Bibliometric Review of Research on Tourism Marketing, 1979-2023

Khadija Hassen Mehrez[1]

[1] Jazan university. kmehrez@jazanu.edu.sa

Abstract

This research presents a bibliometric analysis of tourism marketing publications from 1979 to 2022, examining 772 articles from the Scopus database using R-Studio and VOSviewer. It focuses on prominent figures, institutions, and theoretical frameworks, with specific emphasis on destination marketing, sustainable tourism, and data analytics. The study underscores the substantial contributions of the USA, UK, and Australia, advocating for more global research collaboration. The findings offer crucial insights for tourism professionals and policymakers guiding strategic marketing approaches, particularly in sustainable tourism. Utilizing bibliometric methods over traditional qualitative ones, the study provides an unbiased and comprehensive view of the field's evolution. However, it is limited by its reliance on Scopus and potential methodological constraints in fully interpreting its findings and implications.

Keywords: Tourism Marketing, Bibliometric analysis, R-Studio, VOSviewer

Resumen

Esta investigación presenta un análisis bibliométrico de publicaciones sobre marketing turístico desde 1979 hasta 2022, examinando 772 artículos de la base de datos Scopus utilizando herramientas de RStudio. Se centra en figuras prominentes, instituciones y

marcos teóricos, con un énfasis en marketing de destinos, turismo sostenible y análisis de datos. El estudio subraya las contribuciones sustanciales de los EE. UU., el Reino Unido y China, abogando por una mayor colaboración de investigación global. Los hallazgos ofrecen conocimientos cruciales para profesionales del turismo y responsables de políticas, particularmente en turismo sostenible, guiando enfoques de marketing estratégico. Utilizando métodos bibliométricos sobre los cualitativos tradicionales, el estudio proporciona una visión imparcial y completa de la evolución del campo. Sin embargo, está limitado por su dependencia de Scopus y posibles limitaciones metodológicas para interpretar completamente sus hallazgos e implicaciones.

Palabras clave: Marketing Turístico, **análisis** Bibliométrico, R-studio,VOSviewer

1   Introduction

Tourism marketing, as defined by Grönroos (2006) , and adopted by the World Tourism Organization, emphasizes a customer-centric approach integral to organizational functions and processes. This strategy revolves around delivering value through tourism products and services to meet customers' and stakeholders' expectations. It is a field focused on facilitating customers' value-generating processes and equipping organizations with tools and processes for effectively influencing behavior toward their goals(Grönroos, 2006; Sharpley & Pearce, 2007).

This rapidly expanding research area delves into understanding consumer behavior, analyzing market trends, and developing effective strategies within the tourism industry(Buhalis, 2000; Fyall & Garrod, 2005; Li & Petrick, 2008). Integrating insights from economics, psychology, sociology, and communication, its primary objective is to enhance marketing effectiveness by identifying key factors that influence tourist behavior and devising strategies that adapt to their evolving needs(Amalia & Hanika, 2021; Jafari et al., 2000; Leung, 2002; Tribe, 1997; Wang et al., 2002).

Over time, various studies on tourism marketing have explored areas like destination image, experiential, and sustainable tourism. The field's growth has brought new challenges and opportunities for marketing professionals, highlighting the ongoing importance of research

in this sector. Academic journals and scholars regularly feature and assess pioneering research, further advancing the understanding of tourism marketing (Antoniadis et al., 2020; Kim & Law, 2015; Mwinuka, 2017; Tsiotsou & Ratten, 2010).

Despite the considerable and swift expansion of literature concerning tourism marketing, this study employs bibliometric analysis to offer a novel and expansive perspective on the field, distinguishing itself as one of the few, if not the only, research endeavors to address the discipline in its entirety. Unlike conventional studies that often segment tourism marketing into isolated facets, this approach utilizes a vast dataset to visually map the entire landscape and its progression over time. By doing this, it provides a unique vantage point from which overarching trends and shifts within the domain can be observed. This holistic perspective is especially vital as it facilitates the identification of key trends, collaboration patterns, and thematic shifts, thereby setting the stage for the research questions that aim to explore these dimensions in depth. This methodology not only addresses a significant gap in the existing literature, which typically focuses on singular aspects of tourism marketing but also lays a foundation for future research to build upon.

In specific, the study endeavors to answer the following research questions (RQs):

1. How have researchers' authorship, affiliations, and characteristics in tourism evolved over the past four decades?

2. What are the evolving trends and knowledge base in tourism marketing research?

3. What potential research areas or themes can be identified within tourism marketing?

2   Literature Review

Tourism marketing research is a dynamic field that continuously adapts to the travel industry's changing landscape and traveler preferences. This literature review encapsulates the progression and current state of the field, acknowledging both recent and foundational studies. A significant framework is the Tourism Marketing Knowledge Grid, which categorizes marketing-related tourism studies and underscores the areas for further emphasis, such as innovative hypothesis generation and big data use (Dolnicar & Ring, 2014). Another contribution extends this understanding through a co-citation analysis, illustrating

the evolution of foundational knowledge areas in tourism studies, revealing the dynamic nature of these intellectual sources over two decades (Koseoglu et al., 2019).

Bridging these diverse findings, recent research converges on four pivotal themes: destination marketing, sustainability, digital marketing, and the transformative influence of technology(Chu et al., 2022; Leong et al., 2021; Stepchenkova & Mills, 2010; Tsiotsou & Ratten, 2010). Within destination marketing, certain studies have delved into the evolving perceptions of destination images and their consequential impacts on tourist behavior(Chu et al., 2022; Ivanka et al., 2023). Concurrently, other inquiries have dissected destination categorization and sustainable smart tourism development(Shafiee et al., 2019; Zhong et al., 2023), thus expanding on Pike's seminal research regarding the limitations of destination image (Pike, 2002, 2007).

In the realm of digital marketing, the seismic shifts brought about by the digital revolution are underscored(Tsiotsou & Ratten, 2010),paving the way for a proliferation of research on digital marketing strategies and tools (Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa, 2021; Saura et al., 2020). This includes in-depth explorations of social media marketing and the role of travel vlogs in the digital tourism marketing landscape(Dewantara et al., 2023; Mkwizu, 2019).

Sustainability, a constant theme in tourism research, has seen studies delving into eco-conscious consumer behavior (Han, 2021), the effects of smart tourism on sustainable development (El Archi et al., 2023), and the difficulties of sustainable rural homestays(Janjua et al., 2021). These varied research areas intersect at the point of sustainable development and tourism marketing, underlining this field's intricate and multi-faceted nature.

Numerous bibliometric studies have provided valuable insight into various facets of tourism marketing, and Key areas of focus include journal publication analyses(Leong et al., 2021; Mulet-Forteza et al., 2018), assessment of research quality in tourism (Hall, 2011; Sigala et al., 2021; Singh et al., 2022), and exploration of sustainable tourism trends (Cavalcante et al., 2021; Moyle et al., 2020; Niñerola et al., 2019; Pahrudin et al., 2022; Ruhanen et al., 2015). Specialized topics such as Artificial Intelligence (Knani et al., 2022) and the impact of social media on tourism (Muritala et al., 2020; Nusair et al., 2019), have also been extensively studied. Table 1 summarizes and presents the most recent and highly influential bibliometric studies in tourism. These reviews reveal a rich tapestry of emerging topics and trends.

For example,Liu et al. (2023) provided a detailed bibliometric and visual analysis of hospitality and tourism marketing research from 2000-2020. Their study highlights emerging topics such as "economic behavior," "customer orientation," "search engine marketing," and "tourist patterns," suggesting new directions for theoretical development in tourism marketing. They noted a higher frequency of research in tourism compared to hospitality and identified the most popular and emerging keywords across the studied period, revealing trends and shifts in focus areas. These newly emerged keywords, such as big data and social media, are closely related to internet development and may remain popular for some time.

Pahrudin et al. (2022) explored integrating tourism management and marketing with sustainable tourism practices. Their bibliometric analysis of literature from the Web of Science database highlighted the significance of destination management organizations, stakeholders, and government roles in enhancing sustainable tourism practices. They observed a thematic evolution in tourism management and marketing toward sustainability, identifying a transition in focus from generic management studies to more specialized areas such as ecosystem services, models, and conservation. The study also pointed out the increasing importance of keywords like 'sustainable tourism' and 'decision making' in recent years, indicating a shift toward strategic and long-term planning in tourism management. This research underscores the necessity for ongoing adaptation in tourism policies to accommodate sustainability trends.

Furthering this line of inquiry, Cavalcante et al. (2021) conducted a bibliometric analysis to examine sustainable practices in tourism marketing, using VOSviewer software to analyze data from the Web of Science. They identified a strong growth in publications since 2010, with keywords such as "sustainability" and "sustainable development" leading the discourse. The research highlighted how sustainability has begun influencing consumer behavior, with increasing attention on loyalty, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. Their findings suggest that the intersection of sustainability and marketing in tourism is growing and becoming crucial for developing marketing strategies. This study provides valuable insights into how sustainability is shaping the future directions of tourism marketing.

