

## BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF SLOW TOURISM

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### ABSTRACT

This paper aims to review the slow tourism literature using a bibliometric analysis approach. In the current study parameters such as the annual number of publications, the most contributing countries, the most contributing organizations, the most cited studies in Web of Science (WoS), the most productive authors, and the most productive journals were examined. Furthermore, keywords were used to identify the field structure. VOSviewer software was used to find out the leading trends in this slow tourism literature. Thirty-eight studies were found with the help of the WoS database, over the period from 1975- June 2020. Results indicated that: the literature on slow tourism is growing remarkably; four studies accounted for more than 30 citations; Conway, D and Timms, B.F were the most prolific authors; in terms of documents, the USA was the leading country in the topic of slow tourism; Indiana University (System and Bloomington Campus) was the most productive institution with a total of 5 papers. The journal, Tourism Recreation Research was the top contributor to the related literature. According to a keywords analysis the most recently studied concepts were related to tourist experiences and place attachments (2018-2020), while the older concepts were linked to alternative tourism and leisure (2014-2016).

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## INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, mass tourism has been an essential function in the economic growth of many tourist destinations; between the years 1950 and 2000, the number of tourists increased from 25 million to 687 million, especially in Europe (Morey & Manera, 2016). Developments in technology, increase in urbanization, an educated population, and the level of welfare has created much more leisure time for employees around the World (Cioban & Slusariuc, 2014). Additionally, globalization has supported the growth of touristic demand for new, different, and undiscovered destinations (Pellešová, 2020), especially the mass consumption of tourism products. Integration of the tourism industry and distribution channels vertically and horizontally has made package tours more affordable to low income groups of tourists, so mass tourism has become more popular in a short time and the number of international tourist arrivals has increased significantly. As a result, new destinations emerged without a sustainable approach. All these developments have revealed the concept of slow tourism, which is an alternative type of tourism to mass tourism.

Slow tourism aims to address the negative aspects of mass tourism, which mainly focuses on economics without consideration of the environmental and social factors. In tourism literature, there is no clear definition of slow tourism. However, some scholars tried to define slow tourism by approaching the phenomenon from a perspective of multiple principles, ideas, and behavioural patterns (Calzati & de Salvo, 2017). The term of slow tourism can be defined as involving authentic and worthwhile relationships with people, sites, cultures, food, heritage, and environment (Caffyn, 2012).

The concept of slow tourism has attracted the attention of researchers since the 2000s and a lot of research has been conducted on slow tourism. Some researchers have examined slow tourism in terms of an alternative tourism type. For instance, Conway and Timms (2010) stated that slow tourism is a new type of tourism which is a promotional and tactical model and follows up on Poon's advocacy from the early 1990s. Poon (1994) argued that mass tourism from the 1960s and 1970s was challenged with new tourism types caused by advances in technology and more prominent sensations in consumer taste. Moreover, this new approach to tourism offers an opportunity for sustainability, as well as the chance of wealth development in previous vulnerable destinations. Additionally, some studies have examined the motivations of slow tourism. For example, Oh et al. (2016) paid attention on incentives and purposes of slow tourism in their

study. The authors stated that there are six general motivations of slow tourism: relaxation, self-reflection, escape, novelty-seeking, engagement, and discovery.

Although, there are many studies on slow tourism (e.g. Conway & Timms 2010; Timms & Conway, 2012; Oh et al., 2016; Wilson & Hannam, 2017) and several bibliometric studies regarding sustainable tourism-related subjects (e.g. Ruhanen et al., 2015; Mauleon-Mendez et al., 2018; Della Corte et al., 2019; Niñerola et al., 2019; Serrano et al., 2019; Jiménez-García et al., 2020; Moyle et al., 2020), no bibliometric study on slow tourism has been found. In this context, this study aims to examine the slow tourism concept in WoS database from 1975 until 2020<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, this fact makes this particular study more unique and valuable for researchers.

The importance of bibliometric studies has recently started to increase in tourism literature all over the world (Özel & Kozak, 2012), and there have been many bibliometric studies carried out by researchers within the scope of tourism studies. Bibliometric analysis in tourism research is often used for the evaluation of articles (e.g. Kozak, 1998; Evren & Kozak, 2014; Koseoglu et al., 2016; Garrigos-Simon et al., 2019; Johnson & Samakovlis, 2019; Niñerola et al., 2019) and journals (e.g. Mauleon-Mendez et al., 2018; Mulet-Forteza et al., 2018, 2019; Merigó et al., 2019).

Current research gives insight into topics strictly relevant to slow tourism, which requires further academic research. This particular study is beneficial for various reasons. For instance, it can assist tourism related scholars to identify potential organizations, institutions, or governments with the most prospects in terms of development and sharing research findings (Mulet-Forteza et al., 2019). This study can further contribute to a clear understanding of the importance of developing sustainable tourism. Moreover, a review of the topic can lead to slow tourism development support from various subjects related to tourism, which can possibly induce the essential aim of reducing mass production in the tourism industry.

According to the aim of the research, this paper is structured as follows. The first section of the paper explores the literature of slow tourism. The following section describes methods applied for the research. The third section offers results. Finally, the last section includes a conclusion, limitations, and suggestions for further research.

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<sup>2</sup> In this study, the search was carried out from 1975 until June 2020 because the WoS search engine has been searching since 1975.

