

# Information, Communication, and Technology in the Field of Tourism and Hospitality: A Bibliometric Approach <sup>†</sup>

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**Abstract:** Recently, information, communication, and technologies (ICTs) and the tourism sector have gained attention from researchers and practitioners. Thus, we examined the trends in using ICTs in the tourism sector using a scientific document approach based on bibliometric analysis. A bibliometric analysis was conducted on 102 selected papers from the Scopus database from 2000 to 2021. The results revealed that the most discussed keywords in the papers were ICT and destination management organization, smart tourism destination, and smart city. Co-occurrence analysis was performed to analyze the trending topic in ICTs, tourism, and hospitality used by academics, while authorship network collaboration examined the partnership between different countries around the world. Statistics such as the number of documents per country, number of citations related to each country, ICT practice studies, and research methods were also discussed in this study. Limitations and implications were also indicated to provide deeper insights to researchers and their future research in terms of ICTs, tourism, and hospitality.

**Keywords:** scientific approach; bibliometric; ICT; tourism; hospitality



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## 1. Introduction

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have benefits in the tourism sector, particularly in tourism destinations, influencing tourist satisfaction. Studies showed that media and technologies have influenced tourist organizations to encourage and assist stakeholders in reshaping business processes and changing how customers and visitors communicate [1,2]. ICTs have overgrown and are now becoming an urgent issue for the tourism industry while they increase operational efficiency [3]. The basic form of tourism has shifted from traditional tourism destinations to smart tourism destinations due to the growth of ICTs [4,5]. Here, ICT has a role in management and marketing to improve the tourism industry [6] and the education industry [7]. Therefore, technology plays an essential role and function in making strategies for enhancing sustainable tourism development [8–10].

Nowadays, ICTs are the most researched issue in tourism [11]. Many researchers from academics and practitioners have been researching tourism from different perspectives of case studies [12], a concept or literature review [13], or methodology/technology [14,15], and behavioral study [16]. Scholars and academics have established and spread the notion of ICT and tourism destinations with the concept of the smart tourism destination (STD) [17–19]. The concept of smart tourism has developed from the concept of the smart

ecosystem such as smart technology, smart cities, and smart tourism [20]. As a result, the concept of an intelligent tourism destination has a new definition related to STD [13].

Several years ago, researchers and academics debated the notion of tourist destinations from many perspectives and meanings [17]. Since then, smart tourism destinations' ideas and ground theory have developed [17,21]. However, research on incorporating ICT into a tourist site is insufficient in terms of making it smart [22]. Furthermore, the term STD refers to the integration between technology, tourism, and the environment to satisfy tourists [23,24]. In addition, the concept of STD integrates technology and the business ecosystem in tourism [23]. As a result, tourism destinations must have a new model framework and plan to integrate all components, including economic, technical, and social infrastructures, that make smartness possible and convenient for tourists when visiting a location.

From the theoretical perspective, research on the ICTs, tourism, and hospitality have been discussed by scholars from several perspectives such as emerging tourist behavior on technology in the technology acceptance model and theory-driven technology [25,26]. Several authors or scholars have conducted systematic literature reviews on ICTs, tourism sectors, and other fields [27–29]. However, the topic of ICTs, tourism, and hospitality industries needs more attention and discussion to discover the trends in the literature based on the bibliometric approach. The bibliometrics analysis was proposed to investigate the convergence of ICT and tourism destinations. Because technology and its applications are rapidly evolving, reviewing the current literature is necessary to offer firm ground and direction for future studies.

To fill out the research gap in this study related to ICTs, tourism, and hospitality, the bibliometric analysis is one of the methods to explore the scientific documents based on the authorship, author's collaboration, countries, names of journals, and keyword analysis trend. Studies were conducted [30,31] to apply bibliometric analysis in tourism. This study aims to provide scientific documents such as articles, books, and conference papers from the Scopus database. In addition, it is proposed to explore the scientific documents on the topics of ICTs, tourism, and hospitality through the bibliometric analysis approach with several objectives such as mapping the research trend on ICTs, tourism, and hospitality (O1), the number of publication (O2), authorship (O3), institution (O4), and research methods (O5). The study result provides research trends in ICTs, tourism, and hospitality fields, the conceptual framework of the scientific document in the bibliometric approach, and a direction for future research on ICTs, tourism, and hospitality.

