

A BIBLIOMETRIC EXAMINATION OF DOMESTIC TOURISM LITERATURE: UNVEILING RESEARCH PATTERNS AND TRENDS

Abstract

DANIEL DRAGIČEVIĆ, PhD, Associate Professor
University of Rijeka, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management
Department of Micro- and Macroeconomics
Primorska ul. 46, P.P. 97, 51410 Opatija, Croatia
Phone: +385-51-294683
E-mail: daniel@fthm.hr

Purpose – This study aims to analyse the current state of domestic tourism research through a bibliometric analysis.

Design – A bibliometric approach is employed to evaluate the landscape of domestic tourism research published between 1990 and February 2024 using the Web of Science (WoS) database as the primary source.

Methodology – The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 framework guided the overall method selection process. Boolean search strings were used to retrieve relevant articles on domestic tourism and related topics in titles, abstracts, or author keywords. Bibliometric software VOSviewer was utilized to analyse and visualize keyword co-occurrence and thematic clusters.

Approach – The analysis focused on identifying current trends, influential contributors, prominent thematic clusters, and future research directions.

Findings – The research has identified a consistent increase in publications on domestic tourism since 1990, with a significant surge following the COVID-19 pandemic. Thematic clusters have emerged around the analysis of domestic tourism demand, tourist decision-making and behaviour, tourist experience and satisfaction, and lastly, tourist behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper's results suggest potential research avenues, including changing travel behaviour during pandemics, examining risk perception and travel decisions, using domestic tourism as a crisis relief strategy, and adapting marketing strategies during crises.

Originality of the research – The study is original in its comprehensive overview of the domestic tourism research landscape, identifying trends, influential contributors, thematic areas, and promising future research directions. This text provides insights for researchers, policymakers, and industry professionals interested in domestic tourism.

Keywords domestic tourism, bibliometric analysis, trends and patterns, COVID-19

Review

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a global phenomenon that has significant economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts on societies. Research has shown that it can lead to increased social welfare (Xuanming et al., 2024), changes in local residents' moral values (Zhuang et al., 2019), community pride and upliftment (Scholtz and Slabbert, 2015), as well as negative effects such as anti-social behavior, public space congestion, population displacement, and weakened social structures (Elorrieta et al., 2022). It has been linked to elevated economic growth (Comerio and Strozzi, 2018), revenue, and foreign exchange earnings (Pizam and Milman, 1986). However, it has also been associated with negative impacts such as water pollution, impaired health of wild animals, and loss of biodiversity (Matias et al., 2022).

In relation to the country of reference, domestic tourism is defined as one of the basic forms of tourism, alongside inbound and outbound tourism. Domestic tourism "comprises the activities of a resident visitor within the country of reference either as part of a domestic tourism trip or part of an outbound tourism trip" (UNWTO, 2010, p. 15). In 2022, tourism contributed 7.6% to the world's GDP and accounted for 9% of global jobs (WTTC, 2023). Additionally, there were 917 million international tourist arrivals in the same year, generating 539 billion EUR in tourism receipts worldwide (UNWTO, 2023). According to available UNWTO (2024) data for 2022, domestic tourism accounted for 62.7% of total overnight stays in all commercial accommodation services. Additionally, domestic spending made up 78% of the total spending, while international spending accounted for 22% (WTTC, 2023). The data for the EU confirms the significance of domestic tourism. According to the 2019 Tourism Satellite Accounts in Europe, domestic tourism expenditure in the EU-27 was 62% (695 billion EUR), which is 1.6 times higher than inbound tourism expenditure (436 billion EUR) (Eurostat, 2023).

Although statistics highlight the importance of domestic tourism, research on this topic is still underdeveloped in comparison to international tourism (Li et al., 2024). Domestic tourism offers several benefits, such as reducing regional inequality (Goh et al., 2014, 2015; De Santana Ribeiro et al., 2022), generating higher net benefits for the poor in reducing poverty compared to inbound tourism (Llorca-Rodríguez et al., 2018), enabling more efficient allocation of resources (Haddad et al., 2013), increasing regional economic growth (Lee, 2021; Paci and Marrocu, 2014; Prayag et al., 2018), reducing economic vulnerability for low and lower-middle-income countries (Canh and Thanh, 2020) and hotel industry (Boto-García and Mayor, 2022), decreasing seasonality (Cisneros-Martínez and Fernández-Morales, 2013; Šegota and Mihalič, 2018) and promoting sustainability (Amin, 2017; Seyfi et al., 2022).

