# THE NEXUS OF CULTURE AND ECONOMICS: A BIBLIOMETRIC ANALYSIS AND VISUALISATION OF CULTURAL ECONOMY

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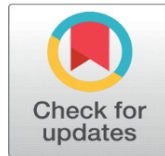
ABSTRACT

The cultural economy is a multidisciplinary field that explores the intersection of cultural values, practices, and industries with their economic impact, encompassing sectors such as heritage, creative industries, and cultural tourism. This study employs bibliometric analysis to investigate the scholarly landscape of the cultural economy using data sourced from the Scopus database. Advanced bibliometric tools, including Biblioshinyand VOSviewer, were used to analyze trends, authorship, and thematic structures. The annual scientific production reveals a steady growth in the field, with a notable surge in publications since the late 1990s. Key contributors, such as Scott, A.J., and Pratt, A.C., along with prominent sources like Geoforum and Journal of Cultural Economy, are identified as central to the field's development. A three-field plot illustrates the interconnected relationships between authors, publication sources, and countries, highlighting the dominance of the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia in global collaborations. Trend topics, such as sustainability, creative cities, and cultural work, reflect the field's adaptability to contemporary societal challenges, including globalization and environmental concerns. Thematic mapping categorizes research into motor, basic, niche, and emerging themes, emphasizing areas for further exploration, such as gender and migration. Co-occurrence analysis of author keywords highlights the interdisciplinary nature of the field, while country co-authorship networks reveal opportunities for increasing global collaboration. This study provides a comprehensive overview of cultural economy research, identifying trends, gaps, and future directions for advancing the field.

Keywords: Cultural Economy, Bibliometric Analysis, Biblioshiny, VOS viewer

1. INTRODUCTION

The cultural economy represents a dynamic intersection where culture and economics converge, creating opportunities for creativity, innovation, and social transformation (Gibson & Kong, 2005; Pratt, 2009). Rooted in the interplay between cultural values and economic activities, this field encompasses a broad spectrum of industries and practices, including art, media, heritage, design, and tourism (Pratt, 2019; Terkenli, 2002). As a concept, the cultural economy highlights how cultural expressions and industries contribute not only to economic growth but also to identity formation, social cohesion, and global interconnectedness (Pratt, 2015; Scott, 2010b). In an increasingly globalized world, understanding the nuances of the cultural economy is essential for appreciating its role in shaping societies and economies alike (Gibson, 2012; Richardson, 2019).

Cultural goods and services occupy a unique position in the economy, often characterized by their dual value: intrinsic cultural significance and measurable economic impact (Du Gay & Pryke, 2002; Hardin, 2017). These goods are not only commodities but also bearers of meaning, history, and identity (Douglass, 2016). Unlike traditional goods, cultural

products frequently derive their value from their uniqueness, symbolic importance, and the emotions they evoke (Grodach, 2013). This distinctiveness drives consumer behavior, making cultural products significant contributors to local and global markets (Grodach et al., 2017). For instance, cultural heritage sites generate revenue through tourism while preserving historical narratives, exemplifying the dual benefits of cultural economy initiatives (Du Gay & Pryke, 2002; Grodach et al., 2017).

The cultural economy also plays a critical role in fostering sustainable development (Nurse, 2006). By promoting creative industries, it enhances employment opportunities, stimulates innovation, and encourages the use of local resources (Anheier & Isar, 2008). Cultural enterprises often support smaller, community-based initiatives, empowering marginalized groups and reinforcing cultural identity (Anheier & Isar, 2008). Moreover, the integration of cultural economy principles into urban planning and policy-making has the potential to transform cities into hubs of creativity and economic vitality (Amin & Thrift, 2004). From revitalizing historic districts to organizing cultural festivals, these endeavors demonstrate how cultural and economic objectives can align for broader societal benefit.

