

1 Introduction

The Way of St. James (Camino de Santiago) is one of the world's oldest and most representative pilgrimage routes, which annually attracts hundreds of thousands of pilgrims from various regions and countries. This study conducts a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of publications related to the Camino de Santiago from 1934 to 2023, using the Scopus, Web of Science, and PubMed databases. Initially, 685 studies were identified, of which 317 met the inclusion criteria, after filtering for duplicates, accessibility, and relevance. The analysis categorised these studies by document type, research methods, techniques, types of analysis and study topics.

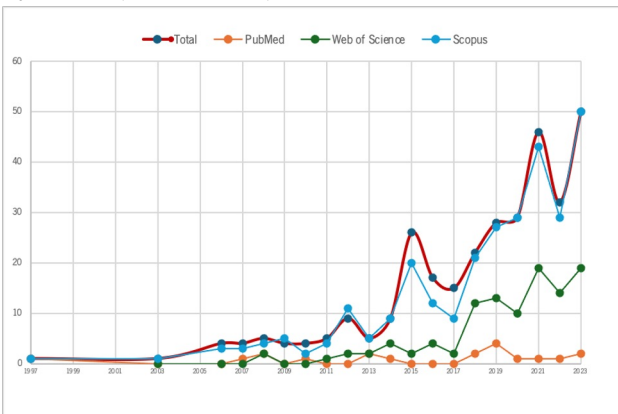
3 Methods

This research aimed to analyse the scientific studies related to the Way of St. James indexed in the Scopus, Web of Science and PubMed databases. The studies were searched through two combinations (OR and AND), for different keywords related to the Way of St. James. The keywords were written in Portuguese, French, English and Spanish ("Caminho de Santiago" OR "Camino de Santiago" OR "St. James Way" OR "Way of St. James" OR "Way of Saint James") OR ("Way of Santiago" AND "Route of St. James").

4 Results

4.1. Evolution of the number of publications

Figure 1 - Number of publications indexed in Scopus, Web of Science, and PubMed between 1997 and 2023



Source: Author's own elaboration, based on research conducted on 01/09/2024.

2 Main goals

- Evaluate the studies indexed in the Scopus, Web of Science, and PubMed databases, for the period 1934-2023.
- Identify the main themes addressed in studies related to the *Camino de Santiago*, the most representative fields of study, the authors that have made the greatest contribution and had the greatest impact in terms of citations, as well as the countries and institutions that have played significant roles in studies on this topic.
- Understand the collaboration networks established between authors, institutions and countries in the context of research related to the *Camino*.

Category	Title, Abstract and Keywords
Subject area	All
Document type	Books, articles, book chapter, editorial, conference paper, conference review, note and review.
Period	1934 - 2023
Language	All
Access	Open
Duplicate publications	Deleted

1st stage - Prior to 2003

It reflects the beginning of the interest in the topic. Engels (1974), Benitezrojo (1983), Gerrard (1985), and Guillere (1997) are examples from this period. Between 1998 and 2002, there were no articles related to the *Camino de Santiago* in any of the databases. In the three databases, the first study related to the *Camino de Santiago* available and in open access, was published in 1997 by the authors Michael Murray & Brian Graham, "Exploring the dialectics of route-based tourism: The *Camino de Santiago*". Other databases were consulted as mentioned before, but so far it has not been possible to identify studies related to the *Camino de Santiago* available prior to 1997.

2nd stage - 2003 to 2012

In this period there was a slight increase in the number of articles indexed in both databases (Scopus or Web of Science - n=24). Between 2003 and 2006, the indexed studies were theoretical, i.e., they do not constitute any practical body in their development (e.g., de La Cuesta, 2003). These authors have mainly studied the stories and traditions linked to the pilgrimage to the *Camino de Santiago* since the Middle Ages.

