

Research Article

Sustainability of Religious Tourism in Indonesia: A Bibliometric Review and Analysis

Lissa Rosdiana Noer^{1*}, Sri Yuyu Ninglasari¹, Prahardika Prihananto¹, Ni Gusti Made Rai¹, and Wawan Darmawan²

¹Faculty of Creative Design and Digital Business, Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember, Indonesia

²Department of Culture and Tourism of East Java, Indonesia

ORCID:

Lissa Rosdiana Noer: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4406-7605>

Abstract.

Religious tourism in Indonesia plays a significant role in the economy and the generation of employment opportunities. This study employs bibliometric techniques to uncover the sustainability of religious tourism in Indonesia. The data was acquired from Scopus and then examined using VosViewer. This study highlights the current patterns of research, the contributions made by different countries, and the clusters of research topics. The research findings indicate a substantial surge in the quantity of research articles pertaining to religious tourism throughout the past 15 years. The United States, India, and the United Kingdom, together with Indonesia, made substantial contributions to this research area. In addition, the sustainability of religious tourism must consider economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors. Subsequent studies are required to investigate areas such as spiritual tourism, halal tourism, destination image, visitor experience, and sustainability. Ensuring stakeholder engagement and advocating for sustainable tourism practices are crucial for maintaining the sustainability of religious tourism. As such, this study offers significant understanding into the growth and possibilities of religious tourism research in Indonesia.

Keywords: spiritual tourism, halal tourism, destination image, visitor experience, sustainability

1. Introduction

Religious tourism in Indonesia plays a crucial role in the country's economic sustainability, contributing significantly to national GDP and creating potential employment prospects for the local population [1]. This study's bibliometric research specifically examines the sustainability of religious tourism in Indonesia. The data utilized in this study were acquired from Scopus data. Bibliometrics can focus on specific research areas by employing quantitative analysis techniques to study collections of publications [2]. The bibliometric markers included in this study encompass keywords, citations, and the researcher's country of origin. Bibliometric analysis enables the measurement and analysis of statistics, allowing for the identification of research focus, as well as

Corresponding Author: Lissa Rosdiana Noer; email: lissarosdiananoer@gmail.com

Published: 19 November 2024

Publishing services provided by Knowledge E

© Lissa Rosdiana Noer et al. This article is distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use and redistribution provided that the original author and source are credited.

Selection and Peer-review under the responsibility of the 1st ICCDBS Conference Committee.



the identification of research outcomes that receive little attention and those that are extensively studied [3].

The bibliometric technique consists of two main components: performance analysis and knowledge mapping. Analyze the performance of authors and nations in terms of publication and citation distribution. Science mapping is conducted by the utilization of visualization tools to display the structure of the subject [4]. The bibliometric software utilized in this study is VosViewer. VosViewer is recognized for its capability to facilitate the analysis of data pertaining to the sustainability of religious tourism in Indonesia [2].

Indonesia's tourism industry successfully draws a significant influx of international tourists. Indonesia stands to gain substantial economic advantages from a notable annual surge in tourist arrivals, leading to increased state revenue [5]. The data presented in Figure 1 indicates a substantial surge in the quantity of international travelers following the Covid-19 outbreak. The sustainability of religious tourism is expected to enhance the appeal for international travelers.

