

## In-home service consumption

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DOI:

[10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.02.050](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.02.050)

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*Document Version*

Peer reviewed version

*Citation for published version (Harvard):*

Tsiotsou, RH & Boukis, A 2022, 'In-home service consumption: a systematic review, integrative framework and future research agenda', *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 145, pp. 49-64.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.02.050>

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**In-Home Service Consumption:  
A Systematic Review, Integrative Framework, and Future Research Agenda**

**Abstract**

Given the increasing academic interest in in-home consumption and the fragmented, multidisciplinary scholarly knowledge in this area, this study provides a first systematic effort to review and organize the literature on in-home service consumption. Using a hybrid systematic review, combining bibliometric and framework-based literature reviews, we identify four major thematic clusters (i.e., the meaning of home, home as a consumption hub, home healthcare services, and serving the elderly), critically analyze, and discuss. We draw on AADO (Actor-Antecedents-Decisions-Outcomes) and TCM (Theories-Contexts-Methods) frameworks to synthesize our findings into an integrative framework of in-home service consumption, namely InHoServ. InHoServ provides a comprehensive understanding of the main actors involved in-home service consumption and delineates their changing role. Finally, we provide a future research agenda highlighting four fruitful areas for researchers (i.e., theorizing in-home service consumption, the changing role of service providers, technology and service consumption at home, the dark side of in-home consumption).

**Keywords:** in-home service experiences; domestication of technology; digital consumers, robots; healthcare services; place attachment; social distance; transformative service research; artificial intelligence

## 1. Introduction

The exponential growth of technological advances has significantly accelerated the transition from shopping in retail stores to digitalized marketplaces, reducing consumer dependence on brick and mortar outlets. The COVID-19 pandemic has expedited the expanding digitalization of consumption and the use of virtual reality in retail encounters, causing a transient paradigm shift (Diebner et al., 2020). This new paradigm is evident in the new services that dominated throughout the COVID-19 era, such as Zoom parties and Peloton workouts. Whereas traditional consumption models assume that consumers acquire such services and experiences out of their residential space, socially deprived and working from home consumers, have increasingly demanded such services, including shopping, fitness, and entertainment, without leaving their residences (Yang et al., 2020). In this paradigm shift, an increasing portion of service offerings revolve around the concept of staying at home (Yang et al., 2020); the homescape is being transformed into a servicescape, as an increasing number of services and experiences are consumed in spaces previously reserved for consumers' private lives.

In this post social distancing landscape, terms like "stay-at-home", "on-demand," and "staycation" have become commonplace to describe how brands like Peloton and Netflix have transformed consumers' personal spaces into consumption hubs for services through interactive experiences and augmented reality (Sheth, 2020; Scholz & Duffy, 2018; Roy et al., 2019). Despite evidence that the in-home economy will be a growing market trend in the coming years (Ipsos, 2021), we have limited knowledge about in-home consumption, the nature of service exchanges at home, or the changing role of customers, service firms, and service personnel in this context. This work adopts the term "*in-home service consumption*" to capture "*the phygital service offerings (and experiences) that are consumed synchronously or asynchronously into customers' private physical space*" to synthesize scholarly knowledge

around in-home service consumption, in light of technological advances and the social distance-induced behavioral shift.

The marketing and environmental psychology literature have long explored the role of physical places and spaces in customers' experience as well as consumers' relational, and often emotional bonds with commercial settings and with people (e.g., service personnel, family members) in these settings (Debenedetti et al., 2014; Hernandez et al. 2014; Roster, Ferrari, & Jurkat, 2016; Tartaglia, 2012). As such, marketers know a lot about how environmental cues in physical consumption settings (e.g., ambient conditions, furniture, and décor) influence consumers' purchase desire (Johnstone & Todd, 2012). However, pertinent researchers have largely overlooked consumer behavior in private, residential locales compared to public consumption settings (Van Birgelen et al., 2012); hence, we know considerably less about how residential spaces can be successfully transformed into servicescapes.

On the other hand, the sociology literature is replete with studies that explore the meaning of home and the nature of people's emotional relationship to places, including residential places. For instance, studies in this area explore how various aspects of a person's residential home (e.g., physical and symbolic properties) influence their sense of attachment, belonging, and self-identity (Moore, 2000; Bardhi & Askegaard 2009; Frisou & Yildiz, 2010; Kreuzer et al., 2018). However, they have done so without accommodating the idiosyncrasies of recent technological advances of health crises (e.g., COVID-19), which have fueled changes in how people experience their residential homes.

To date, there has been no systematic effort by scholars to map and organize the fragmented, multidisciplinary literature around in-home service consumption. Existing reviews focus either on niche contexts of in-home consumption such as home health care services (Rabbetts et al., 2020) and home help services (Arts et al., 2001) or on specific consumer groups such as the elderly (Anker-Hansen et al., 2018; Karlsen et al., 2017). Although such

reviews are valuable for those seeking a more in-depth understanding of a topic, it is unlikely to get considerable attention and impact from the broader research community, who seek cutting-edge insights that transcend a single context or consumer group. In addition, a systematic review on in-home service consumption from a services marketing perspective, remains absent to date. This paper could provide researchers with a more comprehensive understanding of how the in-home paradigm transcends, given its heterogeneous nature along with the changing role of the actors involved, due to social distance restrictions and emerging technologies (Debenedetti et al., 2014; Johnstone & Todd, 2012; Roy et al., 2019).

Given the apparent void in the literature and growing research interest in in-home service consumption, the study aims to fill the gap by providing a holistic understanding of the phenomenon and its impact. Hence the objectives of this study are: a) to systematically investigate and critically analyze the current knowledge surrounding in-home service consumption, b) to synthesize the findings into an integrative, multi-actor, and multidisciplinary framework; and c) to identify inconsistencies and knowledge gaps in order to map future avenues for this paradigm shift.

This paper signals one of the first efforts to thoroughly analyze extant literature on in-home service consumption through a hybrid systematic review approach, contributing to this emerging research area in various ways. First, by adhering to the tenets of a hybrid systematic review (Snyder, 2019), we integrate a bibliometric review with a framework-based review to identify, critically evaluate, and synthesize the fragmented, multidisciplinary in-home service literature in a transparent, rigorous, and replicable way (Paul & Criado, 2020; Vrontis & Christofi, 2021). Second, based on a thematic analysis of the literature, we identify four thematic clusters (i.e., the *meaning of home*, *home as a consumption “hub”*, *home healthcare services*, *servicing the elderly*) and the main actors involved in this context (i.e., *consumers*, *home service personnel*, *techno-actors*, and *service providers*) while we critically discuss research developments within each cluster. Third, we synthesize these findings into an

integrative framework of in-home service consumption (hereafter InHoServ). InHoServ organizes fragmented knowledge and offers insights into the principal actors involved and the nature of the relationships between the antecedents, decisions, and outcomes of in-home service consumption.

Moreover, InHoServ considers the theories, contexts, and methods used to study in-home service consumption. This way, InHoServ advances methodologically existing practices in systematic reviews by expanding the ADO organizing framework to AADO (Actor-Antecedents-Decisions-Outcomes) and integrating the latter with the TCM framework (Theories-Contexts-Methods). Finally, we identify research gaps and provide a research agenda for in-home service consumption. Our agenda highlights four promising areas of future research (i.e., *theorizing in-home service consumption, the changing role of service providers, technology and service consumption at home, the dark side of in-home consumption*) while considering current developments resulting from social distance restrictions and emerging technologies.

