governance system devoted to co-creating public value (Brix *et al.*, 2020; Bryson *et al.*, 2014).

In the framework of evolutionary public administration thinking, the local government's role in public policymaking and service delivery has therefore evolved, shifting from an administrative to a broadly conceived management role. Generally speaking, politicians and public managers acting at a

local-government level have assumed greater responsibility to manage public resources efficiently, to provide effective services in order to meet stakeholders needs, and to improve public policy performance outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, environmental, social and cultural benefits to increase the level of well-being experienced by citizens and communities (Mayne and Vigoda-Gadot, 2018; Pérez-López *et al.*, 2015). Such responsibilities serve as a backdrop to understanding the role of local government in the context of city hospitality, in which it acts as a host, taking responsibility for enhancing the well-being of a city's guest stakeholders. It is from this perspective that the present study aims to use meta-ethnography to understand this role.

3. Research approach

3.1. *Meta-ethnography as a qualitative research approach*

Meta-ethnography is a seven-step, qualitative research approach introduced by sociologists Noblit and Hare in their seminal book of 1988 (Noblit and Hare, 1988) (Figure 1). Originally conceived to synthesize ethnographies in education research, meta-ethnography has become a widely used method of synthesizing and extending qualitative evidence in health-related research (France *et al.*, 2014). Indeed, it is now applied to all forms of qualitative research, including case studies and discourse analyses (Noblit, 2018). Meta-ethnography is a theory-based approach, specifically designed to derive new conceptual understandings through “translations” of concepts from primary studies by considering the unique research contexts in these studies (France *et al.*, 2019; Toye *et al.*, 2014). It is understood as a systematic comparative and interpretative textual analysis of qualitative studies rather than a mere synthesis of findings from them. Indeed, data from the studies included in a meta-ethnographic synthesis are frequently described in terms of first-order constructs (i.e., key concepts reported in the results of the included studies) and second-order constructs (i.e., the interpretations of first-order constructs made by authors of these studies). On the basis of these data, third-order constructs (i.e., the researchers' new interpretations of the original authors' interpretations) are developed to generate new theoretical understandings (Atkins *et al.*, 2008; Toye *et al.*, 2014). Accordingly, the core of the methodology is a complex process of synthesis that comprises translations, translations synthesis and line of argument synthesis, thereby potentially producing new theories, frameworks, or conceptual models (France *et al.*, 2019). Noblit and Hare's seminal book does not provide procedural guidance for conducting meta-ethnography, which has undergone important developments since its inception (Noblit, 2018). Recently, France *et al.* (2019) provided up-to-date, practical instructions for the complex analytical phases of the methodology.

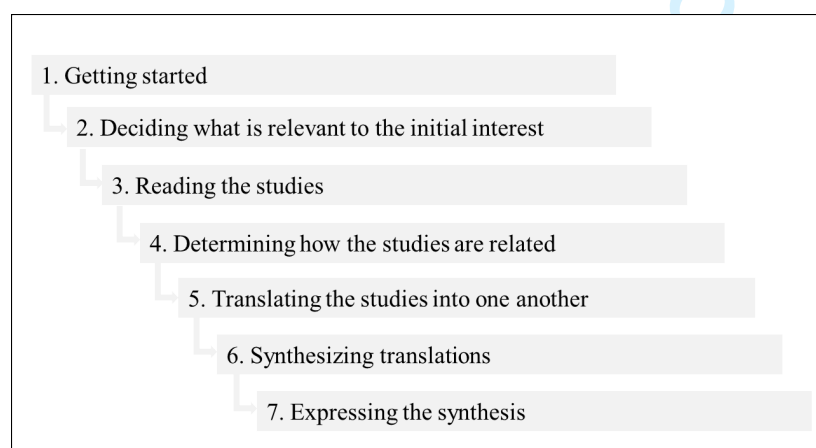


Figure 1. Seven-step process of Noblit and Hare's meta-ethnography

To the best of the authors' knowledge, meta-ethnography has only been used in two studies of business, management and accounting, and one of them is in the tourism field (Loulanski T. and Loulanski V., 2011; Stolze, 2021). Therefore, it is an unusual approach in this area, and this study might contribute to the spread of its knowledge and use. Loulanski T. and Loulanski V. (2011, p. 838) highlighted how meta-ethnography (with its cross-study focus capable of developing "a higher-order, theoretical structure") is relevant to the advancement of concepts based on fragmented or neglected knowledge, as well as of notions from multiple sciences that address a common theme. In health care research, in addition, meta-ethnography has proven to be a viable tool for detecting significant aspects of a topic that existing research has failed to address or exhaustively understand (Perkins *et al.*, 2020). Accordingly, the meta-ethnographic approach is well-suited to conceptually advancing knowledge of an issue — such as local government involvement in city hospitality — that has not yet received specific attention and is mostly informed by qualitative data. Therefore, the present study uses meta-ethnography to synthesize and interpret different theoretical contributions to the emerging interdisciplinary debate on city hospitality and to focus on local government's roles.

3.2. *Meta-ethnography as a method for this study*

A meta-ethnography was undertaken to achieve the research goal of discerning the local government's role in promoting city hospitality. We decided to apply this theory-based and potentially theory-engendering methodology (France *et al.*, 2014; Noblit, 2018) because we deemed it the most appropriate way to capture the essence of the role of the local government through the public-management lens. Noblit and Hare's seven-step, iterative procedure was employed using the supplementary explanation and operational suggestions provided by France *et al.* (2019) for conducting the key synthesis phases of meta-ethnography. Both the decisions made and the operating techniques used in relation to each of the seven phases were designed to ensure the trustworthiness of the meta-ethnography and to enable reproducibility. Both are described in detail below.

Phase 1: Getting started

In the first phase, the involvement of local government in city hospitality was identified as the subject that qualitative research could inform. City hospitality research conducted so far gives several hints of such an involvement (e.g., Chávez and Rest, 2014; Morton and Johnson, 2019; Park and Wiegerink, 2020). Accordingly, the following specific research question was formulated:

RQ: What role does local government play in the city hospitality context?

Phase 2: Deciding what is relevant to the initial interest

The second phase consisted of searching for and selecting the relevant studies to be included in the meta-ethnography. Noblit and Hare (1988) did not provide details on how to conduct this stage, but meta-ethnographies performed in health care research offer working examples on how to identify such studies. Most of these meta-ethnographies have adopted and recommended a structured, rigorous search-and-screening strategy (e.g., Atkins *et al.*, 2008; Toye *et al.*, 2014). We borrowed the methodological recommendations and experiences shaped in the medical field in order to identify appropriate studies to be included in meta-ethnography, and a comprehensive, systematic literature search was conducted, and criteria for inclusion were established.