Similarly, Niñerola et al. (2019) provide a comprehensive overview of sustainability issues within the tourism sector, analyzing the prolific growth of the literature and highlighting key publications that have shaped the field. Their research identified a robust growth in literature, with sustainability emerging as a pivotal focus for both business strategies and destination management. The analysis highlighted the shift in thematic emphasis from general concepts like "environmental management" and "tourism management" to more focused terms such as "sustainable tourism development." This transition illustrates a broader integration of sustainability into all facets of tourism, emphasizing economic, social, and environmental dimensions rather than merely environmental concerns. Keyword such as "ecotourism" has become prevalent, noted in 34% of the articles, showcasing its centrality in current tourism research. The study also observed the evolving relevance of terms, with earlier keywords like "environmental impact" and "nature conservation" now part of a comprehensive approach that includes significant internal business strategies. This reflects a deeper integration of sustainability into the core operational strategies of tourism businesses, suggesting a shift towards a holistic view of sustainability in the industry.

Another line of research focuses on the analysis of individual tourism journals' contributions. For instance, Leong et al. (2021)offered a bibliometric review of the Tourism Review journal (TR), celebrating its 75th anniversary and focusing on publications from 2001 to 2019. The study conducted performance analyses and science mapping to trace thematic evolution and key areas of interest, such as destination management, consumer behavior, and tourism management. They noted new interests in smart and rural tourism topics, indicating the broadening of research focus within the field. This study also underscored the importance of evolving tourism policies and academic focus to better align with emerging trends and stakeholder needs.

Likewise, Mulet-Forteza et al. (2018) analyzed all publications in the Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing since its inception. Their study highlights the journal's influence in the fields of marketing, tourism, leisure, and hospitality management. They noted a strong interdisciplinary nature within the journal, underlining its role in shaping research agendas and trends in tourism marketing. Keywords such as "destination image," "satisfaction,"

"travel motivation," and "marketing" were among the most cited, indicating the journal's core areas of ongoing interest and research.

Additionally, Koseoglu et al. (2019) examined intellectual connections in tourism studies using co-citation analysis to map the evolution of knowledge domains within the Annals of Tourism Research over the past two decades. They observed significant shifts from traditional topics such as tourism impacts and planning to more dynamic themes like backpacker tourism and mobilities. Initially, the study identified key knowledge domains from 1998 to 2002, with a substantial focus on authenticity, tourist experiences, tourism planning, resident attitudes, tourism impacts, and the destination lifecycle. These early themes underscore the central topics of interest and their clustering in scholarly discussions during that era. As the research advanced through subsequent five-year periods, shifts were noted. Domains like resident attitudes and tourism impacts declined in centrality, making room for other themes to merge into broader subject clusters—such as lifecycle merging into fundamentals—or to gain prominence, such as consumer behavior and marketing, reflecting a trend towards integrating consumer insights into tourism research. In contrast, themes such as authenticity and tourist experiences continued to attract significant attention, underscoring their enduring relevance in tourism studies. The study also highlighted a growing interconnection among various research themes, indicating a shift towards more interdisciplinary approaches within tourism studies. This trend is characterized by blurred boundaries between traditional and emerging topics, adapting to new theoretical and practical insights.

Overall, Koseoglu et al. (2019) detailed and analyzed the subject clustering, connections, and developments across twelve major knowledge domains—including authenticity, tourist experiences, tourism planning, resident attitudes, tourism impacts, tourism area lifecycle, consumer behavior, backpacker tourism, performance approach, paradigms in tourism, dark tourism, and mobility—over four distinct periods (1998–2002, 2003–2007, 2008–2012, and 2013–2017). The study serves as a crucial examination of how intellectual landscapes in tourism studies evolve and highlights the ongoing need to reassess research focuses within the field.

Other bibliometric studies have investigated more contemporary facets of the tourism industry. For instance, Tolosa et al. (2021) examined the impact of the sharing economy on tourist accommodation, particularly through platforms like Airbnb, with a special focus on its interplay with the real estate market in tourist destinations. Ortega-Fraile et al. (2018) expanded on the pivotal role of mobile phones within the tourism sector. Their review of relevant literature noted that "geographic location" and "information services" were frequently discussed topics, reflecting the critical adoption of mobile technology across various tourism stakeholders. The study also highlighted the significant focus on human behavior related to travel behaviors, choices of tourism companies, and destinations, which are extensively covered in scholarly articles. Conversely, it's noteworthy that subjects such as social media, management of tourism enterprises, and augmented reality are among the least explored in the field.

While these quantitative review articles provide valuable insights, they primarily focus on specific topics such as hospitality and sustainability(Liu et al., 2023; Pahrudin et al., 2022) or are limited to publications from individual journals (e.g., Tourism Review, Annals of Tourism Research) (Koseoglu et al., 2019; Leong et al., 2021) .These studies represent only a segment of the broader field of tourism marketing. Recognizing this gap, there is a pressing need for a comprehensive bibliometric review encompassing the entire spectrum. The study aims to address this deficiency by providing a more holistic analysis.

Table 1. Summary of Bibliometric Studies in Tourism Marketing related topic

Author	Domain/Search Strategy	Data Source	Software	Period	Documents Examined	Examined Attributes
Liu et al. (2023)	Marketing	Web of Science	VOSviewer	2000 - 2020	3942	Descriptive analysis collaboration network analyses
Pahrudin et al. (2022)	Tourism Management Tourism Marketing Sustainable Tourism.	Web of Science	R program	Up to January 2022	528	Multidimensional scaling analysis Correspondence analysis

Cavalcant e et al. (2021)	Sustainability and Tourism	Web of Science	VOSview er	1900-2020	694	bibliographic coupling and Keyword trends
Leong et al. (2021)	Tourism Review	Scopus	VOSview er	-2001 2019	693	Keyword analysis/topics analysis/network analysis
Koseoglu et al. (2019)	Annal of Tourism Research	Scopus	VOSview er BibExcel	1998 - 2017	1393	Co-citations analysis/network relationships/sourc e knowledge mapping
Niñerola et al. (2019)	Tourism sustainability Sustainable Tourism	Scopus	VOSview er	1987-2018	2647	Descriptive data analysis/network analysis
Mulet-Forteza et al. (2018)	Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	Scopus	VOSview er	1992-2017	1192	Impact, comparison, classification

Source: author elaboration

3. Materials And Methods

Bibliometric analysis has been used to examine scientific documents related to various domains, including the tourism sector (Cavalcante et al., 2021; Koseoglu et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2023). It is a fully structured process that requires collecting, extracting, and purifying metadata from a scientific literature base, leading to descriptive and network analysis (Donthu et al., 2021).

For this study, we chose Scopus, one of the most important bibliographic databases, well-regarded for its broad spectrum of scholarly articles across diverse disciplines. Launched by Elsevier in 2004, Scopus is recognized as a premier platform for academic research and discovery. It started with 27 million records from 1966 to 2004 and has grown to over 76 million records covering publications from 1788 to 2019, thus establishing itself as one of the most comprehensive bibliographic and citation databases available (Baas et al., 2020;

Schotten et al., 2019). Moreover, while approximately 40% of bibliometric studies in tourism have employed the Web of Science, a majority, 60%, have opted for Scopus. However, previous research often narrowly focused on specific journals or topics within tourism, which limited the scope of analysis and reduced the potential to fully capture the sector's complexity and diversity.