The paper is organized as follows. First, we briefly describe our hybrid systematic review methodology (section 2). Following, we present the results of our analysis (section 3) and critically discuss the thematic clusters we identified (section 4). Next, we present our conceptual framework, InHoServ, based on integrating AADO and TCM organizing frameworks (section 5). We present the agenda for future research in the following section (section 6) and conclude with the limitations and a summary of findings (section 7).

## **2. Method**

### ***2.1 Selecting the review method***

This work aspires to provide a systematic review of identifying, analyzing and synthesizing discrete streams in the in-home service consumption literature (Paul & Criado,

2020; Snyder, 2019; Vrontis & Christofi, 2021). To overcome the challenges associated with the increasing volume of scientific production (e.g., subjectivity), we adopted a hybrid review methodology by combining a bibliometric and a framework-based review (Figure 1) (Paul & Criado, 2020; Snyder, 2019). **Our methodological approach meets all three recommended conditions that add value to a literature review (see SPAR-4-SLR - Paul et al., 2021). Moreover, the size of the in-home consumption literature has reached sufficient maturity for review (i.e. over 40 studies) and there is no systematic review available in the domain for over 15 years (Paul & Criado, 2020).**

The bibliometric review enabled us to quantify the productivity of scientific research, identify thematic clusters and the main actors involved, establish the foundations of in-home service consumption, and identify research gaps. To study the available literature on in-home service consumption, we relied on three widely used bibliometric analysis techniques: evaluative, relational, and review techniques (Echchakoui, 2020). For the purpose of this study, we mainly focused on the latest technique that allowed us to identify main thematic clusters on the topic while we report some productivity results, which are part of the evaluation technique to show the production of knowledge on the topic over the years.

We set the AADO and TCM frameworks as the organizing frameworks of our systematic review. We introduce AADO as an extension of the ADO framework (Paul and Benito, 2018) to capture the main Actors involved in in-home service consumption. Previous reviews have integrated these complementary frameworks “*to leverage the strengths and overcome the shortcomings of each framework*” (Lim et al., 2021, p. 537). Specifically, ADO reflects current and future knowledge (“what do we know” and “what research directions we should take”) (Lim et al., 2021), whereas the TCM framework illustrates why, how, and where knowledge has been acquired so far. Our review sets the foundations for the InHoServ framework and provides a comprehensive understanding of in-home service consumption.

Moreover, both the thematic clusters (bibliometric analysis) and framework-based review assisted us in identifying research gaps and proposing future research directions.

## **2.2. Review questions**

We present the study's research questions as research questions drive systematic reviews. *“How can we systematically identify advances in in-home service consumption by examining key themes, theories, methods, contexts, and actors involved in extant literature?”* *“How can we develop a comprehensive conceptual framework for analyzing in-home service consumption that encompasses antecedents, mediators, moderators, and outcomes?”* *“What is the role of consumers in in-home service consumption, and how do service exchanges take place in this context?”* *“What are the implications of our framework for future research?”*

## **2.3. Definition of the review protocols**

To ensure the objectivity and inclusiveness of our bibliographic search, we followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) protocol (Figure 1). **Despite the robustness and detailed protocol that more recent frameworks like SPAR-4-SLR offer (Akhmedova et al., 2021), we chose PRISMA as a well-established roadmap to conduct an objective and transparent systematic review that includes a multi-step process with four major phases** (Identification, Eligibility, Screening, and Inclusion) (Moher et al., 2009). Next, we provide details for each of these phases.

In the *identification phase*, we identified relevant articles from Scopus, which provides a comprehensive portfolio of business and management outlets. We identified the most common keywords on the topic by exploring the leading publications in the field, and we used these as the basis for our literature search. In particular, the terms *"in-home"*, *"in-house"*, *"home"*, and *"house"* were initially used as the main search terms in the database's



topic section or the keywords, title, or abstract of the article under consideration (Figure 1). In addition, each of the keywords mentioned above was combined interchangeably with the terms: "experience", "*service*", "*consumption*," and "*service delivery*". An identical search took place at two additional databases (i.e., Google Scholar and Web of Science) to ensure inclusivity. These searches resulted in a pool of 4,083 articles from 1976 to September 2020 (identification phase). After integrating these searches, we finalized the dataset and eliminated duplicates resulting in 3,494 articles (*Eligibility phase*).

In the screening phase, we used a number of criteria that the systematic reviews literature advances to increase our results' relevance, accuracy, and quality. First, we limited our search only to peer-reviewed journals in English, resulting in 3,119 articles. Published work from dissertation/theses, book chapters, commentaries, editorial material, and conference papers was also excluded from our search, resulting in 2,431 articles. Then, we refined the results with respect to subject categories "Business and Management" by excluding articles related to geography (96 articles); environment, energy, and water-related studies (388 articles); tax and law articles (46 articles); medicine, drugs, intensive care and diseases studies (762 articles); dietary and nutrition-related articles (178 articles); pediatric studies and, work around building and construction (91 articles). We excluded studies from medicine, drugs, and intensive care as they do not capture how individuals perceive or experience their homes or residences. This work captures phenomena occurring in a home context and mainly uses objective data to observe them (e.g., medication effectiveness on health conditions) and does not accommodate participants' views, perceptions, or experiences with their home. Moreover, only articles in Tier 1 of Scopus indexing were maintained (we removed 102 articles). Last, we excluded 126 articles related to other non-relevant areas (e.g., US patents, libraries). These refinements resulted in 642 articles for further review.

**<Insert figure 1 here>**

After this initial screening, a thorough review of the abstracts of all remaining articles took place independently from each member of the research team. We split the abstracts into half (321 abstracts in each), and both groups were rated independently by at least two researchers to establish face validity and whether in-home service consumption was indeed the focus of each article. Each member evaluated each of the papers based on the relevance of their abstract to the focal topic and rated them as relevant (3), partially relevant (2), and not relevant (1). Any articles assessed by both researchers as relevant or partially relevant were maintained in the dataset, resulting in 96 articles (*Inclusion phase*).

### **3. Data Analysis and Results**

To analyze and visualize the bibliometric data, we deemed appropriate Bibliometrix written in R. Bibliometrix supports the recommended science mapping workflow (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Once the data was filtered and loaded, the following variables were considered relevant for bibliometric analysis: a) annual scientific publications (articles) from 1976 to September 2020 and b) analysis of keyword networks.

#### **3.1 Descriptive analysis**

In line with current practices (Donthu et al., 2020), we report descriptive results referring to yearly article production and author productivity to demonstrate the level of maturity of the topic, provide a general overview of its development, justify the relevance of our study, and guide our future research directions. The analysis of the scientific production on in-home service consumption over the last 44 years (1976 to September 2020) indicates an annual growth rate of 7.43%. Figure 2 shows the trend in publications for this period. Publications on the area come from 72 different sources, with 49.86 average citations per document and 3.46 citations per year per document. Two hundred forty-three authors

published papers on in-home service consumption, of which 26 were single-authors. There were 2.53 authors per paper and 2.65 co-authors per paper with a collaboration index of 3.1.

As Figure 2 shows, based on the frequency of publications, three periods can be identified: 1976-1986, 1987-2007, and 2008 to present. During the 1976-1986 period, there was marginal academic interest in the topic with only three publications. The topic became relevant in the 1987-2007 period, with an average of 1.86 papers published per year (total of 39 papers). From 2008 to the present, there are 54 publications in in-home service consumption, from which 11 were in 2019 and 8 in 2020 (until September 2020), indicating a significantly increased interest over the last two years. The average production in this period reached 4.2 articles per year. The first article using the term “*in-home consumption*” in its title was published in 1976 by Schiffman, Schus, and Winer in the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*. The authors examined the role of perceived risk and inclusive (vs. exclusive) perceived error tolerance strategies as factors influencing in-home consumption behavior (purchasing products through catalogs).