Systematic retrieval of data supports qualitative research by reducing the effects of researchers' biases and subjectivity and by enabling studies to be replicated (Lune and Berg, 2017). An important decision first concerned the scope of the literature search. Due to the limited number of studies discussing city hospitality, an exhaustive search was undertaken to access every available study on the topic (Toye *et al.*, 2014), although the database search was limited to English manuscripts. Comprehensive criteria guided the search of international indexed literature (such as journal articles, books, book chapters and conference proceedings) published in any year as long as they addressed the concept of hospitality in the context of a city or a destination. The search was performed in May

2021 within the major bibliometric databases (Harzing and Alakangas, 2016). The first search was done in Scopus and the Web of Science (WoS) Core Collection within articles' titles, abstracts, and keywords. These citation-based platforms were chosen because they traditionally constitute the largest and most authoritative sources of bibliographic data, and they are widely used in academia to identify and assess high-quality international research across multiple disciplines (Prancut , 2021). The searches were conducted by entering the following query string, which combined key search terms with a Boolean operator: (("city hospitality") OR ("hospitable city") OR ("destination hospitality")). After refining the results by limiting them to English-language manuscripts, the search yielded 17 available scholarly works from Scopus and eight from WoS in all subject areas. The works found from the two databases were then combined and duplicates were removed. This enabled us to obtain 19 manuscripts for potential inclusion in meta-ethnography. The abstracts and often the full texts were screened and assessed for eligibility according to three main inclusion criteria: (1) manuscripts that were pertinent to the research topic, (2) manuscripts that were qualitative in design, and (3) manuscripts that mentioned local government or similar terms. Eight manuscripts did not meet the first criterion and were excluded because they were published in different disciplines (e.g., Arts and Humanities and Engineering) and focused on themes that were irrelevant to the research topic. One manuscript using a quantitative approach also was excluded as inconsistent with meta-ethnography, thus not meeting the second criterion. The remaining city hospitality studies were thoroughly inspected to identify those that expressly discussed, or even alluded to, a role of local government. The contents of the full texts were therefore analyzed to ascertain whether the following key terminology was mentioned at least once: "local government(s)," "local governance," "municipal government(s)," "city government," "destination government," "local authorities," "local administration(s)," "city managers" and "city decision/policymakers." Three studies were excluded because they did not mention any of these terms and, thus, did not meet the third criterion. Ultimately, only seven manuscripts (six journal articles and one book chapter) among those originally found in the Scopus and WoS databases were found to be eligible for this meta-ethnography.

To supplement the selection process and thus obtain a more representative range of studies, the search was subsequently conducted in the Google Scholar database using the same search-and-screening strategy and criteria. Given the comprehensive coverage of this database, the aim was to locate scholarly works on city hospitality that appeared within lower-ranked journals or publications not indexed in the previous two databases (Harzing and Alakangas, 2016). The Google Scholar search identified three additional relevant manuscripts (two journal articles and one book chapter) that met the inclusion criteria. Furthermore, a supplementary manual search also was executed in leading peer-reviewed scholarly journals of hospitality scholarship, including the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management. No additional manuscripts were found to fit the criteria for inclusion, however. Reviewing the references cited by included studies also failed to find additional relevant manuscripts.

All the steps of the process for identifying studies for inclusion in meta-ethnography are summarized in Figure 2. The final sample included 10 studies spanning a fairly recent publication period (2007 to 2021) and therefore were consistent with the reformulated role of local government discussed in Section 2 (Table I). The three researchers carried out the search-and-selection process separately with the same results. The quality appraisal of the 10 studies was then assessed in order to avoid including poor-quality manuscripts (Atkins *et al.*, 2008). We used the qualitative checklist developed by the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) for appraising qualitative research (CASP, 2018), which has often been adopted as a study quality appraisal tool for meta-ethnography (Toye *et al.*, 2014). This resulted in a fairly good overall quality of manuscripts, although not all of the individual manuscripts achieved high scores. In order not to reduce the sample of included studies further, however, no manuscripts were excluded based on their quality.

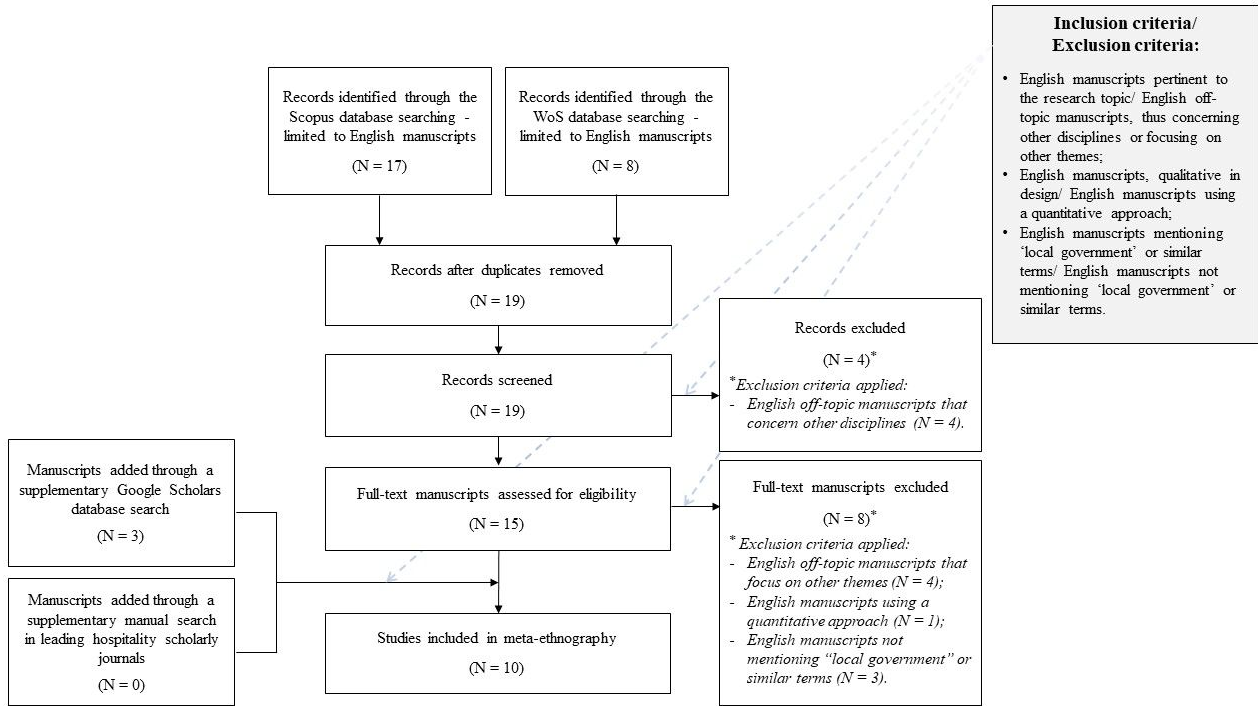


Figure 2. Flow chart of the selection process for including literature in the meta-ethnography

Table I. The 10 studies included in meta-ethnography, listed in chronological order: main characteristics

