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A bibliometric study of regional competitiveness and tourism innovation

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Abstract: This study's objective essentially strives to provide a mapping of the scientific publications and the intellectual knowledge therein contained while conveying past research trends and identifying potential future lines of research in the fields of regional competitiveness and tourism innovation. This correspondingly deploys a systematic literature review in keeping with the bibliometric approach. This analysis encapsulates the number of articles published and their annual number of citations for the period between 1900 and 2016 as registered by the Web of Science database. Results show how the intellectual structure on regional competitiveness and tourism innovation evolves over time. The main contribution of this study arises out of identifying the main research trends in this field and the respective shortcomings and specific needs for future scientific research.

Keywords: regional competitiveness; bibliometric studies; tourism innovation; systematic review.

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1 Introduction

Competitiveness has now become a general concern for contemporary societies. In every activity and beyond those purely economic in nature, competitiveness features as a goal. The concept spilled over into organisational fields and for example, people and territories increasingly strive to attain higher levels of competitiveness. Various researchers have correspondingly dedicated their projects to the study of regional competitiveness (Abreu-Novais et al., 2016; Aiginger and Vogel, 2015; Ayikoru et al., 2013; Byun et al., 2017; Camisón and Forés, 2015; Chen et al., 2016). For instance, Abreu-Novais et al. (2016) and Aiginger and Vogel (2015) focus on the competitiveness of a destination and its determinants and Assaf and Josiassen (2016) and Assaf and Tsionas (2015) on measuring the means of tourism performance. In turn, Ayikoru et al. (2013) analyse the determinants of competitiveness, proposing an index for competitiveness alongside recommendations for how destinations might become competitive. Furthermore, Byun et al. (2017) and Camisón and Forés (2015) approach the aspects of competitiveness specific to tourism and the effects at the national and regional level alongside the impacts of the tourism industry and the tourism district. Chen et al. (2016), expand on the factors interrelated with destination competitiveness to consider service performance, tourism perceptions and levels of satisfaction. The study by Cibinskiene and Snieskiene (2015) analyses the competitiveness of municipal tourism of tourism destinations and the concept of urban competitiveness. Additionally, the research findings of Corsi and Prencipe (2016) elucidate factors of competitiveness, innovation, metropolitan areas, urban areas and university spin-offs.

In some studies, the competitiveness concept of regions within a country resembles the concept of competitiveness among countries and the main conclusions in the literature on national competitiveness apply equally to the competitiveness of regions within countries (Aiginger and Vogel, 2015; Institute for Management Development, 2014; Porter, 2003; Sölvell, 2015).

However, this also requires taking into consideration the different processes and dynamics inherent to each of the realities (Boschma, 2004). The concept of regional competitiveness spans far further than the export capacities of a region or recording a positive trade balance as it extends beyond the capacity to produce goods in order to encapsulate a broad diversity of factors and indicators alluding to tangible and intangible resources (Kitson et al., 2004).

Innovation takes place within a specific social, cultural, economic and political environment and displays systemic characteristics (Ferreira et al., 2017; Cooke, 1998). However, Tidd et al. (1997) rather define innovation as a process through which opportunities get transformed into practical utilities. The effective implementation of innovation nevertheless stems from the growing recognition as to how this serves as a synonym for the building of sustainable competitive advantage and therefore, strengthening the levels of organisational performance (Koc and Ceylan, 2007). Within ever more competitive environments, innovation represents a critical factor to companies seeking whether to obtain dominant positions and/or boost their profits (Hu and Hsu, 2008; Kaminski et al., 2008). Various authors maintain that innovation would seem the only way by which companies might adapt to increasingly dynamic surrounding environments (Doloreux and Melancon, 2008; Hua and Wemmerlov, 2006; Roberts and Amit, 2003).

However, tourism has grown at selected locations all around the world and provides interesting perspectives on how the classical destinations are themselves attempting to overcome signs of their own decline and stagnation (Garay and Cànoves, 2011; Gill et al., 2009; Pitkänen and Vepsäläinen, 2008).

Tourism has now become a fundamental catalyst for economic development representing one of the industries with the fastest pace of growth in recent years due to the many means available for travelling worldwide and triggering daily mass movements of tourists (Michopoulou and Buhalis, 2013).

In this context, this present study seeks to answer the following question: what are the main research trends on regional competitiveness and tourism innovation?

This article, through resource to bibliometric technique, identifies the lesser explored fields of study thereby opening new potential areas for research. The contributions made by this study very much interrelate with the very nature of research, overcoming the shortcomings existing due to the lack of scientific studies providing systematic reviews of the literature and bibliometric studies of these fields. Hence, this study identifies, explores and systematises the main themes, contributing towards deepening the literature through identifying the priority areas as regards the competitive innovation strategies capable of ensuring regional standards of excellence in comparison with their competitors. In addition, this may also contribute to the future development of models of destination competitiveness that, interlinked with indicators for measurement, shall enable the identification of the strengths and weaknesses relative to any tourism destination and thereby of practical worth to industry and government entities in defining policies striving to enhance regional competitiveness.

2 Theoretical background

We may define regional competitiveness as the capacity of a region to provide an attractive and sustainable environment for companies and inhabitants to live and work in (Dijkstra et al., 2011). Huggins et al. (2013) define regional competitiveness as the difference in the economic growth rates of regions and their capacities to leverage future economic growth in relation to other regions in similar stages of economic development.

Evaluating regional competitiveness remains bound by the level of region selected, especially at the Nomenclature of Territorial Statistically Units (NUTS) level in terms of the European Union. The period of reference, the availability and regularity of data, as

well as the selection of specific factors play an equally important role. Calculating regional competitiveness proves crucial to reducing regional inequalities and improving both regional and national competitiveness. The Portuguese economy, ever since membership of the Eurozone has practically stagnated and with fairly aggravated regional inequalities, especially between regions located along the coast and those inland regions (Silva and Ferreira-Lopes, 2014; Soukiazis and Antunes, 2011). Hence, guaranteeing sustainable economic growth and attenuating these regional inequalities constitute important goals for raising the competitiveness of every region in a country.

According to Sölvell (2015), the definition of competitiveness spans five core axes:

- 1 the prosperity of regions and nations in developed and developing countries
- 2 the specific role of clusters in nurturing competitive companies
- 3 the setting up of new companies and attracting multinational companies
- 4 the role of the microeconomic business environment that shapes companies
- 5 the role of innovation and continuous improvement in companies obtaining competitive advantages.

The competitiveness of a destination has become a fundamental question in the growing and increasingly challenging tourism market and it needs to provide a higher level of tourism experience to the alternative destinations. Destination competitiveness is strictly related with the respective tourism experience associated with the destination (Silva et al., 2014).

