



Global Research Trends in the Beauty Salon Industry: A 35-Year Bibliometric Study (1990–2024)

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze and summarize research trends in the beauty salon industry, comparing publications across different countries and journals. As interest in the beauty salon industry rapidly grows, no comprehensive bibliometric analysis has been conducted on this industry. Articles extracted from Web of Science (WoS) between 1990 and 2024 were identified and summarized using Excel and VOSviewer platforms. The types of publications, years of publication, citations, research trends, and areas of focus, as well as the country of publication, publisher, and leading institution, were recorded and analyzed. Additionally, bibliometric maps illustrating co-citations and keyword co-occurrence were created. Based on 880 articles, the results indicate a significant increase in the number of articles related to beauty salons over the years. Most of the publications analyzed were articles published in the USA, focusing on public environmental and occupational health, and written by researchers from the University of London, published by Elsevier. This study is the first bibliometric analysis dedicated to examining the academic literature of the beauty industry, providing valuable insights into emerging trends and key areas of interest in the field.

Keywords: Bibliometric Mapping; Beauty and Cosmetics Industry; Keyword Co-occurrence; Publications Trends; VOSviewer

1. Introduction

Researching trends in the beauty salon industry is crucial due to its rapid growth, economic impact, and evolving consumer demands. This sector has shown significant workforce expansion, with the U.S. beauty salon workforce increasing by 25.1% from 2014 to 2022 (Datausa, 2024). Similarly, the Asia-Pacific markets, particularly China, Korea, and Japan, dominate the global beauty industry, accounting for 35% of the market share (Kim et al., 2021). According to statistics, a trend has been recorded among EU members in terms of the employment rate of hairdressers and beauticians (Eurostat, 2023). These trends highlight the industry's dynamic nature and underscore the need for ongoing research to understand its evolution. Moreover, the high level of interaction between customer-service providers in beauty salons (Chou & Chen, 2018; Gwinner et al., 1998) makes customer satisfaction and relationship management critical factors for business success. Even during crises such as the

COVID-19 pandemic, beauty services remained in demand, though operational restrictions affected accessibility (Pikoos et al., 2020). This resilience further underscores the industry's significance and the necessity for research to adapt to evolving conditions. Additionally, as consumers continually seek new styles, products, and services (Kim et al., 2021; Kumar, 2005), understanding market trends through research is crucial for maintaining a competitive edge. A series of studies on beauty salon services has highlighted the importance of this service (e.g., Vázquez-Carrasco & Foxall, 2006; Dagger & O'Brien, 2010; Garzaniti et al., 2011; S. Chou & Chen, 2018; H. W. Lee & Kim, 2019; Karami et al., 2023). Although these studies provide valuable insights into consumer experience, service quality, and relational marketing, the literature remains fragmented and largely descriptive. There is limited synthesis of how research on beauty salon services has evolved over time or how academic attention has shifted with technological, environmental, and social changes. Thus, a systematic, data-driven approach is required to unify and map this body of knowledge.

As the beauty salon industry continues to expand globally, its strong customer engagement and adaptability in shifting economic conditions highlight the need for continuing research into industry trends and challenges. This industry is notable for its unique characteristics, such as frequent interactions between clients and service providers, and a personalized service model, which makes innovation, customer relationship management, and service quality crucial for long-term success. Through bibliographic analysis, scholars and industry professionals can gain valuable insights into market dynamics, business strategies, and emerging trends, fostering a deeper understanding of the industry's evolution and trends. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative and systematic method that identifies the intellectual structure and thematic development of a research field (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Donthu et al., 2021; Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). It allows for the examination of co-citation networks, keyword co-occurrences, and publication trends to reveal patterns of scholarly communication. In service-related context, bibliometric studies have been instrumental in identifying emerging topics, influential authors, and evolving conceptual frameworks, thereby providing a methodological foundation for mapping the knowledge base of dynamic industries (Baier-Fuentes et al., 2019; Baier-Fuentes et al., 2019).

The bibliographic analysis is one of the effective methods for identifying research trends, which has been widely used in various service industries including hospitality (e.g., Nusair et al., 2019; Knani et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2024), tourism (e.g., Niñerola et al., 2019; Palácios et al., 2021), healthcare (dos Santos et al., 2019; Guo et al., 2020; Kokol et al., 2021), retail (e.g., Mahadevan & Joshi, 2022; Pop et al., 2024), education (e.g., Huang et al., 2020; Djeki et al., 2022) and transportation (e.g., Tian et al., 2018; Kaffash et al., 2021). These examples confirm that bibliometric methods are now well established for investigating service industries, yet they have not been systematically applied to the beauty salon sector. Given this gap, applying bibliometric analysis to beauty salon research is necessary to understand its structural development, main themes, and research interests/foci.