No.	Reference	Journal/ Book	Manuscript type	Manuscript (cited) keywords	Research methods	Aim
1	Bell, 2007	Progress in Human Geography	Journal Article/ Conceptual paper	Commercial spaces; food and drink; hospitality; urban regeneration	Use of theoretical and philosophical discussions of hospitality	"To draw on recent discussions of the spaces and geographies of hospitality in the contemporary city and to use these to explore the relationships between practices of commercial hospitality and processes of urban regeneration."
2	Chávez and Rest, 2014	Hospitality & Society	Journal Article/ Conceptual paper	Hospitality; city; space; dynamic model; host-guest relationship; hospitality-levels; agency; mobility	Use of the analytical framework of "dynamic model of hospitality" to explore host-guest relationships from a city government perspective	"To call attention to the inherent complexities of analyzing and understanding the hospitalities of cities by exploring and exemplifying a number of host-guest relationships and their different levels."
3	Hollows <i>et al.</i> , 2014	Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events	Journal Article/ Research paper	Food festivals; urban tourism; cultural policy; night-time economy; hospitality	Use of a case study of urban food festival in the UK through interviews with visitors to the festival	"To develop an analysis of how the festival contributed to ideas of the hospitable city."
4	Koens <i>et al.</i> , 2019	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management	Journal Article/ Conceptual Paper	Destination design; participatory design; transition management; resilient urban tourism; sustainable tourism governance; city hospitality; over-tourism	Use of a systemic conceptualization of sustainable urban tourism and principles of a transition approach to introduce the "smart city hospitality" framework	"To introduce the Smart City Hospitality Framework, which could serve as the foundation for a destination-design-driven approach to urban tourism governance and dealing with over-tourism issues."

5	Morton and Johnson, 2019	Hospitality & Society	Journal Article/ Research paper	Hospitality; policy document; post-industrial regeneration; public space; tourism; urban planning	Use of a content analysis of the city of Sunderland's Unitary Development Plan, to understand how local government planning policy guides tourism and hospitality development	<i>"To gain a better understanding of how cities plan for a productive relationship between tourism and hospitality and public space and hotel development."</i>
6	Viet, 2019	African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure	Journal Article/ Research paper	Tourist satisfaction; tourist destination loyalty; destination image; Côn Đảo Islands; Vietnam	Use of a case study of tourist satisfaction and loyalty in Côn Đảo Islands, through focus groups and direct interviews with tourists from this destination	<i>"To devise a framework to explore the relationship between destination image, tourist satisfaction and tourist destination loyalty."</i>
7	Park and Wiegerink, 2020	Sustainable Hospitality Management (Advanced Series in Management, Vol. 24)	Book chapter/ Conceptual paper	City hospitality; city hospitality experience model; citizen science; smart city; quality of life; overcrowding; sustainable growth	Use of both City Hospitality and Smart City concepts to derive the "Smart Community-driven City Hospitality Model" and use of a case study as an example of smart initiatives in city hospitality	<i>"To discover the connection between city hospitality and smart technologies in today's cities to understand how technology-driven solutions can elevate the level of hospitality experienced in city centres."</i>
8	Pasquinelli and Trunfio, 2020	Cities	Journal Article/ Conceptual paper	Urban overtourism; smart city; stakeholder engagement; human-technology interaction; urban sustainable development	Use of an integrative review of literature in the different domains of city tourism and destination innovation, smart city planning, and urban sustainable development	<i>"To contribute to the emerging debate on urban over-tourism by cross-fertilising the theoretical domains of city tourism and destination innovation, smart city planning and urban sustainable development."</i>
9	Wiegerink and Huizing, 2020	The Routledge handbook of tourism experience management and marketing	Book chapter/ Conceptual paper	-- (This book chapter contains no keywords of its own)	Use of examples of volunteer-based city hospitality programs in two cities in the Netherlands in which residents are engaged (with visitors) as city hosts	<i>"To elaborate on the value-adding role of programs in which volunteer residents act as city hosts."</i>
10	De Castro Mendes <i>et al.</i> , 2021	Current Issues in Tourism	Journal Article/ Research paper	Hospitality; hospitality system; gift's circularity; hospitality domains; Campos do Jordão	Use of an exploratory research in Campos do Jordão City based on a qualitative perspective substantiated by literature reviews	<i>"To build the institutionality of 'being welcome' in a touristic city."</i>

Phase 3: Reading the studies

The 10 studies that met the inclusion criteria were read and re-read by the authors to familiarize themselves with their content in order to identify all possible metaphors (i.e., concepts or perspectives) that could describe a role of local government in the context of city hospitality. In doing so, pertinent informative sentences were noted. These sentences described baseline concepts (in terms of first- and second-order constructs arising from the studies), which constituted the raw data for this study. Concepts were recorded wherever they appeared within the manuscripts and listed (i.e., coded) with the help of NVivo 11 qualitative analysis software. Coding in NVivo is recommended because it is considered more efficient than creating a laborious manual list of concepts, especially when these represent a large amount of data (France *et al.*, 2019; Toye *et al.*, 2014).

Phase 4: Determining how the studies are related

Once baseline concepts from the 10 studies were coded, these concepts were compared to explore how the studies were related. Since the general aim of the fourth step of meta-ethnography is to

determine the relationships between the studies, France *et al.* (2019) suggest listing data, juxtaposing them, and using the data to determine relationships across all of the studies. In providing guidance on how to execute this phase, these authors identify two alternative methods for determining how studies are related: grouping the studies by their focus, or grouping common concepts from the studies. Considering that the included studies have quite distinct focuses and are also poorly focused on local government specifically, the second method was chosen. In addition, while the studies were not numerous, the baseline concepts coded in Phase 3 were instead a fair number (33 varied items). Consequently, concepts were grouped into categories according to similar underlying thematic meanings (Atkins *et al.*, 2008; France *et al.*, 2019). The three authors coded the concepts from the studies and then thematically grouped the common ones independently; subsequently, they met and discussed their results in order to achieve a shared preliminary list made up of eight conceptual categories.

Phase 5: Translating the studies into one another

This phase concerned a first-level synthesis process aimed at translating (or interpreting) concepts from each study into one another to arrive at concepts that encompass more than one study. There are two methods for conducting this translation process, which can also both be used: the reciprocal translation, which requires that the studies be similar enough in their focus to be compared; and/or the refutational translation, which is suitable when these studies show contradictory findings or ideas (France *et al.*, 2019; Noblit and Hare, 1988). Consequently, a reciprocal translational analysis (RTA) was performed, since the included studies present sufficiently shared conceptual categories, as demonstrated by the thematic grouping of concepts into eight categories in the previous step. It was not necessary to use the refutational translation as well, as no contradictory concepts were found across the studies. Therefore, the concepts, as organized into categories, were compared individually, study by study, from the first to the tenth, according to the chronological publication order of studies (Table I). In other words, considering the data within each category, the concepts in study No. 1 were compared with those of study No. 2. The synthesis of those two studies was then compared with study No. 3, and so on, also paying attention to possible new emerging categories (Atkins *et al.*, 2008). By comparing the studies, the preliminary list of eight categories identified in Phase 4 was gradually revised and refined by merging and collapsing some categories. No new categories emerged from the translation process, which led to six final conceptual categories comprising all 33 previously recorded concepts (as sub-categories).

