

ORIGINAL

Sustainable tourism and governance strategies in gentrification contexts: a bibliometric analysis

Turismo sostenible y estrategias de gobernanza en contextos de gentrificación: un análisis bibliométrico

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: sustainable tourism can have significant impacts on gentrification processes, both positive and negative; the promotion of responsible tourism can contribute to the revitalization of deteriorated urban areas, attracting investments that improve local infrastructure and services. The objective of the research is to analyze the main lines of research related to sustainable tourism and governance strategies in gentrification contexts.

Method: a quantitative type of research was developed, based on a retrospective and descriptive study, with a bibliometric approach, in the SCOPUS database during the period from 2004 to 2024, with no language restriction, although priority was given to articles in English. The search formula was: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("gentrification" AND "Sustainable" AND "tourism"). A total of 65 research papers were collected.

Results: the behavior of the research was heterogeneous with a tendency of the research was characterized by a polynomial function with a confidence level of 41,85 %. Research articles in the area of social sciences predominated. The most productive country was Spain with 14 research papers. Four lines of scientific research were identified and developed that may constitute an agenda for future research.

Conclusions: sustainable tourism is presented as a powerful tool for the economic and cultural development of local communities, while promoting environmental conservation.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis; Governance Strategies; Gentrification; Sustainable Tourism.

RESUMEN

Introducción: el turismo sostenible puede tener impactos significativos en los procesos de gentrificación, tanto positivos como negativos, la promoción de un turismo responsable puede contribuir a la revitalización de áreas urbanas deterioradas, atrayendo inversiones que mejoran la infraestructura y los servicios locales. El objetivo de la investigación es analizar las principales líneas de investigación relacionadas con el turismo sostenible y las estrategias de gobernanza en contextos de gentrificación.

Método: se desarrolló una investigación de tipo cuantitativa, a partir de un estudio retrospectivo y descriptivo, con un enfoque bibliométrico, en la base de datos SCOPUS durante el período de 2004 a 2024, sin restricción en el idioma, aunque se priorizaron los artículos en idioma inglés. La fórmula de búsqueda quedó: TITLE-ABS-KEY("gentrification" AND "Sustainable" AND "tourism"). Se recopiló un total de 65 investigaciones.

Resultados: el comportamiento de las investigaciones fue heterogéneo con una tendencia de las investigaciones estuvo caracterizada por una función polinómica con un nivel de confianza del 41,85 %. Predominaron los

artículos de investigación en el área de las ciencias sociales. El país más productor fue España con 14 investigaciones. Se identificaron y desarrollaron cuatro líneas de investigación científicas que pueden constituir agenda para futuras investigaciones.

Conclusiones: el turismo sostenible se presenta como una herramienta poderosa para el desarrollo económico y cultural de las comunidades locales, al tiempo que promueve la conservación del medio ambiente.

Palabras clave: Análisis Bibliométrico; Estrategias de Gobernanza; Gentrificación; Turismo.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an activity that promotes the discovery of new cultures and landscapes⁽¹⁾ and boosts local communities' economic development.⁽²⁾ As travelers explore iconic and hidden destinations, they contribute to job creation⁽³⁾ and the maintenance of traditions.⁽⁴⁾ Sustainable tourism has become a growing trend,⁽⁵⁾ where visitors seek experiences that respect the environment and support local economies.^(6,7) From ecotourism in the Amazon rainforest to gastronomic tours in historic cities, every trip becomes an opportunity to connect, learn, and enjoy the world's diversity.^(8,9,10)

This type of tourism allows visitors to immerse themselves in the local culture and support the region's economy through the purchase of artisanal products and participation in community activities.⁽¹¹⁾ By choosing sustainable tourism, travelers not only enrich their personal experience but also contribute to a more balanced and respectful future for our planet.⁽¹²⁾

The main strategies for sustainable tourism management focus on integrated planning,⁽¹³⁾ education,⁽¹⁴⁾ and collaboration among all stakeholders.⁽¹⁵⁾ First, it is essential to develop a management plan that considers the responsible use of natural resources,⁽¹⁶⁾ the protection of biodiversity,⁽¹⁷⁾ and the preservation of cultural heritage.⁽¹⁸⁾ Education and awareness of tourists and operators on sustainable practices are equally crucial, encouraging responsible behaviors that minimize environmental impact.⁽¹⁹⁾

Collaboration between governments, businesses, and local communities can create effective synergies, ensuring that the benefits of tourism are distributed equitably and local traditions are respected.⁽²⁰⁾ Implementing innovative technologies,⁽²¹⁾ such as sustainable mobility applications⁽²²⁾ and waste management systems,⁽²³⁾ can also optimize the visitor experience while protecting the environment. Thus, sustainable tourism management not only improves the quality of life of communities but also enriches the traveler's experience, promoting tourism that respects and values the surrounding environment.