## 2. Methodology

In this study, bibliometric analysis was used with several processes such as selection, data collection, and analyzing the documents. There are two processes in bibliometric analysis: mapping of the document with several techniques analysis such as Bradford's law, Lotka's Law, and the number of H-index journals and mapping of the scientific reports and social scientific collaboration such as author's collaboration, co-word analysis, and citation network [32].

The purpose of scientific mapping analysis is to investigate the global collaboration among the authors from a statistical perspective and scientific studies from several perspectives such as the trend of publication among the authors, topics discussed by the authors, collaboration among authors in publications, and the document's impact on the scientific community [33]. In this study, several research questions were proposed.

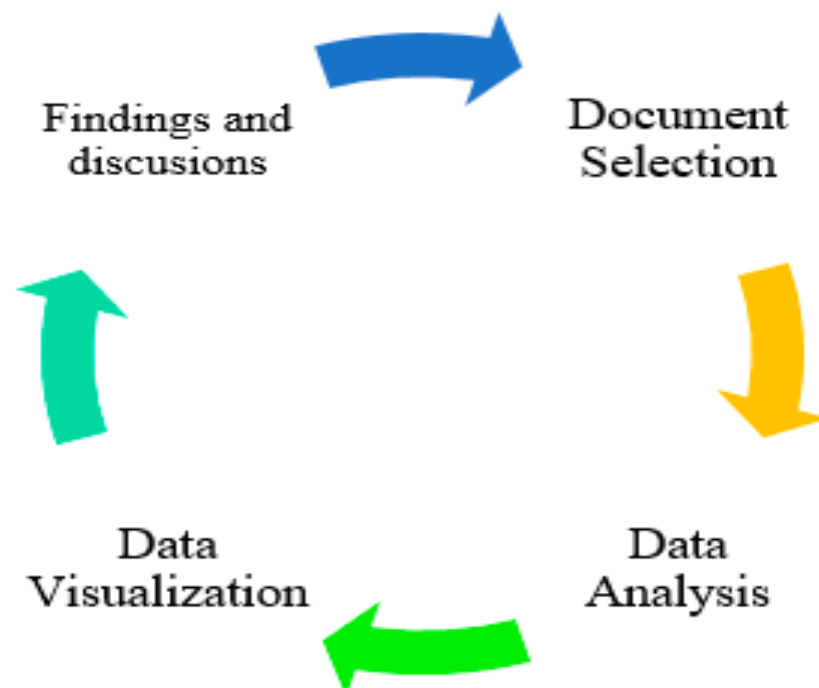
RQ1: what are the main keywords that have been discussed by scholars in the field of ICT, tourism, and hospitality industry?

RQ2: what are the methods used by authors in terms of technology, tourism, and hospitality fields?

RQ3: how do authors collaborate around the world in terms of technology, tourism, and hospitality?

### 2.1. Data Analysis

One of the methods to manage the publication and number of publications is bibliometric analysis. Nowadays, many researchers use bibliometric analysis in their research [34], with several topics of study, the number of institutions, and countries where authors are based on bibliometric analysis [35]. We used a bibliometric analysis for research related to ICT and tourism destinations. The measurement in this research was conducted for the number of publications, name of the journal, mapping the methods that have been used, the authorship, research trend, literature cited, and mapping of the document around the world. To achieve the aims of this study, we analyzed the literature based on the co-citation analysis and bibliometric analysis of authors, keywords, co-occurrence, and the method in the literature. Figure 1 shows the data analysis process for analyzing the scientific documents based on the bibliometric analysis.



**Figure 1.** Data analysis process.

### 2.2. Data Collection

We collected relevant information from the Scopus database to find the focus of the research. In this study, the data were collected in May 2022 based on the Scopus database with several keywords such as “technology”, “tourism”, and “hospitality”. The title, abstract, and keywords were searched for the keywords.