There are various studies about the notion of competitiveness; however, despite the existing developments on regional competitiveness, there is neither any single framework nor any consensually accepted definitions nor even agreement upon how the measurement of this concept should occur (Huggins and Williams, 2011). Regional competitiveness gets determined by the productivity with which the region deploys its human and natural resources and its capital (Porter and Van der Linde, 1995; Porter, 1990).

Porter (1990) pioneered the definition of national competitiveness as resulting from the capacity of that nation to innovate with the objective of achieving or maintaining an advantageous position in relation to others in specific key industrial sectors and thereby shifting the unit of analysis of companies and industries towards the national spatial borders occupied by companies and industries.

Porter (1990) made it clear that notions around clusters, the transfer of knowledge, innovation and cooperation among the companies involved, are built phenomena that operate at the regional level. The focus on regions reflects the growing consensus that these are the primary spatial units competing to attract investments and with the regional level also representing the scope at which knowledge gets circulated and transferred to result in agglomerations or clusters of companies, industries and services (Huggins and Izushi, 2015).

The European Travel Commission (2017) defines competitiveness as the capacity to produce goods and services able to stand up to the competition prevailing in international market and, simultaneously, return high and sustainable levels of earnings or in general terms, the capacity of regions to generate high levels of income and employment while exposed to external competition.

Regional competitiveness thereby encapsulates the capacity of regions to build a productive and highly accessible environment that self-perpetuates and attracts factors of production and thereby fostering economic growth (Huovari et al., 2002).

Recent studies have found that the overall level of development of regional infrastructures directly interlinks with its level of socioeconomic development (Komarova, 2014). A region may thus gain competitive advantages whenever endowed with a sufficient level of infrastructure quality that benefits the individual companies located there (Rozmahel et al., 2016). Any regional competitive strategy seeking to expand the zones potentially eligible for foreign and national investments thus necessarily involves developing efficient transport and communications networks (Camagni and Capello, 2010) with the implementation of efficient public transport systems also able to reduce traffic congestion and improve commuter mobility (Turok, 2004).

According to the World Economic Forum, competitiveness spans the ways in which institutions, policies and factors combine to determine not only the economy's level of productivity but also its capacity to generate wealth and returns on investment as well as shaping the potential for economic growth with the global competitive index based upon 12 fundamental pillars (Schwab et al, 2015; GEM, 2016) institutions, infrastructures, macroeconomic environments, healthcare and primary education, higher education and training, the efficiency of labour markets, the efficiency of financial markets, the technology available, the scale of the internal and external markets and the sophistication of production processes and innovation.

Competitiveness is sustained by different forms of capital, which include the cultural, creative, human, infrastructure, institutional and productive forms of capital (Kautonen, 2012). Within the same framework, regional competitiveness also gets defined through integrating the perspectives of both companies and residents (Dijkstra et al., 2011) and it interrelates with the capacity to provide an attractive and sustainable environment to companies and residents to live and work in (Annoni and Dijkstra, 2010).

Hjalager (2010) refers to significant variations in the interpretations as to just what constitutes the best approach, thus, there is an overall lack of any effective definition for innovation. However, Hall and Williams (2008) explain how innovation encapsulates the process of utilising any new idea for problem solving. Such innovative ideas may range across reorganisation, cost cutting, implementing new budgetary systems, improving communications or assembling new products through team working. Innovation is also about generating, accepting and implementing new ideas, processes, products and services. Therefore, accepting and implementing are also fundamental dimensions to this definition and involve the respective capacity for change and adaptation.

Innovation represents a critical factor to the success of destinations competing for tourists against other destinations and struggling to deal with the constantly changing social and economic determinants of market demand (Hjalager, 2002; Weiermair, 2005; Weiermair et al., 2007).

Innovative activities may be defined as the creation, adaptation or adoption of new or improved products, processes and services (Cowan and van de Paal, 2000), through market innovation (Moodysson et al., 2008) and/or through organisational innovation (Edquist, 2001).

Due to the ferocity of competition, globalisation and the technological advances seen in recent years, innovation and differentiation have become an essential dimension to every company. At the same time, to achieve market success and sustain competitive

advantage, companies need to explore new opportunities, develop new products or services and markets (Tajeddini, 2010).

It is difficult to encounter definitions for regional innovation policies probably in part due to the domain of such policies proving far from uniform and varying from country to country (Kautonen, 2012). In relation to innovation policies, Dodgson and Bessant (1996) define how their objectives strive to boost the capacity for innovations leveraged by companies, networks, industries and entire economies (regional and national).

Innovation currently represents a decisive challenge to overall competitiveness with companies having to know how to deal with the questions arising in order to obtain success through capitalising on local strengths to create and sell new products and services. In advanced economies, the production of standardised products, through the application of standardised resources, methods and processes, now proves unable to return further comparative advantages (Schwab et al., 2015).

In order to describe the innovation context, Porter and Stern (2001) present a national framework for innovation capacities and specify the innovation infrastructures and the specific clusters in innovative environments. The relationship between the shared innovation infrastructures and the industrial clusters proves reciprocal: the strong clusters foster shared infrastructures while simultaneously leveraging the resulting benefits. A broad grouping of formal and informal organisations, involved in cooperating and working in networks, may take up a position between these two fields within the scope of which higher education stands out as a bridge between technologies and companies (Porter and Stern, 2001). From the social, corporate and organisational perspectives, this requires grasping the social dimensions to competitive business environments (Porter and Kramer, 2006).

Innovation has now gained a position in the vanguard of the global competitive agenda due to its interconnections with economic, social and sustainable performance (Kurtishi-kastrati et al., 2016; Ratten and Ferreira, 2017). Factors of social cohesion also interlink with competitiveness given that they contribute towards innovation in conjunction with other business behaviours and the overall development of society. Social cohesion enables better levels of distribution of the most competitive assets available in any society and thus helping to reduce the inequalities able to harm competitiveness. Despite the benefits of social cohesion, differences in competitiveness may result whenever resources are overly concentrated in specific regional locations (Kautonen, 2012).

According to Lundvall (2005), innovation extends to include the creation of sometimes qualitatively different, new ideas and new knowledge. In this perspective and in the wake of the Community Innovation Survey and the Oslo Manual, innovation may take various forms: product innovation; process innovation; organisational innovation and marketing innovation but also service innovation, market innovation, institutional innovation and environmental innovation (Natário, 2014).

Nowadays, there is acceptance of innovation as a critical parameter of human intelligence and cognitive capacities (Galindo et al., 2011). The concept of regional innovation stems from the interactive set of private and public interests, formal institutions and other entities that operate according to organisational and institutional agreements and establishing relations able to drive the generation and dissemination of knowledge. The concept involves analysing the existence and roles of actors (institutions, groups, universities, industries, ...) and the regional competences as well as the ongoing

inter-network interactions around innovation related goals within the overall general objective of providing the local authorities with state-of-the-art tools for defining policies capable of boosting real competitiveness (Huahai et al., 2011).