## SLOW TOURISM

The term of “slow tourism” is a fairly new concept and is recently gaining attention (Oh et al., 2016). It is an outcome of the social movement, which was started by Carlo Petrini in the 1980s in Italy as a riot against the consumerism of fast food (Petrini & Padovani, 2009). Slow tourism gained importance within the past decade as an alternative to mass tourism (Heitmann et al., 2011). It may be considered as a category of alternative tourism supporting society, economy, and the environment (Conway & Timms, 2010). According to tourism scholars, slow tourism aims to connect tourists with the destination, its people, and local culture (Moirira et al., 2017).

Slow tourism encourages independent travel rather than group travel. Therefore, slow tourism destinations offer calmness and silence (Cosar & Kozak, 2014). In addition, slow tourism advocates for the reduction of travel frequency, encouraging tourists to stay longer in the destination rather than travelling more often. This results in tourists favouring local resources and production, and choosing a short-distance travel destination by using sustainable modes of transportation (Caffyn, 2012; Losada & Mota, 2019).

According to Pécsek (2014, 2018), slow tourism has four pillars. Locality, sustainability, social well-being, and focus on experience are the fundamentals of the slow tourism ideology (Pécsek, 2014, 2018). These four components advocate sustainable tourism by encouraging sustainable social, economic, and environmental development, as well as individual travel rather than group travel. At the same time, it discourages mass tourism consumption, while supporting the consumption of local and authentic products.

Oh et al. (2016) stated that the two most frequent intentions of slow tourism are revitalization and self-enrichment. For instance, revitalization assists travellers to get refreshed, reinvigorated, and recharged. Self-enrichment encourages travellers to get inspired, discover oneself, understand the destination more deeply, and restore positive attitudes and mindsets.

The motivation for tourist movements is based on push and pull factors. Both push and pull segments are connected with individual desires, as well as with the destination (Kassean & Gassita, 2013). Push factors define whether tourists feel motivated for the trip or not, while pull factors state the destination attracts people towards themselves according to the

motivation of the tourists (Nikjoo & Ketabi, 2015). That is the reason why destinations try to motivate tourists to travel with their attractions. However, slow tourists first focus on the mode of transportation. For instance, they will not choose the destination which requires the use of an airplane. Aside from the mode of transportation, by wandering about local markets slowly, purchasing from local vendors, enjoying local gastronomy, walking around the countryside, and interacting with local people, a slow tourist is more likely to have an enveloping experience (Rand & Heath, 2009; Losada & Mota, 2019).

Stressing quality over quantity and extension of stay in the destination can attract different tourist profiles, especially those tourists who are oriented toward sustainable development. In addition, longer-stay tourists are more likely to explore the destination and its region, resulting in generating a positive economic, social, and environmental growth of the local community. To that end, slow tourism is an important alternative to mass tourism, which entirely fuels the desires of "new" tourists who are motivated to explore the originality during their travel experience while on the road and during their stay at the destination.

## METHODOLOGY

The current study aims to review the slow tourism literature using a bibliometric analysis. The bibliometric analysis guides new researchers in their future studies. Furthermore, it encourages scholars and researchers to pay attention on new and undiscovered topics for more consideration. In general, a bibliometric analysis centers on statistical methods of analyzing articles and other publications. In many instances, the aim of a bibliometric analysis is to summarize research trends and academic networks of prominent publications, popular journals, subject matters, active authors, research institutions, productive countries, and keyword frequencies (Zhang et al., 2019). For this particular bibliometric study, authors collected data in June 2020 from the WoS database.

WoS is known as one of the world's leading databases containing over 15,000 (Merigó et al., 2015) high-impact and quality journals (Yu et al., 2019). For this reason, many tourism researchers carried out bibliometric researches using WoS (e.g. Merigó et al., 2015; Yu et al., 2019). There are many indexes in the WoS database. In this study, we collected data from the WoS database (Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE), Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI), Conference Proceedings Citation Index-Social Sciences and Humanities, Book Citation

Index-Social Sciences and Humanities, and Conference Proceedings Citation Index-Science) using “Slow Tourism” as a keyword in the “title” field. While writing the title in the search engine, quotation marks (for example “slow tourism”) was used. The reason for that was to reduce the possibility of encountering research with different titles. At the end of this process, we found 38 documents such as articles, conference papers, and books in the WoS database (See figure 1). Since the authors speak Croatian, Turkish, and English, documents published in these languages were taken into consideration. However, documents published in the Turkish and Croatian languages were not found in WoS. Therefore, only English documents were examined.

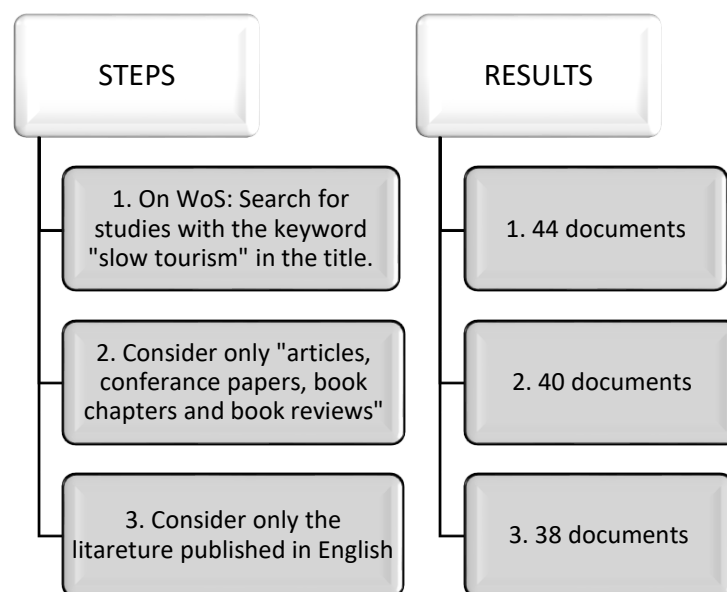


Figure 1. *Research Process*

According to Merigó et al. (2015), bibliometric papers use many methods such as accounting for the number of publications and the number of citations. In this study, we examined “the annual number of publications”, “the most cited studies”, “the most contributing countries”, “the most contributing organizations”, “the most productive authors”, “the most productive journals” and “the most popular keywords in papers”. The VOSviewer software was used to analyze the keywords.

