



How to accomplish a highly cited paper in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field

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ABSTRACT

This paper identifies the main factors that affect the citation rate of an article published in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field. Using several regression techniques, it has been identified that the number of references for an article, the reputation of the main author, and obtaining early citations have a major impact on a document's citation rate. As well as this, by means of a quantitative–qualitative analysis (fsQCA), the most efficient combinations of factors that influence the number of citations received have also been identified. This paper is useful for researchers, editors and readers interested in improving the impact of their research.

1. Introduction

The number of scientific documents published in prestigious academic databases has increased year after year. Thus, upon analyzing the scientific documents indexed in the Core Collection of the Web of Science (WoS), we can see that in 2001 more than 1.3 million were included, a value that has grown every year, reaching over 3.3 million in 2019. Meanwhile, the scientific literature has shown how a large number of scientific articles are barely read and/or cited, with just a few obtaining a high quantity of citations (Tahamtan, Safipour Afshar & Ahamdzadeh, 2016). Garfield (2006) indicated that around 20 % of these types of papers make up more than 80 % of the total citations made, which can be corroborated by carrying out a simple search in any of the most influential scientific databases in the world, such as the WoS or Scopus, among others.

In the tourism, leisure and hospitality field, according to Mulet, Lunn, Merigó and Horrach (2021), bibliometric research has addressed issues such as the productivity of authors, institutions and countries (Zhao & Ritchie, 2007; McKercher, 2008; Svensson, Svaeri & Einarsen, 2009; Hall, 2010; Law, Leung & Buhalis, 2010; Park, Phillips, Canter & Abbott, 2011; Ye, Morrison, Wu, Park, Li, & Li, 2015), new trends and applied research methods (Ballantyne, Packer, & Axelsen, 2009; Beckendorff, 2009; Cheng, Li, Petrick, & O'Leary, 2011; Bilgihan, Barreda, Okumus & Nusair, 2016; Jung, Tom Dieck, & Chung, 2018), and rankings that classify the main journals (Cheng, Li, Petrick, & O'Leary, 2011; Mckercher, Law, & Lam, 2006; Jamal, Smith & Watson, 2008; García-

Lillo, Claver-Cortes, Úbeda-García, Marco-Lajara, & Zaragoza-Saez, 2016). However, little is known either about the factors that influence the number of citations obtained by a paper, or the strategies that lead to a paper having a high level of impact causing it to be highly cited.

With all this in mind, the main objective of this paper is to identify and analyze, empirically, the main factors that determine the citation rate of a scientific document in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field, as well as the combinations of factors which lead to a paper obtaining a high number of citations. With data accumulated until the month of November 2020 for the aforementioned fields, the Web of Science (WOS) database indexed a total of 5,594 documents, accumulating as many as 62,496 citations. However, these were highly concentrated, the 100 most cited documents (that is, 1.79 % of the total published) amassing a sum of 53,753 citations (i.e., 86 % of the total citations received in all). Nevertheless, the factors and strategies that lead to a great number of citations are a topic of interest little studied in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field.

Although there is no consensus in the literature when it comes to indicating which metric is the most suitable for evaluating the quality and impact of scientific research, it is often assumed that the citation rate is the best proxy to analyze it (Garfield, 1979; Padial, Nabout, Siqueira, Bini & Diniz-Filho, 2010; Bornmann, Schier, Marx & Daniel, 2012). Furthermore, it is usually assumed that when such papers are published, for instance, in journals with a considerable impact factor or by authors with a high *h*-index, they obtain higher citation rates, researchers selecting the references to cite based on their relevance and

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contribution to the articles that they are writing. However, the wide array of references available and the space limitations of the journals themselves prevent researchers from citing all the sources actually used (Leimu & Koricheva, 2005). In this regard, there is a certain part of the literature that maintains that a scientific document can be cited for a multitude of subjective factors (Brooks, 1985; Shadish, Tolliver, Gray & Sen Gupta, 1995; Nieminen, Carpenter, Rucker & Schumacher, 2006) which have nothing in common with its supposed quality, such as an interpersonal relationship between authors (Case & Higgins, 2000), flattery (Seglen, 1998), persuasion (Gilbert, 1977), endorsement or recommendation (Harwood, 2008).

Our paper aims to tackle the following research questions: firstly, what factors influence the citation rate of documents published in indexed journals in the tourism, leisure & hospitality field?; secondly, what combinations of factors shape strategies that lead to success in the tourism, leisure & hospitality field? Our research can contribute to shedding some light into the scarce and mixed results derived from previous studies in the tourism, leisure and hospitality area.

This article adds to the existing literature by analysing the factors that explain the level of citation in a medium and long-term time horizon (5 and 10 years) in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field, considering a large number of variables. We have not found other papers that carry out a similar analysis in this field using the Web of Science database or applying both regression techniques and quantitative–qualitative analysis (fsQCA). Using several regression models, we have found that the number of references a document has, the impact factor of the journal, the topic covered, the time of year an article is published, the number of citations of the main author of the document, as well as its publication in open access and obtaining early citations have a positive impact on the number of citations it receives. Moreover, the combinations of factors that lead to an article being lowly cited or, on the contrary, highly cited have been identified. Thus, in addition to identifying the main explanatory factors for the number of citations, this document provides guidance on the most effective combinations. The work we present here is useful for researchers, editors and readers interested in evaluating the impact of the research with the level of citation.

This document is structured as follows: in the next section, a literature review of the main factors that affect the citation rate of a document is made; the third section indicates how the data has been collected to carry out the research, as well as the evaluation metrics used; the fourth section describes the model used; the fifth section presents and discusses the main results obtained; finally, the last section synthesizes the main conclusions, implications, and limitations, as well as future lines of research.

2. Literature review and hypotheses

In this section we review the academic literature which discusses the factors that can influence a scientific document's citation rate. In this regard, this study aims to determine whether these factors also affect the citation rate of documents indexed in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field. The extensive literature review tends to group these factors into one or several categories (see, for example, Leimu & Koricheva, 2005; Wesel, Wyatt & Haaf, 2014; Amara, Landry & Halilem, 2015; Antoniou, Georgakarakos, Sfyroeras & Georgiadis, 2015; Tahamtan, Safipour Afshar & Ahamdzadeh, 2016; Tahamtan & Bornmann, 2018; Xie, Gong, Li, Ke, Kang & Cheng, 2019). Based on these studies, and in accordance with the premise that there are several bibliometric indicators that can affect a document's citation rate (Yu, Yu, Li & Wang, 2014; Stremersch, Camacho, Vanneste & Verniers, 2015), we will also group these factors into several categories. These will be, specifically: contextual characteristics of the documents, characteristics of the authors, institutional factors, journal characteristics, and diffusion and early citation.

2.1. Contextual characteristics of documents

2.1.1. Title, abstract and keywords

The literature registers conflicting positions as there are studies which indicate that the characteristics of the title, abstract and keywords influence a document's citation rate, while others state the opposite. Jamali and Nikzad (2011) conclude that an informative title increases the number of citations obtained, although they also indicate that the length of the title is not correlated with the number of citations, as Rostami, Mohammadpoorasl and Hajzadeh (2014) also affirm. Nonetheless, Guo, Ma, Shi and Zong (2018) argue that there is a mixed relationship between the length of an article's title and its citation rate (Rostami, Mohammadpoorasl & Hajzadeh, 2014; So, Kim, Choi & Park, 2014; Sohrabi & Iraj, 2017). On the other hand, Stremersch, Camacho, Vanneste and Verniers (2015) argue that longer titles receive fewer citations than shorter titles, a view also supported by Ayres and Vars (2000), Stremersch, Verniers and Verhoef (2007), Subotic and Mukherjee (2014), and Nair and Gibbert (2016), among others. However, the presence of punctuation marks, such as hyphens, colons or brackets, can positively influence a document's citation rate (Subotic & Mukherjee, 2014; Bowman & Kinnan, 2018; Hallock & Bennett, 2020; Jimenez, Ávila, Dueñas & Gelbukh, 2020). Having said that, various studies point towards the number of keywords and their diversity influencing the citation rate (Rostami, Mohammadpoorasl & Hajzadeh, 2014; So, Kim, Choi & Park, 2014; Sohrabi & Iraj, 2017). Finally, regarding the abstract, Ibáñez, Bielza and Larrañaga (2013) indicate that documents prepared with an abstract increase their citation rate, while it is reduced if the abstract of the document is well-structured (Lokker, McKibbin, McKinlay, Wilczynski & Haynes, 2008). On this subject, the literature also indicates that the right number of words in the abstract positively influences the citation rate (van Wesel, Wyatt & ten Haaf, 2014; Freeling, Doubleday & Connell, 2019; Martínez & Mammola, 2020). Based on all of the above, the hypotheses that we propose corroborating regarding the title, abstract and keywords of the indexed documents in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field are the following:

H1.A The higher the number of words in a paper's title, the more negatively it affects its citation rate.