### 2.3. Data Visualization

We used several analysis methods. First, the qualitative method was applied to analyze the research focus of the selected papers. Second, the number of publications was identified to examine the articles based on the year of publication, authors, types of research used, research region, and theories applied in the papers. Third, we investigated the trend in keywords used over the last six years and the number of collaborations in various geographies, co-occurrence (keyword), and co-authorship (countries) studies. We used VOSviewer software to analyze all the selected articles’ keywords, authors, and countries. Several indicators were used to measure statistical descriptive and bibliometric indicators such as the annual publication growth, collaboration among authors and institutions, sources, authors, institutions, keywords, and country production. These indicators were obtained from the analysis [36]. Visualization was used to find the mapping of collaboration such as collaboration network analysis of the authors, institution, countries, citations, and

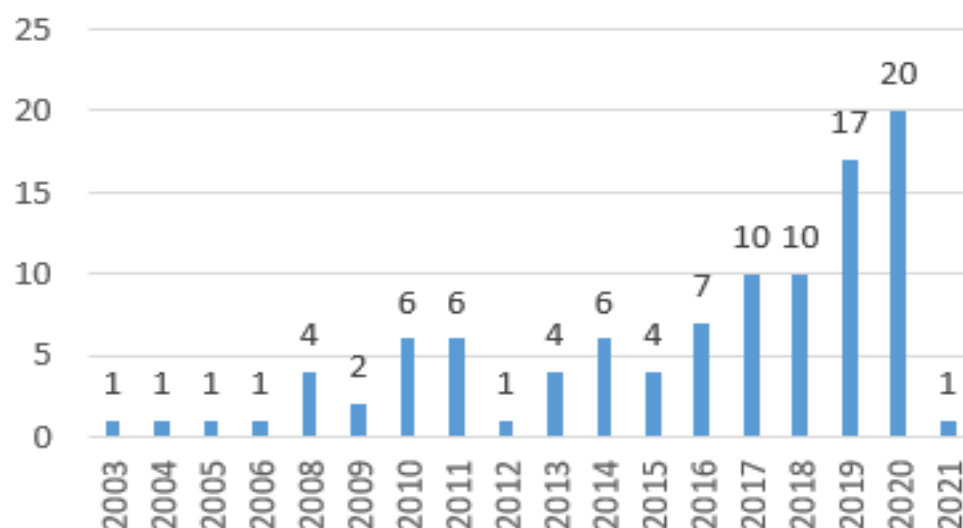
keyword networks. Vos-viewer software was employed for analyzing and visualizing the documents as it has been used for mapping scientific documents ([www.vosviewer.com](http://www.vosviewer.com) (accessed on 5 May 2022)) [37].

### 3. Results

This section explains the results and findings of the study based on the topic of research in the fields of ICT, tourism and hospitality.

#### 3.1. General Overview and Number of Publications

Descriptive statistics explained the number of publications and the journal's name based on the research topic information, communication and technologies, and tourism destination. Figure 2 presents the number of publications in the journal distributed yearly. The number of publications related to ICT and tourism destinations commenced in the year 2003. The number of publications during 2000–2011 increased from one article in 2003 to six articles in 2010. The number of publications from 2011 to 2020 increased from 6 to 20 according to the Scopus database.



**Figure 2.** Number of publications by year.

#### 3.2. Research Trends in ICT, Tourism and Hospitality Based on Keywords

Keyword analysis based on co-occurrence was conducted to analyze research trends (2012–2020) related to ICT and tourism destinations using the VOSviewer software. The results in Figure 3 present the occurrence of the keywords that academics or researchers have conducted. The colors in Figure 3 represent the 'year' highlighting the keyword. ICT was the most frequently used keyword within four years compared to other keywords. The other keywords frequently used by researchers included smart tourism, e-tourism, destination management, and tourism. The most commonly used keywords in 2020 are highlighted in yellow such as ecotourism, stakeholder collaboration, and tourist destination. Each line represents the network among the keywords from 2012 to 2020.