Bibliographic analysis enables researchers and industry professionals to explore existing studies, identify key contributors, track the evolution of topics, and identify gaps in the literature. However, this method has not been widely used in the beauty salon industry, leaving a gap in understanding how academic research has influenced industry practices and future trends. Conducting such an analysis could provide valuable insights into the scholarly work on beauty salon services, highlight new research themes, and identify areas that require further study. By integrating bibliometric techniques into this domain, the present study extends bibliometric mapping to an underexplored service industry. Additionally, it provides a comprehensive overview of how beauty salon research has evolved in response to shifting consumer behaviors, sustainability trends, and digital transformations.

VOSviewer, a Java-based program, is widely used to analyze and visualize the co-citation of references and the co-occurrence of keywords (T. Huang et al., 2020). While a few bibliometric studies have applied this program to various sectors, there has been limited research utilizing it in the context of the beauty salon industry. VOSviewer's visualization capacity enhances the identification of conceptual structures and collaboration networks (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010), making it a suitable tool for uncovering research clusters and thematic evolution in the beauty salon field. Given the rapid growth and competitive nature of the beauty salon sector, it is crucial to analyze the publications related to beauty salon services. To the best of our knowledge, no study has been published that focuses on this industry. Accordingly, this study aims to fill this methodological and empirical gap by providing the first bibliometric mapping of beauty salon research, positioning it within the broader service literature, and highlighting emerging areas for future inquiry.

2. Methodology

2.1 Data Source and Search Method

In this study, Web of Science was used to search for literature on the beauty salon industry. The database included SCI-EXPANDED, SSCI, A&HCI, CPCI-S, CPCI-SSH, ESCI, and CCR-EXPANDED, ensuring comprehensive coverage of relevant academic publications. The search query was carefully structured to balance breadth and specificity, combining industry-related and behavioral terms with Boolean operators to ensure retrieval of multidisciplinary studies relevant to the beauty salon context. The inclusion criteria covered the following document types: Article, Proceedings Paper, Review, Book Chapter, Meeting Abstract, Editorial Material, Book Review, Early Access, Letter, Art Exhibit Review, Book, Correction, Fiction Creative Prose, and News Item. However, some documents types are generally non-scholarly or do not contribute empirical or theoretical insights, they are considered to not missing any information. Only publications in English were considered to maintain linguistic consistency and facilitate accurate analysis. All documents were scholarly and non-scholarly article were not included.

The period was set from 1990 to 2024 to capture historical developments and emerging trends. This time range was selected to encompass the modernization and global expansion of the beauty and cosmetics industry from the 1990s onward, while still reflecting current transformations up to 2024 (Łopaciuk & Łoboda, 2013; Liew et al., 2016; Turcu & Brancu, 2023). Although initial searches identified a few records dating back to 1975, these were excluded because of limited relevance and inconsistent indexing prior to 1990, ensuring both historical depth and methodological coherence.

The search strategy was structured as follows: Theme = ("beauty salon" OR "hair salon" OR "beauty services" OR "nail salon") AND ("customer satisfaction" OR "service quality" OR "consumer behavior" OR "service provider" OR "market trends" OR "economic growth" OR "sustainable relationship" OR "relational benefits" OR "design" OR "green marketing"). This approach allowed for the identification of studies related to customer experience, service quality, industry innovations, and market dynamics in the beauty salon sector. Following data retrieval, duplicate records were removed using the Web of Science "Remove Duplicates" function and manually verified for accuracy. The dataset was then refined through a relevance check to ensure that only publications related to the beauty salon context were included. Unlike systematic reviews, no full-text screening or PRISMA framework was applied; instead, the focus was on curating a comprehensive and representative dataset for bibliometric analysis

(Öztürk et al., 2024; Passas, 2024). In total 880 scholarly documents were selected for data analysis.

2.2 Data Extraction

The data were extracted from the Web of Science database and imported into Microsoft Excel 2010 and VOSviewer for analysis. This process was conducted independently by two authors, and any discrepancies were resolved through discussion until a consensus was reached. The recorded information included the types of publications, years of publication, research trends, areas of focus, countries of publication, publishers, and leading institutions.

