

## Article

# Trends and Perspectives of Nostalgia in Tourism: A Systematic Review and Bibliometric Analysis

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**Abstract:** The main objective of this bibliometric review is to identify and analyze the development of the field of nostalgia tourism through a comprehensive analysis of the scientific literature. To this end, this article performs a bibliometric analysis in R Core Team 2022-Bibliometrix software 4.2.3, complemented by VOSviewer software 1.6.20 and a systematic review of the Scopus and Science Direct database to provide information on the most researched topics, the most influential authors and publications, as well as the areas requiring further research. The findings underscore the significance of nostalgia tourism in addressing the growing demand among travelers for authentic and meaningful experiences. By invoking emotional memories, fostering connections to the past, and emphasizing the quest for authenticity, this form of tourism enables visitors to engage deeply with destinations and activities that transcend conventional tourism. Consequently, it enriches their journeys with a profound sense of discovery, belonging, and cultural identity. The findings of this study make a valuable contribution to the literature on nostalgia tourism by providing a relevant and comprehensive analysis of the current state of the art. This analysis provides a better understanding of the theoretical and conceptual framework of the articles published to date, which is important to consider to enrich the academic debate on nostalgia tourism and for future research.

**Keywords:** nostalgia tourism; bibliometrics; systematic review



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## 1. Introduction

Nostalgia tourism has become a unique and meaningful form of travel today, as it allows people to reconnect with past moments, memories, and experiences that have marked their lives [1]. This form of tourism not only promotes the value of personal memory, but also contributes to the development of local communities, cultural preservation, and revitalization of historical sites [2]. Its importance lies in offering travelers the opportunity to relive past eras, learn about the history of a place, and preserve traditions that might otherwise be lost to time [3].

One of the positive axes of nostalgia tourism is its impact on the preservation of cultural heritage [4]. By traveling to relive significant moments or visit historical sites, people contribute to keeping the history and cultural identity of a region alive [5]. This generates a sustained interest in the preservation of ancient buildings, monuments, traditions, and customs that are part of a community's legacy [6].

Nostalgia tourism economically benefits the localities that promote it. The restoration and preservation of historical sites, as well as the offer of authentic experiences related to the past, attract tourists interested in immersing themselves in an enriching experience [7,8]. Likewise, another relevant aspect is the positive emotional impact it has on people; by reliving memories and special moments, nostalgia tourism can generate a sense of emotional

connection, well-being, and gratitude [9]. This connection with the past can be therapeutic for many people, giving them a sense of belonging, identity, and cultural rootedness that contributes to their emotional and mental well-being [10].

To understand the current state of the field, it is essential to identify and analyze the academic results published so far. However, the importance of the characteristics lies in their ability to connect people to their past, identity, and emotions [11]. Understanding these features enables tourism researchers and professionals to design strategies that meet the demand of tourists seeking to relive historical, cultural, or personal moments [12,13]. In addition, these features can help preserve and promote cultural heritage, as well as revitalize tourism destinations that possess strong emotional and sentimental value for travelers [14]. Thus, the characteristics are based on the focus on the past, preservation of authenticity, and a focus on emotional, sentimental, memorable, and personal experiences.

Nostalgia tourism significantly enhances the development of critical thinking due to its inherently reflective and personal nature. By revisiting past experiences and confronting memories, nostalgia tourists immerse themselves not only in their own emotions and recollections but also in the historical and cultural contexts of those events. This process involves critically evaluating how circumstances and places have transformed over time, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of social, economic, and cultural changes. Additionally, by comparing the past with the present, nostalgic travelers can scrutinize and analyze historical narratives and heritage preservation policies, cultivating a heightened critical awareness of the importance of preserving both collective and personal memory. This critical introspection not only enriches the tourism experience but also facilitates intergenerational dialogue and understanding, underscoring the relevance of the past in shaping contemporary and future contexts.

It is hypothesized that nostalgia tourism has undergone significant evolution, characterized by increasing academic interest and diversification in research approaches and methodologies. Specifically, it is anticipated that recent studies have expanded the understanding of nostalgic travelers' motivations and experiences, incorporating interdisciplinary perspectives from psychology, sociology, and cultural studies. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that the literature will reveal a trend towards valuing authentic and personalized experiences, reflecting a growing demand by nostalgia tourists to connect emotionally with places and events of the past. This hypothesis suggests that nostalgia tourism not only contributes to the preservation of cultural heritage but also plays a crucial role in the construction of identity and social cohesion in a globalized context.

The present research aims to identify and analyze the development of the field of nostalgia tourism through a comprehensive analysis of the scientific literature which is fundamental to understand the evolution, trends, and contributions in this specific area. This approach allows us to trace a timeline that reveals the progression of ideas, theories, and practices associated with nostalgia tourism over time. By systematically examining the existing literature, a broad and detailed perspective on the key issues addressed, emerging trends, as well as the identification of authors, journals, and countries influential in the development of the field is achieved. This analysis not only provides a historical overview but can also reveal insights and areas for future research, making it an invaluable tool for academics, practitioners, and policy makers interested in nostalgia tourism.

### *Nostalgia Tourism*

Nostalgia tourism is a specialized form of tourism that focuses on the exploration and commemoration of historical events, sites, and places related to significant events of the past [15,16]. Likewise, this type of tourism seeks to remember and reflect on events that have left a deep imprint on human history, whether positive or negative [17,18]. Moreover, nostalgia tourism covers a wide range of topics, from commemorating tragedies such as the Holocaust or genocides to celebrating cultural and political achievements, such as the struggle for civil rights [19–21]. In this way, it can include visits to museums, monuments, battlefields, historical sites, and places of cultural significance [22–24].

Nostalgia tourism was identified as a tool for sharing and repeating experiences [18,25]. Therefore, memory tourism is not limited to viewing historical sites, but also seeks to foster reflection and education [26,27]. Therefore, by exploring historical events from a personal perspective, memory tourism visitors can develop greater empathy for the people who lived through those difficult times [28–30]. However, it is important that this type of tourism is managed in a sustainable manner to preserve the authenticity of historical sites and to ensure adequate respect for the memory of the events [3,31].

This type of tourism often contributes to the preservation and conservation of the historical and cultural heritage of a place, as it increases awareness and interest in keeping the memory of past events alive [32–34]. Indeed, tourists can experience a wide range of emotions, from sadness and awe to empathy and reflection [35,36]. Also, it contributes to economic development and the preservation of historically significant sites, as it attracts visitors from around the world and encourages investment in cultural heritage conservation [18].

Nostalgia tourism distinguishes itself from other forms of tourism, such as cultural tourism, through its emphasis on visitors' personal emotions and memories. While cultural tourism centers on the exploration and appreciation of a place's culture, including its art, architecture, customs, and practices, nostalgia tourism is rooted in the visitor's emotional connection to the past. Nostalgic tourists aim to relive experiences, memories, and feelings associated with earlier periods in their lives or specific historical eras. This form of tourism appeals to both personal and collective memory, enabling visitors to reconnect with significant moments in their personal or familial history.

Although nostalgia tourism also facilitates an understanding of a place's history and contributes to the preservation of its traditions, its primary distinction lies in the emotional motivation of the traveler. For instance, visits to childhood homes, old schools, or sites emblematic of significant personal events—such as weddings or family celebrations—are characteristic of nostalgia tourism. In contrast, cultural tourism typically involves visiting museums, historical monuments, festivals, and other cultural events without necessarily having a prior emotional attachment to the location. Thus, while both types of tourism may intersect in their interests in history and traditions, nostalgia tourism is distinguished by its profound emotional and personal component.

## 2. Materials and Methods

To consolidate the bibliometric study and the systematic review [37], the Scopus database and Science Direct were used following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) statement, an essential tool designed to improve the quality of systematic review and meta-analysis reporting [38] guidelines of the empirical studies found in the database, including a total of 2501 studies based on the theory of nostalgia tourism. This systematic review evidenced the importance of knowing the term nostalgia tourism. Likewise, the chronology of the analysis was carried out using the following search strategy in this database, considering the inclusion and exclusion criteria. This section may be divided by subheadings. It should provide a concise and precise description of the experimental results, their interpretation, as well as the experimental conclusions that can be drawn. This was carried out in R Core Team 2022-Bibliometrix software (Figure 1).