Consequently, we collected metadata spanning from 1979 to 2023, targeting articles with the keywords "tourism" and "marketing." Our focus was restricted to articles written in English and published in peer-reviewed journals, deliberately excluding other scientific outputs such as books and conference papers. The initial dataset of 784 records was refined to 772 articles after a preliminary review process that eliminated reviews and bibliometric studies. These articles were thoroughly reviewed and organized using an Excel spreadsheet, which facilitated the extraction of 12 EIDs, as shown in Figure 1. Data analysis was conducted using the bibliometric tools available in the R-packages (Biblioshiny) and VOSviewer. These tools offer greater flexibility and a variety of options for conducting performance analysis and science mapping(Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; van Eck & Waltman, 2010). The results produced crucial insights for our subsequent analysis, as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 1. Flow diagram of the search strategy
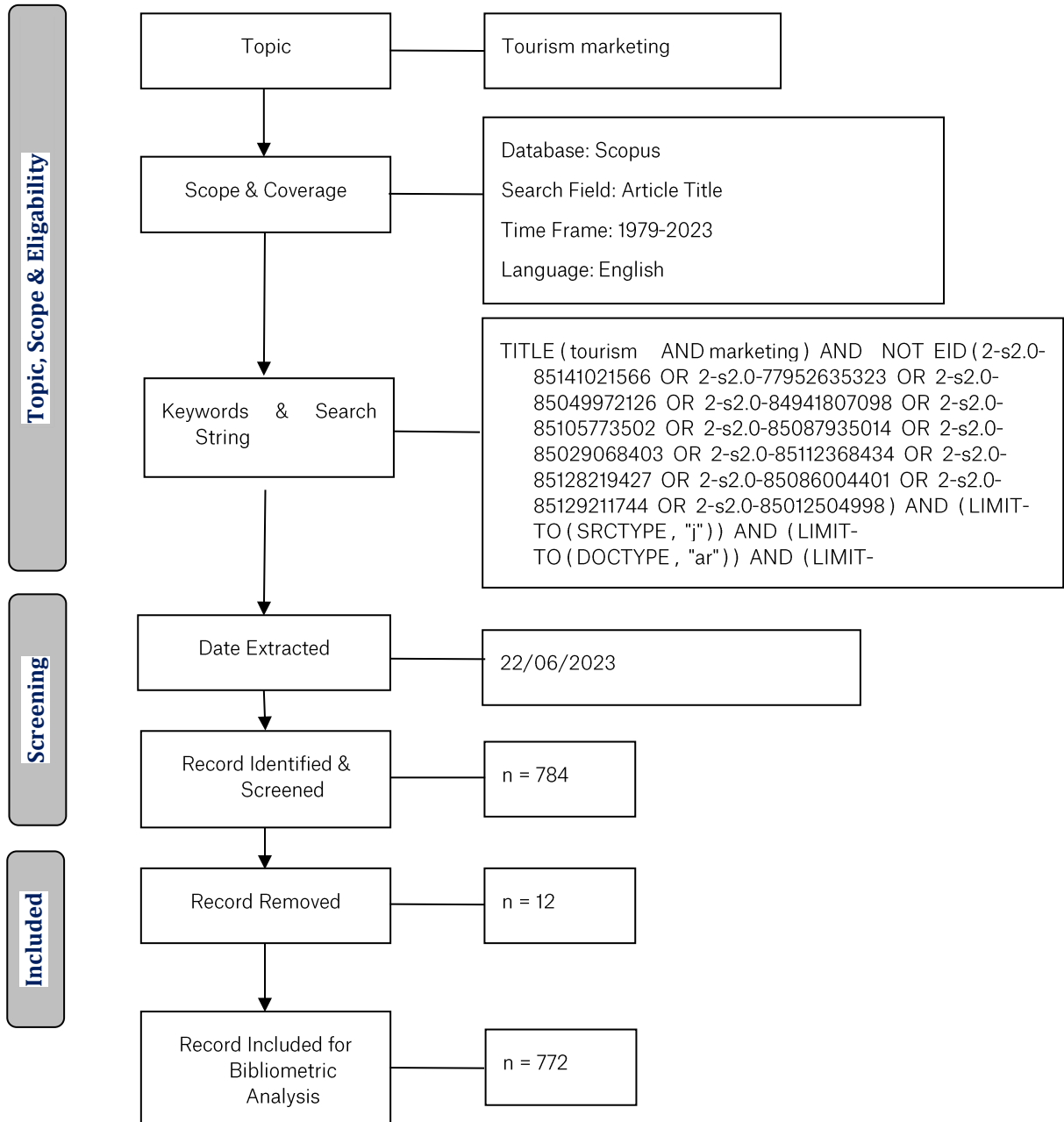
Source: Zakaria et al. (2021)

Figure 2. Main information

Source: R-Studio Software

4. Results And Discussion

In the upcoming results section, we will perform an in-depth and detailed analysis of the tourism marketing research field, aiming to answer the RQs introduced earlier. By meticulously aligning our investigation with the established RQs, we hope to provide a nuanced and detailed examination of the tourism marketing research landscape. This approach is expected to produce significant insights and contributions that will be valuable to academics, practitioners, and policymakers involved in this field of study.

4.1 Main Information And Publication Trend

In the field of tourism marketing research, the interplay of authorship styles is evident in the analysis of 772 papers. A clear preference for collaborative authorship emerges, with teams averaging 2.41 authors per paper, which reflects the complexity of the field that often requires contributions from small to medium-sized groups. Individual authorship also holds its ground, with 214 papers authored independently (193 authors of single-authored documents), indicating that a substantial portion of the academic community still engages in solitary research endeavors. The degree of collaboration, calculated at a notable 72% using

the formula $DC = \frac{Nm}{(Nm+Ns)}$ where *Nm* represents the number of multi-authored papers and *Ns* the number of single-authored papers, reaffirms the predominance of teamwork in the field (Subramanyam, 1983). Although international co-authorship makes up a modest 16.19% of the work, implying a low degree of global academic interaction, the intra-national collaborative relationship dominates the authorship landscape. Collectively, these patterns of authorship paint a picture of a scholarly environment that highly values both the deep insights of independent research and the broadened perspective achieved through collaborative efforts, with a notable leaning towards domestic over international research alliances in tourism marketing research.

Building on this context, Figure 3 visually represents the publication trends and citation impacts within the tourism marketing research field from 1979 to 2023, adding a historical dimension to the authorship patterns discussed earlier. This visual portrayal captures the field's development over time, demonstrating a rise in scholarly output starting in the 1980s and culminating in a surge to 79 papers by 2022. Such a trend, including a particularly influential paper in 2013 authored by Hays et al. (2013), which received around 556 citations, signifies the increasing academic attention and impact of tourism marketing research. This historical analysis, coupled with the depiction of Lotka's law in Figure 4 — where a small percentage of authors (12%) are shown to contribute a substantial portion of the published work (25%) while the majority author two or fewer papers — highlights significant variations in individual authorship productivity. Together, these insights illuminate the evolving dynamics of contribution and influence within the domain of tourism marketing research, providing a concise overview that addresses the 'authorship' aspect of RQ1 and underscores the prevailing trends and nature of contributions within the field. In the following sections, we will discuss the characteristics of the authors, such as the impact of their publications, distribution across various outlets, affiliations, and geographic and scientific mapping.

Figure 3. Yearly publication and time trend
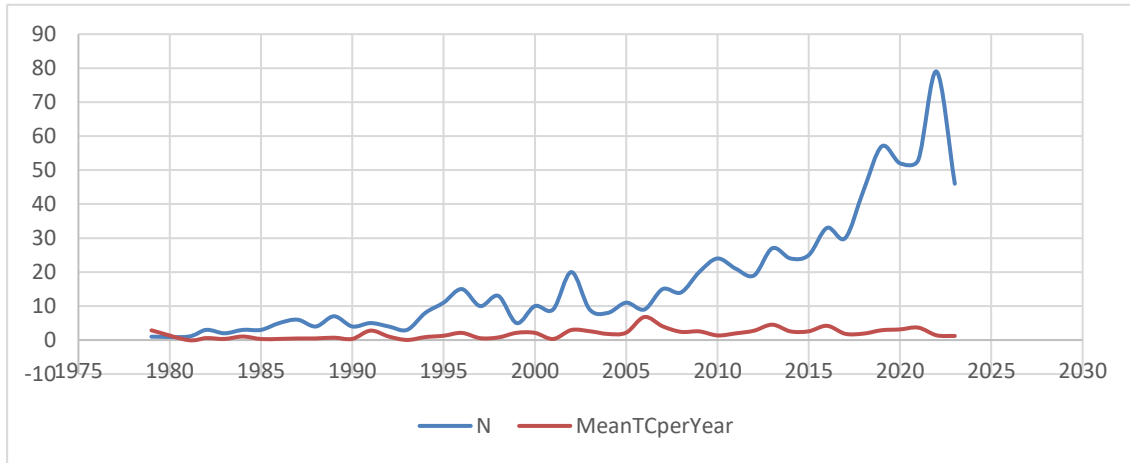
Source: Author Elaboration

Figure 4. Author productivity through Lotka's Law
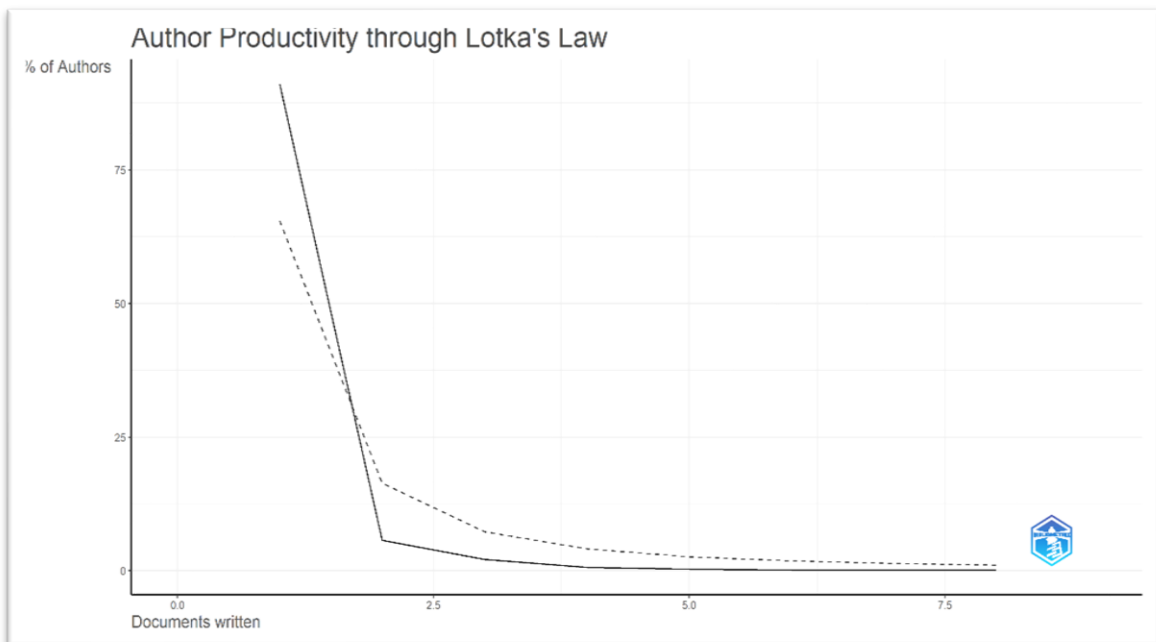
Source: R-Studio software

4.2 Most-Contributing Authors

This section delves into the significant impact of the most highly cited documents in the field. These documents have pioneered the exploration of tourism marketing and its applications, serving as foundational texts guiding current and future research trajectories. The prolific citations of the articles listed in Table 2 underscore their substantive contributions to the burgeoning fields of tourism marketing, becoming seminal due to their

novelty, depth, and alignment with contemporary technological advancements and the evolving needs of the tourism sector.