#### 3.3. Co-Authorship around the World

Co-authorship analysis was conducted concerning the countries of authors that impacted the research focus. The results of VOS-viewer software explained the countries in which authors collaborated around the world. The text sizes show writers' relationships and collaboration with other nations, where the largest font size indicates that the authors from this particular country collaborated more with other countries. Figure 4 represents the links around countries represent the strength of the network between the counties. Each color represents the strength of the network cluster, and the same colors explain the same research field.

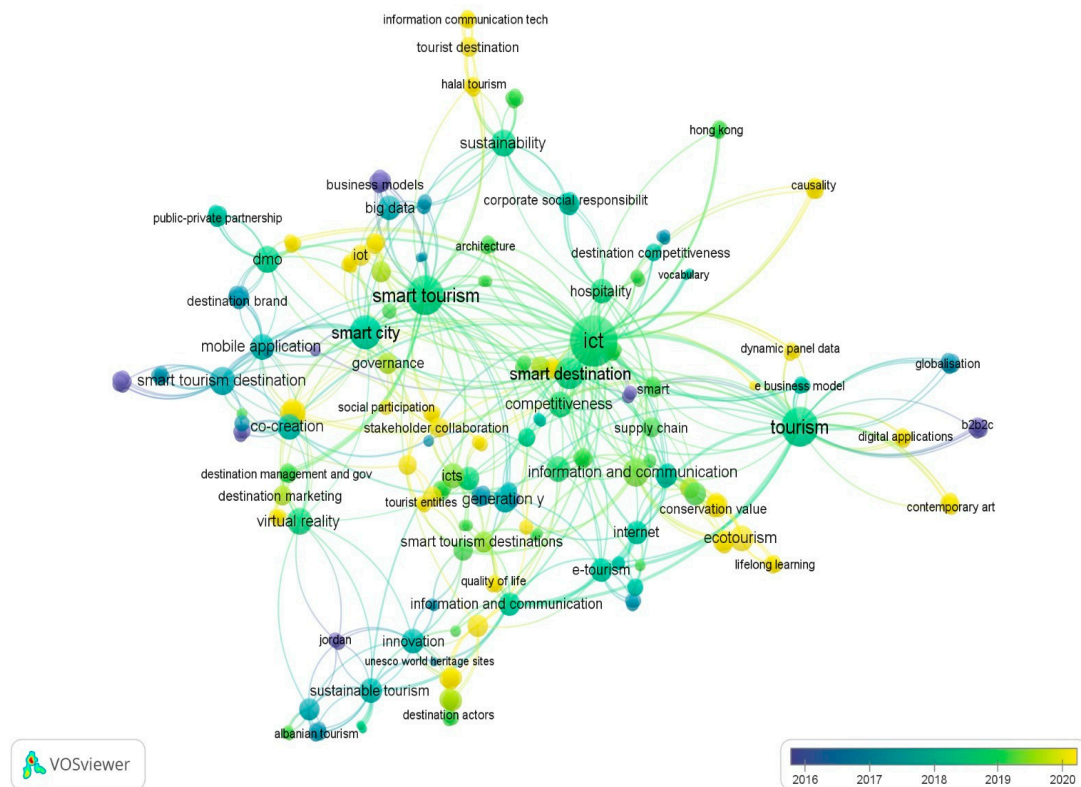


Figure 3. Research trend of keywords.

