

Review

Bibliometric Analysis of Key Variables in Tourism: Destination, Competitiveness, Image, Quality, and Tourist Satisfaction (2000–2023)

José Marques Pereira, Paulo Almeida  and Giovana Gorette Feijó Almeida *

Projeto FAST-Agenda ATT-PRR, CiTUR-Polytechnic University of Leiria, 2411-901 Leiria, Portugal; jose.m.pereira@ipleiria.pt (J.M.P.); palmeida@ipleiria.pt (P.A.)

* Correspondence: giovana.almeida@ipleiria.pt or gorette.giovana@gmail.com

Abstract: In the scientific literature on tourism, a set of variables is frequently utilized. The objective of this study is to analyze the scenario of scientific publications on these variables between 2000 and 2023. This analysis employs a bibliometric approach, utilizing data collected from the Scopus database. The bibliometric method was employed, with a focus on five variables (tourism destination, competitiveness, image, quality, and satisfaction) and five indicators (author, year, country, journal, and affiliation) essential for mapping research patterns and identifying key trends in the field of tourism. The findings demonstrate that the five variables under examination are inherently interrelated. The image of the destination is of particular importance, as it influences the quality of life of residents and the experiences of tourists, which in turn affects the competitiveness of the destination. The results also demonstrate the multidimensional nature of these variables in shaping tourism destination dynamics. This study underscores the value of bibliometric analysis as a strategic tool for synthesizing and deepening tourism literature. The findings not only highlight the primary research contributions and trends but also identify gaps and opportunities for future research, thereby promoting continuous advancement in tourism knowledge and best practices.

Keywords: tourism destination; competitiveness tourism; destination image; destination quality; tourism satisfaction



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1. Introduction

Tourism, as a social, economic, and cultural phenomenon, plays a dynamic and interdependent role in the development of territories, with a wide range of variables impacting and being impacted by it. The scientific literature on tourism has identified several key variables that are frequently examined in the analysis of tourist destinations. These include competitiveness, image, quality, and tourist satisfaction (Buhalis, 2000; Almeida, 2011; De Miranda, 2012; Emmendoerfer & Mediotte, 2022). As posited by Araújo (2023) and Santana and Gosling (2018), these variables are instrumental in the creation of destination value and attractiveness, exerting influence over a range of factors, including the visitor experience and the quality of life of residents. Therefore, it is crucial to comprehend the collective influence of these variables on the formation and functionality of tourist destinations if we are to develop effective and sustainable policies in the field of tourism.

A competitive tourist destination is defined by its capacity to enhance visitor experiences while safeguarding local and cultural resources, thereby promoting the sustainability and quality of life of the local community (Fonseca, 2017; Mazo et al., 2021; Almeida &

Almeida, 2023; Azmi et al., 2023). In the context of a globalized and increasingly digital economy, this competitiveness extends beyond the material offerings and services available, encompassing the perception and image that the destination projects to the public. In this regard, the image of a destination assumes a pivotal role, serving as a differentiating factor in the market and as a conduit for the tourist experience. It influences the formation of expectations and shapes loyalty (Santana & Gosling, 2018; Almeida & Almeida, 2023; Araújo, 2023). This symbolic representation, constructed on visual elements, narratives, and even stereotypes, directly affects tourists' travel motivations and decisions, as well as influencing the creation of a territorial brand for the destination (Almeida, 2018; Almeida & Almeida, 2023).

However, the quality of a destination is not solely determined by material factors; it is also shaped by the subjective perceptions of tourists and residents regarding the quality of tourism services. This can be a crucial determinant of satisfaction for both tourists and residents alike (Postma & Schmuecker, 2017; Utama & Trimurti, 2021; Almeida & Almeida, 2023). Wang and Ye (2022) argue that the assessment of quality in tourism, particularly in the context of sustainable tourism, must strike a balance between economic performance and respect for cultural and ecological values. In this manner, quality serves as a contributing factor to both the immediate satisfaction of tourists and the long-term reputation and competitiveness of the destination. Tourist satisfaction is, thus, an important variable, capable of affecting both the return of visitors and the dissemination of positive recommendations, which serve to enhance the attractiveness and economic potential of the location (Araújo, 2023; Azmi et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2023; Sahabuddin et al., 2024; Xia et al., 2024).

Therefore, the question that raises this study is: What is the panorama of scientific research published on tourist destinations, competitiveness, image, destination quality, and tourist satisfaction in the tourism literature between 2000 and 2023?

The objective of this study is to conduct a bibliometric analysis of publications in the Scopus database between 2000 and 2023 in order to gain insight into the landscape of scientific research and the interrelationships between five variables that are frequently cited in specialized literature.

It is noteworthy that the five variables selected for this study—destination, competitiveness, image, quality, and tourist satisfaction—were chosen based on their theoretical and empirical relevance and are widely addressed in the scientific literature on tourism (Almeida, 2011; Pereira, 2024). These variables play a central role in understanding the factors that influence the performance and sustainability of tourism destinations. In this regard, the concept of a destination is pivotal for situating the context and characteristics of a tourist locale, while competitiveness signifies a destination's capacity to distinguish itself on the global stage. The image of a destination is also critical for attracting visitors and building a reputation. The quality of the destination is intrinsically linked to the tourist's perception of the services and infrastructures offered, while satisfaction is a measure of the success of the tourist experience, directly impacting the loyalty and recommendation of the destination. Consequently, a comprehensive analysis of these variables is imperative in elucidating the interconnections between the pivotal aspects of tourism management, thereby offering a holistic perspective on the prevailing trends and challenges in this domain of study.

The bibliometric approach allows for the quantification of academic productivity, the impact of prominent authors, and the identification of temporal and spatial trends in tourism literature (Guedes & Borschiver, 2005; Costa & Oliveira, 2020; Dhingra et al., 2024). Accordingly, this approach is well-suited to achieving the objective of this study. Furthermore, a qualitative analysis enables the interpretation of identified patterns and relationships, thereby enhancing comprehension of the manner in which these factors

contribute to the sustainable and competitive development of tourist destinations. By delineating this panorama, we map existing scientific production and, in conjunction, propose a reflection on the gaps and prospective avenues for future inquiry, thereby enriching the academic discourse on strategies to enhance the sustainability and value of tourist destinations in the global context.

The study is comprised of five distinct sections. The study commences with a presentation of the topic, subsequently proceeding to the theoretical framework. The following sections present the methodology employed in the research, the results obtained, and a discussion thereof. Finally, the conclusion is summarized.

2. Theoretical Framework

The existing literature on tourism has investigated a number of variables that are believed to determine the success of tourist destinations. These include the destination itself, its competitiveness, its image, the quality of the experience it offers, and the level of satisfaction experienced by tourists.

Each of these variables represents a fundamental aspect of the attractiveness, economic viability, and sustainability of tourist destinations. It is important to acknowledge that this collective understanding provides a comprehensive perspective on the dynamics of development and competitiveness within the tourism industry.

