




# Place branding: revealing the neglected role of agro food products

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## Abstract

This study reviews the literature on the subject of place branding, in order to understand how this practice has provided a synergistic association between territorial brands and agro-food products from certain places. An empirical analysis of references resulting from a search in three databases allowed identification and selection of 261 studies, indexed in the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), on the subject of place branding, and they were classified in seven different categories. The results reveal that the association between place branding and agro-food products can generate synergistic effects for the parties involved. This relationship is found to be dominant in previous studies analysed, identifying 19 different agro-food products which correspond to a universe of 108 brands and/or names. In addition, various gaps are identified in the literature of reference as well as possible paths to explore the applicability of the place branding concept.

**Keywords** Agro-food products · Place · Place branding · Systematic literature review

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## 1 Introduction

Competition between different places for greater differentiation is a phenomenon dating back to the nineteenth century, through the emergence of “boosterism” of the city in response to intensification of the competition between strong national economies and also due to the expansion of international commerce (Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005).

At the end of the 1960s, and being one of the first academics to look at places as potential brands, Philip Kotler became one of the pioneers of the concept known today as *place branding*, defining a place as a «nation-state, a geo-political physical space; a region or state; a culturally, historically or ethically limited location; a city and its surrounding populations; a market with various definable attributes; the base of an industry and a cluster of similar industries and their suppliers; a psychological attribute of the relationships between people» (Kotler et al. 2002:4).

From the analyses made by Skinner (1978), it is possible to reconstitute the genesis of place branding practices, which date back to the beginning of the Italian Renaissance. However, the current concept can be individualized, as mentioned more recently by Lucarelli and Brorström (2013), around the diverse work by Lynch (1960), Kotler and Levy (1969), Pearce (1977), Proshansky (1978) and Burgess (1982).

The concept of place branding has developed in the course of debate between various contrasting academic disciplines, but it was based on these first studies that a series of reference books emerged marking the approximation and crossing of various topics in trans-disciplinary contexts, namely management (Ashworth and Voogd 1988), marketing (Kotler et al. 1993; Gold and Ward 1994), urban studies (van den Berg et al. 1990; Ave and Corsico 1993), governance and public policies (Harvey 1989; Hall and Hubbard 1996) and sociology (Lefebvre 1991; Lash and Urry 1994), which contributed to the multi-disciplinarity and pluri-applicability of the concept. More recently, the practice of place branding has included a wide sphere of disciplines, incorporating others such as history, geography, national identity (Maheshwari et al. 2011) and also agrarian and agro-food sciences (Charters and Spielmann 2014).

From the above, it is understood that places are increasingly positioned as promoters of images and identities, developing to the stage where those images and identities are promoted and sold as the central focus of tourism policies or the regeneration of these localities (Lucarelli and Brorström 2013).

The word places is used to represent all types of locations, such as cities, city-regions, regions, communities, areas, states and nations (Azevedo 2004). Although the “product” that many of these places have to offer is the same, including territory, infrastructure, trained people, etc. (Hanna and Rowley 2008), even so, they still seek to differentiate themselves from their peers given the intensified competition between places, cities, regions and nations worldwide (Baker and Cameron 2008), which must manage and control their brands in order to attract an increasing number of tourists, factories, companies and talented people, and also find markets for their products (Dinnie 2004).

As highlighted by Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2008), for a long time places have been aware of the need to differentiate from each other, so as to affirm their individuality and to achieve diverse economic, political or socio-psychological goals. In fact, recent years have seen growing attention being given to places’ branding (Skinner 2008; Ranasinghe et al. 2017), with increased discussion of the subject between academics

and managers (Hankinson 2001; Florek 2005; Balakrishnan 2008; Hanna and Rowley 2008; Moilanen and Rainisto 2009), as well as more interest being shown by political decision-makers, particularly in terms of defining political agendas for cities, regions and countries (Boisen et al. 2011), to face up better to the competition generated through globalization and internationalization (Messely et al. 2014).

Place branding considers places/territories as something that can be manipulated through a vast range of management tools, but without considering that successful management of those brands depends on the capacity to include and/or use the historical factors that led to considering those places real and authentic (Pedersen 2004), and consciously managing them (Boisen et al. 2011).

Place branding is an essential instrument to achieve differentiation and increase market power (van Ham 2008), and should be considered a participative process (Vuorinen and Vos 2013), and a platform for marketing and communication (Cai 2009), whose associated strategies should result from the opinions of the internal stakeholders of each place/territory (Konecnik and de Chernatony 2013), together with that of its residents (Konecnik and Go 2008; Anholt 2009), in order to strengthen the identity of that place/territory.

For that reason, the interests of authorities, political decision-makers and various types of stakeholders converge on the view that a coherent, strong and attractive territorial brand can help to promote the economic development of their city, region and/or country (Boisen et al. 2011).

However, as mentioned by Azevedo (2004), the branding of places has mostly been discussed in the context of countries and nations (Anholt 2002; Gilmore 2002; Kotler and Gertner 2002), noted by the limited number of studies devoted to the branding of regions, cities and places (Hankinson 2001; Rainisto 2003). The branding practice is a potential option to establish desirable associations with places, and thus can also be considered as a core issue in promoting local competitiveness (Boisen et al. 2011).

In most cases, the strategy of associating a physical product with a geographical location (for example, agro-food products) is not a conscious action (Messely et al. 2014). Nevertheless, in some territories that have opted for place branding, the association provided has revealed synergistic effects both for the product and the place, as outlined by Menival and Charters (2014), in the case of wine, underlining that these brands exist because a specific product is perceived as having a close relationship with a given place from which it cannot be separated. That regional designation does exactly what a brand does, i.e., it adds value to both the producer and the consumer (de Chernatony et al. 2011).

Consequently, territorial brands have come to be associated with the agro-food products of certain places, but little progress has been made in understanding how this synergistic association can contribute to increasing these places' competitiveness and sustainable development by implementing place branding practices.

The following section will briefly address the concepts and basic definitions of place branding and its various areas of intervention. This will be followed by an exhaustive analysis of the literature on the subject of place branding, focusing on the few studies aiming to apply the topic in the context of agro-food products. The main results of the analysis are also presented, with the corresponding discussion. Then exploratory paths for a future research agenda are proposed.

## 2 Revealing the relationship between place branding and agro food products

The *American Marketing Association* defines a brand as «a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of these, destined to identify the goods or services of a seller or group of sellers and differentiate them from competitors» (*AMA Dictionary* 2017). Therefore, a brand covers everything that can give it meaning or value, as well as contributing to defining its identity (Kapferer 1997). Brands exist in the minds of consumers, and so a person buying a given product does not only do so because of the product itself, but also for the identity and social status provided (Klijn et al. 2012).

For Arvidsson (2006), a product or service can be tried out, related or “felt”, through the different forms suggested by a brand. Klijn et al. (2012) add that the brand creates associations between a product and broader social and psychological questions. So the acquisition of a brand aims to satisfy both functional and intangible needs (Feldwick 2002), as at the moment of buying the product, a set of benefits considered essential to satisfy specific needs are acquired (de Chernatony et al. 2011).

Consequently, the practice of branding, in itself, can transform the consumer’s experience (Caldwell and Freire 2004) and branding, as a strategy, seeks to increase a product’s value, whether it is a simple object or a place/territory, giving it a valuable symbolic meaning in the consumer’s psychological and social life (Arvidsson 2006).

However, the literature focused on the subject of branding suggests that on one hand, consumers associate products’ origin in the same way as the brand and the product itself (Chao 2001; Samiee et al. 2005; Magnusson et al. 2011), and on the other, they consider that the brands of places/territories and destinations assume the origin as the brand itself (Hankinson 2009; Aitken and Campelo 2011).

For Messely et al. (2014), a product’s association with a certain geographical location (as with agro-food products) in most cases is not a conscious action, despite this occurring and being considered fundamental for the purposes of recognition and association between the product and the place.

Therefore, this recognition and association justify the motivation for co-branding scenarios of products and places (Messely et al. 2014), to make it viable to commercialize a product associated with a given place endowed with brand attributes that enhance the corresponding image of the product and the place (Kavaratzis and Ashworth 2005).

Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005) even consider the co-branding of products and places as one of the three key-areas of place branding, although the former has been seriously neglected in the literature of reference, leading to many questions about it remaining to be clarified, particularly the fact that many of them are agro-food products. Products such as Gruyère cheese, Barossa Valley wine, Colchester oysters (Charters et al. 2013), Port wine (Kotler et al. 1999), Fundão cherries or Torta del Casar cheese, which on their own can form a place brand, including a vast range of individual brands under their umbrella (Charters et al. 2013).