2.3 Co-citation Analysis Criteria

Co-citation analysis is a crucial method in bibliometrics. Given the large number of cited references, for the bibliometric analysis, a citation threshold of ≥ 2 and a minimum cluster size of 10 were applied. These thresholds were chosen to balance inclusivity and analytical clarity ensuring that only studies with meaningful citation impact were included, while maintaining a sufficient number of items per cluster for stable visualization and interpretation; suggested in prior studies (van Eck & Waltman, 2010; Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Donthu et al., 2021). Lower thresholds risked generating fragmented or insignificant clusters, whereas higher thresholds might have excluded emerging yet influential works. This methodological choice supports the robustness and interpretive validity of the network analysis. To ensure the reliability of the findings, robustness checks were conducted by replicating the search strategy in Scopus, which yielded comparable patterns in publication trends and thematic clusters, confirming the stability of the Web of Science results. Sensitivity analyses were also performed by slightly varying the search query (e.g., substituting “beauty industry” for “beauty services”) to test the consistency of retrieved data. Furthermore, citation metrics were normalized using citations per year and field-normalized impact scores to account for differences in publication age and disciplinary citation practices. Fractional counting was applied to co-citation analyses to minimize bias from multi-authored publications and ensure proportional representation of scholarly contributions. These steps collectively enhance the validity, comparability, and robustness of the bibliometric analysis.

3. Results and Findings

3.1 Overview of Publications on Beauty Salons

A total of 880 publications related to beauty salons were extracted from the Web of Science. These articles have received a total of 11,793 citations, excluding 1,163 self-citations. On average, each publication has been cited 14 times. The H-index for all beauty salon-related research stands at 54. The types and number of publications in each are categorized in Table 1.

Table 1. Types and number of publications

Types of Documents	Number of Publications	Percentage
Article	707	84.17%
Proceedings paper	50	5.95%
Review	31	3.69%
Book chapter	26	3.10%
Meeting abstract	19	2.26%
Editorial material	17	2.02%

Types of Documents	Number of Publications	Percentage
Book review	10	1.19%
Early access	9	1.07%
Letter	8	0.95%
Note	3	0.36%
Art exhibit review	1	0.12
Book	1	0.12
Correction	1	0.12
Fiction creative prose	1	0.12
News item	1	0.12

3.2 Publication Year and Relative Research Interest

The publication years for beauty salon research range from 1975 to 2025. The most productive year was 2021, with 78 publications, marking a peak in research output in this field. On the other hand, lower publication rates were recorded in 1991 and 1995 (Figure 1).

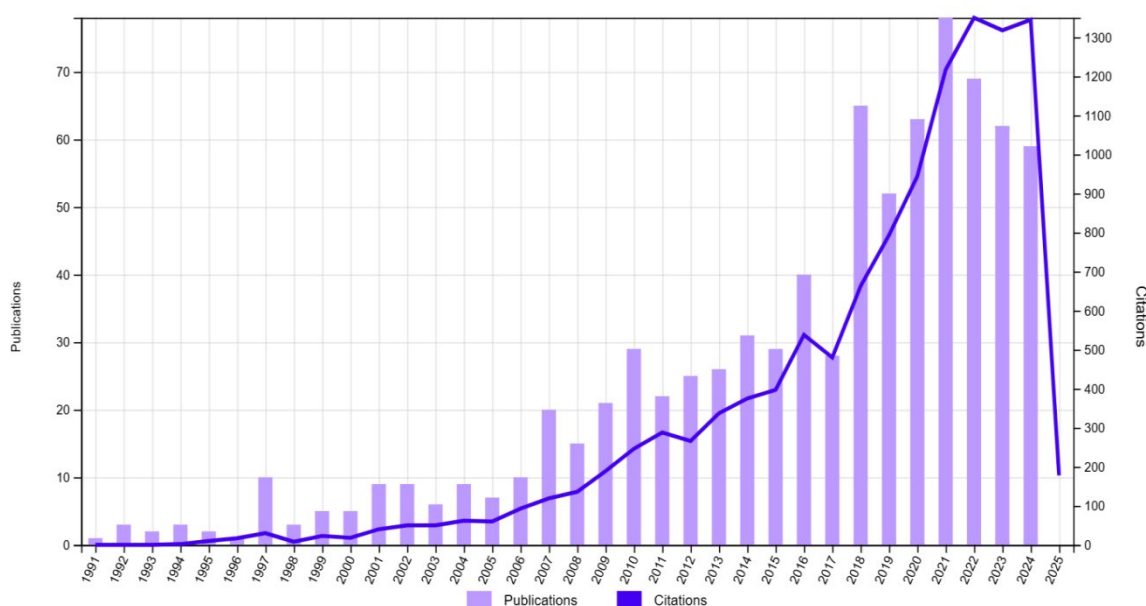


Figure 1. Number of articles published each year and citations (source: WoS)