This paper employs bibliometric analysis with the purpose to analyse the existing body of literature on domestic tourism. Understanding the current research landscape in domestic tourism is important due to several reasons. Firstly, analysing trends will make possible to identify where knowledge is well-established and determine research gaps which can address critical questions within the field. Secondly, this research has a goal of identifying future directions in aforementioned field by revealing emerging themes and trends. Finally, a comprehensive bibliometric analysis can provide valuable insights into tourism practices (tourist behaviour, preferences and motivations, etc.). To achieve these goals, this paper will aim to answer the following questions:

- RQ1: What are the current trends in domestic tourism research?
- RQ2: Which authors, institutions, countries, and journals have made the most significant contributions to the field?
- RQ3: What are the most important thematic clusters?
- RQ4: What are the future research directions?

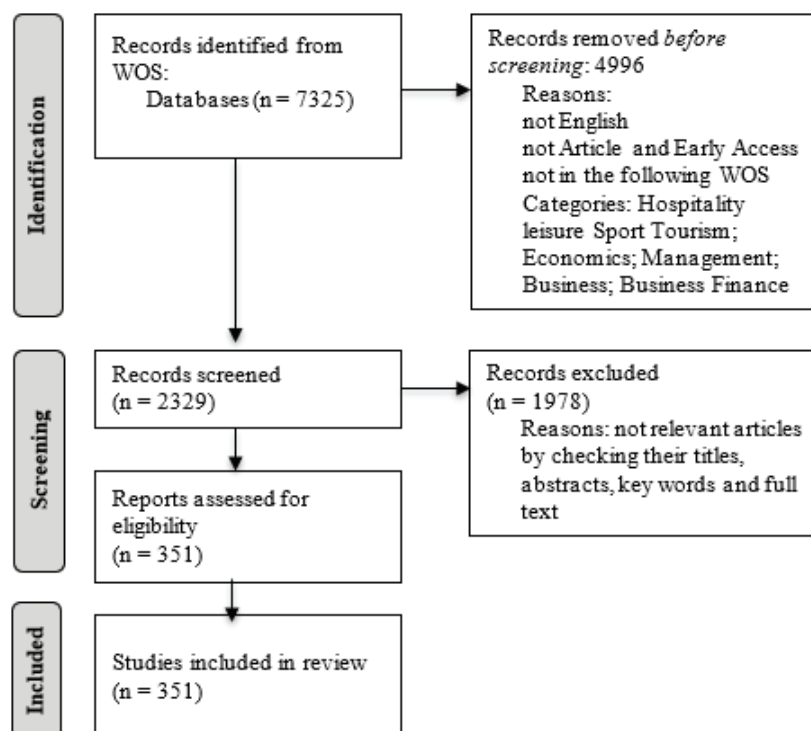
The first question will be addressed by analysing papers over time. This approach can identify periods of increased research activity and potential shifts in focal points. Examining highly cited authors, papers, and journals will reveal the most impactful research and potentially highlight under-researched topics. Geographical patterns could also provide an answer on potential research gaps in under-represented regions. Prominent thematic clusters will emerge from utilizing co-occurrence analysis. This study aims to identify emerging trends by analyzing the top 5 trending articles within the selected time span (1990-2024) to determine future research directions. The contribution of this paper is threefold: First, from the obtained results researchers can clearly pertain the information about knowledge gaps, emerging trends and future research directions. Policymakers can use the insights on geographical distribution and thematic clusters to formulate strategies for promoting domestic tourism and addressing specific challenges. Industry professionals can benefit from understanding current research trends and tourist behaviour to develop new and innovative approaches to promote sustainable domestic tourism practices. This article is divided into four sections. Following the introduction, there is a section that describes the data and methodology used. The results are discussed in the third section, and the main concluding remarks are presented in the final section.

1. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In order to quantitatively assess the research landscape of domestic tourism, this study employs bibliometric analysis. Aforementioned methodology is “an integral part of research evaluation methodology especially within the scientific and applied fields” (Ellegaard and Wallin, 2015, p. 1809). The advantages of the bibliometrics approach are realised through the objective assessment of research trends and activity, identification of potential shifts in focus areas, and the creation of a map of the intellectual structure within the field (Abdullah et al., 2023; Donthu et al., 2021; Greener, 2022).