H1.B A title with punctuation marks increases the paper's citation rate.

H1.C The higher the number of keywords in a paper, the higher its citation rate.

H1.D The higher the number of words in a paper's abstract, the higher its citation rate.

2.1.2. Document length

Many studies indicate that the greater the length of a document (measured as number of pages), the higher its citation rate (see, for example, Bornmann, Schier, Marx & Daniel, 2012; van Wesel, Wyatt & ten Haaf, 2014; So, Kim, Choi, & Park 2014; Antoniou, Antoniou, Georgakarakos, Sfyroeras & Georgiadis, 2015; Stremersch, Camacho, Vanneste & Verniers, 2015; Meyer, Waldkirch, Duscher & Just, 2018), due to it containing a greater amount of information (Leimu & Koricheva, 2005). In contrast, other studies indicate that there is no relationship between the length of a document and its citation rate (Walters, 2006; Haslam & Koval, 2010; Royle, Kandala, Barnard & Waugh, 2013). Based on all of the above, the hypothesis that we propose corroborating regarding the length of a document published in the tourism, leisure & hospitality field is the following:

H2. The length of a paper positively affects its citation rate.

2.1.3. References

Several articles have shown that there is a positive correlation between the citation rate of a document and its number of references in the bibliography section (see, for example, Falagas, Zarkali, Kargeorgopoulos, Bardakas & Mavros, 2013; Antoniou, Antoniou, Georgakarakos, Sfyroeras & Georgiadis, 2015; Onodera & Yoshikane, 2015;

Ahlgren, Colliander & Sjögarde, 2018; Mammola, Fontaneto, Martínez & Chichorro, 2021), indicating that the higher the number of references, the higher the citation rates. In contrast, Wallace, Larivière and Gingras (2009) found that the number of references in the bibliography section had a negative impact on the citation rate. Despite this, we propose that the number of cited references increases the rate since they reveal the knowledge that researchers have of the existing literature in a research field. Based on all of the above, the hypothesis that we propose to corroborate regarding the total number of references cited in a paper in the tourism, leisure & hospitality field is the following:

H3. The total number of references in a paper positively affects its citation rate.

2.2. Characteristics of the authors

2.2.1. Number of authors

Much of the literature shows that co-authorship is positively related to the citation rate of a document, meaning that the greater the number of authors, the greater the number of citations it will obtain (see, among others, Annalingam, Damayanthi, Jayawardena & Ranasinghe, 2014; Biscaro & Giupponi, 2014; Bornmann, Leydesdorff & Wang, 2014; Gazni & Thelwall, 2014; Yu, Yu, Li & Wang, 2014; Onodera & Yoshikane, 2015; Perneger, 2015; Fox, Paine & Sauterey, 2016). However, there are also some papers that indicate that this relationship does not occur (see, for example, Collet, Robertson & Lup, 2014; So, Kim, Choi & Park, 2014; Yu & Yu, 2014; Antoniou, Antoniou, Georgakarakos, Sfyroeras & Georgiadis, 2015). Therefore, we propose that the number of authors positively affects the citation rate since such articles tend to be disseminated to a greater extent by their authors in scientific networks. Consequently, the hypothesis that we propose to corroborate regarding the number of authors for a piece of research in the tourism, leisure & hospitality field is the following:

H4. The number of authors positively affects the citation rate of a paper.

2.2.2. Gender of the authors

Some of the literature indicates that the gender of the authors influences the citation rate of a document (see, for example, Barnett & Fink, 2008; Gingras, Larivière, Macaluso & Robitaille, 2008; Nosek, Graham, Lindner, Kesebir, Hawkins, Hahn & Tenney, 2010; Winnik, Raptis, Walker, Hasun, Speer, Clavien & Matter, 2012; Bosquet & Combes, 2013), with male authors achieving the highest number of citations (Knobloch-Westerwick & Glynn 2013; Maliniak, Powers & Walter, 2013). One reason for this may be that, to date, men have published a greater number of scientific papers than women (Ayles & Vars, 2000), although this gap appears to be narrowing. On the other hand, Borsuk, Budden, Leimu, Aarssen and Lortie (2009) concluded that there are no significant differences in terms of the citation rate for the author's gender, while Atchison (2017), Clapar, Tacchellaand Birrer (2017) indicated that the citation rate increases if the gender of the first author is female. In our case, we will try to corroborate the following hypothesis regarding the gender of the first author of the documents published in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field:

H5. There is no difference in the citation rate of a scientific paper based on the gender of the first author.

2.2.3. Author's reputation

The literature shows that the reputations of researchers are usually related to their citation rates (Bjarnason & Sigfusdottir, 2002; Collet, Robertson & Lup, 2014; Jiang, She & Ni, 2013). Likewise, the measurement of a researcher's reputation is a controversial issue since there is no consensus on which metric is most suitable to evaluate it, although it is considered that the number of citations received by a researcher can be a proxy for said reputation (Padial, Nabout, Siqueira, Bini & Diniz-Filho, 2010; Bornmann, Schier, Marx & Daniel, 2012). Another metric that is often used to measure reputation is the researchers' h-index (Hurley, Ogier & Torvik, 2013). Thus, the literature maintains that those

who accumulate a high number of citations are more likely to continue to perform well, which is why this factor can be considered a good predictor (Walters, 2006; Yu, Yu, Li & Wang, 2014). In spite of this, part of the literature is sceptical due to the fact that findings claim that there is no influence on citation rate, or at best the relationship is very weak (Jabbour, Jabbour & de Oliveira, 2013; Wang, 2014; Yu & Yu, 2014). We consider, nevertheless, that researchers' reputations do influence their citation rates; because of this, we propose corroborating the following hypotheses regarding documents published in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field:

H6.A The reputation of the first author measured in terms of citations of a researcher increases the citation rate per paper.

H6.B The reputation of the first author measured in terms of the h-index increases the citation rate per paper.

2.2.4. Author's productivity

In relation to the above, the literature also indicates that the productivity of researchers, measured as the total number of publications released, positively affects their citation rates (see, among others, Bosquet & Combes, 2013; Onodera & Yoshikane, 2015; Stremersch, Camacho, Vanneste & Verniers, 2015) because they have large networks, resulting in a greater number of citations both for the main author and for the members of his or her network (Bjarnason & Sigfusdottir, 2002). In contrast, Jabbour, Jabbour and de Oliveira (2013) concluded that the productivity of the author researcher does not influence his or her citation rate. As with the previous case, we consider that a researcher's productivity does influence citation rate, and so we propose to corroborate the following hypothesis regarding articles published in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field:

H7. The productivity of a researcher positively influences his or her citation rate per paper.

2.3. Institutional factors

2.3.1. International collaboration

Both national and international collaborations, especially the latter, among authors positively affects a paper's citation rate (see, among many others, Bornmann, Stefaner, de Moya Aneón & Mutz, 2014; Annalingam, Damayanthi, Jayawardena & Ranasinghe, 2014; Smith, Weinberger, Bruna & Allesina, 2014; Antoniou, Antoniou, Georgakarakos, Sfyroeras & Georgiadis, 2015; Guan, Yan & Zhang, 2017) since they have a significant impact (Bárbara, Barrantes, Bote, Rodríguez & Aneón, 2012). Therefore, the hypothesis that we intend to corroborate is the following:

H8. International collaboration positively affects the citation rate of published papers in the tourism, leisure & hospitality field.

2.3.2. Author's registered country

Several articles show that regarding a paper's citation rate, both the main author's country of residence and the location of the educational institution can have a positive influence. More specifically, it is argued that researchers whose country of origin or university belongs to a wealthy region tend to receive more citations for their publications than the rest (Filion & Pless, 2008; Gargouri, Hajjem, Larivière, Gingras, Carr, Brody & Harnad, 2010; Sin, 2011; Peng & Zhu, 2012). Nonetheless, there are also other studies that indicate that the geographical location has no effect on citation rate (Bhandari, Busse, Devereaux, Montori, Swiontkowski, Tornetta Iii & Schemitsch, 2007). We have opted for the first argument as we consider that the most developed countries and the most prestigious educational institutions, by being able to gain access to greater sources of funding, can produce papers of higher scientific quality and achieve greater dissemination (Padial, Nabout, Siqueira, Bini & Diniz-Filho, 2010; Amara, Landry & Halilem, 2015). Therefore, the hypotheses that we intend to corroborate are the following:

H9. The more developed the main author's country of residence is, the more positively it affects the citation rate for a paper published in the tourism,

leisure and hospitality field.