Phase 6: Synthesizing translations

This phase concerned a second-level synthesis process aimed at developing new conceptual interpretations from the reciprocal translation made in Phase 5 (Noblit and Hare, 1988). Accordingly, third-order constructs were derived from the studies going beyond these by drawing lines of argument (LOAs) within and across the six translated conceptual categories identified by the RTA in the previous phase. The LOAs represent the key point of this phase and the meta-ethnography's outcome (France *et al.*, 2019). Indeed, this outcome was an overarching conceptual model for an understanding, interpreted from a public-management perspective, of local government's role in city hospitality which was developed by logically combining and synthesizing the aforementioned LOAs. After the authors had outlined the LOAs in their own mind-maps separately and after having shared, compared, discussed and agreed on which LOAs were appropriate to follow, the authors built the model together.

Phase 7: Expressing the synthesis

Finally, the format used to express the findings of Phase 6 includes a visually structured model showing both the concepts and their inter-relationships.

3.3 Validation interviews in support of meta-ethnography

Validation interviews were also carried out to check expert consensus and opinions on the conceptual model developed from the meta-ethnography in order to increase its validity and reliability. To ensure that the feedback was provided from a heterogeneous perspective, a multinational panel of 14 experts was identified — eight from Italy, three from the USA, and three from Pakistan — drawn from both the local government context and the hospitality and tourism sector (Table II). Semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide-form that was elaborated based on the results of the meta-ethnography and then filled out in the margins of each interview with expert feedback. All interviews began with a brief presentation of the study and the purpose of the interview. Experts were then presented with the model and asked to express their agreement or disagreement on its key passages by commenting on their responses. The interviews were conducted individually via phone conversation or video conference and lasted between 30 and 50 minutes.

Table II. Experts' profiles

Expert No.	Role	Years' experience	Country
E-1	Mayor	5	Italy
E-2	City controller/ Chief financial officer	25	Italy
E-3	CEO (and founder's son) of a luxury hotel in a seaside resort	20+	Italy
E-4	City auditor	16	Italy
E-5	City councilor for tourism	4	Italy
E-6	Coordinator of a regional tourism network	5	Italy
E-7	CEO of a destination marketing consulting private business	10	Italy
E-8	Chief architect – Town hall technical office	12	Italy
E-9	President and CEO of the County's nonprofit destination marketing corporation	23	USA
E-10	President and owner of a restaurant group	27	USA
E-11	Executive director of the County government's Convention & Visitors Bureau	14	USA
E-12	District food controller of the provincial government food department	32	Pakistan
E-13	Media and marketing officer in the local City authority, a semi-governmental organization	8	Pakistan
E-14	Assistant director of historic research in the local City authority, a semi-governmental organization	16	Pakistan

4. Findings

4.1. Meta-ethnography findings

Following the translation process of meta-ethnography, the RTA conducted in Phase 5 — across the 10 studies identified in Phase 2 that met the inclusion criteria (Table I) — yielded six conceptual categories reported in Table III. This result is a first level of interpretation of the 33 concepts coded from the studies in Phase 3, which were thematically grouped and then reciprocally translated, respectively, in the next two phases. Indeed, these concepts, which have become the conceptual sub-categories also shown in Table III, encompass, and therefore cover, more than one reference source among those included. The radial treemap in Figure 3 also shows, through a hierarchical representation, the extent of coverage of the categories across data from the studies.

Table III. Results of the reciprocal translational analysis (RTA): Conceptual categories (and sub-categories) for local government's role in the city hospitality context

Local government's role in city hospitality		Reference sources in meta-ethnography
Conceptual categories	Conceptual sub-categories	
Advocating city hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acting as a host for citizens, tourists, businesses, and visitors.• Staging hospitality in the city.• Fostering city hospitality.• Creating a favorable environment for hospitality.• Enabling a memorable welcome experience.	Study No. 1 (Bell, 2007); Study No. 2 (Chávez and Rest, 2014); Study No. 3 (Hollows <i>et al.</i> , 2014); Study No. 10 (de Castro Mendes <i>et al.</i> , 2021)
Co-creating city hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating opportunities for various transactions to take place.• Co-creating hospitality experiences in the public space by building collaborative communities.• Co-creating efforts with other city stakeholders for effective and sustainable city hospitality.	Study No. 1 (Bell, 2007); Study No. 9 (Wiegerink and Huizing, 2020)
Strategizing city hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deciding on laws and welcoming policies.• Promoting integration policies.• Promoting policies to ensure social harmony in the city.• Promoting policies for the environment.• Promoting policies concerning culture and knowledge.• Guiding tourism and hospitality development through policy in the city.	Study No. 2 (Chávez and Rest, 2014); Study No. 5 (Morton and Johnson, 2019)
Implementing city hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promoting hospitality practices and services.• Improving the quality of life in the city.• Helping to prevent public disorder.• Protecting the city's heritage.• Taking administrative actions and organizing the urban space.• Improving the public transportation system.• Supporting all city hospitality and service providers.• Supporting professionally organized city hosts.	Study No. 2 (Chávez and Rest, 2014); Study No. 3 (Hollows <i>et al.</i> , 2014); Study No. 6 (Viet, 2019); Study No. 7 (Park and Wiegerink, 2020); Study No. 9 (Wiegerink and Huizing, 2020); Study No. 10 (de Castro Mendes <i>et al.</i> , 2021)
Promoting city hospitality for sustainable tourism development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Taking initiatives to promote welcoming tourists.• Providing services and policies for hosting tourists.• Enhancing the city's appeal to attract tourists.• Taking more note of tourism and hospitality.• Merging sustainable development and city hospitality concepts in tourism-development decisions.• Seeking effective interventions for long-term, sustainable tourism.• Adopting partnership strategies for tourism promotion.• Tackling over-tourism problems and impacts through smart city solutions.• Cooperating with stakeholders to counter the negative effects of over-tourism.	Study No. 2 (Chávez and Rest, 2014); Study No. 4 (Koens <i>et al.</i> , 2019); Study No. 7 (Park and Wiegerink, 2020); Study No. 8 (Pasquinelli and Trunfio, 2020); Study No. 9 (Wiegerink and Huizing, 2020); Study No. 10 (de Castro Mendes <i>et al.</i> , 2021)
Planning city hospitality	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning strategic interventions to increase the level of hospitality offered by the city.• Planning to sustainably develop natural beauty, the environment, and historical and cultural resources.	Study No. 5 (Morton and Johnson, 2019); Study No. 6 (Viet, 2019)