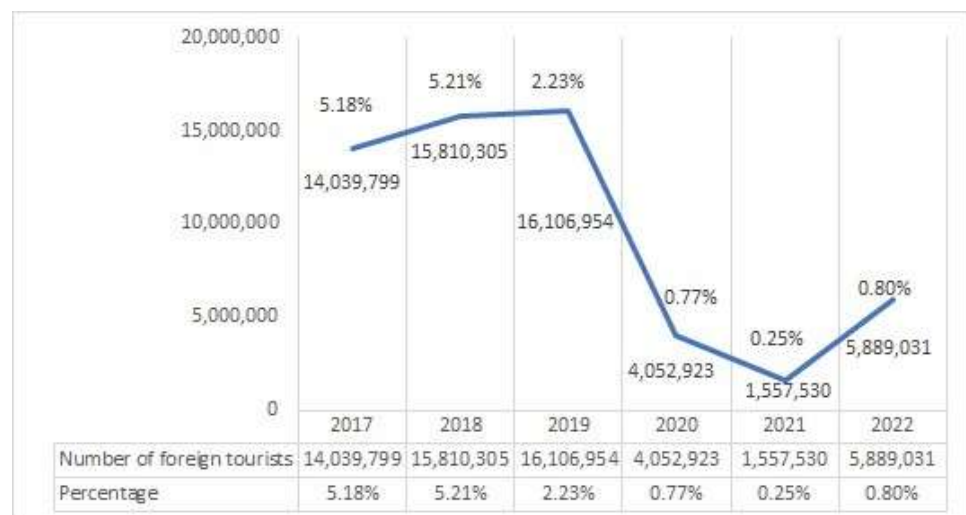


Figure 1: Foreign Tourists Visits.

Policy makers must prioritize sustainable tourism to effectively address the present and future economic, social, cultural, and environmental consequences [6]. Research related to religious tourism has been intensively explored in recent years, especially throughout the world and in Asia [7]. Bibliometric analysis technologies are utilized to process the data found in Scopus. In addition to identifying established and emerging disciplines, it can also identify research groups associated with the tourist sector [2].

2. Literature Review

Presently, research is scarce concerning the interest in sustainable tourism, despite the involvement of multiple stakeholders in the tourism industry, including supporters, companies, and tourists [8]. Ensuring the sustainability of tourism necessitates active involvement from pertinent stakeholders and robust political guidance. Sustainable tourism aims to uphold a notable level of tourist contentment and offer significant experiences to visitors, while also enhancing their understanding of sustainability concerns and encouraging the adoption of sustainable tourism practices [2]. The sustainability of religious tourism is contingent upon the conscientious consideration of economic, social, and environmental sustainability in the development and promotion of such tourism.

Figure 2 depicts the notion of four facets of tourist sustainability. Tourism activities can exert a significant influence on the environment, ecosystem, economy, society, and culture. To ensure the sustainable development of the tourism sector in both the medium and long term, it is crucial to establish a comprehensive equilibrium among these four elements [9]. Tourism is anticipated to fulfill the requirements of tourists and future potential for destination development, while also preserving the integrity of heritage, ecology, biodiversity, and life support systems. Sustainable tourism refers to the promotion and implementation of tourism activities that align with the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects, with the aim of ensuring long-term viability and endurance [9]. It is necessary to focus on sustainable tourism development in order to enhance tourist satisfaction [10].

Religious tourism refers to the current trend of visiting locations of religious significance or pilgrimage sites, where people seek to satisfy both their religious and recreational desires [11]. Some tourists who engage in religious tourism may not have religious motivations but rather visit for heritage-related reasons [12]. Furthermore, it is imperative to establish effective collaboration between local and central government entities to address any issues that may occur and ensure the long-term viability of religious tourism. This collaboration should specifically focus on the recruitment and training of individuals dedicated to serving in the field of religious tourism [13].