H10 *The better the reputation of the educational institution where the main author works, the more positively it affects the citation rate for a paper published in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field.*

2.4. Journal characteristics

2.4.1. Journal impact factor

Much of the literature indicates that the publication of manuscripts in journals with a high impact factor positively affects their citation rate (e.g., among others, Didegah & Thelwall, 2013a; Vanclay, 2013; Subotic & Mukherjee, 2014; Van Der Pol, McInnes, Petrich, Tunis & Hanna, 2015). For their part, Bornmann and Williams (2013) also indicated that documents analyzing trending topics may attract a considerable number of citations, even if they are published in journals with a low impact factor. Finally, there are also a few studies which indicate that a journal's impact factor does not affect the citation rate of a document (Willis, Bahler, Neuberger & Dahm, 2011; Leimu & Koricheva, 2005; Roldan-Valadez & Rios, 2015).

H11 *The journal impact factor positively affects the citation rate of a paper.*

2.4.2. Journal issue

According to De Araujo et al. (2012), documents published at the beginning of the year obtain high citation rates. On the contrary, Ma, Li, Guo and Si (2019) and Tahamtan, Safipour Afshar and Ahamdzadeh (2016) showed that the articles published between October and December received fewer citations than those published in the other months. By contrast, Ayres and Vars (2000) indicated that a journal's issue is not correlated with the citation rate of a document, a proposition with which we agree, which leads us to the following hypothesis:

H12 *The journal issue variable does not affect the citation rate of papers published in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field.*

2.4.3. Journal's scope

A journal's scope, measured as the number of research areas in which it is indexed, is positively related to its citation rate, since interdisciplinary journals are more likely to be read and cited; this is owing to their targeting of a wider readership rather than specialized journals (Bornmann, Schier, Marx & Daniel, 2012; Annalingam, Damayanthi, Jayawardena & Ranasinghe, 2014). Based on the above, our hypothesis is as follows:

H13 *Papers published in indexed journals in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field with a broad scope obtain a high citation rate.*

2.5. Diffusion and early citation

Accessibility, visibility and early citations may be considered a predictor of a paper's future citations. The existing literature tends to agree that the citation rate per document is high in articles which are published in open access journals (see, for example, Gargouri, Hajjem, Lariviere, Gingras, Carr, Brody & Harnad, 2010; Xia, Myers & Wilhoite, 2011; Falagas, Zarkali, Karageorgopoulos, Bardakas & Mavros, 2013; Koler-Povh, Juznic & Turk, 2014; Antoniou, Antoniou, Georgakarakos, Sfyroeras & Georgiadis, 2015; Basson, Blanckenberg & Prozesky, 2021; Lund & Maurya, 2020). Other aspects that positively affect the citation rate of a paper are its download, viewing and readership figures (Jahandideh, Abdolmaleki & Asadabadi, 2007; O'Leary, 2008a, b; Guerrero-Bote & Moya-Anegón, 2014; Subotic & Mukherjee, 2014; Perneger, 2015), in that the higher these figures are, the higher its citation rate. Likewise, in terms of an article's altmetrics, if it has many shares, likes and tweets or similar, it also obtains high citation rates (Eysenbach, 2011; Meier & Tunger, 2019; Hou & Ma, 2020; Wang & Zhang, 2020). In contrast, part of the literature also affirms that there is no relationship between the accessibility and visibility of documents and their citation rate (Kurtz, Eichhorn, Accomazzi, Grant, Demleitner,

Henneken & Murray, 2005; Moed, 2005; Craig, Plume, McVeigh, Pringle & Amin, 2007; Davis, 2010; Peng & Zhu, 2012; Jabbour, Jabbour & de Oliveira, 2013). Early or initial citations that a paper receives in the years following its publication are considered a predictor of its future citations. The greater the number of early citations is, the greater the number of subsequent citations a paper will receive (Abramo, D'Angelo & Felici, 2019; Bornmann, Leydesdorff & Wang, 2014; Hilmer & Lusk, 2009; Ruan, Zhu, Li & Cheng, 2020; Xiao et al., 2016; Wang, 2013). Based on the abovementioned approach, we propose that a paper's accessibility and visibility as well as the number of altmetrics it possesses positively affect its citation rate, enabling us to propose the following hypotheses:

H14A *Papers with open access experience high citation rates.*

H14B *The higher the number of downloads a paper has, the higher the citation rate.*

H14C *The higher the number of altmetrics a paper has, the higher the citation rate.*

H14D *Early or initial citations positively affect subsequent citation rates.*

Table 1 summarizes the categories, factors, and independent variables, as well as the expected sign of the hypotheses that have been formulated.

3. Methodology

To carry out our research, firstly, we chose the journals to be analyzed. In order to do this, and bearing in mind that there are a wide array of databases, including Google Scholar and Scopus, we have opted for the Web of Science (WoS) because it is currently considered by researchers to be the most influential databases in the world (Merigó, Gil-Lafuente & Yager, 2015). Once the database was chosen, the 'Hospitality, leisure, sports and tourism' category was selected. In our paper, we have included all the journals indexed in this category in 2010, rejecting any whose main topic is sport. The application of this screening yielded a total of 20 journals (Table 2) focused on the tourism, leisure and hospitality field. The reason for using 2010 as the starting point to carry out this work is due to the fact that prior to that year the number of journals indexed in that category was significantly lower, so the number of observations to be analyzed would have been limited, while the choice of a later year was also rejected because, although it could have raised the total number of journals currently indexed in that category, the records analyzed still would not have had enough time to gather a significant number of citations.

As Table 2 shows, only 4 journals were indexed in the WoS before 2000, while most of them (16) were indexed between 2007 and 2009, coinciding with a period of expansion of said database (Testa, 2011). Once the journals had been selected, the next step was to enter the name of the previous journals in the WoS search panel, filtering the data by "publication name". Specifically, the search returned 24,838 documents, a value that was reduced to 1,043 once the search was refined exclusively to 2010. Next, the search focused only on documents that had passed a strict arbitration process, that is, those indexed as articles and reviews (Mulet, Socias, Monserrat & Amores, 2020); this left 871 to be analyzed, i.e. 83.5 % of the total published in 2010, said value being high enough to analyze the objectives set out in this work.

3.1. Descriptive statistics

The sample contains 871 observations for most of the variables, with papers accumulating more than one thousand citations in the 10 years after the publication (see Table 3). The number of citations is lower, at 382, when we consider only a period of five years. We have considered a five-year citation window in our analysis because it is quite common to do so, and it is a long enough period to evaluate different patterns (Wang et al., 2011; Wang, Yu, An & Yu, 2012; Ruan, Zhu, Li & Cheng, 2020). Furthermore, we have also added a 10-year timeframe to analyze long term citation. In general, significant variability can be observed in most

Table 1
Independent variables and hypotheses.

Category	Factor	Variable name	Definition	Hypotheses	Expected sign
Paper characteristics	Words in a document's title	Title	Number of words in the title	H1A	-
	Titles with punctuation marks	Titleswithmarks	Dummy that takes the value of 1 when the title has punctuation marks	H1B	+
	Number of keywords	Keywords	Number of keywords	H1C	+
	Words in a document's abstract	Abstract	Number of words in the abstract	H1D	+
	Length of a document	Pages	Number of pages	H2	+
Characteristics of the authors	Number of references	References	Number of references	H3	+
	Number of authors	AuthorsN	Number of authors	H4	+
	Gender	Gender	Dummy that takes the value of 1 when the first author is a man	H5	
	Authors' reputation	Citations1A	Number of total citations of the first author	H6A	+
		H-Index	H-index of the first author	H6B	+
Institutional factors	Authors' productivity	Productivity	Number of documents of the first author	H7	+
	International collaboration	Collaboration	Dummy that takes the value of 1 when the document has international collaboration	H8	+
	Level of economic development of the author's residence	Levelofdevelopment	Level of development of the first author's country	H9	+
Journal factors	Reputation of the author's educational institution	Institution	ARWU Ranking of the first author's Institution	H10	+
	Journal Impact Factor – JIF- Journal issue	IFaver5y Issue	5-year journal impact factor, period 2010–2019 Journal issue	H11 H12	+
	Journal's broad scope	Scope	Number of WoS areas in which a journal is indexed	H13	+
Diffusion and early citation	Open access	OA	Dummy that takes the value of 1 when the document is published in Open access	H14A	+
	Downloads	Download	Number of downloads	H14B	+
	Altmetrics	Altmetric	Number total of altmetrics	H14C	+
	Early or initial citations	Citations2y	Citation data during the first 2 years after publication	H14D	+

Source: Own elaboration.