**<Insert Figure 2 here>**

Next, we identified the core journals with the greatest accumulation of knowledge in the area (Bradford, 1985). Results show that 72 journals have published articles on in-home service consumption (Figure 3). The top-5 journals are the *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *Home Health Care Services Quarterly*, *BMC Health Services Research*, *Health and Social Care in the Community*, and *Food Quality and Preference* (Table 1). Among the top-20 journals, we identified five marketing journals: *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Service Management*, *Journal of Services Marketing*, *Psychology & Marketing*, and the *Asian Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*. The journals with the highest h-index are: *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *Home Health Care Services Quarterly*, *Health and Social Care in the Community*.

<Insert Table 1 here>

The next step was to identify the most productive authors and the articles with the highest impact. Table 2 shows the top-20 authors' production over time. The most productive authors are Zandstra, E.H. and Wiig, S. with three articles in total and Applebaum, R., Kim, Y.K., Lim, C.M., McWilliam, C.L., Samuelsson, G., and Woodruff, L. with two articles. Nonetheless, despite this considerable number of publications on in-home service consumption, we cannot corroborate the claim that an in-depth understanding of the area is evident and that the field has reached a mature stage.

<Insert Table 2 here>

Continuing with the analysis, we present the five articles with the most significant impact in Table 3. With 439 citations, the article published by Manzo (2003) was the most cited. Furthermore, we observed that the *Journal of Environmental Psychology* published two out of the top-5 articles that attracted the most citations. We did not find work from the most productive authors presented previously among the five articles with the most significant impact.

<Insert Table 3 here>

### **3.2 Examining the conceptual structure - thematic mapping**

First, we performed keyword analysis using the Bibliometrix R-package, resulting in only 265 keywords. We identified a scarcity of keywords in publications before 2001 (only three articles before 2001 had keywords), which explains the small number of keywords used in the analysis. Out of the 265 keywords, the most relevant ones by occurrences were home care services (7), home (6), home care (6), home health care (4), consumer behavior (3), consumption (3), nursing (3), community (2), domestication (2) and eldercare (2). An examination of the word growth per year indicates an increasing use of the keywords: home,

home care services, patient safety culture, community, nursing, older adults, consumption, and domestication.

Then, we performed a co-word analysis to identify the conceptual structure and the associations between concepts through term co-occurrences in the area. The conceptual structure assisted in understanding the topics scholars investigated and in identifying the most important and the most emerging themes. Co-word analysis is a useful content approach for determining the strength of association between textual data elements (Callon et al., 1983) by identifying associations between keywords and constructing multiple networks. A set of clusters is returned at the end of the co-word analysis, which may be interpreted as conglomerates of different scientific aspects (Cobo et al., 2011). *“The clusters represent groups of textual information that can be understood as semantic or conceptual groups of different topics treated by the research field”* (Cobo et al., 2011, p. 147). We created visualization maps of different social networks based on the bibliographic data gathered from the various datasets. The size of the circles represents the number of keywords associated with each cluster. So the larger the circle, the more keywords are associated with the specific area. Bibliometrics R-package has grouped the keywords into themes based on Porter’s stemming algorithm (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Figure 3 shows a thematic mapping of the in-home service consumption based on 265 author keywords and indicates the existence of four major clusters and 13 themes.

**<Insert Figure 3 here>**

The thematic map (Figure 3) displays themes and interprets them based on their position in the quadrant. The upper-right quadrant of the plot represents contextual themes; the lower-right quadrant depicts very specialized/niche themes; the lower-left quadrant indicates disappearing themes; and the upper-left quadrant illustrates emerging themes (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017). Accordingly, our analysis indicates the environmental aspects of the

home as a disappearing theme (green circle-cluster 1 / lower-left quadrant), the home for service consumption experiences as an emerging and well-developed theme (red circle-cluster 2 / upper-left quadrant), home healthcare services as a contextual well-developed theme (orange circle-cluster 3 / upper-right quadrant), serving the elderly in-home as a specialized/niche but not the well-developed theme (black circle-cluster 4 / lower-right quadrant). Cluster 1 includes themes, such as atmosphere/décor of home and gambling, whereas Cluster 2 includes business ecosystem, domestication, augmented reality, consumer behavior, and service evaluations. Cluster 3 includes patient safety culture, home care, and health services and care relationships. Cluster 4 refers to older people/adults.

In addition, we examined the thematic evolution of the topic over the last 44 years (Figure 4). When we divided the entire period of co-word occurrences into different time slices and compared their conceptual structures, it became clear that from 1976 to 2000, in-home service consumption literature focused on consumption issues (28 publications). During this period, publications focused on the meaning and qualities of home, home health care services, and internet use in in-home service consumption such as gambling and web banking. This time period mainly captures Cluster 1 and early publications in Clusters 2 and 3. From 2001 to 2020, the literature became more interdisciplinary, focusing on other research areas such as technology, home health care for the elderly, work, community (68 publications). During this period, research focused on the quality and co-production/consumption aspects of in-home services for the various actors involved (consumers, service personnel, techno-actors, and service providers). For example, the role of empowerment (e.g., empowering the elderly), emotions, and technology (domestication-digitalization-robotization) for in-home consumption, offering/delivering quality services in-home, and the use of communication channels for in-home consumption (TV and internet shopping) are some of the topics covered. Moreover, we observed an increasing number of

publications focusing on the elderly. The publications during this period represent primarily Clusters 2, 3, and 4.

**<Insert Figure 4 here>**

#### **4. Findings**

This section analyzes the four distinct clusters that emerged from thematic mapping and critically discusses the main articles representing the major research trends in each thematic cluster (Table 4).

**<Insert Table 4 here>**

##### ***4.1. Cluster 1 - The meaning of home***

Cluster 1 studies are primarily concerned with the role and meaning of home to individuals and examine its various sub-dimensions and elements through various theoretical frameworks. The concept of "home" has received increasing attention from various disciplines in social sciences such as sociology, consumer culture, and environmental psychology. The meaning of home has evolved from signifying a physical structure or territory and a social space reflective of self to a social and cultural unit and an emotional 'warehouse' (Manzo, 2003). Work in this cluster emphasizes that home should be understood more as "*a locus of activities, an anchor of identity, a repository of memories bonding past and present, and a center of stability and continuity*" (Seamon, 2014, p. 206), with a plethora of definitions describing its meaning (Table 5).

**<Insert table 5 here>**

Cluster 1 studies delve into the various dimensions underlying the concept of home. Scholars conceptualize home as consisting of "experiential modes" (i.e., personal, social, and physical modes) (Sixsmith, 1986); they view home as a social concept understood through three elements: time, space, and relationships (Bardhi & Askegaard, 2009); they uncover various qualities associated with home environments (e.g., continuity, privacy, personal

identity, social relationships) (e.g., Smith, 1994); and, they identify the underlying dimensions (i.e., distinction, valuation, continuity, temporality) that make home meaningful for individuals (Gustafson, 2001).

This cluster of studies perceives home from a spatial, temporal, social, or relational approach (Kreuzer et al., 2018). The *spatial* perspective reflects the physical structures and characteristics of a place to which people are attached. 'Home' is viewed as a spatial entity that is subjectively constructed (Saunders & Williams, 1988), with "rootedness" emerging from individuals' physical home (Frisou & Yildiz, 2010). The *temporal* perspective of home refers to individuals' present home or how they experience the ideal home (Varley, 2008). Socialization, childhood, and cultural imprints have created memories that allow individuals to experience home when they feel a loss of familiarity (Moore, 2000).