The growing number of studies about agro-food products and their relationship with the place of production has generated a considerable amount of research in the literature on Marketing Theory (Frewer and van Trijp 2006). However, the literature of reference reveals a gap to be filled regarding the still unexplored process of creating place brands, through the use of place branding applied to agro-food products.

One possible justification, as found in this SLR, lies in the fact of a product's association with its place of origin not yet being considered as a place branding process.

An example of this is the recurrent association of this phenomenon with other existing practices, themselves differentiating, such as "Country of Origin" (Eroglu and Machleit 1989; Felzenstein et al. 2004; Balestrini and Gamble 2006; Dekhili et al. 2011; Bruwer and Buller 2012; Agnoli et al. 2014; Brodie and Benson-Rea 2016), Geographical Indications (GI) (Martinez-Carrasco et al. 2005; Hamlin and Leith 2006; Giovannucci et al. 2010; Deselnicu et al. 2013; Mancini 2013; Conejero and Silva 2017), Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOC) and/or Protected Geographical Indications (PGI) (Cendón et al. 2014; Charters et al. 2013; Skilton and Wu 2013; Charters and Spielmann 2014; Calboli 2015; Marcoz et al. 2016).

These practices (Country of Origin, GI, AOC and PGI), certify and/or recognize officially the relationship between agro-food products and their place of origin, and although they contribute to that place's brand are not considered place branding practices (Charters and Spielmann 2014).

According to Dinnie (2004), a product's identification with its place of origin allows consumers to form a perception of a given country (place) based only on the experience related to buying products from that country. This simplistic, and unfounded, thesis has some support in this research about place branding, as the aim is to understand how the relationship between the geographical origin and intrinsic quality and reputation of a given product has an impact on developing place-branding strategies based on agro-food products.

Regarding regional brands, or more widely, geographical brands (i.e., GI, AOC and PGI), there is a close relationship between collective reputation and individual reputation, and the geographical brand creates a stronger link between the product and its place of origin than the hypothetical effect associated with country of origin (Charters and Spielmann 2014).

According to Agnoli et al. (2014), in agro-food products in general, and the wine industry in particular, mainly in Europe, the geographical brand serves as a guarantee regarding the origin of the raw material, the production process, the product's intrinsic characteristics and the respective wrapping, and is regulated by European directives, regulations and norms.

Consequently, consumers tend to assess positively products certified with AOC or PGI, due to them being subject to strict quality control guaranteeing their specificity in terms of unique, inimitable sensory characteristics (Espejel and Fandos 2009).

To the different practices of agro-food product branding presented above, Spielmann (2014) adds the concept of Origin-Bounded Brands (OBBs) for all brands that cannot be separated from their origin. OBBs embrace agro-food products, drinks, oils, hay, precious stones, seeds, extracted material (marble), plants (tobacco, flowers, cork and resin), etc., and are divided in two categories: they can be related to the geological resources used to make the product, for example Carrara marble; or can be created around the geographical area where the product, such as wine, is cultivated or produced (Spielmann 2014).

As highlighted by Verlegh and Steenkamp (1999), agro-food products are a constant target of marketing and place branding strategies as a way to potentiate and enhance the image of their places of origin. Associated with this fact is the recognition of reputation as a sign of quality which, in the marketing domain, has been concentrated mainly on studies about differentiation by "country of origin", producing rather conflicting results.

In marketing practice, regional reputation is a phenomenon with little meaning, except for the wine sector, considering this is a product that tends to operate not just in terms of the individual owning brand, but in terms of what is called the collective brand by economists (Marette et al. 1999) and academics carrying out research in the area of marketing, in general, and on the topic of place brands in particular (Charters et al. 2011).

For instance, in the wine sector, as underlined by Menival and Charters (2014), place brands exist because a certain wine is understood according to its specific connection with a place, from which it can never be separated. Consequently, regional designations associated with wine play the same role as a brand, i.e., they add value for both the producer and the consumer (de Chernatony et al. 2011).

### 3 Methodology

This study reviews the literature on place branding, for better understanding of how this practice has provided a synergetic association between territorial brands and agro-food products from given places.

Most literature reviews found and analysed on the subject of place branding agree this is still in the early stages of research (Gertner 2011a, b; Lucarelli and Berg 2011; Maheshwari et al. 2011; Chan and Marafa 2013; Lucarelli and Brorström 2013; Andersson 2014; Acharya and Rahman 2016; Vuignier 2017).

The same authors have similar views concerning the fact of this subject area, given its lack of maturity, not having a structural body of definitions, classification and taxonomies that have been proposed and tested. Nor does it have a wide-ranging research agenda endowed with a general view of existing studies and research question in need of future exploration.

Therefore, given the previous set of gaps and opportunities detected in the literature, it seems necessary and opportune to carry out this systematic literature review (SLR), using a previously validated research protocol in order to ensure high-quality scientific work aiming to identify the main theoretical streams and constructs in the literature on place branding. In addition, it will provide a future research agenda aiming to strengthen the theoretical body of the subject analysed and extend the limited empirical evidence on the topic of place brands of agro-food products.

To do so, the process was developed based on five criteria defined by Higgins and Green (2008) to carry out SLRs, namely: (1) clear formulation of the SLR's research question, as well as establishing criteria for the inclusion and exclusion of studies; (2) including in the research all important documents or all those possibly having some impact on the review's conclusion; (3) carrying out a review and selection of studies, with the consequent data extraction; (4) analysis of the studies' methodological quality; and (5) presentation of the results obtained.

#### 3.1 Research question of the systematic literature review

The main objective of this SLR is to find an answer to the research question: how, or in what way, has the practice of place branding provided a synergetic

association between territorial brands and agro-food products from given territories?

To do so, a research structure was developed, including a number of inclusion and exclusion criteria for publications to serve as the basis for searches made on the different databases used (Table 1).

The key concept of this SLR is place branding which, despite covering a wide area, is mostly framed in the areas of social science and economics and management, and so databases with greatest impact in these fields were used. According to Pedro et al. (2018), these are the wide-ranging multi-disciplinary databases of *Google Scholar*, *Scopus* and *Web of Science* (WOS).

### 3.2 Search for evidence

Based on the concepts underlying the research question, namely, ‘place brand’, ‘agro-food product’, ‘competitiveness’ and ‘sustainable development’, after several attempts, a combination of terms was established that would lead to reaching results considered satisfactory.

Consequently, in the fields ‘*Title*’, ‘*Abstract*’ and ‘*Keywords*’ the combination of terms used was [“place brand\*” AND “agricultur\*” AND “product” AND “competitiv\*”], adding supplementary filters to search for “articles” in “journals” written in “English” and only in the subject areas of: Environmental sciences; Economics; Agriculture multidisciplinary; Agricultural economics policy; Agronomy; Business management; Geography and Planning development. Patents and quotations were excluded, choosing not to set any time limit.

The search was carried out in September 2017, resulting in 240 scientific articles: 74 on *Google Scholar*, 16 on *Scopus* and 150 on *Web of Science*.

**Table 1** Criteria for inclusion and exclusion of publications in this SLR

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence on the databases: <i>Web of Science</i> (ISI), <i>Scopus</i> and <i>Google Scholar</i>.</li> <li>• Presence of the combination of the terms ‘<i>territorial brand</i>’, ‘<i>agriculture</i>’, ‘<i>product</i>’ and ‘<i>competitiveness</i>’ connected with the boolean operator ‘<i>and</i>’, in the fields ‘<i>title</i>’, ‘<i>abstract</i>’ and ‘<i>keywords</i>’.</li> <li>• The selected subject areas are, on <i>Scopus</i> and on <i>WOS</i>, ‘<i>environmental sciences</i>’, ‘<i>economics</i>’, ‘<i>agriculture multidisciplinary</i>’, ‘<i>agricultural economics policy</i>’, ‘<i>agronomy</i>’, ‘<i>business</i>’, ‘<i>geography</i>’, ‘<i>agriculture dairy animal science</i>’ and ‘<i>planning development</i>’.</li> <li>• Peer-reviewed scientific articles (only articles), indexed on the <i>SJR Index</i>, published in English.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book, book chapter, book section, conference papers and/or proceedings, reports and/or working papers and other types of grey literature</li> <li>• Patents and Citations</li> </ul>

Source: Own elaboration

### 3.3 Selection and review of documents, data collection and analysis

First, all articles from scientific journals not indexed on the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR)<sup>1</sup> were excluded, to ensure the scientific relevance of the articles and their influence on the subject studied. After this stage, 184 articles remained (Fig. 1).

After analysing the titles and abstracts of each article, aiming to identify a possible connection with the subject studied (Fig. 1), 37 articles indexed on the *SCImago Journal Rank* were found and considered relevant for the purposes of this study.