Despite its transformative potential, the cultural economy faces challenges that warrant careful consideration (Pratt, 2007). Issues such as globalization, cultural homogenization, and the commodification of cultural heritage raise concerns about the preservation of cultural diversity (Murzyn-Kupisz, 2012). Additionally, the economic viability of cultural industries often depends on public funding, subsidies, and policy frameworks, which can be unpredictable (Peltoniemi, 2015). Addressing these challenges requires an interdisciplinary approach that integrates cultural, economic, and policy perspectives. By doing so, the cultural economy can continue to evolve as a vital force for innovation, inclusion, and sustainable growth in an interconnected world (Jones et al., 2004).

The cultural economy has emerged as a pivotal field of study, bridging the domains of culture and economics to explore how cultural activities, industries, and values influence and are influenced by economic systems (Gibson & Kong, 2005; Scott, 2010a). As the field grows in importance, it becomes crucial to understand the evolution of its research, identify key trends, and map the knowledge networks shaping its development. Bibliometric analysis, a quantitative approach to analyzing academic literature, offers a powerful tool to uncover these insights (Abbas et al., 2021; Kawuki et al., 2020). By utilizing software such as Biblioshiny and VOSviewer, researchers can systematically evaluate the scholarly landscape of the cultural economy, revealing patterns, influential works, and emerging themes (Guleria & Kaur, 2021; Gupta & Chakravarty, 2021).

Biblioshiny, an advanced interface for the R-based Bibliometrix package, facilitates comprehensive bibliometric analysis through its user-friendly features (Abbas et al., 2021; Komperda, 2017; Waghmare, 2021). It allows researchers to examine a range of indicators, such as citation networks, author collaborations, and thematic clusters, providing a detailed understanding of the research field (Huang et al., 2021). Complementing this, VOSviewer specializes in visualizing bibliometric data, enabling the creation of maps that illustrate relationships between keywords, authors, and institutions (Abbas et al., 2021; Van Eck & Waltman, 2010). Together, these tools empower scholars to explore the intellectual structure of the cultural economy, highlighting areas of growth and gaps in the existing literature (Kuzior & Sira, 2022; Nandiyanto & Al Husaeni, 2022).

This study employs bibliometric analysis to map the evolution of research on the cultural economy, providing insights into its global trends, influential authors, and key publication sources. The integration of Biblioshiny and VOSviewer enhances the ability to analyze and visualize the dataset, fostering a deeper understanding of how the cultural economy has developed as a scholarly domain. By presenting these findings, the analysis aims to guide future research and policy-making, ensuring the continued exploration of this vital intersection of culture and economics.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

We gathered scientific publications related to the investigation from the Scopus database. (Archambault et al., 2009; Harzing & Alakangas, 2016; Kawuki et al., 2020). We retrieve bibliographic data using a search query such as TITLE-ABS-KEY ("Cultural Economy"). The search was not restricted to any particular language, and the data included articles from peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, and conference papers. We collected 1182 articles from671 different sources, spanning 1978 to 2022. To ensure accuracy, we screened the Scopus records to remove any duplicates. The results were saved as a "CSV" file, and we performed bibliometric analysis on the data using VOSviewer and Bibloshiny software.

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

3.1. MAIN INFORMATION OF THE INVESTIGATION

Table 1 provides a comprehensive overview of the bibliometric analysis of the cultural economy spans the years 1978 to 2022, encompassing 1,182 documents sourced from 671 journals, books, and other outlets, with an annual growth rate of 9.75%, highlighting the field's steady expansion. The average age of the documents is 11.5 years, with an average citation count of 27.38 per document, reflecting a significant level of academic impact. The dataset includes a total of 52,934 references and features 1,859 Keywords Plus and 3,088 Author Keywords, indicating a rich diversity in thematic focus. Contributions come from 1,618 authors, with 735 single-authored documents, averaging 1.61 co-authors per paper, and 9.475% of these works involving international collaboration. The majority of the publications are journal articles (976), followed by book chapters (188) and conference papers (18), illustrating the predominance of journal-based dissemination in this research area. These metrics underline the growing scholarly interest and collaborative nature of research in the cultural economy.