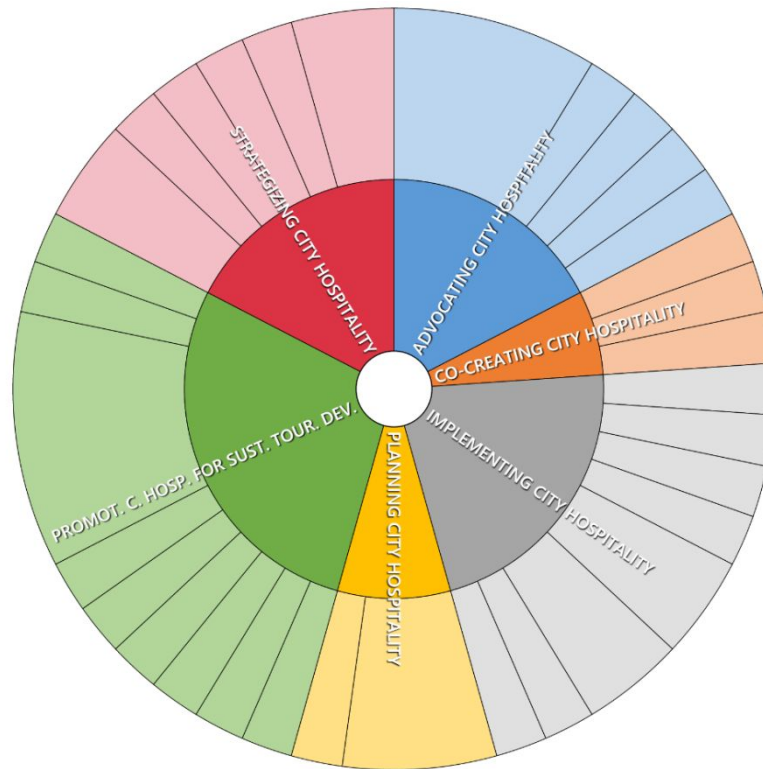


Figure 3. Conceptual categories compared by number of coding references

The six categories can explain a role of local government in the context of city hospitality from a public-management perspective. To answer the research question established in Phase 1, these categories are sorted and interpreted through the public-management lens; in doing so, a higher-order interpretation of the concepts found in the studies is provided as a result of Phases 6 and 7 of meta-ethnography. This is done by sequentially presenting the categories, both individually and brought together within a conceptual model, in terms of third-order constructs obtained by tracing LOAs both within each category and among categories.

The first category, labeled “advocating city hospitality,” expresses a role the local government can play in city hospitality as the city’s main stakeholder, which, in accepting its task of acting as a host toward the city’s various guests (e.g., citizens, tourists, businesses and visitors), stages hospitality in the urban space and fosters the idea by creating a favorable environment for hospitality (instead of obstructing it) for a memorable welcome experience. As can be seen in the word clouds of Figure 4, which depict frequencies of words for each category (i.e., those used in the concepts coded within the studies), *city government* is a key term for “advocating city hospitality,” which stands in the midst of the equally crucial words *hospitality* and *host* and *guest*. This category suggests that, in order to create a welcoming city, the local government needs to support the effort.

The local government is not the only actor responsible for creating city hospitality, although it is the main promoter. Therefore, “co-creating city hospitality” is another category that has been identified by thematically grouping concepts that share an underlying idea of collaboration between the local government and other city stakeholders (e.g., citizens, hospitality entrepreneurs and other service providers) to co-produce a hospitable city. As the related word cloud shows, the word *stakeholders* is the key to describing this conceptual category (see Figure 4). Indeed, the local government’s role of “co-creating city hospitality” for its guests consists of creating opportunities for various transactions — such as social, commercial or other interactions — to take place in a city space, through joint and collaborative efforts with citizens and local community actors for effective and sustainable city hospitality.

It therefore follows the conceptual category named “planning city hospitality.” To achieve city hospitality policies, the local government needs to plan appropriate strategic interventions that can increase the level of hospitality offered by the city. These include strategies to sustainably develop natural beauty, the environment, and historical and cultural resources. Figure 4 highlights key terms for this category, suggesting the relevant role of *local government in planning hospitality in the city*.

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The last of the six categories, “promoting city hospitality for sustainable tourism development,” in which *tourism* is among the most used words among the related concepts, describes an intimate relationship between sustainable tourism development and city hospitality promotion, suggesting that the former is an outcome of the latter. Indeed, concepts in this category highlight the ways in which local government plays a proactive role in acting as a host to a city’s tourists, by taking initiatives to promote their welcome and striving to provide hospitality services and policies that enhance the city’s appeal. This role, therefore, entails taking more note of tourism and hospitality so that tourists can experience a memorable welcome. To achieve long-term, sustainable tourism, however, the local government also is called upon to seek effective interventions by merging sustainable development and city hospitality concepts in tourism development decisions. Such tourism and hospitality sustainability interventions include addressing over-tourism impacts, such as by adopting smart-city solutions and cooperation strategies with citizens and local businesses.

The six categories described above converge within the conceptual model depicted in Figure 5, which configures the concepts and the varied relationships among them. Hence, the conceptual categories are represented as interrelated cruxes. The model shows how local government plays a responsive, proactive and collaborative role in city hospitality. Indeed, interpreted from a public-management perspective, this role is that of a key actor responsible for the strategic management and co-creation of city hospitality with other city stakeholders. Figure 6 is a simplification of the model which, in reiterating its main points, shows how it also can represent an operative tool for practicing city hospitality in a public-management perspective. The model describes four major local government actions to promote city hospitality and achieve sustainable tourism development as an outcome of such promotion: 1) advocating and co-creating, by making city hospitality a shared value; 2) strategizing, by integrating city hospitality policies into the government’s vision; 3) planning, by formulating strategic goals and interventions to achieve city hospitality; 4) implementing, by effecting city hospitality policies, plans and values.

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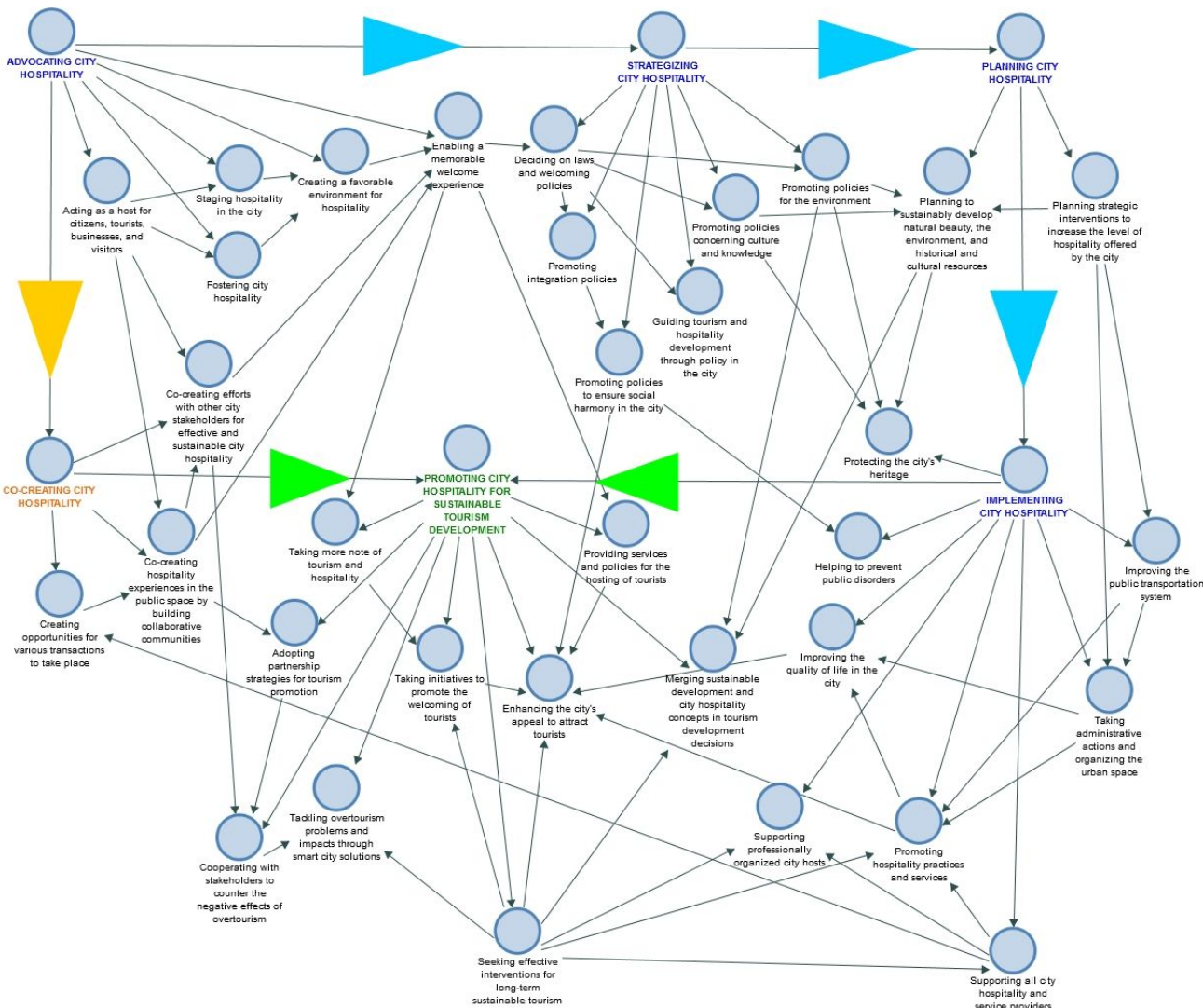