The main governance strategies for achieving sustainable tourism are based on collaboration among stakeholders and comprehensive tourism development planning.⁽¹⁵⁾ First, it is essential to encourage the active participation of local communities, the private sector, and government entities in decision-making and implementing tourism projects.⁽²⁴⁾ This makes it possible to align the interests of all parties and ensure that the benefits of tourism are distributed equitably.

Management plans that simultaneously consider sustainable tourism's environmental, economic, socio-cultural, and political-institutional dimensions should be developed.⁽²⁵⁾ Such plans should consider both global and local aspects, broadening the time and space horizon to allow for adaptation to the needs of present and future generations.

Sustainable tourism can significantly impact gentrification processes⁽²⁶⁾ both positively and negatively. On the one hand, promoting responsible tourism can contribute to revitalizing deteriorated urban areas, attracting investments that improve local infrastructure and services.⁽²⁷⁾ However, this same phenomenon can lead to rising housing prices and the transformation of the cultural identity of neighborhoods, displacing original residents in favor of tourists and new inhabitants with greater economic resources.

The process of gentrification, driven by tourism demand, often generates social and economic tensions, as local communities may be excluded from the benefits of tourism development.⁽²⁸⁾ To mitigate these effects, it is crucial to implement policies that regulate real estate development and promote the active participation of communities in tourism planning, ensuring that economic growth does not compromise their well-being and cultural heritage.

In this context, the research aims to analyze the main lines of research related to sustainable tourism and governance strategies in contexts of gentrification.

METHOD

A quantitative type of research was developed^(29,30) based on a retrospective and descriptive study⁽³¹⁾ with a bibliometric approach⁽³²⁾ in order to analyze the scientific production related to sustainable tourism and governance strategies in contexts of gentrification in the SCOPUS database (<https://www.scopus.com/>) during the period from 2004 to 2024, without language restriction. However, priority was given to articles in English.

The search formula was TITLE-ABS-KEY (“gentrification” AND “Sustainable” AND “tourism”). The inclusion criteria were to select all articles of relevance and quality that explicitly addressed the two thematic descriptors defined. The strategy was carried out on September 02, 2024, and 65 research papers (n=65) were collected. Two researchers independently downloaded and analyzed a “RIS” file format in the EndNote X8 bibliographic manager.

Bibliometric indicators

Trend indicator

- Trend of investigations per year: The number of investigations per year and their trend were analyzed based on the representation of the trend line and its level of fit (R^2).

Production indicators

- Scientific production by type of document: An analysis was made of the number of research and review articles identified.
- Scientific production by area of knowledge: An analysis was made of the number of articles by area of knowledge.
- Scientific production by country: An analysis was made of the number of articles by country and the levels of introduction of results based on a density map.

Source of information: The indicators were obtained from the SCOPUS database, where .XLSX files in Excel format were downloaded.

Knowledge mapping

Vosviewer software and the Lens platform were used to create the knowledge maps, where the maps shown in the table below were constructed 1.

Table 1. Knowledge maps developed		
Map	Description	Source
Keyword co-occurrence network	A keyword co-occurrence analysis was performed based on the bibliometric network map. An analysis of the main clusters was carried out to identify possible lines of research.	Vosviewer
Author collaboration network	An analysis of the collaboration between authors was carried out.	Vosviewer
Map of citations	An analysis was made of the main citations in the period, according to the level of access to the publications and the comparison between the levels of citations in open access or not.	Lens

RESULTS

The behavior of the research was heterogeneous (figure 1), where two main periods were evidenced, one from 2004 to 2019, with research between one and four per year, and the other from 2020 to 2024, with research between nine and 11 as a maximum peak in the period in the year 2020. One article published in the editorial period of a journal was found for the year 2025. The research trend was characterized by a polynomial function with a confidence level of 41,85 %.