The *social* perspective considers home as a social space and describes the relationships with others in a specific physical location. Home as a social space satisfies three basic human needs: community (i.e., social embeddedness), control (i.e., actionability), and coherence (i.e., making sense of the world) (Low & Altman, 1992). The emotional value of the social space is mainly felt when being away (Nowicka, 2007). The *relational* perspective reflects the strong emotional meanings of home for individuals and describes people's relationships with it (Coolen & Meesters, 2012; Gattino et al., 2013). This perspective acknowledges the experiential nature of home, its rich contextual significance and strong emotional meanings for individuals, as their relationship to their living environment plays a crucial role in their well-being (Ferrari et al., 2018; Gattino et al., 2013).

Scholars further highlight the contribution of the relational dimension of home to the construction of social and individual identity (Dion et al., 2014; Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996) and view home as "*the nexus where identity and place meet to satisfy needs, wants, and prospects of self*" (Mugerauer, 1994, p. 154). The term "psychological home" reflects a broader understanding of home as a vital source of meaning, belonging, and identity. The



notion of *psychological home* indicates a sense of belonging in which self-identity is tied to a place (Roster et al., 2016). The psychological home literature identifies several emotional (e.g., security), cognitive (e.g., beliefs about home), and behavioral benefits of home for individuals (e.g., construction and personalization of an individual's surroundings) (Moore, 2000; Roster et al., 2016).

As developing intimacy with physical spaces is closely tied to self-identity processes (Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminoff, 1983), scholars have examined the relationship between individuals and “home” from the perspective of attachment theory (Hummon, 1992). *Place attachment theory* reflects the emotional bond between individuals and their environment (Hernandez, Hidalgo & Ruiz, 2014). The place attachment literature investigates what makes a place meaningful to the self by describing how particular spaces become part of one's self-identity (e.g., Fried, 2000; Gustafson, 2001; Manzo, 2003, 2005). Scholars identify two components of place attachment, place identity (i.e., emotional attachment to a location) and place dependence (i.e., functional attachment to a location) (Tartaglia, 2012). These components create and reinforce self-identity through repeated personal, social, and cultural interactions with places over time (Crum & Ferrari, 2019).

#### ***4.2 Cluster 2 - Home as a consumption hub***

Cluster 2 studies focus on three interrelated but distinct areas: home characteristics and their role in service consumption, the domestication and digitalization of new technologies adopted of in-home (e.g., appification), and the integration of service robots in consumer's lives (i.e., robotization). The majority of the work in this cluster focuses on consumer interactions with technologies and techno-actors (e.g., virtual assistants), disregarding the role of other actors such as family members, service personnel (in and out of home), and service providers.

Scholars have examined how contextual factors such as the interior physical surroundings (e.g., furniture, décor) (Madigan & Munro, 1996) and consumer characteristics such as perceived risk (Schiffman et al., 1976) shape the meaning and consumption behavior at home. Since home serves as a place to engage in autonomous activity and a safe space for self-reflection and creative self-expression, it has both symbolic and practical meaning to consumers. Van Birgelen et al. (2012) recognize the pivotal role of customer participation in in-home service provision and showcase three types of desired benefits central in-home service consumption: functional, social, and economic. The social context consumption and the situated daily practices of households facilitate consumer identity formation (Valentine, 1999) and develop long-term patterns on in-home consumption (Zandstra et al., 2004).

Research in this cluster examines consumers' attachment to home used technologies and related activities (e.g., TV, home cleaning services) (Gregson et al., 2009) and how possession attachment processes define and communicate self-identity (Kleine and Baker, 2004). Originated mainly from anthropology and media studies, scholars introduce the term *domestication* to signify the process whereby technology takes a natural place in consumers' everyday practices at home (Berker et al., 2005). In this context, consumers play a more active role in constructing the meaning and practice of technologies within their homes. Early studies on domestication examined people's attitudes toward internet banking (Haddon, 1999) and the role of the cost of telecom services on household interactions (Haddon & Vincent, 2005). Work in this stream, although very limited, also explored interactions, tensions, and negotiation processes between household members concerning the adoption and use of new technologies at home, based on domestic and social constraints (e.g., hours children watch TV) (Haddon, 2003).

Following, the *digitalization* of technology became another significant aspect of in-home service consumption (Silverstone, 2005; Bakardjieva, 2005). Research in this theme explores how the in-home use of mobile AR apps allow consumers to interact with a brand

(e.g., Sephora), shop from home and develop closer relationships with them in a familiar, casual, and relaxing atmosphere in their own private and domestic spaces (Scholz & Duffy, 2018). Furthermore, mobile apps for managing and controlling homes (e.g., "smart" lighting, pet feeder, smart keys) have recently attracted research attention (Delgado, 2021). However, the digitalization of technology may raise uncertainty and worries for both consumers and service personnel at home (Kleiven et al., 2020). Extant literature in this cluster disregards how service personnel (in and out of home) and service providers integrate new technologies in their interactions with consumers at home, given the dominance of app-enabled consumption in providing in-home services.

In addition, this cluster identifies robots as a new techno-actor. Consumers use robots for in-home services such as vacuuming, floor cleaning, lawn-mowing, and entertainment. Drawing on technology acceptance models and the theory of planned behavior (Heerink et al., 2010), studies in this theme investigate the use of assistance robots in various home services (e.g., vacuum cleaner robots) and their adoption in consumers' personal and in-home life. For instance, scholars explore consumers' ideal embodiment preferences and personality attributes for a care service robot at home (Hendriks et al., 2011) as well as how consumers evaluate domestic social robots and the perceived risk when users interact with them (social robotics) (de Graaf et al., 2019; Shin & Choo, 2011). Scholars have also begun to explore users' expectations and experiences with domestic "social" robots (de Graaf et al., 2019). We identify this theme as an emerging research area needing further investigation in the following years.

#### ***4.3 Cluster 3 - Home healthcare services***

The home healthcare services cluster remains the most established cluster in our sample and has attracted significant research attention from the nursing/medical and the marketing literature. "Home care" refers to non-clinical help and support services (e.g., meal

preparation, dressing, financial management, and companionship) provided by care assistants at home, whereas "home health care" refers to clinical and medical assistance and supervision services (e.g., therapy, monitoring health status) offered by licensed professionals (Samuels, 2020).

Early research in the field focuses on the supply side of health/care services at home (e.g., health care agencies and hospital pharmacists) and how marketing principles and strategies can be successfully implemented in targeting and penetrating the home healthcare market (Freitag, 1988). Researchers turned their attention to the home nursing and caring staff by examining enablers (e.g., motivation - Laamanen et al., 1999) and inhibitors of staff's performance and turnover (e.g., time pressure, burnout, job satisfaction, and stress) (Arts et al., 2001; Hedin, 1997); also, they investigated the interaction quality between home health/care personnel and recipients (McWilliam et al., 2001). However, research on the influence of home service professionals on in-home service consumption continues to be sparse.

In line with the paradigm shift in services marketing from a supplier-driven to a customer-oriented strategy, health/care services transitioned from a career-centric to a patient-centric approach, fueled largely by the integration of new technologies (e.g., Internet of Things). This shift led to the development of the telemedicine and home telehealth/telecare literature (health-IoT) (Pang et al., 2013). Pertinent scholars look into how health care professionals' knowledge, skills, and attitudes (e.g., involvement) shape effective and successful telecare implementation (Guise & Wiig, 2017). Equally important, telecare scholars investigate patients' experience with health-IoT services. Evidence reports higher satisfaction for patients using telecare than those receiving usual care at home (Grant, Rockwood, & Stennes, 2015) and a positive effect of telecare on chronic illness outcomes such as re-hospitalization and length of stay (Bowles & Baugh, 2007; Glomsas et al., 2020).