Over various decades, tourism has turned in continuous growth and steadily diversified in order to become one of the economic sectors experiencing the fastest expansion at the global scale. Modern tourism to a greater or lesser extent interconnects with the development and competitiveness of regions and incorporates a growing number of new destinations. Hence, these tourism sector dynamics have proven an essential motor for driving socioeconomic progress (WTO, 2016).

However, the success of tourism destinations in world and regional markets stems to a certain extent from the influence of its relative competitiveness (Enright and Newton, 2004). Over recent decades, academics and politicians have increasingly focused their attentions on studying clusters, particularly their role within regional contexts and correspondingly developing a great diversity of conceptual models (Estevão and Ferreira, 2012). Other studies and research findings on regional competitiveness have only measured factors of relevance in isolation and have not sought to produce a composite global index, whether at the regional or local levels.

Throughout many years, bibliometric studies have held major importance to literature reviews given their contributions have revealed and boosted the profile of certain fields of scientific interest.

In recent decades, reflections on the influences of location on competitiveness have taken relatively simple approaches to how companies and regions compete. This perspective holds competition to be fairly static and dependent on reducing costs within fairly closed economies. In this case, comparative advantages in factors of production constitute a vital means of boosting the economies of scale that play such a central role (Porter, 2003).

3 Methodology

3.1 Data and methods

The data for this study came from the citation and number of articles data compiled by the Web of Science (WoS) databases that contain many thousands of academic publications alongside information on their authors, affiliations and citations. Furthermore, in bibliometric studies spanning various publications, citations have gained rising popularity in the literature especially due to the development of specialist databases such as the WoS, which greatly facilitates the obtaining of research on emerging fields and contexts (Merigó et al., 2015). This search took place on the WoS database in the first half of 2017 with the data subject to analysis in July of the same year through VOSviewer vs. 1.6.5 software that enables bibliometric analysis in accordance with the articles published in journals specialising without applying any chronological filter, corresponding to the period of founding, maturing and solidifying of research interrelated with regional competitiveness and tourism innovation. The keywords applied in the database search were: ‘regional competitive* and tourism innovation*’.

In accordance with the aforementioned database and software, the analytical criteria were the following:

- 1 In a first WoS research phase, we downloaded all of the documentation, thus a complete register including the references cited, author, title, source and abstract; before.
- 2 In a second phase, we applied the VOSviewer software and inputted all of the research data with the method chosen, the ‘full counting’ method resulting in the analysis of the titles and abstracts of all these documents.

The period of analysis selected ranged from 1900 to 2016 and based upon the keywords defined, returned a sample containing 3,752 articles and 23,918 citations. There are a series of techniques applicable to analysing the literature on any specific scientific field. Various researchers have also correspondingly made resource to bibliometric techniques, in particular co-citation analysis and co-word analysis, to study some of the diverse management fields (Zupic and Čater, 2014).

Various studies have deployed bibliometric analysis to gain a better understanding of the data analysed in the past and to uncover possible hidden patterns that may be of great relevance to current and future research (Carvalho et al., 2013; Chun-hao and Jian-min, 2012; Daim et al., 2006; Fahimnia et al., 2015; Koc and Boz, 2014; Merigó et al., 2015; Pollack and Adler, 2015; Zhong et al., 2016; Zupic et al., 2010).

4 Results

4.1 Evolution and data analysis

The results below stem from analysis of the evolution in the number of articles and their respective numbers of annual citations for the period between 1900 and 2016 (Figure 1). Figure 1 highlights the evolution of publications on the theme over time. We may correspondingly report the first publications only emerged in the 1990s before entering into a clear period of expansion after 2006 in the case of regional competitiveness and with the first articles on tourism innovation coming out in 1992, with another in 1995.

Figure 1 Evolution of publications

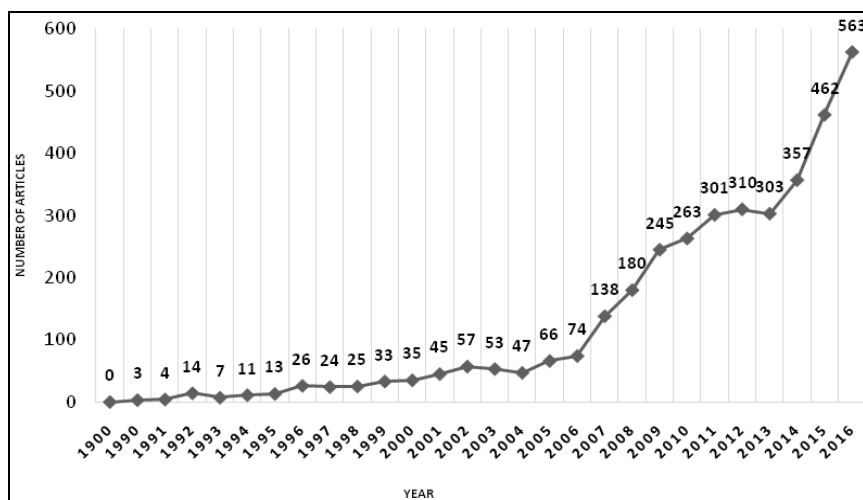


Table 1 reflects the percentage of publications for each selected field and in accordance with the search sample results.

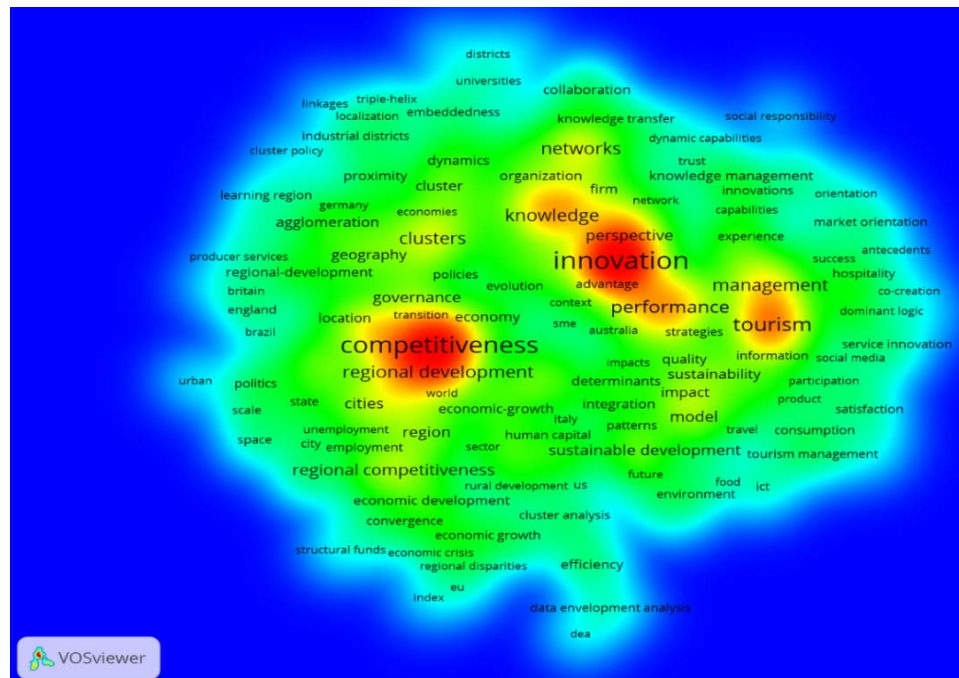
Table 1 General research data on the unfiltered number of articles and citations