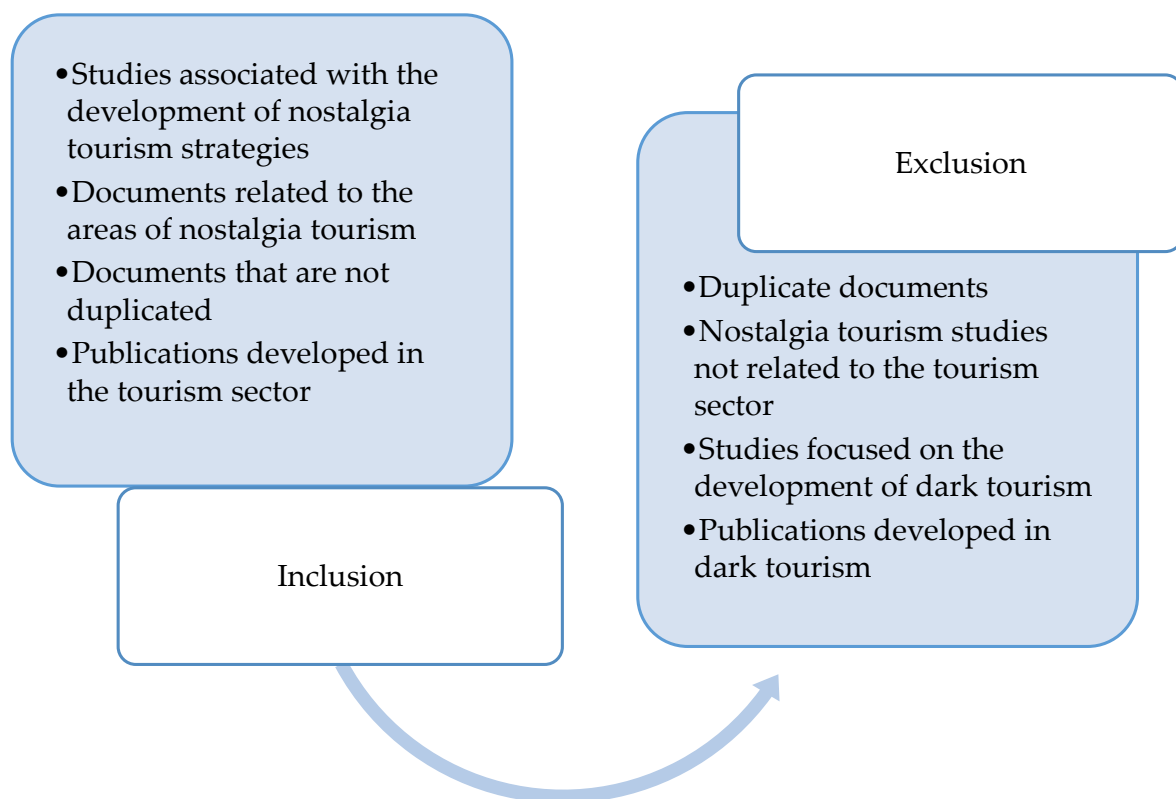


**Figure 1.** Inclusion and exclusion criteria. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

#### Document Selection

In the Scopus database, 523 papers were found, and in Science Direct, 1978 papers were found, for a total of 2501 papers. A total of 924 papers were eliminated as duplicates in both databases, resulting in 1577 unique papers. Of these, 410 were excluded because they were not published in English, leaving 1167 documents. Subsequently, 237 documents were discarded because they could not be retrieved, 498 because they were not related to the topic of nostalgia tourism, and 351 because they dealt exclusively with tourism in general. Finally, 81 papers were assessed for eligibility, of which 61 were excluded for not meeting the inclusion criteria. Thus, for the systematic review, only 20 papers that met all the established criteria were considered. To conclude, 20 documents were considered for the systematic review where the authors, title, objective, methodology, and determinants of each article related to nostalgia tourism are highlighted (Table 1 and Figure 2).

**Table 1.** Registration of databases.

|                                     |                  |                    |           |             |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Scopus Registration (523)           | Articles (401)   | Book Chapter (50)  | Book (19) | Other (53)  |
| Science Direct Registration (1.978) | Articles (1.523) | Book Chapter (188) | Book (99) | Other (168) |

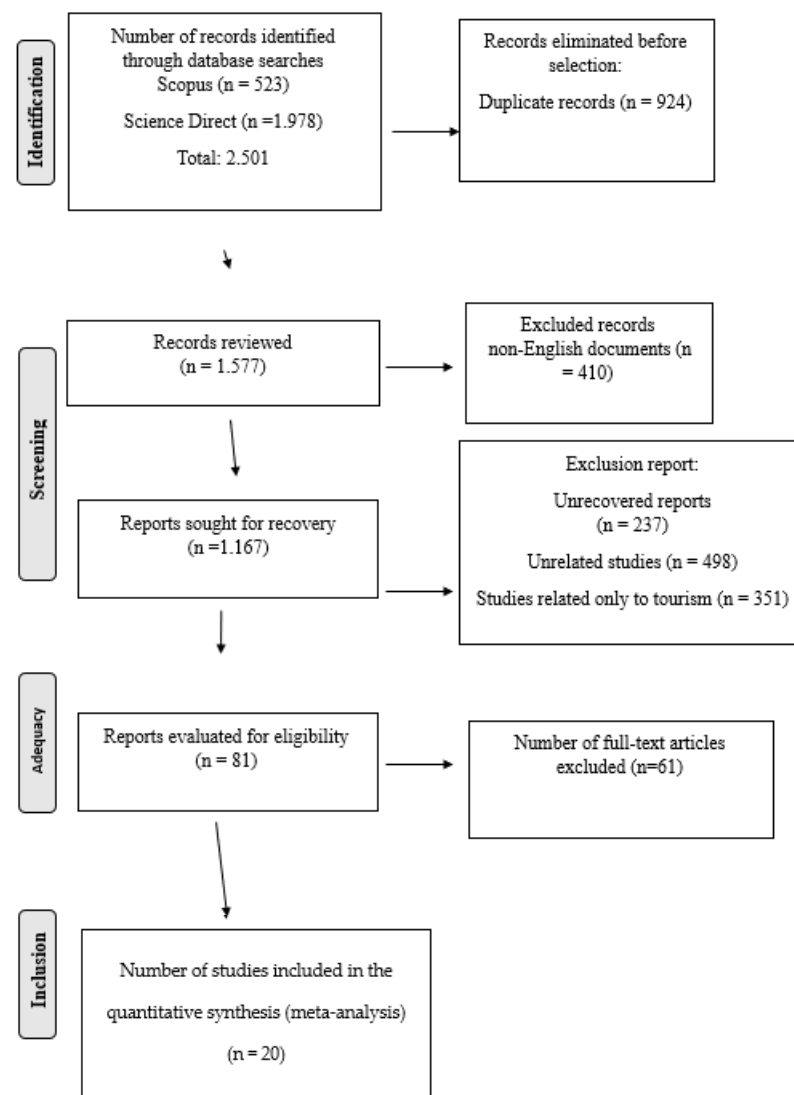


**Figure 2.** Prisma. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3. Results

Nostalgia tourism has gained increasing relevance in recent years, becoming a phenomenon of significant interest to both researchers and professionals in the tourism sector. This trend reflects travelers' desire for authentic and meaningful experiences, as they seek to connect with their personal or collective past through their choice of destinations and activities. The determinants driving nostalgia tourism are diverse and interwoven, shaping this mode of travel.

Primarily, nostalgia acts as a powerful catalyst, evoking emotional memories and a longing for emblematic moments or places. This is evident in the attraction to destinations that evoke earlier eras, whether through cultural heritage, ancestral traditions, or popular iconography. Additionally, the quest for authenticity plays a crucial role, prompting tourists to immerse themselves in genuine and unconventional experiences. This can range from participating in traditional practices to exploring historical and cultural sites that embody the essence of a place.

Another key determinant is the emotional connection travelers establish with certain events or places in the past. This can stem from personal memories, such as attending a memorable sporting event, or from a fascination with significant historical and cultural moments. In this sense, nostalgia tourism provides an opportunity to relive those emotions and deepen the knowledge and understanding of such transcendental moments. In this

way, the following table shows 20 documents with the authors, document title, objective, methodology, and determinants selected for the systematic review (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Systematic review.

| Authors | Document Title                                                                      | Objective                                                                                                                                 | Method                                        | Determinants                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [39]    | Development of a professional approach to travel for tourism motivation             | Examine patterns of motivation and travel experience                                                                                      | Mixed approach through interviews and surveys | Growing traveler demand for unique and authentic experiences                                                                                                                                          |
| [40]    | Memorylands: Heritage and identity in today's Europe                                | Analyze how the legacies of the past contributed to the shaping of European identity                                                      | Mixed approach through interviews and surveys | Interconnection between collective memory, historical sites, and the construction of cultural identities in a changing European context                                                               |
| [41]    | Nostalgic sports tourism: a critical research analysis                              | Better understand how they interrelate and how they can be optimized to maximize the benefits of nostalgic sports tourism                 | Quantitative approach through surveys         | These include the available sports infrastructure, promotion and organization of events, accessibility to destinations, quality of tourism services, as well as the perception and demand of tourists |
| [42]    | A model of tourism motivations for the elderly: anecdotes from Beijing and Shanghai | Develop a theoretical model through intense scrutiny of textual data                                                                      | Qualitative approach by means of interviews   | Among these factors are the search for deep cultural experiences over nostalgia, convenience, and accessibility of the destinations                                                                   |
| [41]    | Music and nostalgic tourism: Back on the road again                                 | Contextualize nostalgic tourism, music being an element that connects travelers with memories, emotions, and experiences of earlier times | Mixed approach through interviews and surveys | Songs and melodies associated with certain places or historical moments have the ability to attract tourists looking to relive that sense of nostalgia and familiarity                                |
| [43]    | Topical issue in tourism: The authentic tourist                                     | Identify 10 trends that are shaping the concept of authenticity and exemplify them through the respective trends                          | Mixed approach through interviews and surveys | This type of traveler seeks genuine and profound experiences, far from conventional destinations and activities                                                                                       |

Table 2. Cont.