#### ***4.4 Cluster 4 - Serving the elderly in home***

Home researchers recognize life stage as a key determinant of individual needs and desires, with services and/or technologies geared towards working parents (Beech et al., 2003), children, people with disabilities, and the elderly (Boland, 2019; Choi et al., 2017; Gudnadottir et al., 2019; Tang & Lee, 2010). This cluster focuses on the centrality of the home for the elderly as well as its benefits (e.g., social connectedness, occupational opportunities) for their well-being (de Jonge et al., 2011). In its nascence, the home services for the elderly literature took a service provider perspective investigating the structure and management practices of home care organizations as well as the quality assurance standards of the provision of in-home care services to the elderly (Schmid, 1993; Applebaum et al., 1994). This stream has also looked into the elderly's evaluations of the quality of home care services showcasing staff characteristics such as reliability, kindness, cheerfulness, competence, flexibility as central in these evaluations (Woodruff & Applebaum, 1996). As home care services became more common and affordable (Howell et al., 2007), home- and community-based services (e.g., visiting nurses, housekeeping services) sparked debate among researchers studying older adults' attitudes toward these services (Tang & Lee, 2010). However, this cluster is missing research from home service personnel and service providers' perspectives.

Later work in this stream focuses on the well-being of older adults, particularly those experiencing vulnerabilities (Tang & Lee, 2010). The increasing life expectancy requires more research on the complex needs of the elderly and necessitates new methods of organizing and coordinating existing home care practices and services (Boland, 2019; Choi et al., 2017; Gudnadottir et al., 2019). For instance, evidence shows that older people's physical disabilities or activity limitations (e.g., lack of shopping mobility) increase their loneliness and parasocial interaction with TV shopping hosts while prevent their institutionalization (Lim & Kim, 2011; Choi et al., 2017). Furthermore, this cluster has considered ethical issues

such as boundaries, confidentiality and privacy, competency, insurance coverage, and autonomy in in-home psychotherapy (Boland, 2019).

Our analysis shows that the four clusters are interconnected as they address different aspects of the same phenomenon and provide significant implications. Specifically, Cluster 1 remains highly relevant as it encompasses several theories and lenses that explain individuals' relationships with their home or residential spaces (e.g., place attachment theory and psychological home). This cluster provides the theoretical underpinnings to studies from Cluster 2. Cluster 2 offers increasingly dated insights as its studies examine emerging services and experiences consumed at home, fueled by new technologies and current social distance restrictions. Cluster 3 looks into a specific type of in-home commercial services (i.e., healthcare services), drawing on the services marketing literature. Cluster 4 looks into a specific and significant consumer segment, the elderly, and how it experiences and evaluates in-home services. Most importantly, this segment is an under-represented consumer group in the marketing literature. With this in mind, we argue that these clusters remain complementary but largely incomplete as they have yet to provide a comprehensive understanding of in-home service consumption in the light of new technologies.

Overall, our bibliometric review and cluster analysis identify the fragmented theoretical underpinnings of in-home service consumption. Despite the plethora of perspectives and theoretical frameworks used (e.g., domestication) that range from environmental psychology to sociology and consumer culture, there is no solid theoretical paradigm linking early work in the field with emerging consumption patterns (e.g., synchronous in-home experiences), partially fueled from the social distance-induced behavioral shift. The divergent nature of the clusters that emerged from our analysis suggests that these perspectives (e.g., technology acceptance models and place attachment framework) have yet to be integrated. Moreover, the application of in-home service consumption

frameworks remains highly context-specific as they have been examined primarily on specialized/niche settings (e.g., home healthcare services and elderly). Although healthcare services constitute a significant volume of this stream, most of the literature reviewed (67.7%) lies in other contexts such as leisure, retail, financial, and telecommunication services, which justifies our approach to in-home service consumption.

Overall, our cluster analysis of the in-home service consumption literature reveals some interesting insights. First, it highlights the four actors that dominated service exchanges at home (i.e., consumers, home service personnel, techno-actors, and service providers) in the past and present without, however, adequately addressing their changing role in digitally consumed experiences in this setting. Second, there is a significant gap in the literature regarding the role of other or new actors (e.g., family members, friends, and virtual assistants, e.g., Amazon Alexa) and how they might influence service experiences at home. Cluster 2 epitomizes the increasingly dominant role of technology and techno-actors in in-home service consumption, enabling new forms of synchronous and asynchronous services and experiences without explaining how customers engage with them (emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally).

## **5. InHoServ: A Proposed Conceptual Framework of In-Home Service Consumption**

To overcome these shortcomings, we introduce an integrative, multidisciplinary framework, namely *InHoServ*, which provides a comprehensive understanding of in-home service consumption as well as guidance for future research endeavors (Figure 5). *InHoServ* synthesizes existing knowledge in the area and builds further the key research gaps identified in our findings. It revisits the changing role of the main actors in in-home service consumption and discusses their exchanges with other actors in this context. Moreover,

*InHoServ* makes a step forward towards establishing the theoretical underpinnings of the area by epitomizing existing theoretical frameworks (e.g., technology acceptance, place attachment, domestication frameworks) embedded on various clusters of in-home service consumption.

To present InHoServ, we use the AADO (Actor-Antecedents-Decisions-Outcomes) and TCM (Theories-Contexts-Methods) frameworks (Lim et al., 2021). The adopting AADO enables us to capture the main Actors involved in in-home service consumption (i.e., consumers, service providers, home service personnel, and techno-actors); to identify the factors influencing their behavior in this context (Antecedents) and the types of their behaviors (Decisions) as well as their evaluations and future intentions (Outcomes) in this context (Paul & Benito, 2018). As evidenced by Cluster 2 of our findings, technology plays an important mediating role in in-home service consumption, enabling synchronous and asynchronous service experiences (Decisions). We consider virtual assistants and robots techno-actors due to their anthropomorphic features and behaviors. We complementary adopt the TCM framework (Lim et al., 2021), which allows us to identify the relevant contexts (Contexts), highlight the theoretical foundations of the extant literature (Theories), and denote the methodologies used in the study of in-home consumption (Methods) to provide a more exhaustive understanding of the literature in the area (Figure 5).

**<Insert Figure 5 here>**

**Consumers** – The consumer is the primary actor in the consumption of in-home services. Several factors influence consumers when consuming at home, classified as homescape elements, individual characteristics, micro-social environment (e.g., other household members, home service personnel), and available technology. As home plays a vital role in consumers' life, environmental psychology perspectives explore, through inductive approaches, how homescape elements such as style, design, and layout might



influence their psychological and emotional state (e.g., anxiety). Family values influence the home atmosphere ("a relaxed, comfortable haven") as well as the desire to maintain status by adhering to certain standards (Madigan & Munro, 1996). Through survey-based approaches, scholars explored various consumers' psychological factors such as perceived risk (Schiffman et al., 1976) and domestic interactions with technology (e.g., robots) that influence their consumption decisions at home (de Graaf et al., 2019; Shin & Choo, 2011). When consumers use service firms' social communication channels, they seek functional, social, and economic value from in-home services (van Birgelen et al., 2012). However, customer participation level plays a critical role in in-home service provisions where "*the customer predominantly produces the desired service outcome by performing production-facilitating activities*" (van Birgelen et al., 2012, p. 220).