<i>Keywords</i>	<i>No. of articles</i>	<i>No. of citations</i>
'Regional competitiveness'	2.565 (68.4%)	18.013 (75.3%)
'Tourism innovation'	1.187 (31.6%)	5.905 (24.7%)
Total	3.752 (100%)	23.918 (100%)

We may correspondingly report that 68.4% of these articles approach the theme of regional competitiveness and the remaining 31.6% focus on tourism innovation. Hence, based on Figure 1 and the number of publications annually, we registered a total of 3,752 articles distributed across three areas of study (regional competitiveness and tourism innovation). The same table sets out the distribution of citations for each selected area. Without the application of any chronological filter, we arrive at a total of 23,918 citations, with 18,103 citations (75.3% of total citations) focusing upon the field of 'regional competitiveness' and 5,905 citations (24.7%) on 'tourism innovation'.

Based on the information detailed in Table 1, we made resource to VOSviewer software, applying the selection method focusing on the titles and the abstracts following the extraction of terms, we then opted for the 'full counting' method and with a minimum number of ten incidences for each term identifying the 280 terms with greatest relevance and that we then subjected to analysis in order to verify the areas with the greatest density of clusters and the ways in which they mutually interrelate (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Density of the most relevant areas of study (see online version for colours)



Based upon analysis of Figure 2, we may identify two major groups of clusters. The first group includes 705 areas of study, the second group 540 areas and together amounting to the overall identification of 1,245 feasible areas of research. Among the diverse study focuses, we would highlight “competitiveness, innovation, tourism, demand, region, development, industry, impact and method” as the areas returning the highest incidences, thus, most centralised in the densest areas. As regards those less explored and more dispersed (or lower density) fields, we would highlight the following: “cluster analysis, product, satisfaction, participation, model, tourist, service, cooperation, motivations and regional development.”

4.2 Regional competitiveness: publications and intellectual knowledge

Table 2 sets out a summary of the most cited scientific publications and with the greatest relevance to articles identified by the keywords of ‘regional competitiveness’.

Based upon Table 2, the five most cited authors for studies on regional competitiveness are:

- 1 Porter (2000)
- 2 Martin and Sunley (2003)
- 3 Maskell and Malmberg (1999)
- 4 Porter (2003)
- 5 Boschma (2004).

Through the analysis carried out, it is possible to identify several articles on tourism issues, related to the researched area, regional competitiveness, which in our opinion there is a great relationship between the areas of tourism and regional competitiveness. Some of the studies identified are, for instance: Herrero-Prieto and Gómez-Veja (2017), Firgo and Fritz (2017), Cuccia et al. (2017) and Chong (2017). Herrero-Prieto and Gómez-Veja (2017) analyse the performances of tourist destinations, stating that regions are tourist destinations to be explored and their findings reveal implications for economic development, competitive relations and economic policy. Firgo and Fritz (2017) through an econometric analysis identified that isolating some issues of tourism attractiveness contribute to regional growth and tourism competitiveness. Furthermore, Chong (2017) studies wine tourism and through Porter’s four diamond model tries evaluate the competitiveness of this wine tourism industry and reinforces this product as a factor of tourist competitiveness.

Figure 3 displays the evolution in the number of articles and annual citations in the field of regional competitiveness, for the period from 1900 to 2016 without the application of any chronological filter.

Figure 3 demonstrates, only after 1990 did the first publications appear and attaining their greatest relevance after 1999. In terms of citations, the year of greatest incidence of publication is 2003.

Figure 4 displays the areas of greatest density as regards this field of study and correspondingly identifying the clusters of greatest importance and the areas with the greatest incidence of studies existing.

Table 2 Scientific articles on regional competitiveness

Author	Journal	Title	Methodology	Citations
Porter (2000)	<i>Economic Development Quarterly</i>	Location, competition, and economic development: local clusters in a global economy	Qualitative	961
Martin and Sunley (2003)	<i>Journal of Economic Geography</i>	Deconstructing clusters: chaotic concept or policy panacea? High technology small firms clusters	Qualitative	751
Maskell and Malmberg (1999)	<i>Cambridge Journal of Economics</i>	A localized learning and industrial competitiveness	Qualitative	727
Porter (2003)	<i>Regional Studies</i>	The economic performance of regions	Quantitative	411
Boschma (2004)	<i>Regional Studies</i>	Competitiveness of regions from an evolutionary perspective	Qualitative	187
Kiison et al. (2004)	<i>Regional Studies</i>	Regional competitiveness: an elusive yet key concept?	Qualitative	178
Camagni (2002)	<i>Urban Studies</i>	On the concept of territorial competitiveness: sound or misleading?	Qualitative	162
Bristow (2005)	<i>Journal of Economic Geography</i>	Everyone is a 'winner': problematizing the discourse of regional competitiveness	Quantitative	116
Huggins (2003)	<i>Regional Studies</i>	Creating a UK competitiveness index: regional and local benchmarking	Quantitative	84
Iyer et al. (2005)	<i>Regional Studies</i>	Social capital, economic growth and regional development	Quantitative	74
Yeo et al. (2008)	<i>Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice</i>	Evaluating the competitiveness of container ports in Korea and China	Quantitative	62
Guerrero et al. (2016)	<i>The Journal of Technology Transfer</i>	Entrepreneurial activity and regional competitiveness: evidence from European entrepreneurial universities	Quantitative	6
Berti and Mulligan (2016)	<i>Sustainability</i>	Competitiveness of small farms and innovative food supply chains: the role of food hubs in creating sustainable regional and local food systems	Quantitative	3
Herrero-Prieto and Gómez-Vega (2017)	<i>Tourism Economics</i>	Cultural resources as a factor in cultural tourism attraction: technical efficiency estimation of regional destinations in Spain	Quantitative	3
Capello et al. (2014)	<i>International Regional Science Review</i>	Modeling regional growth between competitiveness and austerity measures: the MAST3 model	Quantitative	2
Firgo and Fritz (2017)	<i>Annals of Regional Science</i>	Does having the right visitor mix do the job? Applying an econometric shift-share model to regional tourism developments	Quantitative	1
Cuccia et al. (2017)	<i>Tourism Economics</i>	UNESCO sites and performance trend of Italian regional tourism destinations: a two-stage DEA window analysis with spatial interaction	Quantitative	1
Chong (2017)	<i>Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research</i>	Thailand wine tourism: a dream or a reality?	Quantitative	1
Parakhina et al. (2017)	<i>International Journal of Educational Management</i>	Strategic management in universities as a factor of their global competitiveness	Quantitative	-
Wilde et al. (2017)	<i>International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration</i>	Consumer insights and the importance of competitiveness factors for mature and developing destinations	Quantitative	-