Figure 5. A conceptual model for understanding local government's role in city hospitality from a public management perspective

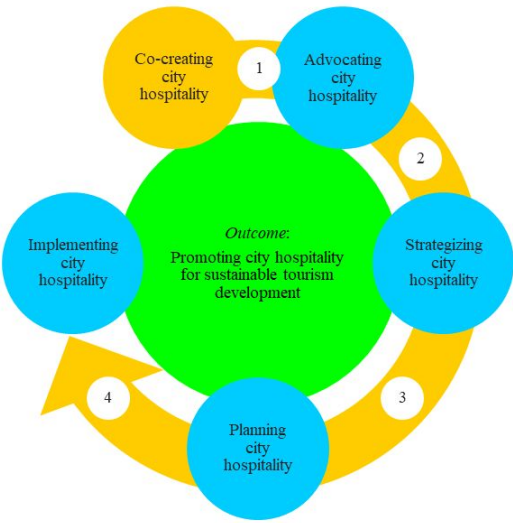


Figure 6. Local government action framework for practicing city hospitality

4.2. *Supporting evidence from expert interviews*

Semi-structured interviews conducted with the 14 experts resulted in a more reliable and substantiated understanding of the local government's role in city hospitality. The interview questions sought to ascertain whether the respondents agreed with the conceptual model developed using the meta-ethnographic approach. All the experts interviewed gave a general endorsement to the interrelated cruxes. They linked the model with the domestic practices by the local government in Italy, the USA, and Pakistan for promoting city hospitality. Their feedback thus supports the knowledge drawn from the meta-ethnography from a broad spectrum of expertise and points of view. Notably, based on their experiences, all respondents believe that local government policies and operations are extremely important to effectively promote a hospitality atmosphere within a city/destination. Some experts stress their agreement on the "advocating" and "co-creating" categories by stating that:

The local government is the driving force behind a common city hospitality design. It makes fundamental, impacting decisions on city hospitality that drive willingness for creating a place's distinct identity and beauty. For example, it shapes urban design and the public realm by defining land uses of urban areas, relationships of buildings, circulation, streets, etc. through a city master plan; it defines the road system as well as regulations that govern the implementation of any commercial or hospitality activity and event (E-4).

The local government plays a crucial role in guiding the development of the whole urban fabric from which all activities and the overall city community can benefit. By providing manifold opportunities, it can create the right ecosystem for a joint commitment to promoting a city's hospitality and tourism development (E-5).

Several experts also underline the importance of the "strategizing" category, noting that council policies may directly affect a city's businesses, people, activities and visitors, impacting city hospitality. The following comments are most noteworthy in this regard:

Council policies decide the direction of the city development in any sector, including hospitality and tourism. Our work as the municipal staff is to ensure that these policies are implemented (E-2).

Striving to create a hospitable city that cares about people and the environment, offering opportunities to live, socialize, work and flourish, and enabling community amenities is a mission that any councilor should pursue during its political term (E-1).

Most of the interviewees emphasize the "planning" category, considering it crucial to implement desirable city hospitality outcomes. Understandably, government strategies are to be translated into plans in terms of performance objectives and human and financial resources allocation. Planning thus helps politicians map the city's priority initiatives and place them high on the government agenda. As the elected government official respondents pointed out, planning enables the mayor and the council to address the opportunities and challenges inherent in their city governance mission, ensuring that they meet their responsibilities and improve the quality of services and programs they deliver. It also helps municipal staff focus on priority tasks and understand how their work fits into the larger frame of the council's overall long-term goals. Furthermore, a city government needs to be at the forefront of city hospitality planning, since it must create a city master plan, as Expert 11 has emblematically observed:

Local governments have to make sure that they have the proper zoning in the city in certain corridors to be able to build out tourism-related assets and then brand elements in the marketplace. They have to take the lead in developing hospitality assets in the community and they have to be a part of marketing and promoting it, whether it is the governments themselves (someone like me) or contracting with a third party to market and promote the hospitality industry that they have helped built through their city or county planning (E-11).

Everyone seems to agree that the ability to implement effective local tourism strategies for destination development, marketing, and promotion must be found in the synergy between all the

actors involved, since a place's unique identity is built through a shared vision, as witnessed also by the feedback below:

While destination marketers help "market" unique identity by advertising and promoting a place's attributes and assets (such as cultural attractions, natural beauty, the enogastronomic heritage, things to do, distinctive neighborhoods, boutiques, restaurants, hotels, etc.), governments can help "produce" it by wielding political power, allocating budgets, creating or promoting tourism public-private partnerships and networks, etc. (E-7).

Even if a tourism office has its own strategy, it needs to integrate with the local government, so they are both alive together and all on the same page. The tourism bureau should push government actions not to wait for it to act by itself (E-9).

Ultimately, what seems to be highlighted by the experts is a need for governments to plan shared long-term goals as well as to move from planning to practical implementation. Therefore, interaction and communication are paramount in this respect, just as Expert 3 said:

Shared planning of medium-long terms goals would allow tourism and hospitality activities to manage their business operations within a strategic urban development scenario designed by the local government, all going in the same direction. So, it would behoove local governments to disclose their hospitality strategy to make us aware of, and to get involved in, the direction to move (E-3).