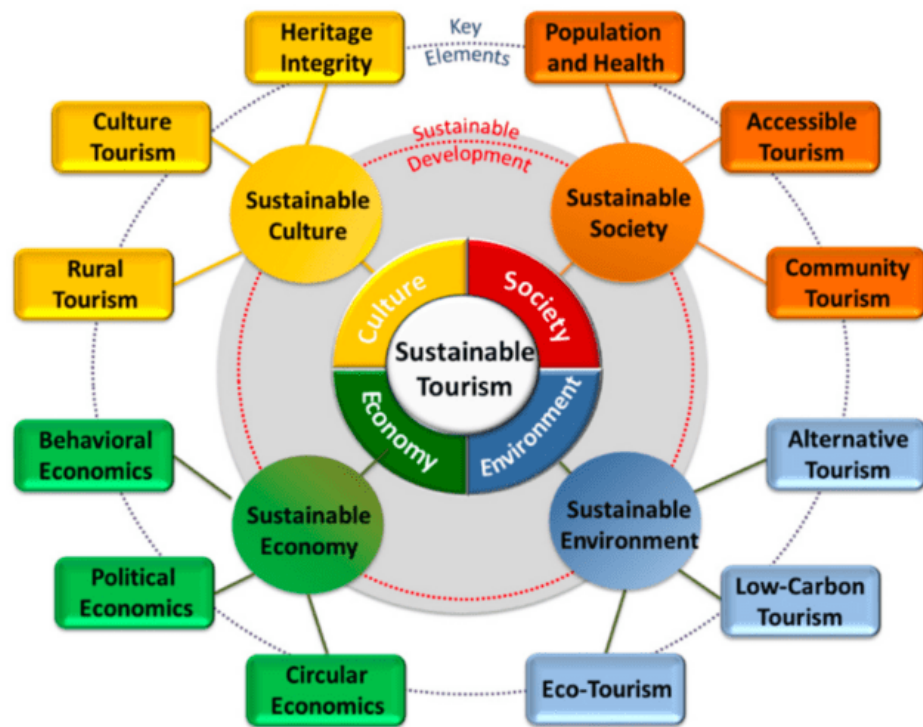


Figure 2: Four conceptual aspects required for achieving sustainable tourism [9].

3. Methodology Research

Utilizing quantitative methods, this study does a bibliometric analysis. Bibliometrics is a method that seeks to categorize data, generate concise summaries, and is widely acknowledged as a good approach for measuring the performance of journals, authors, and the attributes of research topics [14]. This study utilizes VosViewer software to analyze data on sustainable religious tourism, specifically examining the impact of author keywords, research citations, and prominent countries. The Scopus database search engine, specializing in sustainable religious tourism, was utilized for data collection. The Scopus database contains a wide range of abstracts from many sources that have been evaluated by experts, including scholarly journals, literature articles, books, and international conference proceedings [15]. The researchers employed the term 'sustainable religious tourism' as a keyword to collect pertinent data for the study. The user inputted this query into the Scopus database search engine. The study seeks to bolster the objectives of the sustainable development paradigm, encompassing the augmentation of human life standards, the provision of welfare for the present

generation, and the establishment of favorable circumstances for future generations [2].

4. Results and Discussion

This study involved an analysis of the annual publication count to ascertain if there have been changes from one year to another. The study employed materials published between 1977 and October 2023.

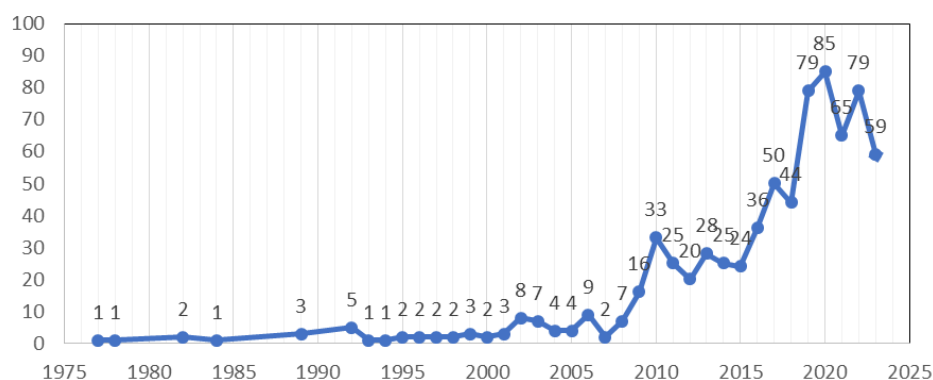


Figure 3: Number of Publications 1977-2023.