Place attachment theory (Hernandez, Hidalgo & Ruiz, 2014) suggests that consumers' attitude towards and satisfaction with in-home consumption depends on their psychological attachment to their home and its meaning for their self-identity. Drawing on attachment theory, researchers have associated home attachment to several positive outcomes, including improved quality of life, better physical and psychological health, more satisfying social relationships, greater satisfaction with one's physical environment, freedom of behavior, exploration, and confidence (Tartaglia, 2012).

In addition, the integration of technology remains quite impactful for in-home service consumption. According to the technology acceptance model (TAM), consumers' engagement with domestic technology is a function of their level of readiness influencing the levels of functional, emotional, and social value they experience (Venkatesh, 2006; Zainuddin et al., 2016). On the one hand, technologies afford consumers several benefits. For example, teleservices provide consumers with autonomy and the ability to maintain control over their lives and services, which increases their service satisfaction (Grant et al., 2015;

Woodruff & Applebaum, 1996). Furthermore, mobile apps enable consumers to interact with brands from the comfort of their own homes (Scholz & Duffy, 2018), engage in social communications and networking, manage their finances, as well as educate, entertain, and empower family members (Bakardjieva, 2005; Delgado, 2021; Haddon, 2003; Venkatesh, 2006).

On the other hand, the in-home use of technology may entail several problems. For instance, domestication research employing primarily qualitative approaches has revealed that increased domestic use of technologies may harm household interactions (Haddon & Vincent, 2005) and may result in conflicts and tensions between household members or alienation (Haddon, 2003). Thus, consumers may complain about other household members' mobile phone usage and attempt to limit its use, or they may negotiate with their children about how much time they can spend watching TV or surfing the internet. Domestication of digital technology may also impair in-home consumption experiences, leading to uncertainty, concerns, and fear of destroying it or being unable to use it correctly (Kleiven et al., 2020).

Pertinent research, through survey-based data, adopts technology acceptance models (e.g., TAM and UTAUT) to examine how domestic robots gradually replace service personnel at in-home tasks (e.g., vacuuming) and family members in their entertainment (e.g., social robots). Moreover, studies examine how robots' personalities and behavior affect consumer experiences with various services and their well-being (Hendriks et al., 2011; Kidd & Breazeal, 2008). Consumers' acceptance of domestic social robots is a function of utilitarian and hedonic attitudes and their interaction experiences, which influence their behavioral intentions (de Graaf et al., 2019). In line with existing social norms, consumers remain skeptical of social robots' sociability and companionship potential and delegating substantial parts of the shopping process to autonomous systems. However, they are more prone to adopting them for utilitarian tasks (de Graaf et al., 2019).

Despite the increasing importance of new technologies in the post-Covid-19 era, consumer attitudes toward and experiences with technology-mediated in-home consumption of services remain widely under-researched. First, there is a lack of empirical evidence on the transformative role of technologies in the homescape and what this transformation entails for consumers, home service personnel, and providers. Second, scarce and dated insights exist on the role of the home environment and its features as a marketplace where consumers experience products/services (Madigan & Munro, 1996). In this direction, a handful of survey-based studies are evident, as shown above, signifying the need for further research. Third, marginal research is available on the disruptive consequences of consuming at home, such as social isolation and technology addiction (de Graaf, Allouch & van Dijk, 2019; Haddon & Vincent, 2005; Kleiven et al., 2020). Most importantly, scholars have yet to use behavioral data to understand how the co-presence of new actors (e.g., family members and virtual technology assistants) and their interactions with the key actors of our framework co-create/co-destruct value at home.

***Home Service Personnel*** - The second actor refers to personnel providing services on a temporary or regular basis at consumers' homes. From a service provider perspective, in-home service personnel might undertake different roles depending on the service encounters. For example, in temporary service interactions, service personnel may act more as brand ambassadors when accessing consumers' personal space to deliver a service (e.g., food delivery personnel and plumbers) (Chen et al., 2011) or co-create a service experience (e.g., DJs in a home party or organizers of a home wedding) (van Birgelen et al., 2012) or as commercial friends and caretakers in regularly offered services (e.g., hairdressers, gardeners). Furthermore, service personnel's role becomes more influential in relational (vs. interactional) service encounters at home (e.g., healthcare professionals and housekeeping personnel) due to their social proximity with various family members (Thomas et al., 2010).

Prior research adopts survey-based and qualitative approaches to address service personnel's role in a home health/care context and particularly focuses on care and health professionals' performance in this context (Sørly et al., 2019). For instance, adopting specific HR practices (e.g., purposeful training, skill utilization) enhances home caregivers' ability to deliver their services effectively (Yalçındağ et al., 2016; Sims-Gould et al., 2017). Survey-based work also highlights the importance of technology-related support and its various aspects (e.g., technology literacy skills and domestication) in-home care and health professionals' experiences with their roles (Rabbets et al., 2020). Working conditions for home healthcare service personnel and physicians (e.g., emotional climate, teamwork, role ambiguity, and role conflict) and the type of collaboration they have with patients (e.g., communication openness and co-consumption with customers) shape their delivery efforts and drive their experience with their role (Randall, 2008; Ree & Wiig, 2019; Gudnadottir et al., 2019; Liaaen & Vik, 2019). Interestingly, their supervisors' leadership style (e.g., transformational leadership) and reaction to technological innovations influence health professionals' and day-care providers' performance toward patients (Sørly et al., 2019).

Regarding home health professionals' performance at home, pertinent work employs inductive approaches (e.g., ground theory) or adopts self-reported proxies of service performance (Gantert & McWilliam, 2004). Studies in the field explore aspects of health professionals' well-being, such as job satisfaction and quality of life (Arts et al., 2001; Kleiven et al., 2020), while also investigating how healthcare firms can build up home carers' customer-oriented behaviors and engagement with their role while decreasing their absenteeism and retention intentions (Kleiven et al., 2020; Afolabi et al., 2018).

In light of emerging communication technologies (e.g., app-based consumption), no research to date has looked into how service personnel can successfully deliver services and experiences in consumers' personal spaces and how firms should re-design and deploy their

workforce in this setting (Randall, 2008; Meesala & Paul, 2018; Sørly et al., 2019). The ramifications of service personnel's upgraded function in in-home service consumption (e.g., "brand ambassadors" and "commercial friends") demand more research scrutiny. There is also a scarcity of studies explaining how digital technologies impact the complexity and effectiveness of in-home services (e.g., home health care delivery) in the face of service personnel resistance (Guise & Wiig, 2017). Furthermore, the existing literature is limited to healthcare personnel and does not consider other professionals who provide services at home, such as housekeeping and cleaning personnel, plumbers, electricians, hairdressers, and chefs. Last, existing research focuses on the technological skills of service personnel (Kleiven, Ljunggren & Solbjør, 2020), and there is no adequate behavioral data on their emotional capabilities (e.g., empathy, discretion, and compassion) when interacting with consumers and their technologies at home.

***Service Providers*** - Service providers, are the third main actor of this framework. Service firms' organizational characteristics play a significant role in the successful provision of in-home services. Early quantitative research in non-profit healthcare services shows that a stable organizational environment combined with specialized strategy, formal centralized structures, and close control and supervision results in higher organizational effectiveness as reflected on employee turnover, number of customer complaints, and service quality (Laamanen et al., 1999; Schmid, 1993). On the other hand, commercial service providers are less effective and limit consumer empowerment because they operate in an unstable environment with limited resources, have a decentralized structure, and are task-oriented (McWilliam et al., 2001; Schmid, 1993). However, as private service providers become more sophisticated, customer-focused, and technologically literate, the above findings may no longer apply. Therefore, additional insights are needed to uncover the optimal organizational

characteristics and capabilities of commercial and non-profit firms for successful service provision at home.