| Authors | Document Title                                                                    | Objective                                                                                                                             | Method                                           | Determinants                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [44]    | In search of a revived social experience: nostalgic group sports tourism          | Reconnecting people to relive the excitement of past events                                                                           | Qualitative approach by means of interviews      | They lie in the emotional connection and collective memories that form around specific sporting events or significant locations                                                                                       |
| [45]    | Postmodern tourism: the Santa Claus industry and nostalgia                        | Analyze how nostalgia plays a crucial role in travelers' memories through their childhood                                             | Qualitative approach by means of interviews      | Postmodern tourism, through these experiences centered on nostalgia and cultural icons, demonstrates how the demand for travel goes beyond the conventional                                                           |
| [46]    | Heritage Tourism on Route 66: Deconstructing Nostalgia                            | Identify the iconic route, such as the search for authenticity and connection to U.S. culture                                         | Qualitative approach through active interviewing | Deconstructing the nostalgia associated with Route 66 involves a critical analysis, inviting travelers to reflect on memory and history                                                                               |
| [47]    | Visitor preferences in terms of interpretation at heritage sites                  | Highlighting visitors' preferences for on-site interpretation, an essential element in the management of heritage tourism attractions | Mixed approach through interviews and surveys    | The level of prior knowledge about the site, individual expectations, personal interests, and the presentation of historical information                                                                              |
| [48]    | Braveheart's Ned Kelly: historical films, heritage tourism, and destination image | Analyze interest in how feature films can create attractive nostalgia tourism destination images                                      | Quantitative approach through surveys            | The image of the tourist destination has been shaped in large part by the lingering fascination with the Ned Kelly figure on nostalgic tourism                                                                        |
| [49]    | National heritage and global nostalgic tourism in Thailand                        | Exploring the significance of Thai cultural heritage in terms of domestic and international nostalgic tourism                         | Qualitative approach through active interviewing | The preservation and promotion of this national heritage are essential to maintain the country's tourist attractiveness, while guaranteeing its conservation for future generations in the field of nostalgic tourism |

Table 2. Cont.

| Authors | Document Title                                                                                   | Objective                                                                                                                                                                              | Method                                                  | Determinants                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [7]     | Nostalgia as a travel motivation and its impact on tourist loyalty                               | Examine the relationships between attractions and motifs in the context of Macau                                                                                                       | Qualitative approach by means of interviews             | People often choose destinations that evoke personal or collective memories, whether through historical films to identify the impact of memory and nostalgia                                                                        |
| [50]    | Consuming rural Japan: the marketing of tradition and nostalgia in the Japanese tourism industry | Determining the promotion and sale of authentic experiences in villages and rural regions has become a powerful lure for tourists seeking a connection to the country's cultural roots | Mixed approach through interviews and surveys           | This strategy relies on the careful representation of ancestral customs, local crafts, and traditional practices based on nostalgia, offering visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in a more authentic and timeless Japan |
| [51]    | Discovery, Connection, Nostalgia                                                                 | Describing the emotional connection we establish with these historical elements deepens our engagement with the story                                                                  | Quantitative approach through surveys                   | Nostalgia, in turn, acts as a powerful catalyst in heritage tourism and in the construction of the image of tourist destinations, attracting travelers seeking to relive past experiences                                           |
| [52]    | "China, forever": Nostalgic tourism discourse and auto-orientalism                               | Identify the importance of constructing a narrative that evokes an idealized and exotic past, generating a romantic and dreamy perception of destinations and cultures                 | Qualitative approach through semi-structured interviews | Nostalgia in the tourist discourse is nourished by a longing for past or imagined experiences, focusing on traditional, authentic, and lost-in-time elements.                                                                       |
| [53]    | More than nostalgia? Exploring the nexus between heritage and sports tourism                     | Determine the intersection between heritage and sports tourism that goes beyond nostalgia                                                                                              | Quantitative approach through surveys                   | Landmarks, sporting events, and deep-rooted traditions act as key determinants in attracting tourists eager to live authentic experiences and connect with the identity of a place                                                  |

Table 2. Cont.

| Authors | Document Title                                                                                               | Objective                                                                                                                                           | Method                                        | Determinants                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [54]    | Something lived, something learned: the growing role of nostalgia in sports tourism                          | Examining previous experiences, where memorable events were played or participating in tours that recall historical exploits                        | Mixed approach through interviews and surveys | This trend highlights how nostalgia influences travel decisions, as tourists seek not only to witness the present, but also to relive and learn from iconic sporting moments of the past                               |
| [55]    | Research on memorable experiences in the senior travel market: an examination of the rise of reminiscence    | To examine how travel experiences for seniors become meaningful and memorable moments, influencing their emotional, social, and cognitive wellbeing | Quantitative approach through surveys         | Drive preference for destinations, activities, and services that promote reminiscence, thus enabling a better understanding of how tourism can enrich the lives of older people through meaningful and memorable trips |
| [56]    | Tourist travel motivation to Kruger and Tsitsikamma National Parks: a comparative study of nostalgia tourism | Comparing travel motives of visitors to Kruger National Park and Tsitsikamma National Park as nostalgia tourism                                     | Quantitative approach through surveys         | This contrast in motivations offers a deeper understanding of how the distinctive attributes of each park influence tourists' travel decisions in the nostalgic realm                                                  |

### 3.1. Annual Scientific Production

#### ChatGPT

Annual scientific production is a fundamental component of bibliometric analysis, utilizing tools such as Bibliometrix. The following analysis reveals that the impact on nostalgia tourism began in 1986, with noticeable growth in the years 2002, 2005, 2008, 2013, and 2017. However, 2017 experienced a decline in scientific production related to nostalgia tourism. Conversely, from 2018 to 2022, there was consecutive growth, culminating in the publication of over 50 articles on the research topic (Figure 3).

### 3.2. Average Citations per Year

The analysis shows that in 1994 it begins to have a positive impact, obtaining 2.6 citations [37]. Similarly, in 1996 it has an absurd growth, achieving more than 7.5 citations during the period of that year. However, in 1998, the number of citations decreased, with a percentage of less than 2.5. On the other hand, after this negative impact in that year, it gradually increased from 2002, 2004, and 2008, achieving more than 6.0 citations. Likewise, in the years 2011, 2014, 2017, 2019, and 2023 it has a constant impact; however, in 2023 the citations provided are greater than 7.5, being the year with the highest citations on nostalgia tourism (Figure 4).

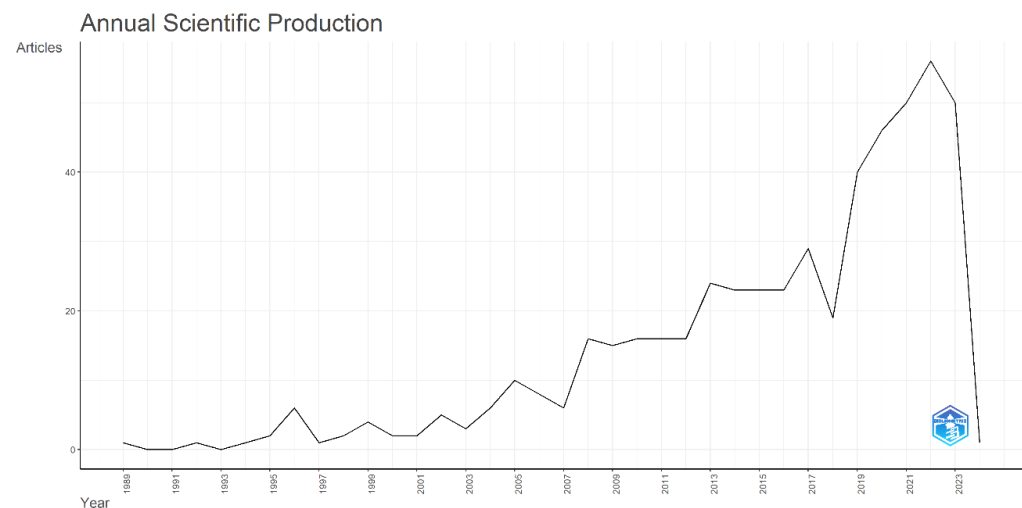


**Figure 3.** Annual scientific production. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

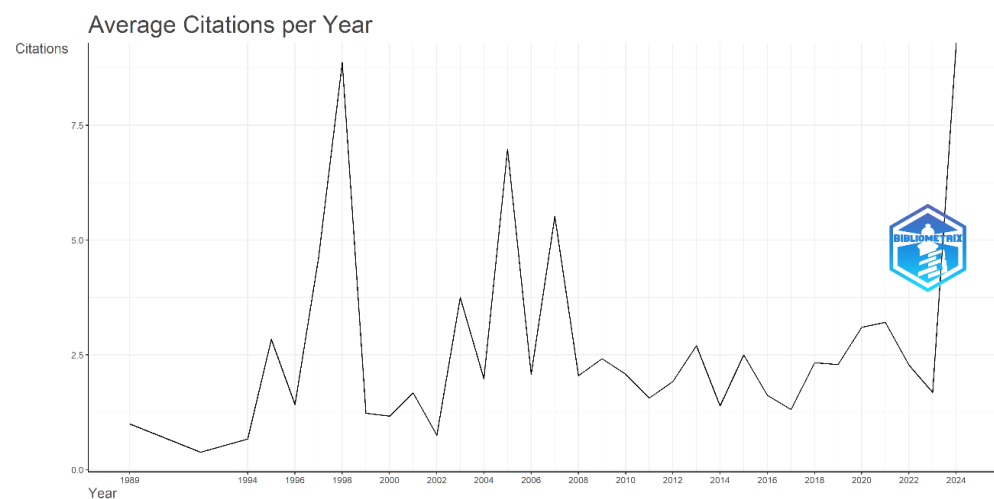


**Figure 4.** Average citations per year.

### 3.3. Production of the Sources over Time

The production of sources over time is crucial to understand the evolution of research in various areas, which can be useful for decision-making in scientific policies, identification of priority research areas, and monitoring the impact of research [57]. Likewise, it is identified that the most relevant source with the greatest impact in 2023 is the Journal of Heritage Tourism, with more than 20 cumulative occurrences. Similarly, in second place, is the Journal of Tourism and Cultural and Change, with an occurrence of 18. Thereafter, the sources Current Issues in Tourism and Annals of Tourism Research stand out for having a cumulative occurrence between 16 and 17. On the other hand, the Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing has an impact of 13, so it is stated that it is the source with the lowest scientific production during the years 2022 and 2023 (Figure 5).