For instance, Hays et al. (2013) Investigate how top national destination marketing organizations (DMOs) strategically employ social media to market their destinations. They find that while social media offers a cost-effective platform for reaching a global audience, the adoption and strategic use of social media by DMOs are still largely experimental and vary widely among organizations. The analysis revealed that although all DMOs acknowledge the potential of social media for marketing purposes, there is no consistent approach or strategy across the board, and many are still in the process of developing effective practices. The research suggests a framework of the best practices for social media use in tourism marketing, recommending a more strategic and integrated approach to these platforms. This includes tailoring content to specific audiences, engaging more actively with users, and continuously evaluating the impact of social media activities on tourism promotion.

Similarly,Wang et al. (2002) explore the concept of virtual communities within the tourism industry. The paper emphasizes the importance of understanding the essence and needs of virtual community members for effective tourism marketing. It highlights that virtual communities are characterized by shared interests and goals, and they serve as platforms where individuals can engage in activities like information exchange, social interaction, and entertainment. The study presents a detailed framework that defines virtual communities by focusing on their operational elements, such as people, purpose, policy, and computer systems. It suggests that the success of a virtual tourist community largely depends on how well these elements are understood and managed by travel organizations. Furthermore, the paper discusses the potential of virtual communities in transforming traditional business functions, particularly marketing and sales, through enhanced customer relationships and innovative service delivery. Additionally, the authors propose a model to address virtual community members' functional, social, and psychological needs, arguing that satisfying these needs is crucial for sustaining and growing virtual communities in the tourism sector.

Following a similar theme, Huang et al. (2016)focus on the utilization of 3D virtual worlds for tourism marketing. The study explores how virtual reality (VR) technologies can be effectively

integrated into tourism marketing strategies to enhance user engagement and influence travel intentions. The paper highlights the growing use of immersive virtual environments, such as Second Life, to simulate tourism destinations and interact with potential tourists. The researchers developed a framework that integrates the Technology Acceptance Model and Self-Determination Theory to assess how tourists perceive and interact with these virtual environments. Key findings include the significance of perceived usefulness and enjoyment in influencing tourists' behavioral intentions to visit a real-world destination after experiencing its virtual counterpart. The study also emphasizes the importance of psychological needs such as autonomy and relatedness in enhancing users' virtual experiences, which in turn positively affects their travel intentions.

Additionally, Buhalis and Foerste (2015) explore the adoption of social context mobile (SoCoMo) marketing as a novel framework for the travel and tourism industry. This paper details how SoCoMo marketing leverages advanced information and communication technologies for the dynamic personalization of travel experiences through mobile devices, enhancing engagement and satisfaction. The framework underscores the potential of SoCoMo marketing to transform traditional marketing strategies by utilizing real-time data on user preferences and environmental conditions. Moreover, the study addresses the implications of SoCoMo marketing, including the challenges it presents, such as privacy concerns, the dependence on technology adoption, and the need for extensive market penetration to be effective.

Likewise, Okumus et al. (2007)examine how local and international cuisines are used to enhance the marketing of tourism destinations, focusing specifically on Hong Kong and Turkey. The study highlights how these destinations strategically employ their culinary strengths in distinct ways to attract tourists, arguing that effectively incorporating local and international cuisines into destination marketing can significantly enhance a destination's attractiveness, providing a competitive edge in the global tourism market.

More influential works with good citation rankings are also listed, such as those by Hudson and Ritchie (2006), who discuss the significant influence of films on tourism destinations. They identify various marketing strategies that can effectively promote destinations featured in films, including proactive efforts to encourage filming, generating media publicity,

marketing the film location post-production, and leveraging film tourism potential through peripheral marketing activities. A notable finding from their study is the strong correlation between proactive marketing efforts and the success in attracting film tourists. This highlights the need for destinations to collaborate with film producers and continuously optimize the tourism benefits derived from films. The study suggests that film tourism presents an underutilized opportunity with substantial economic impacts for destinations.

Chon (1991) investigates how tourists' travel experiences modify the image of a tourist destination. Using a traveler behavior model, the study found that travel experience positively altered tourists' perceptions regarding safety, scenery, and the overall attractiveness of the destination. Similarly, Williams (2006) emphasizes the importance of experiential marketing in understanding and advancing marketing theories and practices specific to tourism and hospitality. The paper provides a framework for effectively implementing experiential marketing strategies within these industries.

Finally, the research by Echtner and Prasad (2003) delves into the content of Third World tourism marketing, uncovering how these destinations are often depicted using persistent myths: the unchanged, the unrestrained, and the uncivilized. These portrayals, deeply entrenched in colonial discourse, serve to maintain existing geopolitical power structures by echoing past colonial relationships. In parallel, Bramwell and Rawding (1996) examine the tourism marketing images of old industrial cities in England–Birmingham, Bradford, Manchester, Sheffield, and Stoke-on-Trent. Their study identifies a blend of standardized and distinctive tourism imagery influenced by each city's unique geographical, economic, and cultural characteristics. The research discusses the influence of various academic disciplines in understanding place marketing, stressing the need for an integrated, multidisciplinary approach to analyze how tourism images are constructed and the factors shaping them. This includes how cities adapt and promote their images to attract tourism, balancing modernity with cultural heritage to reshape economic futures while retaining local identity.

Collectively, the significant citation counts of these papers reflect their successful alignment with key technological advancements and their application in the tourism sector. The titles

of these works clearly signal their engagement with complex and pressing issues relevant to developing tourism destinations and improving the overall tourist experience. These articles surpass the typical academic inquiries by comprehensively reviewing the existing literature and proposing new avenues for continued research. As a result, they serve as critical reference points within their research communities, highlighting the vital and immediate nature of the challenges they explore.

Table 2. Most cited papers

Paper	DOI	TC	TC/Year	NormTC
Hays et al. (2013), **social media as a destination marketing tool: its use by national tourism organizations.**	10.1080/13683500.2012.662215	556	46.33	10.22
Wang et al. (2002), **Defining the virtual tourist community: Implications for tourism marketing**	10.1016/S0261-5177(01)00093-0	332	14.44	4.89
Buhalis and Foerste (2015), **SoCoMo marketing for travel and tourism: Empowering co-creation of value.**	10.1016/j.jdmm.2015.04.001	321	32.1	12.46
Okumus et al. (2007), **Incorporating local and international cuisines in the marketing of tourism destinations: The cases of Hong Kong and Turkey**	10.1016/j.tourman.2005.12.020	320	17.78	4.40
Huang et al. (2016), **Exploring the Implications of Virtual Reality Technology in Tourism Marketing: An Integrated Research Framework**	10.1002/jtr.2038	316	35.11	8.38
Hudson and Ritchie (2006), **Promoting Destinations via Film Tourism: An Empirical Identification of Supporting Marketing Initiatives**	10.1177/0047287506286720	315	16.58	2.44
Chon (1991), **Tourism destination image modification process: Marketing Implications**	10.1016/0261-5177(91)90030-W	304	8.94	3.21

|				
Williams (2006), **Tourism and hospitality marketing: fantasy, feeling, and fun.**	10.1108/09596110610681520	284	14.95	2.20
Echtner and Prasad (2003), **The context of third world tourism marketing.**	10.1016/S0160-7383(03)00045-8	278	12.64	4.85
Bramwell and Rawding (1996), **Tourism marketing images of industrial cities**	10.1016/0160-7383(95)00061-5	254	8.76	4.15

Notes :TC=total citations; NormTC= Normalized TC

Source: Author elaboration

4.3 Affiliations and Geographic Scientific Production

Our dataset encompasses 772 publications from researchers across 634 universities globally. The contributions from the top 10 institutions, depicted in Figure 5, account for 17% of the total research output. The foremost contributors include Griffith University (Australia), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (Hong Kong), and Bournemouth University (England).