Qualitative evidence from the field suggests that involving multidisciplinary teams in service provision (e.g., healthcare or housekeeping services), networking, navigating, and aligning social processes among team members enhances their communication and integration, and thus their effective functioning (Gantert & McWilliam, 2004). Moreover, it is critical for home service providers to establish service standards and monitor their implementations through customer feedback (Applebaum, Regan & Woodruff, 1994). To increase customer referrals, service firms need to apply marketing principles to meet customers' needs and desires through customer service and communication (Freitag, 1988).

Various technologies mediate interactions and relationships between service providers and consumers at home (e.g., videotext in the 1980s, the internet since the 1990s, and robots since the 2000s). Interview data show that firms with a high marketing orientation prioritize service excellence, whereas firms with a low marketing orientation prioritize cost containment when implementing new technologies (Dansky & Ajello, 2005). To offer their services in a digital (or phygital) way, firms should transform their systems to support in-home consumption and consider the quality of information they offer to consumers, the perceived sacrifice (time, effort, and money) consumers must make, along with their product attributes. Businesses should explore new ways to encourage the trial of adaptive service provisions to overcome consumers' resistance to third-party presence at home.

Regardless of the above evidence, there are several idiosyncrasies and gaps in the literature regarding the shifting mode of delivery and co-production of services at home, as well as the changing role of all actors involved, in light of new technologies (van Birgelen et al., 2012; Ipsos, 2021). First, as consumers transform into digital natives, there is scarce data on whether and how service firms adapt their technology capabilities and marketing strategies

to accommodate these changes. For example, many restaurants have added home delivery services during social distance restrictions, or many retailers such as supermarkets developed their e-shops and home delivery services. However, there is limited understanding of this transition and diversification of service delivery modes and how these changes impact the actors involved in in-home service consumption.

Second, there is no evidence about how service providers need to adjust their organizational culture and structure to meet increasing consumer expectations from the presence of their reps' access to their personal space. Third, increased levels of consumer participation elicited across diverse delivery channels (digital, phygital, physical) and modes (synchronous vs. asynchronous) of in-home service offerings necessitate co-production and co-creation of services (e.g., at home events) in their intimate and personal space via new technologies. Thus, more insights are needed on under which circumstances the increased level of customer engagement in tech-mediated (co-)production of services results in higher value creation in this context. Fourth, there is a shift of socially and publicly consumed services into a more socially distant/private mode and a relative dearth of research on the role of other consumers (e.g., family members and friends) and in-home service personnel in the production and consumption of in-home experiences.

## **6. Future Research Agenda**

Significant research progress has been made on in-home service consumption over the last decades, enriching our understanding of its nature and idiosyncrasies. InHoServ provides an integrated view of current knowledge and shortcomings of the extant in-home service consumption literature, serving as the starting point for the future research endeavors. Our research agenda identifies four areas of interest for researchers and raises several questions that can be addressed in the future.

### **6.1. Theorizing in-home service consumption**

Our systematic review reveals that prior studies (cluster 1) primarily draw on specific theories to explain changes in consumer behavior and individuals' identity enactment at home (i.e., domestication theory, theory of planned behavior, place attachment theory) (Debenedetti et al., 2014). However, these theories have yet to uncover how value emerges for consumers when consuming at home. The integration of value creation frameworks (e.g., service logic, service-dominant logic, and relational dialectics) in future research could help scholars understand how tech-facilitated in-home service exchanges shape value creation/destruction for different actors in this context (Tsiotsou, 2021). Revisiting the foundational propositions of service-dominant logic would enable researchers to delineate further the changing roles of consumers as value creators and hosts of service provision, as well as uncover how various delivery channels (digital vs. physical) and modes (i.e., synchronous vs. asynchronous) shape consumers' perceptions of value. Questions like the ones below need further attention: *What are the nature of in-home value and the role of various actors in value creation? Which individual-level, exchange-specific, and situational factors determine in-home value creation for different types of consumers (e.g., elderly)? How do the different delivery channels and modes shape service exchanges during "in-home service consumption"? Do the premises of traditional value creation frameworks (e.g., service logic) apply to in-home service exchanges? How is value created among actors through their daily practices (integration of resources) at home?*

We stress further the need for more insights on how various situational contingencies fueled by technological advances and social distance practices affect key actors' role in in-home service consumption. Such factors include: the shift from consuming services socially and publicly into a more socially distant/private mode; the lack of (or selected) presence of other consumers (e.g., family members and friends) in the production of in-home services and



experiences; firms' access to consumers' intimate and personal space and new norms of employee-customer interactions required during in-home exchanges; and consumers replace firms in becoming hosts of service exchanges.

Practice theory (Breadshell et al., 2019) integrated with environmental and sociological perspectives (Roster et al., 2016; Valentine, 1999) may add to the understanding of the above features and address some of the following questions: *Under which conditions (situational, market, individual-level) are consumers more prone to switch from consume-out (e.g., dining out) experiences into in-home ones? How does the shift to more private and intimate services (with no presence of other consumers) affect customer satisfaction and spending habits in at-home conspicuous experiences? How much is customer participation optimal across different types of in-home experiences (e.g., digitally vs. physically delivered)? What would make consumers less reluctant to allow firm reps into their personal space? What changes must service providers make to meet the increased consumer demand for in-home service consumption?*

Building on Van Birgelen et al.'s work (2012), who identified three types of desired benefits for "*in-home service consumption*", a classification of different in-home services and experiences is warranted to design better and customize service providers' diverse in-home offerings. Researchers could explore: 1) *development & learning-seeking* services and experiences (e.g., virtual workouts, online courses) that are orientated towards consumers' personal development, physical and mental well-being while also enhancing their novelty-seeking inclination; 2) *hedonic & social-seeking* services and experiences (e.g., virtual concerts, in-home cinema) where consumers seek fun, socializing and networking or try to reduce boredom; and, 3) *comfort & convenience-seeking* services (e.g., in-home pampering services), driven from consumers' inclination towards staying safe, maintaining privacy or serving their financial motivation. Future research could address questions like: *How should*

*service providers customize different types of in-home services and experiences? To what extent should home service personnel strive for co-creating with customers different in-home experiences? How does the co-presence of other consumers (e.g., family members and friends) affect satisfaction from different types of in-home services?*

## **6.2. The changing role of service providers**

The changing role of service providers lies in the DNA of in-home consumption (Van Birgelen et al., 2012). Despite some evidence that Cluster 2 offers, service providers' and consumers' roles in value creation spheres are altered, and consumers now become the 'hosts' of their service exchanges with firms. Prior service delivery models advance a supplier-based understanding of customer service where firms reach out to consumers to join their physical or virtual stores (Meuter et al., 2005); in an in-home context, firms need to access consumers' personal space to deliver their services physically (e.g., personal training).

For this to happen, service providers have to offer attractive service offerings and convey trust to consumers to gain access to their intimate space. To gain consumers' trust in this context and maintain their continuing commitment and loyalty, service brands must be even more cautious in keeping their promises (Montgomery et al., 2018). The role of service personnel in this process is central, and they should function as brand ambassadors.