2.1. *Tourism Destination: The Concepts*

The concept of a tourist destination is not merely a geographical location; rather, it is a multifaceted entity that encompasses the provision of products and services, as well as the promotion and marketing of the destination's image. As posited by [Baggio \(2020\)](#) and [Bernaki and Marso \(2023\)](#), the success of a destination is contingent upon the manner in which it is promoted and its capacity to align with the expectations of tourists and other stakeholders, including residents and local managers. [Buhalis \(2000\)](#), one of the seminal authors of the field, posits that the competitiveness of a tourist destination is sustained by a combination of cultural, heritage, and natural factors that enhance the offer of meaningful and memorable experiences. This perspective is also supported by [Djurica and Djurica \(2010\)](#) and [López-Molina and Pulido-Fernández \(2023\)](#), who discuss the role of the tourist experience in attracting and retaining visitors. Furthermore, they emphasize the necessity of achieving a balance between local development and the expectations and demands of tourists.

It is imperative to acknowledge the necessity of incorporating the viewpoint of both local residents and managerial personnel in the development of competitive destinations ([Pike & Ryan, 2004](#); [Bernaki & Marso, 2023](#)). In this context, the development of theoretical models has emerged as a pivotal endeavor. These models address two critical aspects: the strategic management of tourism and the socioeconomic dynamics of the destination. A central tenet of these models is the assurance that the development of tourism does not come at the expense of the quality of life of the local community ([Candela & Figini, 2012](#); [Bernaki & Marso, 2023](#)). Recent advancements in the field, such as the utilization of big data and artificial intelligence to comprehend tourism demand patterns, as well as innovative strategies that enhance the resilience of destinations in the context of climate change and global challenges, are also noteworthy ([Gössling & Hall, 2019](#); [Almeida et al., 2024](#)).

The concept of a tourist destination is intricate, encompassing a geographical space that assembles natural, cultural, historical, or artificial attractions that pique the interest of visitors, along with infrastructure and services that cater to the needs of tourists. This concept is perceived as a set of interrelated elements, including experiences, images, and

meanings attributed by visitors and the local community (Buhalis, 2000; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Emmendoerfer et al., 2023).

2.2. Destination Competitiveness: The Concepts

The competitiveness of tourist destinations is a variable that is frequently discussed in scientific literature, with an emphasis on the capacity of destinations to generate added value for visitors in a sustainable manner. As (Fonseca, 2017; Mazo et al., 2021) have observed, a destination's competitiveness is driven by tourist satisfaction and the preservation of the resident community's lifestyle. Additionally, it is determined by the superior performance of its products and services compared to those of competing destinations. Azmi et al. (2023) further develop this perspective by emphasizing the necessity of continuous innovation for competitiveness, particularly in a globalized context where differentiation and adaptation to market demands are crucial for maintaining growth. Ahn and Bessiere (2022) and Azmi et al. (2023) indicate that competitiveness is associated with both environmental sustainability and local economic development, with an emphasis on fostering tourist loyalty and attracting new visitors. Consequently, in order to maintain competitiveness, tourist destinations are advised to strike a balance between the generation of value for visitors and the preservation of local and cultural resources (Lee et al., 2022; Rodríguez et al., 2020; Sedlacek et al., 2022).

Lee et al. (2022) underscore tourist loyalty as a strategic component of competitiveness, positing that destinations that foster memorable experiences are more likely to attract repeat visitors and fortify their position in the global market. This perspective is further elaborated upon by Sedlacek et al. (2022), who underscore the significance of collaborative governance and the involvement of local communities in formulating competitive strategies. It is also important to note that the competitiveness of a destination is not static but rather dynamic, requiring constant adjustments to changes in the global environment, such as climate change, economic crises, and evolving tourist preferences (Gössling & Hall, 2019).

Consequently, a competitive destination is one that distinguishes itself in the tourist market by its capacity to attract and satisfy tourists in a sustainable manner, taking into account factors such as infrastructure, natural and cultural attractions, hospitality, and effective management (Gössling & Hall, 2019). This concept involves the analysis of how destinations create perceived value and a superior experience compared to competitors while also taking into account the sustainability and well-being of local communities (Dwyer & Kim, 2003; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003; Prayag, 2020; Navarro Jurado et al., 2022).

2.3. Destination Image: The Concepts

The image of a tourist destination is one of the most pivotal elements in the promotion and positioning of a destination on the market (Almeida, 2011; Jeong & Kim, 2019; Almeida & Almeida, 2023; Ramadhani et al., 2024). As posited by Santana and Gosling (2018), the image of a destination exerts a direct influence on tourists' travel motivations and expectations, and constitutes a principal decision-making factor when selecting a destination. This image is a constructed representation that incorporates both visitors' perceptions and the narrative promoted by local authorities. It is shaped by visual, cultural, and symbolic elements that collectively influence the collective imagination (Phelps, 1986; Almeida, 2011; Araújo, 2023). As posited by Almeida and Almeida (2023), Jeong and Kim (2019), and Almeida (2011), the image of a destination not only attracts new visitors but also influences the perception of quality. This creates a dynamic in which a positive image can boost the destination's satisfaction and competitiveness. Accordingly, the image of the destination, as a symbolic representation (Almeida, 2011), becomes pivotal in forging

emotional connections with tourists and establishing distinctive and appealing identities that can even give rise to a territorial brand (Almeida, 2018).

The discussion of this theme also covers the need to adapt the image of destinations to global changes, such as those related to sustainable tourism and digitalization. According to Ramadhani et al. (2024), the management of destination images must take into account the evolving expectations of tourists, who increasingly seek authentic experiences that are in alignment with principles of sustainability and the digital environment.

The image of a destination, therefore, is conceptualized as a symbolic representation of its identity, comprising elements such as iconic landscapes, cultural traditions, and the hospitality of its population. This image is a critical factor in attracting tourists and consolidating the destination's market position (Hunt, 1975; Almeida, 2011; Zhang et al., 2020; Prayag, 2022), thereby ensuring its competitiveness in the tourism industry.

2.4. Destination Quality: The Concepts

The quality of a tourist destination is a multifaceted concept, encompassing both the intrinsic value of the products and services offered and the subjective experience and satisfaction of tourists and residents. As Postma and Schmuecker (2017), Utama and Trimurti (2021), and Zhang et al. (2020) have observed, the quality of a destination is not solely determined by objective factors such as infrastructure. It is also shaped by the subjective perceptions of value that visitors and residents attribute to the destination. Wang and Ye (2022) posit that in order to ensure high perceived quality, it is essential that the destination aligns its resources and services with the well-being of the local community, promoting tourism that is economically viable, socially just, and environmentally responsible. He et al. (2024) and Suswandari et al. (2023) posit that quality, in conjunction with other factors, exerts a considerable influence on tourists' intention to revisit the destination, thereby facilitating the formation of a loyal visitor base that serves to bolster the local economy. As evidenced by the work of Acharya et al. (2023), Wang and Ye (2022), and Suswandari et al. (2023), quality management in tourism must consider not only the satisfaction of tourists but also the sustainability of local cultural and natural resources.