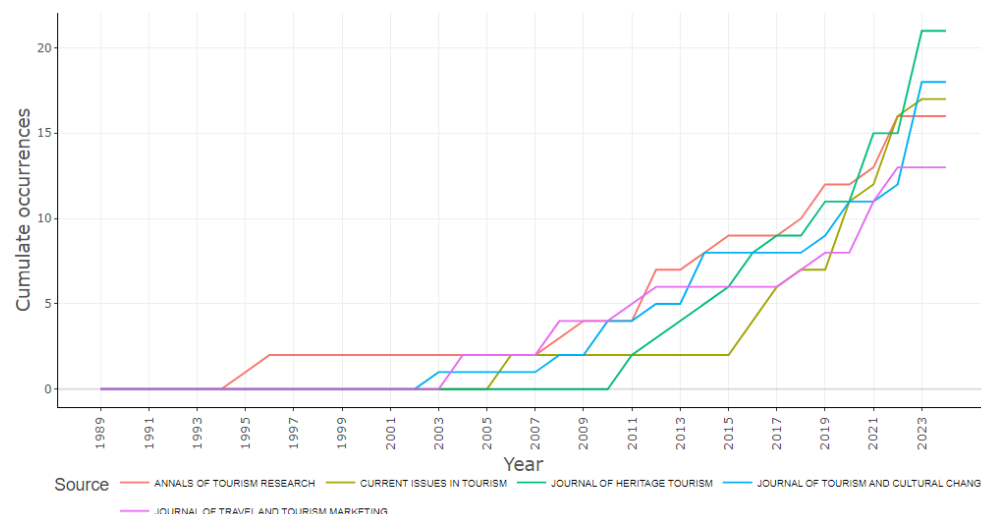


Figure 5. Production of the sources over time. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.4. Plot of Three Fields

According to the analysis of the three fields, it can be identified that the most relevant theme is nostalgia, being a fundamental factor in the research [58]. Likewise, the next topic after the previous one is tourism, where it has less impact than the previous one, but is still an important axis in nostalgia tourism. On the other hand, heritage stands out as the third most sought-after thematic axis in the scientific community. However, topics such as motivation, authenticity, memory, dark tourism, and identity are essential concepts for the search of this research (Figure 6).

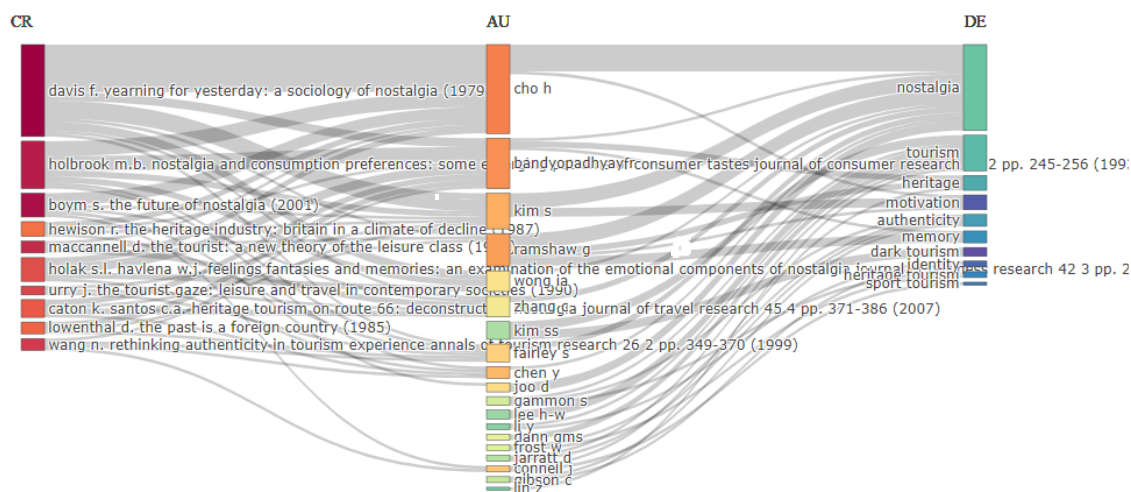


Figure 6. Plot of three fields. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix [58].

### 3.5. Most Relevant Sources

The first source is the Journal of Heritage Tourism with 21 articles on nostalgia tourism; therefore, it is called the Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change. In third place is categorized Current Issues in Tourism with 17 articles; in fourth place is Annals of Tourism Research with 16 articles; in this way, the Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing stands out in fifth place since it has 13 publications related to nostalgia tourism. However, sources such as the Journal of Sport and Tourism, Tourism Geographies, Journal of Travel Research, Tourism Management, and Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research have a total of 38 articles (Figure 7).

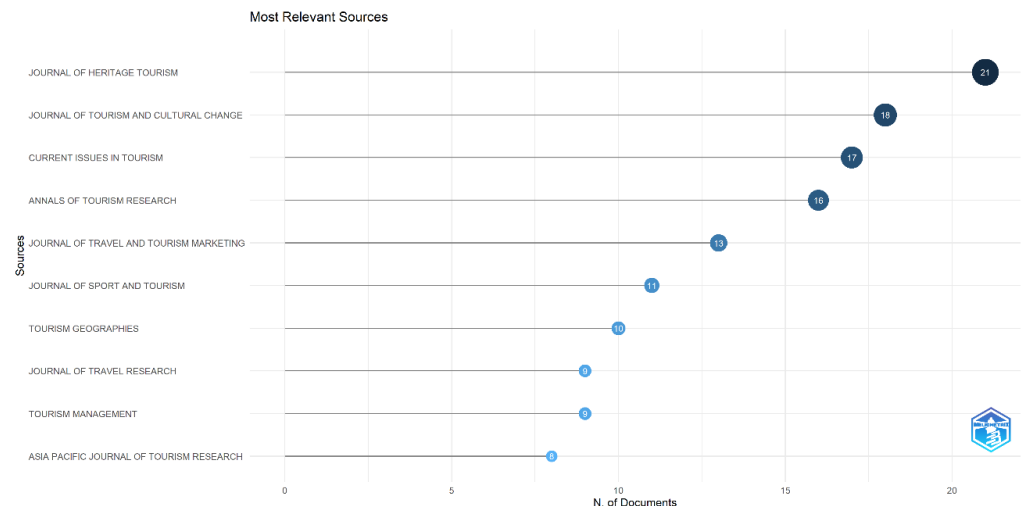


**Figure 7.** Most relevant sources. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

According to the above, an analysis is made in VOSviewer where the relationship of each relevant source is shown in four clusters, which are differentiated by three colors [59]. The red cluster is where the greatest impact of the magazines on nostalgia tourism is evidenced. The green cluster stands out for having five important sources; likewise, the blue cluster is identified as having the fewest relevant sources (Figure 8).

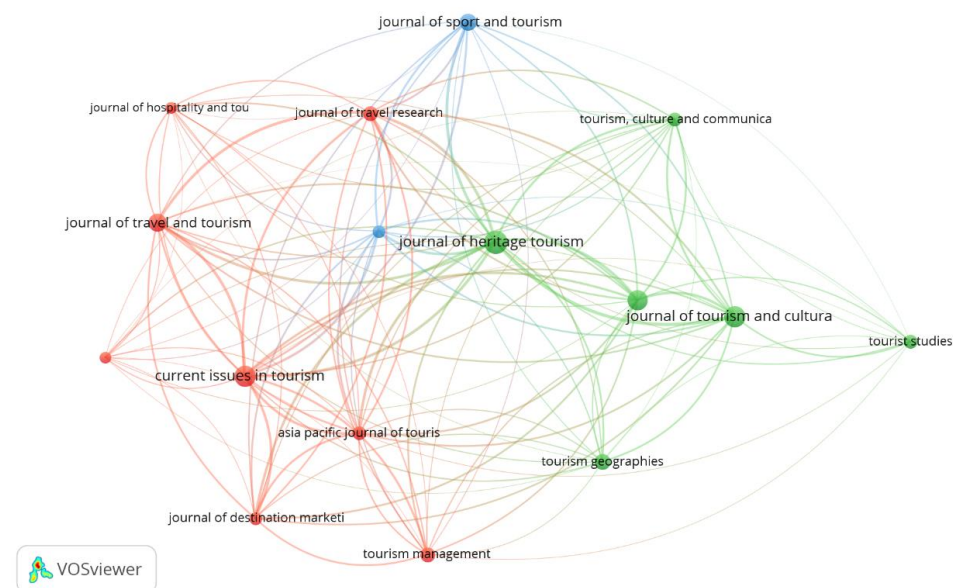


**Figure 8.** Most relevant sources in VOSviewer. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.6. Most Relevant Authors

The impact of those authors who have relevance in nostalgia tourism is analyzed, and in this way, 10 authors who are fundamental according to the bibliometrics are named. The author H. Chao is the most relevant author, obtaining 11 publications based on the research topic; R. Bandyopadhyay and G. Ramshaw are positioned second and third, since they have nine articles each in the scientific databases. Similarly, S. Kim is ranked fourth with eight publications on nostalgia tourism. Thereafter, authors such as Y. Chen, J. Cornell, S. Farley, D. Jodd, I.A. Wong, and C. Zhang have four articles each based on the main topic of the research (Figure 9).