Figure 5. Most relevant affiliations
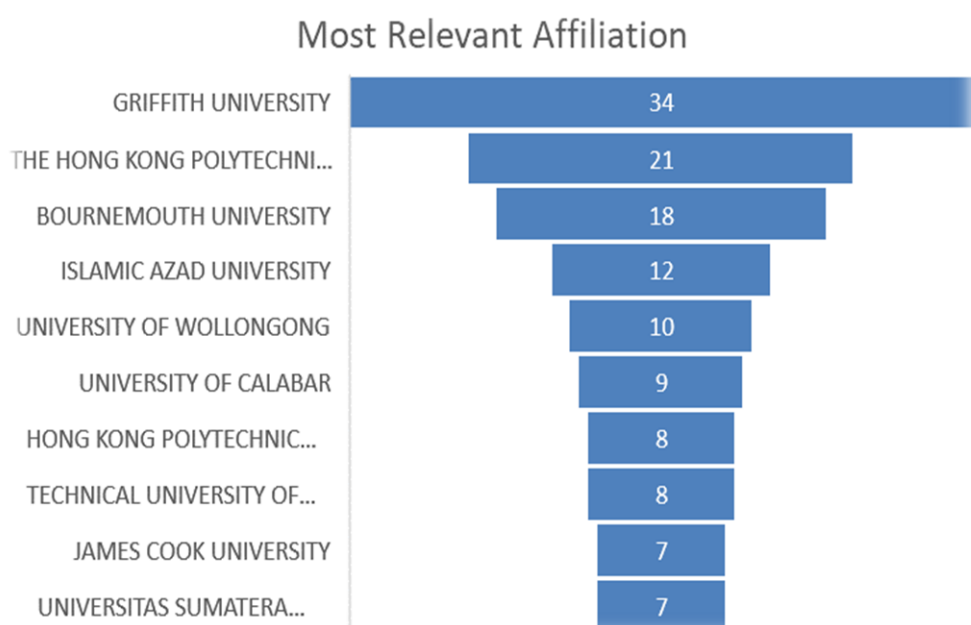
Source: Author Elaboration

Table 3 and Figure 6 illustrate the worldwide distribution of tourism marketing research based on various bibliometric indicators, ranking countries according to their academic contributions in this field. The United Kingdom stands out as the top contributor, with 147 publications and 2734 citations. The USA leads with 209 publications, the highest number, but with a total of 2279 citations, resulting in a lower average citation per publication compared to New Zealand and Italy. Despite having far fewer publications, with 28 each, these countries show higher citation rates. Canada is noteworthy with 44 publications and 688 citations, achieving an average citation rate of 86, significantly surpassing other countries, indicating a higher quality or relevance in its tourism marketing research. This data highlights the UK's significant role and the impactful presence of Canadian research in the field.

Other significant contributors include China, New Zealand, Italy, and Spain, each with a notable count of publications and citations. Figure 6 also maps the collaborative networks among countries, showing five primary clusters indicating the strongest research partnerships. The first cluster (red with 14 countries) includes the UK, Greece, Italy, and Spain. The second cluster (green with 9 countries) features China, the USA, and Japan. The third and fourth clusters (blue and yellow, each containing 7 countries) include collaborations among France, Finland, and New Zealand in the blue cluster and Egypt, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia in the yellow cluster. The final cluster (purple with 4 countries) groups Australia, Canada, Austria, and Germany together. The UK, the US, and Australia lead in collaboration strength, with link strengths of 5810, 4929, and 4371, respectively.

This comprehensive overview underscores the broad interest in tourism marketing research globally, influenced by geographical and economic factors, with technologically advanced countries contributing significantly due to their substantial resources and research infrastructure. The inclusion of nations like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Malaysia indicates a fresh and diverse interest in tourism marketing research, highlighting the field's growth and diversification, with a wide array of countries shaping the development and application of tourism marketing.

Table 3. Top countries' scientific production

Country	TC	Freq	Average Article Citations
United Kingdom	2734	147	60.8
USA	2279	209	45.6
Australia	1758	121	41.9
China	1289	169	21.1
New Zealand	710	28	54.6
Canada	688	44	86
Italy	426	28	47.3
Spain	353	69	15.3
Greece	338	48	21.1

Notes: TC=total citations; Freq=total publications

Source: Author elaboration

**Figure 6. Countries Collaboration Network**
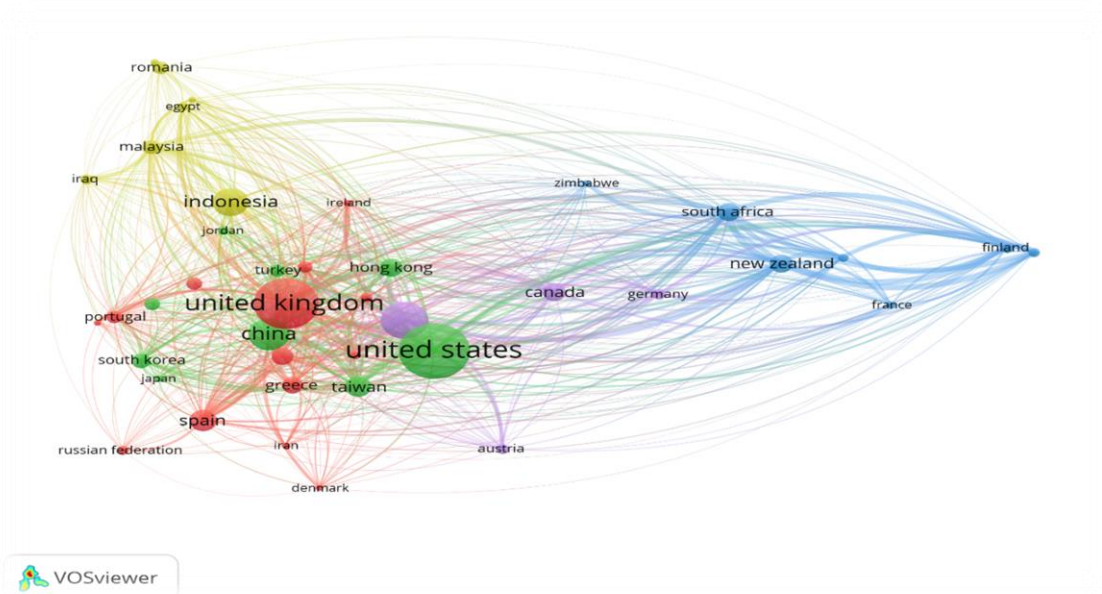
4.4 Most Frequent Sources

This section focused on the interconnections among journals as depicted in tourism marketing research (Fig.7). The nodes in this analysis symbolize both the activity and volume

of published papers. The findings unveil seven distinct clusters: the first red cluster encompasses 31 items, the second sky green cluster comprises 12 items, the third blue cluster contains 11 sources, and the fourth yellow cluster includes 6 items, while the last three clusters (purple, Orange and Cyan) each consist of 4 items. Only sources with over 500 citations were considered to ensure a comprehensive analysis. The top five journals identified include "Tourism Management" (43 281 link strength), "Journal of Travel Research" (25 375 links), "Annals of Tourism Research" (24 239 link strength), "Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing" (15 556 link strength), and "Journal of Sustainable Tourism" (13 851 link strength). Additionally, prominent sources such as "Current Issues in Tourism," "International Journal of Hospitality Management," "Journal of Business Research," "International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management," and "Journal of Marketing" emerge within the research domain.