Figure 3 Number of articles and annual citations on regional competitiveness

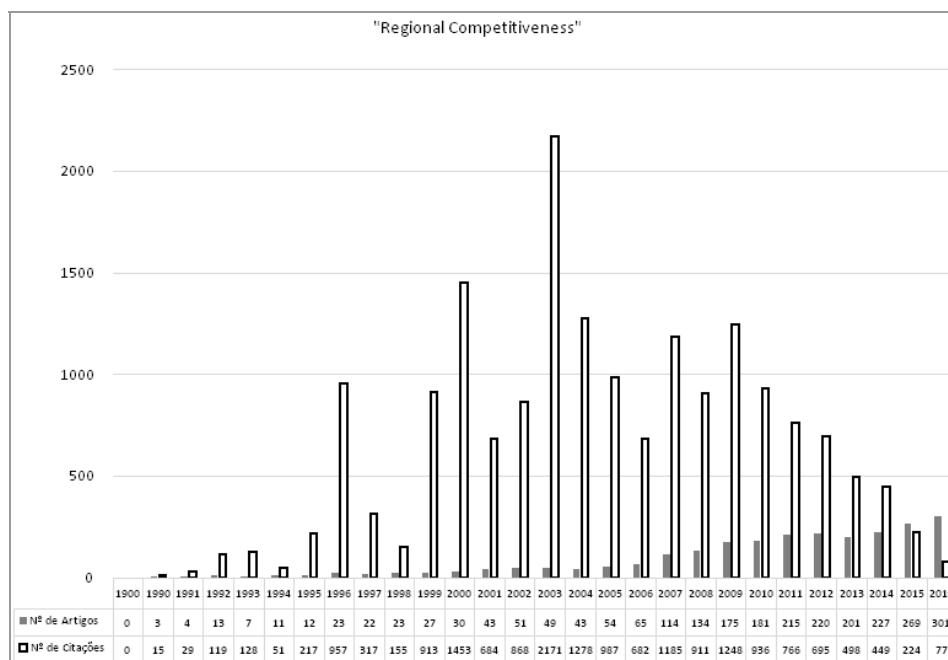


Figure 4 Map of relations around the regional competitiveness keywords (see online version for colours)

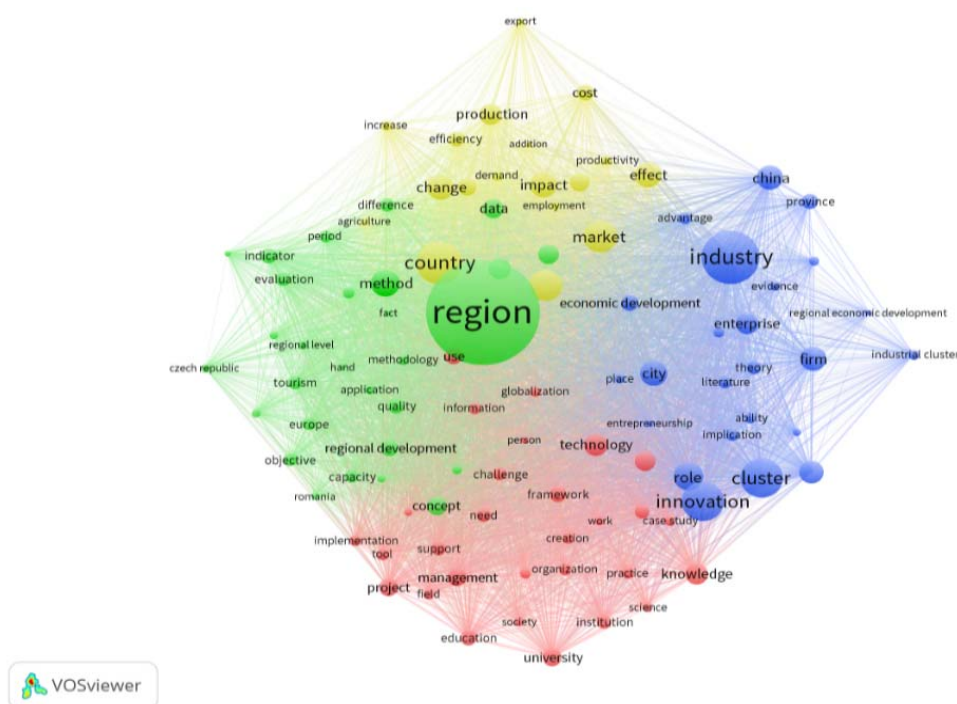


Table 3 Most relevant clusters on regional competitiveness

<i>Cluster 1 (29 items)</i>	<i>Cluster 2 (29 items)</i>	<i>Cluster 3 (24 items)</i>	<i>Cluster 4 (18 items)</i>
Case study, challenge, company, cooperation, creation, education, experience, field, framework, globalisation, implementation, information, institution, knowledge, management, need, organisation, person, practice, project, science, society, support, sustainability, technology, tool, university, use, work	Application, capacity, comparison, concept, Czech Republic, data, difference, Europe, European Union, evaluation, fact, group, hand, indicator, method, methodology, objective, performance, period, quality, region, regional competitiveness, regional development, regional level, Romania, Slovakia, sustainable development, territory, tourism	Ability, advantage, china, city, cluster, competitive advantage economic development, enterprise, entrepreneurship, evidence, finding, firm, implication, industrial cluster, industry, innovation, literature, network, place, province, regional economic development, regional economy, role, theory	Addition, agriculture, change, cost, country, demand, effect, efficiency, employment, export, impact, increase, investment, market, product, production, productivity, sector

Table 4 Top 20 most cited authors for the keywords 'regional competitiveness'

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Citations</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Total link strength</i>
1	Porter, M.E.	1,384	2	1,984
2	Martin, R.	961	4	6,237
3	Sunley, P.	809	5	5,722
4	Malmberg, A.	738	2	4,912
5	Maskell, P.	733	1	2,288
6	Haxeltine, A.	584	1	76
7	Prentice, I.C.	584	1	76
8	Huggins, R.	344	16	30,528
9	Malecki, E.J.	342	5	8,980
10	Tyler, P.	276	4	4,546
11	Bathelt, H.	272	4	6,997
12	Kitson, M.	253	2	3,091
13	Gluckler, J.	242	3	3,940
14	Bristow, G.	237	5	3,266
15	Iammarino, S.	212	2	2,910
16	Keebe, D.	206	5	3,634
17	Coenen, L.	206	2	2,864
18	Camagni, R.	197	4	3,891
19	Boschma, R.	196	1	1,591
20	Simmie, J.	194	4	3,453

Following the application of a filter, with the utilisation of the ‘regional competitiveness’ keywords to search the online database (WoS), we transported the data into VOSviewer software in accordance with the criteria of including only the titles and summaries in keeping with the ‘full counting’ method. Table 3 details the 100 most cited items in the total of four clusters found.