Therefore, the quality of a tourist destination is not solely determined by its tangible attributes; rather, it functions as a strategic element that connects the visitor experience to sustainability and the development of the local community. By integrating management practices that consider both objective and subjective aspects, destinations can achieve greater competitiveness and relevance in the global market (Postma & Schmuecker, 2017; Zhang et al., 2020; He et al., 2024; Acharya et al., 2023).

2.5. Tourism Satisfaction: The Concepts

Tourist satisfaction represents a crucial indicator in the field of tourism, exerting a direct influence on the decision to return and the dissemination of positive recommendations. This, in turn, has the potential to enhance the destination's attractiveness (Shahijan et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020; Ramadhani et al., 2024).

As indicated by Yasir et al. (2023), Arismayanti et al. (2020), and Wang et al. (2019), tourist satisfaction is influenced by a number of factors, including the quality of services, the image of the destination, and the experiences had during the visit. Satisfaction, as defined by Yasir et al. (2023) and Meng and Han (2019), is a complex and multifaceted variable.

In addition to addressing tourists' initial expectations and motivations, it also entails their assessment of the reality of the destination, which constitutes an essential aspect of this process. Chen et al. (2020) and Ramadhani et al. (2024) posit that satisfaction is directly correlated with loyalty, as satisfied tourists are more likely to return and recommend the destination.

Consequently, the management of tourist satisfaction necessitates an integrated approach that encompasses all aspects, from the fundamental services provided to the creation of personalized experiences, in alignment with visitor preferences and local sustainability objectives (Lv & McCabe, 2020; Xiang & Fesenmaier, 2022; Yasir et al., 2023; Ramadhani et al., 2024). Thus, it becomes evident that the existing literature on tourism demonstrates an indirect interdependence between the variables of tourist destination, competitiveness, image, quality, and satisfaction, as well as the relevance of an integrated approach to understanding the impact of these variables on the success of tourist destinations.

In this regard, Kozak and Rimmington (1999) and Guedes and Borschiver (2005) propose that bibliometric analysis can offer insights into monitoring research trends in these domains, facilitating a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between the variables under investigation. This body of knowledge, which has been developed over the past few decades, provides not only a robust theoretical foundation but also practical guidance for the strategic and sustainable management of tourist destinations. It is aligned with the demands of the sector and addresses the global challenges of sustainability and competitiveness.

In this scenario, tourist satisfaction is defined as the subjective evaluation made by a visitor based on the congruence between their prior expectations and the experience they have in the destination. This concept encompasses dimensions such as the perceived quality of services, authenticity of experience, hospitality, and emotional factors that influence the perception of value, and the likelihood of return or recommendation (Baker & Crompton, 2000; Ali et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2022).

3. Research Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods approach to examine the trends, gaps, and interrelationships in the literature on five core variables in tourism. The combination of bibliometric analysis and qualitative interpretations allows for a comprehensive understanding of the field, which is aligned with the objective of analyzing the landscape of scientific publications between 2000 and 2023.

3.1. Method

The method employed was bibliometric analysis, a well-established approach to quantifying academic production and identifying publication patterns within a particular field of research (Guedes & Borschiver, 2005). The application of bibliometrics enables the assessment of the productivity and impact of researchers, institutions, and countries, thereby providing insights into the development of knowledge in the field of tourism (Marques, 2010; Costas, 2017). Furthermore, a qualitative analysis was integrated into this study to elucidate the interconnections between the variables, thereby enhancing the comprehension of the observed trends and challenges pertaining to academic production on the subject under investigation (Costa & Oliveira, 2020; Wolfram, 2017).

The bibliometric analysis, of a quantitative nature, involved the extraction and processing of data using the following indicators: year, number of publications, authors, country, and affiliation/universities. The metrics employed were obtained directly from the Scopus database, which also furnished the visualization resources for the analysis of this study.

In addition, a qualitative approach was incorporated to interpret the relationships between the variables investigated. We employed content analysis, as outlined by Bardin (1977), to examine the collected data. This approach was utilized to identify patterns, significant connections, and gaps in the specialized literature. The interpretation of the graphs and tables facilitated a more in-depth discussion of the theoretical and practical

connections between the variables investigated. This integrated approach yielded a more comprehensive and detailed insight into interactions and trends in the field.

The study is of an exploratory-descriptive nature. Exploratory research is employed to examine phenomena that have been relatively understudied in the existing literature, offering an initial perspective that can inform subsequent investigations (Gil, 2008). In this instance, the exploratory approach was employed to investigate the variables under examination. Conversely, the descriptive approach was employed to quantify existing production, delineate temporal trends, and identify the most influential authors, countries, sources, years, and institutions, thereby providing a comprehensive overview of the field (Richardson, 1999).

3.2. Data Collection Procedures

The data were collected in April 2024 using the Scopus database, selected for its status as the largest scientific database in the world and its adherence to a rigorous indexing process.

Specific inclusion criteria were applied, considering publications between the years 2000 and 2023, with the objective of ensuring temporal representativeness and capturing the recent development of tourism literature (Pereira, 2024). The year 2000 was selected as the starting point due to its designation as “Tourism Year 2000” as a globalized activity (Boyer, 1999), and the year 2023 was included because it represents the most recent full year.

According to Sigala (2018), the advent of technologies applied to tourism commenced a substantial impact from the 2000s onward, with the integration of various instruments into the services and modus operandi of tourism. Examples include artificial intelligence, the web industry, big data, smart devices, drones, sensors, virtual and augmented reality, and others that continue to be added to this list. Concurrently, the advancement of communication technologies has facilitated the interconnectedness of individuals and nations, thereby influencing the proliferation of sporting competitions. This development has not only enhanced the safety of sports but also given rise to novel sporting disciplines and infrastructures (Schwaninger, 1984).

Noteworthy among these developments is the advent of novel trends, exemplified by the concept of creative tourism. This term was first analyzed and defined by Richards and Raymond in 2000 as “tourism that offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in educational courses and experiences that are characteristic of the destination in which they take place” (Richards & Raymond, 2000).

The search terms included “tourism destination”, “destination competitiveness”, “destination image”, “destination quality”, and “tourist satisfaction”. Only articles published in journals were included in the selection to ensure the quality and relevance of the sources analyzed. After applying the filters of the year (2000 to 2023), type of document (article), and type of publication (journal), a final sample of 9953 articles was selected for analysis.

It is noteworthy that the method employed for the analysis of the 9953 publications was the bibliometric method. To this end, a dual approach was employed in the analysis of the publications: one quantitative and the other qualitative.

(a) Quantitative analysis:

The extraction and processing of bibliographic data is conducted directly from the Scopus database, which offers integrated tools for bibliometric analysis. The extracted data included the number of publications per year, authors, countries, institutional affiliations, and scientific journals. These data were represented by graphs and tables generated by the database itself, which allowed us to identify temporal patterns and trends in scientific production.