Figure 3 illustrates the number of publications that address the topic of religious tourism. The graph clearly demonstrates a substantial rise in the number of publications during the past 15 years. The most significant surge took place during the period from 2009 to 2010, exhibiting a growth rate of 106%. This was followed by a change in 2018-2019, resulting in a 79% increase. This suggests that in 2010, scholarly and professional interest in this area of study started to gain worldwide recognition. In 2018, there was a peak in the number of publications, indicating that study in this field has gained significant attention and popularity among scholars during the past five years. Moreover, the overall trend in the quantity of publications in this sector continues to be favorable, suggesting that research in this domain will persistently grow and has not yet achieved its maximum capacity. This implies that there remains untapped potential for further investigation in this domain.

There are 84 countries of origin for the 740 articles. Figure 4 displays the top 20 countries with the highest publication counts. These 20 countries collectively contribute to 71.35% of all publications in the field of religious tourism. The United States leads with the highest number of publications, totaling 65 articles, followed by India with 62 articles and the United Kingdom with 56 articles. Indonesia, on the other hand, ranks 6th

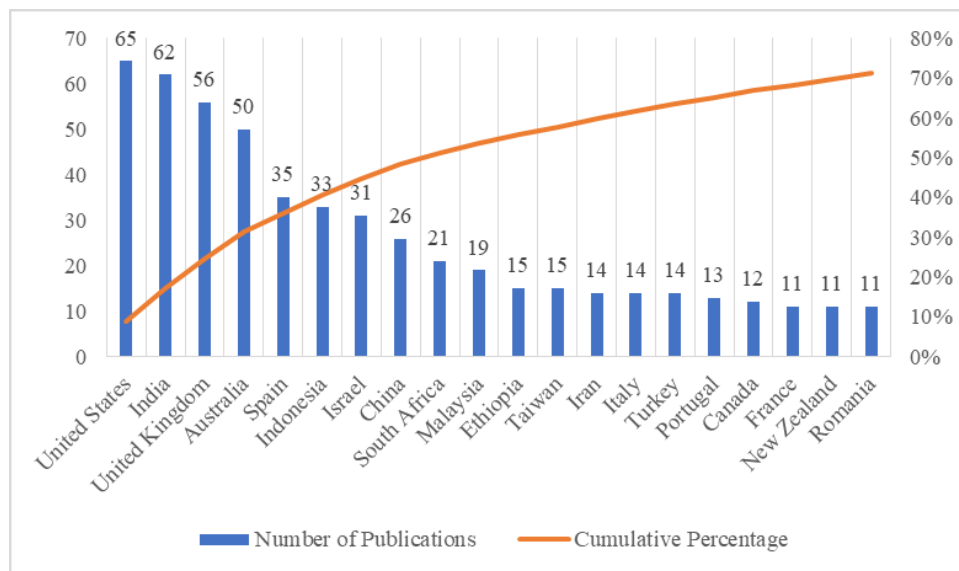


Figure 4: Top 20 Countries of All Contribution.

with 33 articles, representing only about 4% of the total publications. This indicates that publications related to religious tourism are still predominantly authored by countries other than Indonesia, although Indonesia remains an influential contributor to research in this field.

TABLE 1: Top 10 Publisher by Number of Documents.

Publisher	Documents
International journal of religious tourism and pilgrimage	110
annals of tourism research	46
journal of heritage tourism	30
African journal of hospitality, tourism, and leisure	30
tourism recreation research	29
tourism management	23
international journal of tourism research	21
journal of tourism and cultural change	20
tourism geographies	19
journal of Islamic marketing	19

In addition to analyzing publications by country, an analysis based on their publisher names was also conducted. Table 1 presents the Top 10 publisher names based on the number of documents. It can be observed from Table 1 that these 10 publishers contribute a total of 347 out of 740 documents, accounting for approximately 46%. It is worth noting that only 2 of these publishers explicitly use names related to religious

tourism, namely the 'International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage' and the 'Journal of Islamic Marketing.' The 'International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage' ranks highest in terms of the largest number of documents, with 110 documents or a contribution of 14%. This suggests that research in the field of religious tourism has established a dedicated platform. However, Table 2, which showcases the Top 10 publisher names based on the number of citations, reveals that publishers explicitly using names related to religious tourism occupy the 9th and 10th positions. Despite their high rankings, publications related to religious tourism that receive numerous citations are still predominantly dominated by publishers addressing tourism in general, without utilizing specific names related to religion.