Table 1. Main information of the investigation

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	1978:2022
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	671
Documents	1182
Annual Growth Rate %	9.75
Document Average Age	11.5
Average citations per doc	27.38
References	52934
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	1859
Author's Keywords (DE)	3088
AUTHORS	
Authors	1618
Authors of single-authored docs	608
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	735
Co-Authors per Doc	1.61
International co-authorships %	9.475
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	976
book chapter	188
conference paper	18

3.2. ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC PRODUCTIONS

Figure 1 presents the annual scientific production in the field, exhibiting a clear upward trend over the years, demonstrating growing scholarly interest and engagement. From its inception in 1978, the number of publications remained sparse and intermittent until the late 1990s, with only occasional contributions (e.g., 1 article in 1978 and 1 in 1989). Starting in 1999, there was a notable increase in activity, with 12 publications in both 1999 and 2000, signaling a turning point in the field's development. The period from 2007 onward marks a significant surge in publications, with the number of articles rising dramatically from 40 in 2007 to a peak of 94 in 2013. This growth reflects the expanding interest in cultural economy research and possibly increased funding and institutional support for studies in this area.

Although there were fluctuations after 2013, with annual publication counts ranging from 55 (2020) to 84 (2017), the overall trend has remained robust, highlighting sustained academic engagement. The data for 2022 indicates 60 publications, showing a slight decline from the recent peak years but still maintaining a strong output compared to earlier decades. This trend underscores the cultural economy's growing relevance and the increasing acknowledgment of its importance in academia and policy-making.
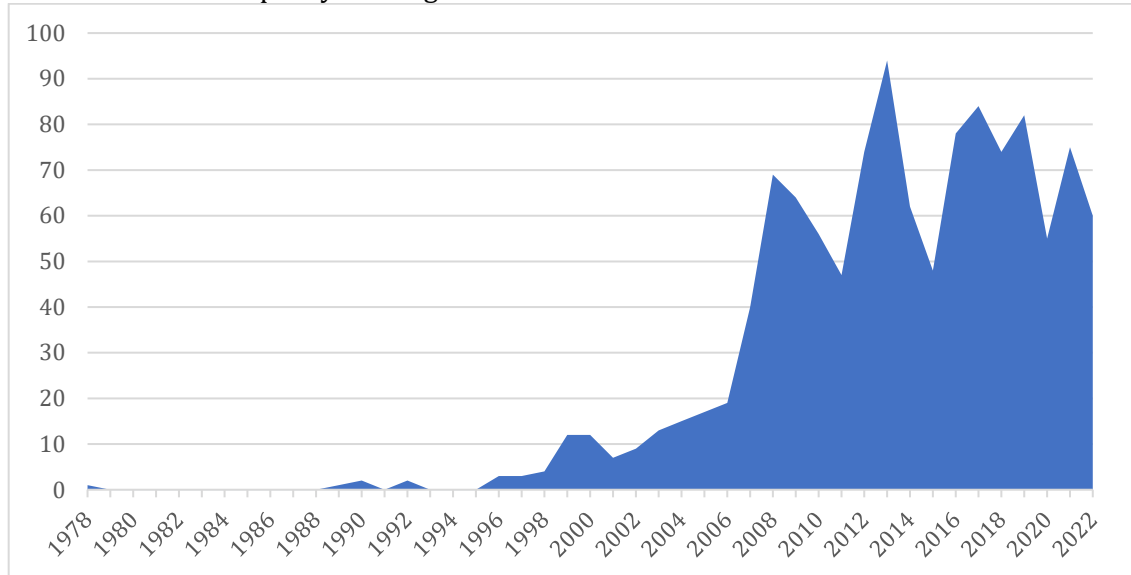