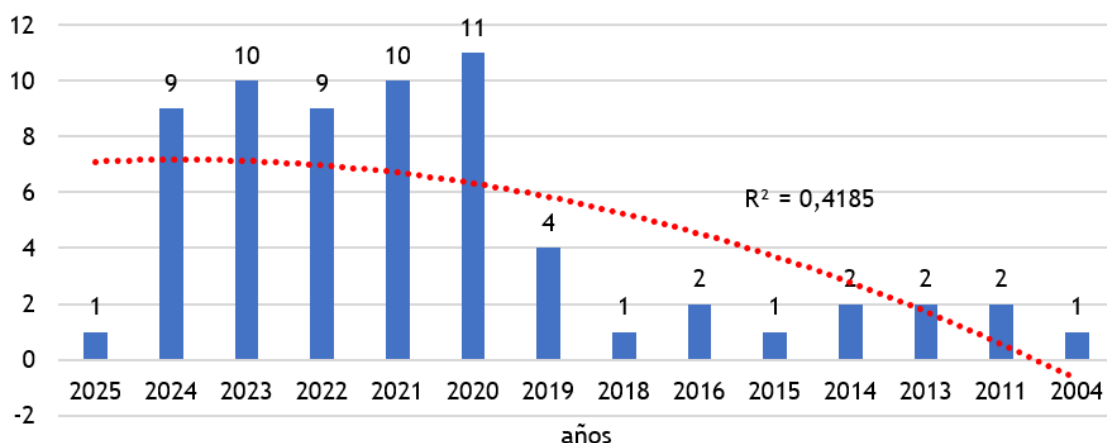


Figure 1. Trend of investigations by year

Table 2 shows the scientific production by type of document, where it was evident that research articles predominated with a frequency of 45 documents, followed by events and book chapters with eight and five documents, respectively. The research was identified in 10 areas of knowledge, with 49 types of research, the most representative area being social sciences, followed by environmental sciences with 30 types of research, and energy with 18 types of research.

Table 2. Scientific production by type of document	
Scientific production by type of document	Quantity
Research article	45
Event	8
Book chapter	5
Review article	4
Book	1
Conference review	1
Note	1

Research was conducted in 27 countries, and these countries were analyzed with four or more investigations (figure 2). With 14 investigations, Spain was the highest-producing country, while China and the United Kingdom published seven articles each. Germany and Italy were the third highest-producing countries, with five research papers.

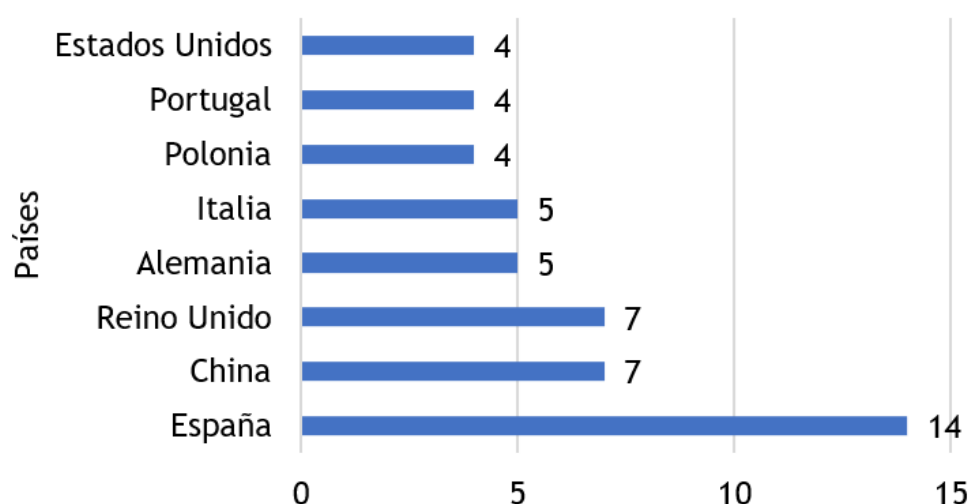


Figure 2. Scientific production by country

A co-occurrence analysis of keywords with a frequency equal to or greater than 4 ($n \geq 4$) was performed, where 24 items grouped into four clusters were identified (figure 3). A cluster analysis was performed to identify possible lines of scientific research.