This study adheres to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 framework (Page et al., 2021). The overall method and its selection process are visually represented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: PRISMA 2020 flow diagram



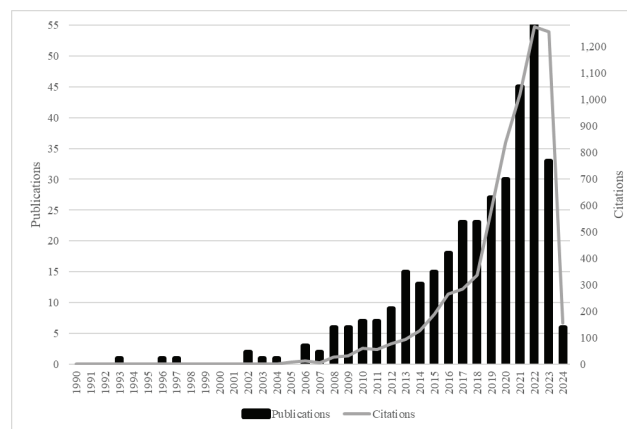
Source: Authors` representation

The primary database chosen for this study was the Web of Science (WOS), which is one of the most selective (Singh et al., 2021), widely used and authoritative database of research publications and citations (Birkle et al., 2020). The time frame for the initial search was set from January 1st, 1990 to February 29th, 2024. Relevant keywords, encompassing various aspects of domestic tourism, were used. The final Boolean search string used in WOS was: TS=(domestic tourism* OR domestic travel). This string ensures that the search retrieves publications where “domestic tourism” or “domestic travel” and their synonyms appear in the title, abstract or author keywords. The current trends and most influential contributors within the field were analysed using the Web of Science analytical tool. Prominent thematic clusters were derived from the analysis and visualization of bibliographic data. For this purpose, the bibliometric software VOSviewer v. 1.6.20 was utilized (van Eck and Waltman, 2023). VOSviewer offers distance-based visualisations of bibliometric networks, where the distance between two nodes indicates the relatedness of the nodes (van Eck and Waltman, 2014). Keyword co-occurrence analysis identifies the frequency with which certain keywords appear together.

2. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings of the bibliometric analysis of domestic tourism research. Figure 2 shows the temporal dimension of research interest in the aforementioned topic.

Figure 2: Publications and citation on domestic tourism from 1990 to 2024



Source: WoS

The first recorded article on this topic was written in 1993. From 1993 to 2024, the annual growth rate of published papers was 20.8%. A total of 816 authors published in 101 journals, impacting the research field with 6710 citations. On average, articles received 227 citations annually, or 19.12 average citations per item, with an H-index of 46. The trend shows steady growth up to 2012, followed by an increasing trend. Exponential growth is visible after 2019, when COVID-19 emerged as a dominant topic. The importance of domestic tourism has gained recognition, particularly after the exogenous shock of the recent health pandemic. Between 1993 and 2019, researchers wrote 181 academic papers on the topic. In the last five years (2020-February 2024), this number has increased to 171. This evolution of interest demonstrates a shift in researchers' focus.

Between 1993 and 2009, 24 papers were published with a major focus on forecasting (Athanasopoulos and Hyndman, 2008; Athanasopoulos et al., 2009; Yap, 2009) and modelling domestic tourism (Divisekera, 2009; Ehrentraut, 1993; Lundgren et al., 2006; Seckelmann, 2002; Sindiga, 1996; Taylor and Ortiz, 2009), as well as investigating the differences between international and domestic components (Cortés-Jiménez, 2008; Garín-Muñoz, 2009; Kim, 2007). In the first period analysed, the focus of the research can be explained by the growing interest in tourism and its economic impact on economies, and the increasing trend in the number of people travelling. Forecasting and determining the main factors contributing to the development of domestic and international tourism are important from the point of view of tourism destination management, especially in mitigating the effects of the economic crisis. Research activity (157 papers) in the next decade (2010-2019) focused on investigating tourism demand and impact analysis (Adeloye et al., 2019; Boakye et al., 2013; Haddad et al., 2013; Lukin et al., 2018; Massidda and Piras, 2015; Yap, 2010; Zhang et al., 2013). However, there was also a shift in interest towards new themes such as tourist experiences (Bideci and Albayrak, 2018; Espinosa Abascal et al., 2014; Liu et al., 2016; Styliadis et al., 2015; Tran et al., 2019), behaviour (Jani et al., 2013; Pearce and Schott, 2011; Prayag et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2017), destination management (Gálvez et al., 2014; Gursoy et al., 2018; Mutinda and Mayaka, 2012) and sustainability (Adamiak et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2016; Pegas et al., 2015; Sun, 2014; Zhou et al., 2019). Increasing competitiveness, the growing experience economy as well as global environmental concerns shifted the focus of applied research. Responsible tourism, driven by consumer preferences and regulatory changes, began to emerge. In order to gain a competitive advantage, it became important to identify what makes an experience authentic and environmentally responsible in order to manage expectations and gain economic benefits from such travel.