The VOSviewer software was developed by Jan van Eck and Ludo Waltman in order to construct and view bibliometric maps (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). The software is frequently used in tourism studies (e.g. Mulet-Forteza et al., 2018; Leong et al., 2020) as well as in many disciplines. The VOSviewer is used in both constructing and visualizing bibliometric networks such as in researches, journals or individual publications.

Moreover, the VOSviewer can analyze data provided by WoS, Scopus, Dimensions, and PubMed (VOSviewer, 2020).

## RESULTS

### Annual Number of Publications

Figure 2 shows the accumulation of the number of studies published about “Slow Tourism”. Papers published in the WoS database with the title of “slow tourism” were scanned between 1975 and 2020. However, the first paper scanned in this database under the title of slow tourism was published in 2004. No papers were published in 2005, 2007, and 2008. In 2013, slow tourism started to attract the attention of researchers. It then moved up to thirteen publications in 2018.

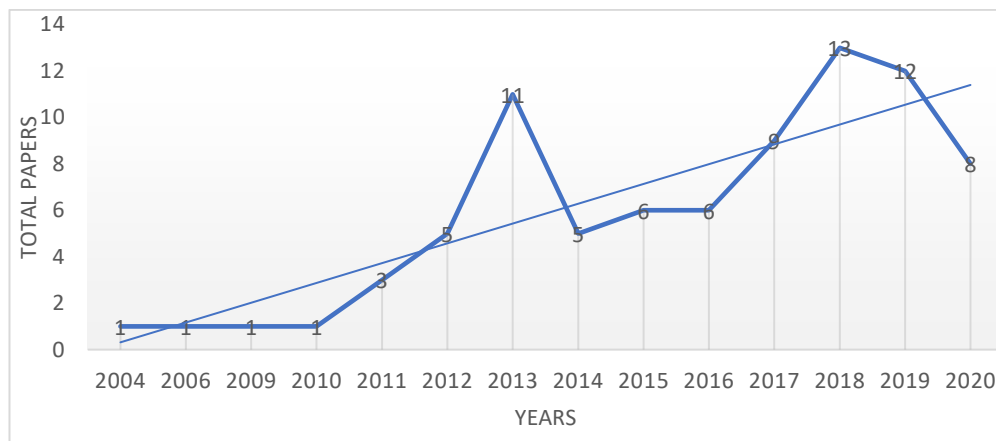


Figure 2. *Annual Number of Publications*

### Top 10 Contributing Countries

Figure 3 shows the most productive continents and countries. Considering geographical contribution by continent, Europe takes the lead (15 documents) and it is followed by America (both North and South) (12 documents), and Asia (11 documents).

As mentioned earlier, slow tourism is a type of alternative tourism that supports sustainability. For this reason, we can safely assume that Europe is the leader in publication because of its advocacy towards sustainable tourism development. Additionally, scholars interest in Europe can be related to the sustainable tourism development policy presented by the European Union to develop Europe into a sustainable tourist destination, maximising the industry contribution to economic growth and employment opportunities (Dionysopoulou, 2012).

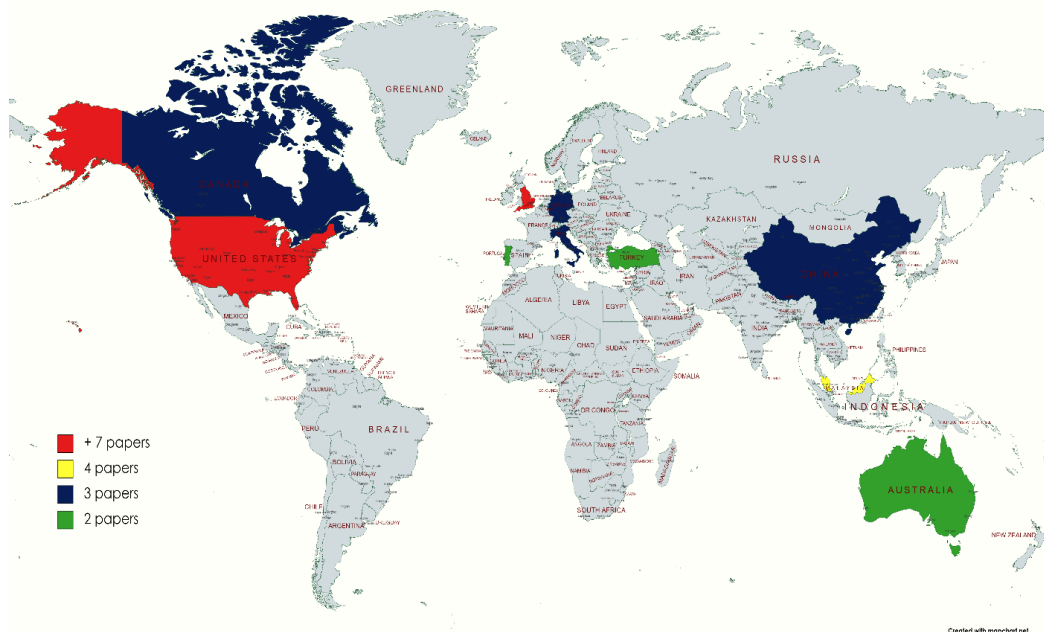


Figure 3. *Top 10 Contributing Countries*

(Source: This map created by the authors via mapchart.net)

In addition, the USA is the most productive country in the highest number of publications (9). After the USA, the UK is the most generative country with seven documents, while Malaysia is the third generative country with four documents. Other productive countries include Canada (3), Germany (3), Italy (3), China (3), Portugal (2), Turkey (2), and Australia (2), indicating global attention to this research topic.