Table 2
List of journals included in the analysis.

Journal	Number of documents included	Y
Annals of Tourism Research	52	1982
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	27	2009
Cornell Hospitality Quarterly	36	2008
Current Issues in Tourism	32	2008
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	56	2009
International Journal of Hospitality Management	87	2008
International Journal of Tourism Research	61	2008
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	26	2008
Journal of Hospitality Leisure Sport & Tourism Education	24	2007
Journal of Leisure Research	29	1969
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	60	2008
Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change	22	2009
Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing	56	2008
Journal of Travel Research	38	2008
Leisure Sciences	30	1991
Leisure Studies	26	2008
Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism	25	2007
Tourism Economics	64	2008
Tourism Geographies	25	2007
Tourism Management	95	1994

Note: Y, year of indexing of the journal in WoS.

Source: Web of Science, October 2020.

of the variables and dimensions considered. It should also be noted that some variables, such as early citations and the altmetric are good predictors of future citation even though, in general, they are not factors that the authors can control a priori. For this reason, we have built models incorporating these variables and excluding them. In addition, the altmetric significantly reduces the sample size and when they are combined with the downloads, the observations fall to 565.

Next, Table 4 shows the mean differences among the papers

Table 3
Descriptive statistics.

Variables	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Citations10y	871	46.45235	72.23	0	1,098
Citations5y	871	16.79104	22.69	0	382
Paper characteristics					
Title	871	11.62	4.12	3	28
Titlewithmarks	871	0.09	0.29	0	1
Keywords	871	4.69	1.29	0	10
Abstract	870	148.14	53.17	1	504
References	871	55.44	29.91	0	373
Pages	871	15.19	5.67	2	44
Author characteristics					
Productivity	871	46.84	65.75	1	490
H-index	871	12.68	10.06	1	72
Citations1A	871	1,083.30	2,054.43	3	20,670
Gender	871	0.35	0.48	0	1
AuthorsN	870	2.24	1.05	1	8
Institutional characteristics					
Collaboration	871	0.23	0.42	0	1
Institution	871	6.18	3.60	1	10
Journal characteristics					
IFaver5y	871	2.02	2.59	0.24	19.09
Issue	871	6.95	3.50	1	12
Scope	871	1.69	0.72	1	3
Diffusion and early citation					
OA	871	0.07	0.26	0	1
Download	730	6,765.54	158,138.50	10	4,273,401
Altmetric	627	1.43	6.85	0	91
Citations2y	871	4.41	5.87	0	89

Source: Own elaboration.

classified in the first quartile using the citations accumulated in the first five years after the publication relative to the rest of the papers. The mean difference analysis reveals that highly-cited papers have significant differences with respect to lowly-cited papers, with more references, higher productivity and citation impact from the main authors, and usually more authors per document. Besides this, the journals in which they are published have a higher average impact factor rate (2.12 versus 1.34) with a broader scope. In addition, the papers have a notable

Table 4
Mean difference between highly citation papers and the others.

	Low	High	Diff.	Std. Error	N
Paper					
Title	11.7807	11.1535	0.6272**	0.317	871
Titlewithmarks	0.0964	0.0702	0.0262	0.022	871
Keywords	4.6361	4.8553	-0.2192**	0.0992	871
Abstract	147.7866	149.1535	-1.3669	4.1011	870
References	51.325	67.0395	-15.7144***	2.2442	871
Pages	15.1415	15.3202	-0.1787	0.437	871
Author					
Productivity	45.4961	50.636	-5.1399	5.0681	871
H-Index	11.902	14.864	-2.9620***	0.7696	871
Citations1A	964.7558	1417.6184	-452.8626***	157.6979	871
Gender	0.3561	0.3421	0.014	0.0369	871
AuthorsN	2.1729	2.4123	-0.2394***	0.0803	870
Institutional					
Collaboration	0.2146	0.2675	-0.0529	0.0323	871
Institution	2.2193	2.2807	-0.0614	0.1999	871
Journal					
IFaver5y	1.3416	2.1247	-0.7831***	0.2678	871
Issue	7.1767	6.3232	0.8534***	0.268	871
Scope	1.6081	1.9254	-0.3174***	0.0543	871
Diffusion and Early Citation					
OA	0.0653	0.0877	-0.0224	0.0198	871
Download	8,718.2344	1,626.3632	7,091.8712	13,109.43	730
Altmetric	0.7216	3.2079	-2.4863***	0.5988	627
Citations2y	2.2146	10.6096	-8.3950***	0.3517	871

Note: Level of statistical significance: * statistically significant at the 10%; ** statistically significant at the 5%; *** statistically significant at the 1%.

early citation and a significant difference in terms of the altimetric.

Regarding the correlations, as we can see in Table 5, the citations accumulated by a paper in the 5 (Citations5y) and 10 years (Citations10y) after publication are related with the number of references, the relevance of the first author (measured by his or her H-index or citations) and the scope of the journal, given that journals with a broad area of research attract many citations. By the same token, the high correlation between the early and long-term citation indicates that the first two years are very important for predicting citations for longer periods of analysis. In general, for the independent variables, the main correlation has been found for the productivity, citations1A and the H-

Table 5
Correlation between citations and the independent variables.

	Citations10y	Citons5y
Citations10y	1	0.9578
Citations5y	0.9578	1
Paper		
Title	-0.0452	-0.0662
Keywords	0.0446	0.0716
Abstract	-0.02	-0.0114
Pages	-0.032	-0.0136
References	0.2592	0.2581
Authors		
Productivity	0.0912	0.0895
H-Index	0.1824	0.1799
Citations1A	0.1964	0.183
AuthorsN	0.0621	0.0767
Institutional		
Collaboration	0.046	0.04980
Institution	0.0367	0.0358
Journal		
IFaver5y	0.3552	0.4100
Issue	-0.0898	-0.1278
Scope	0.2007	0.2371
Early citation and Diffusion		
Download	-0.004	-0.0084
Altmetric	0.3783	0.3956
Citations2y	0.8186	0.9087

Note: This table contains the correlations between the citations and explanatory variables considered in the analysis. The correlations of the dummy variables have not been analyzed.

Index, with values close to 85 %. The other variables show low or moderate correlations.

3.2. Models and results for the determinants of citation

Regression is one of the most common methodologies used to explain or predict citation (Ruan et al., 2020). Using this methodology, several papers, like Locker et al. (2008), Yu, Yu, Liand Wang (2014), Annalingam, Damayanthi, Jayawardena and Ranasinghe (2014), and Abramo, d'Angelo and Felici (2019) show the importance of early citations when the intention is to predict medium term citation. Another commonly used methodology is the Negative Binomial regression, taking into account that the number of citations has a non-negative, skewed distribution (Lokker et al., 2008); this has been used in several papers, like Didegah and Thelwall (2013b) and Onodera and Yoshikane (2015) to predict the citations in different fields. Other methodologies like machine learning (Bai, Zhang & Lee, 2019) and Neuronal networks (Ruan et al., 2020) are common in the bibliometric field. Unlike regression models, classification approaches do not have strict requirements for data distribution. One advantage of the regression approach is that it does not need training data to be able to categorize new data (test set). Because in this section we try to identify the most influential determinants of the level of citations, we have opted for the use of several regression techniques. In particular, we firstly show and compare the estimation via linear and negative binomial regression and we estimate the quantile regression to complete the analysis. The following equation is estimated first, using a linear regression model:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Y_i = & \alpha_i + \beta_1 Title + \beta_2 Titlewithmarks + \beta_3 Keywords + \beta_4 Abstract + \beta_5 References \\
 & + \beta_6 Pages + \beta_7 Productivity + \beta_8 Citations1A + \beta_9 Gender \\
 & + \beta_{10} Collaboration + \beta_{11} Institution + \beta_{12} AuthorsN + \beta_{13} IFaver5 \\
 & + \beta_{14} Issue + \beta_{15} Scope + \beta_{16} OA + \beta_{17} Download \\
 & + \beta_{18} Altmetrics + \beta_{19} H.Index + \beta_{20} Citations2y + \beta_{21} USA + \beta_{22} England \\
 & + \beta_{23} China + \beta_{24} Canada + \beta_{25} Australia + \beta_{26} EuropeoexUK + \epsilon_i
 \end{aligned}
 \tag{1}$$

where:

Y_i is the number of citations of the paper 5 years after the publication. The independent variables are described in Table 2, and α_i and β_k

with $k = 1, \dots, 26$ are parameters of the regression while ε_{it} is the error term.