Identification of lines of research

- Cluster 1 (8 items): Impact of tourism co-management on sustainable urban development from studying urban strategies and policies for tourist destinations.
This line of research could contribute to creating sustainable urban tourism models that align tourism development with the needs and expectations of local communities, thus promoting a balance between tourism growth and urban sustainability.
- Cluster 2 (6 items): Impact of gentrification and touristification in urban neighborhoods from planning strategies for sustainable tourism development.
This line of research could contribute to creating urban planning policies and practices that comprehensively address the challenges posed by gentrification and touristification, promoting tourism development that benefits visitors and local communities and preserves the authenticity and unique character of urban neighborhoods.
- Cluster 3 (6 items): Cultural Heritage Conservation in the Context of Urban Renewal in China:

Strategies for the Sustainability of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

This line of research would contribute to creating a theoretical and practical framework that supports cultural heritage conservation in a context of rapid urban change, promoting development that respects and values China's rich cultural heritage.

- Cluster 4 (4 items): Impact of tourism gentrification on rural development

Through ecotourism with a focus on strategies for sustainable transition.

This line of research could contribute to creating policies and practices that comprehensively address the challenges posed by tourism gentrification in rural environments, promoting ecotourism development that benefits local communities, preserves their cultural and natural heritage, and ensures the long-term sustainability of these areas.

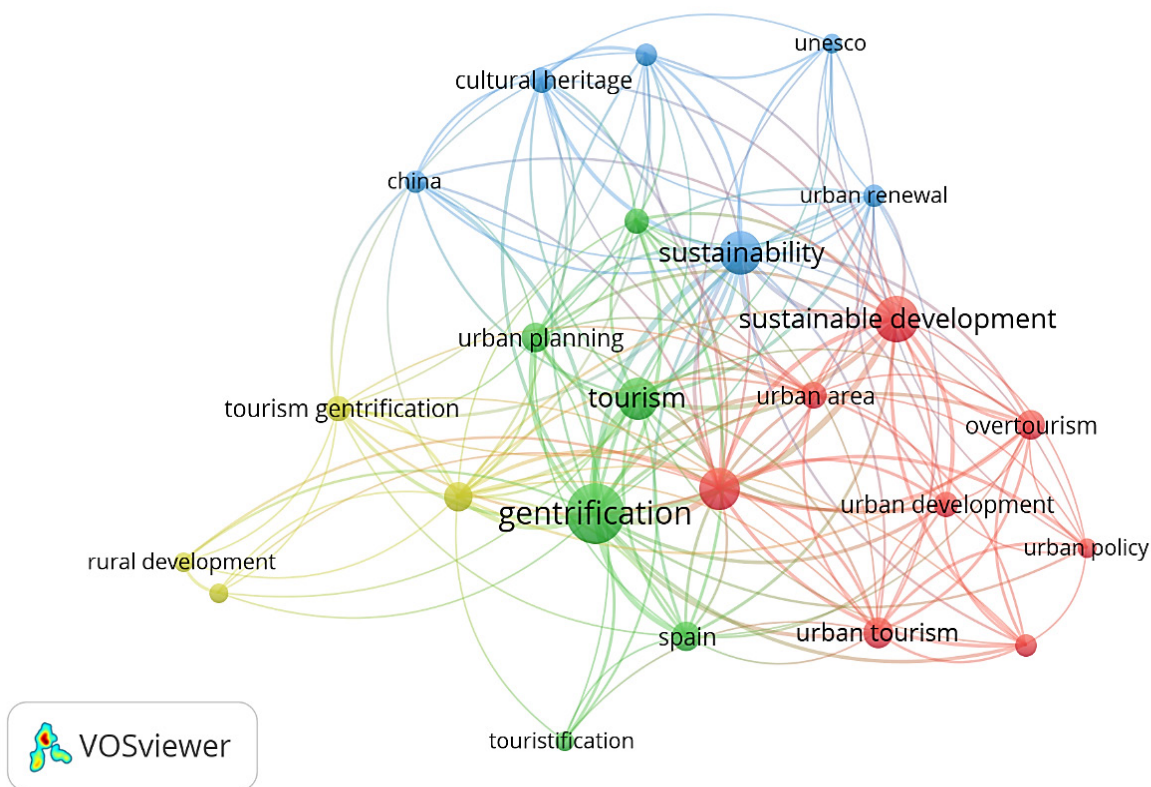


Figure 3. Keyword cooccurrence network ($n \geq 4$)

Figure 4 shows the collaboration network between authors with a level of cooccurrence equal to or greater than two ($n \geq 2$), where two main clusters were identified among the authors: García Hernández, M., Yubero, C. and Martínez Hernández, C.



Figure 4. Network of collaboration between authors ($n \geq 2$)

Figure 5 shows the map of citations where it is evident that the highest number of citations were from 2011 onwards, with an average concentration of 100 citations and maximum peaks of more than 300 citations.