(b) Qualitative analysis:

The qualitative analysis was centered on the interpretation of quantitative data, with an emphasis on identifying theoretical and practical connections between the variables investigated. To illustrate, the initial publications on each variable were evaluated to comprehend the historical progression of investigative endeavors and the theoretical frameworks within the domain of tourism. This analysis also highlighted the interactions between the variables, providing a deeper insight into the dynamics and gaps in the literature. The qualitative approach was conducted manually, applying principles of Bardin's (1977) content analysis without the use of additional software.

3.3. Data Analysis Procedures

We employed a bibliometric analysis based on the counting and categorization of pertinent scientific publications accessible via the Scopus database. This approach enabled us to quantify the primary productivity indicators, including author, year, country, source, and affiliation, thereby facilitating the creation of a comprehensive overview of the scientific literature (Wolfram, 2017). Moreover, Bardin's (1977) qualitative content analysis approach was employed to examine the data, with the objective of identifying patterns and relationships between the variables under investigation, thereby revealing significant connections and potential gaps in the specialized literature. This mixed approach allowed for a more comprehensive examination of the theoretical and practical interconnections between the variables under investigation.

3.4. First Publications of the Variables

While not the primary objective of the study, an investigation was conducted into the initial publications on each of the variables under consideration in the Scopus database (see Table 1). The aforementioned table illustrates the initial publications identified on each of the variables examined (tourist destination, competitiveness, image, quality, and satisfaction) in the Scopus database. While not the primary objective of the study, this preliminary analysis provides an initial historical insight into how each variable began to be addressed in the academic literature.

Table 1. First studies on variables.

Variable Investigated	Search Without Filter	Filter Applied	Theme of Study (Author, Year)
Tourism destination	8438 documents	5505 articles	Regional tourism model (Smith et al., 1986).
Destination competitiveness	685 documents	546 articles	Competitiveness cluster method for international tourist destinations (Kozak & Rimmington, 1999). Arrangement and combination of resource-oriented and market-oriented competitiveness factors (Pechlaner, 1999). Using competitiveness as a tool for evaluating tourism (Faulkner et al., 1999).
Destination image	3076 documents	2506 articles	Method of evaluating secondary images of resorts in determining the effect that such images have on tourist decision-making (Phelps, 1986).
Destination quality	91 documents	70 articles	Application of utility theory to travel to individual destinations (White, 1976).
Tourist satisfaction	1986 documents	1822 articles	Identification of eight factors of tourist satisfaction and complexity of the variable "tourist satisfaction" (Pizam et al., 1978; Dann, 1978).

Source: authors.

It is evident that the initial studies of each variable investigated established the theoretical and methodological foundations that subsequently influence the behavior and decisions of tourists. Over time, research has evolved to address more complex and integrated issues, reflecting the growth and increasing complexity of the field of tourism. An analysis of these early studies is crucial for understanding the evolution of the field and the remaining gaps in knowledge, thus providing a robust foundation for both current and future research endeavors.

4. Results and Discussions

The results are presented in two perspectives: firstly, by indicators (year, country, author, source, and affiliation) and secondly, by each variable investigated in this study.

4.1. Production over Time

A review of the data indicated a consistent and exponential growth in scientific output on the five variables since the year 2000 (Figure 1).

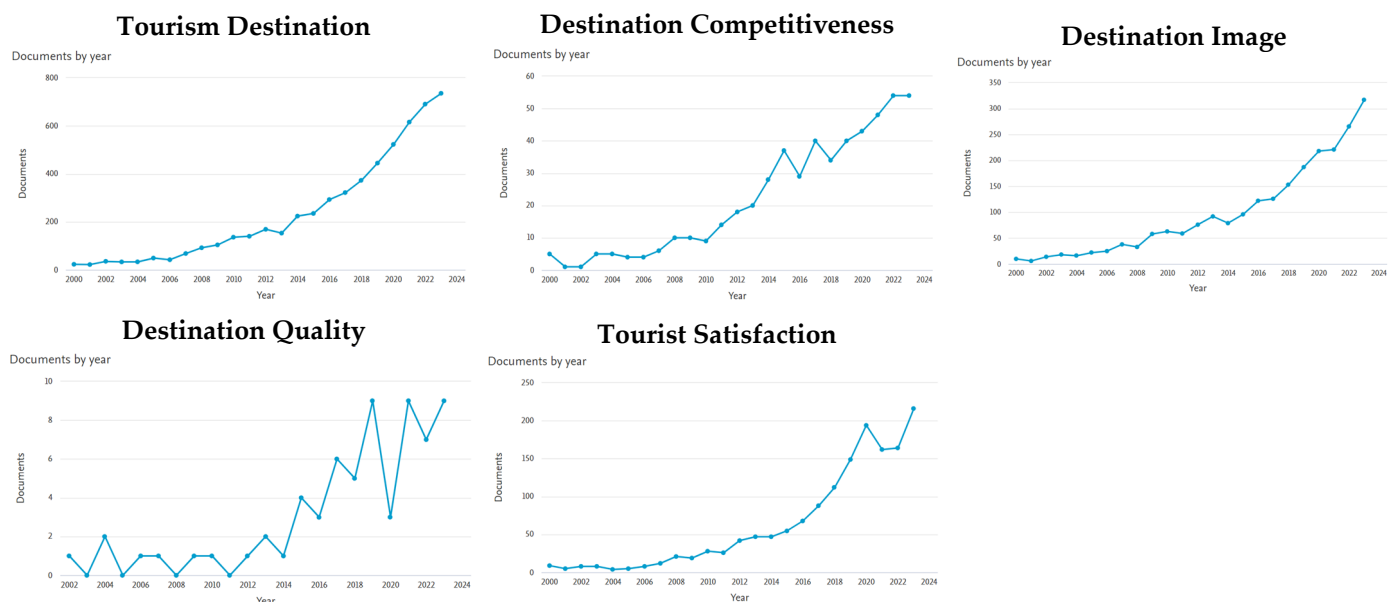


Figure 1. Indicator Year. Source: Pereira (2024, p. 66).

The results substantiate the influence of shifts in consumer demand and evolving preferences for authentic and sustainable experiences in the contemporary era.

4.2. Analysis by Country

The analysis by country revealed a global distribution, with a notable prevalence of publications from China, the United States, Spain, and Portugal. China leads in the volume of publications, particularly in the variables of destination, image, and tourist satisfaction (Table 2). This can be interpreted as a reflection of national policies to encourage tourism and the expansion of domestic and international tourism in the country (Kozak & Rimmington, 1999; Wang et al., 2019).

In the United States, studies are concentrated on destination and image, topics aligned with the country's interest in innovation policies and efficient destination management (Kim, 2012; Sedlacek et al., 2022). Spain, on the other hand, has distinguished itself in the domains of destination and image, particularly due to the significance of cultural and heritage tourism, which plays a pivotal role in attracting international visitors (López-Molina & Pulido-Fernández, 2023; Araújo, 2023). Portugal, in turn, is noteworthy for its

presence across all the variables under analysis. The results indicate that the socioeconomic context and tourism policies influence the focus of research in each country, underscoring the value of a comprehensive contextualized analysis.