Figure 1. Annual scientific production

3.3.   MOST RELEVANT AUTHORS

Figure 2 presents the most relevant authors contributing to the field of research. Scott, A.J. leads significantly with 24 contributions, indicating their pivotal role and influence in shaping the scholarly discourse in this domain. Pratt, A.C. follows with 13 contributions, showcasing a strong engagement in advancing research. Gibson, C. and Grodach, C. are tied with 9 contributions each, highlighting their substantial involvement in the field. Other notable contributors include Hall, S. with 8 publications and Dixon, J. and Özdemir, N., each with 6 contributions. Meanwhile, Hutton, T., Langley, P., and O'Connor, J. have made 5 contributions each, indicating their steady engagement in the research area. This distribution underscores the concentration of significant contributions among a few leading scholars, with Scott, A.J. playing a particularly prominent role in the field's development. These authors likely serve as key influencers, shaping the research agenda and intellectual progression of cultural economy studies.
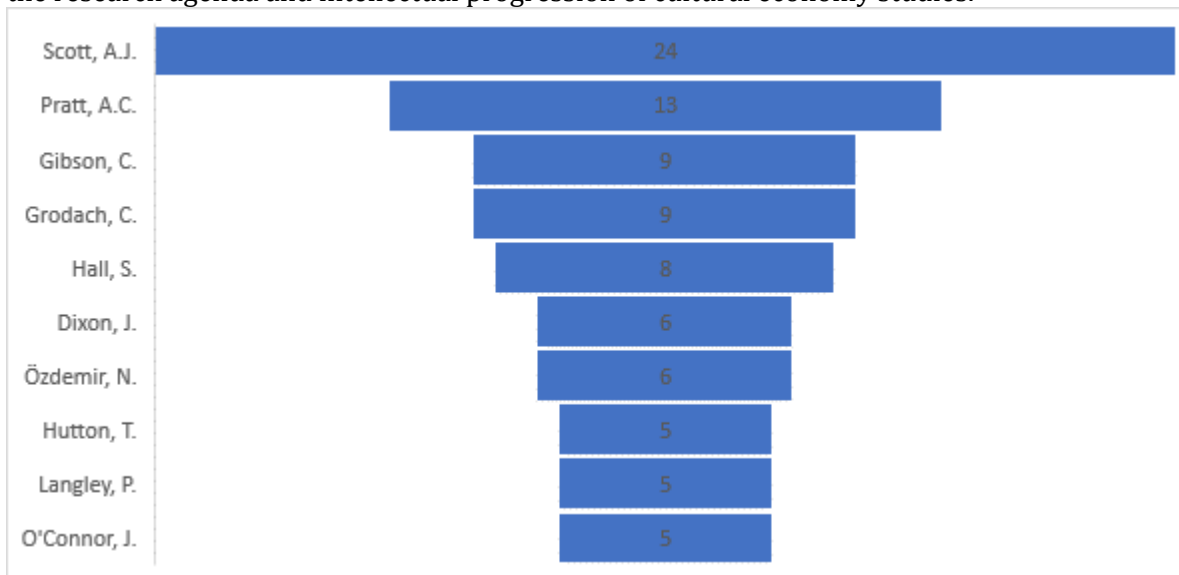

Figure 2. Most relevant authors

3.4. MOST RELEVANT SOURCES

Table 2 outlines the key sources that significantly contribute to this field of research. Geoforum leads with 24 published articles, making it the most prominent source for scholarly discussions on cultural economy. This indicates a strong focus on geographical perspectives in cultural economic studies. The Journal of Cultural Economy follows closely with 20 articles, signifying its specialized role in advancing theoretical and practical insights within this domain. Other significant contributors include Environment and Planning A, with 16 articles, and Urban Studies, with 15, reflecting a focus on urbanization and spatial dynamics in the cultural economy. European Planning Studies (13 articles) and City Culture and Society (12 articles) also emphasize the integration of culture in urban and regional planning contexts. Similarly, Regional Studies (12 articles) underscores the role of regional dynamics in cultural economy research. Rounding out the list are Cities (11 articles), and both the International Journal of Cultural Policy and the International Journal of Urban and Regional Research with 10 articles each. These journals reflect a mix of policy-focused and interdisciplinary approaches, indicating the diversity of perspectives shaping the field. Together, these sources represent the core platforms for disseminating knowledge and driving discourse in cultural economy research.