Furthermore, service providers might have to personalize and customize further their offerings, departing from mass-oriented services (as presented in clusters 3 and 4) so that they access consumers' inner circle. Researchers in this area could address the following questions: *What type of service offerings and experiences would be more appealing among consumers for their homes? What is the role of service personnel in building rapport and intimacy with consumers to easier access their personal space? How can brands forge stronger relationships with their customers through their presence in their personal space? How should service providers organize and train their service personnel to deliver service*

*excellence in consumers' homes? How should service providers adjust their traditional social/store-based offerings to increase their wallet share in consumers? Does in-home consumption make individuals more or less prone to share their personal data with service providers?*

In-home service consumption could enable service providers to become more inclusive and offer their customized offerings to vulnerable consumers or consumers experiencing vulnerabilities (e.g., elderly and disabled consumers), as well-established in clusters 3 and 4. Theoretical frameworks integrating transformative service and service inclusion approaches could guide firms when designing their in-home service offerings. More research is needed to understand how in-home service consumption could emerge as a more inclusive business model for children, elderly and disabled consumers and the role of service personnel (Choi, Kand & Joung, 2017; Gudnadottir et al., 2019) to expand the transformative service stream. Due to their inability or high risk of accessing these services in a public/social setting, service providers could easier reach and support them. Future research could investigate questions like: *What type of in-home services and experiences would most appeal to consumers experiencing vulnerabilities? How can service providers alleviate the disruption and risks that elderly consumers might experience from giving third parties access to their personal space (e.g., privacy threat, embarrassment, deception)? How is transformative value (hedonic and eudaimonic well-being) created in in-home service consumption?*

### **6.3. Technology and service consumption at home**

Emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual try-on (VTO), virtual technology assistants (e.g., Alexa), virtual reality (VR), and robots have vastly changed consumer purchasing habits at home in the past few years (Qin et al., 2021). The emergence of digital technologies and the application of consumption renders the insights of Cluster 2

increasingly dated (Crewe et al., 2009). For instance, the functional, social, and experiential meanings that consumers derive from AR apps could be affected by the homescape (Fuentes & Svingstedt, 2017; Shove, 2007). Equally important, there is no evidence under which circumstances the integration of such technologies in the delivery of in-home services affects the levels of emotional attachment and psychological distance among consumers from such services.

Research on how technology empowers people in-home examines their goal achievement, self-expression in new forms, and spontaneous experiences (Bakardjieva, 2005). In this regard, future research should reconsider the role of domestication theory and how the consumption aspects of technology shape people's lives and at-home experiences (Silverston, 2005). In particular, consumers' reliance on and integration of technologies as an essential part of their lives constitute major research issues. Expanding the early insights from Palen and Hughes (2007), the social consequences of domestication need further exploration.

From a service providers' point of view, more insights are needed on how to integrate technology best when designing in-home services and experiences. Despite the insights from clusters 2, 3, and 4, some consumers may be reluctant to allow service personnel to access their personal space. On the other hand, others may prefer a more AI-driven delivery of in-home services (Chandler & Chen, 2015). For instance: *How do virtual mobile apps affect consumers' choice of newly emerged in-home experiences (e.g., digital socialization)? Can augmented reality apps facilitate the acceptance of in-home services among consumers? How can brands utilize technology to gamify learning and personal development activities at home? What is the impact of the extensive use of virtual apps on consumer satisfaction with in-home experiences? How can virtual reality apps reduce consumer boredom and reduce resistance among newcomers in the market? How can in-home robots influence consumers' experience, socialization processes, and well-being?*

Building on the premises of the transformative service stream (Anderson *et al.*, 2013), more research is needed around the role of technology as an enabler of appealing offerings to consumers experiencing vulnerabilities. Challenge point theory (Scassellati *et al.*, 2018) integrated with traditional perspectives (TAM and UTAUT) (Zainuddin *et al.*, 2016) may shed light on how vulnerable consumers (or those experiencing vulnerabilities) achieve an optimal level of learning how to use technologies at home depending on their level of difficulty (Clusters 2 and 4). Questions like the ones below are worth investigating: *How can firms integrate virtual reality in designing in-home offerings to support consumers experiencing vulnerabilities? Does the use of technology-mediated channels (instead of firm reps) minimize disruption (e.g., privacy threat, embarrassment) on vulnerable consumers' lives? Are vulnerable consumers more willing to co-create physically delivered service exchanges from service personnel at their place? How is the level of well-being influenced when consumers experiencing vulnerabilities interact with social robots or home service personnel?*

#### **6.4. The dark side of consumption at home.**

In the post-COVID-19 era, remote work policies tend to become the norm, interpersonal communication becomes increasingly tech-mediated, and consumers spend an increasing amount of time at home (Sheth, 2020; Zwanka & Buff, 2021). These policy changes and working trends are absent in all emerging clusters. Hence, scholars should further investigate the potential dark side of this behavioral paradigm shift for consumers' working and social lives.

As work-life boundaries become increasingly blurred, consumers use the same space for engaging in discrete activities such as working, learning, shopping, and socializing while eventually experiencing decreased utility (e.g., Zoom fatigue) (Venkatesh, 2020). In such circumstances, the lack of boundaries in the enactment of multiple identities and roles (e.g.,

as consumers and service personnel) might result in individuals engaging in re-constructing these identities (e.g., change the meaning of their job role) or decrease their motivation to perform their various roles (Petriglieri, 2011). At the same time, evidence shows that increased staying at home is often associated with disruptive psychological outcomes (e.g., anxiety, fatigue, boredom, and social isolation) (Venkatesh, 2020) and behavioral outcomes (e.g., domestic violence).

These significant changes in daily consumer lives generate important questions for marketing researchers: *How does long-term working from home affect consumer preferences and consumption patterns? Does work from home increase impulsive spending in specific product categories (e.g., hedonic services)? To what extent do boredom and fatigue, triggered by the enactment of various personal identities, reduce consumer tendency for in-home service consumption? How do consumption-related emotions from staying-at-home affect consumer purchases? To what extent does consumers' psychological mindset at home reduce their inclination to certain product categories (e.g., conspicuous consumption)? To what extent does the enactment of multiple roles influence consumers' psychological, physical, social, and financial well-being?*

## **7. Limitations and Concluding Remarks**

This study, like any other systematic review, suffers from several limitations. First, our keywords, process, and use of specific databases may have omitted potentially relevant studies. Second, because we concentrated on analyzing and integrating existing research, we did not provide research propositions connecting the themes and elements of InHoServ. Third, this review only includes studies published in peer-reviewed academic journals written in English; it excludes books, conference proceedings, and other "grey" literature, as well as articles written in other languages that may be relevant. However, we are confident that the

studies identified to represent the current body of the available literature on the subject, and as such, it may not be necessary or realistic to include every publication. Fourth, our proposed framework focuses on the main actors involved while treating techno-actors as mediators. Integrating other actors such as family members and friends could allow future researchers to expand and upgrade InHoServ.

In conclusion, we aimed to provide a better understanding of in-home service consumption by conducting a systematic review of the extant literature published in peer-reviewed journal articles from various fields, including marketing, environmental psychology, sociology, and medicine, among others. To that end, we provide a comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and multi-actor framework. We hope that by synthesizing and critically evaluating existing research on in-home service consumption, we have advanced our knowledge on the topic and improved cross-fertilization of theories and concepts into new research avenues that will broaden the boundaries of this emerging research stream.

**Acknowledgment.** The authors wish to convey their deepest appreciation to the guest editors of the special issue (Prof. Justin Paul, Prof. Demetris Vrontis, and Prof. Kalpesh Desa) and the three reviewers for the considerable effort and time they have invested in providing guidance and constructive comments for improving the quality of our paper.

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