3.3 Research Areas and Countries of Publications

Most of the research conducted in the beauty salon industry has focused on Public, Environmental, and Occupational Health (19.77%), followed by Business and Economics (8.86%), Environmental Sciences and Ecology (7.95%), Dermatology (7.07%), and Psychology (6.12%). Other notable fields include Engineering (5.23%), General Internal Medicine (4.20%), Women's Studies (4.20%), Linguistics (3.86%), Sociology (3.52%), Social Sciences (Other Topics) (2.84%), Computer Science (2.61%), Health Care Sciences and Services (2.61%), Toxicology (2.61%), Chemistry (2.50%), Geriatrics and Gerontology (2.50%), Science and Technology (Other Topics) (2.39%), and Communication (2.27%). The remaining

8.86% of research falls under other fields (e.g., art and history). The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Research areas

Area of research	Number of research	Percentage
Public Environmental Occupational Health	174	19.77%
Business Economics	78	8.86%
Environmental Sciences Ecology	70	7.95%
Dermatology	62	7.07%
Psychology	54	6.12%
Engineering	46	5.23%
General Internal Medicine	37	4.20%
Women's Studies	37	4.20%
Linguistics	34	3.86%
Sociology	31	3.52%
Social Sciences Other Topics	25	2.84%
Computer Science	23	2.61%
Health Care Sciences Services	23	2.61%
Toxicology	23	2.61%
Chemistry	22	2.50%
Geriatrics Gerontology	22	2.50%
Science Technology Other Topics	21	2.39%
Communication	20	2.27%
Others	78	8.86%

The United States led in research output, contributing 27.9% of the total publications. England followed with 8.5%, while China ranked third with 4.5%. Brazil accounted for 4.1% of the publications, and Germany contributed 3.7%. Taiwan published 2.8% of the articles, while both Iran and Poland each accounted for 2.6%. Australia followed closely with 2.4%. Japan and South Africa each contributed 2.3% of the total publications. India's research output stood at 2.1%, while both Canada and France each accounted for 2.0%. Italy, the Netherlands, and South Korea each contributed 1.7%. Spain followed with 1.6%, while Saudi Arabia accounted for 1.5% of the publications. The top contributing countries are reported in the pie chart below, illustrating the dominance of the United States, followed by England and China. At the same time, other nations play a smaller yet significant role in the global research landscape. The remaining counties accounted for 24% of the total publications (Figure 2).