Last five years was predominantly influenced by COVID-19 (171 papers). Various consequences of the pandemic have been researched, including tourist behaviour (Ren et al., 2022; Sarişik et al., 2023), choices (Adamiak, 2023; Barazi et al., 2021), consumption patterns (Arjomandi et al., 2023; Karasakaloğlu and Öztemiz, 2022), travel intentions (Abraham et al., 2020; Laparojkit and Suttipun, 2021; Poulaki and Nikas, 2021), risk perception related to travel (Barazi et al., 2021; Handler and Tan, 2022; Wattanacharoensil et al., 2023) and impact on tourism demand (Boto-García and Mayor, 2022; Falk et al., 2022a, 2022b). Important themes during this period were also determinants of domestic tourism (Alvarez-Diaz et al., 2020; Canh and Thanh, 2020; Lee, 2021; Li et al., 2024; Sahoo et al., 2022; De Santana Ribeiro et al., 2022; Xuanming et al., 2024), tourist experiences (Duman et al., 2020; Gannon et al., 2021; Lebrun et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2020), satisfaction (Chebli et al., 2021; Luvsandavaajav and Narantuya, 2021; Pop et al., 2024) and loyalty (Chebli et al., 2021; Laparojkit and Suttipun, 2021; Williamson and Hassanli, 2020). Economic instability, as seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, has increased the focus on domestic tourism as a buffer against the volatility of international travel markets. The need for governments to replace international tourism losses has further stimulated research into domestic tourism.

Table 1: Top 5 most cited papers

Authors	Citations	
	Average per year	Total
Cahyanto, I., Wiblishauser, M., Pennington-Gray, L. & Schroeder, A. (2016). The dynamics of travel avoidance: The case of Ebola in the U.S. <i>Tourism Management Perspectives</i>	25.33	228
Becken, S., Simmons, D. G. & Frampton, C. (2003). Energy use associated with different travel choices. <i>Tourism Management</i>	9.45	208
Massidda, C. & Etzo, I. (2012). The determinants of Italian domestic tourism: A panel data analysis. <i>Tourism Management</i>	13.92	181
Yuksel, A. (2004). Shopping experience evaluation: a case of domestic and international visitors. <i>Tourism Management</i>	6.33	133
Athanasopoulos, G., Ahmed, R. A. & Hyndman, R. J. (2009). Hierarchical forecasts for Australian domestic tourism. <i>International Journal of Forecasting</i>	8.19	131