In the case of the negative binomial analysis, Y_i is the value of the response variable which is distributed as a binomial distribution (Onodera & Yoshikane, 2015):

$$\Pr(Y_i = K) = \frac{\Gamma(k + \Theta)}{\Gamma(\Theta)\Gamma(k + 1)} \left(\frac{\Theta}{\mu_i + \Theta}\right)^\Theta \left(\frac{\mu_i}{\mu_i + \Theta}\right)^k \quad (2)$$

where:

μ_i is the expected value, estimated as $\ln(\mu_i) = \alpha_i + \beta_1 X_{i1} + \beta_2 X_{i2} + \dots + \beta_p X_{ip}$, Θ and β_k are obtained from the input data (X and Y_i), and Θ is supposed to be independent of i .

The results of the models (Table 6), regardless of the method used, show a great consensus regarding the variables that determine the number of citations accumulated in the five years after the publication of a paper. The number of references (*References*) has a positive and highly significant relationship, supporting hypothesis 3 and is in line with previous evidence in other research areas, such as Ahlgren, Colliander, and Sjögarde (2018) and Mammola, Fontaneto, Martínez and Chichorro (2021). Moreover, productivity is relevant in all the models, although the sign is the opposite to what is expected in hypothesis 7. The fact that we have incorporated other variables related to the author's reputation, such as the H-index and citations from the first author (Citations1A) may affect that relationship. Given that the first author's citations are positively and significantly related to the number of future citations, this indicates that a good evolution is expected in highly cited authors, albeit with few publications, something that seems reasonable. Therefore, our work also supports hypothesis 6A, which postulates many future citations of papers whose first author has an excellent reputation as supported by the number of previous citations, thus adding to the studies by Walters (2006), and Yu, Yu, Li and Wang (2014). Regarding the journal

impact factor (IFaver5y), it is very relevant in most of the estimated models and methods, highlighting the importance of the journal's reputation in future citations, which has already been found in papers such as those by Subotic and Mukherjee (2014) and Van Der Pol et al. (2015) in other areas of research. Furthermore, the issue of the journal seems to determine the citation of a paper and the negative sign is contrary to the hypothesis raised, which supports high citations for papers published in the first half of the year, thus adding evidence to the scarce literature that proposes a poor citation rate for papers published at the end of the year (Ma, Li, Guo & Si, 2019). Regarding open-access (OA) publications, the advantage giving free access to the manuscript in terms of future citations has been confirmed. The result obtained does not cast any doubt, and open access documents receive an average of five more citations than those that do not support hypothesis 14A. Consequently, the strategy of publishing openly in the tourism field can provide high citation levels for the paper, in line with the approaches by Basson, Blanckenberg and Prozesky (2021) and Lund and Maurya (2020). Finally, following H14D, the first two years largely mark the trajectory of citations that a paper has, meaning that the incorporation of this variable allows the level of fit to increase from 45 % to 85 % in the linear model. Thus, like in the papers by Yu et al. (2014), the importance of citations from early on is confirmed, although these cannot be considered to be a determinant that the authors can monitor at the time of publication. At the same time, altmetrics are significantly related to future citations, as hypothesis 14C proposes, so they are an aspect which authors who wish to obtain citations in their articles in the field of tourism should seriously consider. Another variable that, contrary to our initial hypothesis, has been relevant in a significant number of models is gender, with a sign contrary to what is established in most of the previous literature. In this case, papers signed by women receive a high number of citations, which has also been found in Clapar, Tacchella and Birrer (2017).

Table 6
Regression models for citations.

Variable	Linear Regression Models			Binomial negative		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Title	-0.059	-0.0261	0.169	-0.0063	-0.0056	-0.0016
Titlewithmarks	0.5878	0.2171	0.2031	0.0289	0.0319	0.0392
keywords	0.0997	-0.0235	0.1403	0.0166	0.0129	0.02
Abstract	0.0108	0.0081	0.0137	0.0003	0.0001	0.0005
References	0.1290***	0.1309***	0.0510***	0.0076***	0.0077***	0.0046***
Pages	-0.3272*	-0.3599*	-0.3157***	-0.0031	-0.0028	-0.0041
Productivity	-0.1026***	-0.1023***	-0.0612***	-0.0030***	-0.0030***	-0.0023***
H-Index	-0.0574	-0.0625	-0.0134	-0.0007	-0.0015	0.004
Citations1A	0.0054***	0.0055***	0.0028***	0.0002***	0.0002***	0.0001**
Gender	3.5548**	3.6417**	-0.4568	0.1192*	0.1170*	0.0339
Collaboration	-3.0096	-2.938	-1.4664	-0.0962	-0.0981	-0.042
Institution	-0.3221	-0.4129*	-0.0413	-0.0055	-0.0048	0.0049
AuthorsN	1.088	1.1256	0.1561	0.1121***	0.1095***	0.0628**
IFaver5y	9.0769***	9.3580***	-1.3013	0.6124***	0.6232***	0.2958***
Issue	-0.8579***	-0.8636***	0.1508	-0.0295***	-0.0307***	0.0006
Scope	3.8289**	3.4237**	1.2877	0.0386	0.0264	-0.0435
OA	5.2365*	5.4753**	1.4452	0.2323*	0.2811**	0.1661*
Download	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Altmetric	1.7575*	1.7508*	0.3978*	0.0318***	0.0310***	0.0023
Citations2y	-	-	3.3054***	-	-	0.0920***
EuropeoexUK	-	-0.7896	1.0501	-	-0.0456	0.0792
USA	-	-1.6313	0.1631	-	-0.0899	0.0521
England	-	-1.2988	-1.7005	-	-0.2855**	-0.2453**
China	-	-4.3531	-0.1249	-	-0.0933	0.0489
Canada	-	3.4965	2.5981	-	0.1063	0.1009
Australia	-	-1.8104	1.4695	-	0.0184	0.1344
_cons	-4.7752	-2.2141	-2.4296	1.0141***	1.1006***	1.0907***
N	565	565	565	565	565	565
r2	0.4464	0.4502	0.8591	0.095	0.0966	0.1572

Note: The table shows the results of the regression using two different regression methodologies (linear and Negative Binomial) where the dependent variables are the citations, and the independent variables are defined in table 2. In addition, country dummies have been included in some of the models. N is the number of observations, r2 is the R-squared of the regression. The second model of each regression adds the country control variables and the third, the early citation. Level of statistical significance: * statistically significant at 10%; ** statistically significant at 5%; *** statistically significant at 1%.

Furthermore, to evaluate the effects at different locations of the citation distribution, which is skewed and affected by outliers, the quantile regression is used. This methodology has been quite a common alternative in the bibliometric field (Birks, Fairhurst, Bloor, Campbell, Baird & Torgerson, 2014; Stegehuis, Litvak & Waltman, 2015; Ahlgren, Colliander & Sjögarde, 2017). Taking y_i as the different performance measures and X_i as a regressor vector, the proposed quantile regression model is in the following form:

$$y_i = X_i' \beta_\phi + u_{\phi i} \quad (3)$$

assuming that:

$$Quant_\phi(y_i|X_i) = X_i' \beta_\phi \quad (4)$$

$$Quant_\phi(Y_i|X_i) = 0 \quad (5)$$

In Table 7 we can see that when this methodology is used, the main variables that are relevant in the previous models continue to be relevant in the quantile regression. Thus, the number of references, as well as the productivity and the citations of the first author, impact factor, issue and altmetrics are still significant in most of the models and with the same sign. However, it should be noted that both the first author's citations (Citations1A) and the altmetrics are only explanatory in the 75th quintile. Hence, to differentiate the number of citations in the most-cited group, the reputation of the first author and the dissemination of the paper seem to be important, although it is not the case in lower levels of the citation's distribution. Likewise, gender only seems relevant in the central part of the distribution, but not in the most extreme values.

As seen in Table 8, not all the variables used to test the hypotheses are significant. The results of regression models indicate that the number of references, the citations of the first author, the journal impact factor and the issue (first half of the year), the altmetrics, early citations, being a woman (gender) and publishing in open access format have a positive influence in the citations.

3.3. Models and results for the strategies to accomplish a highly cited paper in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field

In this section, we will analyze the strategies that an author could use to increase the number of citations of an article in the category of tourism, leisure and hospitality. For this purpose, we will use a logical qualitative analysis technique called Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA). QCA was developed by Ragin (1987) and bases the analysis on logical techniques such as Boolean algebra, truth tables and methods of logical minimization. QCA was popularized by Ragin (1987, 2000, 2008) and Rihoux and Ragin (2009). In the last few years in various fields, the number of QCA-related articles published in journals has increased exponentially (Rihoux, Álamos-Concha, Bol, Marx & Rezsöhazi, 2013). QCA can help highlight relationships of necessary and sufficient causation and analyze the possible causal contribution of a set of conditions of a particular outcome. QCA was recently used to analyze the research impact in the category of tourism, leisure and hospitality (see Phillips, Page & Sebu, 2020). As a result, we can use the QCA technique to find out the causal configuration, i.e., the combination of factors that constitutes a subset of the outcome for producing highly cited papers. Unlike the previous section which uses regression analysis, focusing on the net effect of a factor on an outcome, QCA focuses on the conditions (combinations of factors) that lead to a specific outcome.