Table 2. Variables by country.

Tourism Destination	Competitiveness Destination	Image Destination	Quality Destination	Tourist Satisfaction
China (787)	Spain (68)	EUA (414)	Indonesia (10)	China (252)
EUA (597)	Australia (58)	China (335)	EUA (9)	EUA (141)
Spain (557)	EUA (51)	Spain (209)	Czech Republic (5)	Malaysia (136)
Portugal (250)	Portugal (23)	Portugal (96)	Portugal (1)	Portugal (42)

Source: authors.

4.3. Influential Authors and Affiliations

The most cited authors in each variable, especially Pike, S., Styliadis, D., Baggio, R., and Rogerson, J.M., make significant contributions to the topics of image and competitiveness. Authors such as Kozak, M., with publications on competitiveness and tourist satisfaction, demonstrate an interrelationship between these variables, reflecting the mutual influence that the image of a competitive destination has on visitor loyalty and satisfaction (Dann, 1978; Pizam et al., 1978).

It should be noted that the most influential authors are responsible for establishing theoretical and methodological frameworks that guide subsequent research, consolidating a basis for studies that seek to understand the dynamics of attracting and retaining tourists. In addition, the analysis of the author indicator revealed links between universities and research centers, such as The Hong Kong Polytechnic University and Purdue University, indicating that these institutions play an important role in disseminating knowledge and promoting international cooperation in tourism.

4.4. Main Sources of Publication

The selection of journals included in this section was based on the empirical results of the study, focusing on the journals that presented the highest number of publications related to the variables investigated. These journals were identified by their relevance and representativeness within the field of study, reflecting the predominant literature on the study variables. The empirical analysis indicated that the most cited journals and the highest production of articles on the topics covered are the most significant for understanding the development and current trends in the field of tourism.

Thus, the most influential journals in publishing the variables investigated include *Tourism Management*, *Sustainability*, and the *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*. The journal *Tourism Management* is a particularly prominent source of publications, with a focus on the management and innovation of tourist destinations. This reflects a significant interest in management practices that enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of destinations (Postma & Schmuecker, 2017; Mazo et al., 2021). The recurrent appearance of publications on sustainability in these journals indicates a prioritization of responsible tourism practices in accordance with contemporary market demands and concerns regarding the environmental and cultural impact of destinations.

4.5. Tourism Destination

The variable designated as “tourist destination” has undergone a notable evolution within the corpus of academic literature on tourism, as evidenced by data extracted from the Scopus database. The period under analysis (2000–2023) demonstrates a consistent pattern of growth, particularly from 2007 onwards, when scientific production reached an

exponential trajectory. The peaks identified in 2012 and 2014 suggest an intensification of debates and theoretical and methodological advances on the subject, reflecting the growing complexity and relevance of this field of study. By the conclusion of the period under review, a total of 736 publications had been produced, thereby demonstrating the consolidation of the “tourist destination” as a central variable in the field of tourism studies.

The journals *Sustainability* (Switzerland), *Tourism Management*, and the *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism, and Leisure* have emerged as the principal vehicles for the dissemination of research in this field, with 312, 190, and 120 publications, respectively. These journals reflect not only the global reach of the topic but also its intersection with areas such as sustainability, management, and hospitality.

In terms of authorship, Pulido-Fernández, J.I., Baggio, R., and Rogerson, J.M. are particularly noteworthy, with 27, 24, and 21 publications, respectively. This data indicates the presence of prominent researchers in the field whose contributions have significantly influenced the development of theoretical and applied approaches to the study of tourist destinations.

In terms of geographical distribution, the analysis reveals China to be the country with the highest number of publications (787), followed by the United States (597) and Spain (557). Portugal is in eighth place with 250 publications and is notable for its consistent academic output at universities such as the University of Aveiro, which has produced 78 publications. Other universities with notable output include the University of Johannesburg (96) and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (85), which serve to reinforce the assertion that institutions situated in disparate contexts can nevertheless demonstrate a comparable dedication to cutting-edge research in this field.

The results demonstrate the strategic significance of the “tourist destination” variable in scientific literature, reinforcing its role as a pivotal axis for comprehending the dynamics of global tourism development. Furthermore, the data illustrates the interconnection of this variable with factors such as innovation, sustainability, and competitiveness, emphasizing research trends that delve into multidisciplinary dimensions. The prevalence of publications in specific countries and institutions also indicates potential disparities in resource and funding accessibility for research, underscoring the necessity for enhanced diversification in global academic endeavors.

4.6. Destination Competitiveness

The variable of “competitiveness of tourist destinations” has been a prominent topic in scientific literature since 2000, with a significant increase in the volume of publications over the last two decades. A significant milestone was reached in 2010, with a notable increase in the number of articles published, indicating a heightened level of discourse on the subject. This growth remained constant until 2015, when 40 publications were recorded, and reached a new peak in 2022 with a total of 50 publications.

The results indicate that Spain is the country with the highest number of publications, with a total of 68, followed by Australia (58) and the United States (51). Portugal, although to a lesser extent, is among the ten most productive countries, occupying ninth place with 23 publications, which demonstrates its emerging relevance on the global academic stage.

The most prolific authors in the study of competitiveness are Dwyer (15 publications), Lo (12), and Kozak (8). These researchers have made significant contributions to the theoretical and empirical development of the field, facilitating a deeper understanding of the interrelationships between competitiveness, tourism development, and destination management.

The journals *Tourism Management* (31 publications), *Current Issues in Tourism* (20), and *Tourism Economics* (19) serve as the primary vehicles for disseminating discussions on

competitiveness, thereby reinforcing their importance as reference platforms for debates and academic advances in the field.

The most prominent universities in this field include the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney (16 publications), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (13), and the ISCTE—Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (8). These institutions are distinguished by their capacity to generate research, which suggests a correlation between the concentration of academic resources and scientific output.

The data obtained serves to reinforce the position that the competitiveness of tourist destinations represents a central theme within the broader field of tourism and is a topic that is widely explored in a variety of geographical and institutional contexts. Spain's preeminence in publications, coupled with the presence of pivotal researchers and institutions, exemplifies the academic dedication to elucidating the competitive dynamics of destinations. Furthermore, the preponderance of specific journals and universities suggests the existence of research clusters that influence the trajectory of inquiry in this field. However, it also highlights potential avenues for geographic and thematic diversification in future studies.

4.7. Destination Image

The “destination image” variable has emerged as a prominent and rapidly evolving area of scientific inquiry, with a notable surge in the volume of publications between 2000 and 2023. At the outset of the period under examination, there were only 10 publications on the subject. By 2023, this number had grown to 317, indicating a marked increase in interest in this topic among those engaged in tourism research.

The most prolific authors are Pike, S. and Styliadis, D., with 24 publications each, followed by Morrison, A.M., with 18. These researchers have played an instrumental role in the consolidation of the field, delving into both theoretical and applied dimensions of the destination image. Their contributions have significantly advanced our understanding of how destinations are perceived and valued by tourists.