### The Most Cited Studies in WoS

Table 1 shows the most cited studies from 1975 to 2020. Among them, the most cited study is "Re-branding alternative tourism in the Caribbean: The case for slow tourism" which was published in *Tourism and Hospitality Research* in 2010 and had been cited 44 times until June 2020.

In their research, Conway and Timms (2010) advocate that slow tourism outlines the sort of alternative tourism which allows Caribbean islands the opportunity to re-brand their image as an alternative tourist destination, rather than mass destination. Moreover, the authors stated that slow tourism could assist as the promotional identity following quality offerings, community-level and local participatory initiatives, and island-specific alternative tourism can be maintained.



Table 1. *Most Cited Studies During the Period of 1975 to 2020 (WoS)*

Author(s)	Citation (WoS)	Journals/ Books	Title	Method	Type
Conway and Timms (2010)	44	Tourism and Hospitality Research	Re-Branding Alternative Tourism in The Caribbean: The Case For Slow Tourism	Conceptual	Article
Matos (2004)	39	Tourism and Leisure Industry: Shaping The Future	Can Slow Tourism Bring New Life to Alpine Regions?	Conceptual	Proceedings Paper
Oh et al. (2016)	30	Journal of Travel Research	Motivations and Goals of Slow Tourism	Both qualitative and quantitative	Article
Heitmann et al. (2011)	30	Research Themes For Tourism	Slow Food, Slow Cities and Slow Tourism	Conceptual	Book Chapter
Hall (2006)	23	Tourism Review International	Introduction: Culinary Tourism and Regional Development: From Slow Food to Slow Tourism?	Conceptual	Editorial Material
Timms and Conway (2012)	22	Tourism Geographies	Slow Tourism at the Caribbean's Geographical Margins	Conceptual	Article
Conway and Timms (2012)	18	Tourism Recreation Research	Are Slow Travel and Slow Tourism Misfits, Compadres or Different Genres?	Conceptual	Research Probe
Wilson and Hannam (2017)	12	Annals of Tourism Research	The Frictions of Slow Tourism Mobilities: Conceptualizing Campervan Travel	Qualitative	Article
Caffyn (2012)	12	Tourism Recreation Research	Advocating and Implementing Slow Tourism	Conceptual	Research Probe

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The following most cited research is, "Can slow tourism bring new life to Alpine regions?" with 39 citations, published in 2004. The author of the study, Matos (2004) argues that a slow tourist concept can reduce the negative effect of stress and mass tourism in mountain areas. Furthermore, he claims that slow tourism can provide diversification in tourism. The slow

tourism concept offers tourists a more extensive range of the products satisfying their demands, besides preserving the natural environment.

The third most cited study is "Motivations and Goals of Slow Tourism", with 30 citations, it was published in the year 2016 in the Journal of Travel Research. Oh et al. (2016) approached the aspect of slow tourism from the viewpoint of a motivated expenditure process. Moreover, the study offers new insights into that aspect. The study designated that slow tourism might have already been a quintessential part of mass tourism. Furthermore, the authors noted that they did not view mass and slow tourism as a separate entity to synthesise.

The study conducted by Heitmann et al. (2011), "Slow Food, Slow Cities and Slow Tourism", may be noticed in the fourth place of Table 1 with 30 citations. The study was published in the book "Research Themes for Tourism" in 2011. Authors in this study introduced the growing interest in slow activities and offered insight into the origin of the slow food movement and the concept of slow cities (Cittaslow). Furthermore, the study addressed the discussion "if local communities can benefit from adopting slow principles", as well as criticised slow tourism as a new tool towards sustainable tourism development.

As shown in Table 1, the study of Hall (2006), "Introduction: Culinary Tourism and Regional Development: From Slow Food to Slow Tourism?", with 23 citations, published by the Tourism Review International Journal. The paper offered insights into the culinary tourism and its possibilities towards regional development and depicted slow tourism as highly attractive, describing it as an extended vacation where the tourist can meet the destination closer, purchase authentic local products, as well as support the local economy.

The following most cited study is "Slow Tourism at the Caribbean's Geographical Margins" with 22 citations, published in 2012, in Tourism Geographies (Timms & Conway, 2012). Followed by, "Are Slow Travel and Slow Tourism Misfits, Compadres or Different Genres?" with 18 citations published in 2012 in Tourism Recreation Research (Conway & Timms, 2012). The study "The frictions of slow tourism mobilities: Conceptualising campervan travel" with 12 citations which was published in Annals of Tourism Research in 2017 (Wilson & Hannam, 2017). Followed by the study, "Advocating and Implementing Slow Tourism" from 2012 with 12 citations, published in the Tourism Recreation Research (Caffyn, 2012).