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This study surveyed what role the local government plays in the context of city hospitality by conducting a meta-ethnography and adopting a public-management perspective. Such perspective is crucial in this context since the local government is responsible for deciding and implementing city policies (including tourism-development policies), managing public resources and spaces, and providing a wide range of goods and services to citizens, businesses and other city users to ensure the community's well-being and sustainable local growth (e.g., Mayne and Vigoda-Gadot, 2018; Pérez-López *et al.*, 2015; Ruhanen, 2013). The emerging interdisciplinary debate on city hospitality, in fact, conceives the city as a place offering various forms of hospitality and treats city stakeholders, such as citizens, visitors and businesses, as the city's guests (e.g., Bell, 2007; 2016; Chávez and Rest, 2014; Lugosi *et al.*, 2010; McNeill, 2008; Wiegerink and Huizing, 2020). The conventional view of hospitality management as the prerogative of commercial hospitality venues (hotels, restaurants, bars and the like) is therefore extended to the level of the city, with clear implications for the local public administration. However, current discourses on the subject shaping a notion of hospitality into the urban context have not yet focused on a management role for local government. Although some existing literature addressing hospitality themes at the city/destination level has included the local government among the various actors hosting the city's guests and alluded to its constructive involvement in the context (e.g., Chávez and Rest, 2014; de Castro Mendes *et al.*, 2021; Morton and Johnson, 2019), no specific survey has been made of such involvement. Through a meta-ethnography of 10 carefully identified qualitative studies, this study has attempted to fill this research gap by developing a conceptual model that can provide an understanding of the local government's critical responsibility to promote city hospitality.

The findings of this meta-ethnography have indeed led to the identification of six interrelated third-order constructs conceptualized into an articulated model that shapes local government's role in city hospitality from a public-management perspective. The model, described in the previous section also through supporting expert feedback, configures such a role in terms of advocating, strategizing, planning, and implementing (by co-creating) city hospitality to promote the hospitality capacity of a city for its sustainable tourism development (see also Figures 5 and 6). The sustainable tourism development of a city or place is, therefore, interpreted as an outcome of the strategic and collaborative action of the local government to promote the city's hospitality. This is, of course, important because hospitality is a critical supporting factor underlying competitiveness and

attractiveness of a place; it is a cornerstone for the development and sustainability of local tourism (Koens *et al.*, 2019; Omerzel, 2006).

Notably, the role of advocating expresses a local government's positive attitude toward the co-creation of a hospitable place with the collaboration of other actors in the local community, including residents and private businesses, but also public and non-profit organizations that operate there. Evidence supporting this role can be found in Wiegerink and Huizing (2020), who provide an example of how it can be accomplished, namely by engaging volunteer residents as city hosts welcoming visitors to improve their hospitality experience. Consistent with the arguments put forward by these authors (as well as by Park and Wiegerink, 2020), this research not only confirms (and in turn supports) their idea of city hospitality co-creation but also strengthens it by including a public management perspective. Another piece of evidence showing how a local government's positive attitude toward city hospitality co-creation can be accomplished can be found in Chávez and Rest (2014). This paper shows the importance of city support and promotion of new hospitality businesses and other organizations that provide services, transportation, culture, health, entertainment, events and so on, thus improving the quality of life in the city and enhancing its tourist appeal. Furthermore, some allusions to local government collaboration with local businesses and/or residents to improve hospitality can be found in other studies (e.g., de Castro Mendes *et al.*, 2021; Pasquinelli and Trunfio, 2020). This city hospitality co-creation approach was further corroborated by the views of the experts, who strongly advocated it as necessary to successfully promote the uniqueness of a place. As this evidence shows, the local government is not the only actor implementing city hospitality, although it is a key actor, being the decision-maker on public policies (e.g., for the protection of the environment and cultural heritage, for urban security and social integration), as well as the provider of public services and infrastructure. These policies and services influence the social, relational, economic, environmental and cultural milieu of an area and hence its ability to offer a welcoming experience to its guests. To be sure, a number of other factors pertaining to the infrastructural and the emotional and behavioral human sphere affect the assessment of the hospitality offered by a place (Chau and Yan, 2021). But for the implementation role of local government to be effective, it must adopt a city hospitality strategy and intervention plans aligned with it, such as protection and sustainable development of the natural beauty, and the historical and cultural values of a city/destination. Evidence supporting this can be found in the included studies, such as in Morton and Johnson (2019), in Viet (2019), as well as in Bell (2007), who point out the relevance of local government intervention plans to improve hospitality. The present study not only confirms such relevance but also places local government planning within the conceptual model proposed, which highlights how planning is an essential step in an articulated strategic process of co-creation of city hospitality. Indeed, appropriate strategies and plans, including cooperation strategies with the multiple city stakeholders, can be essential to achieving city hospitality-related outcomes. Furthermore, as is clear from the expert views, shared strategic planning of urban and tourism development goals would help attain these outcomes, enabling local politicians and officials to act in synergy with the hospitality and tourism players.

The proposed model, therefore, highlights a collaborative and strategic management role for local government in the city hospitality context. This role is consistent with the contemporary view of public administration — following the modernization by the NPM and NPG movements — as being an advocate for stakeholders' participation in the formulation of government strategies and actions, for interactions with local community members, and for forms of cross-sector collaboration in order to improve local services and public value outcomes (Bryson *et al.*, 2014; Osborne, 2010; Pérez-López *et al.*, 2015; Pestoff, 2019). In particular, the conceptual interpretations that this study provides are in line with a public-governance view emphasizing the community co-creation of public values (Bovaird and Loeffler, 2013; Brix *et al.*, 2020; Bryson *et al.*, 2014). Indeed, hospitality in a city context can be understood as a "public good" to be created in common by all community members.

The local government takes part in this interactive and collaborative city hospitality governance to represent the public interest, thus acting as a key host to promote the welcome the city offers.

Given the above, our main conclusion is that local government plays a central role in city hospitality because it is responsible for the strategic management and co-creation of a welcoming place, both as a more livable space for the local community and as an area attractive to potential visitors and investors. Consistent with this conclusion, the implications of the study as well as its limitations and future research directions are outlined in the sections below.

5.1. *Theoretical implications*

This study introduces public-governance cues into a city-hospitality context. This is important to help understand the involvement of local public administrations in the management of hospitality in a city or other place. Traditionally, hospitality management has been confined to hospitality businesses, and attention has thus been focused on their management-related issues (strategies, operations, performance, etc.) in addressing hospitality and tourism development. This study, however, supports development of a broadened notion of hospitality management in which local government also takes part in playing a pivotal role in promoting hospitality co-creation at the city level. Accordingly, the study offers relevant implications for developing hospitality research beyond the micro-organizational level of analysis to include further meso/macro-level studies (Ritchie and Jiang, 2021). This should lead to a better understanding of hospitality business sustainability and resilience during a crisis or time of uncertainty.

5.2. *Methodological implications*

The study applied a relatively novel qualitative research methodology using Noblit and Hare's meta-ethnographic approach with its later methodological developments (France *et al.*, 2019; Noblit, 2018; Noblit and Hare, 1988). This approach, widely used in health-related research, is in fact little known to hospitality and tourism scholars and to business, management, and accounting researchers in general. Therefore, this study may provide an example contributing to an enhanced understanding and use of meta-ethnography in this research area. Indeed, the conceptual structure developed herein, by subsuming and advancing original concepts, shows how meta-ethnography is a constructive study of studies that goes far beyond a mere synthesis of them. Consistent with Loulanski, T. and Loulanski, V. (2011), moreover, the findings of the study confirm that meta-ethnography is an effective approach to advance knowledge on poorly addressed issues such as those concerning local government's role in city hospitality.