Some of the most decentralised areas, those without any large number of studies, include the following: “sector, product, regional level, tourism, cluster, region, innovation, regional economy and impact” which may thus represent highly interesting future areas of research.

We can also mention that the area of studies of tourism and regional competitiveness appear both in the same group of clusters which shows also a relation and connection of these areas of studies.

Following this analysis of the main clusters, we produced a ranking of the top 20 most cited authors (Table 4).

The results of Table 4 demonstrate that Porter is undoubtedly the lead reference in this field and trailed by Martin, R., Sunley, P., Malmberg, A., Maskell, Haxeltine, A., Prentice, I.C., Huggins, R., Malecki, E.J., Tyler, P., Bathelt, H., Kitson, M., Gluckler, J., Bristow, G., Iammarino, S., Keebe, D., Coenen, L., Camagni, R., Boschma, R. and Simmie, J.

Table 5 Top 20 of countries with the largest number of articles featuring the keywords ‘regional competitiveness’

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Citations</i>	<i>Total link strength</i>
1	China	457	759	14,602
2	USA	216	4,063	36,880
3	England	211	4,154	66,106
4	Czech Republic	171	291	17,793
5	Italy	119	891	23,555
6	Germany	118	1,509	27,494
7	Slovakia	102	172	7,257
8	Romania	99	72	5,412
9	Spain	93	530	19,308
10	Netherlands	65	1,353	25,422
11	Poland	65	91	3,067
12	Russia	65	33	4,108
13	Canada	57	635	15,379
14	Australia	55	302	6,552
15	France	53	326	9,111
16	Sweden	44	1,291	18,643
17	Wales	44	1,037	26,716
18	Lithuania	43	282	4,350
19	Finland	36	274	8,353
20	Scotland	33	1,217	10,269

Based upon the analysis already undertaken, we now provide a summary of the top 20 countries producing scientific articles on this field (Table 5).

Table 6 Top 30 most cited journals for the keywords 'regional competitiveness'

Ranking	Source	Greatest no. of citations	No. of articles	Total link strength
1	<i>Regional Studies</i>	3120	108	33337
2	<i>Journal of Economic Geography</i>	1220	13	8612
3	<i>Economic Development Quarterly</i>	1127	14	4750
4	<i>Cambridge Journal of Economics</i>	755	3	2200
5	<i>European Planning Studies</i>	666	51	17292
6	<i>Urban Studies</i>	587	21	8343
7	<i>Global Biogeochemical Cycles</i>	584	1	2
8	<i>Research Policy</i>	527	13	4253
9	<i>Environment and Planning C-Government and Policy</i>	472	25	8615
10	<i>Economic Geography</i>	384	6	3148
11	<i>Entrepreneurship and Regional Development</i>	378	19	11238
12	<i>European Urban and Regional Studies</i>	321	22	6976
13	<i>Environment and Planning A</i>	318	26	9702
14	<i>International Journal of Urban and Regional Research</i>	304	13	3551
15	<i>International Regional Science Review</i>	250	9	2400
16	<i>Annals of Regional Science</i>	184	19	2644
17	<i>Inzinerine Ekonomika – Engineering Economics</i>	183	18	2061
18	<i>Cambridge Journal of Regions Economy and Society</i>	160	9	3555
19	<i>Journal of Urban Affairs</i>	152	5	1447
20	<i>Energy Policy</i>	145	8	64
21	<i>International Journal of Technology Management</i>	138	7	1356
22	<i>Tourism Management</i>	137	5	962
23	<i>Technological Forecasting and Social Change</i>	135	12	3385
24	<i>Growth and Change</i>	134	10	5422
25	<i>Cities</i>	130	8	579
26	<i>Journal of Evolutionary Economics</i>	130	4	2758
27	<i>Service Industries Journal</i>	129	14	3521
28	<i>Futures</i>	125	3	430
29	<i>E and M Ekonomie a Management</i>	121	15	2164
30	<i>Agriculture Ecosystems and Environment</i>	121	1	9

Table 5 correspondingly shows how the five countries with the largest number of articles on this field of study are: ‘China’ followed by the USA, England, Czech Republic and Italy.

In turn, Table 6 sets out the top 30 scientific journals in terms of their publications and citations on this field of study.

Thus, clearly leading the way in the top 30 of scientific journals by number of citations in this field of study is the *Regional Studies* journal, well ahead of the *Journal of Economic Geography*, *Economic Development Quarterly*, *Cambridge Journal of Economics* and *European Planning Studies*.

4.3 *Tourism innovation: publications and intellectual knowledge*

Table 7 details the most cited and most relevant scientific publications identified by the keywords ‘tourism innovation’.

Based on Table 7, the five most cited authors of studies on tourism innovation are:

- 1 Hjalager (2010)
- 2 Novelli et al. (2006)
- 3 Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003)
- 4 Orfila-sintes et al. (2005)
- 5 Sundbo et al. (2007).

Following analysis of the regional competitiveness field of study, we undertook the same analysis for tourism innovation beginning with Figure 5.