Even though QCA works well with a low quantity of cases, the number of causal conditions should be small (for Rihoux & Ragin (2009), between three and eight). We have employed the following factors influencing citations for a paper. We have used the number of references (References) as a characteristic of the paper, the number of citations for the first author as a characteristic of the author (Citations), international collaboration as an institutional characteristic (Collaboration), the Open Access variable as a diffusion factor and the journal

impact factor (IFaver5y) as a journal characteristic. The literature review and our previous empirical analysis justify their relevance. We have adopted the fuzzy-set QCA, fsQCA variant,¹ and the QCA package built into the R software (Dusa, 2020).

Once relevant cases and causal conditions were identified, the next step was calibration, which is the transformation of the original raw values of variables into fuzzy variables. A fuzzy value greater than 0.5 means membership (the value of 1 is for full-membership), while a fuzzy value of less than 0.5 means non-membership. Open Access and International collaboration are crispy variables from the start (the value of 0 or 1). The remaining variables were initially calibrated using the logistic function to produce fuzzy set membership scores using three anchors (the value of the percentile 0.05 for a full non-membership threshold, the value of the percentile 0.5 as maximum ambiguity and the value of the percentile 0.95 as the threshold for full membership). We have not been able to perform the direct assignment method because there is no expert knowledge on allocating fuzzy scores, but we have validated the scores with the plots of the variable values.

The next step was the analysis for necessity, which is an assessment of whether any conditions are necessary to obtain a high impact paper score. It is usually assumed that conditions are necessary if its consistency exceeds 0.9 (Schneider, Schulze-Bentrop & Paunescu, 2010) and provided its coverage is not too low. No individual condition or combination of two of them was necessary for the outcome. A high level of references is the individual condition with the highest value of consistency (0.70), followed by the journal's impact factor (0.65) then the citations for the first author (0.63). Table 9 presents three necessary solutions that arise if we specify a cut-off for the relevance of necessity, using a relevance threshold of at least 0.6 with at least 0.8 inclusion (consistency). Following these criteria, for example, the first combinations (References + IFaver5y) imply that a paper having a high quantity of references or published in a journal with a high-level impact factor is necessary to accomplish a highly cited paper.

The analysis of sufficiency, which identifies if there are any conditions that always lead to the outcome, has been performed using truth tables, which have 2^k rows (configurations), where k refers to the number of causal conditions (the number of groups of factors [negated or not]) that can be grouped (in our dataset, 32 configurations). Truth tables summarize all logically possible combinations of conditions. Table 10 shows the truth table of the dataset, in which each row shows a configuration that corresponds to one or more cases. A consistency threshold of 0.8 has been chosen, above which it is deemed that the configuration is consistent with its being sufficient for the outcome of interest to occur.

The Boolean minimization of a truth table can be calculated via three methods depending on how the logical remainders (the settings that are not presented in the experience [note that it is not the case in the dataset]) are treated: the conservative/complex solution, the parsimonious solution or the intermediate solution. The Boolean minimization aims to obtain the simplest possible expression that is related with the explained value of the output (Dusa, 2020). The solution for the truth table is shown in Table 11. The results show nine configurations which make up three solutions (called M1, M2 and M3), revealing several paths to achieving a high citation score. This means that there are several conditions that can influence the citations of a paper. All the configurations need the combinations of many conditions. We have employed the following notation: X is a condition, and its negation is $\sim X$. For example, the first combination (A*B*~E) is made up of three conditions: a high quantity of references combined with the impact factor of the

¹ Other variants are crisp sets (csQCA), temporal (QCA) and multi-value sets (mvQCA). With crisp sets, each case is assigned one of two possible membership scores in each set included in a study: "1" (membership in the set) or "0" (non-membership in the set). Fuzzy sets extend crisp sets by permitting membership scores in the interval between [0] and [1].

Table 7
Quantile regression models for citations.

Quintile Model	q25			q50			q75		
	Model 1	Model2	Model3	Model 1	Model2	Model3	Model 1	Model2	Model3
Title	-0.1652*	-0.1261	0.0058	-0.0949	-0.0997	0.0107	-0.2909	-0.1628	-0.0256
Titlewithmarks	0.453	0.4648	-0.6026	1.0974	1.0807	-0.3989	0.1395	0.6149	1.2332
keywords	0.2465	0.2451	-0.0021	0.2142	0.1581	-0.0495	-0.3124	0.0435	0.0306
Abstract	0.0054	0.0052	0.0091	0.0148	0.0175	0.0097	-0.0055	-0.0114	0.0153
References	0.0472**	0.0451***	0.019	0.0702**	0.0728**	0.0404**	0.0890**	0.0767	0.0427**
Pages	0.04	0.0493	-0.0782	0.004	-0.0182	-0.105	0.0747	0.0181	-0.0797
Productivity	-0.0175*	-0.0159	-0.0247***	-0.0445***	-0.0402**	-0.0279***	-0.0659*	-0.0645**	-0.0428***
H-Index	-0.0002	-0.0065	0.0685	0.0638	0.0871	-0.0161	-0.4936	-0.4906*	-0.0959
Citations1A	0.0006	0.0007	0.0009*	0.0017	0.0015	0.0012	0.0081***	0.0078**	0.0029*
Gender	0.7294	0.8579	0.5837	1.6736*	2.2999**	-0.4085	2.8366**	1.9305	-0.1383
Collaboration	-0.0494	-0.0217	-0.2871	0.4826	0.218	-0.3122	-1.2153	-2.6204*	-0.3634
Institution	-0.0052	-0.0415	-0.0189	-0.0582	-0.0879	0.0281	-0.0946	-0.177	-0.0845
AuthorsN	0.4575	0.4476	0.2754	0.4305	0.5914	0.064	1.4703	1.6837**	0.9789**
IFaver5y	4.4884***	4.6258***	0.4838	6.7501***	6.9146***	0.1734	9.2192***	10.2690***	-0.0076
Issue	-0.2285*	-0.2264**	0.0605	-0.3539***	-0.3490***	0.0261	-0.4034	-0.4692**	0.2349*
Scope	0.8546	0.5791	-0.0741	2.3527**	1.8688**	0.4301	3.3967**	3.9108***	1.4531
OA	1.1843	2.0482**	0.085	2.0532	3.1468**	2.1455	3.7683	2.7913	0.8229
Download	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Altmetric	0.228	0.2193	0.0487	1.3379	1.3154	0.2479	3.4315**	3.2679**	1.0698**
EuropaexUK	-	0.0133	0.7381	-	0.0337	0.2498	-	-3.8017	0.3366
Citations2y	-	-	2.2747***	-	-	2.7708***	-	-	3.2489***
USA	-	-0.3751	0.2492	-	-0.8017	0.221	-	-5.0450**	0.6176
England	-	-0.908	0.3937	-	-2.0453	-1.3875	-	-2.3201	-0.3842
China	-	-1.7249	-0.8186	-	-2.9902	0.5946	-	-1.135	0.0833
Canada	-	0.2183	1.3346	-	0.8575	3.9944**	-	-1.5054	4.0972**
Australia	-	-0.2704	0.9127	-	-2.3628	1.3806	-	-1.8578	1.1793
_cons	-3.8013*	-3.6119	-2.4829	-7.4683**	-7.1815**	-0.8222	0.0869	0.8001	-3.9279

Note: The table shows the results of the quantile regression where the dependent variable is the citations and the independent variables are defined in Table 2. In addition, country dummies have been included in some of the models. N is the number of observations, r2 is the R-squared of the regression. The second model of each regression adds the country control variables and the third, the early citation. Level of statistical significance: * statistically significant at 10%; ** statistically significant at 5%; *** statistically significant at 1%.

journal and no international collaboration is enough to produce a highly impactful paper. The second combination means a low number of references in the bibliography combined with a high impact factor for the journal and an international collaboration which is also enough to produce a highly impactful paper. Table 10 also presents the raw coverage (third column) and the consistency or inclusion scores (fourth column). The raw coverage shows how much of the outcome is explained by the configurations or solutions, like the R-squared in a regression model. The results reveal that all of the configurations have low coverage (below 0.5) and the solution coverage ranges between 0.565 and 0.581. Configurations 6, 7, 8 and 9 are the least plausible configurations. Consistency reveals how much each configuration weighs in the outcome. The consistency scores are above 0.8, meeting Ragin’s (2008) criterion regarding consistency values, implying high consistency for the three solutions and the nine configurations. Of particular interest in the findings is the evident role of the journal impact factor and the high quantity of references and a non-highly cited first author, A*B*~E, which is present as a construct in the three solutions.