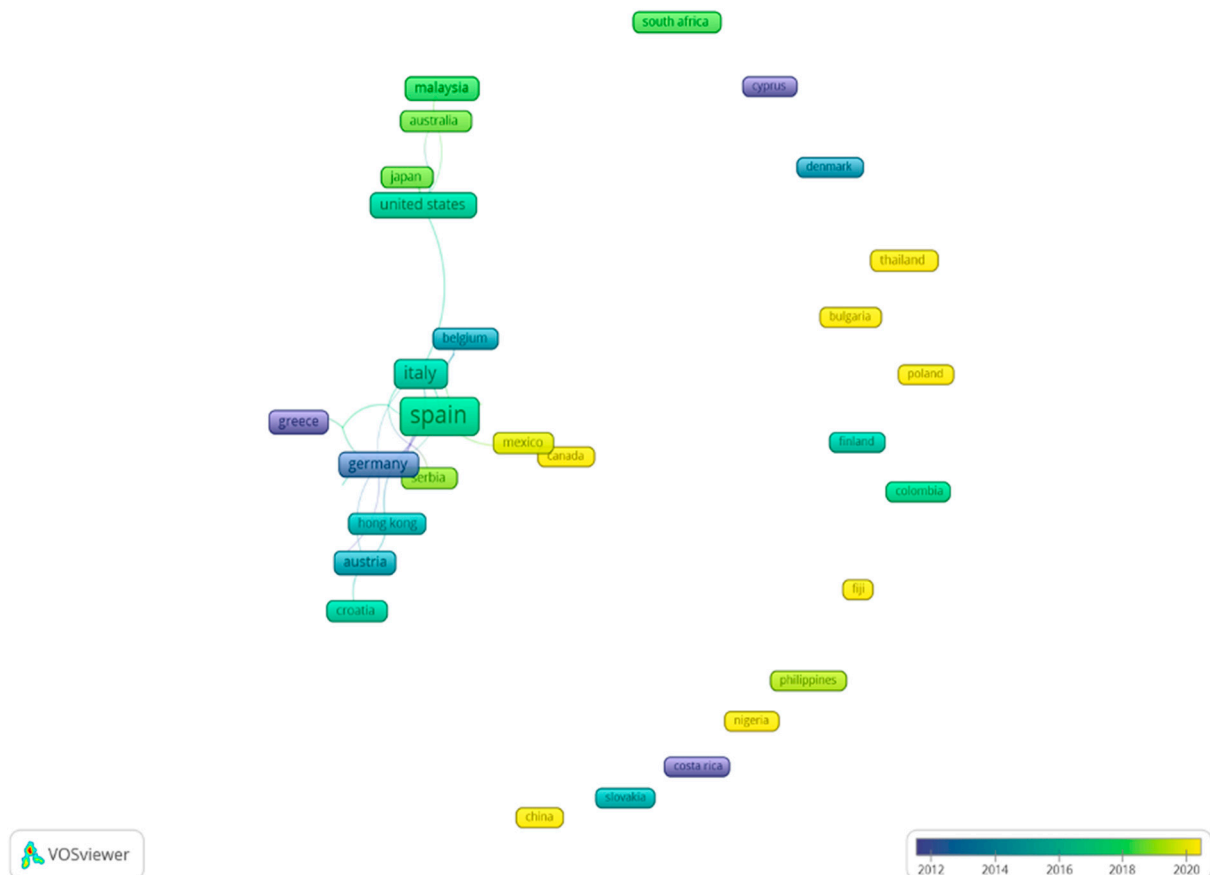
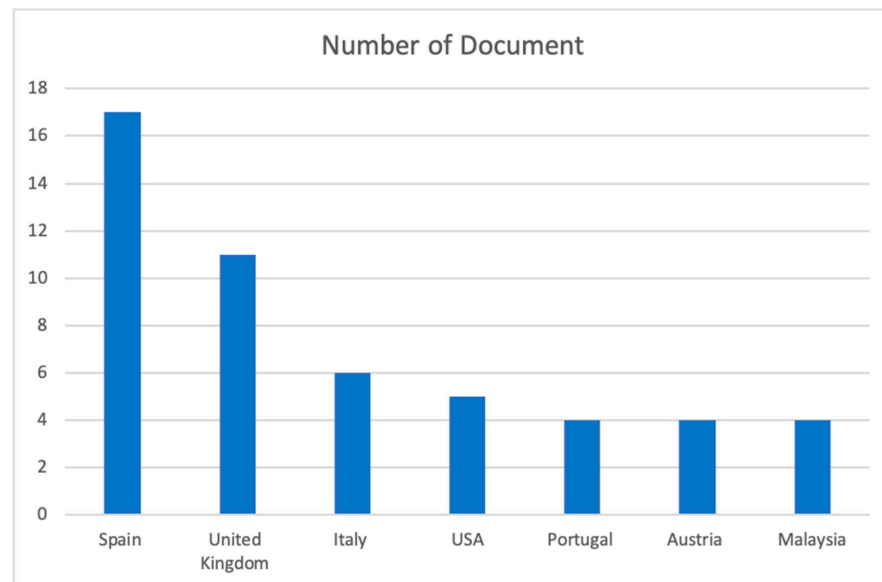


Figure 4. Collaboration of countries around the world.