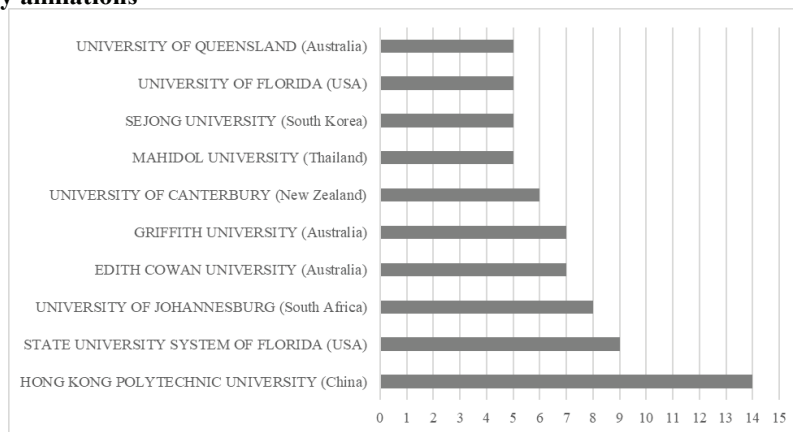
Source: WoS

These fundamental papers constitute 13.1% of the total citations made in the field during the analyzed period. As such, they hold significant influence within the field of domestic tourism research. The novelty of their research stems from the novelty of the methods used, but also from the topics they wrote about. These could be summarised as follows: “impact of external factors on tourism behaviour” (Athanasopoulos et al., 2009; Cahyanto et al., 2016; Yuksel, 2004), “sustainable and responsible tourism” (Becken et al., 2003), “economic analysis of tourism demand” (Massidda and Etzo, 2012). The most cited paper (228 citations) critically examines the psychological impact of health crises on tourist behaviour by interpreting how perceived risk influences the decision to travel (Cahyanto et al., 2016). The relevance of the paper lies in understanding the dynamics of tourist decision making in the face of health crises and possible destination management responses to mitigate travel avoidance. As authors show individuals with higher perceived levels of risk are more likely to avoid travel, as are younger age groups and females. Knowing how to model tourist preferences and behaviour is vital for businesses in any local economy. Yuksel (2004) offers practical suggestions for destination retailers and merchants to increase the satisfaction and spending of both domestic and international tourists. It is this distinction between domestic and international tourists that makes this paper relevant, particularly in understanding the subtle differences in preferences and expectations of each group. As the author points out, international tourists are more concerned with variety and uniqueness of products, while domestic tourists prioritise value for money and convenience. Athanasopoulos et al. (2009) adopted an innovative approach to tourism forecasting by using hierarchical time series models to forecast the demand for tourism in the domestic market. Advantages of this method include adaptability to other regions and countries, ability to handle multiple levels of data reflecting different geographical scales, and creation of tailored strategies based on regional demand forecasts. One of the first study to provide a comprehensive assessment of energy use in tourism from a multi-dimensional perspective (transport, accommodation and activities), addressing the environmental impacts of tourism-related activities in a detailed and systematic way, is the seminal paper of Becken et al. (2003). As the authors have shown, with significant differences between the energy consumption of domestic and international tourists, transport is the largest contributor to energy consumption. Massidda and Etzo (2012) identified the determining factors of domestic tourism with respect to interregional bilateral tourism flows, which is the third most cited paper with 181 citations. The article presents a novel approach to controlling factors that bias national comparisons, such as fiscal regimes and regulatory structures. The authors confirm the importance of traditional economic variables such as relative prices, GDP per capita and population density in determining domestic tourism flows and identify other relevant determinants such as environmental quality, outbound tourism, reputation and habit formation.

Falk, M. is the most productive academic in the field with five published papers. Following closely behind are Athanasopoulos, G., Fakfare, P., Lin, X., Nguyen, C.P. and Li, H., each with four papers. Falk, M. wrote one single-author paper and four others in collaboration with colleagues, making him the second most cited author among the aforementioned scholars with 80 citations. Among others, he co-authored four papers with the highly productive researcher Lin, X. His research emphasised the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on domestic tourism, including the influence of high regional activity, uneven domestic tourism demand, and the difference between do-mestic tourism demand in the North and South of Europe. The density of accommodation establishments is used as an approximation of regional economic activity, which has an impact on domestic tourism flows during the sum-mer of 2020. Regions with lower density, higher proportion of second homes, closer distance to national parks (Falk et al., 2021) and sparsely populated areas (Falk et al., 2022a), showed higher growth rates in domestic overnight stays. During the peak of the pandemic in summer 2020, the Northern remote regions of European countries experienced an increase in domestic demand, which partially offset losses in the large metropolitan regions (Falk et al., 2022b). However, this trend was not observed in Southern countries, where the decline in domestic arrivals to major metropolitan areas was more pronounced. Among the most productive researchers, Athanasopoulos, G. had the highest number of citations (330). The author’s research centres on modelling and forecasting demand for domestic tourism in Australia (Athanasopoulos and Hyndman, 2008; Athanasopoulos et al., 2009), as well as identifying similarities and differences between domestic and inbound (Deng and Athanasopoulos, 2011) and outbound travel (Athanasopoulos et al., 2014). The temporal and spatial effects on domestic and inbound travel in Australia are broadly similar (Deng and Athanasopoulos, 2011). Nevertheless, there appears to be significant substitution effects between domestic tourism in Australia and inbound travel to Asia, the United Kingdom and the United States. Mas-sidda and Etzo (2012) also found similar results for Italian tourists, where domestic and international destinations were considered substitutes.

In the analysis of affiliations’ productivity, Hong Kong Polytechnic University (China) ranks first with 14 published papers on the researched topic. Three universities from Australia have produced 19 articles, while two from the USA have produced 14.