In terms of geographical distribution, the United States leads the volume of publications with 414, followed by China (335) and Spain (209). Portugal occupies ninth place with 96 publications, thereby establishing itself as a significant contributor to the global discourse on tourism, particularly in light of its relatively modest territorial extent in comparison to other prominent countries in this field.

The journals *Tourism Management* (107 publications), *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing* (94), and *Sustainability* (Switzerland) (93) represent the primary avenues for the dissemination of research on destination image studies. This dominance underscores the convergence of marketing, management, and sustainability, which are pivotal to the advancement of this field.

The universities that have made the most significant contributions to academic production on destination image include The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (84 publications), Purdue University (42), and the University of Algarve (27). This data indicates the concentration of research in leading institutions, which reflects the strategic role of these universities in defining global agendas on the subject.

The analysis of the indicators revealed that the “destination image” is the second most discussed variable, with a high level of discussion among authors, countries, journals, and universities. China's preeminence in the number of publications pertaining to the indicators for countries and academic institutions is a notable phenomenon that underscores its ascendance as a dominant force in the realm of scientific production within the domain of tourism. Conversely, Portugal maintains a notable presence, particularly in view of its size and resources, thereby reinforcing its capacity to contribute to the advancement of

knowledge in this field. These findings underscore the significance of destination image for the examination of global tourism dynamics and highlight the necessity for future research to expand geographical and thematic diversity.

4.8. Destination Quality

The variable measuring the quality of the destination exhibited an irregular pattern of growth in scientific publications, becoming statistically significant from 2002 onwards. Despite the general progress observed over the years, there were no publications in 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2011, indicating a fragmented timeline. The initial production peaks occurred in 2004 and 2013, followed by uninterrupted growth until 2019. However, there was a precipitous decline in 2020, likely attributable to the impact of the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, which has affected both the tourism sector and academic research in this field.

The countries that have published the most research on destination quality are Indonesia (10), the United States (9), and the Czech Republic (5). Portugal, on the other hand, has only one publication in this field, ranking 13th. The preponderance of research from Indonesia and other emerging countries may indicate a growing interest in understanding quality as a competitive differentiator in developing tourist destinations.

The most prolific authors are Dedeoglu, B.B., and Ryglová, K., who have each published three times, followed by Effendi, M.I., who has published twice. These researchers have made significant contributions to the consolidation of the variable within the context of the existing literature, although the volume of their publications remains relatively limited.

The journals that have published the most on the subject include *Tourism Management* (3 publications), *Acta Universitatis Agriculturae et Silviculturae Mendelianae Brunensis* (2), and the *International Journal for Quality Research* (2). The vehicles utilized in this research, though diverse in nature, reflect the interdisciplinary character of the field of destination quality research, encompassing both managerial and methodological aspects.

In terms of scientific production on destination quality, the institutions that stand out most are Mendelova Univerzita v Brne (4 publications), Universitas Pembangunan Nasional “Veteran” Yogyakarta (3), and Macquarie University (2). The University of Coimbra, with a single publication, is the sole Portuguese institution represented in the university indicators, underscoring the necessity for a more substantial presence of national academic bodies in this domain.

A review of the data reveals that destination quality is the least explored variable among those investigated in this study. The development of this concept in the scientific literature is characterized by a paucity of publications and a trajectory marked by fluctuations, which reflect a limited interest among researchers and institutions. In order for destination quality to gain scientific and practical relevance, it is necessary to encourage research that highlights its strategic importance in tourism competitiveness, as well as to expand dissemination and collaboration efforts between researchers from different regions and disciplines. Therefore, it is essential to reinforce this line of research in order to address existing gaps and advance our understanding of the factors that influence the perception of quality in local, regional, and global tourist destinations

4.9. Tourism Satisfaction

The variable “tourist satisfaction” has been the subject of an increasing number of scientific publications over time. This increase reached its zenith in 2020, after which a decline was observed between 2021 and 2022. This decline may be attributed to the global restrictions and disruptions caused by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. In 2023, the variable once again attracted scholarly attention, registering a new growth peak, which suggests that academic interest in the topic has resumed.

With regard to the countries in question, China (252 publications), the United States (141), and Malaysia (136) are to be identified as the principal contributors, while Portugal is to be found in 14th position with 42 publications. China's leadership in this field is indicative of its status as a major global tourism market, as well as a growing academic focus on areas pertaining to the tourist experience and perception.

The most prolific authors in this field are Kozak, M. (15 publications), followed by Carvache-Franco, M. (10), and Carvache-Franco, W. (9). These authors have been instrumental in advancing our understanding of the factors that influence tourist satisfaction.

Among the academic journals, *Sustainability Switzerland* (90 publications), *Tourism Management* (47), *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites* (33), and *African Journal of Hospitality Tourism and Leisure* (32) merit particular attention. The extensive range of journals indicates an interdisciplinary and global approach to the study of tourism satisfaction, with a particular focus on sustainability, tourism management, and geography.

With regard to universities, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University is at the vanguard with 42 publications, followed by the Universiti Sains Malaysia (26), the Chinese Academy of Sciences (20), and the University of Algarve (14). The inclusion of the University of the Algarve, representing Portugal, is illustrative of the country's contribution to research on tourist satisfaction, albeit on a relatively modest scale.

Despite its relatively low ranking in terms of publication output, tourist satisfaction demonstrates a pattern of continuous and relevant growth. This growth is particularly evident in the indicators pertaining to countries, universities, and journals, which collectively signal a growing recognition of the importance of tourist satisfaction in the field of tourism. Portugal, though not yet among the foremost contributors, is notable for its persistent presence in the academic publication indicators, both at the national and institutional levels. These developments underscore the potential for further research in this area, particularly in light of its significance in enhancing the tourist experience and developing competitive strategies for global destinations.

4.10. Relationships Between the Variables Investigated

The analysis revealed an intrinsic relationship between the five variables under investigation. Destination image was identified as a mediator in the perception of quality and competitiveness, while tourist satisfaction was found to reflect the combined impact of these variables (Buhalis, 2000; Almeida, 2011; Almeida & Almeida, 2023; Chen et al., 2020). A positive image of a destination attracts new tourists and reinforces the perception of quality, thereby increasing competitiveness and promoting a value-added experience for visitors (Almeida, 2011; Jeong & Kim, 2019). This includes the development of a territorial brand (Almeida, 2018).

In practical terms, these findings suggest that destination management can adopt a holistic and interconnected approach, recognizing that investments in image and quality have a direct impact on competitiveness and tourist satisfaction. Destinations that succeed in aligning these elements tend to demonstrate greater resilience and attractiveness in a competitive global market, particularly in an environment where personalization and sustainability are increasingly valued by tourists.