### 3.4. Distribution of Publications

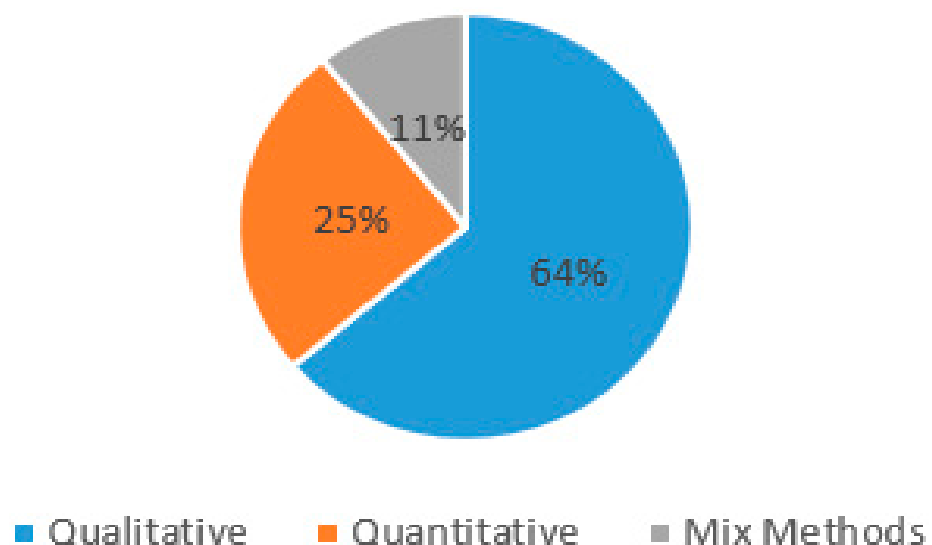
The research on ICTs and tourism destinations was conducted in more than 30 countries. Figure 5 shows the distribution of publications or articles by the countries related to ICTs and tourism destinations. Spain had the maximum number of publications with seventeen articles. The United Kingdom had eleven articles, followed by Italy with six articles. The United States of America published five articles, followed by Portugal, Malaysia, and Austria with four articles.



**Figure 5.** Number of documents per country.

### 3.5. Research Methods

The authors' use of the methodology in the research topic of ICTs and tourism destinations was investigated. The method was divided into quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods to research ICT and tourism destinations. As shown in Figure 6, 65 papers (65%) used qualitative methods in the research of ICT and tourism destinations. The quantitative method were adopted by 25% of the research papers. The mixed research method was used in 11% of the research papers.



**Figure 6.** Research methods.



#### 4. Discussion

The result provided an understanding of the trend research on ICTs, tourism, and hospitality. The trend in the publication from 2003 to 2021 showed an increase. In 2019, the publication was 17 articles, and in 2020, it reached 20. The number of publications in ICTs and tourism destinations continued to increase in 2021. The geographical areas were mainly located in European countries such as Spain, Italy, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Portugal, and Austria. The countries that generally discussed ICT and tourism destinations were developed countries because of technological advancement [38]. European countries and the United States of America had made an effort to promote tourism destinations and city development based on technological advancements to help the tourism sector expand [13,24]. Europe and the USA have the technology to support the development of the destination such as networks, infrastructures, and government supports [13,24,39]. Concerning Asian countries, only a few countries discussed ICTs and tourism destinations such as Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, India, Thailand, China, and Hong Kong. The countries in Asia that focused on the research of ICTs and destinations were also advanced in technologies [24]. Mainland China and South Korea have developed infrastructure and technology to support STDs [13,24]. For example, in 2015, the Authority Of China Tourism released the concept of “Guidance to promote Smart Tourism Destination” [11]. Infrastructures and the new system are the keys to building a new technology based on the tourist experience, assuming that all stakeholders and providers have the experience to use the technologies [39]. Therefore, ICT is the key to the tourist experience and enhancing competitiveness in tourism destinations [40].

