Insights into Travel Motivation Research: A Bibliometric Analysis of Trends and Patterns from 1998 to 2022

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Abstract

In the dynamic tourism industry, understanding the reasons behind travel behaviour has become increasingly crucial. While there are various methods and perspectives to address the question "Why do we travel?" there remains a gap in research focusing on the development of travel motivation studies. This study aims to fill this gap by employing bibliometric indicators, such as citations, to analyze the field structure of travel motivation research from 1998 to 2022. The research also utilizes the VOSviewer and CiteSpace software to map significant trends in the travel motivation domain. By examining 1277 publications from the Scopus database the study successfully revealed essential trends concerning publications, authors, affiliations, nations, and authors' keywords within the field. Serving as a historical record of travel motivation publications, this study offers a comprehensive bibliometric analysis that highlights the key research trends in this area. The findings of this study can be highly beneficial for potential authors in the field of travel motivation. Authors can gain valuable insights into the existing literature and better understand the direction in which travel motivation research is heading.

Keywords: Travel Motivation, Bibliometric Analysis, VOSviewer, Tourism Management.

Introduction

The existence of tourism can be traced back to the ancient period when people used to travel for different reasons like business, exploration, religion, etc. The major development in tourism can be seen after world war second. In 1950, according to the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UNWTO), there were only 25 million tourists worldwide in a year. After 68 years, the annual number of international arrivals has increased to 1.4 Billion annually. This is a 56 times greater figure than the previous one in a very short span. This continues till 2019 when the world witnessed a global lockdown due to Covid-19. In past cuisines, business and religion were the primary travel cause, but afterward, studies, adventure, and exploration get included in the major travel motivation. This research centres its attention on a fundamental inquiry that underlies every deliberation regarding travel, namely, the motivation behind it. The study aims to investigate the trajectory of research pertaining to tourists' motivation during the preceding 25-year

period (1998-2022), with the intention of achieving the following objectives:

- Identifying the recent trends in travel motivation research.
- Highlighting the countries, subject areas, and authors that have demonstrated the highest degree of productivity in conducting research on travel motivation over the past 25 years.
- Identifying the principal keywords frequently employed in the literature on travel motivation during the past 25 years.

To achieve the mentioned objectives this study focused on conducting a thorough analysis of scholarly articles that have been published in the SCOPUS database within the timeframe of the past 25 years, specifically from 1998 to 2022. The researchers employ specific keywords, namely "Tourism Motivation," OR "Tourists Motivation," OR "Travel Motivation," in order to identify relevant literature related to the field. The primary goal is to conduct a detailed examination of the existing body of research pertaining to

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travel motivation. To facilitate this analysis, the study categorizes all the available literature found in the SCOPUS database within the specified time period, based on prevalent themes. This categorization allows for tracking the development of literature on travel motivation over time. Additionally, the study aims to identify influential publication outlets, articles, and authors by considering citation rates and volume. Furthermore, this study builds upon previous research reviews that have sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of the advancements made in the field of travel motivation research. By conducting this comprehensive examination of relevant literature, the researchers aim to contribute to the existing knowledge in this area and gain insights into the recent trends, productive research entities, and commonly utilized keywords in travel motivation research.

Material and Methods
Methods

The method employed in this study involved the utilization of bibliometric analysis to assess and recognize the prevailing patterns and tendencies within the field of travel motivation literature. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative and statistical approach employed to examine the publishing trends of scholarly documents, including research articles and conference papers. In this study, only published research articles are taken into consideration for further analysis.