### Most Contributing Organizations

In terms of organizations, Figure 4 indicates the most productive universities in slow tourism. From the viewpoint of productivity, the Indiana University System and the Indiana University Bloomington (with five papers) were the most productive institutions, followed by California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo (with four papers), California State University System (with four papers), and Taylor's University (with four papers).

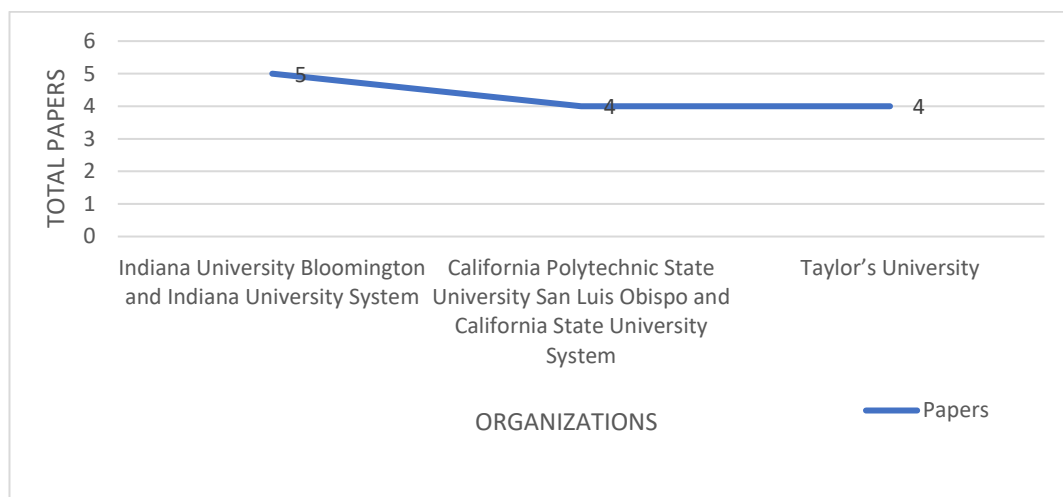


Figure 4. *Most Contributing Organizations*

In a period from 1975 to November 2020, the Indiana University System appeared in 196,620 publications in WoS, counting the highest number of published articles (120,529). Moreover, the number of articles related to the tourism phenomenon and related disciplines such as economics, management, multidisciplinary sciences, and social sciences interdisciplinary reached the number of 7,993. The most productive year was 2017 with 497 published articles. Conversely, the least beneficial years were 1975 - 1978 with only two published articles in a year. The Indiana University Bloomington showed its productivity with 6,268 published articles in the field of economics, social sciences, as well as the social sciences discipline. Therefore, most of the studies were published in 2017 (391). The least productive year was in 1979 with only one published study. Both institutions have a total of five studies published associated with the subject of slow tourism. Moreover, the first study dates from 2010, while the latest study was published in 2013. The most cited study was the Re-branding alternative tourism in the Caribbean: The case for slow tourism with 45 citations, in contrast, the least cited study is Slow Tourism: Experiences and Mobilities, counting only one citation. Noticeably, all five

studies were written by the same authors, Conway D and Timms B (WoS, 2020).

The California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo appeared 8,603 times in WoS publications during the period between 1975 and 2020. Thus, the count of articles in journals is 5,414 publications. Furthermore, 403 articles appeared in tourism relevant studies (management, multidisciplinary sciences, social sciences interdisciplinary, hospitality, leisure, and sport tourism). The most productive year considering the number of publications was the year 2019 with 46 issuing. Moreover, in the years 1980, 1983, 1984, as well as 1999, only one article was published by the California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo. Authors affiliated with this institution published the first article about slow tourism in 2010, with the title, "Re-branding alternative tourism in the Caribbean: The case for slow tourism". Moreover, this is the most cited article regarding the topic associated with slow tourism (See Table 1.). The most productive year for the university was 2012, with two published studies and both of the studies are the most cited publications. Interestingly, the same authors Conway D. and Timms B. published all three studies. The latest study published by California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo concerning slow tourism was in 2013 with no citations until June 2020 (WoS, 2020).

The California State University System appeared in WoS with a total of 160,664 publications and 101,612 of them are articles in the journals. 7,483 studies covered social science-related subjects and 1,003 publications embraced tourism-related topics, putting attention on hospitality, leisure, and sport tourism. Most of these studies published in the year 2019 (554 documents) and the least number of publications dates back to the year 1979 (1 document). Regarding the topics focused on slow tourism, the California State University System published four studies. The first study published in 2010, while the latest study dated to 2013. All four studies were written by the authors (Conway D and Timms B) mentioned in the previous section (WoS, 2020).

Out of these institutions, Taylor University contributes with the least number of publications in WoS, 2,353. From the total number of publications, articles in journals counting 1,640. Regarding tourism-related studies, the organization took place with 447 articles. The least prolific year was in 2009 with only one publication. On the other hand, the most productive year was 2020 with 94 publications. Taylor University published

four studies about slow tourism. The first study was published in 2013, on the other hand, the latest study was published in 2016 (WoS, 2020).

### Most Productive Authors

The figure 5 indicates the five most productive authors in Slow Tourism. According to the record count, the most productive authors are Conway D. and Timms B. counting five records (with five papers each), followed by authors, Mura P., Nair V., and Noor F., with a total of three records each (with three articles each).