Researchers and scholars linked ICTs and destination management organizations (DMOs) in 21 papers. The studies mainly emphasized that ICTs impacted consumer or traveler behavior for searching information, services, and products in the tourism industry [41]. DMOs include various functions such as identifying markets, promotions, and serving information about tourism destination and service quality, which become necessities [42]. DMO enhances the function of smart infrastructure and data analysis and helps brainstorm knowledge for the stakeholders [17]. Implementing ICTs in digital technology is the key to implying the advantages and opportunities that digital system and technology offer in destination management [43–45].

Other topics discussed by the researchers related to ICTs and tourism destinations included smart cities and smart tourism destinations. ICTs can develop a smart city to increase citizens’ quality of life using ICT infrastructure, supporting smart tourism destinations [46]. STD integrates destination and digitalization in ICT context into physical infrastructure [47]. ICTs impact tourism to shape a new construct for destination management [47]. Researchers were interested in smart ecosystems and smart cities. These studies focused on the potential evolution of destination imagery evaluation criteria. Thus, STD becomes a concept of tourism with ICTs and smart cities in enhancing the tourist experience.

Keyword analysis results based on co-occurrence showed that ICT was the most frequently used keyword within the last four years. Other frequently used keywords by researchers included smart tourism, e-tourism, destination management, and tourism. This finding implied that future potential research is connected to the concept of ICTs and tourism for the destination and building fundamental theories. In earlier studies, ICTs and tourism were focused on several ideas such as tourism destination, sustainability, and innovation, as indicated by the color of each keyword.

In terms of co-authorship (country) network analysis, Spain and Italy were the most powerful, followed by the United States of America, Mexico, and Malaysia. Other countries emphasized local and regional cooperation (e.g., within the same continent). While ICTs and tourist destination practices differ by country, sharing ideas, intelligence, and best practices globally is beneficial. As a result, new worldwide research networks and research centers emerged, resulting in the proliferation of literature.

ICTs are crucial for enhancing sustainability-related tourism destinations for tourist satisfaction. Research into government policies on ICTs may help tourism destinations

expand. The link between ICTs and tourism destinations must be promoted to countries worldwide, especially in the countries where tourism is the primary source of income. Future investigation must address how governments can combine the ICT infrastructure and tourism destinations in urban and rural areas to promote tourist destination.

More academics or researchers need to conduct empirical research related to ICTs and tourism destinations in developing countries. Many researchers studied ICTs and tourism destinations or smart tourism destinations in developed countries. The study of ICTs and tourism has been conducted in countries or cities such as Europe, South Korea, Japan, and the United States of America. Recently, several countries have applied ICTs to promote tourism destinations in pandemics with several online or virtual methods. The researchers need to analyze the role that ICTs can play in tourism destinations during pandemic situations.

## 5. Conclusions

The advancement of technology has impacted tourism. Nowadays, the issue of ICTs and tourism destinations is one issue in developing the tourism sector considering the technology to improve tourist satisfaction. ICTs and tourism are drivers to enhance economic growth in many countries worldwide [1]. The bibliometric analysis on ICTs and tourism destinations shows that this has been discussed from several different perspectives by researchers. Researchers have discussed different dimensions and components related to a research focus on ICTs and tourism destinations including research trends, research methods, research topic, authors, and the number of publications. ICT integrates innovation and technology, productivity, and development, and influences businesses in general and small and medium businesses [48]. Advancement in ICTs give competitive bargain and provides the tourism sector opportunities such as a tourism destination [49]. Advanced technology in tourism is a solution for dealing with tourism development [50] to enhance tourist satisfaction. Hence, the case study must be related to ICTs and tourism destinations.

The bibliometric analysis approach in this study provides insight into the study of ICTs, tourism and hospitality from several perspectives. The primary purpose of conducting research based on bibliometric analysis is to research ICTs and tourism destinations. The result also contributes to extending the literature of tourism and hospitality as a guide for future research.

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