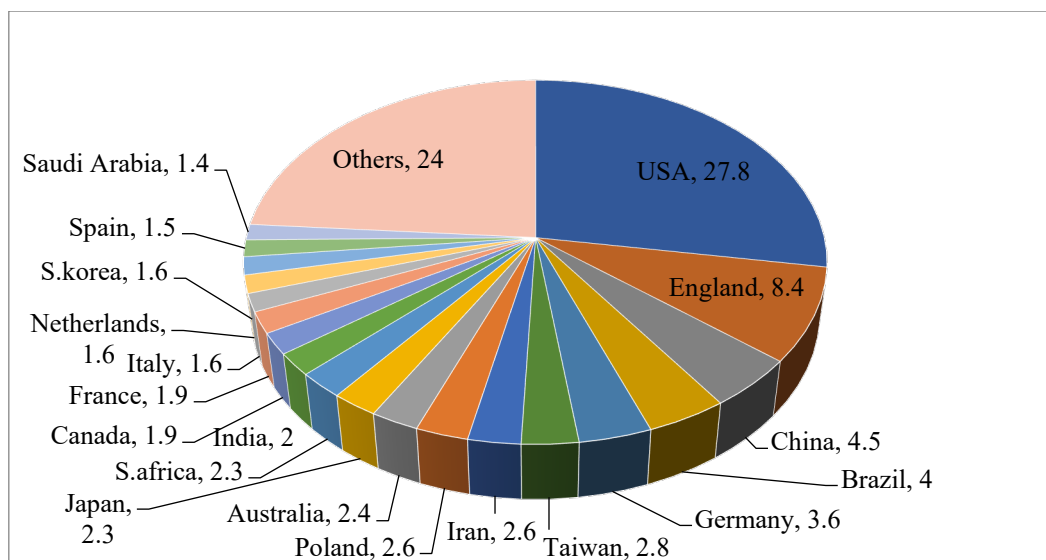


Figure 2. Publication distribution by country

3.4 Publisher and Institutions

Elsevier is the most productive publisher, leading with 114 accepted publications, accounting for 13.6% of the total. Springer Nature follows in second place with 87 publications, contributing 10.4%. Wiley, Sage, and Taylor & Francis each contributed 66 publications, representing 7.9% of the total number of publications. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins accepted 25 articles, accounting for 3.0%, followed by MDPI with 21 publications at 2.5%, and Oxford University Press with 19 at 2.3%. Routledge published 16 articles, contributing 1.9%, while Emerald Group Publishing and Frontiers Media SA contributed 14 and 13 publications, accounting for 1.7% and 1.6%, respectively. IEEE had a lower number of accepted articles (9), representing 1.1% of the total. Additionally, a significant portion of the publications, 317, came from other publishers, accounting for 37.7% of the total research output. The proportion of publications in different journals was lower than 9 for each publisher and is not reported in the bar chart, emphasizing the significance of these other publishing platforms in the research landscape (Figure 3).

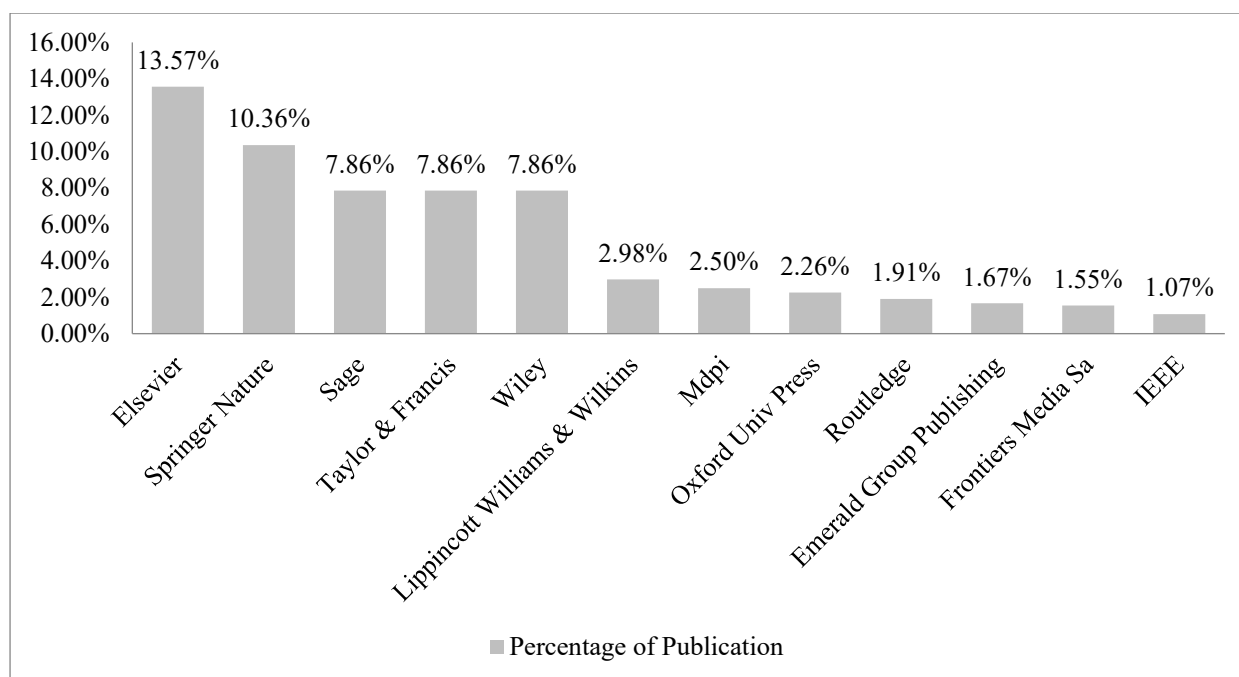


Figure 3. Percentage of accepted articles per journal

The University of London leads with 3.805%, followed by the University of California System at 2.735%, and King's College London at 2.140%. Other notable contributors include the University of North Carolina, with 2.021%, as well as Harvard University and Johns Hopkins University, both at 1.665%, and the University of Manchester, at 1.308%. Additionally, the California State University System, Harvard University Medical Affiliates, State University System of Florida, and the University of Arizona each contribute 1.189%. The detailed results are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Leading institutions in the beauty salon industry publications