Table 2. Most relevant sources

Source Title	Articles
Geoforum	24
Journal of Cultural Economy	20
Environment and Planning A	16
Urban Studies	15
European Planning Studies	13
City Culture and Society	12
Regional Studies	12
Cities	11
International Journal of Cultural Policy	10
International Journal of Urban and Regional Research	10

3.5. THREE-FIELD PLOT

Figure 3 illustrates the interconnected relationships between authors, publication sources, and countries in cultural economy research, highlighting key contributors and their affiliations. Prominent authors like Scott, Allen J. (USA), Pratt, Andy C. (UK), and Gibson, Chris (Australia) are strongly linked to leading journals such as Geoforum, Environment and Planning A, and the Journal of Cultural Economy, demonstrating their significant influence on the field. The plot reveals a geographic concentration of research output, with the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia dominating contributions to high-impact journals. Other countries, including Canada, Singapore, Turkey, and China, have emerging contributions, reflecting growing global interest. The strong association between leading journals and top-producing countries underscores the central role of developed nations in shaping cultural economy research, while also indicating opportunities for increased participation from other regions.
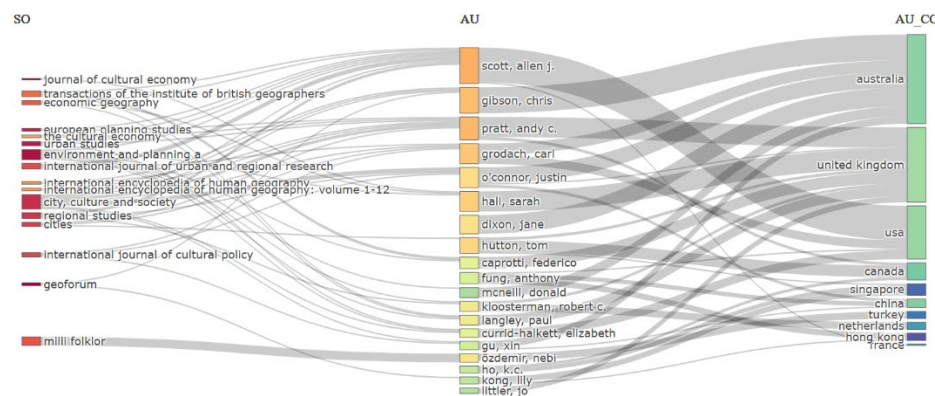
Figure 3. Three-Field Plot, highlighting the relationships between authors, publication sources, and countries.

3.6.   TREND TOPICS

Figure 4 highlights the evolution of key trend topics over time, illustrating the changing focus and growth of specific themes. Early topics, such as "economic geography," "discourse," and "globalization," gained prominence in the mid-2000s, reflecting foundational discussions about how culture intersects with economic systems and global influences. By the late 2000s, themes such as "creative industries," "cultural policy," and "regional development" began to emerge, emphasizing the role of cultural and creative sectors in shaping economic and regional growth strategies. These topics signaled a growing interest in understanding the economic impact of cultural activities.

In recent years, there has been a notable shift towards contemporary issues such as "sustainability," "cultural work," "creative cities," and "diversity," reflecting the field's response to modern societal challenges. Emerging topics like "Covid-19" illustrate how the cultural economy has adapted to address global disruptions, particularly in the wake of the pandemic. The increasing size of the bubbles over time signifies the rising frequency and relevance of these terms, with topics like "creative labour," "urban development," and "entrepreneurship" gaining substantial attention in the 2010s and beyond. Overall, the figure reveals a dynamic and evolving research landscape, with a growing emphasis on addressing contemporary challenges and opportunities within the cultural economy.
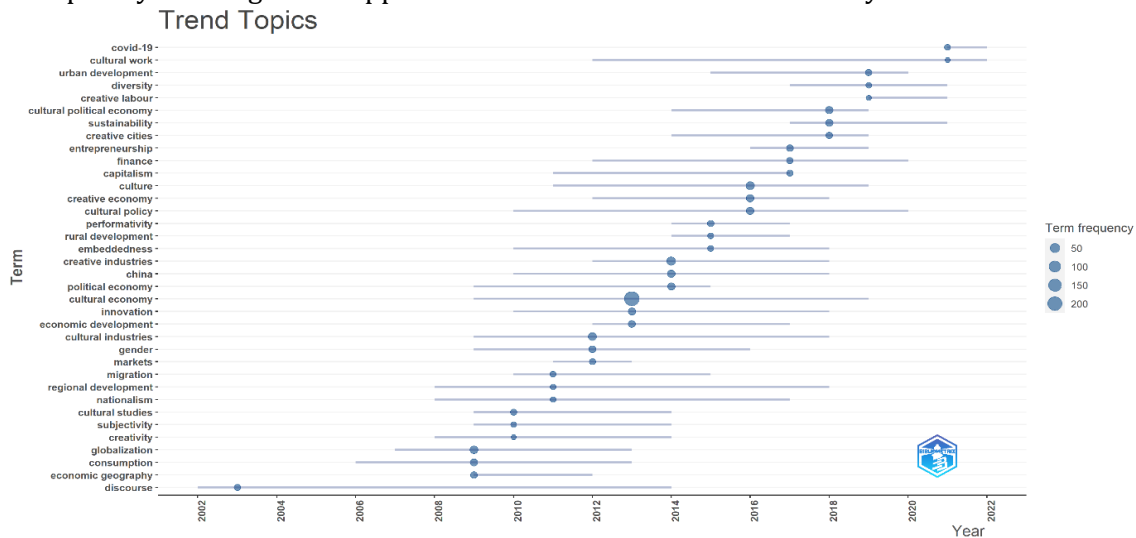