Data Analysis
Publication by Year

To evaluate the progress of a particular area of research, it is important to consider the number of published articles related to that specific field. To conduct such an assessment, Figure 2 presents a year-by-year examination of publications on Travel motivation. The graph illustrates a significant rise in the number of papers from the last decade especially from the year 2018 which is still rising in numbers demonstrating a consistently upward trend. This observation indicates a favorable growth rate in the field of research related to Travel motivation. There are two factors that can be taken into account in relation to this rise: firstly, advancements in technology have led to the emergence of new methods for studying travel motivation, resulting in an increased number of research studies; secondly, the demand for specialized knowledge and contributions in the market and knowledge-based society has fostered the exploration and dissemination of scientific knowledge and technologies. (Jin Chen & Wei Zhou, 2020)
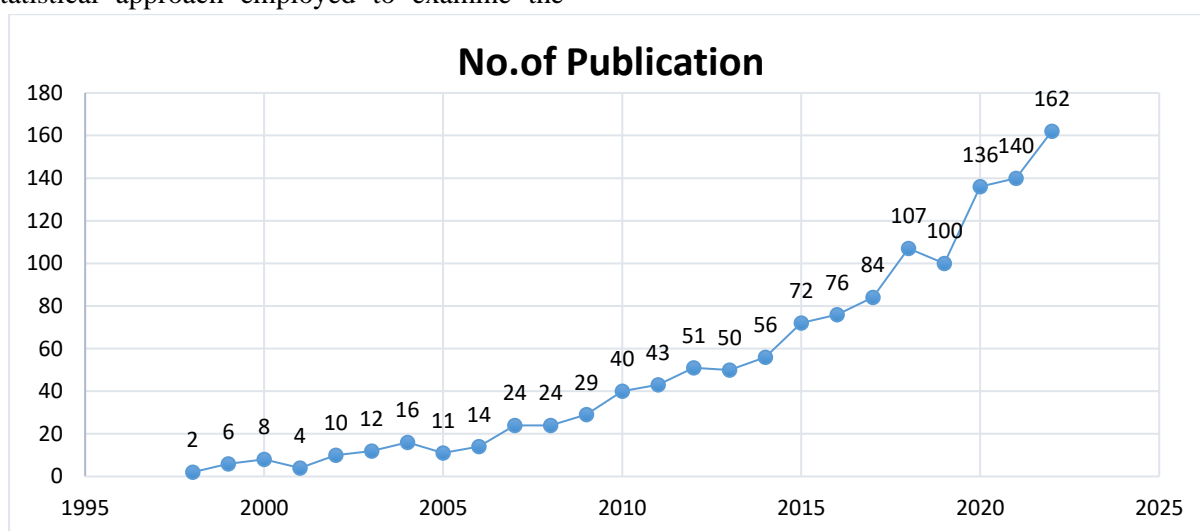

Figure 2: Number of publications from 1998 to 2022

Source: Authors' work

Most Productive Countries

When determining country productivity, if multiple authors from the same country were involved in a study, those countries were treated as a single entity (Güzeller, and Çeliker 2018). The number of publications by the top ten

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countries with the highest publication count between 1998 and 2022 is as follows: Out of the 97 countries that contributed to the top-five journals, the United States (USA) had the highest contribution, accounting for 25.9% of the publications, followed by China with 15.2%. The combined contribution of the top ten countries accounted for 92.5% of the total publications. Figure 3 illustrates the top twenty countries with the highest productivity in terms of publications.

The most productive country generated over 150 publications, while the top two countries each produced over 100 publications. Additionally, the top five countries on the list have generated over 50 publications during the study period. Notably, the United States of America (USA) demonstrated exceptional productivity with 199 publications followed by China and Australia with 140 and 137 publications respectively.
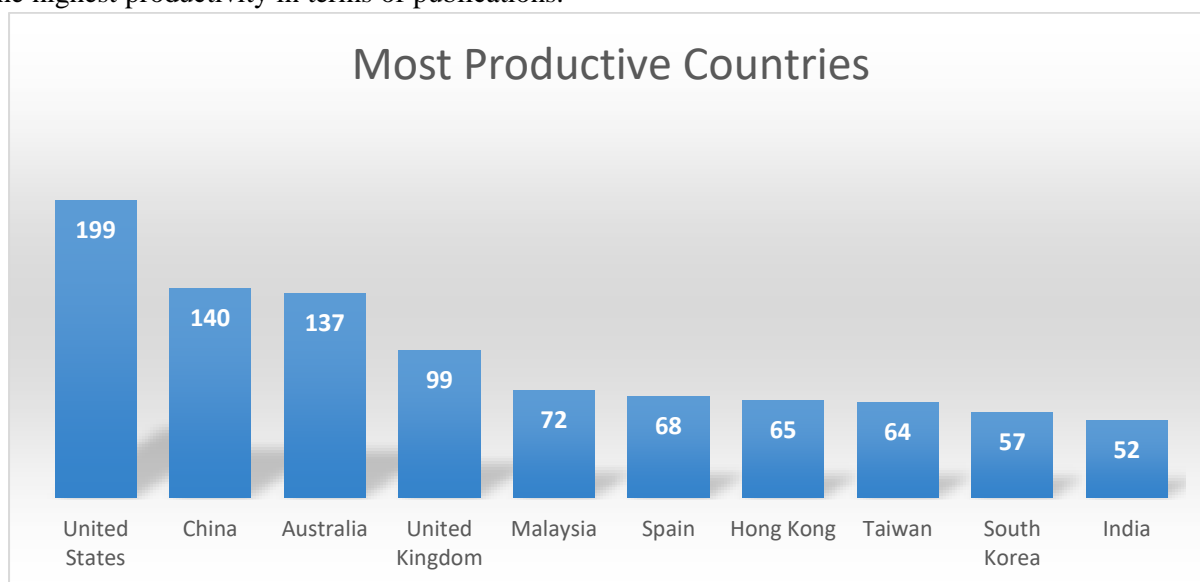