It should be noted, however, that electronic searches only cover approximately 10% of the articles that should appear in an exhaustive literature review. Consequently, to obtain the remaining 90%, various methods were used, finding that the most effective is to make an in-depth search of the bibliographical references resulting from the final selection previously made. In this search, the most relevant are selected, their bibliographical references read once again and exhaustively, with another selection of the most relevant, and so on successively until reaching a point of saturation where it is not considered possible to find more articles relevant to the study in question (Randolph 2009).

Attempting to identify and select academically relevant articles and journals for a multi-disciplinary field like place branding is an extremely challenging task, as underlined by Vuignier (2017) on the occasion of an extensive and important review carried out on this subject. A total number of 224 articles was found which added to the 37 articles originating from the initial search, form a total of 261 documents as the basis of this study.

### 3.4 Classification of articles

The next step was to classify and categorize the 261 articles on a database, according to the seven different variables assessed, namely: bibliographical classification; type of document; principal subject; geographical context; product and/or service studied; nature of the study and methodology used; and data-collection method (Table 2).

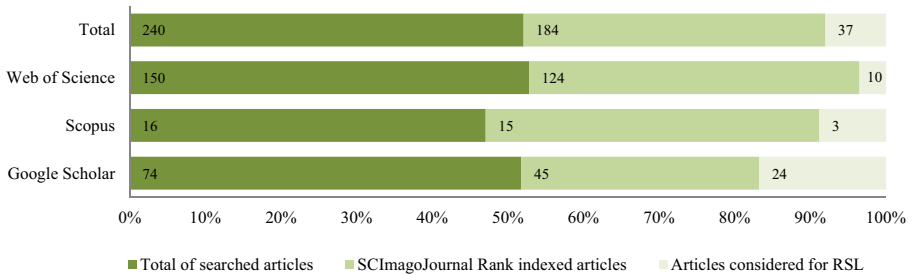
## 4 Results

### 4.1 Quantitative analysis of the literature related to place branding

Having selected the documents to include in this SLR, the 261 articles were classified and categorized according to the variables: (1) year of publication; (2) number of articles; (3) number of authors and co-authors; and (4) scientific journal in which the articles were published.

<sup>1</sup> *SCImago Journal Rank* (SJR indicator) is a measure of the scientific influence of academic publications that explains the number of quotations received by a journal and the importance or prestige of the journals these quotations come from (<http://www.scimagojr.com/>).





**Fig. 1** All articles resulting from the searches made. Source: Own elaboration

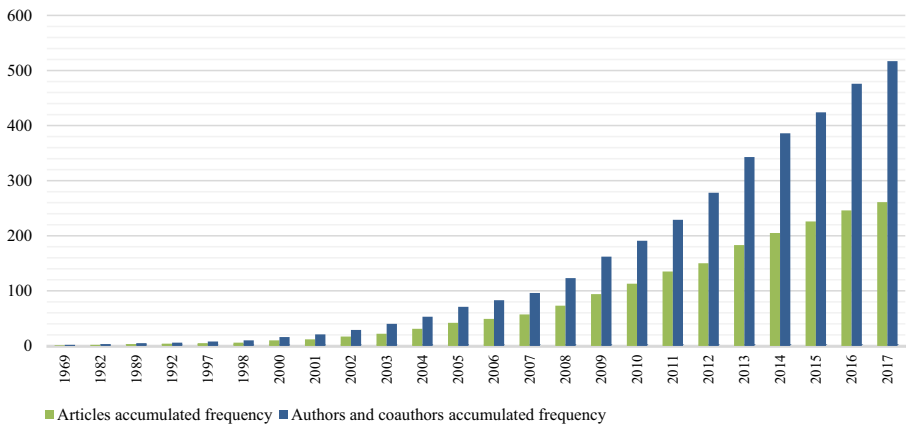
Figure 2 reveals a tendency for the number of articles published annually on place branding to increase, as well as the authors involved. It is noted that for the period studied, the greatest number of articles published in any year ( $n = 33$ ) was reached in 2013, and the total number of documents found up to the date of carrying out this SLR amounts to 261 articles and 517 authors and co-authors.

Also in relation to Fig. 2, it is important to mention that the data presented for 2017 do not correspond to the annual total as the document search for this SLR took place in September of that year.

**Table 2** All articles considered for the SLR

Variable	Identification
Article classification	Author(s); Title; Year of publication; Keywords; Journal; Volume; Issue; Pages; Place of publication; Editor; Journal subject area and category; Number of citations on Google Scholar and Web of Knowledge
Type of document	Conceptual/Exploratory (based on pure conceptual theoretical and thematic approach with few or no supporting empirical data); Empirical paper; Literature review; Other.
Main scope/topic	Destination branding, Place branding, Place image, Place marketing, Sense of place, Territorial brand, etc.
Geographic context	(1) Type of geographic context (Village, Town, City, Municipality, Region, Country or Other) (2) Name of the place
Product/Service	(1) Name of the product/service (2) Type of product/service attached to the place brand
Adopted methodology and nature of the study	(1) Qualitative (Single case study; Comparative and Multi-case; Conceptual/Exploratory; Other) (2) Quantitative (Survey, Textual analysis Conceptual) (3) Multi-method (4) Theoretical or conceptual (based on pure conceptual theoretical and thematic approach with few or no supporting empirical data)
Data collection methods	Primary data (Cases; Surveys; Observations; Experiments; Questionnaire; Interview; Focus group; etc.) Secondary data (Government publications; Websites; Books; Journal articles; Internal records; etc)

Source: Own elaboration based on the studies developed by Acharya and Rahman (2016); Gertner (2011a, b); Lucarelli and Berg (2011); Vuignier (2017)



**Fig. 2** Accumulated frequencies of the number of articles and authors/co-authors involved, considered in the SLR. Source: Own elaboration

Five hundred and seventeen authors and co-authors participated in the selected articles, with six participating in five articles or more (Table 3), this set of publications ( $n = 40$ ) corresponding to 15.3% of all articles forming the SLR ( $n = 261$ ).

It is also noted that 20 authors have participated in three or four publications. In addition, of the universe studied, 26 authors have participated in at least three publications, these corresponding to 39.1% of all articles studied (Fig. 3).

However, analysing the number of quotations on the *Web of Knowledge* and *Google Scholar* (see Table 4), among the authors with the greatest number of articles included in this SLR (cf. Table 3 and Fig. 3), only Gertner (in co-authorship with Kotler) and Kavaratzis (in co-authorship with Ashworth) participate in articles included in the list of ten articles with the greatest number of quotations.

Using *VOSviewer*<sup>2</sup> software, it was also possible to make an analysis of co-authorship, using the fractional counting method, and in the total number of 434 authors identified, see how many authors participated in at least three studies as well as the existence of clusters of scientific knowledge in the area of study (Fig. 4).

This analysis confirms the diversity of knowledge, applications and practices regarding place branding, identifying 19 clusters of authors/co-authors who in some way interact in producing scientific research.

Furthermore, there is also a predominance of articles published in scientific journals in the areas of marketing ( $n = 22$ ), social sciences ( $n = 21$ ) and agricultural and biological sciences ( $n = 14$ ), together representing 52.8% of all ( $n = 108$ ) articles selected (Fig. 5).

Bearing in mind the origin of the expression *place branding*, it is not surprising to find a high number of articles from the area of marketing (47.5%). Continuing with the distribution of publications by area of knowledge, those in the areas of social sciences and management represent, respectively, 12.6 and 10.4% of the total of articles selected.

<sup>2</sup> *VOSviewer* is a software tool used to build and visualize bibliometric networks. Those networks can include various publications, and are built through relationships of citation, co-citation or co-authorship (<http://www.vosviewer.com/>).