Figure 4. Trending topics in the realm of research

3.7.   THEMATIC MAP

Figure 5 presents a thematic map, categorizing topics based on their development degree (density) and relevance degree (centrality). The upper-right quadrant, labeled Motor Themes, contains highly central and well-developed topics such as cultural economy, creative industries, and culture. These themes represent the core driving forces of the field, attracting significant scholarly attention and shaping research directions. Their prominence underscores their vital role in addressing key questions and advancing the understanding of cultural economy, particularly in relation to creative practices, economic impact, and cultural significance.

In the lower-right quadrant, Basic Themes such as political economy, cultural political economy, and neoliberalism are highly central but less developed in terms of specialized research. These foundational topics underpin much of the theoretical and conceptual framework of the field, serving as the basis for broader discussions. While they are crucial for contextualizing the field, their lower density indicates an opportunity for further detailed investigation to enhance their depth and specificity in cultural economy studies.

The upper-left quadrant highlights Niche Themes like financialization, governmentality, and craft, which are well-developed but have limited connections to the broader field. These topics cater to specific, specialized interests and provide depth within narrower scopes of research. Conversely, the lower-left quadrant, representing Emerging or Declining Themes, includes topics like gender, migration, and cultural tourism. These themes are less developed and less central, indicating potential areas for future research or reflecting waning interest. Overall, the map provides a comprehensive view of the thematic structure, highlighting the field's dynamic areas, foundational topics, and underexplored opportunities for further inquiry.
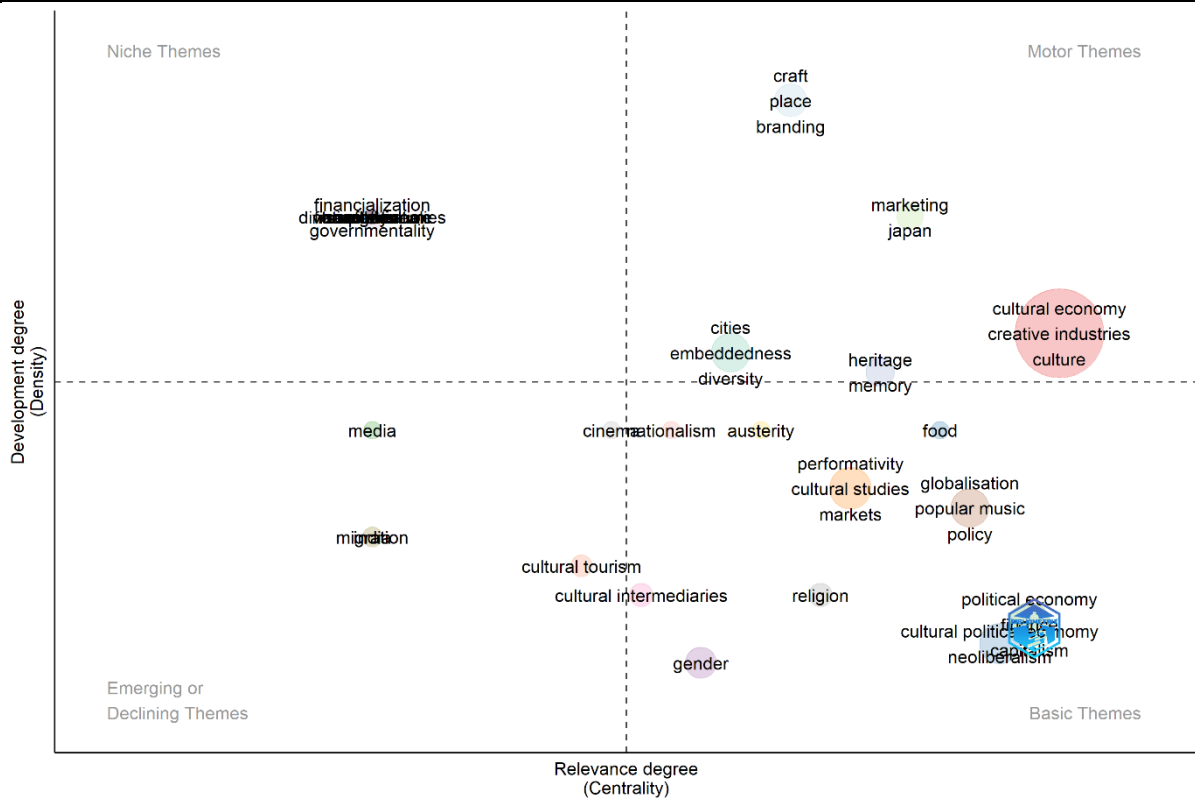
Figure 5. Thematic visualisation of author keywords

3.8.   CO-OCCURRENCE OF AUTHOR KEYWORDS