Figure 3: Most productive countries in terms of number of publications.

Source: Author's work

Top Ten Most Productive Authors

Figure 4 emphasizes the authors who have contributed the most to the literature on travel motivation, based on the number of their published works. The findings of the study revealed that the authors' publication counts ranged from seven to fourteen. The data depicted in Figure 3 indicates that "Pearce, P.L." and "Saayman, M." were the most prolific authors, with each of them having fourteen publications. They were followed by "Scott, N." and "Uysal, M." with nine publications each.
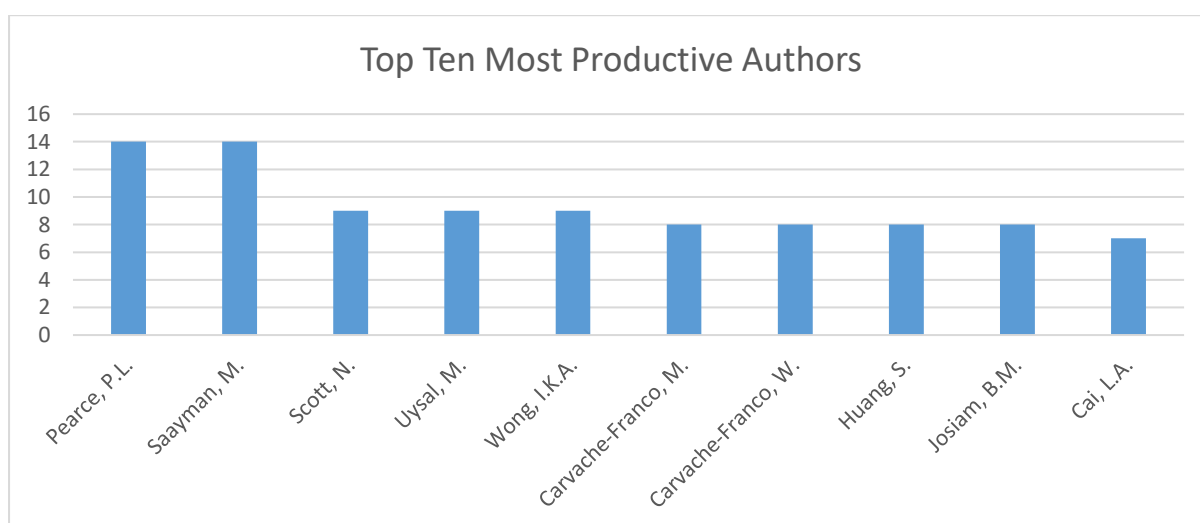

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Figure 4: Most productive authors in terms of number of publications.