**Table 3** Authors with most articles published and the corresponding number of citations on *Web of Science* (WOS) and *Google Scholar* (GS)

Author/ Co-Author	N.° of Articles	Articles	Citations (WOK/GS)
Kavaratzis, M.	8	Kavaratzis, M. (2005). Place Branding: A Review of Trends and Conceptual Models. <i>The Marketing Review</i> , 5(4), 329–342.	94/429
		Kavaratzis, M., and Ashworth, G. J. (2005). City branding: an effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick? <i>Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie</i> , 96(5), 506–514.	107/835
		Kavaratzis, M., and Ashworth, G. (2008). Place marketing: how did we get here and where are we going? <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 1(2), 150–165.	53/244
		Kavaratzis, M. (2012). From “necessary evil” to necessity: stakeholders’ involvement in place branding. <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 5(1), 7–19.	38/168
		Kavaratzis, M., and Hatch, M. J. (2013). The dynamics of place brands: An identity-based approach to place branding theory. <i>Marketing Theory</i> , 13(1), 69–86.	52/221
		Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., and Zenker, S. (2013). My city – my brand: the different roles of residents in place branding. <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 6(1), 18–28.	50/213
		Kavaratzis, M. (2015). Place branding scholars and practitioners: “strangers in the night”? <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 8(3), 266–270.	4/6
		Kavaratzis, M., and Kalandides, A. (2015). Rethinking the place brand: the interactive formation of place brands and the role of participatory place branding. <i>Environment and Planning A</i> , 47(6), 1368–1382.	12/26
Zenker, S.	8	Zenker, S. (2009). Who’s your target? The creative class as a target group for place branding. <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 2(1), 23–32.	24/45
		Zenker, S. (2011). How to catch a city? The concept and measurement of place brands. <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 4(1), 40–52.	52/166
		Zenker, S., and Martin, N. (2011). Measuring success in place marketing and branding. <i>Place Branding and Public Diplomacy</i> , 7(1), 32–41.	37/120
		Zenker, S., and Beckmann, S. C. (2013a). Measuring brand image effects of flagship projects for place brands: The case of Hamburg. <i>Journal of Brand Management</i> , 20(8), 642–655.	9/27
		Zenker, S., and Beckmann, S. C. (2013b). My place is not your place – different place brand knowledge by different target groups. <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 6(1), 6–17.	0/89
		Braun, E., Kavaratzis, M., and Zenker, S. (2013). My city – my brand: the different roles of residents in place branding. <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 6(1), 18–28.	50/213
		Zenker, S., and Erfgen, C. (2014). Let them do the work: a participatory place branding approach. <i>Journal of Place Management and Development</i> , 7(3), 225–234.	10/25

**Table 3** (continued)

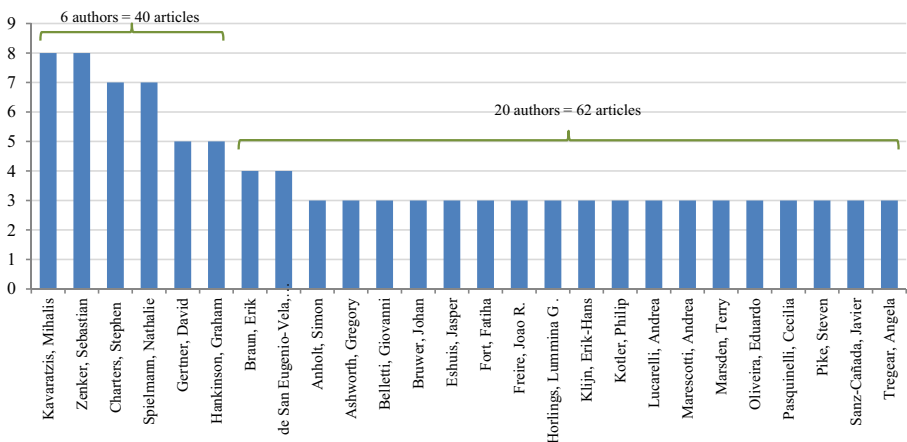
Author/ Co-Author	N.° of Articles	Articles	Citations (WOK/GS)
		Zenker, S., and Rütter, N. (2014). Is satisfaction the key? The role of citizen satisfaction, place attachment and place brand attitude on positive citizenship behavior. <i>Cities</i> , 38, 11–17.	16/45
Charters, S.	7	Charters, S. (2009). Does a brand have to be consistent? <i>Journal of Product and Brand Management</i> , 18(4), 284–291.	8/24
		Charters, S., Menival, D., Senaux, B., and Serdukov, S. (2013). Value in the territorial brand: the case of champagne. <i>British Food Journal</i> , 115(10), 1505–1517.	4/9
		Spielmann, N., and Charters, S. (2013). The dimensions of authenticity in terroir products. <i>International Journal of Wine Business Research</i> , 25(4), 310–324.	7/15
		Charters, S., and Michaux, V. (2014). Strategies for wine territories and clusters: why focus on territorial governance and territorial branding? <i>Journal of Wine Research</i> , 25(1), 1–4.	1/4
		Charters, S., and Spielmann, N. (2014). Characteristics of strong territorial brands: The case of champagne. <i>Journal of Business Research</i> , 67(7), 1461–1467.	16/42
		Menival, D., and Charters, S. (2014). The impact of geographic reputation on the value created in Champagne. <i>Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics</i> , 58(2), 171–184.	2/4
		Charters, S., Spielmann, N., and Babin, B. J. (2017). The nature and value of terroir products. <i>European Journal of Marketing</i> , 51(4), 748–771.	0/1
Spielmann, N.	7	Spielmann, N., and Gélinas-Chebat, C. (2012). Terroir? That's not how I would describe it. <i>International Journal of Wine Business Research</i> , 24(4), 254–270.	0/23
		Spielmann, N., and Charters, S. (2013). The dimensions of authenticity in terroir products. <i>International Journal of Wine Business Research</i> , 25(4), 310–324.	7/15
		Spielmann, N. (2014). Brand equity for origin-bounded brands. <i>Journal of Brand Management</i> , 21(3), 189–201.	6/13
		Charters, S., and Spielmann, N. (2014). Characteristics of strong territorial brands: The case of champagne. <i>Journal of Business Research</i> , 67(7), 1461–1467.	16/42
		Spielmann, N. (2015). Anything but typical: how consumers evaluate origin products based on their cues. <i>International Journal of Wine Business Research</i> , 27(1), 23–39.	4/8
		Spielmann, N., and Williams, C. (2016). It goes with the territory: Communal leverage as a marketing resource. <i>Journal of Business Research</i> , 69(12), 5636–5643.	1/1
		Charters, S., Spielmann, N., and Babin, B. J. (2017). The nature and value of terroir products. <i>European Journal of Marketing</i> , 51(4), 748–771.	0/1
Gertner, D.	5	Kotler, P., and Gertner, D. (2002). Country as brand, product, and beyond: A place marketing and brand management perspective. <i>Journal of Brand Management</i> , 9(4), 249–261.	11/57051
		Gertner, D., and Kotler, P. (2004). How can a place correct a negative image? <i>Place Branding</i> , 1(1), 50–57.	36/191

**Table 3** (continued)

Author/ Co-Author	N.° of Articles	Articles	Citations (WOK/GS)
		Gertner, D. (2007). Place branding: Dilemma or reconciliation between political ideology and economic pragmatism? <i>Place Branding and Public Diplomacy</i> , 3(1), 3–7.	17/55
		Gertner, D. (2011). A (tentative) meta-analysis of the “place marketing” and “place branding” literature. <i>Journal of Brand Management</i> , 19(2), 112–131.	27/83
		Gertner, D. (2011). Unfolding and configuring two decades of research and publications on place marketing and place branding. <i>Place Branding and Public Diplomacy</i> , 7(2), 91–106.	42/145
Hankinson, G.	5	Hankinson, G. (2001). Location branding: A study of the branding practices of 12 English cities. <i>Journal of Brand Management</i> , 9(2), 127–142.	117/480
		Hankinson, G. (2004). Relational network brands: Towards a conceptual model of place brands. <i>Journal of Vacation Marketing</i> , 10(2), 109–121.	185/703
		Hankinson, G. (2009). Managing destination brands: establishing a theoretical foundation. <i>Journal of Marketing Management</i> , 25(1–2), 97–115.	61/194
		Hankinson, G. (2010). Place branding research: A cross-disciplinary agenda and the views of practitioners. <i>Place Branding and Public Diplomacy</i> , 6(4), 300–315.	31/102
		Hankinson, G. (2012). The measurement of brand orientation, its performance impact, and the role of leadership in the context of destination branding: An exploratory study. <i>Journal of Marketing Management</i> , 28(7–8), 974–999.	25/59

Source: Own elaboration

Legend: WOK/GS: Web of Knowledge/Google Scholar

**Fig. 3** Authors and/or co-authors participating in three or more publications. Source: Own elaboration

**Table 4** Publications with the greatest number of citations according to *Web of Knowledge* and *Google Scholar*, in October 2017

N.º	Title	Author(s), year, journal	Citations (WOS/GS)
1	Country as brand, product, and beyond: A place marketing and brand management perspective	Kotler, Philip; Gertner, David <i>Journal of Brand Management</i>	11/57051
2	The strategic analysis of intangible resources	Hall, Richard <i>Strategic Management Journal</i>	748/3866
3	Broadening the Concept of Marketing	Kotler, Philip; Levy, Sidney J. <i>Journal of Marketing (pre 1986)</i>	33/3163
4	Embeddedness and local food systems: notes on two types of direct agricultural market	Hinrichs, C.Clare <i>Journal of Rural Studies</i>	437/1235
5	Cooperative branding for rural destinations	Cai, Liping A. <i>Annals of Tourism Research</i>	176/1118
6	Quality, Nature, and Embeddedness: Some Theoretical Considerations in the Context of the Food Sector	Murdoch, Jonathan; Marsden, Terry; Banks, Jo <i>Economic Geography</i>	354/938
7	Embeddedness, the new food economy and defensive localism	Winter, Michael <i>Journal of Rural Studies</i>	347/874
8	Food Supply Chain Approaches: Exploring their Role in Rural Development	Marsden, Terry; Banks, Jo; Bristow, Gillian <i>Sociologia Ruralis</i>	251/853
9	City branding: an effective assertion of identity or a transitory marketing trick?	Kavaratzis, Mihalis; Ashworth, Gregory <i>Tijdschrift voor economische en sociale geografie</i>	107/835
10	Translating terroir: the global challenge of French AOC labeling	Barham, Elizabeth <i>Journal of Rural Studies</i>	250/670