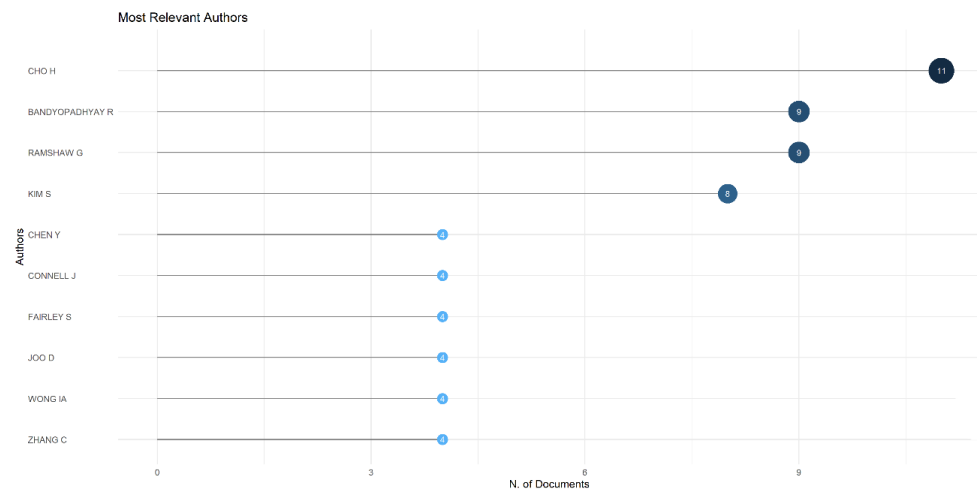


**Figure 9.** Most relevant authors. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.7. Authors' Production over Time

The relevance of an author's production over time depends on the quality, originality, and durability of his or her works, as well as their ability to remain meaningful and attractive to future generations. Based on this, the author Cho is categorized as having an impact of 3.0 articles in 2019 and 30 articles in 2020. However, the author R. Bandyopadhyay publishes 2.0 articles in 2007, 2.0 in 2012, and 1.0 in 2018. Similarly, in the year 2014, the author G. Ramshaw is categorized as publishing 2.0 articles; likewise, in the year 2017, he has a publication of 1.0 articles. In addition, Kim has publications in four different years, which are 2016, 2018, 2019, and 2020. On the other hand, Conbell and S. Fairley publish between 1.0 and 1.5 articles during 2003, 2004, 2008, and 2018. Therefore, according to the analysis of the authors' production over time, it is evident that the author H. Cho has more publications in the last seven years (Figure 10).

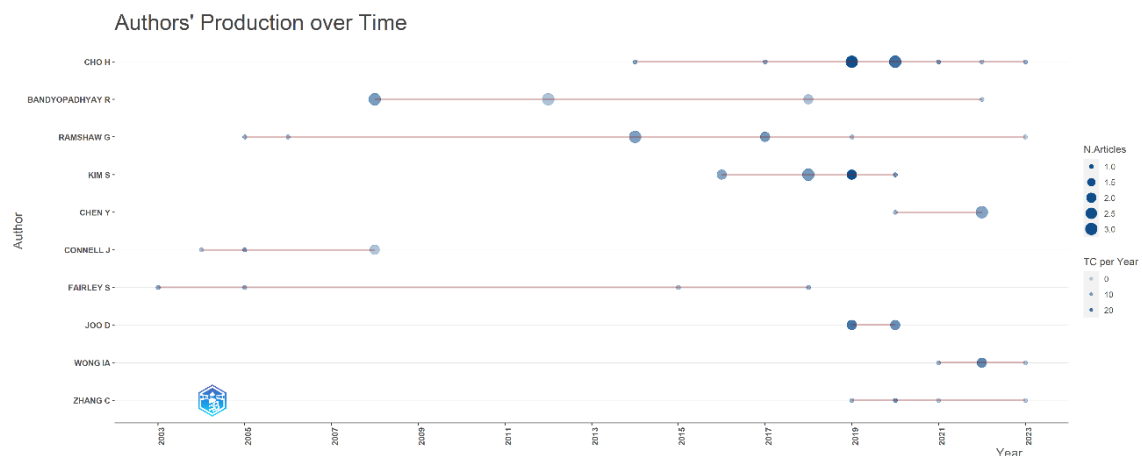


**Figure 10.** Authors' production over time. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.8. Most-Cited Countries

As shown in the following figure, it is evident that the country with the highest number of citations is the USA, with 1845 citations on nostalgia tourism. In this way, the second country with the highest citation relevance is Australia with 1579; in third place is China, with 609 publications. On the other hand, the United Kingdom has 522 and Canada 489 publications on the related topic of the present research. Hong Kong has 475, South Africa 294, and New Zealand 167; having said this, and continuing with the analysis, the two countries with the lowest citations are Turkey and Cyprus.

The data taken into account in the selection of documents included the author, title, abstract, keywords, year, number of citations, and language [19] (Figure 11).

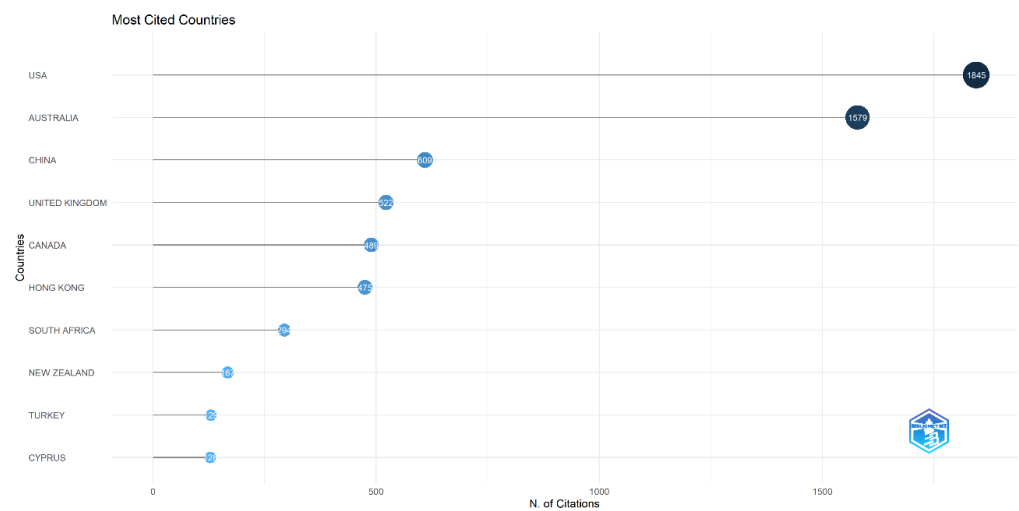


**Figure 11.** Most-cited countries. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.9. Most-Cited Documents Worldwide

They provide a quantitative measure of the impact, quality, and influence of research in a specific field, in addition to serving as key references for the academic community. Consequently, 10 papers stand out, one of which stands out for having 727 global citations, being the paper with the highest citation impact; similarly, it is evident that there are 476, 432, 210, 194, 184, 165, 158, 148, and 135 global citations in eight papers on nostalgia tourism (Figure 12).

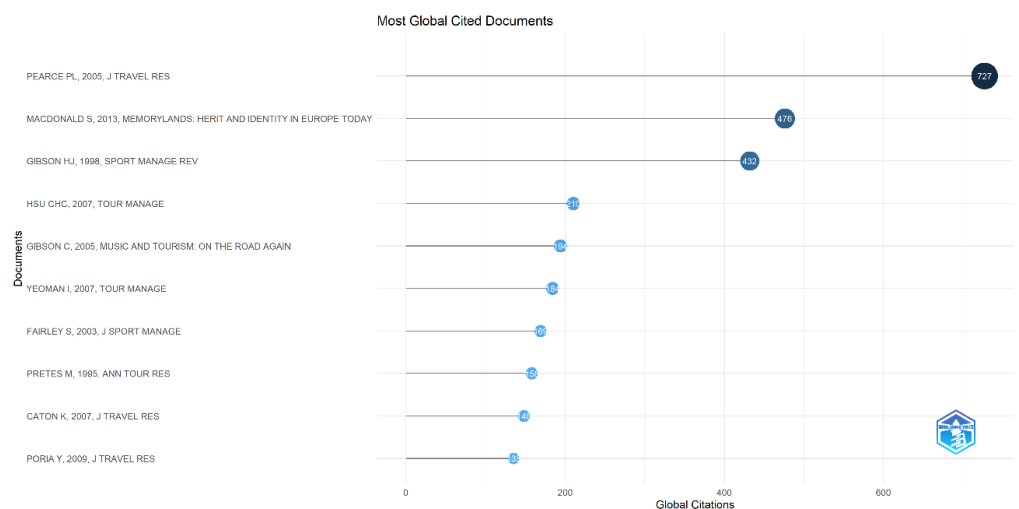


**Figure 12.** Most-cited documents worldwide. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix [58].

### 3.10. Most-Frequent Words

The keywords in the field of nostalgia tourism reflect a complex network of interconnected concepts that define the industry and how it operates. The theme of tourism development represents the process of planned and sustainable growth of a region to attract and cater to tourists. This term has an occurrence of 28 times. On the other hand, other frequent terms are heritage tourism, tourism behavior, tourism perception, and tourism attraction, having an occurrence of 21 to 28 times. Finally, tourism management had a frequent occurrence, which implies the strategic planning and coordination of resources

to optimize the tourist experience, promoting a balance between tourism development, conservation, and the well-being of local communities, and ensuring the competitiveness of the tourism market (Figure 13).