Figure 7. Journal co-citation network on Tourism Marketing
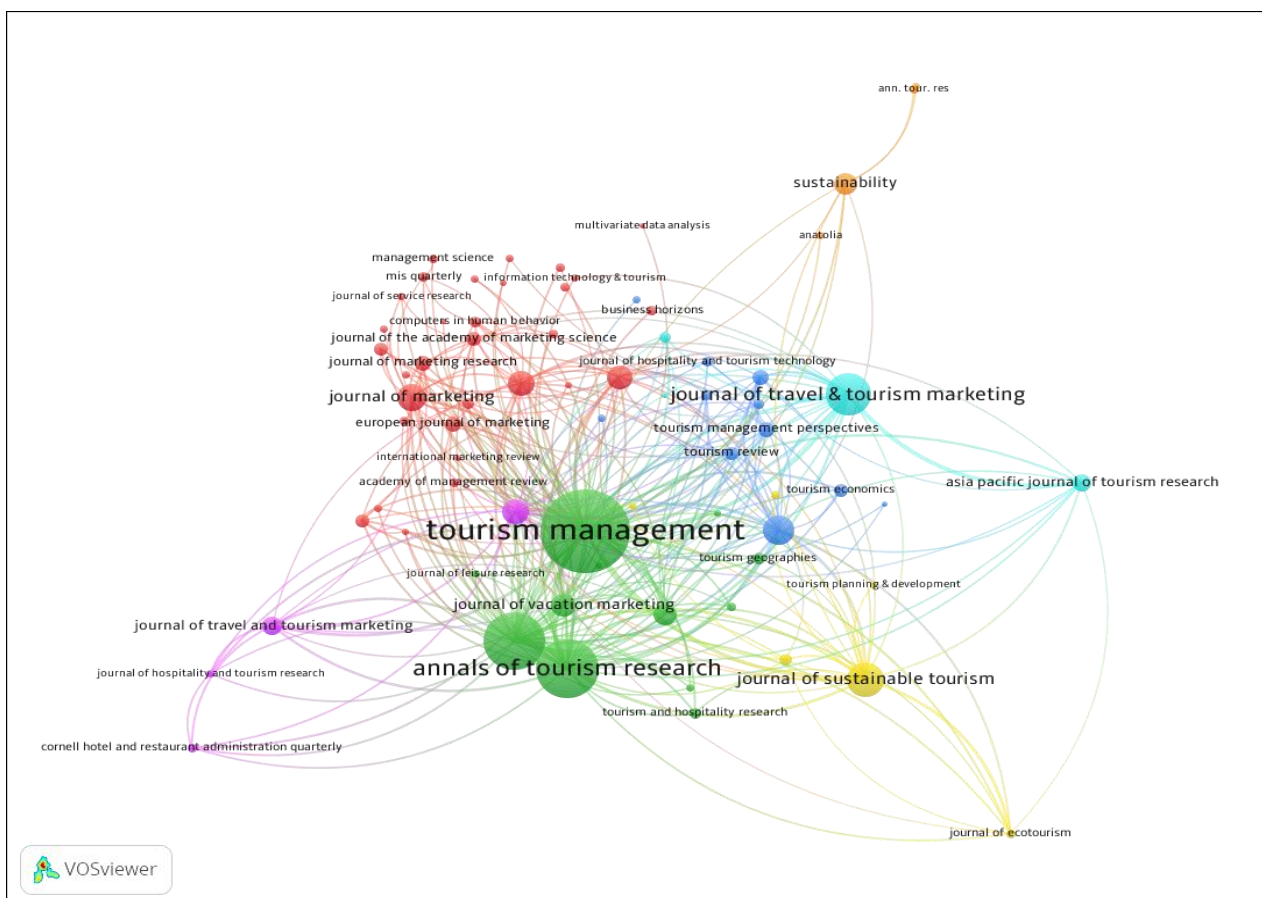
Building on this analysis, among the 282 academic outlets publishing 772 tourism marketing papers, a significant portion of the total publications is found within a select group of journals. Notably, five outlets represent nearly a third of these publications. The Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing leads in volume with 56 papers, accounting for 8% of the total, while the Journal of Tourism Management distinguishes itself by accumulating the highest number of citations, receiving 3819 citations from 44 papers. Other journals, despite each having fewer than 30 papers, also contribute significantly to the field, as highlighted in Table 4. This concentration of publications within a few key journals further illustrates the clustered nature of contributions in tourism marketing research. The upcoming sections explore current and potential trends in tourism marketing research and the evolution of knowledge in this field. This addresses Research Questions 2 and 3 through an analysis of keyword distribution and thematic development.

Table 4. Most relevant outlets

Publication outlet	TC	Recs	h_index	g_index	m_index	PY_start
Tourism Management	3819	44	32	44	0.744	1982
Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing	2341	56	25	48	0.8	1994
Annals of Tourism Research	1454	18	10	18	0.217	1979
Journal of Travel Research	1291	29	19	29	0.442	1982
Current Issues in Tourism	1156	14	9	14	0.474	2006

TC=total citations; Recs=total publications; PY=publication year

Source: Author elaboration

4.5. Keyword Analysis

Co-word analysis describes the co-occurrence of keywords reflecting the contents of the documents. Using clusters and strategic diagrams, it reveals and visualizes how scientific fields have evolved based on the strength of the association between terms in documents (Callon et al., 1991; Cobo et al., 2011). Accordingly, a set of interconnected keywords or themes can be described by two main parameters: centrality and density. The study was

divided into three unequal subperiods to track thematic shifts, reflecting varying production rates: 16 years for the first, 18 for the second, and 11 for the third. This method allows for a clearer understanding of recent trends, identification of gaps, and addresses the uneven distribution in tourism marketing research.

Figure 8. WordCloud

Source: R-Studio Software

Figure 8 displays the occurrence of the author's keywords. The keyword "destination," appearing prominently in tourism research, is mentioned nearly 80 times and is central to five of the top ten most cited papers discussed earlier.

The keyword growth graph, representing the author's keyword evolution trend, visualizes an inflection point around 2006, where several topics experienced a sudden increase, with "destination marketing " and "Sustainable tourism" being the most noteworthy (Fig.9). This inflection point suggests that from 2006 onwards, there was a heightened focus on marketing strategies aimed at promoting destinations more effectively in an increasingly competitive market. Concurrently, the rise of "sustainable tourism" reflects a growing recognition of the need to balance economic benefits with environmental protection and social responsibility in travel. This trend underlines the tourism industry's response to global sustainability concerns and changing consumer preferences towards more ethical and responsible travel experiences.

Figure 9. Word dynamics
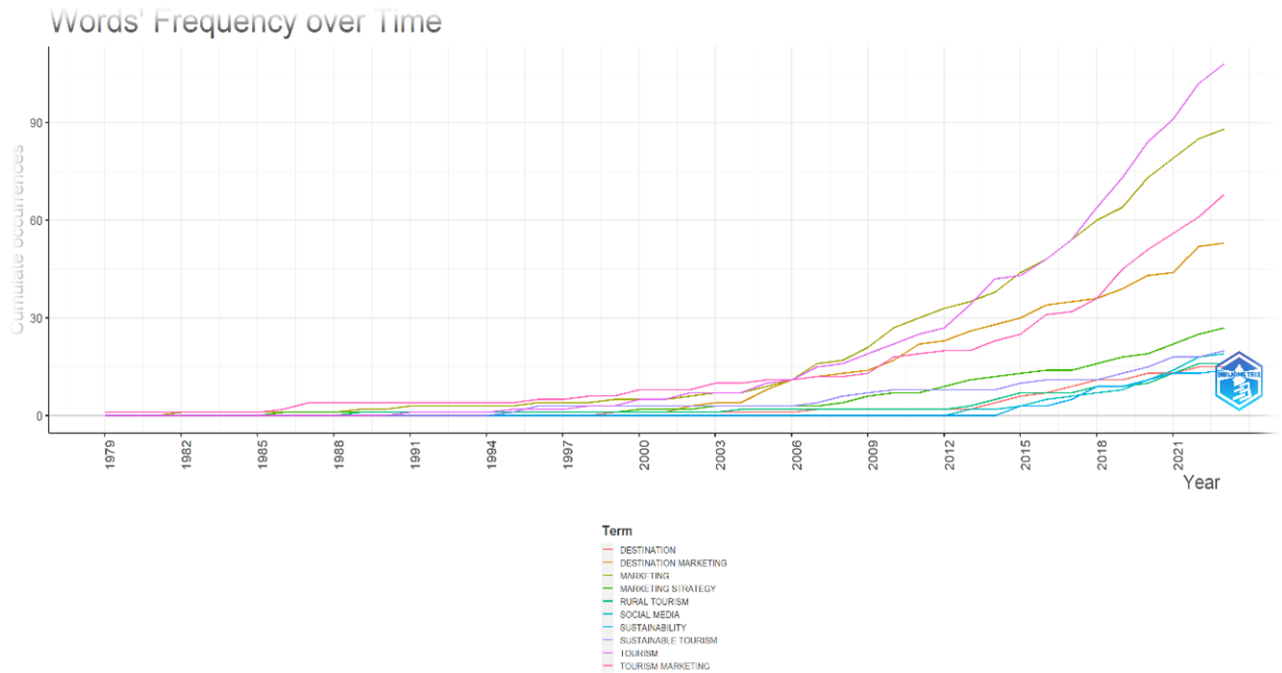
Source: Author Elaboration

4.6. Thematic Issues and Trend Topics

The evolution of the tourism research field is elucidated through three strategic diagrams (Fig.10-Fig.12) and a thematic evolution map (Fig.13). In sub-period A (1979-1994, Fig.10), two clusters, namely tourism marketing, and marketing, stand out for their strong internal connections. This period, accounting for 8% of total documents includes pioneering studies like tourism destination image modification and its marketing implications (chon, 1991).Top of Form

During the second sub-period B (1995-2012, Fig.11), critical themes like medical tourism, destination marketing, and destination marketing organizations rose into prominence. Influential studies in this era include virtual tourist communities (Wang et al., 2002), gastronomy and films in tourism (Hudson & Ritchie, 2006; Okumus et al., 2007), and experiential marketing (Williams, 2006). Over 33% of the publications focused on destination image and promotion (Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997; Beirman, 2002; Lichrou et al., 2008). The field witnessed a shift towards big data, customer behavior analysis, and social media marketing (Appiah-Adu et al., 2000; Cho & Leung, 2002; Olmeda & Sheldon, 2002; Teodorescu et al., 2009), coupled with a growing emphasis on experiential and sustainable

travel, highlighting personalized and authentic experiences (Cho et al., 2002; Sanders & LeClus, 2009; Sharpies, 2003).

The final sub-period, C (2013-2022, Fig.12), emphasizes e-commerce solutions and digital technology in tourism research. Previously a subset of marketing research, these elements have gained prominence due to their roles in improving efficiency, cutting costs, and boosting revenue (Deb et al., 2022; Xie et al., 2022). Moreover, the emergence of halal tourism and health tourism tourists as new concepts differentiates this sub-period from the earlier ones.