Source: Own elaboration

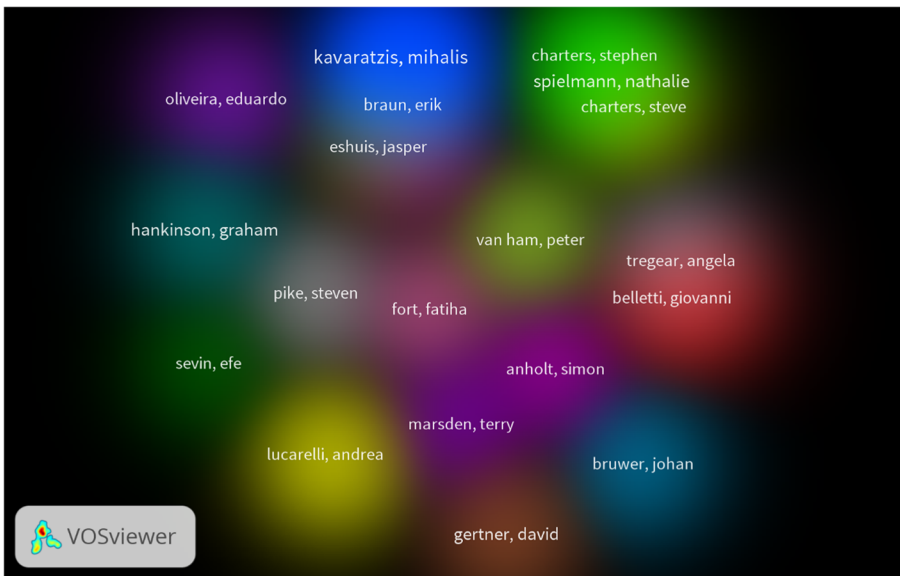
Of a total of 108 scientific journals, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* is the one with the greatest number of articles used in this SLR (17,6%). The *Journal of Place Management and Development* (7,7%) and *Journal of Brand Management* (4,6%) are the second and third sources of articles with the greatest presence in our research (see Table 5).

As for publications' country of origin, the United Kingdom, besides being the country of origin of the greatest number of journals referenced in this SLR, (58.3%), is also the one publishing the most relevant journals in this area of knowledge, namely: *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*; *Journal of Place Management and Development*; and *Journal of Brand Management* (see Table 6).

Consequently, these journals also register a greater number of publications by the most relevant authors, namely, Mihalis Kavaratzis, Sebastian Zenker, Stephen Charters or Nathalie Spielmann.

## 4.2 Studies' geographical contexts

For the total number of 261 articles forming this SLR, 177 case studies (67.8%) were identified, where research was centred on the geographical contexts of 'country'

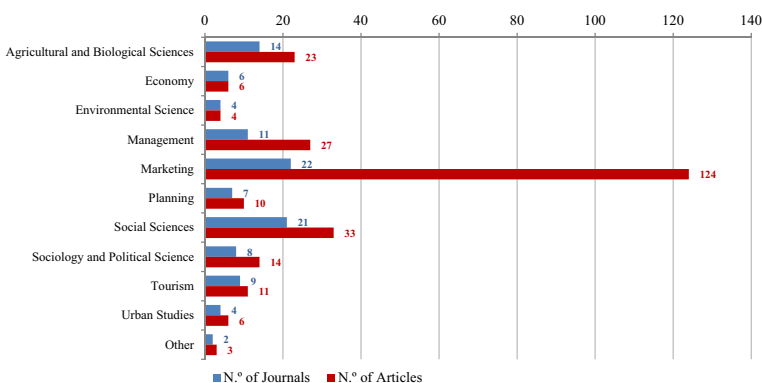


**Fig. 4** Clusters of authors/co-authors participating in more than two articles in the SLR. Source: Own elaboration, using *VOSviewer* software

(30.5%), ‘region’ (35.6%), ‘city’ (7.9%), ‘municipality’ (1.1%), ‘town’ (1.1%) or ‘other geographical context’ (1.1%) (see Table 7). In 22.6% of case studies, various geographical contexts are referred to, comparing them (countries, regions, local authorities and/or cities) or presenting several individual cases in the same study, without resorting to a comparative analysis.

The geographical context of ‘region’ is most common in the studies selected (48.1%), followed by that of ‘country’ (34.5%). Together, the contexts of ‘country’, ‘region’ and ‘city’ account for almost all the case studies (93.9%).

In addition, the majority of experiences focused on in studies are located in Europe (71.4%), and consequently, this continent also has the greatest number of case studies reported, namely the United Kingdom (12.7%); France (11.7%); and Italy (10.3%) (cf. Fig. 6).



**Fig. 5** Nº of scientific journals and articles by area of knowledge. Source: Own elaboration

**Table 5** Scientific journals with more than four articles in the SLR, by country and area of knowledge

Journal	N.º of Articles	Impact factor $S/R$	Country	Field of Study
Place branding and Public Diplomacy <sup>a</sup>	46	0.36	United Kingdom	Marketing
Journal of Place Management and Development	20	0.45	United Kingdom	Marketing
Journal of Brand Management	12	0.62	United Kingdom	Marketing
Journal of Business Research	9	1.81	Netherlands	Management
International Journal of Wine Business Research	8	0.33	United Kingdom	Management
Journal of Product and Brand Management	7	0.66	United Kingdom	Marketing
Journal of Rural Studies	7	1.23	United Kingdom	Social Sciences: Geography
Sociologia Ruralis	6	0.60	United Kingdom	Sociology and Political Science
European Journal of Marketing	5	1.00	United Kingdom	Marketing
Marketing Theory	5	1.64	United Kingdom	Marketing
Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie	5	0.71	United Kingdom	Social Sciences: Geography
Journal of Wine Research	4	0.25	United Kingdom	Agricultural and Biological Sciences
Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal	4	0.42	United Kingdom	Marketing

<sup>a</sup> After 2006, the journal *Place Branding* changed its publisher and its name to *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*

Source: Own elaboration

Outside Europe, the United States of America stands out (9.4%) in the American continent, and Australia (3.3%) in Australasia. Together, other countries in the world only represent 16.0%, that is, 34 of the 213 case studies.

### 4.3 Nature of the different studies, data-collection methods and methodology adopted

Most of the articles selected are of a markedly research nature (*research papers/empirical papers*) (67.8%). There is a high percentage of studies of a conceptual and/or exploratory character and literature reviews (27.9%), in that place branding is a relatively recent research topic requiring additional research efforts of an applied nature (Dinnie 2004) (see Fig. 7).

Still concerning the research articles (research/empirical papers) ( $n = 177$ ), the vast majority are seen to be qualitative ( $n = 166$ ; 93.8%) and grounded on case studies ( $n = 123$ ; 69.5%). Only 6.2% ( $n = 11$ ) are quantitative ( $n = 7$ ; 3.9%) or multi-method ( $n = 4$ ; 2.3%) (Table 8).