The bibliometric approach enabled us to map out the research landscape and gain insight into the interconnections between the variables under study. However, the qualitative analysis, when used in conjunction with bibliometrics, proved essential for interpreting the meaning of these relationships and their practical implications for the management of tourist destinations. In light of these findings, it becomes evident that the interplay between the variables of destination, competitiveness, image, quality, and satisfaction provides a foundation for the formulation of sustainable development strategies in tourism. Destina-

tions that succeed in aligning these elements, particularly in the context of sustainability and quality of experience, demonstrate greater potential to become benchmark destinations in the global market, enhancing their attractiveness and resilience in the face of current and future challenges.

The field of tourism is inherently complex, necessitating an integrated analysis of the myriad factors that influence the performance of destinations and the experience of visitors. In this context, the variables under investigation—tourist destination, image, quality, competitiveness, and tourist satisfaction—are inextricably linked and play a pivotal role in understanding the dynamics of the sector.

It is important to note that these variables do not exist in isolation; rather, they interact in a complementary manner, creating a system in which changes in one dimension directly affect the others. To illustrate, the image of a destination, frequently regarded as the initial emotional and symbolic link between a location and prospective visitors, exerts an influence on expectations and, subsequently, the assessment of perceived quality. Destinations with a positive image tend to attract a greater number of tourists, while simultaneously establishing a high standard for the delivery of services and experiences, which is closely linked to tourist satisfaction. These perceptions are discussed in the following works: [Echtner and Ritchie \(1991\)](#), [Pike and Ryan \(2004\)](#), [Almeida \(2011\)](#), and [Almeida and Almeida \(2023\)](#).

Furthermore, the competitiveness of destinations is contingent upon a multitude of factors, both tangible and intangible. These include, but are not limited to, infrastructure, innovation, and perceptions of quality and image. A destination's competitiveness is reinforced by high levels of tourist satisfaction, which not only encourage visitor loyalty but also consolidate the destination's reputation in the global market ([Dwyer & Kim, 2003](#)). Consequently, tourist satisfaction is directly correlated with perceived quality, emphasizing the significance of managerial strategies that prioritize excellence in services and the tourist experience ([Oliver, 1999](#); [Fornell et al., 1996](#)).

The justifications for these relationships are supported by theoretical and empirical studies, which demonstrate the interdependence between the aforementioned dimensions. [Echtner and Ritchie \(2003\)](#) examined the relationship between image and perceived quality, while [Dwyer and Kim \(2003\)](#) presented a comprehensive model of tourism competitiveness that integrates quality and satisfaction. Moreover, research such as that conducted by [Kozak \(2001\)](#) on satisfaction and loyalty further substantiates the interconnection between these variables, underscoring the necessity for integrated approaches in the planning and management of tourist destinations.

It is important to note that the variables under analysis are interrelated, reflecting the complex nature of tourism as a field of study. However, each of these approaches addresses complementary dimensions of the tourist experience and destination performance (Figure 2).

The interrelationships identified between the variables analyzed in the study highlight the complexity of the connections between the image of a destination, quality, competitiveness, and tourist satisfaction. The identification of these relationships was based on data extracted from the bibliometric analysis and corroborated by extant studies. For instance, the study by [Dwyer and Kim \(2003\)](#) demonstrated the direct influence of the destination image on competitiveness. Similarly, [Almeida and Almeida \(2023\)](#) analyzed the influence of the destination image on the territorial brand.

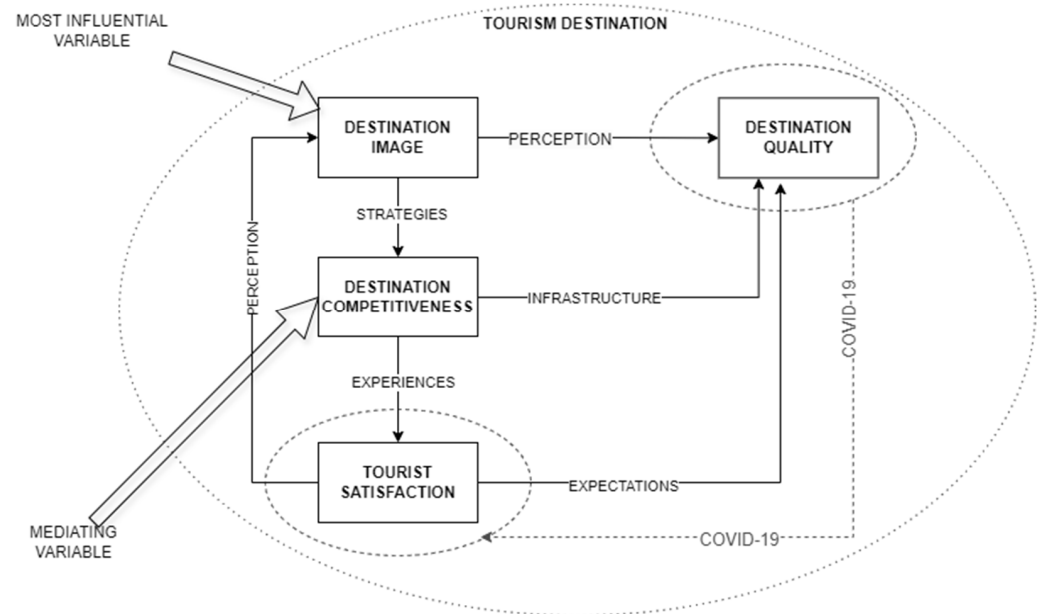


Figure 2. Correlations between study variables—Source: authors.

The arrows in Figure 2 indicate the direction of the relationships and reinforce the understanding of how changes in one variable can impact others. For instance, destinations with a favorable reputation tend to attract more satisfied tourists, thereby reinforcing the destination's competitive edge.

This analysis yielded seven significant relationships between the variables under investigation, which are illustrated in Figure 2. These relationships were identified based on their theoretical and empirical interconnections within the context of tourism.

1. Destination Image and Destination Quality: The image of a destination exerts a direct influence on the perception of its quality. A positive image generates expectations that can be met or exceeded, depending on the quality of the destination as perceived by the tourist. Conversely, destinations that maintain high-quality standards tend to reinforce their image and attract a greater number of tourists.
2. The relationship between destination competitiveness and destination quality is a complex one. Competitiveness is inextricably linked to quality, as destinations that offer exemplary infrastructure, services, and distinctive experiences are better positioned to distinguish themselves in the global market. The perception of quality constitutes a pivotal differentiating factor between competitive destinations and those that are less prepared.
3. The relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination quality is a complex one. The quality of a destination is of paramount importance in determining the level of satisfaction experienced by tourists. When tourists' expectations are met or exceeded, satisfaction increases, thereby enhancing the probability of their returning to the destination and recommending it to others.
4. The relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination image is a complex one. Satisfaction exerts an influence on the post-visit perception of the destination's image. Tourists who are satisfied with their experience are more likely to construct and disseminate positive narratives about the destination, which in turn affects the way potential visitors perceive it and reinforces the destination's reputation.
5. The relationship between destination competitiveness and tourist satisfaction is a complex one. Destinations that are competitive in nature are able to offer experiences that meet a variety of expectations, which ultimately results in greater satisfaction

among tourists. Conversely, high levels of satisfaction contribute to the strengthening of competitiveness, thereby creating a virtuous cycle of development.