Figure 3: Publications by affiliations



Source: WoS

The normalised number of citations from those institutions is more noteworthy. The normalization “corrects for the fact that older documents have had more time to receive citations than more recent documents” (van Eck and Waltman, 2023, p. 38). According to the results of the VOSviewer analysis, the University of Florida (16.3) is the most influential institution in the field in terms of normalised citations. It is followed by Hong Kong Polytechnic University (12.8), the University of Johannesburg (8.9), and Edith Cowan University (7.5). Some universities have a higher impact than others when considering the number of published papers. For example, Arizona State University from the USA had 4 articles with a normalized citation rate of 13.5, while Hainan University from China had 1 article with a normalized citation rate of 9.3, and Black Hills State University from the USA had 1 article with a normalized citation rate of 9.2. The distribution of published papers shows that China (54) is the most prominent country, followed by Australia (49), the USA (48), Spain (30), England (22), New Zealand (17), India (16), South Korea (14), Italy (13) and Turkey (12). Central Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America are under-represented regions. As might be expected, countries with a strong tourism sector are leading the way in domestic tourism research. Domestic tourism in these countries plays an important role in the overall tourism economy.

Journals that publish a significant amount of research on domestic tourism are likely to have a strong reputation within the field. The most productive journals in this area are “Tourism Management” and “Current Issues in Tourism”, each with 25 published articles, followed by “Tourism Economics” (23), “Anatolia” (15) and “Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research” (15).

Figure 4: Publications by sources (journals)



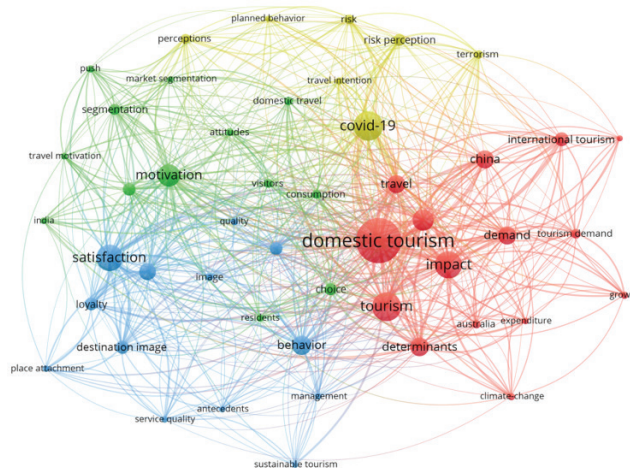
Source: WoS

“Tourism Management” and “Current Issues in Tourism” have the highest normalised citations, 47.5. and 40.2 respectively. Both of them are indexed in Social Sciences Citation Index (Q1). VOSviewer’s temporal analysis indicates that “Current Issues in Tourism” has been more focused on domestic tourism field in recent years, with an average publication year of 2020.3, compared to “Tourism Management”, which has an average publication year of 2012.2. Although “Tourism planning & Development”, “Anatolia”, “Journal of Hospitality and tourism Insights” and “Tourism Review International” are indexed in the Emerging Sources Citation Index, they are gaining more attention. Their normalised citations, in the order they appear above, are 7.0, 6.3, 5.7, and 4.9, respectively, with an average publication year of 2023, 2019.8, 2022.3, and 2016.1.

The analysis of domestic tourism research was based on 1,698 keywords. The minimum number of occurrences for a keyword was set to eight, resulting in 49 keywords meeting the threshold. The most frequently used keywords were “domestic tourism” (108 occurrences, total link strength of 90) and “COVID-19” (61 occurrences, total link strength of 61). The total link strength attribute indicates the total strength of the relationship between two keywords, while the size of a circle in a co-keyword network visualization represents the frequency of a keyword appearing with other keyword (van Eck and Waltman, 2023).

Figure 5 visualises thematic clusters within domestic tourism research based on keyword co-occurrence. Four prominent clusters are represented by different colours, each representing an established research area. The red cluster includes keywords such as domestic tourism, tourism, impact, model, determinants, demand, international tourism, and growth. This cluster focuses on the “analysis of domestic tourism demand”, with a particular emphasis on understanding domestic travel patterns and the factors that influence them. The keywords motivation, domestic tourists, choice, segmentation, consumption, attitudes, travel, and motivation are all part of the green cluster.