Figure 5 Number of tourism innovation articles and annual citations

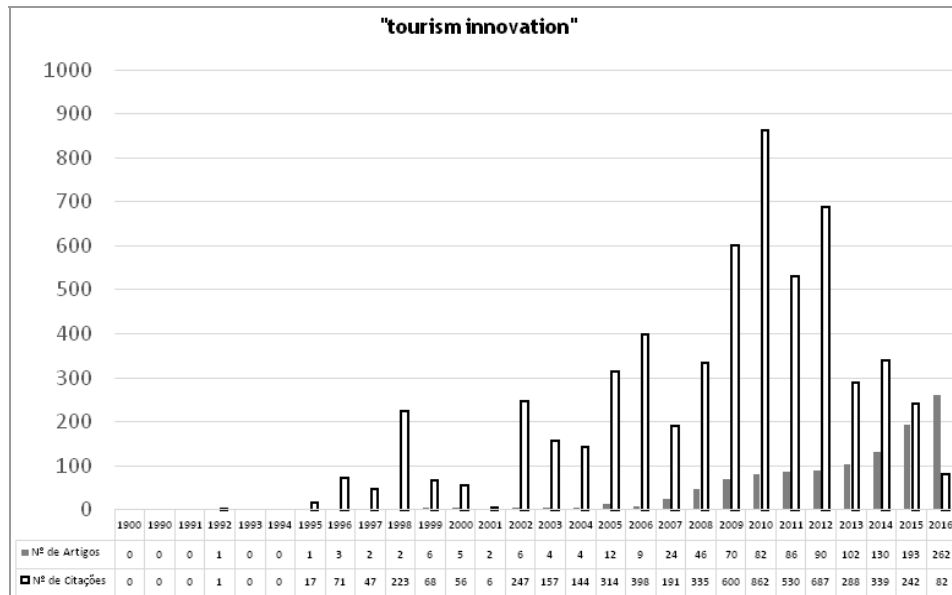


Table 7 Scientific articles on tourism innovation

<i>Author</i>	<i>Journal</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Methodology</i>	<i>Citations</i>
Hjalager (2010)	<i>Tourism Management</i>	A review of innovation research in tourism	Qualitative	213
Novelli et al. (2006)	<i>Tourism Management</i>	Networks, clusters and innovation in tourism: a UK experience	Qualitative	179
Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003)	<i>Tourism Management</i>	Innovation strategies and technology for experience-based tourism	Qualitative	132
Orfila-sintes et al. (2005)	<i>Tourism Management</i>	Innovation activity in the hotel industry: evidence from Balearic Islands	Quantitative	102
Sundbo et al. (2007)	<i>Research Policy</i>	The innovative behaviour of tourism firms – comparative studies of Denmark and Spain	Quantitative	90
Song and Dwyer (2012)	<i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	Tourism economics research: a review and assessment	Qualitative	80
Orfila-sintes and Mattsson (2009)	<i>Omega – International Journal of Management Science</i>	Innovation behavior in the hotel industry	Quantitative	78
Camisón and Monfort-mir (2012)	<i>Tourism Management</i>	Measuring innovation in tourism from the Schumpeterian and the dynamic-capabilities perspectives	Quantitative	50
Approach and Paget (2010)	<i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	A tourism innovation case an actor-network approach	Qualitative	50
Aldebert et al. (2011)	<i>Tourism Management</i>	Innovation in the tourism industry: the case of tourism	Quantitative	42
Bramwell and Lane (2011)	<i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>	Towards innovation in sustainable tourism research?	Qualitative	39
Hudon et al. (2017)	<i>Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics</i>	Towards sustainability: the innovation paths of social enterprise	Qualitative	1
Hong et al. (2017)	<i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	From innovation to sustainability: sustainability innovations of eco-friendly hotels in Taiwan	Quantitative	-
García-Villaverde et al. (2017)	<i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	Determinants of radical innovation in clustered firms of the hospitality and tourism industry	Quantitative	-
Booyens and Rogerson (2016)	<i>Tourism Geographies</i>	Networking and learning for tourism innovation: evidence from the Western Cape	Quantitative	-
Camisón et al. (2017)	<i>Current Issues in Tourism</i>	Cluster and firm-specific antecedents of organizational innovation	Quantitative	-
Kuščer et al. (2017)	<i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>	Innovation, sustainable tourism and environments in mountain destination development: a comparative analysis of Austria, Slovenia and Switzerland	Quantitative	-
Quandt et al. (2017)	<i>Social Enterprise Journal</i>	Social innovation practices in the regional tourism industry: case study of a cooperative in Brazil	Quantitative and qualitative	-
Fiona and Sherry (2017)	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	Event innovation induced corporate branding	Quantitative	-
Spenceley and Snyman (2017)	<i>Tourism and Hospitality Research</i>	Protected area tourism: Progress, innovation and sustainability	Qualitative	-

Figure 5 details the annual evolution in the number of articles and their respective number of citations contained in the WoS database and identified by the keywords ‘tourism innovation’, without the application of any filter for the period between 1900 and 2016. This correspondingly shows how the first article only appeared in 1992 and with their frequency only beginning to rise after 1995 and with the articles gaining the greatest number of citations occurring in 2010 with the number of articles published on this theme rising through to 2016. Figure 6 analyses the areas interrelated with this field with the greatest density of studies.

Table 8 Most relevant clusters on tourism innovation

<i>Cluster 1 (15 items)</i>	<i>Cluster 2 (15 items)</i>	<i>Cluster 3 (ten items)</i>	<i>Cluster 4 (nine items)</i>	<i>Cluster 5 (six items)</i>
Area, article, case, case study, concept, context, destination, example, practice, product, region, tourism, tourist, value, way	Analysis, author, data, finding, firm, hotel, importance, innovation, paper, purpose, relationship, research, result, study, type	Information, knowledge, need, order, problem, process, project, student, technology, use	China, country, development, impact, industry, opportunity, role, service, tourism industry	Competitiveness, factor, level, model, tourism sector

Table 9 Top 20 most cited authors for the keywords ‘tourism innovation’

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Author</i>	<i>Citations</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Total link strength</i>
1	Hjalager, A.M.	539	12	9
2	Orfila-sintes, F.	349	7	9
3	Bessiere, J.	203	1	0
4	Novelli, M.	188	2	3
5	Schimtz, B.	182	1	2
6	Spencer, T.	182	1	2
7	Williams, A.	180	2	3
8	Cooper, C.	169	2	1
9	Martinez-ros, E.	165	3	4
10	Shaw, G.	136	3	5
11	Skayannis, P.	134	1	1
12	Stamboulis, Y	134	1	1
13	Buhalis, D.	133	5	7
14	Williams, A.M.	128	4	7
15	Song, H.Y.	113	2	5
16	Weidenfeld, A.	110	4	6
17	Crespi-caldera, R.	102	1	2
18	Dwyer, I.	99	3	8
19	Sorensen, F.	99	3	5
20	Bailey, A.	92	1	2

Figure 6 sets out the clusters of greatest importance and the areas with the greatest incidence of existing studies following the application of a filter utilising the keywords ‘tourism innovation’ in the WoS online database. We then inputted these data into the VOSviewer software according to the criteria of including only the titles and abstracts in accordance with the ‘full counting’ method.

Table 8 sets out the most cited items, identifying five clusters in total.

Following the identification of the most relevant items, we drafted Table 9 featuring the ranking of the top 20 most cited authors on this theme.

Table 9 lists the top 20 most cited authors according to the results of this research process and demonstrating how Hjalager, A.M. stands out as the lead reference followed by Orfila-sintes, F., Bessiere, J., Novelli, M., Schimtz, B. and Spencer, T.

Having presented the most influential authors in the field, we may identify the top 20 countries producing the most articles (Table 10).