3.4. Robustness

We have performed the following robustness checks: we have used the citations for 10 years instead of 5, reaching the same conclusions, applying the same regression techniques. We have also estimated the regression model using the logarithm of citations and the Poisson regression, in general obtaining the same results.

Table 12 below presents the results using regression models with a new data set, the 2015 documents looking 5 years ahead in terms of citations. Overall, these estimations confirm our previous results and in general the variables that we have found in the main models remain significant and with the same signs.

For the QCA, we have varied the frequency threshold, the consistency threshold (Ragin’s recommended values for 2008 being greater

than 0.74; because we initially used the value of 0.8, we have tested our previous results by employing 0.75 and 0.85) and finally, the calibration of the conditions (fuzzy sets) using other functions; initially we employed automatically adjusted values via a logistic function and the values of the percentile 0.05 for complete exclusion, 0.5 for the cross-over point and 0.95 for complete inclusion; in robustness we have used the empirical cumulative distribution function (ECDF) and the “bell-shape” functions (see Dusa, 2020). We have obtained the same configurations and solutions that we have previously shown in Table 10.

4. Discussion and conclusion

4.1. Conclusions

In this paper we have carried out a bibliometric study of papers published in journals indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) in the field of tourism, leisure and hospitality. We have applied the number of citations for a paper in the five and ten years after its publication as a proxy of its quality and impact. There are several features that could have an impact on a paper’s citations. From the theoretical review we can summarize them in the following five categories: the paper’s features (the characteristics of its title, number of pages [length], number of references cited, etc.), the journal’s features (the journal impact factor, etc.), the authors’ features (number of authors or institutions, H-index, etc.), the institutional aspects (countries, universities, international collaboration, etc.), and finally, its diffusion and early citations (open access, Altmetrics, etc.).

By analyzing the differences in means between the most and least cited articles, we have demonstrated that they can be found in several variables from all the aforementioned categories. Using regression models (multiple linear regression, Poisson regression and negative binomial regression) we have explained the factors that determine the obtention of a great number of citations in a paper. We have found that

Table 8
Summary of results and hypothesis testing.

Category	Factor (Hypothesis)	Prediction	Sign / Significance
Paper characteristics	Number of words in a document's title (H1.A)	-	- / Only in QR q25 Model 1)
	Titles with punctuation marks (H1.B)	+	+ / No
	Number of keywords in a document (H1.C)	+	Usually + / No
	Number of words in a document's abstract (H1.D)	+	+ / No
	Length of a document (H2)	+	-/ Only inLR
	Number of references (H3)	+	+ / Yes
Characteristics of the authors	Number of authors (H4)	+	+ / Only in BNR and QR q75
	Gender (H5)	No affect	+ / Yes
	Reputation of the first author (H6.A, H6.B)	+	+ (Citations)/ Yes Usually - (H-Index)/ No
Institutional factors	Authors' productivity (H7)	+	-/ Yes
	International collaboration (H8)	+	-/ No
	More developed country of the first author's residence (H9)	+	No
	Reputation of the first author's educational institution (H10)	+	-/ No
Journal factors	Journal Impact Factor – JIF- (H11)	+	+ / Yes
	Journal issue (H12)	Not affect	- / Yes
	Journal's broad scope (H13)	+	+ / Yes (LR and QR)
Diffusion and early citation	Open access (H14.a)	+	+ / Yes
	Number of downloads (H14.b)	+	+ / No
	Number of altmetrics (H14.c)	+	+ / Yes
	Early or initial citations (H14.d)	+	+ / Yes

Table 9
Necessary condition table.

Combinations	inclN	RoN	covN
References + IFaver5y	0.844	0.649	0.644
References + Citations1A	0.843	0.631	0.632
IFaver5y + Citations1A	0.807	0.686	0.653

Note: inclN: sufficiency inclusion score (consistency), RoN: relevance of necessity. covN: coverage score.

the following variables have significant parameters: in the “paper’s features” category, the greater the number of references a paper cites, the greater the number of citations the paper receives, similar to the findings of Ahlgren et al. (2018) and Mammola et al. (2021), among others, but contrary to Wallace, Larivière and Gingras (2009); in the “journal’s features” category, the publication of documents in journals with a high impact factor positively affects their citation rate, similar to what Subotic and Mukherjee, (2014) and Van Der Pol et al. (2015) assert. The issues in which articles are published also have an impact on the number of citations received, whereby the ones which have the most citations are those that are published at the beginning of the year, in line with De Araujo et al. (2012).

In the category of “authors’ features” we have discovered that the number of authors, their productivity and the number of citations for the first author all have a positive and significant impact on the number of

citations received for the paper. This confirms that researchers select the references to cite based on the relevance of authors. Co-authorship is positively related to the citation rate of a document in that the higher the number of authors, the higher the number of citations, confirming Onodera and Yoshikane, (2015) and Fox et al. (2016), but contrary to Yu and Yu (2014) and Antoniou et al. (2015). Finally, in the “diffusion and early citations” category we have noticed that publishing in open access and early citation metrics such as the number of citations at 2 years and altmetrics, have a positive impact on the number of citations obtained. Similar to Antoniou et al. (2015), Basson et al. (2021), and Lund and Maurya (2020), we have found that open access (OA) publications increase the dissemination of research results. The articles can also receive a great deal of mentions, shares, likes, tweets or similar with altmetrics. We have learned that the WoS database currently lacks some data on this variable for the journals in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field, although it may be a valid measure for the use and impact of scientific publications in the not-too-distant future. Finally, we have discovered that early citations a paper receives in the two years after its publication can be considered predictors of its future citations. The scientific community considers that the articles which are cited the most in the first few years are of quality and are therefore cited in the years that follow by a high number of papers.

Using Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) we have highlighted the combination of factors that constitutes a subset of the outcome of producing highly-cited papers. We have shown that all the possible combinations of the analyzed factors (number of references, journal impact factor, international collaborations, publishing in open access and the relevance of the first author [measured via the citations of the first author]) are present in our dataset. This means that a special combination of these factors is not required for publishing in the WoS database in the field of tourism, leisure and hospitality. The most frequent combinations are papers published in journals with low journal impact factors, with a low number of references, without international collaboration and published in a non-open access format, these factors combined leading to a lowly cited paper. Focusing on the solutions in the truth table, we have found nine configurations which make up three solutions. All nine configurations need the combinations of several conditions (three or four) to produce high citations. This is contrary to the regression models which give the impression that the variables with positive parameters have a positive effect on the number of citations, making a paper highly cited when there is a high value in the variables. However, in the QCA estimation, we can observe that the combinations of several factors are needed to obtain a paper with high citations. The five most plausible configurations are:

- High number of references combined with high impact factor for the journal and no international collaboration.
- Low quantity of references in the bibliography combined with high impact factor for the journal and an international collaboration.
- High number of references combined with high impact factor for the journal and no open access publication.
- High impact factor for the journal without an international collaboration and high number of citations for the main author.
- High impact factor for the journal, no open access publication and high number of citations for the first author.

We have obtained 3 solutions, a phenomenon known in QCA as model ambiguity, which illustrates a common situation in QCA when there are various models that fit a dataset equally well. Of particular interest in the findings are the evident role of the journal impact factor, the high number of references and a non-highly cited first author, which are present as constructs in the three solutions obtained. In QCA language we find one prime implicant that is common to all models, i.e., one combination of causes that seems essential to the outcome (see Baumgartner & Thiem, 2017). The inclusion of other metrics that more effectively measure the real quality of the paper (intrinsic characteristics

Table 10
Truth table.