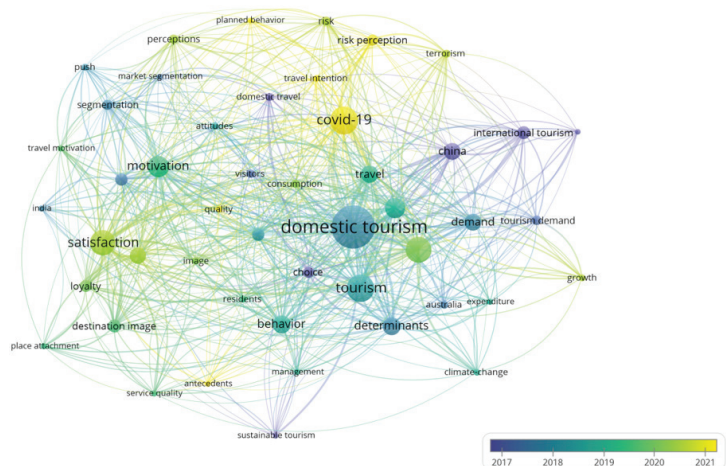
Figure 5: Co-keyword network visualization based on the occurrences



Source: WoS (using VOSviewer)

This cluster focuses on researching “tourist decision-making and behaviour”, specifically the motivations and choices tourists make when selecting destinations. The third cluster (blue) includes keywords such as satisfaction, behaviour, experience, destination image, loyalty, and service quality.

Figure 6: Co-keyword overlay visualization based on the occurrences and average publication per year scores



Source: WoS (using VOSviewer)

This is a theme of “tourist experience and satisfaction”. The research aims to understand tourist experiences and satisfaction at destinations. The yellow cluster is represented by the following keywords: COVID-19, risk perception, travel intention, planned behaviour, and terrorism. The focus is on “tourist behaviour and the COVID-19 pandemic”. Behaviour, risk, and risk perception towards COVID-19 are the core of this cluster. Figure 6 shows the temporal development of research topics using co-keyword overlay visualization. The most influential keywords over time include travel intention, COVID-19, planned behaviour, quality, antecedents, risk perception, and terrorism. These topics are not surprising given the major exogenous shock of the last five years.

The analysis carried out so far has provided valuable insights into the current state of research on domestic tourism. To identify promising avenues for future exploration, an analysis of the recommendations presented by the top five highly cited articles published within the last five years (2020-2024) based on their average citations per year was conducted. This approach enables the identification of emerging trends and knowledge gaps that require further research.

Table 2: Top five trending article by average citations per year (2020-2024)

Authors	Average citations per year
Arbulú, I., Razumova, M., Rey-Maqueira, J. & Sastre, F. (2021). Can domestic tourism relieve the COVID-19 tourist industry crisis? The case of Spain. <i>Journal of Destination Marketing & Management</i>	29.0
Altuntas, F. & Gok, M. S. (2021). The effect of COVID-19 pandemic on domestic tourism: A DEMATEL method analysis on quarantine decisions. <i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	24.0
Das, S. S. & Tiwari, A. K. (2020). Understanding international and domestic travel intention of Indian travellers during COVID-19 using a Bayesian approach. <i>Tourism Recreation Research</i>	17.2
Fan, X., Lu, J., Qiu, M. & Xiao, X. (2023). Changes in travel behaviors and intentions during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery period: A case study of China. <i>Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism</i>	16.0
Volgger, M., Taplin, R. & Aebli, A. (2021). Recovery of domestic tourism during the COVID-19 pandemic: An experimental comparison of interventions. <i>Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management</i>	12.8

Source: WoS

The recommendations for research on domestic tourism can be categorised into four emerging themes: shifting traveller behaviour during pandemics, risk perception and travel decisions, domestic tourism as a crisis relief strategy, adapting marketing strategies in crises.

During pandemics, there appears to be a shift in traveller behaviour towards natural and less crowded locations, as opposed to cultural and more crowded destinations (Fan et al., 2023). The authors emphasised that positive attitudes, motivation, and

perceived behaviour control towards travel are positively associated with travel behaviours. Tourists who trust destination management in preventing the spread of the virus are more likely to travel. Possible future research avenues could include analysing travel behaviour variations across different social-demographic groups and investigating tourists' travel behaviours and intentions to visit destinations with varying risk profiles. Domestic and international travel intentions are influenced by various factors, including fear of contagion, trust in control measures, and perceived severity of the pandemic (Das and Tiwari, 2020; Fan et al., 2023). Tourists may view non-pharmaceutical interventions as preventive measures that can reduce the risk of contagion while travelling (Das and Tiwari, 2020). Future work should analyse the understanding of the fear of contagion and risk perception across different age groups. It should also investigate risk perception variations by subdividing social-demographic groups and travel patterns, such as elderly and solo travellers.