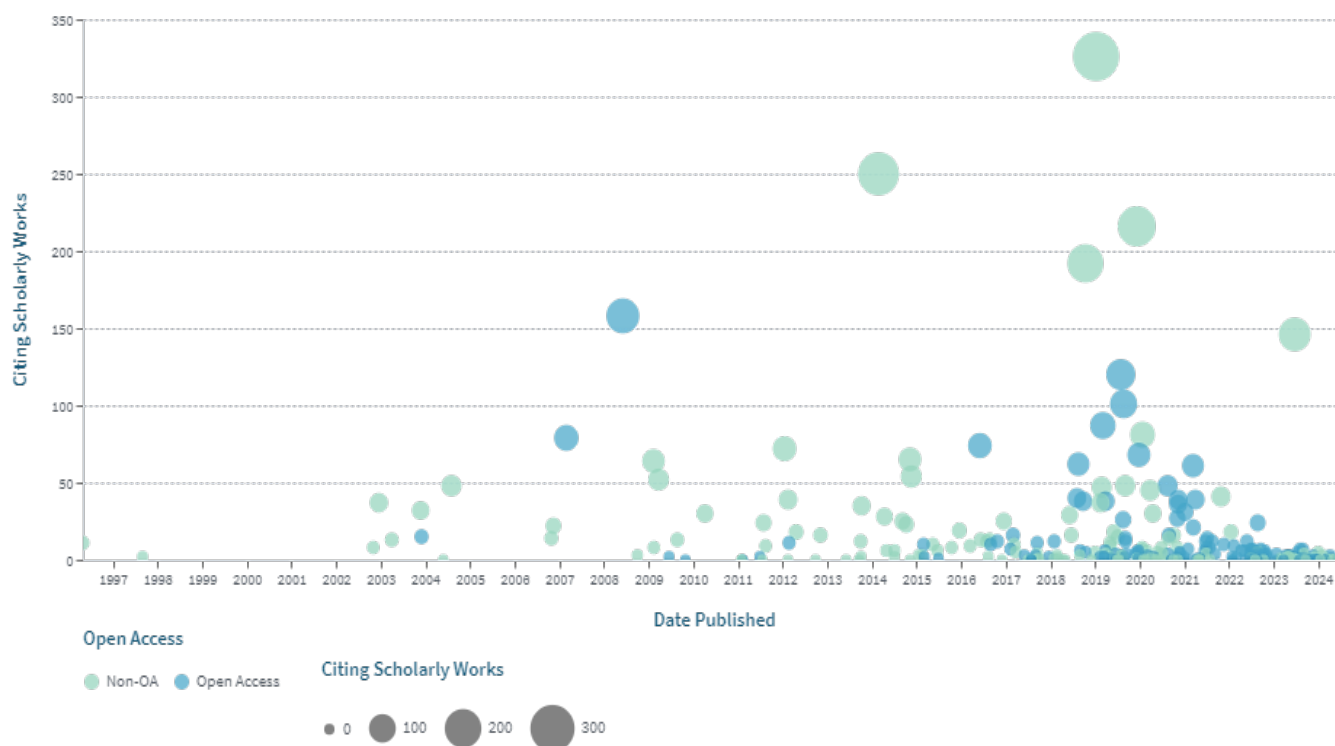


Figure 5. Map of citations

DISCUSSION

Bibliometric studies are increasingly used to identify lines of research and organize indicators of scientific production.⁽³³⁾ Research has been developed in various areas of knowledge, including health sciences,^(34,35) production management,⁽³⁶⁾ tourism management,^(37,38) and also in the field of gentrification and urban management.⁽³⁹⁾

An analysis and confrontation were developed in light of the literature on the main contributions and research in the main lines of research identified, where each research cluster was associated with its line.