Source: Author's work

Co-citation Analysis in the Field of Travel Motivation

The co-citation analysis serves as a fundamental tool for identifying previous theories, methods, or findings that are relevant to the primary research being conducted (Ferreira et al., 2014). By examining these citations, researchers can comprehensively understand a particular research domain, observe the trends in research frontiers, and make informed decisions regarding future research directions. Figure 5 provides a timeline visualization of a network, showcasing highly cited articles. In this visualization, the nodes represent the cited articles, while the links between the nodes indicate the frequency of their co-citations in the included source documents. Additionally, the figure incorporates red rings to highlight periods of citation bursts over time (Chen, Dubin, & Kim, 2014). The color of the links reflects the time when the connection was established, based on the publication year of the source article. Older connections are represented by blue colors, while more recent connections are depicted in red. Figure 5 displays relevant articles, identified by their first authors, and organizes them into thematic clusters.
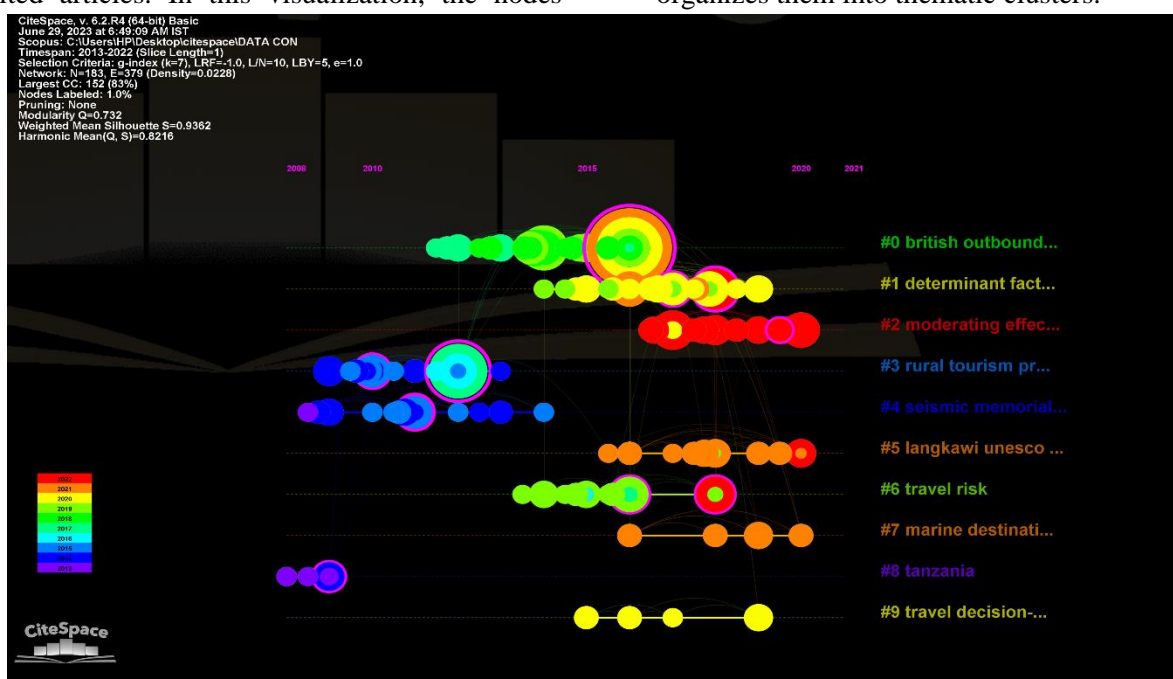

Figure 5: Co-citation analysis using different clusters

Source: Author's work

CiteSpace II organizes the co-citation network into multiple clusters, ensuring that references within each cluster are closely linked. The freshness of a cluster is assessed based on percentiles and the average publication year. A total of 10 significant homogeneous clusters have been generated through cite-space software. Each cluster consists of at least 5 documents and exhibits favorable silhouettes (>=.07). These clusters can be appropriately labeled using noun phrases extracted from the titles of the cited articles within each cluster (Chen, Ibekwew-SanJuan, & Hou, 2010). Details of these clusters are depicted below:

Cluster #0 British Outbound Tourist: The largest cluster (#0) has 31 members. It is labeled as British outbound tourist by LLR, travel motivation by LSI, and tourism studies (2.37) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is Sastre, RP (2017) Examining tourists' push and pull travel motivations and behavioral intentions: the case of British outbound tourists to Phuket, Thailand. Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality and Tourism.

Cluster #1 Determinant Factor: The second largest cluster (#1) has 22 members. It is labeled

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as a determinant factor by both LLR and LSI and as a new frontier (0.58) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is Kucukergin, KG (2020) 'What if this is my last chance?': developing a last-chance tourism motivation model. Journal of Destination Marketing and Management.