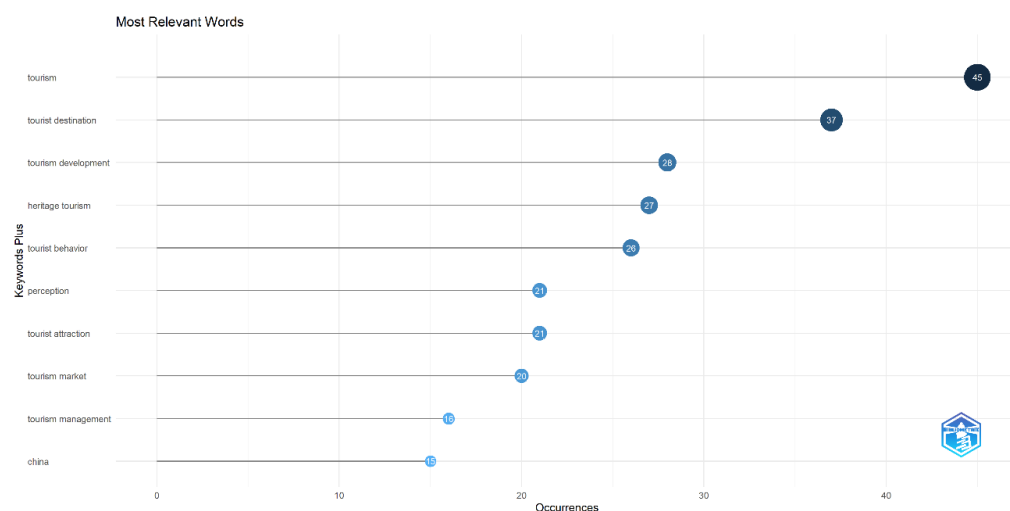


Figure 13. Most-frequent words. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.11. Word Cloud

The following analysis evidences the most frequent or relevant keywords extracted from the set of tourism and nostalgia texts, such as scientific articles, books, or any other type of academic documents. As a prominent word in this analysis is tourism, in this way, the words and phrases of tourist destinations, development tourism, tourist heritage, tourist attraction, cultural heritage, tourist management, psychology, marketing, economic tourism, and memory are characterized, these being keywords and phrases associated with nostalgia tourism (Figure 14).



Figure 14. Word cloud. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.12. Frequency of the Words over Time

From the years 1996, 1999, 2004, 2005, and 2007, the growth of the keywords of this research begins to be identified; therefore, it can be determined that the words and phrases with a positive and relevant impact are tourism behavior, heritage tourism, perception, tourist destination, and tourism, being the word that in 2023 has an occurrence of more than 40 instances (Figure 15).

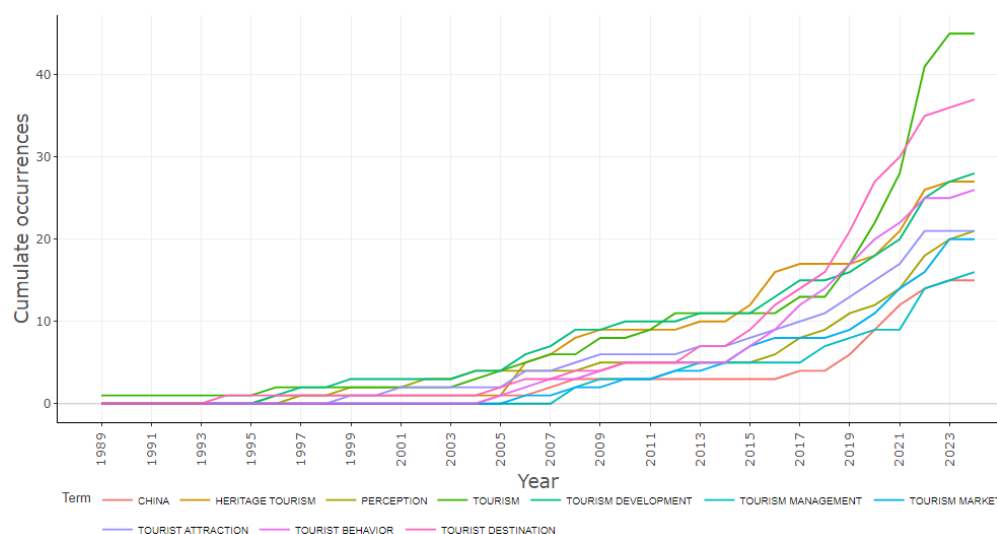


**Figure 15.** Frequency of words over time. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.13. Trending Topics

The analysis of trending topics provides valuable and updated information on the direction and landscape of scientific research, which can be fundamental for decision-making, identification of opportunities, and the advancement of research in different academic fields [60]. That said, in the year 2022 the word with the highest impact is human; consequently, in 2021 the word tourism stands out for having a frequency of 40 instances. Similarly, in 2020 the phrase tourism market is categorized with a frequency of 20 instances; in 2019, the phrase with a frequency of 30 instances is tourism destination. Other trending topics are tourism behavior, tourism development, heritage tourism, ecotourism, and culture; these topics have a frequency between 10 and 20 instances (Figure 16).

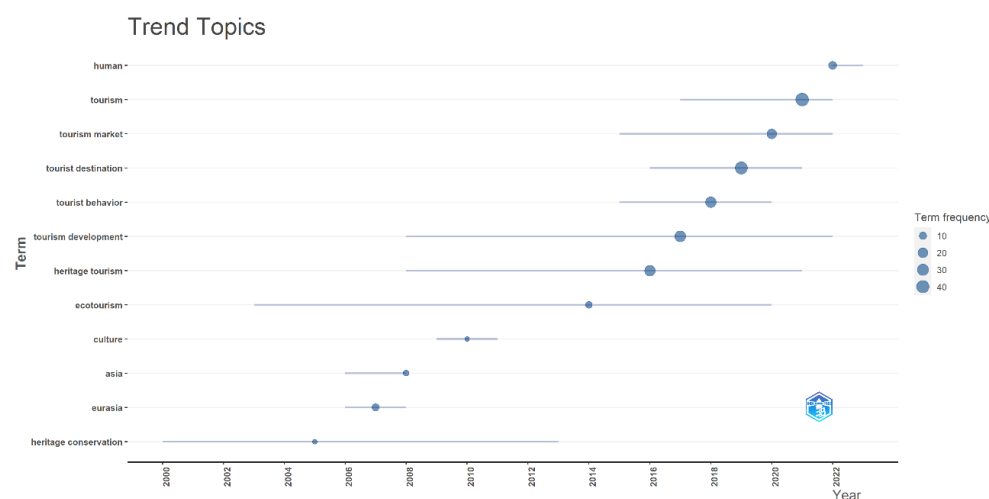


**Figure 16.** Trending topics. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.14. Coupling Grouping

In this way, four clusters are identified which are characterized by the color red, green, blue, and purple. In the red cluster, three axes stand out, which are categorized by tourist attraction obtaining 35.8% reliability; in addition, tourist destination obtained 22.7% reliability and tourist heritage 26.3% reliability. On the other hand, the green cluster generates 22.2% reliability in the topic of tourism development; in addition, the word Eurasia has a percentage of 66.7 and the word tourism a 15.8% reliability. The purple cluster analyzes tourism behavior with 65% reliability, and also analyzes tourist destination

with 58.1% reliability and heritage tourism with 63.2% reliability. The last cluster (blue) highlights tourism development with 16.7% reliability, tourism behavior with a percentage of 15%, and as the last axis, the theme of tourism destination obtains a percentage of 13.6% (Figure 17).