	References	IFaver5y	Collaboration	OA	Citations1A	Output	n	Incl	PRI
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	118	0.531	0.182
2	0	0	0	0	1	0	73	0.662	0.28
3	0	0	0	1	0	0	13	0.576	0.288
4	0	0	0	1	1	0	5	0.787	0.512
5	0	0	1	0	0	0	23	0.612	0.201
6	0	0	1	0	1	0	23	0.767	0.483
7	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0.727	0.297
8	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0.946	0.782
9	0	1	0	0	0	0	58	0.742	0.419
10	0	1	0	0	1	1	45	0.855	0.624
11	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0.723	0.393
12	0	1	0	1	1	1	6	0.876	0.74
13	0	1	1	0	0	0	12	0.786	0.431
14	0	1	1	0	1	1	19	0.821	0.555
16	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.976	0.93
17	1	0	0	0	0	0	65	0.709	0.372
18	1	0	0	0	1	0	54	0.781	0.472
19	1	0	0	1	0	0	7	0.724	0.377
20	1	0	0	1	1	1	3	0.885	0.66
21	1	0	1	0	0	0	19	0.765	0.463
22	1	0	1	0	1	0	18	0.797	0.545
24	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0.854	0.614
25	1	1	0	0	0	1	51	0.832	0.623
26	1	1	0	0	1	1	74	0.896	0.761
27	1	1	0	1	0	1	3	0.84	0.6
28	1	1	0	1	1	1	10	0.952	0.9
29	1	1	1	0	0	1	19	0.87	0.697
30	1	1	1	0	1	1	36	0.865	0.732
31	1	1	1	1	0	1	2	0.823	0.728
32	1	1	1	1	1	0	4	0.73	0.537

Note: n is the number of cases in configuration. Incl is the sufficiency inclusion score and PRI the proportional reduction in inconsistency.

Table 11
Solution of the truth table.

Solutions	Raw Coverage	Consistency	
1	A*B*~E	0.389	0.841
2	~A*B*E	0.316	0.85
3	A*B*~D	0.464	0.825
4	B*~C*E	0.349	0.857
5	B*~D*E	0.433	0.845
6	~A*C*D*E	0.006	0.959
7	A*~B*D*E	0.024	0.878
8	A*~C*D*E	0.028	0.893
9	~B*C*D*E	0.006	0.869
M1:	A*B*~E + (~A*B*E + A*B*~D + A*~C*D*E + ~B*C*D*E)	0.581	0.805
M2:	A*B*~E + (~A*B*E + B*~D*E + A*~C*D*E + ~B*C*D*E)	0.565	0.814
M3:	A*B*~E + (B*~C*E + B*~D*E + ~A*C*D*E + A*~B*D*E)	0.565	0.814

Note: A: References. B: Journal’s impact factor. C: International collaboration. D: Open access. E: Citations of the first author. ~ means negation. * means AND. + means OR.

such as a well-constructed hypothesis) or the inclusion of the novelty, popularity and interest of the subject (see [Tahamtan, Safipour Afshar & Ahamdzadeh \(2016\)](#) for a comprehensive review of the literature) could improve the results for the coverage of the models.

4.2. Theoretical implications

Decision makers often use citation counting to assess the academic performance of researchers and institutions when having to decide upon several procedures such as hiring, promotion or funding. Nevertheless, relatively few studies have utilized bibliometric analysis in tourism ([Koseoglu, Rahimi, Okumus & Liu, 2016](#)). The significant theoretical contribution lies in the need for combinations of several factors to obtain a paper with high citations in the field of tourism, leisure and

hospitality. Methodologically, this paper contributes to bibliometric research in the analyzed field thanks to its application of fsQCA. Using complexity theory, researchers can formulate models where no single condition is responsible for the outcome (high citations). Nonetheless, we have obtained several conditions or factors in order to observe how they combine to contribute to the final result. Regression models, which are usually employed in bibliometric analysis, isolate the net and independent effects of single independent variables (the factors) from the dependent variable (the outcome). We have proven that no single condition is the cause of an outcome, but we have found three prime implicants: the journal impact factor, the high number of references and a non-highly cited main author are constructs in the three solutions obtained.

4.3. Practical implications

This work has been carried out in order to identify which factors can influence the citation rate of a scientific paper, specifically in the area of tourism, leisure and hospitality. This will be of great help to researchers when preparing and submitting their manuscripts to journals in order to ensure that their articles occupy relevant positions in the citation ranks. In addition, the results obtained in our study provide very useful information for academic policy and decision makers in universities, research centers and governments ([Law, Leung & Buhalis, 2010](#)). They are also useful for editors in an effort to make editorial decisions. Promoting open access, fostering articles with a high number of references, identifying any emerging patterns (recent paper with high altmetrics or early citations) and so on, seem like good strategies to increase citations and improve journal rankings.

4.4. Limitations and future research

This study has its own limitations. Firstly, the sample which we have used covers papers published in journals which were indexed in the Web of Science (WoS) in the tourism, leisure and hospitality field. This may

Table 12
Regression models with new data for citations.

Variable	Linear Regression Models			Binomial negative		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Titlequest	0.2418	0.118	0.1373	0.0035	0.0015	0.001
Titlewithmarks	6.4304	1.4018	1.4606	0.112	-0.0354	-0.0352
keywords	0.8463	0.1008	0.0852	0.0433**	0.0201	0.0211
Abstract	-0.0148	0.0114	0.0123	0.0004	0.0008**	0.0009**
References	0.3035***	0.0425**	0.0426**	0.0100***	0.0039***	0.0040***
Pages	-0.2974*	-0.1746**	-0.1734**	-0.0086	-0.0034	-0.0038
Productivity	-0.1374***	-0.0318**	-0.0307**	-0.0027***	0.0001	0.0001
H-Index	-0.0284	-0.1711**	-0.1658**	0.0032	0.0017	0.0011
Citations1A	0.0063***	0.0018**	0.0018**	0.0001***	0	0
Gender	3.9309**	0.6463	0.6825	0.0663	-0.0535	-0.0396
Collaboration	-1.5145	-0.1628	-0.117	-0.0123	0.0337	0.0371
Institution	-0.0232	-0.0067		0.004	0.0038	
IFaver5y	5.8742***	-0.5669	-0.507	0.2779***	0.1197***	0.1198***
Issue	-0.7988**	0.6745***	0.6840***	-0.0278***	0.0056	0.0048
Scope	1.2489	-1.8186***	-1.9001**	-0.0787**	-0.1034***	-0.1056***
OA	2.7657*	-0.592	-0.1711	0.1419**	0.0139	0.0012
citations2y		4.3194***	4.3142***		0.0894***	0.0890***
EuropeExUK			0.228			0.0839*
USA			0.7835			0.0532
UK			1.4586			0.4645
Canada			6.0114			-0.2263**
China			0.6029			0.0272
Australia			-0.8634			0.1100*
_cons	-11.4906*	-2.368	-3.4168	1.5595***	1.6626***	1.6540***
N	1211	1211	1211	1211	1211	1211
r2	0.2341	0.8686	0.8694	0.056	0.1423	0.1435

Note: The table shows the results of the regression using two different regression methodologies (Linear and Negative Binomial) where the dependent variables are the citations, and the independent variables are defined in Table 2. In addition, country dummies have been included in some of the models. N is the number of observations, r2 is the R-squared of the regression. The second model of each regression adds the country control variables and the third, the early citation. Level of statistical significance: * statistically significant at 10%; ** statistically significant at 5%; *** statistically significant at 1%.

suggest that future studies should include a larger sample of journals included in other databases (such as Scopus). Secondly, bibliometric analysis can be applied to any bibliometric unit, and it is not limited to studies of journal citations (see Hall, 2011, Koseoglu et al., 2016). Our sample has only included articles published in tourism journals. Future studies could consider other publications such as conference proceedings and books, for instance. Thirdly, there might be errata and other oversights in bibliographic data for the related databases that could impact the reliability of bibliometric analysis (see Hicks, 2004). In our dataset there are missing values in several variables, especially in altmetrics due to its relative newness. Fourthly, other model alternatives, such as neuronal networks, support vector machines (SVMs) and Structural equation modeling (SEM), could be used which could have significant influence on the results and in the errors associated with the estimate. In the Robustness section we estimated the models for the papers published in the year 2015. Estimating the models for all the possible years is an extremely challenging task because multiple variables/data are manually collected. Finally, despite the inclusion of 22 variables in our data set, the literature indicates that other variables which are not in our dataset could affect the number of citations (see Tahamtan et al., 2016).

In future studies, authors could focus on a systematic review to identify the most relevant contributors (such as authors, institutions or countries) for a bibliometric analysis in tourism. Secondly, the research could develop scales measuring the quality of papers. Thirdly, since citations vary according to the field of study and sub-fields of a discipline, the inclusion of trending topics, a research area that many people will find interesting, should improve the results. Fourthly, there are other techniques, such as neural networks and decision trees, which have also been used in bibliometric studies. Future work could compare bibliometric studies in the tourism field with bibliometric studies in other fields using the different statistical techniques available.

CRedit authorship contribution statement

Onofre Martorell Cunil: Writing – review & editing, Methodology, Conceptualization. **Luis Otero González:** Writing – original draft, Supervision, Formal analysis, Data curation. **Pablo Durán Santomil:** Writing – original draft, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation. **Carlos Mulet Forteza:** Validation, Supervision, Resources, Methodology, Conceptualization.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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