Line of Research 1

The impact of tourism co-management on sustainable urban development is a crucial issue that deserves attention, especially in the context of the increasing pressures tourism destinations face.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Through the study of urban strategies and policies, innovative approaches can be identified that promote collaborative management between local authorities, tourism operators, and resident communities. This co-management allows balancing the economic needs of tourism with the preservation of urban resources and the inhabitants' quality of life.⁽⁴¹⁾ By implementing policies that encourage the active participation of all stakeholders, tourism models can be developed that meet visitor demand and ensure sustainable urban development while protecting the cultural and environmental heritage of cities.⁽¹⁵⁾

Line of research 2

The impact of gentrification and touristification on urban neighborhoods is a complex phenomenon requiring comprehensive planning to achieve sustainable tourism development.⁽⁴²⁾ These processes of urban transformation, driven largely by the growth of tourism, can lead to significant changes in the social, cultural, and economic composition of neighborhoods, with the risk of displacing low-income residents and eroding local identity.⁽⁴³⁾ However, innovative urban planning strategies can mitigate these negative effects and promote tourism that benefits visitors and local communities.⁽⁴⁴⁾ This involves integrating the needs and aspirations of residents into decision-making about tourism development while preserving the diversity and authenticity of neighborhoods. In addition, it is crucial to develop management models that balance the economic interests of tourism with the long-term sustainability of urban resources. Through a participatory and holistic approach to planning, vibrant and resilient urban environments can be created where tourism contributes to the well-being of all stakeholders.⁽⁴⁵⁾

Line of research 3

The conservation of cultural heritage in the context of urban renewal in China is a crucial challenge that

requires effective strategies to ensure the sustainability of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.⁽⁴⁶⁾ As the country undergoes rapid urbanization, many historic cities face pressure to modernize, often losing their cultural and architectural identity. Integrating urban planning practices that prioritize the preservation of cultural heritage is essential to balance urban development with the protection of these valuable legacies.⁽⁴⁷⁾ This involves not only the restoration of historic structures but also the creation of spaces that encourage community participation and sustainable tourism, ensuring that the economic benefits of tourism do not compromise the cultural integrity of the sites. Adopting a holistic approach that combines modernization with conservation can promote an urban development model that respects and values China's rich cultural heritage, ensuring its legacy for future generations.⁽⁴⁸⁾

Line of research 4

The impact of tourism gentrification on rural development through ecotourism is a phenomenon that poses significant challenges and opportunities for local communities. As ecotourism becomes a popular strategy to boost the rural economy, it can also result in gentrification processes that transform these areas' social and cultural structures.⁽⁴⁹⁾ This can result in the displacement of low-income residents and the loss of community identity as housing prices and living costs increase. Therefore, it is critical to implement strategies that facilitate a sustainable transition by promoting a model of ecotourism that prioritizes social equity and community participation.⁽⁵⁰⁾ This includes developing policies that regulate tourism, encourage the training of residents in tourism resource management, and ensure that the economic benefits of ecotourism are equitably distributed. By adopting a holistic approach that integrates environmental, social, and economic sustainability, the negative impact of tourism gentrification can be mitigated, and rural development can be strengthened in an inclusive and resilient manner.

Among the limitations of the present research is that it was only carried out in the Scopus database, it does not consider collaborative analyses between countries, nor a study of the most productive journals. These elements can be addressed in future research.

CONCLUSIONS

Sustainable tourism is a powerful tool for local communities' economic and cultural development while promoting environmental conservation. By implementing responsible practices and collaboration between different stakeholders, such as governments, businesses, and communities, it is possible to maximize the benefits of tourism, ensuring that economic growth does not compromise residents' cultural identity and well-being. Education and sustainability awareness are essential to encourage responsible behavior among tourists and operators, contributing to an enriching and environmentally friendly experience.

Sustainable tourism can lead to gentrification processes that impact local communities, generating social and economic conflicts. While the revitalization of urban areas can result in improvements in infrastructure and services, it is essential to establish policies that regulate real estate development and encourage the active participation of residents in tourism planning, a context where tools for capacity planning in services can be implemented. By addressing these challenges, it is possible to develop effective governance strategies that balance tourism development and preserve cultural and social values, ensuring that all stakeholders benefit equitably from the sector's growth.

The analysis of scientific production in tourism reveals a remarkable evolution in research, with a significant increase in the number of studies since 2020, indicating a growing interest in this field. The predominance of research articles, especially in areas such as social and environmental sciences, suggests that tourism is not only considered from an economic perspective but also from its social and environmental impact.

In addition, the geographic diversity of the research, covering 27 countries, highlights the global relevance of tourism and the need for context-specific approaches.

Despite the potential benefits of sustainable tourism, such as community revitalization and heritage conservation, significant challenges, such as gentrification and touristification in urban and rural areas, have also been identified. Planning policies that integrate community participation and sustainability is crucial to mitigate these negative effects. Emerging lines of research that address tourism co-management and cultural heritage conservation are fundamental to developing tourism models that balance economic growth with social and environmental well-being, thus ensuring a sustainable future for local communities.

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