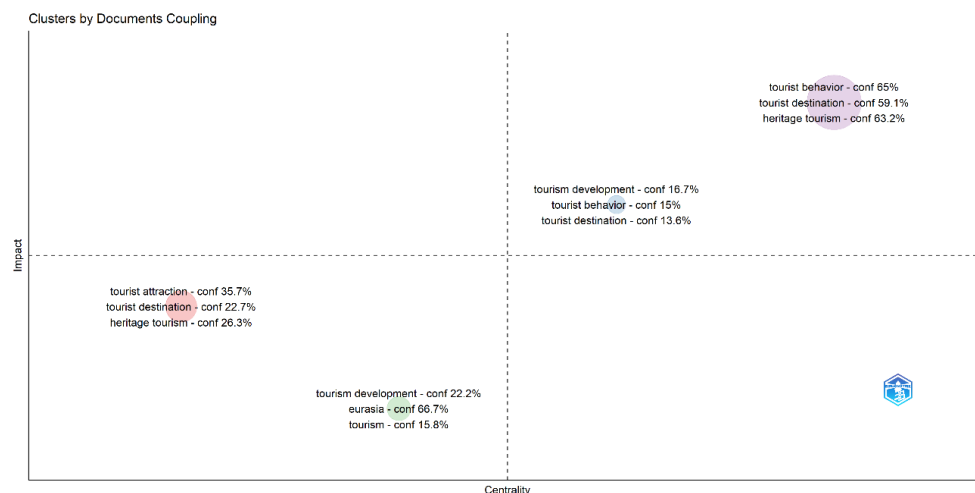


**Figure 17.** Coupling grouping. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.15. Thematic Map

This visual approach facilitates the identification of trends, interrelated research areas, and the evolution of themes over time. The first axis represents the niche themes where forecasting, leisure, sense of place, and design stand out. Next, the second axis contains motor themes, where this axis is related to tourism, humans, articles, historical geography, urban areas, nationalism, diaspora, tourist destination, tourism development, and tourism heritage. This visual approach facilitates the identification of trends, interrelated research areas and the evolution of themes over time. The first axis represents the niche themes, where foresight, leisure, sense of place and design stand out. Then, the second axis contains the driving themes, where this axis is related to tourism, human beings, articles, historical geography, urban areas, nationalism, diaspora, tourism destination, tourism development and tourism heritage. In the third axis, called emerging themes, no themes are analysed; likewise, in the last axis, which represents the basic themes, none are identified either (Figure 18).

### 3.16. Keywords Co-Occurrence

By analyzing how certain words are related and appear together, a deeper understanding of the context and semantics of the text can be obtained. In this way, six clusters stand out which emphasize the most relevant words about the relationship of nostalgic tourism. Thus, the green cluster identifies the words nostalgia, heritage tourism, tourist destination, dark tourism, destination image, psychology, virtual reality, and travel motivation. The second cluster (red) highlights words such as memory, marketing, satisfaction, human, emotion, place, and landscape. The blue cluster identifies keywords such as nostalgic tourism, authenticity, culture, cultural heritage, rural tourism, identity, and conservation. On the other hand, the purple cluster identifies tourism development and tourist; likewise, the yellow cluster emphasizes words such as nationalism, food, natural, Japan, Asia, Europe, and Eurasia. Finally, the last cluster (orange) categorizes the words sports tourism and sport (Figure 19).

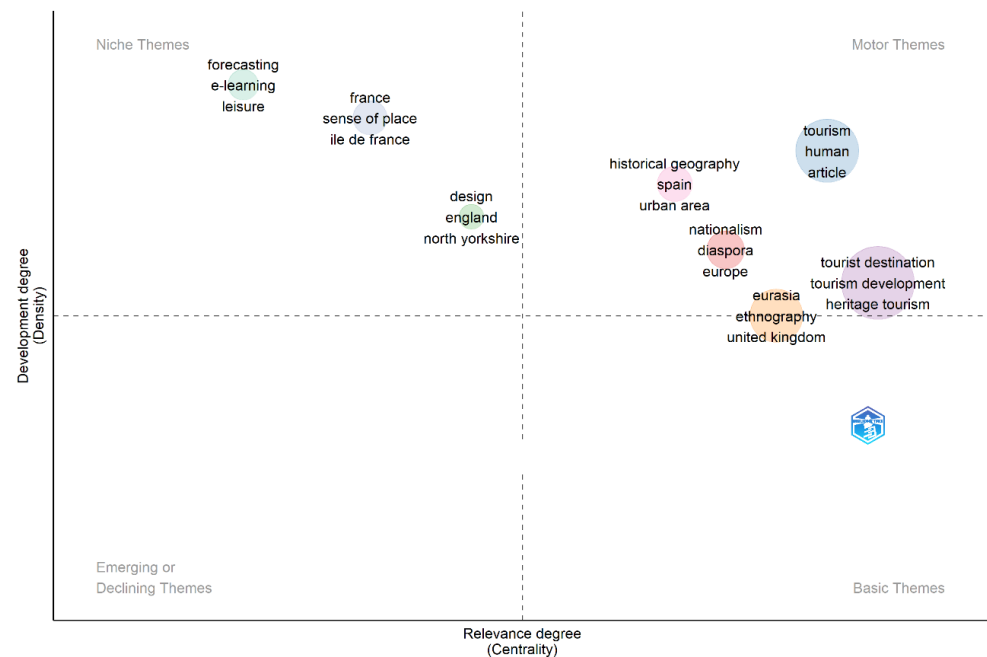


**Figure 18.** Thematic map. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

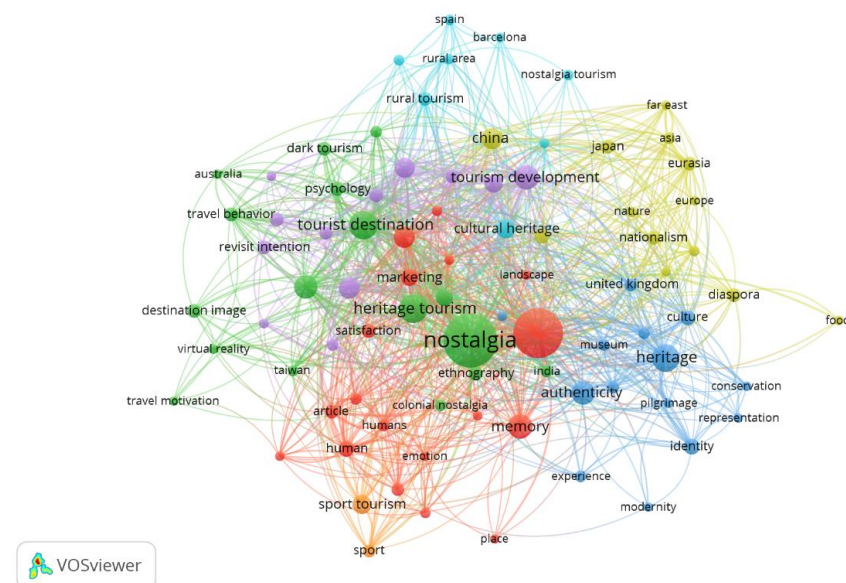


**Figure 19.** Keywords co-occurrence. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.17. World Map of Country Collaboration

It provides visual information and significant data on scientific interactions between countries, which can be fundamental for advancing research, innovation, and international cooperation in the academic and scientific fields. Likewise, the analysis shows that collaboration between countries was as follows: USA and Singapore, USA and United Kingdom, USA and China, and Australia and Hong Kong (Figure 20).

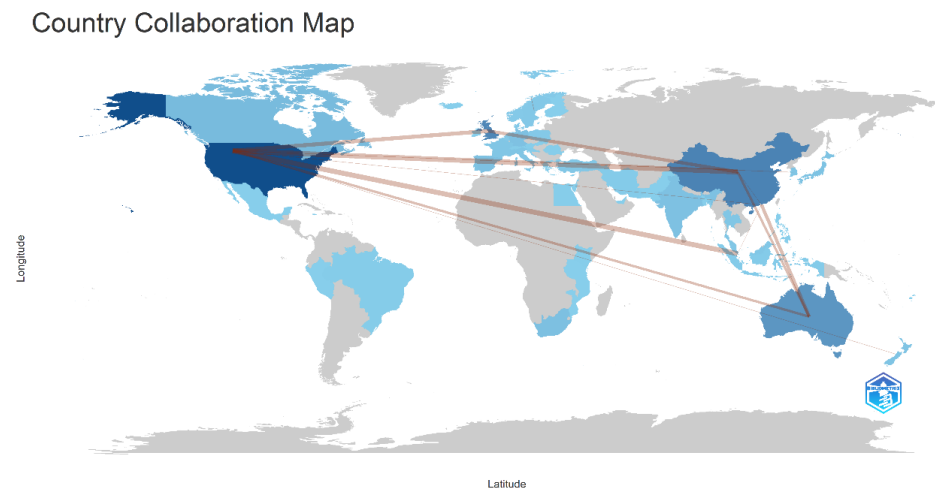


**Figure 20.** World map of country collaboration. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

### 3.18. Determinants

Nostalgia tourism focuses on experiences that evoke past times, generating positive emotions by remembering or reliving historical, cultural, or personal moments. Within this area, several determinants of nostalgia tourism can be identified; thus, this type of tourism not only involves a physical trip to past places, but also involves deeply rooted emotions and personal experiences. Historical sites, preservation of cultural traditions, ancient architecture, and activities that evoke memories are key elements that will attract travelers in search of emotional and cultural reconnection. The importance of these determinants lies in their ability to preserve collective identity, transmit cultural legacies, and foster a sense of belonging, allowing people to better understand their history and find meaning in their own lives through these nostalgic experiences (Figure 21).