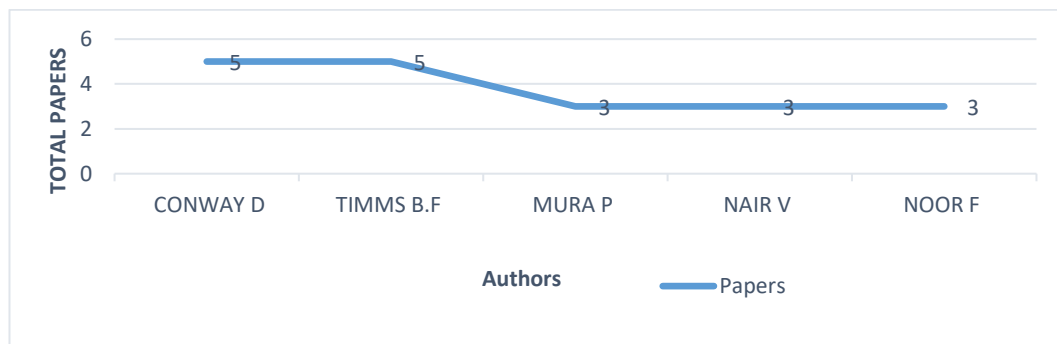


Figure 5. *Most Productive Authors*

One of the most productive authors, Conway D., from the year 1975 until November 2020 appeared in 31 searches regarding publications in WoS. Moreover, from the total number of publications, 22 were published as articles in journals. Four studies put attention on tourism, leisure, and hospitality. Interestingly, one of the authors' most cited studies, in general, is about slow tourism which is entitled "Re-branding alternative tourism in the Caribbean: The case for slow tourism". The authors most productive year was 2010, with a total of seven publications (WoS, 2020).

The second most productive author, Timms Benjamin F. authored a total of nine publications in WoS, counting seven articles published in journals. Most of the studies dated in 2013 (2 documents), while 2010 and 2018 were the least productive years for the author with only one publication each year (WoS, 2020).

Although Mura P. was not the most productive author regarding slow tourism studies, he can boast of 45 publications in WoS, counting 31 published articles, putting attention on 2013 with 13 published studies. Alternatively, in the years of 2010 and the 2012 the author published only one study each year (WoS, 2020).

Mura P. is followed by Nair V. with a total of 34 publications, of which 16 were articles in journals. Moreover, 2015 was the most productive year with four publications, on the other hand, the least productive year was 2018 with only one publication. Thus, it can be concluded, both authors were very productive regarding tourism, hospitality, and leisure related topics (WoS, 2020).

Noor F. appeared in total of three publications in WoS. Moreover, all three articles were published in the years of 2014, 2015 and 2016 and interestingly, two of them put attention on slow tourism (WoS, 2020).

### Most Productive Journals

The six most productive journals in Slow Tourism in the period from 1975 to 2020 are listed as follows; Tourism Recreation Research (with a total of four papers), Sustainability (with a total of three articles), as well as Anatolia-International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research, Annals of Tourism Research, Tourism Geographies, and Zeitschrift für Tourismuswissenschaft (with a total of two papers each) (See figure 6).

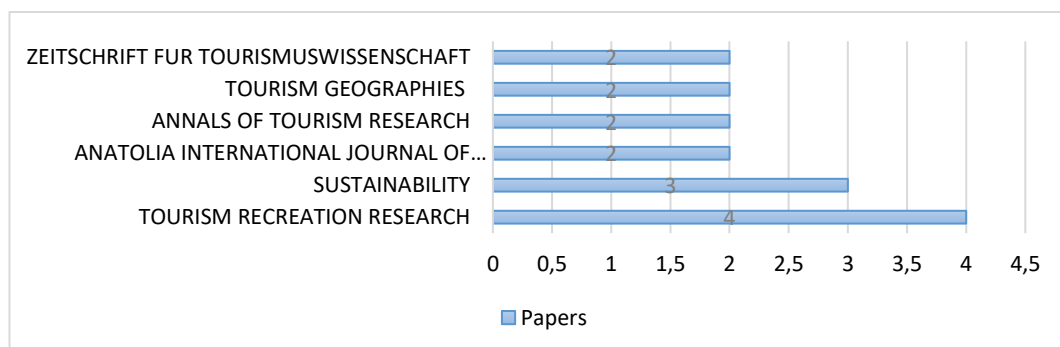


Figure 6. Top 6 Productive Journals

Journal Tourism Recreation Research (TRR) was established in 1976 by Professor Tej Vir Singh. It is an international research journal that publishes various studies related to tourism and recreational topics (Vishwakarma & Mukherjee, 2019). The journal has 851 publications in WoS, considering the period from the year 1975 until June 2020, regarding topics related to tourism, leisure, and hospitality. The most published studies are articles (504), as well as book reviews (171). The most productive year for the journal was 2019 with 80 publications. While the year 2015 had the least publications (38). Additionally, the number of publications in 2013 incorporates %4.465 of total number, while publications from the 2019 covers %9.401 of total publications. We can assume that publications in journal doubled in five years (WoS, 2020).

The second most productive journal is Sustainability, which is an international cross-disciplinary journal. Moreover, journal publications concentrate on environmental, cultural, economic, and social sustainability (MDPI, 2020). In 45 years, the journal published 25,015 studies in WoS, from which 23,513 are articles published in the category of green sustainable science technology. The most productive year for the journal was the 2019 with a total of 7,255 publications, while in 2011 journal published 128 publications in WoS (WoS, 2020).

Anatolia-International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research has a total of 878 publications in WoS. In 2019, the journal published 63 studies, while the least number of publications was in 2005, 15 published articles (WoS, 2020).