Cluster #2 Moderating Effect: The third largest cluster (#2) has 22 members. It is labeled as moderating effect by both LLR and LSI and as cross-country evidence (0.76) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is Seyitoğlu, F (2022) Determinants and implications of travel motivations: international travelers visiting Cappadocia. International Journal of Tourism Cities.

Cluster #3 Rural Tourism Product: The 4th largest cluster (#3) has 19 members. It is labeled as rural tourism product by LLR, travel motivation by LSI, and low-spending tourist (0.48) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is Mody, M (2014) The different shades of responsibility: examining domestic and international travelers' motivations for responsible tourism in India. Tourism Management Perspectives.

Cluster #4 Seismic Memorial Site: The 5th largest cluster (#4) has 18 members. It is labeled as seismic memorial site by LLR, dark touristic perception by LSI, and dark tourism motivation (0.12) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is: Tang, Y (2014) Dark touristic perception: motivation, experience, and benefits interpreted from the visit to Seismic Memorial Sites in Sichuan Province. Journal of Mountain Science.

Cluster #5 Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark Malaysia: The 6th largest cluster (#5) has 11 members. It is labeled as Langkawi UNESCO Global Geopark Malaysia by LLR, domestic tourist by LSI, and planned behavior (0.1) by MI.

The major citing article of the cluster is: Yusof, MFM (2021) Measuring revisit intention of domestic tourists in Langkawi UNESCO global Geopark, Malaysia: a road to sustainable tourism. Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism.

Cluster #6 Travel Risk: The 7th largest cluster (#6) has 9 members. It is labeled as travel risk by LLR, travel motivation by LSI, and Geotourism visitors motivation (0.19) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is Jiang, S (2019). Motivations of experienced leisure travelers: a means-end chain study on the Chinese outbound market. Journal of Vacation Marketing.

Cluster #7 Marine Destination: The 8th largest cluster (#7) has 8 members. It is labeled as marine destination by both LLR and LSI, and as travel motivation (0.06) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is: Solis-Radilla, MM (2021) Motivations as predictive variables of satisfaction and loyalty in coastal and marine destinations: a study in Acapulco, Mexico. International Journal of Tourism Cities.

Cluster #8 Tanzania: The 9th largest cluster (#8) has 7 members. It is labeled as Tanzania by both LLR and LSI and as travel motivation (0.08) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is Mlozi, S (2013). Testing a model of destination attachment - insights from tourism in Tanzania. Tourism and Hospitality Management.