**Table 6** Country of origin of the different scientific journals

Country	N.º of Journals	Publications
United Kingdom	63	Annals of the Association of American Geographers; Annals of Tourism Research; Area; Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics; Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics; British Food Journal; Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society; Canadian Journal of Development Studies; Cities; Economic Geography; Enterprise and Society; Environment and Planning A; Environmental Communication; European Journal of Marketing; European Planning Studies; European Review of Agricultural Economics; European Sport Management Quarterly; Food policy; Food Quality and Preference; Geoforum; Geografisk Tidsskrift-Danish Journal of Geography; Geography Compass; International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality; International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation; International Journal of Tourism Research; International Journal of Wine Business Research; International Marketing Review; International Planning Studies; Journal of Brand Management; Journal of Consumer Marketing; Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development; Journal of Destination Marketing and Management; Journal of Development Studies; Journal of Marketing Management; Journal of Place Management and Development; Journal of Product and Brand Management; Journal of Rural Studies; Journal of Strategic Marketing; Journal of Sustainable Tourism; Journal of Urban Technology; Journal of Wine Research; Journal of World Intellectual Property; Marketing Intelligence and Planning; Marketing Theory; Measuring Business Excellence; Place Branding; Place Branding and Public Diplomacy; Planning Theory and Practice; Public Administration Review; Public Management Review; Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal; Regional Studies; Regional Studies, Regional Science; Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism; Sociologia Ruralis; The Marketing Review; Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie; Tourism and Hospitality Research; Tourism Management; Town Planning Review; Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers; Urban Research and Practice; World Development.
United States	21	AgExporter - Economics of Agriculture; Agribusiness; American Economic Review; Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science; California Agriculture; Consumption Markets and Culture; European Urban and Regional Studies; Global Business and Economics Review; International Journal of Communication; Journal of Advertising; Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics; Journal of Food Products Marketing; Journal of Macromarketing; Journal of Marketing; Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute; Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing; Journal of Vacation Marketing; Local Economy; Progress in Human Geography; Rural Sociology; Strategic Management Journal.
Netherlands	7	Agriculture and Human Values; European Economic Review; Journal of Business Research; Journal of Cleaner Production; Land Use Policy; Open Geography Journal; Wine Economics and Policy.
Spain	4	Architecture, City and Environment; Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Espanoles; Documents d'Anàlisi Geogràfica; Spanish Journal of Agricultural Research.
Canada	3	Canadian Social Science; Island Studies Journal; Review of European Studies.
Germany	2	IIC - International Review of Intellectual Property and Competition Law; International Review on Public and Non Profit Marketing.
Romania	2	Amfiteatru Economic; Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences.
Brazil	1	Ambiente & Sociedade.

**Table 6** (continued)

Country	N.º of Journals	Publications
Hungary	1	Society and Economy.
Pakistan	1	World Applied Sciences Journal.
Poland	1	European Spatial Research and Policy.
South Africa	1	South African Journal of Business Management.
United Arab Emirates	1	Recent Patents on Food, Nutrition and Agriculture.
Total	108	

Source: Own elaboration

Researchers are found to use various methodologies to gather data, with 52.5% ( $n = 93$ ) of articles resorting to primary sources (direct observation, interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, etc.); 14.7% ( $n = 26$ ) to secondary sources (promotional document, official documents, information in the media, internet content, etc.); 19.2% ( $n = 34$ ) of cases use them simultaneously, and 13.6% of cases do not mention the data-collection method (Table 9).

The multi-disciplinary nature of the research topic, and the multiplicity of data-collecting methods (qualitative and quantitative) this implies, is reflected in the great variety of analysis techniques used by the authors for data treatment and analysis.

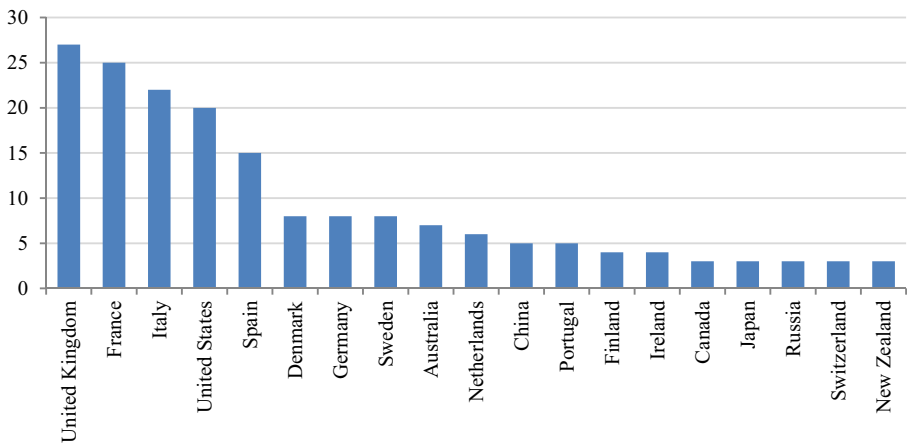
This SLR identified many articles that do not use data analysis, but in most of those where this type of analysis is made, the authors choose not to present the techniques and/or methodologies used. So of the 261 articles considered, only 98 identify the techniques and/or methodology used.

Still on the question of data analysis, the authors who used qualitative analysis software chose the *Atlas.ti 2.0* and *Nvivo* programs. The quantitative or mixed approaches (qualitative and quantitative) used various descriptive statistic techniques (ANOVA, SEM – Structure

**Table 7** Scientific journals with more than four articles in this SLR, by country and knowledge area

Geographic context	Studies referring only one place	Studies referring two places	Studies referring three or more places	Total number of studies	Total of places
Town	2	0	0	2	2
City	14	2	4	20	69
Municipality	2	0	0	2	2
Region	63	11	11	85	145
Country	54	4	3	61	72
Mixed	0	1	4	5	44
Other	2	0	0	2	2
Number of studies	137	18	22	177	336

Source: Own elaboration



**Fig. 6** Countries with three or more references in the case studies presented in the selected articles. Source: Own elaboration

Equation Modeling, Factor Analysis and Correlation and/or Regression Analyses), with most of them resorting to the SPSS program as their tool of preference.

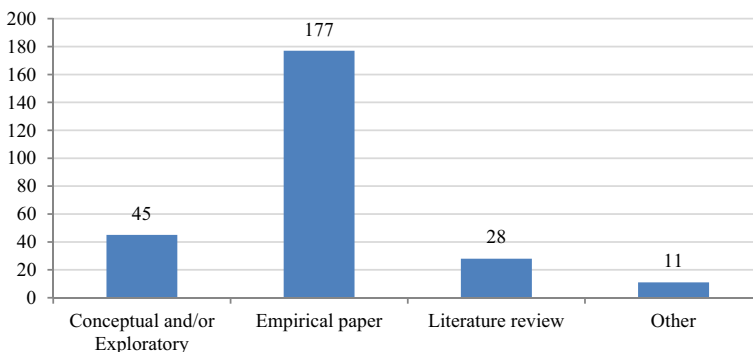
There was also a predominance of qualitative studies ( $n = 167$ ; 63,9%) made using data analysis, by subject or content.

Zenker and Beckmann (2013a, b) question the quality of participants interviewed, considering that, as found in this SLR, these authors understood that most data gathered with this technique are based on non-structured or semi-structured interviews, which limits the conclusive nature of the results obtained (Acharya and Rahman 2016).

It is also noted that, as suggested by Chan and Marafa (2013), regarding the quantitative studies identified in this SLR, whenever finding some subjectivity due to researchers' individualized interpretations, this ends up affecting the possibility of generalizing the results obtained.

#### 4.4 Analysis of lexical clusters

Initially, the 261 articles selected were classified using *Mendeley* software, joining on this platform all the sources and respective bibliographical information. Then a



**Fig. 7** Typology of articles selected for this SLR. Source: Own elaboration

**Table 8** Different types of research articles (research/empirical papers)

Types of research/empirical papers			Studies		
			N.º	%	
Multi-method			4	2.3	2.3
Quantitative	Quantitative		3	1.7	3.9
	Conceptual		4	2.3	
Qualitative	Case study	Case study	13	69.5	93.8
		Comparative multi case study	42		
		Multi case study	3		
		Single case study	65		
	Conceptual		2	1.1	
	Exploratory		37	20.9	
	Other		4	2.3	
TOTAL			177	100.0	100.0

Source: Own elaboration

spreadsheet was created on *Excel*, so as to present a more detailed classification table, aiming to use this for classification and categorization on *NVivo Pro11* software.

Using this program, and based on the parameters: (1) ‘in all sources (n=261)’; (2) ‘selecting words with a minimum of four characters’; and (3) with options ‘look for the exact word’ and ‘look for similar words’; an analysis was made of the frequency of key-words and the corresponding word cloud was designed (Table 10).

Figure 8 presents the word clouds created using the *NVivo Pro 11* program for the lexical analysis elaborated previously (see Table 10 above). Viewing this schematic representation – related to the dimension of the words and their frequency in the articles – strengthens the importance and pertinence of the final documents selected.

For the cluster analysis, the ‘.ris’ file originating in the database created on *Mendeley* was exported to the *VOSviewer* program, resulting – after the respective treatment – in various outputs referring both to the word network and the most frequent expressions.