Annals of Tourism Research is a social science journal concentrating on the academic approach of tourism (Elsevier, 2020). The journal has a total of 3,679 publications in WoS, more precisely, 2,030 articles. Interestingly, the most productive year was 2020 with 165 publications, on the other hand, the year with the smallest amount of publications was in 1982 with 39 published studies (WoS, 2020).

Tourism Geographies journal was established in 1999 and aims to present and discuss the geographic aspects of tourism and tourism-related studies (Tourism Geographies, 2020). Looking into the WoS database the journal appears with a total of 766 publications, counting 546 articles. In 2019 it was the most productive with 121 publications, while in 2007 journal published seven studies (WoS, 2020).

Zeitschrift für Tourismuswissenschaft journal centres on multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary studies associated with the tourism phenomena (De Gruyter, 2020). Moreover, the journal has a total of 361 publications, from which 167 articles. The most successful year for the journal was 2011 with 47 publications, while 2020 counts eight publications until June 2020 (WoS, 2020).

### **The Most Popular Keywords in Papers**

As shown in Figure 7, the authors' keywords were analysed by using co-occurrence feature of the VOSviewer. Moreover, this method confirms how often keywords transpire in the study. In other words, the concepts of the following keywords are linked to each other (Merigó et al., 2020). In addition, Table 3 shows occurrences and total link strengths. "Slow tourism", "sustainability", and "alternative tourism" are some of the

common keywords in the whole network as represented in Figure 7. Moreover, the visual analysis presented in Figure 7 through the VOSviewer Software distinguishes four clusters<sup>3</sup>, which are the following:

- Cluster 1, containing the terms sustainability and alternative tourism.
- Cluster 2, which includes slow tourism and leisure.
- Cluster 3, which includes tourist experience and place attachment.
- Cluster 4, focused on sustainable tourism and tourism marketing.

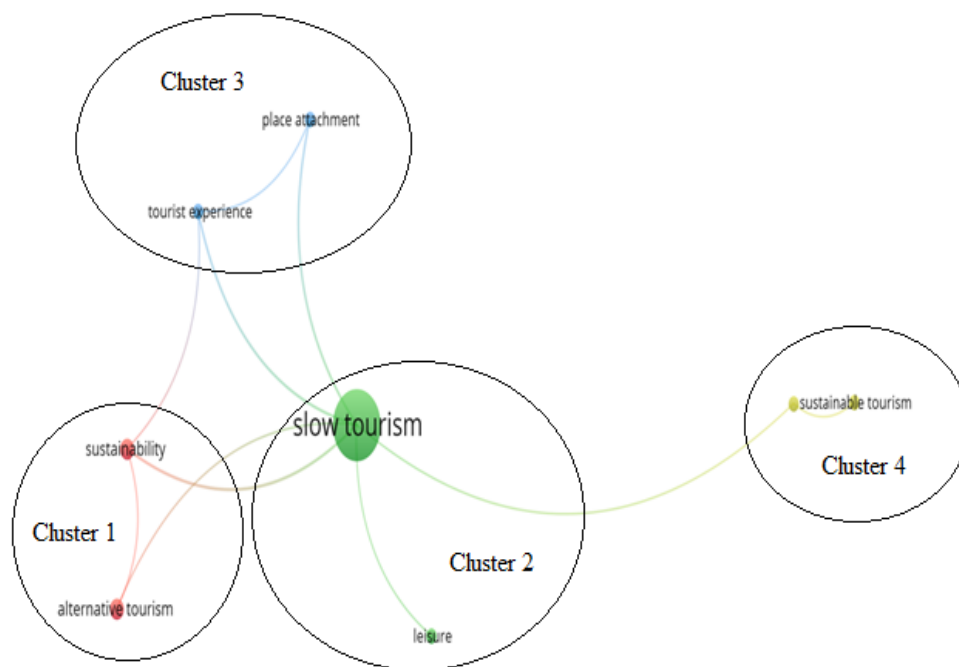


Figure 7. Analysis of Keywords (The minimum number of occurrences of each keyword was set to two)

Table 2. Occurrences and Total Link Strengths

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Alternative Tourism	3	2
Leisure	2	1
Place Attachment	2	3
Slow Tourism	15	9
Sustainability	3	4
Sustainable Tourism	2	1
Tourism Marketing	2	2
Tourist Experience	2	4

<sup>3</sup> The keywords are in the same cluster means that they are closely related to each other.



Figure 8 shows that the most recently studied concepts are related to tourist experience and place attachment (2018-2020). On the other hand, the earlier concepts studied together with slow tourism are alternative tourism and leisure (2014-2016).