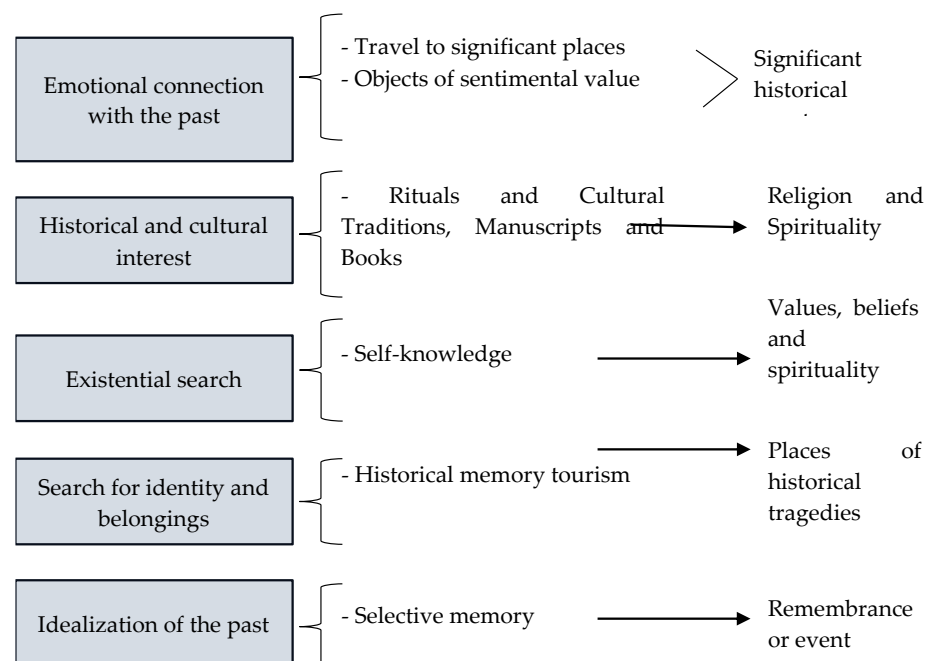


**Figure 21.** Determinants of nostalgia tourism. Own elaboration based on Bibliometrix.

Nostalgia tourism and visits to historic sites play a fundamental role in the preservation of monuments and in strengthening emotional processes linked to collective memory. According to UNESCO, “cultural heritage sites are fundamental to the identity and sense of

belonging of communities” [61]. It is important to distinguish between heritage ensembles and places and historic sites. A heritage ensemble includes multiple tangible elements, such as buildings, landscapes, and objects that possess significant cultural value, while a historic site refers specifically to a place where a historic event occurred, such as a battle, but does not always retain tangible heritage elements. Through nostalgia tourism, visitors not only explore history, but also actively participate in the preservation of these places through their financial support and their interest in keeping local traditions and narratives alive. Moreover, this type of tourism allows individuals to reconnect with their roots and experience a deep emotional reflection on the past, thus contributing to a greater understanding and appreciation of the historical events that shaped their communities. UNESCO stresses that “the preservation of cultural heritage not only protects the past, but also promotes social cohesion and sustainable development” [61], underlining the importance of these sites as catalysts of cultural memory and identity.

#### 4. Discussion

Memory tourism has emerged as a significant way to engage with historical events, and it has been argued that it goes beyond simply visiting historical sites. However, the authors Yan and Santos (2009) identify the importance of constructing a narrative that evokes an idealized and exotic past, generating a romantic and dreamy perception of destinations and cultures [52]. In this way, the results indicate that the approach determines an emotional and reflective connection with the past, promoting both education and empathy towards those who experienced historical moments.

However, according to the authors [19,26,27,36] they emphasize that nostalgia tourism is not limited to viewing historical places, but also seeks to foster reflection and education. That said, the results determine that this type of tourism does not only involve physical travel to past places, but also involves deeply rooted emotions and personal experiences.

The distinction between heritage sites and historic sites highlights the complexity and richness of nostalgia tourism. The results show that while heritage ensembles contain multiple tangible and culturally significant elements, historic sites can be equally important from an emotional and educational point of view, although they do not always preserve physical structures. This nuance is crucial to understanding how different types of sites contribute to the preservation of collective memory and cultural identity. Nostalgia tourism, by involving both heritage ensembles and historic sites, allows visitors to actively participate in the preservation of these spaces, providing economic support and helping to keep local traditions alive. In addition, the emotional reflection experienced in these places fosters a deep connection to the past and a greater appreciation of the historical events that have shaped today’s communities. UNESCO underlines the importance of these sites not only for their historical value, but also for their capacity to promote social cohesion and sustainable development (UNESCO, 2021) [61]. In this sense, the preservation and promotion of both types of sites are fundamental to keeping cultural memory alive and fostering a sense of belonging in future generations.

The results of the systematic review and bibliometric analysis on nostalgia tourism reveal a detailed and in-depth picture of the evolution and impact of this field of study. The “annual scientific production” shows a steady growth in the number of publications, indicating a growing interest and increased academic attention towards nostalgia tourism. The “average citations per year” reflects the influence and relevance of studies in this field, highlighting those papers that have had the greatest impact on the scientific community. The “three-field plot” allows us to visualize the interconnection between authors, institutions, and keywords, highlighting the most significant collaborations and the predominant thematic areas. The “most relevant sources” and the “production of sources over time” highlight the journals and publications that have been instrumental in the dissemination of knowledge on nostalgia tourism. Likewise, output over time from “authors” and “most relevant authors” highlight key researchers and their ongoing contributions to the development of the field.

On the other hand, the analysis of the “most-cited countries” and most-cited papers worldwide provides a global overview of the scope and influence of nostalgia tourism research, pinpointing the most influential geographies and works. The “most-frequent words”, “word cloud”, and word frequency over time reveal the most studied topics and concepts, allowing for the identification of predominant trends and areas of interest. The ‘trend themes’ and “coupling clustering” provide insight into emerging trends and thematic relationships between different studies. The “thematic map” and “keyword co-occurrence” facilitate the identification of central themes and their interrelationships. Finally, the “world map of cross-country collaboration” highlights international cooperation in nostalgia tourism research, indicating the most frequently collaborating countries and the strongest patterns of collaboration. These findings not only illuminate the current state of the field, but also suggest future directions for research, promoting a more complete and nuanced understanding of nostalgia tourism.

## 5. Conclusions

The comprehensive bibliometric analysis conducted in this study on nostalgia tourism provides a comprehensive and detailed view of the current state of the field. Through tools such as R Core Team 2022-Bibliometrix and VOSviewer software, trends, prevalent themes, prominent authors, and influential publications in the scientific literature on this topic have been identified. The results obtained provide a solid basis for understanding the existing theoretical and conceptual framework in nostalgia tourism, highlighting specific areas that require further research. This systematic review of Scopus and Science Direct provides a valuable contribution to the academic field by consolidating current knowledge and fostering enriched and substantiated features on this tourism phenomenon.

Nostalgia tourism fosters sustainable practices by promoting the preservation and appreciation of historical sites and cultural heritage. By cultivating a deeper emotional connection to places and traditions, nostalgia tourism motivates travelers to support conservation efforts and engage in sustainable tourism practices. This approach not only aids in protecting cultural and historical assets but also ensures that future generations can experience and enjoy these significant sites. Consequently, nostalgia tourism aligns with sustainability goals by underscoring the importance of maintaining and valuing our shared heritage.

The relevance of this study is not only limited to its contribution to the existing literature, but also establishes a solid platform for future research in the field of nostalgia tourism. The findings and conclusions drawn provide valuable guidance for researchers and academics interested in delving deeper into this area, pointing to specific areas where more information and development is needed. In addition, by providing a detailed analysis of the most-researched topics and influential publications, this article facilitates a clearer understanding of the determinants and directions that research in this field has taken.

According to the results, the determinants lie in their ability to influence the motivations, behaviors, and experiences of nostalgic tourists. These determinants, which can range from emotional and psychological aspects to sociocultural and contextual factors, act as key drivers that guide the choice of destinations, activities, and consumption patterns during these trips. Understanding these determinants not only allows the tourism industry to adapt strategies and offerings to the needs and desires of this segment of travelers, but also contributes to the development of more effective policies and the creation of more authentic and meaningful tourism experiences for those seeking to relive memories and connect with the past through nostalgia tourism.

The analysis of nostalgia tourism and its interaction with heritage ensembles and places and historic sites reveals substantial scientific questions about the preservation of cultural memory and identity. Heritage ensembles, containing multiple significant tangible elements, and historic sites, although sometimes lacking physical structures, both play crucial roles in education and social cohesion. Future research should focus on quantifying the economic impact of nostalgia tourism on the preservation of these places and on

assessing how visitors' emotional experiences contribute to the preservation of collective memory. Furthermore, it is essential to explore the most effective strategies to promote both heritage ensembles and historic sites in the context of sustainable development. Therefore, the integration of interdisciplinary approaches that include economic, socio-cultural and environmental aspects will be vital to strengthen the management and conservation of these sites, ensuring their relevance and sustainability for future generations.

The growing importance and significant impact it has on the tourism industry, as well as on travelers' experience, has been evidenced. However, there are still areas to be further explored and understood. Future lines of research should focus on the connection between nostalgia tourism and sustainability, exploring how this type of tourism can coexist with more responsible and eco-friendly practices. In addition, in-depth analysis of the psychological and emotional effects of nostalgia tourism on individuals could provide a more complete picture of its influence on the perception of cultural heritage and its potential for personal well-being. On the other hand, interdisciplinary research addressing the intersection of nostalgia tourism with emerging technology will also be valuable in understanding how new tools may shape and transform this form of travel in the future.

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