5.3. *Practical implications*

This study also contributes to practice because it has the potential to facilitate modes of local government commitment to improving hospitality of cities or places through cooperation initiatives and projects and strategic management. Politicians, public managers, city officials, hospitality practitioners, service providers, and other local community actors can translate the study's findings into ways of promoting hospitality and tourism in their cities/destinations. Indeed, the proposed model could represent an iterative action-framework for local government support for such promotion. It might serve as the foundation for city hospitality co-creation efforts in practice, stimulating stakeholder collaboration and strategic planning processes that can enhance the city's identity in the perceptions of all its guests, thus also advocating for city branding endeavors. The model could therefore give momentum to a joint journey to promote a city's hospitality and tourism through shared planning to guide its practical implementation. Some inputs to such practice of city hospitality co-creation as a value for all may be: the recovery or enhancement of a cultural, artistic, or landscape city's resource; the regeneration of a neighborhood, a square, or a suburban area; the creation of green spaces and sustainable mobility paths; the improvement of social housing, urban security, infrastructure and services; and many other measures that can improve community living in the city

by increasing its liveliness, thus also attracting visitors and businesses. All this, by involving the community; also, orienting and supporting the creation and development of hospitality facilities and activities and other businesses, such as through an update or adaptation of the city's urban master plan, road system, municipal regulations, bureaucratic requirements, etc. Local government measures may be advocated, strategized, planned, and implemented by undertaking collective and participatory initiatives and projects, thus involving local entrepreneurs, institutions, associations, destination marketers and citizens with the ultimate goal of promoting hospitality experiences for the whole city's guest community.

5.4. *Limitations and future research directions*

This meta-ethnography has some limitations to take into consideration. Since it was limited to English manuscripts, works written in other languages were missed. More generally, other manuscripts might not have been picked up by the search strategy. Therefore, the collaborative and strategic-management role of local government in city hospitality outlined herein may not have been fully captured by the meta-ethnography. Notwithstanding expert interviews that substantiated this role, future studies could perform further empirical surveys. One research direction could be devoted to exploring whether and how city hospitality policies, services, projects and related performance objectives are embedded in the vision, planning and budgetary strategy of local governments. The intimate link with the adoption of smart and sustainable urban initiatives would also deserve attention. City hospitality outcomes and any related practices of accountability to city stakeholders can be investigated as well. Another research direction could address local government collaborations with various stakeholders in the local community to promote city hospitality, including projects or experiences of cross-sector partnership and collaboration. Further studies could delve into how local governments support hospitality businesses, individuals and organizations that promote and organize community events and activities, or other public and private service providers. Ultimately, this study lays the foundations to initiate a new research line that interprets hospitality management in a broader sense than the traditional one, placing it in the complex context of a city or place.

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'Local government's role in promoting city hospitality: A meta-ethnography with a public management perspective'

Report of Author(s) Response:

Suggestions/comments from the Editor/Associate Editor	Response from the Author(s)
<p>1. Respond to one of our associate editors' comments and revise your article accordingly.</p> <p><i>"This is an interesting study on an important topic. The study can benefit from a strong copy-editing. The theoretical foundation and theoretical implications should be improved further. The following studies can help the authors with this task. Below studies are just suggestions and the authors may find similar relevant and recent studies."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Baum, T. and Hai, N.T.T. (2020), "Hospitality, tourism, human rights and the impact of COVID-19", <i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>, Vol. 32 No. 7, pp. 2397-2407. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-03-2020-0242 - Elkhwesky, Z., Salem, I.E., Ramkissoon, H. and Castañeda-García, J.-A. (2022), "A systematic and critical review of leadership styles in contemporary hospitality: a roadmap and a call for future research", <i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>, Vol. 34 No. 5, pp. 1925-1958. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-09-2021-1128 - Hua, N., Li, B. and Zhang, T.(C). (2020), "Crime research in hospitality and tourism", <i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>, Vol. 32 No. 3, pp. 1299-1323. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-09-2019-0750 - Jones, P. and Comfort, D. (2020), "The COVID-19 crisis and sustainability in the hospitality industry", <i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>, Vol. 32 No. 10, pp. 3037-3050. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-04-2020-0357 - Molina-Collado, A., Santos-Vijande, M.L., Gómez-Rico, M. and Madera, J.M. (2022), "Sustainability in hospitality and tourism: a review of key research topics from 1994 to 2020", <i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>, Vol. ahead-of-print No. ahead-of-print. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2021-1305 - Ritchie, B.W. and Jiang, Y. (2021), "Risk, crisis and disaster management in hospitality and tourism: a comparative review", <i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>, Vol. 33 No. 10, pp. 3465-3493. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-12-2020-1480 	<p>Thank you very much for the positive comments on the manuscript and for the valuable suggestions.</p> <p>We improved the theoretical foundation by integrating the following studies suggested: Baum and Hai, 2020; Hua et al., 2020; Jones and Comfort, 2020; Molina-Collado et al., 2022; Ritchie and Jiang, 2021. We have not included the study by Elkhwesky et al. as it focuses on a different topic.</p> <p>Notably, we added the following sentences in the introduction part that briefly discuss the integrated studies:</p> <p><i>"Furthermore, some studies suggest that government policies, such as those pertaining to public safety, crisis management and sustainable consumption, can support the hospitality industry's sustainability (Hua et al., 2020; Jones and Comfort, 2020; Molina-Collado et al., 2022). As Ritchie and Jiang (2021) note, hospitality research needs to broaden its micro-organizational focus at a macro level by also considering government policy measures that are crucial to improving the hospitality and tourism industry's resilience to risks and crises – such as following a global health pandemic (Baum and Hai, 2020) or natural disasters caused by climate change".</i></p> <p>Accordingly, we also improved the part devoted to the theoretical implications, as follows:</p> <p><i>"Accordingly, the study offers relevant implications for developing hospitality research beyond the micro-organizational level of analysis to include further meso/macro-level studies (Ritchie and Jiang, 2021). This should lead to a better understanding of hospitality business sustainability and resilience during a crisis or time of uncertainty."</i></p> <p>(See for the above changes: <i>Section 1. Introduction, and Section 5.1. Theoretical implications</i>).</p>

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5. To strengthen your literature review and theoretical implications, you may like to incorporate more recent and relevant references published in recent months/years.	In addition to the references suggested by the Associated Editor (i.e.: Baum and Hai, 2020; Hua et al., 2020; Jones and Comfort, 2020; Molina-Collado et al., 2022; Ritchie and Jiang, 2021), we also incorporated a reference by the first author on city hospitality that has been published in recent months. Furthermore, some old and unnecessary references were removed.
6. Cross check all references within text with your reference list and make sure that all references used in within text are listed in your reference list and remove any uncited reference from the reference list. You must also make sure that each reference in your reference list is accurate and complete in terms of authors' names, title, volume number, issue number, pages, publisher etc.	We checked that all references included in the text matched those listed in the list of references and vice versa. We made sure that each reference in the reference list is accurate and complete in terms of authors' names, title, volume number, issue number, pages, publisher, etc.
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