The co-occurrence network represents the interrelation of 105 author keywords within the field, categorized into 9 distinct clusters. These clusters vary in size, with the largest containing 17 items and the smallest having just 1. The central node, "cultural economy," dominates the network, signifying its core role in connecting various themes and subfields. Surrounding this key term are closely linked concepts such as "political economy," "sustainability," "cultural policy," and "tourism," emphasizing the interdisciplinary nature of the field and its focus on balancing cultural and economic priorities.

Each cluster highlights specific thematic areas. For instance, Cluster 1 (17 items) focuses on sustainability, urbanization, and creative clusters, reflecting the role of cultural economy in fostering sustainable urban and creative development. Cluster 2 (17 items) emphasizes regional and policy-driven themes like tourism and cultural policy, with a regional focus exemplified by keywords such as "South Korea." Similarly, Cluster 3 (17 items) revolves around governance, finance, and political economy, underlining the economic and administrative dimensions of cultural development. Cluster 4 (16 items) explores social constructs like gender, identity, and discourse, shedding light on cultural representation and identity politics.

Other clusters reflect more specific aspects of the cultural economy. Cluster 5 (14 items) focuses on market dynamics within creative industries, highlighting terms such as marketing, popular music, and cinema. Cluster 6 (13 items) addresses themes like food, nationalism, and ethics, emphasizing cultural consumption and societal values. Smaller clusters, such as Cluster 7 (8 items), focus on niche creative domains like fashion and music, while Cluster 8 (2 items) and Cluster 9 (1 item) indicate emerging or highly specialized research areas. Overall, the dense interconnections within the network illustrate the interdisciplinary nature of the cultural economy, with opportunities for further exploration in less-developed clusters and emerging themes.