6. The relationship between destination image and destination competitiveness is a topic of considerable interest within the tourism industry. The image of a destination is a crucial factor in determining its competitiveness. Destinations with a well-established and appealing image tend to attract a greater number of tourists, investments, and media attention. A well-established image frequently represents a strategic advantage within the tourism market.
7. The relationship between tourist satisfaction and destination quality in the context of the global pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) The decline in publications and satisfaction indicators during the pandemic is indicative of the impact that the disruption of services and global uncertainties have had on the perception of quality and, consequently, on tourist satisfaction.

Consequently, when these variables are examined collectively, a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the performance and attractiveness of tourist destinations can be gained. These interconnections underscore the necessity for integrated approaches in tourism management and research, given that actions in one dimension frequently have repercussions in the others. Prioritizing strategies that enhance the destination's perceived quality and image can bolster its competitiveness and elevate tourist satisfaction levels, thereby establishing a virtuous cycle. This alignment yields immediate positive outcomes while simultaneously establishing a robust foundation for the sustainable and resilient growth of the tourism sector over the long term.

The results of the study indicated substantial interactions between the variables examined, particularly in relation to the association between tourist destination, competitiveness, image, destination quality, and tourist satisfaction. These findings are consistent with extant literature on the subject. Studies, such as that of [Dwyer and Kim \(2003\)](#), have demonstrated that the competitiveness of a destination directly correlates with its capacity to project a positive image, which, in turn, exerts a significant influence on the attraction of tourists and their subsequent satisfaction.

The impact of perceived quality on tourist satisfaction, as observed in this study, is corroborated by research such as that of [Arismayanti et al. \(2020\)](#), [Suhartanto et al. \(2020\)](#), and [Ramadhani et al. \(2024\)](#), who identified quality as a direct antecedent of satisfaction in service contexts. These results underscore that the perception of high quality not only elevates satisfaction levels but also contributes to the establishment of a favorable image of the destination ([Chen & Tsai, 2007](#)).

In the domain of tourism, the interplay between the variables of destination image and perceived quality has been extensively examined by [Acharya et al. \(2023\)](#), [Lee et al. \(2022\)](#), [Almeida and Almeida \(2023\)](#), and [Marques et al. \(2021\)](#). These studies contend that destinations with a robust and appealing image are more likely to be associated with a heightened perception of quality among tourists. The present study's findings align with this logic, suggesting the existence of a synergy between the investigated variables, which implies an interconnection.

5. Conclusions

This study analyzed five key variables in tourism, namely tourist destination, competitiveness, image, quality, and tourist satisfaction. The analysis was based on a bibliometric examination of scientific publications published between 2000 and 2023. By employing a mixed-methods approach that integrated quantitative and qualitative techniques, it was feasible to discern patterns and trends within the corpus of publications, thereby facilitating an appreciation of the interconnections between these variables and their ramifications for

the tourism sector. In this way, the study has achieved its objective of providing a historical overview of scientific publications on the Scopus database.

The contemporary tourism context is distinguished by an increasing interdependence between the factors that shape the competitiveness and appeal of tourist destinations. The focus of the study on the variables investigated reflects the complexity and multidimensionality of the phenomenon of tourism. It is evident that these variables do not operate in isolation; rather, they are subject to complex interrelationships that directly influence the success and sustainability of a destination.

The primary findings indicate that, despite the interrelated nature of the variables, the image of the destination exerts the most significant influence, directly impacting both the perception of quality and tourist satisfaction. The competitiveness of the destination was identified as a mediating factor, which serves to enhance the attractiveness of the destination based on image and quality. In geographical terms, the United States, China, and Spain were the leading countries in terms of publications, reflecting the intense presence of research in both mature and emerging tourism markets. Additionally, the growth in publications on the topic of tourist satisfaction is noteworthy, indicating a shift in emphasis in studies towards the visitor experience.

The study makes a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge on the subject by providing a comprehensive bibliometric analysis that synthesizes current trends and identifies key gaps in the field of tourism research. Moreover, by integrating the interdependent variables, a more comprehensive analytical model is proposed for understanding the competitiveness and attractiveness of tourist destinations.

From a theoretical standpoint, this research expands the comprehension of the interrelationships between tourism variables, challenging the conventional models that treat variables in isolation. The interactions between the variables under investigation indicate that a more integrated approach to analysis is required in order to gain a detailed understanding of the factors determining the success of a destination. Moreover, the research indicates the necessity for more comprehensive models that incorporate the intricacies of contemporary tourism.

From a social perspective, this study demonstrates how the image and quality of a destination directly influence tourist perceptions, which in turn have implications for the social and economic development of local communities. Well-managed tourist destinations can provide direct benefits for residents while promoting a stronger local cultural identity. Effective management of the variables identified in this study can contribute to improving the quality of life of host communities and strengthening local cultural identities.

The practical implications are directed towards those responsible for the management of tourist destinations. The findings indicate that enhancing the quality and image of a destination should be a strategic priority for those seeking to increase competitiveness and tourist satisfaction. It is recommended that such strategies be adopted with an integrated vision, taking into account the potential impact on all variables. Furthermore, the findings indicate the necessity of ongoing monitoring of tourist satisfaction and the adaptation of marketing and management strategies in accordance with visitor perceptions and expectations. The aforementioned implications may involve investments in tourism infrastructure with the objective of improving visitors' perception of quality. Furthermore, the implementation of marketing campaigns that establish a connection between the destination's image and its local cultural identity or brand is also recommended. Additionally, the development of community engagement initiatives to ensure the equitable distribution of the benefits derived from tourism is strongly advised.

The research is limited by two factors. First, the time scope of the analysis is restricted to the period from 2000 to 2023. Second, the Scopus database, although comprehensive, may

not include all relevant publications on the subject. Furthermore, the study did not employ software that could enhance the bibliometric analysis, thereby potentially augmenting the findings.

To obtain a more comprehensive view, future research could extend the temporal scope and include other databases, such as Web of Science and B-On. A systematic literature review would also be a valuable addition to the existing research, as it would facilitate a deeper understanding of the theories and methodologies applied in this field. Another promising avenue for future research would be to explore the causal relationships between the variables under investigation, utilizing advanced statistical models such as network analysis or structural equation modeling. Subsequent studies will delve deeper into the issue of the variable quality of the destination.

This research has thus answered the problem question by identifying and analyzing the main variables that influence the competitiveness and attractiveness of tourist destinations. The relationships between these variables indicate that an integrated approach is essential for effective tourism management. An analysis of scientific publications reveals that, although there is a growing number of studies on these variables, significant gaps remain that must be explored to enhance understanding of the dynamics of the tourism sector. This study, therefore, not only contributes to the existing literature but also points to important directions for the development of future research and practice in the field of tourism.

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