Cluster #9 Travel Decision-Making: The 10th largest cluster (#9) has 5 members. It is labeled as travel decision-making by LLR, comparative approach by LSI, and travel motivation (0.05) by MI. The major citing article of the cluster is Karl, M (2020). The impact of travel constraints on travel decision-making: a comparative approach of travel frequencies and intended travel participation. Journal of Destination Marketing and Management.
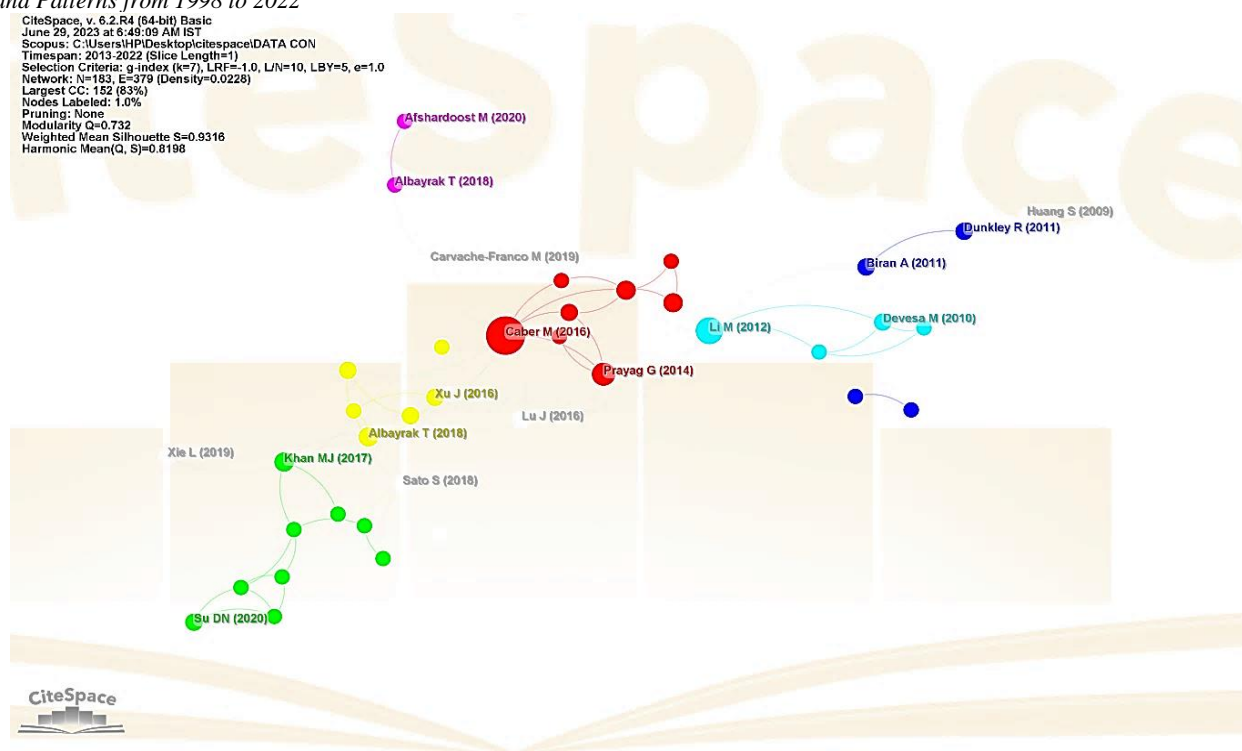
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CiteSpace, v. 6.2.R4 (64-bit) Basic
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Scopus: C:\Users\HP\Desktop\citespace\DATA CON
Timespan: 2013-2022 (Slice Length=1)
Selection Criteria: g-index (k=7), LRF=-1.0, L/N=10, LBY=5, e=1.0
Network: N=183, E=379 (Density=0.0228)
Largest CC: 152 (83%)
Nodes Labeled: 1.0%
Pruning: None
Modularity Q=0.732
Weighted Mean Silhouette S=0.9316
Harmonic Mean(Q, S)=0.8198

Figure 6: Network map of Co-citation analysis of travel motivation.

Source: Author's work

Keyword Analysis using Network Mapping Technique:

In order to analyze the pattern in the keywords used by the authors, we created a list of keywords that appeared alongside the authors' names from 1998 to 2022. To focus on the more recent developments, we specifically examined the co-occurrence of authors' keywords over the past twenty-five years, spanning from 1998 to 2022. Initially, we compiled the co-occurrence of authors' keywords by selecting a minimum of five keywords from the first publication on travel motivation within this time frame then using the VOSviewer software a network of all the indexed and authors' keywords and separately only authors' keyword has been constructed which shows "motivation", "travel motivation" and "tourism" were the most occurred authors keyword with the total link strength of 288, 257 and 160 respectively, whereas "tourist destination", "motivation" and "tourist behavior" were the most occurred authors and indexed keyword with the total link strength of 1226, 1049 and 971 respectively. These total keywords were divided into 9 clusters which shows the relatedness of these keywords. (See Figure:7 and 8)