TABLE 2: Top 10 Publisher by Number of Documents.

Publisher	Citations
annals of tourism research	5167
tourism management	1687
tourism recreation research	710
journal of heritage tourism	668
international journal of tourism research	600
journal of travel research	454
tourism geographies	412
tourism management perspectives	377
international journal of religious tourism and pilgrimage	340
journal of Islamic marketing	336

In terms of highly cited articles, please refer to Table 3 for an overview. In addition to Table 3, the Citation Network of the articles is depicted in Figure 5. From these two sources of information, it becomes evident that the publication by Lepp & Gibson holds the highest position in terms of citations in the red cluster [16]. While the articles authored by Noy and Buchmann et al. make it to the Top 10 most-cited documents, they are still situated within the red cluster [17,18]. The top-ranked articles within a cluster and those featured in the Top 10 most-cited documents are the article by Collins-Kreiner for the purple cluster and the article by Mak et al. for the green cluster [19,20]. This reveals that the predominant clusters in the field of religious tourism are the red, purple, and dark green clusters.

The red cluster centers on the topic of "destination image," as exemplified by Lepp & Gibson, who examine the risks associated with international tourism [16]. The findings of

TABLE 3: Top 10 Cited Document.

Authors	Citations
Lepp & Gibson (2003)	742
Noy (2004)	486
Rinschede (1992)	426
Collins-kreiner (2010)	339
Mak, et al (2012)	311
Buchmann, et al (2010)	288
Digance (2003)	275
Seaton (1999)	272
Nolan & Nolan (1992)	258
Sharpley & Jepson (2011)	253

this research reveal that many regions in developing countries are categorized as high-risk tourism destinations for tourists. Noy investigates the construction of backpacker travel identities within the context of tourism, with the research sample drawn from Israeli backpackers [17]. These travelers are regarded as narrators, narrating their identities, where profound experiences of self-transformation are forged and communicated. These experiences are rooted in authenticity and unique adventure, and they are rhetorically validated within semi-religious and romantic contexts.

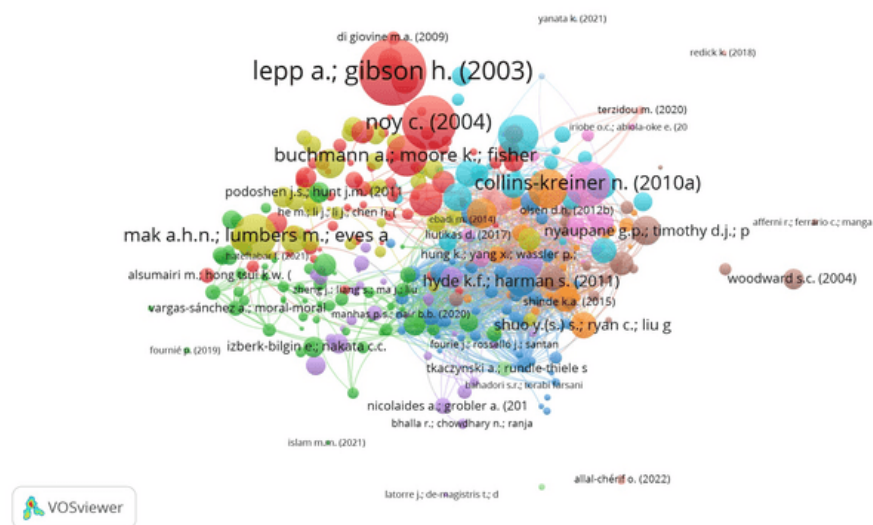


Figure 5: Citation Network of Articles.