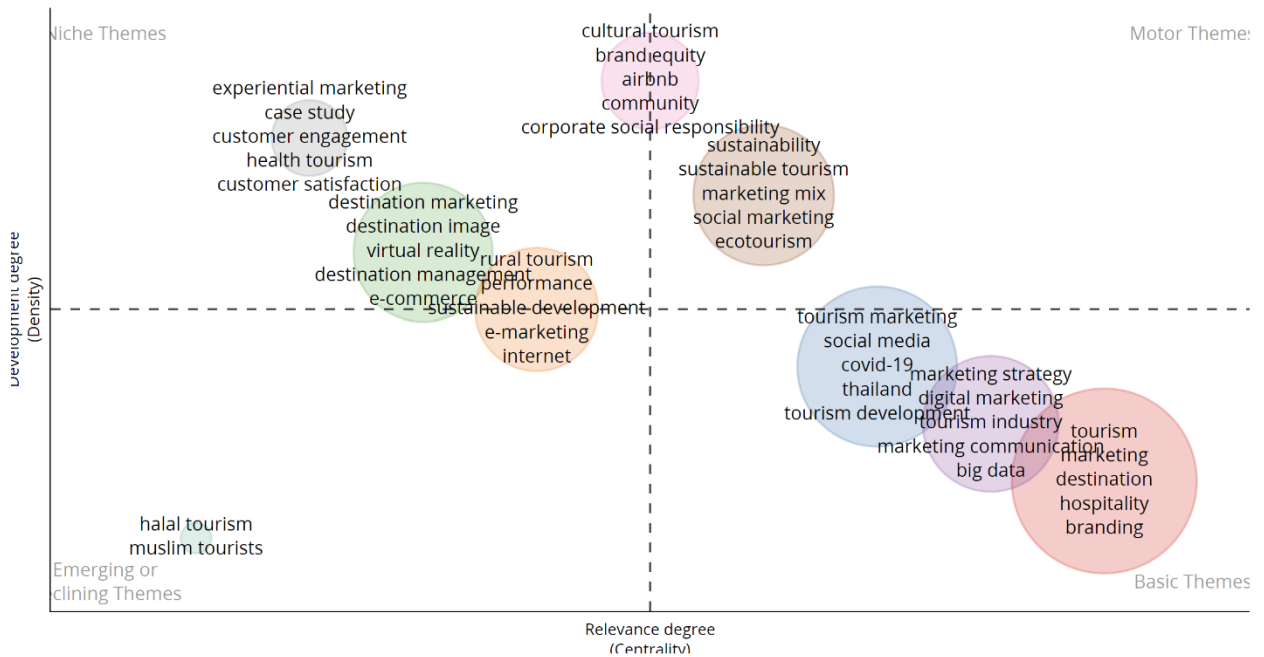**Figure 10. Strategic Diagram-sub-period A (1979-1994)**
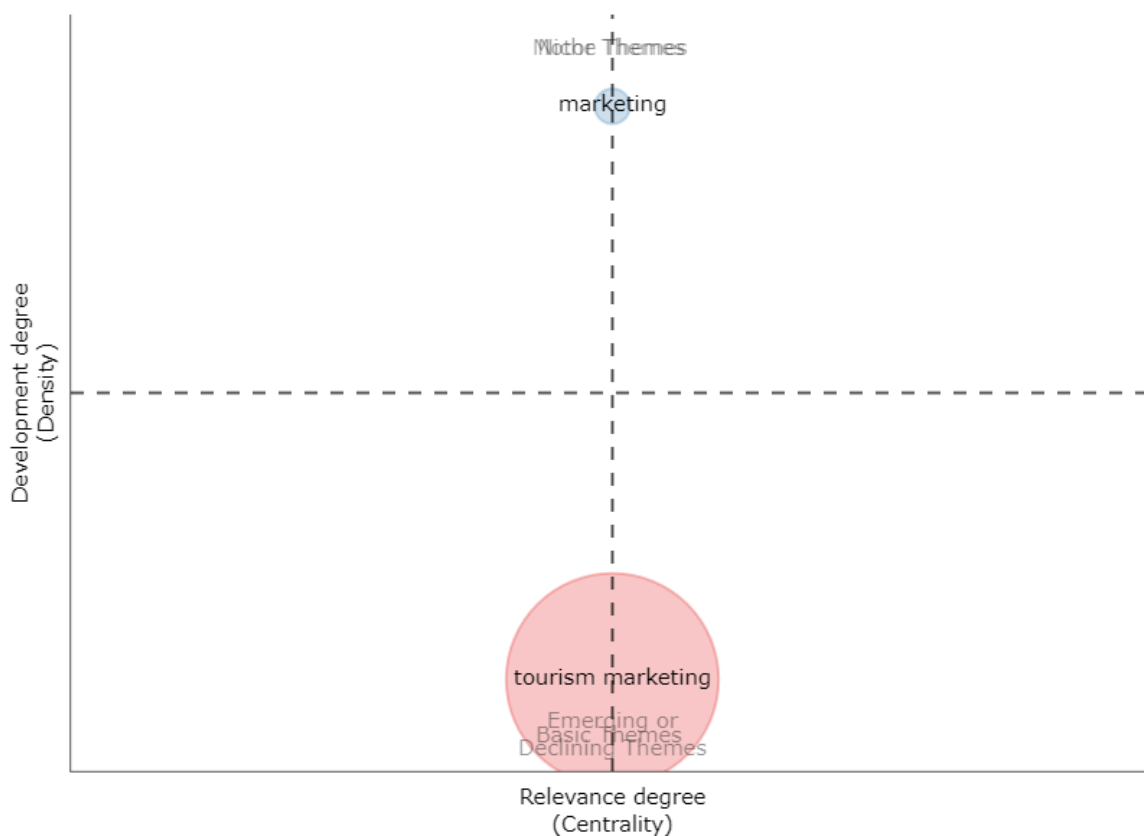
Source: R-Studio Software
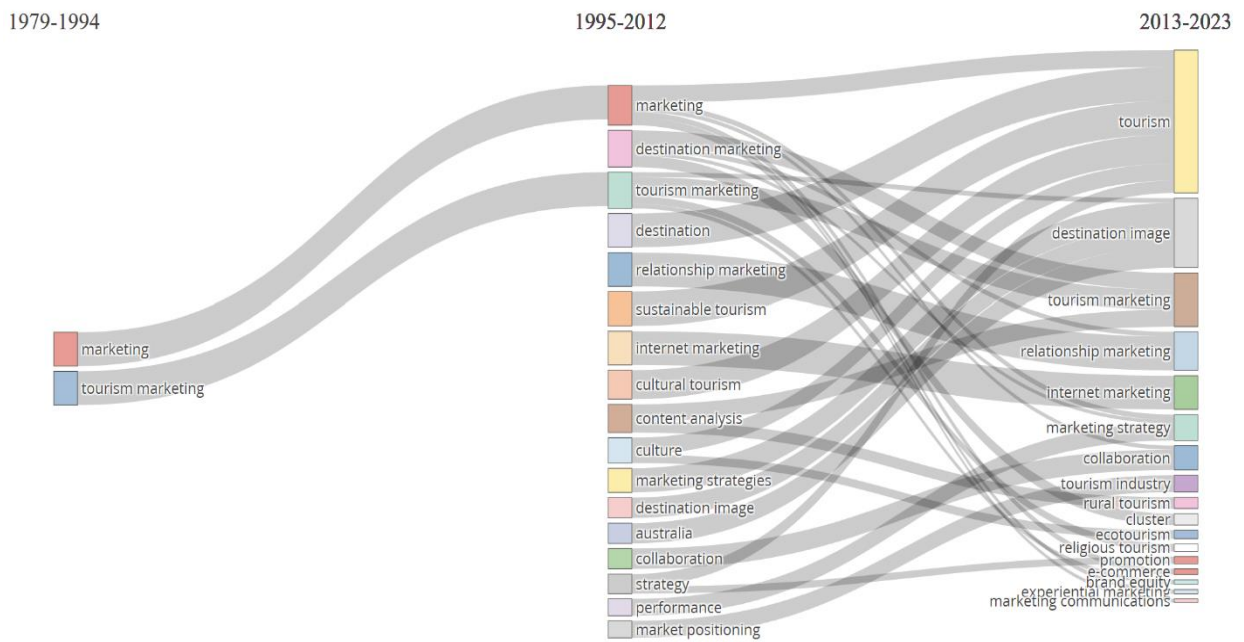
Figure 11. Strategic Diagram-sub-period B(1995-2012)
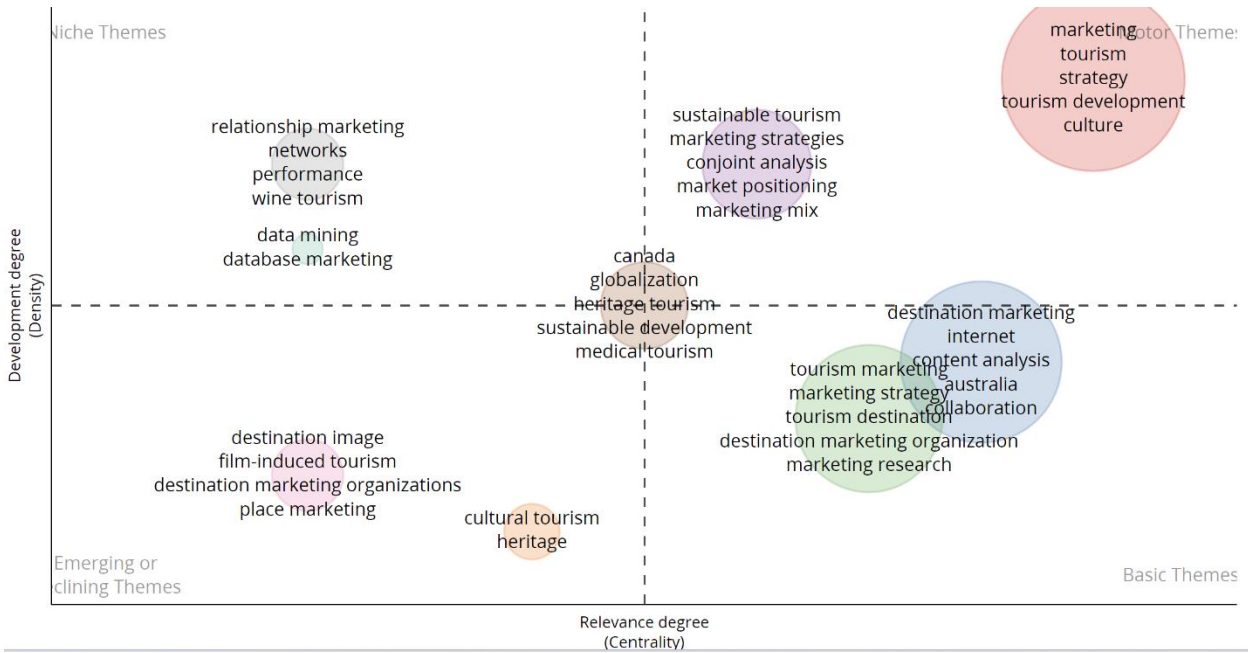
Source: R-Studio Software