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Figure: 7 Co-occurrence-based network map of Authors' keyword from 1998 to 2022.
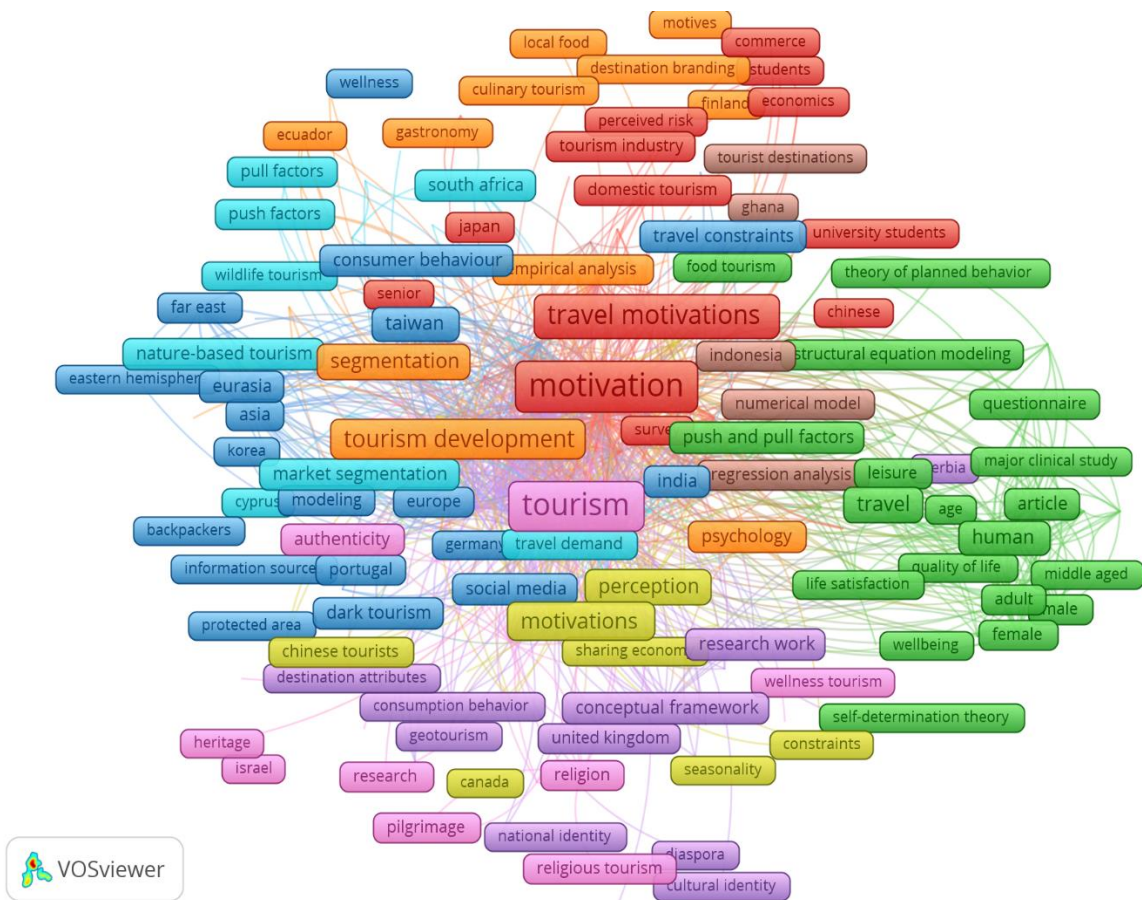
Source: Author's work

Figure 8: Co-occurrence-based network map of Authors and indexed keywords collectively

Source: Author's work

Top 10 most productive Journals in Travel Motivation

Figure 9 presents the top 10 journals known for their high publication output. Notably, Tourism Management emerges as the leading journal in the field of travel motivation research with a total of 60 publications in the last 25 years, surpassing the Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing (49) in terms of the number of research outputs