Institution	Number of publications	Percentage
University of London	32	3.805%
University of California System	23	2.735%
King's College London	18	2.140%
University of North Carolina	17	2.021%
Harvard University	14	1.665%
Johns Hopkins University	14	1.665%
University of Manchester	11	1.308%
California State University System	10	1.189%
Harvard University Medical Affiliates	10	1.189%
State University System of Florida	10	1.189%
University of Arizona	10	1.189%

3.5 Co-citation Analysis

Out of 1,726 cited references, 133 met this threshold and were selected for analysis. For each of the 133 references, the total strength of co-citation links with other cited references was analyzed and visualized using VOSviewer software, with a minimum cluster size of 10 items (Figure 4).

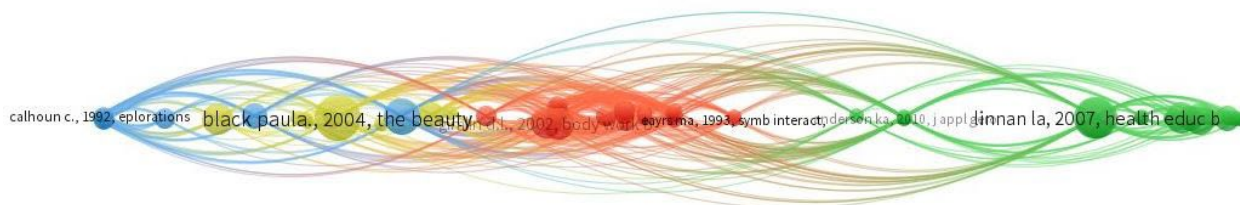


Figure 4. Co-citation network visualization of beauty salon industry research

Review the articles on the first cluster (red) containing 25 items, which show the social and individual perspectives of research on the beauty salon industry, where the authors focus specifically on healthcare access, inequalities, interventions, and public health (e.g., Barber, 2008; Cohen, 2010; Beebe et al., 2018; Kirby et al., 2021). Observation of the references revealed that most articles were published between 2005 and 2018. The second cluster (green) comprised 21 publications, primarily centered on the classification of health and disease (e.g., Solomon et al., 2004; Lieberman & Harris, 2007; Anderson et al., 2010). An examination of the references indicated that the majority of these articles were published between 2000 and 2010. The third cluster (blue) comprised 12 publications, primarily focusing on business and organization theories, with most articles published around 1990 (e.g., James, 1989; Fineman, 1996; LeBaron & Jones, 2002). The fourth cluster (yellow) included 10 publications, primarily focused on the concept of beauty and the beauty industry, with the majority published between 2000 and 2010 (e.g., Moore, 2019).

3.6 Keyword Analysis

Keywords related to the beauty industry were analyzed using VOSviewer and classified into ten clusters, as illustrated in Figure 5.