Table 10 Top 20 countries for articles published with the keywords ‘tourism innovation’

<i>Ranking</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Citations</i>	<i>Total link strength</i>
1	England	1,379	76	16,771
2	Spain	801	128	20,340
3	USA	735	74	12,017
4	Australia	676	59	10,027
5	Denmark	634	23	7,362
6	China	348	249	9,483
7	France	308	28	2,349
8	Canada	281	28	4,932
9	Greece	247	20	2,326
10	Italy	226	75	8,201
11	Portugal	210	24	2,497
12	Turkey	202	27	4,382
13	Sweden	165	16	2,568
14	Taiwan	153	55	4,519
15	Finland	141	13	3,412
16	Scotland	137	11	2,234
17	Austria	133	17	4,186
18	Netherlands	131	26	2,955
19	Germany	115	21	2,986
20	Norway	105	20	6,966

Table 10 identifies the countries with the largest number of articles in this study field with ‘England’ at the top of the list followed by Spain, the USA, Australia, Denmark, China, France, Canada, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Turkey, Sweden, Taiwan, Finland, Scotland, Austria, Netherlands, Germany and Norway.

Table 11 identifies the top 30 scientific journals accounting for the largest number of citations.

Table 11 Top 30 of scientific journals according to the keywords ‘tourism innovation’

Ranking	Source	Greatest no. of citations	No. of articles	Total link strength
1	<i>Tourism Management</i>	2,189	61	12,200
2	<i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	712	22	5,842
3	<i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i>	269	25	2,577
4	<i>International Journal of Tourism Research</i>	254	28	5,026
5	<i>Sociologia Ruralis</i>	203	1	2
6	<i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	172	14	3,742
7	<i>Service Industries Journal</i>	162	12	1,974
8	<i>Current Issues in Tourism</i>	133	18	3,915
9	<i>Research Policy</i>	113	2	619
10	<i>Journal of Cleaner Production</i>	103	11	797
11	<i>Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism</i>	91	10	2,535
12	<i>Journal of Urban Affairs</i>	87	1	39
13	<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	83	17	4,326
14	<i>Industrial Management and Data Systems</i>	83	2	153
15	<i>Omega – International Journal of Management Science</i>	78	1	385
16	<i>Information and Management</i>	71	1	109
17	<i>Science</i>	65	1	21
18	<i>Journal of Travel Research</i>	64	6	2,058
19	<i>Tourism Geographies</i>	62	11	2,315
20	<i>Cornell Hospitality Quarterly</i>	58	5	666
21	<i>Journal of Business Research</i>	55	8	436
22	<i>Technovation</i>	54	2	475
23	<i>Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing</i>	53	6	1,166
24	<i>Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research</i>	49	10	1,704
25	<i>Journal of Destination Marketing and Management</i>	49	4	919
26	<i>European Planning Studies</i>	48	13	2,486
27	<i>Journal of Management Studies</i>	45	1	131
28	<i>Tourism Economics</i>	44	13	2,373
29	<i>Computers in Human Behavior</i>	40	3	366
30	<i>American Journal of Bioethics</i>	39	1	55

In Table 11, we selected the top 30 scientific journals with the largest number of citations in this area of study and correspondingly detailing how the five most influential are: *Tourism Management*, clearly the best referenced and followed by *Annals of Tourism*

5 Discussion and conclusions

This article provides a general and systematic overview of the most influential and productive publications, their authors, the scientific journals for the areas under study and the respective national backgrounds across two distinctive fields: regional competitiveness and tourism innovation, over the period from 1900 to 2016 in accordance with the WoS database contents.

Bibliometric analysis, hence mapping the interconnections between the keywords produced maps of clusters featuring the areas with the greatest density of citations for the

keywords analysed and furthermore demonstrating the importance of the research fields encapsulating regional competitiveness and tourism innovation represent the results of analysis of these concepts.

Ensuring that these results constitute a reliable source of data is one of the most important and difficult challenges present in the management sciences.

The problems with measurement essentially derive from issues surrounding the complexity of questions of regional competitiveness and tourism innovation as well as the lack of clear and exact definitions and interpretations of these questions.

There are already proposals for measuring the competitiveness of regions, the impacts of innovation on the tourism sector and depending on the methodology adopted. The methods described in the literature however are not exempt from their own limitations as regards problems around regional competitive and innovation in the tourism sector that account for a large majority of the literature on these questions. In these terms, our analysis extends beyond the traditional spectrum of bibliometric studies. Furthermore, through this innovative methodological approach, we demonstrate our capacity to capture and identify new fields of research within the field of regional competitiveness and tourism innovation in order to establish feasible and new research paths.

The fields of study identified as some areas hitherto attracting lower levels and that might be of interest for future research include: “tourism clusters, touristic events, touristic product, model, touristic satisfaction, regional development.”

According to Almeida (2016), since 2005 for instance in the island of Madeira (Portugal), tourism sector has undergone a transition phase, characterised by the stagnation of the classic product and the attempt to strengthen sectors alternatives to avoid the weakness of the tourism product.

Thus, in recent years temporary events and festivals, essentially tourism products have been increasingly seen as instruments of local development, thanks to their intangible benefits and as a boost to the reputation of the host city, a pride for the local community (Delamere et al., 2001) as well as their impact on the local economy (Bracalente et al., 2011).

Tourist events are an applied product dedicated to the understanding and improvement of tourism through the realisation of certain events (Getz and Page, 2014). Mair and Whitford (2013) identified as most important topics for future research the socio-cultural impacts as well as the political dimensions of event tourism.

Tourism clusters in literature are still at an embryonic phase of discussion, since the small number of studies that address this issue shows this (Estevão and Ferreira, 2009).

A destination image influences the travel decisions prior to the visit, as well as after the visitation and it can influence an individual to visit that destination, which can consequently influence the level of satisfaction contributing for the tourist repeat the visit (Önder and Marchiori, 2017).

In addition, image of the destination affects the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of an individual's journey. This depends on whether the expectation about a destination and the image of destiny is in congruence with reality (Pike, 2002).

Although the expectation that tourism contributes significantly to the development of a specific region is high, the real role that tourism plays in regional development is still poorly understood (Hall, 2002). Tourism is undoubtedly the fastest growing industry in the world and at the same time the main source of revenue for a considerable number of developing countries and regions, not only because of the vast human potential but also

because of the stimulating factor of regional development (Iordache, 2010) and wealth creation and employment (Kovacevic et al., 2017).

We believe that our study makes an additional and strong contribution to this scientific area by providing a systematic evolution of the concepts of regional competitiveness and tourism innovation and conveys the importance of these fields and furthermore deepening our understanding of the interrelationship between regional competitiveness and innovation in regional tourism sectors.

The main implication of this study arises out of identifying the main research trends in this field and the respective shortcomings and specific needs for future scientific research in competitiveness and tourism areas.

As regards its limitations and future lines of research, we may refer to how this study only adopted a single database (the WoS database) and without any filter, which excluded some of the leading specialist journals in this field, and we would hence make the recommendation that the results here require comparison with research focusing on the Scopus and/or Google Scholar databases as well as specifically analysing some journals.

Another future line of research might stem from undertaking qualitative studies, longitudinal studies, applying other systematic reviews involving interpretation-based summaries and evaluations, thus combining management practices based on evidence with inductive methods and through resource to methodological triangulation.

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