Figure 7. Co-occurrence of author keywords

3.9. CO-AUTHORSHIP OF COUNTRIES

Figure 6 illustrates the co-authorship network of countries and highlights the collaboration patterns. The United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia emerge as the dominant nodes, indicating their central roles in international research partnerships. Their large node sizes and multiple connections signify high levels of co-authorship with other countries, reflecting their global influence and leadership in cultural economy studies. Countries like Germany, France, Italy, and Canada are also prominent collaborators, often connecting with multiple key hubs, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. This indicates their active participation in fostering international research networks. Regional clusters are apparent as well, such as Sweden, Denmark, and Ireland, which are strongly connected to the United Kingdom, emphasizing geographic and institutional proximity in research collaboration. Similarly, New Zealand and South Africa display strong ties with Australia, reflecting regional synergies in research. Emerging research contributors, such as Indonesia, Mexico, Romania, and Brazil, show fewer but growing connections, signaling their increasing engagement in global research networks. Overall, the visualization underscores a well-established network of collaboration dominated by Western countries while highlighting the gradual integration of emerging nations into the broader academic discourse on cultural economy. This pattern reflects both the historical leadership of developed nations in research and the expanding globalization of the field.

Figure 7. Countries collaborations

4. DISCUSSIONS

The bibliometric analysis of the cultural economy highlights a dynamic and evolving field with significant scholarly engagement and diverse thematic focuses. The growth in annual scientific production, particularly since the late 1990s, reflects an expanding interest in understanding the intersection of culture and economics. Leading contributors, such as Scott, A.J. and Pratt, A.C., alongside prominent sources like Geoforum and Journal of Cultural Economy, have played

crucial roles in shaping the field. However, while the annual output and citation rates underscore the field's academic impact, the relatively low rate of international co-authorship (9.475%) points to an opportunity for fostering greater global collaboration and interdisciplinary approaches.

The thematic map and co-occurrence analysis reveal well-established core topics, such as cultural economy, creative industries, and culture, which function as the driving forces of the field. Foundational themes like political economy and neoliberalism highlight theoretical underpinnings that require further development for deeper insights. Simultaneously, niche themes like financialization and craft cater to specialized interests but remain disconnected from the broader field, potentially limiting their broader applicability. Emerging or underexplored areas, including gender, migration, and cultural tourism, indicate fertile grounds for future research, particularly in addressing contemporary societal challenges like diversity and inclusion.

Trend topics, such as sustainability, cultural work, and entrepreneurship, signify a shift in focus towards addressing modern challenges, including environmental concerns, creative labor dynamics, and urban development. The integration of terms like Covid-19 highlights the field's responsiveness to global disruptions, emphasizing the adaptability and relevance of cultural economy studies. However, research gaps exist in understanding the long-term implications of these contemporary issues, particularly in emerging regions, as evidenced by the limited contributions from countries like Indonesia, Mexico, and Brazil in the co-authorship network. Addressing these gaps could enhance the inclusivity and global applicability of the field.

From a practical perspective, the findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and industry practitioners. The dominance of sustainability and creative industries in recent research suggests opportunities to align cultural economy initiatives with broader sustainability goals and economic innovation. Moreover, enhancing international collaborations and engaging underrepresented regions could lead to more equitable and globally resonant policy frameworks. By addressing identified research gaps and leveraging key trends, the cultural economy has the potential to advance as a vital force in promoting cultural diversity, economic growth, and societal resilience.

5. CONCLUSION

The bibliometric analysis of cultural economy research provides a comprehensive overview of the field's growth, key contributors, and evolving thematic trends. The findings highlight the dominance of topics such as cultural economy, creative industries, and sustainability, which serve as driving forces in the field, while emerging themes like gender, migration, and cultural tourism present opportunities for future exploration. Despite the field's steady expansion and significant scholarly engagement, limited global collaboration and underrepresentation of emerging regions suggest areas for improvement. To address these gaps, it is recommended to foster international co-authorship, particularly involving scholars from underrepresented regions, to promote inclusivity and diverse perspectives. Policymakers and funding agencies should prioritize interdisciplinary research that bridges theoretical frameworks with practical applications, such as aligning cultural economy initiatives with sustainability goals. Additionally, journals and conferences should encourage contributions on less-developed themes, ensuring a balanced exploration of both foundational and emerging topics. By addressing these challenges and leveraging the field's strengths, cultural economy research can continue to evolve as a critical area of study with significant societal and economic impact.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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