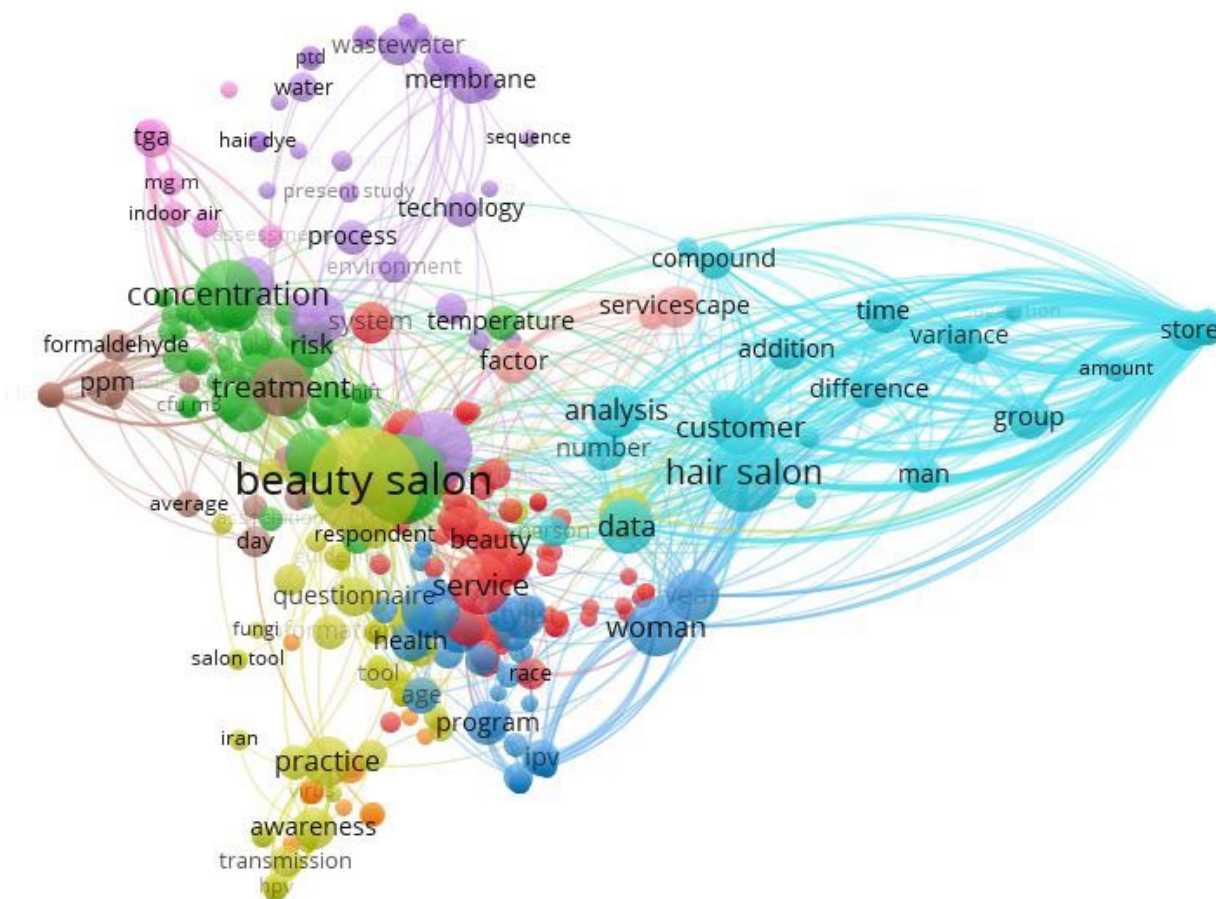


Figure 5. Keyword network of beauty salon industry literature

Six major clusters emerge from the analysis. The largest cluster, Cluster 1 (Beauty Salon), comprises 78 keywords and primarily focuses on beauty salons, encompassing a wide range of services, treatments, and industry trends. Cluster 2 (Hair Salon) closely follows with 72 keywords, concentrating on hairstyling techniques, hair care treatments, and professional salon practices. Cluster 3 (Customer), comprising 63 keywords, focuses on customer preferences, satisfaction, and service experience, highlighting the importance of consumer engagement in the beauty sector. Cluster 4 (Concentration), with 51 keywords, focuses on product formulations, ingredient concentrations, and quality control, underlining the scientific aspect of the beauty industry. Meanwhile, Cluster 5 (Woman), with 61 keywords, revolves around women as the primary consumers of beauty products and services, reflecting their influence on market trends and brand strategies. In addition, Cluster 6 (Product) comprises 42 keywords, focusing on beauty and skincare products, their development, and evolving market trends. Other smaller clusters explore themes such as beauty.

4. Discussion and Implications

The findings of this bibliometric study provide a comprehensive overview of research trends in the beauty salon industry. As the beauty industry continues to expand globally, academic interest in this field has increased significantly, yet there has been no prior bibliometric analysis dedicated to examining its scholarly literature. This study systematically analyzed 840 articles published between 1990 and 2024, providing insights into key themes, publication trends, and research contributions. The overview offers practical value by helping salon managers and

investors identify priority areas for innovation, such as sustainable operations, technology integration, and health-based service diversification. Policymakers can also use these insights to design regulatory frameworks and vocational programs that address occupational safety, gender equity, and labour skilling in the personal care sector.

