

# Chapter 10

## Evaluating Bibliometric Studies on Smart Tourism: A Crucial Analysis in a Rapidly Evolving Field

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### ABSTRACT

*Tourism, a dynamic industry, has been transformed by technological advancements, leading to Smart Tourism Frameworks (STFs). These frameworks leverage ICT, AI, IoT, data analytics, and mobile applications to enhance travel experiences from planning to post-visit. STFs promote eco-friendly initiatives, shaping a sustainable future. This chapter explores the evolution from e-tourism to smart tourism, highlighting its role in destination management, sustainability, and economic growth. It also evaluates bibliometric studies on smart tourism, identifying research gaps and potential challenges in technology adoption.*

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a dynamic and multifaceted industry that comprises the art and science of travel, which invites people to explore diverse landscapes, cultures, and experiences. Tourism embodies a human desire for discovery, adventure, and connection, fostering interactions between visitors and their destinations. Tourism serves as a channel for iconic landmarks, natural wonders, cultural heritage sites, pilgrim sites, and local traditions, thus appreciating the richness of global tapestry. Whether individuals travel for leisure, business, or personal growth, tourists contribute to the economic vitality of host communities and cross-cultural dialogue that enriches our collective understanding of the world. We are in an interconnected era where tourism emerges as a transformative force, weaving together the threads of exploration, education, and mutual respect, transcending geographical boundaries, and leaving an unforgettable

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memory for individuals. Tourism has evolved and transformed, and now smart tourism is gaining much attention, representing a symbiotic relationship between travel and technology. Smart tourism leverages Information and Communication Technology (ICT); it enhances every facet of a traveler's journey, from pre-trip planning to on-site experiences and post-visit engagement (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015). By integrating different mobile-based travel applications, augmented reality, and the Internet of Things (IoT), smart tourism can provide travelers with a personalized and immersive experience, thus contributing to sustainable destination management. The infusion of smart tourism has increased the efficiency and enjoyment of travel, leading to better connectivity, personalization, and sustainability, which are intrinsic to the global exploration experience (Zang & Gordon, 2016).

## **Significance of Smart Tourism**

Tourism is undergoing transformational evolution driven by technological advancements and a growing emphasis on sustainability, which is called smart tourism. Smart tourism refers to applying ICT and other innovative technologies such as data analytics, IoT, artificial intelligence, mobile applications, and other digital tools to enhance various aspects of the tourism industry (Neirotti et al., 2014; Xiang et al., 2017). The tourism industry is now largely focused on sustainability, and adopting smart tourism contributes to responsible practices, minimizing environmental impact, and promoting eco-friendly initiatives. Moreover, adopting smart tourism technologies provides a competitive edge for businesses, aligning with modern travelers' expectations and fostering economic growth at destinations (Egger et al., 2017; Li & Wang, 2019). This approach revolutionizes destination management through improved planning and resource allocation and encourages innovation, ensuring that the industry remains adaptable to changing consumer behavior and preferences. Smart tourism is pivotal in shaping a connected, efficient, and sustainable future for the tourism sector. Considering the dynamic nature of the tourism industry and the continuously evolving technology, research on smart tourism has become imperative.

The word Smart Tourism gained popularity only after the year 2018. However, the term was coined two decades earlier, as studied by (Borges-Tiago et al., 2021), who have constructed a scientometric review that brings out the essence of the term gaining popularity only in 2019, and not much importance was given to both academic and managerial perspectives. This is corroborated with the current research work as we deliver a search for articles on the word Smart tourism, and the results indicate that the articles are only from 2019. The term smart tourism, as reviewed by previous authors, is a wide extension of e-tourism Ercan (2023). Therefore, the significance of the term e-tourism no longer reconnects; hence, Smart Tourism has gained momentum since 2019.

## **Research objectives**

The chapter focuses on discussing the below objectives:

- To identify the countries that have solely authored and encourage collaboration.
- To identify the missing keywords that were neglected concerning smart tourism.
- Explore the impact of smart tourism on tourist experience and engagement.
- Assess the sustainability impact of the smart tourism framework.
- Examine challenges and opportunities in implementing smart tourism frameworks.

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