Additionally, the influence of attitudes on travel intentions should be examined from various perspectives, including affective, cognitive, and behavioural. Domestic tourism could mitigate the negative effects of crises like COVID-19, especially when international travel is restricted (Arbulú et al., 2021). In the authors' view, the promotion of domestic tourism and the redirection of outbound tourism policies may be crucial to the survival of the industry during pandemics. Future research could address questions such as: What are the characteristics of outbound tourists? Is there a possibility of diverting outbound tourists to domestic destinations during pandemics? What are the characteristics of domestic travellers and the volatility of their demand? Is there a difference between island and mainland tourism destinations? During crises, destination management attempts to implement various marketing strategies to encourage domestic tourism. While strategies such as discounts and flexible cancellation policies can be beneficial, the most critical factor for boosting domestic travel is maintaining low numbers of infections (Volgger et al., 2021). As study showed the presence of international visitors and a surge in COVID-19 cases decreased domestic tourists' booking intentions. Future research could explore the trade-offs between stricter pandemic risk control and the associated reduction in tourism benefits. Additionally, key factors for the observed behavioural intentions, including trade-offs between health and experiential benefits, could be further investigated. The recommendations described are consistent with the results of the temporal co-keyword overlay visualisation, which identified risk and travel perception, experience and satisfaction as emerging themes.

CONCLUSION

Research on domestic tourism is crucial for comprehending travel patterns and their impact on societies, especially during crisis events like pandemics that significantly alter travel behaviours. This paper conducts a bibliometric analysis using the Web of Science database to examine the existing body of research on domestic tourism from 1990 to February 2024. The analysis has provided a comprehensive overview of the current research landscape. It highlights prominent trends, influential contributors, thematic clusters, and future research directions. The answers to the four research questions are described as the following key findings.

First, there has been a steady growth in domestic tourism research, with a significant increase following the emergence of COVID-19. This highlights the growing recognition of domestic tourism's importance, particularly during exogenous shocks. The research focus has evolved over time, with early studies concentrating on forecasting and modelling domestic tourism. Later research shifted towards tourist experiences, behaviour, destination management, and sustainability. In recent years, there has been a dominant focus on COVID-19 and its impact on tourism demand. This includes research on tourist behaviour, choices, consumption patterns, travel intentions, and risk perception. Second, the most influential academics in the field are Falk, M., Athanasopoulos, G., Fakfare, G., Lin, X., Nguyen, C.P. and Li, H. The leading institutions, based on normalised citations, are the University of Florida (USA), Hong Kong Polytechnic University (China), and Black Hill State University (USA). The journals "Tourism Management" and "Current Issues in Tourism" have published the highest number of articles and have the most normalised citations. Recently, "Current Issues in Tourism" has focused more on domestic tourism research compared to "Tourism Management". Third, the paper identified four prominent thematic clusters through keyword co-occurrence analysis: domestic tourism demand analysis, tourist decision-making and behaviour, tourist experience and satisfaction, and tourist behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic. Fourth, the analysis of the top five trending articles published within the last five years has identified several promising avenues for future research. These include investigating variations in travel behaviour across different demographics, analysing travel intentions for destinations with varying risk profiles, examining variations in risk perception by demographics and travel patterns, analysing the characteristics of outbound tourists and the possibility of diverting them domestically during crises, and exploring the trade-offs between stricter pandemic risk control and reduced tourism benefits. The identified knowledge gaps and emerging trends can guide future investigations. Policymakers can formulate effective domestic tourism promotion strategies by leveraging the understanding of geographical distribution and thematic clusters. Industry professionals can gain insights into current tourist behaviour in order to develop innovative and sustainable domestic tourism practices. There are limitations to this study. The analysis is restricted to the selected database (WOS), which may exclude relevant research from other sources. Additionally, relying solely on published papers (articles and early access) may result in publication bias, with underrepresented perspectives. Further research could involve in-depth analysis covering additional research databases. Furthermore, a comparison between domestic and international tourism, including their similarities and differences, advantages and disadvantages, could be an interesting avenue for future scholarly work.

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