Figure 9 confirms the existence of ‘nodes’ that are different from the others. This phenomenon reflects the importance of the number of words/expressions with the greatest

**Table 9** Data collection methods in the research articles (research/empirical papers)

Method of data collection	N.º of studies
Primary sources: Direct observation; Interviews (in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, etc.); Focus groups; Questionnaires; etc.	93
Secondary sources: Marketing and promotional documents; Official documents; Social media; Web contents, etc.	26
Primary and secondary sources	34
Nor mentioned/specified	24

Source: Own elaboration

**Table 10** Lexical analysis of the ten most frequent words, exact and similar, in the 261 articles selected

N.º	Most common exact words		Most frequent similar words		
	Word	Frequency	Word	Frequency	Similar words
1	Place	19.036	Brand <sup>***</sup>	35.379	brand, brand', 'brand', brand', brand", brand"', brand'simage, brand'sown, branded, branded', branded", branding, branding', branding', branding", branding'1, branding'literature, brands, brands', 'brands, 'brands"', brands', brands <sup>***</sup>
2	Brand	15.468	Placing	21.751	'place'ing, place, place', 'place, place', place", place"', place'and, place'ing, place'sbenefits, place'sbrand, place'sdemocratic, place'simage, place'sstakeholders, placed, placefulness, placeness, placeness', places, places', places', places", placing
3	Branding	15.076	Market <sup>**</sup>	13.859	market, 'market', market', market", market'sformative, marketability, marketable, marketed, marketed', marketeers, marketer, marketer', marketers, marketers', marketers', marketing, marketing', marketing", marketing'and, marketization', marketized, marketness, marketness', marketness'of, markets, markets', markets <sup>**</sup>
4	Marketing	9.206	Product <sup>**</sup>	12.230	product, product', product', product", product'slocal, product'soriginassociationmay, productes, production, production', production', production", productions, productive, productively, productives, productivity, products, products', products', products <sup>**</sup>
5	Research	6.190	Region <sup>**</sup>	7.956	region, region', region", regional, regional', regionalism, regionalism', regionality, regionalization, regionalized, regionalizing, regionally, regionals, regione, regioner, regiones, regions, regions', regions', regions <sup>**</sup>
6	Journal	6.015	Develops	7.364	develop, developed, developer, developers, developers', developing, development, development', development', development", developments, developments', developing, develops
7	Product	5.411	Consuming	6.894	consum, consumable, consumables, consume, consume', consumed, consumer, consumer', consumer'smind, consumer'sperspective, consumer'spreferenceforregionalproducts, consumer'sside, consumers, consumers', consumers', consumers", consumers'knowledge, consumers'views, consumes, consuming
8	Local	4.907	Research <sup>**</sup>	6.782	research, research', research", researched, researcher, researcher', researchers, researchers', researchers', researches, researching



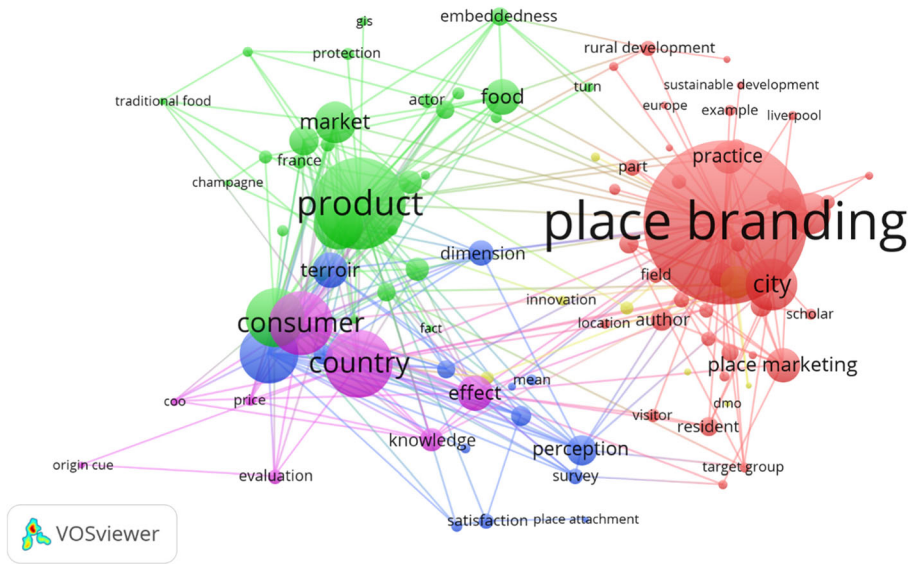


Fig. 9 Network of words and/or expressions with greatest relevance. Source: Own elaboration, using VOSviewer software

It is also found that expressions which at the outset have a similar origin to the area of knowledge appeared in different clusters, namely: “city branding”, “place brand”, “place branding”, “place identity” and “place marketing” in Cluster 1; “geographical indication” and “territorial brand” in Cluster 2; “regional brand” in Cluster 3; “place branding process” in Cluster 4; and “COO – country of origin” in Cluster 5.

Table 11 Ten words/expressions with the greatest presence and greatest relevance in the “title” and “abstract” of the articles in the SLR

Terms with more occurrences			More relevant terms		
Terms	Occurrence	Relevance	Terms	Occurrence	Relevance
Place	274	0.17	Origin cue	11	7.38
Place branding	254	0.74	Traditional food	11	5.94
Paper	212	0.11	Obstacle	15	5.28
Brand	205	0.11	Geographical indication	17	5.03
Branding	165	0.38	COO	13	3.96
Study	151	0.16	Protection	20	3.42
Product	143	1.01	Price	18	3.38
Research	137	0.13	PDO	15	2.95
Region	123	0.27	Place branding process	10	2.83
Strategy	120	0.08	Place attachment	10	2.81

Source: Own elaboration

**Table 12** Clusters of words/expressions with the greatest relevance in the “title” and “abstract” of the articles in the SLR

Cluster	N.º of items	Terms	Color identification
1	41	application; author; business; challenge; change; city; city branding; competition; contribution; destination; effectiveness; emergence; europe; evolution; example; field; focus; idea; investigation; liverpool; location; lation; leed; lumber; obstacle; part; place brand; place branding; place identity; place marketing; practice; practitioner; resident; review; rural development; scholar; sustainable development; target group; town; understanding; visitor	Red
2	29	actor; benefit; champagne; consumption; difference; embeddedness; environment; fact; firm; food; france; geographical indication; gis; impact; italy; market; origin; pdo; producer; product; production; protection; quality; reputation; spain; territorial brand; territory; traditional food; turn	Green
3	14	aspect; authenticity; dimension; influence; information; mean; perception; place attachment; regional brand; sample; satisfaction; survey; terroir; wine	Blue
4	8	customer; dmo; innovation; meaning; organization; place branding process; practical implication; stakeholder	Yellow
5	8	consumer; coo; country; effect; evaluation; knowledge; origin cue; price	Purple

Source: Own elaboration



**Fig. 10** Clusters of words and/or expressions with greatest relevance. Source: Own elaboration, using software VOSviewer software



**Table 13** Products and/or services considered in the studies

Typologies of products and/or services focused on in the studies	N.° of different products and/or services	
	N.°	%
Agro-food products	19	55.9
Tourism products and/or services	4	11.8
Food supply chains	2	5.9
Other products and/or services	9	26.5

Source: Own elaboration

#### 4.5 Products and/or services studied

Considering the research question guiding this SLR, 109 articles were identified as referring to case studies, analyses or concepts related to products and/or services ( $n = 33$ ).

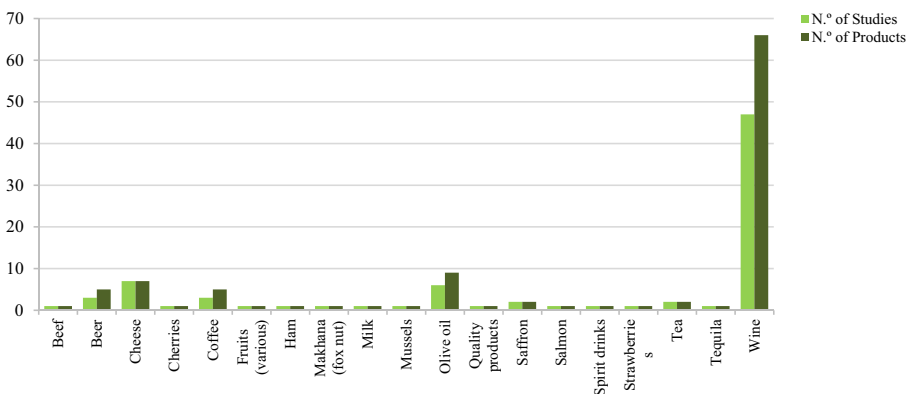
Therefore, in an attempt to find out the total number and the typology, the products and/or services were classified in four distinct groups, namely: agro-food products (55.9%); tourism (11.8%); agro-food chains (5.9%); and other products and/or services (26.5%) (see Table 13).

In absolute terms, agro-food products are the typology most referred to in the selected articles ( $n = 19$ ). Tourism products and/or services, in turn, represent 16.9% and agro-food chains only 1.2%.

Considering only agro-food products, Fig. 11 presents the relationship, in absolute terms, between the number of articles and the number of agro-food products.

Given the variety of work dealing with more than one product, analysis from this point on is made in absolute terms, considering all products present in the articles. For example, if the same study compares two types of wine from different regions, not only the wine product is considered but rather the two types of wine studied.