Figure 12. Strategic Diagram- sub-period C(2013-2022)

Source: R-Studio Software

Figure 13. Thematic Evolution

Source: R-Studio Software

Thematic evolution showcases significant connections, highlighting shifts in keyword frequencies in recent sub-periods (Fig.13). The analysis prioritizes themes with an inclusion index of at least 0.5. Destination and sustainable tourism stand out as solid themes, each with an inclusion index of 1. Cultural tourism and content analysis are also prominent, each with an index of 0.5.

This trend correlates with the word evolution trend seen in Figure 9, underscoring a growing synergy between destination marketing and sustainable tourism. In this interplay, destination marketing increasingly focuses on sustainable tourism, highlighting aspects like cultural heritage experiences, eco-friendly accommodations, and responsible wildlife tourism. This partnership is crucial for enhancing the visibility of sustainable practices and boosting the appeal of responsible travel (Dedusenko & Wagenseil, 2020; Khan et al., 2021). The importance of this trend is evident in recent research literature, where over 40% of studies delve into how sustainable tourism influences rural tourism, social media's impact, and the nuances of cultural tourism. Additionally, sustainable tourism has significantly risen in academic prominence, being featured in about one-fifth of all scholarly articles, demonstrating its growing significance in the tourism industry.

The thematic map further illustrates the evolution in research focus, showing how themes like 'internet marketing' and 'destination marketing' have adapted to digital transformations, reflecting the industry's shift to online platforms and social media (Leung, 2022; Li et al., 2023). Concurrently, "rural tourism" and "ecotourism" have grown, resonating with a desire for unique travel experiences and environmental sensitivity.

Cultural tourism maintains a steady relevance, indicating a sustained interest in exploring the potential of tourism for cultural heritage celebration and preservation. The thematic evolution also signals an expanding research interest in 'tourism marketing,' 'relationship marketing,' and the 'tourism industry,' suggesting a mature academic discourse that increasingly examines the intersections of marketing efficiency, customer relationships, and broader industry dynamics (Al-Hazmi, 2021; Kathuria et al., 2023).

This evolving focus mirrors broader trends in the marketing discipline, highlighting shared strategies and goals. Importantly, considering the findings of Nicolas et al. (2020), examining the field of marketing research, it is evident that both marketing and tourism marketing research are converging on several key fronts. These include integrating digital technologies, a strong emphasis on sustainability, and the principles of relationship marketing. This shared trajectory is underpinned by a robust emphasis on understanding and leveraging consumer behavior insights, with digital marketing strategies and social media platforms playing a pivotal role. Both fields are also making significant strides in innovation, utilizing cutting-edge tools such as AI and virtual reality within the tourism sector to enhance consumer engagement and experience. The focus on sustainability and relationship marketing has become particularly prominent, reflecting a trend towards environmentally responsible practices and the development of long-term customer relationships across all sectors of marketing. These converging paths not only highlight technological integration and consumer focus but also underscore the crucial role of sustainable practices and relationship marketing in shaping future marketing strategies.

As we explore emerging themes such as 'religious tourism' and 'experiential marketing,' the diversification of tourism types and the recognition of varied tourist experiences become evident. These areas provide rich opportunities for further research, especially in evaluating the impact of marketing strategies on niche tourism sectors and exploring how emerging

technologies can shape these unique tourist experiences(Le et al., 2019; Rainoldi et al., 2022). Additionally, ongoing studies emphasize the importance of researching the social impacts of cultural tourism, particularly its role in identity preservation and conflict resolution. Such explorations are crucial in understanding the effectiveness of diverse marketing campaigns and maintaining the delicate balance between tourism development and cultural sustainability. As the scope of tourism marketing expands to meet the evolving expectations of global travelers, the industry is increasingly focusing on personalization, leveraging big data, and employing artificial intelligence to create more targeted and meaningful experiences. This approach aims to enhance marketing efforts' efficiency and redefine how destinations engage with tourists, ensuring that marketing methods evolve in lockstep with technological and societal shifts.

5. Conclusion

This comprehensive bibliometric analysis delves into tourism marketing research's evolution and current dynamics, employing a vast dataset to map the discipline's extensive geographical distribution and collaboration patterns globally. By integrating empirical data and visual analytics from 772 articles, the study enriches previous research and comprehensively addresses the discipline, providing a broad perspective on the field. This analysis stands out as one of the few endeavors to encapsulate the entire discipline, moving beyond the conventional segmented approach of previous studies that focused either on one facet of tourism marketing or analyzed a single journal within the field. This paper offers a unique vantage point for observing key trends, collaboration patterns, and thematic shifts within the domain. It highlights significant contributions from countries like the United Kingdom and Canada, noted for their high citation rates and robust engagement in theoretical development. Additionally, extensive international collaborations with countries such as the USA, Australia, Spain, China, Malaysia, and New Zealand underscore the global nature of the field and the rich exchange of cultural and economic perspectives that bolster theoretical foundations.

The analysis also reveals a trend toward multidisciplinary cooperation, with an average of 2.41 authors per paper, emphasizing the complexity of the field, which often requires diverse expertise. This is complemented by a predominance of domestic collaborations, where

international co-authorship accounts for a modest 16.19% of the work, suggesting significant roles for national academic networks in shaping tourism marketing theories. Among the 282 sources reviewed, a few prominent sources published 21% of the papers and accounted for over 49% of the total citations, highlighting their substantial influence in the field.

Furthermore, the study's methodology uniquely captures the evolution through three distinct sub-periods marked by specific thematic trends and pioneering studies. Initially focused on traditional aspects of tourism marketing, the field shifted towards embracing digital technologies and exploring topics like content analysis, internet marketing, and big data. The most recent period has seen a notable pivot towards e-commerce solutions and digital marketing, crucial for enhancing operational efficiency and profitability, and the emergence of new demographic trends like rural tourism, religious tourism, and ecotourism. A recent surge of interest in post-COVID-19 tourism research highlights recovery strategies and the changing dynamics of travel behaviors. Additionally, the focus on 'destination marketing' and 'sustainable tourism,' each with an inclusion index of 1, followed by cultural tourism and content analysis, each with an index of 0.5, reflects an evolving theoretical landscape, particularly post-2006, in response to global sustainability concerns and the need to integrate environmental, social, and economic considerations into tourism marketing strategies.

Practically, this analysis delivers actionable insights crucial for industry stakeholders. Pinpointing leading countries in research output and highly comprehensive studies lays a solid foundation for formulating effective marketing strategies and harnessing cutting-edge technologies to gratify tourist experiences. The study also opens avenues for future research, emphasizing the need to delve into underrepresented themes and enhance international collaborations, which could greatly enrich theoretical perspectives and practical solutions. The integration of emerging technologies such as virtual reality, artificial intelligence, big data analysis, and augmented reality, coupled with an increased focus on the transformative potential of traveler communities, presents significant areas for further exploration. Investigating how these technologies and community dynamics influence consumer behavior and destination branding is essential. Such research is poised to revolutionize

theoretical paradigms and practical applications in tourism marketing, steering the field toward more innovative and effective adavnces.

Overall, the findings from this bibliometric study enhance our understanding of current trends and establish a foundation for future research that could greatly improve both theoretical and practical aspects of tourism marketing. However, the study does have limitations. Its reliance on the Scopus database may have missed important literature, and the use of bibliometric methods does not achieve the depth that content analysis might. Incorporating a variety of databases and analysis methods could provide a more comprehensive view of the field and its future directions.

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