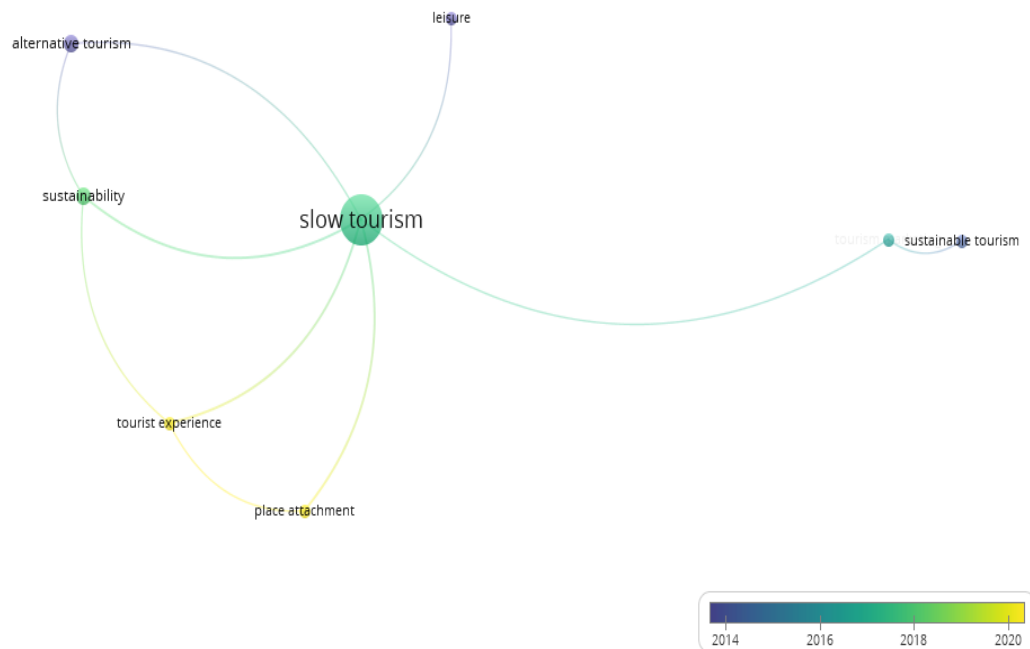


Figure 8. *Analysis of Keywords - Temporal distribution*

## CONCLUSION

This study carried out the bibliometric analysis of slow tourism. The current study contributes to the literature as it presents the main researches indexed in WoS about slow tourism conducted between the years 1975- 2020. Through the article search in the WoS database, we had noticed that the first article with this title was published in 2004. However, there is a significant improvement in publishing academic papers related to this topic, especially starting with the year 2013, when the subject began attracting scholars' attention. Regarding the most productive continents, Europe is the leader with a total of 15 papers, followed by America and Asia. The USA is the most productive country in terms of total publications with 9 papers. We found 4 studies that gather more than 30 "WoS" citations. The most cited research is "Re-branding alternative tourism in the Caribbean: The case for 'slow tourism'" and had been cited 44 times until June 2020. In terms of organizations, Indiana University System and Indiana University Bloomington campus (with 5 papers) are the most productive institutions.

In terms of the productive authors, Conway D. and Timms B. are most productive authors (with 5 papers each). In terms of the productive journals, *Tourism Recreation Research* (with a total of 4 papers) is most productive journal.

The analysis of related keywords aimed to identify the main description of the research with the most common keywords. The visual analysis of keyword distinguishes four of the following clusters: a) Sustainability and Alternative Tourism, b) Slow Tourism and Leisure, c) Tourist Experience and Place Attachment, and d) Sustainable Tourism and Tourism Marketing.

The first cluster includes sustainability and alternative tourism. Sustainability and alternative tourism are some of the most frequent keywords in the papers. It could be predicted, taking into consideration that slow tourism is seen as a genre of alternative tourism and a solution for reducing the consumption of mass tourism. Because slow tourism represents a progressive type of alternative tourism which is seen as a tool for lowering mass tourism in the destinations (Conway & Timms, 2012).

The second cluster includes slow tourism and leisure. Historically, the definition of leisure was related to work. Many scholars defined leisure as the inverse of work; meaning leisure was seen as free time out of work (Voss, 1967). In recent times, however, leisure is further suggested as an experience gathered in free time (Akyıldız & Argan, 2010). Thus, time is an essential part of slow tourism, allowing tourists to experience their travel and stay in the destination on a specific and more profound way. Additionally, researching through the literature, we concluded that leisure and slow tourism are closely connected, which can be seen in figure 7.

Cluster three includes tourists' experiences and place attachment. As mentioned earlier, slow tourism consumers are seen as the antithesis of mass tourism consumers and slow tourists prefer quality over quantity; moreover, during their stay at the destination, they are involved in the daily lives of the local community (Dickinson & Lumsdon, 2010). Ordinarily being involved with the local community makes them more attached to the place.

Cluster four includes sustainable tourism and tourism marketing. Although the progress towards sustainable tourism has been improved, many destinations worldwide are still looking into enhancing their performance in attracting advocates of sustainable tourism. Besides, to achieve the goal, different styles and understanding of tourism marketing

is essential, moreover, sustainable tourism marketing targets specific groups of tourists. The aim is to attract the group of tourists who share an interest in sustainable products such as the protection of the environment, sustainability, and universalism (Vinzenc et al., 2019). Slow tourism is one of the latest types of alternative tourism which requires further research and strategical tourism marketing in order to create further development and improvement.

The insights from the bibliometric analyses offer answers to some precise topics. Moreover, the scholars and researchers should give attention to those results before commencing to study slow tourism. These analyses can assist researchers in better understanding the topic, to identify issues for further necessary investigation, the journals that mostly addressed this specific field of study, as well as use it as reference for their new research. From an academic point of view, the number of papers has increased over the years; however, the slow tourism topic requires further academic research, which will allow researchers to get more significant insights into the topic.

### **Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

There are some limitations to the current study. Firstly, although the WoS database represents one of the leading collections of knowledge, it may not include all potentially relevant documents such as other journal articles and books. Therefore, other databases (i.e., Scopus) can also be included in the research. Secondly, our findings may give a picture of the current situation about slow tourism literature but the slow tourism literature may change over time. Thirdly, in this study, analyses were made only with the VOSviewer. However, apart from the VOSviewer other software (i.e., CiteSpace II and Bibexcel) can be used as well in future studies.

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