published. (See Figure 5) Furthermore, Tourism Management holds the highest impact factor among the listed journals. This can be attributed to its emphasis on interdisciplinary perspectives related to tourism policies and management. The journal covers a broad range of literature on travel motivation, contributing to its influential position in the field (Jin Chen & Wei Zhou, 2020).
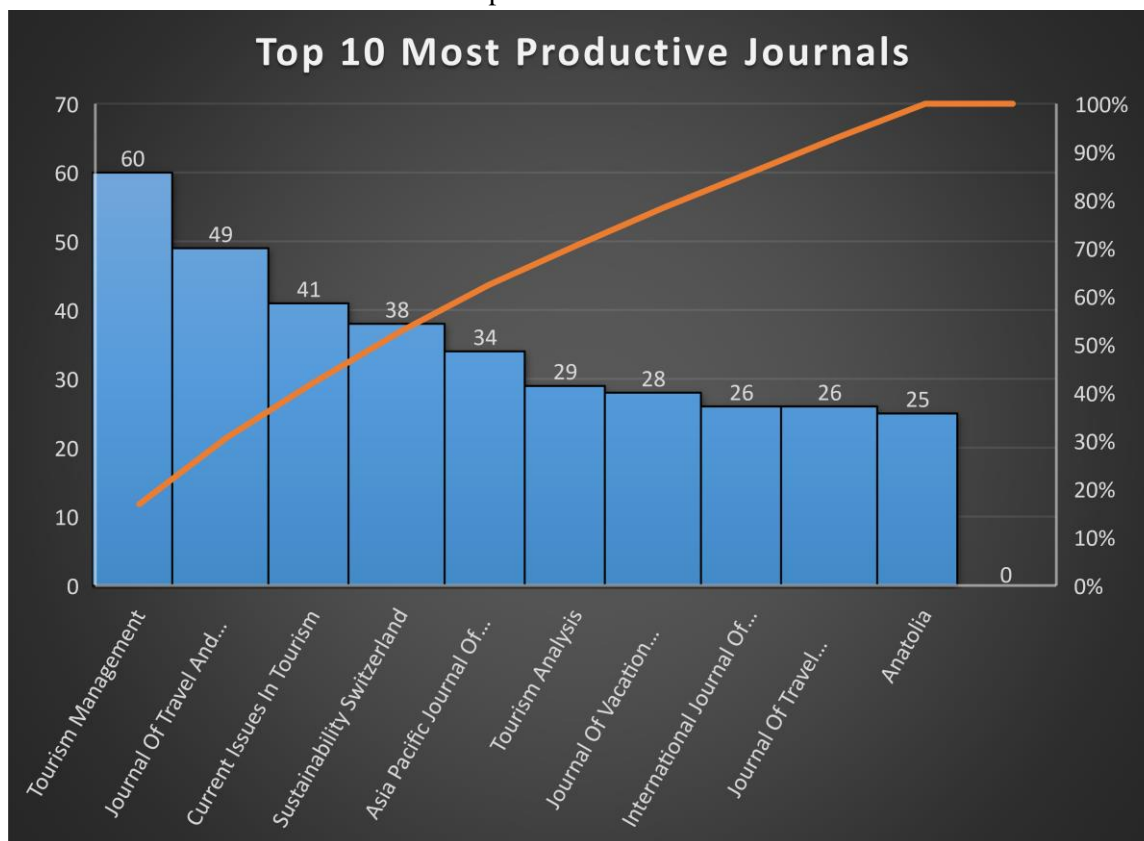

Figure 9: Most Productive Journals in terms of number of publications.

Source: Author's work

Conclusion

This study employs CiteSpace II and VOSviewer to analyze the present status and emerging trends in travel motivation research. The research data consists of 1277 published papers spanning from 1998 to 2022. The findings can be summarized as follows: The number of research outputs focusing on travel motivation has exhibited a consistent upward trend in recent years. The United States (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), China, and Australia have emerged as significant contributors to the field of travel motivation research. This can be attributed to the flourishing tourism industries in these countries. Additionally, authors from these countries have

made noteworthy contributions to the field. Among the journals dedicated to travel motivation research, Tourism Management stands out as the leading publication, indicating its prominence in advancing research in this area. To uncover the less explored aspects of travel motivation research, a comprehensive analysis was conducted using co-occurrence and co-citation methods. This analysis aimed to identify areas that demand further investigation, contributing to a deeper theoretical understanding of the field. The primary unit of analysis for keyword examination was co-occurrence, following the approach outlined by Shah et al. in 2019. To ensure relevance, a minimum threshold of five occurrences was set for keywords to be

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considered in the analysis, meaning they needed to appear together at least five times.

The timeline visualization provided valuable insights by revealing ten distinct clusters, representing significant research themes or trends within travel motivation. Furthermore, a tabular presentation highlighted the influential journals, along with the authors and brief summaries of their research work, indicating their impact in the domain of travel motivation. Through a historical analysis of direct citations, the study identified prominent research paths stemming from the influential contributions of Yoon Y., Uysal M., Oh H., Fiore A.M., and Jeoung M. These researchers have shed light on important areas of focus and development within the field of tourism motivation research. This study offers quantitative findings while also suggesting potential areas for future research, complementing the bibliometric analyses with a qualitative literature review. From an academic perspective, the bibliometric analysis helps future researchers as a valuable resource, offering insights into essential questions that researchers should contemplate when studying tourists' travel motivation. This study can be advantageous to researchers by assisting them in identifying and comprehending emerging trends within this field. Additionally, it provides valuable information about the terminology commonly used, key publications focused on these investigations, and references from the field of travel motivation.

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