One of the major findings is the growing number of publications related to beauty salons, particularly in the last two decades. This trend reflects the increasing recognition of the beauty industry's economic, cultural, and health-related significance. Previous studies have emphasized the evolving role of beauty services, particularly in addressing health and wellness concerns (Black, 2002; Cohen, 2010). Notably, most articles were published in the area of public and environmental occupational health, suggesting a strong intersection between beauty services and healthcare. This aligns with research highlighting the role of salons in public health initiatives, such as skin cancer prevention and community health outreach (e.g., Solomon et al., 2004; Linnan et al., 2014). This finding highlights an emerging opportunity for salon–healthcare partnerships, where beauty salons can serve as informal health contact points, facilitating early disease detection and wellness education. Managers could collaborate with local health organizations to offer preventive screening programs, while policymakers may consider integrating beauty professionals into community health outreach networks.

The co-citation analysis further revealed distinct research clusters, each emphasizing different aspects of beauty salon studies. The first and largest cluster focused on social and individual perspectives of beauty salons. These findings align with previous research indicating that beauty services are increasingly utilized for personal and social health (Black, 2002; Nadison et al., 2022; Battle, 2021). For practitioners, this highlights the value of promoting salons as spaces of psychological well-being and social connection, suggesting new marketing and service strategies focus on wellness, self-esteem, and inclusivity.

The second cluster emphasized the classification of health and disease, reinforcing the connection between salon services and dermatological, occupational, and hygiene-related concerns (e.g., Solomon et al., 2004; Júnior & Wen, 2015; Alharbi & Alhashim, 2021). This provides a rationale for policymakers and regulators to strengthen occupational health standards and safety training in beauty salons. Implementing evidence-based hygiene protocols and ergonomic guidelines could reduce health risks among beauty professionals and clients.

The third cluster focused on business and organizational theories, reflecting the growing body of research on management practices, consumer engagement, and professional development within the beauty sector (e.g., James, 1989; Fineman, 1996; LeBaron & Jones, 2002; Ourahmoune & Jurdi, 2021). Managers can leverage these insights to adopt data-driven decision-making, employee empowerment, and innovation-based business models to enhance competitiveness. For investors, the cluster's findings highlight promising areas for digital transformation, franchising, and service diversification.

The final cluster highlighted research on beauty concepts and industry trends, particularly from a cultural and sociological perspective, which has been explored in prior studies on the commodification of beauty and identity formation (e.g., Black, 2004; Jacobs-Huey, 2010; Moore, 2019). Understanding these cultural dynamics can help salon owners and brand strategists develop inclusive marketing narratives that reflect diverse beauty ideals and promote social sustainability. Policymakers can further encourage inclusive representation through cultural funding and awareness campaigns supporting diversity in beauty standards.

The keyword analysis further validated these findings by identifying ten thematic clusters, with six major ones dominating the field. The largest cluster focused on beauty salon services, underscoring the industry's significance in consumer culture and wellness. The second cluster

examined hair salons, focusing on hairstyling techniques and the science of hair care. The third cluster addressed customer engagement and satisfaction, aligning with marketing research on the importance of personalized beauty experiences. Additional clusters explored product formulations, the role of women as primary consumers, and the development of skincare and beauty products. The results guide future researchers in identifying influential works, emerging trends, and gaps within the field. From an applied perspective, these keyword patterns can inform managerial innovation, such as developing gender-inclusive product lines, data-informed customer experience systems, and digital loyalty programs.

5. Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has its limitations as follows: Firstly, this study exclusively used the Web of Science database publications. Therefore, data from other sources, such as Scopus and Google Scholar, were not included; thus, more databases should be used in future studies. Secondly, the study may have overlooked important research in other languages, as it only focused on English-language publications. A more comprehensive understanding of global trends in the beauty industry would result from the inclusion of various languages. Despite their increasing impact, emerging trends such as artificial intelligence, digital transformation, and sustainable beauty practices have not been fully investigated. Future forecasts and trend identification may be enhanced by machine learning. As the beauty industry continues to evolve, further studies integrating new methodologies, such as machine learning and big data analytics, could enhance bibliometric assessments and provide a more nuanced understanding of this rapidly expanding sector.

6. Conclusion

This study offers important insights into new research issues, highlights key contributors, and interdisciplinary connections to other disciplines. It is the first bibliometric analysis devoted to the beauty salon sector. The results demonstrate that research on beauty salons extends beyond aesthetics and is related to fields like sociocultural studies, business management, and public health. The evolving social role of beauty salons, from wellness and self-care to economic and public health contributions, is reflected in the expanding scientific interest in them. Future studies can enhance our understanding of this dynamic and fast-growing business by identifying existing obstacles and implementing innovative techniques.

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