3rd stage - 2013 to 2024

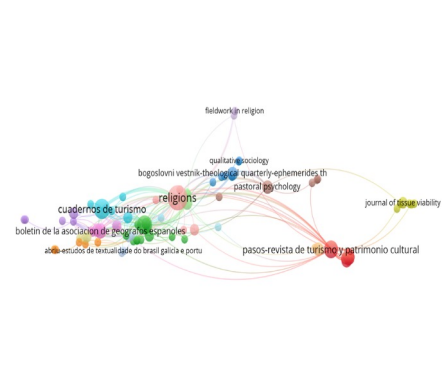
In 2015, there was a sharp increase (n=26), and in the following years there was a small decrease (2016, n=17) and 2017 (n=15). Between 2018 and 2023, there was a significant increase in the number of published studies (n=207), coinciding with the surge in the number of people travelling along the *Camino*, according to data obtained from the *Oficina del Peregrino* (2024). The Scopus database has the highest number of publications (n=263), especially from 2015 onwards, when the number of publications increased sharply. Over the last 8 years, there are some important peaks (e.g., in 2019 and 2021), and 2023 was the year with the highest number of publications, exceeding 50.

4.2. Main sources and most cited authors and documents

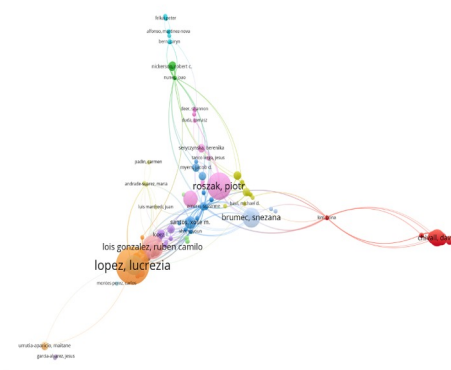
Figure 2 represents the visualisation map of the network of citations of sources with the highest number of publications..

Figure 3 also - visualisation of the network that maps the connection between different authors with relationships and academic publications or research collaborations.

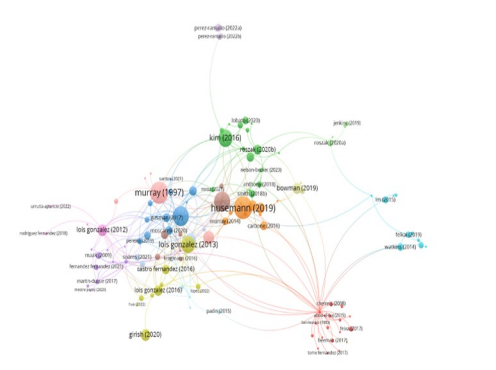
In Figure 4, the network map presents the most cited documents. The most cited document (497 citations in 3/12/2024) corresponds to the author Murray & Grahn (1997), which appears in many groups.



Source: Author's own elaboration, based on research conducted on 01/09/2024.



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5 Discussion and main conclusions

The bibliometric analysis permitted study of three databases (Scopus, Web of Science and PubMed), and to facilitate better interpretation, the VOSviewer tool was used to create network maps. By carrying out this bibliometric analysis, important studies have been revealed and the existence of a few studies related to the *Camino de Santiago* have been highlighted, since the first remote open access study took place in 1997. After 2013 scientific interest in this topic grew at a faster rate, in particular to describe the history and characteristics of the *Camino* (54% of the published papers). The data obtained reveals a significant concentration of studies in the areas of arts and humanities (27.1%), followed by social sciences (24.4%), and tourism (15.2%). These results reflect the interdisciplinary richness of the topic, with a predominant focus on the cultural, historical and social aspects of the *Camino*. However, it is evident that there is a lack of studies that address pilgrims' experiences, interaction between pilgrims and residents, pilgrim mobility and analysis of the digital narratives generated on social networks. There are also gaps in studies focused on emerging issues, such as climate change. Further research is required about the digital experiences of pilgrims and the role of the *Camino* in promoting their mental health and well-being.

6 Bibliography

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