Regarding the type of agro-food products studied, wine is the product given most attention by researchers, being studied in 61.1% of work referring only to agro-food products (66 out of 108), followed by olive oil ( $n = 9$ ; 8.3%) and cheese ( $n = 7$ ; 6.5%).



**Fig. 11** Relation between  $n^{\circ}$  of studies and  $n^{\circ}$  of agro-food products. Source: Own elaboration

Table 14 Number of agro-food products studied by country of origin

	Africa			America				Asia				Europe			
	Ethiopia	Kenia	Tunisia	Brazil	Dominican Rep.	Jamaica	Mexico	Nicaragua	United States	China	India	Japan	Sri Lanka	Austria	Denmark
Beef															
Beer															
Cheese							1								
Cherries															
Coffee	1	1		1	1	1									
Fruits (div.)				1											
Ham															
Makhana										1					
Milk															
Mussels															1
Olive oil															
Quality products															
Saffron															
Salmon												1			
Spirit drinks															
Strawberries															1
Tea													1		
Tequila							1								
Wine	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	13	3	1	1	1	2	1

Table 14 (continued)

Ethiopia	Europe											Australasia		General Total			
	Europe											Australia	New Zealand				
	France	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Italy	Netherlands	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	Australia	New Zealand				
Beef										1						1	
Beer		2								1						2	5
Cheese	2			1						3							7
Cherries				1													1
Coffee																	5
Fruits (div.)																	1
Ham				1													1
Makhana																	1
Milk																	1
Mussels								1									1
Olive oil																	1
Quality products	1			2					4								9
Saffron				1					1								1
Salmon																	2
Spirit drinks																	1
Spirit drinks			1														1
Strawberries																	1
Tea																	1
Tequila																	2
Wine	20	1	1	2	11			2	6						2	2	66
	23	3	2	2	17	1		2	11	1					2	2	108

Source: Own elaboration

As for origin, Europe ( $n = 70$ ; 64.8%) and America ( $n = 19$ ; 17.6%) produce most of the agro-food products studied (80%) (Table 14).

France ( $n = 23$ ; 21.3%), Italy ( $n = 17$ ; 15.7%) and the United States ( $n = 13$ ; 12.0%) are the countries of origin of approximately half the products studied ( $n = 53$ ; 49.0%), with most of them being wine. Curiously, the four products studied from countries in Australia are wine brands, something traditionally associated with the “Old World”.

Given the great diversity of agro-food products worldwide, the limited variety of products studied concerning their contribution to the image and brand of their lands of origin is remarkable ( $n = 19$ ).

It should be underlined, referring once more to wine, that this is the agro-food product dealt with by most studies ( $n = 66$ ; 61.1%), as well as the product most studied as a territorial brand, with the predominant authors being Stephen Charters (Charters et al. 2011, 2013); Charters and Spielmann 2014), Nathalie Spielmann (Spielmann 2014) and David Menival (Menival and Charters 2014), regarding the specific case of Champagne.

## 5 Discussion of the SLR's results

The results of this SLR reveal the growing interest in the research topic of place branding, both by academics and the community of practitioners formed by managers and policy-makers.

As initially intended, for better understanding of how place branding has provided a Synergistic association between territorial brands and agro-food products from certain places, a search was made of scientific studies on this subject in three multi-disciplinary databases, resulting in the selection of 261 articles published in 108 scientific journals indexed in the *SCImago Journal Rank* (SJR).

The majority of articles identified were published in only three scientific journals, namely: *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*; *Journal of Place Management and Development*; and *Journal of Brand Management*; all of them directed to Marketing research, which in turn, is the area of knowledge producing most articles for this SLR, followed by Social Sciences, Management, and Agrarian and Biological Sciences.

It was found that most articles presenting theoretical knowledge use different theories of product, services, corporate marketing and branding and social sciences, also confirming the poor consistency and coherence in applying and defining concepts related to brands and branding.

As for the most influential authors, it was possible to identify some nuclei and associations of researchers who have concentrated on this area of knowledge, albeit diverging from the specificity of place branding, with some focusing on the branding of countries and nations (Anholt 2002; Gilmore 2002; Kotler and Gertner 2002), while others on the branding of regions, towns and locations (Hankinson 2001; Rainisto 2003).

Other more objective research clusters were also found in relation to the approach. For example – and because the parallel with the main aim of this SLR is perceptible – territorial brands and agro-food products, highlighting researchers such as Stephen Charters (Charters et al. 2011, 2013; Charters and Spielmann 2014), Nathalie Spielmann (Spielmann 2014), David Menival (Menival and Charters 2014), Diego Begalli or Roberta Capitello (Begalli et al. 2015, 2014) for the wine sector, in general,

and Champagne in particular, and Javier Sans-Cañada (Sans-Cañada and Muchnik 2016), Roberta Sonnino (Sonnino and Marsden 2005; Sonnino 2007) or Giovanni Belletti (Belletti et al. 2015; Belletti et al. 2017) for the olive oil sector.

Most articles analysed, as mentioned, adopt qualitative approaches as the predominant method (research and/or empirical articles), and generally the case study as the preferred method to address the subject under study. Concerning the data-collection methods used, there is a preference for primary sources, more precisely interviews, direct observation, focus groups and questionnaires. The simultaneous use of primary and secondary data sources is also frequent.

Regarding the typology of documents analysed, empirical studies stand out, focusing research on the geographical contexts of “country”, “region” and “town”; with a predominance of European countries, particularly the United Kingdom, France and Italy.

The relationship between place branding, or any other associated practice, and agro-food products is a common denominator in much of the work studied. This relationship is shown especially in the work involving case studies, identifying a total of 19 different products, which cover a universe of 108 product types.

Standing out among the typologies of agro-food products associated with place branding are wine, olive oil and cheese. In various studies selected, the research focuses mainly on a given territory’s reputation arising from the association between origin and those products’ quality.

## 6 Concluding remarks, limitations and future research

This study provides an SLR on the subject of place branding, for better understanding of how this practice has provided a synergetic association between territorial brands and agro-food products from certain places.

From the SLR performed, the majority of articles analysed: (1) fail to define specific research objectives; (2) are of a predominantly qualitative nature, based on data-collection methods that involve some subjectivity; (3) are of the descriptive type, based on personal opinions, specific experiences or case studies; (4) do not present consistent hypotheses and testable models are scarce; (5) tend to omit the methodologies used; and (6) present conclusions that are not particularly objective, generally failing to discuss opportunities for future research.

This SLR also confirmed some observations associated with the research topic, particularly that place branding is a multi-disciplinary practice, with multiple applications; that it includes concepts which in the literature even today have different or rather dissimilar interpretations; and that the synergetic association between territorial brands and agro-food products from certain places caused by the practice of place branding has been successively ignored by the literature of reference. This needs special attention, specifically an attempt to establish the role of place branding in determining the value added of territorial brands associated with agro-food products in the presence or absence of certification of origin.

In the scope of the studies selected for this SLR, there is a clear gap in terms of the existing knowledge on the synergistic role of place branding in the relationship between territorial brands and agro-food products from identified territories. This may be justified by the great majority of agro-food products identified being subject to

recognition and certification, already allying those products' quality and reputation to their geographical origin, and it remains to explore the (for example, the moderator-mediator) role of place branding in the synergetic process of value creation based on the relationship between territorial brands and agro-food products.

This fact is due essentially to the limitations found in carrying out this SLR, such as:

- i) A limited number of bibliographic references addressing the subject of place branding based on the synergy between the origin and quality of agro-food products;
- ii) The limited number of references consisting above all of qualitative approaches not supported by empirical studies, and;
- iii) The great profusion of disciplines involved in the subject of place branding.

Minimizing the impact of these limitations could, in fact, be the first contribution to place branding becoming an area of research with greater prominence and support both by scholars and policy-makers engaged in public and non-profit marketing issues.

For future research, this SLR signals the need for place branding to evolve from its descriptive state to a normative state founded on development of a robust, solidly based theory with qualitative and quantitative empirical applications.

To do so, theoretical structures and coherent taxonomies must be developed, as well as studying and understanding the differences between the branding of localities, towns, regions and countries, besides other types of places.

Since most agro-food products originate in rural, sparsely populated regions, place branding practices based on product quality can be a key element of many public policies for developing such territories, adopting qualitative differentiation as a mechanism to potentiate medium-long term competitiveness.

This possibility will take on greater relevance following the increased attention paid by European public policies to regional development practices based on territories' endogenous resources and intangible assets, above all in sparsely populated areas suffering from a declining population, an ageing workforce and the difficulty to access and penetrate international markets, which increasingly value biological and handmade production. These products must enter global distribution chains, but for this they need a distinctive stamp and it is here precisely where territorial brands have a differentiating role for perception and recognition by the global consumer.

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