The research conducted in 2010 by Buchmann et al. looks at the tourism experiences that the movie “Lord of the Rings” brought about in New Zealand [18]. The study’s conclusions show that factors influencing tourists’ perceptions of authenticity include

existing clusters. These four clusters are the yellow cluster, the green cluster, the red cluster, and the brown cluster. The remaining three clusters, namely the blue, light blue, and purple clusters, are dominated by keywords that have been prevalent in relatively older research. The blue cluster consists of keywords such as “religious tourism,” “sacred sites,” and “pilgrimage.” From these keywords, it is evident that the blue cluster primarily focuses on the historical and cultural aspects of tourism. The light blue cluster comprises keywords like “experience,” “authenticity,” and “identity,” indicating a focus on non-physical attributes of tourism. The purple cluster includes keywords like “spirituality,” “motivation,” and “pilgrimage tourism,” emphasizing motivation in visiting tourist destinations. From this analysis, it can be discerned that recent research has shifted its focus away from the historical aspects of tourism, non-physical attributes of tourism, and visitor motivation, as these topics have become less prominent. Conversely, the yellow cluster is dominated by keywords that have recently emerged, including “umrah,” “spiritual tourism,” and “performance.” These keywords suggest that research using these terms is currently trending in the field of religious tourism. In addition, while the green, red, and brown clusters are not dominant in terms of recent keywords, they contain noteworthy terms. The green cluster includes the recent keyword “halal tourism,” while the red cluster features “destination image” and “visitor experience.” Lastly, the brown cluster encompasses “sustainability.” Thus, the latest research trends in the field of religious tourism are oriented toward “spiritual tourism,” “performance,” “halal tourism,” “destination image,” “visitor experience,” and “sustainability.”

5. Conclusion

The objective of this study is to assess the sustainability of religious tourism in Indonesia through the utilization of a bibliometric methodology. The bibliometric analysis results offer valuable insights into the progress of research pertaining to religious tourism and help identify emerging trends and areas of research concentration. The study's conclusions highlight numerous crucial aspects. Religious tourism in Indonesia is a substantial industry that has the potential to contribute to the country's economic growth and employment opportunities. The bibliometric study reveals a substantial surge in the quantity of scholarly publications on religious tourism during the past 15 years. Furthermore, the United States, India, and the United Kingdom have made noteworthy contributions to the study of religious tourism, while Indonesia has also been involved in this area of research. Furthermore, the examination of co-occurrence networks reveals

the existence of four distinct clusters of keywords derived from current study. The clusters consist of the following categories: the yellow cluster includes “umrah,” “spiritual tourism,” and “performance”; the green cluster is focused on “halal tourism”; the red cluster encompasses “destination image” and “visitor experience”; and the brown cluster encompasses “spiritual tourism,” “performance,” “halal tourism,” “destination image,” “visitor experience,” and “sustainability”. The sustainability of the religious tourism sector necessitates the harmonious integration of economic, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions. Further exploration and advancement in this area of study remain promising, particularly in relation to subjects such as “spiritual tourism,” “halal tourism,” “destination image,” “visitor experience,” and “sustainability.” Moreover, the attainment of sustainability in religious tourism necessitates the involvement of diverse stakeholders and endeavors to advocate for sustainable tourism practices. This study provides useful insights into the growth and research opportunities of religious tourism in Indonesia.

Acknowledgements

This research is funded by the Department of Business Management Research Grant, Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember.

References

- [1] Al Qital S. Bibliometrix application on halal tourism management research. *J Islamic Econ Lit.* 2022;3(2):1–11. DOI: 10.58968/jiel.v3i2.122.
- [2] Kawuryan MW, Fathani AT, Purnomo EP, Salsabila L, Azmi NA, Setiawan D, et al. Sustainable tourism development in Indonesia: bibliometric review and analysis. *Indones J Geogr.* 2022;54(1):154–66.
- [3] Gümüş S, Bellibaş MŞ, Gümüş E, Hallinger P. Science mapping research on educational leadership and management in Turkey: a bibliometric review of international publications. *Sch Leadersh Manage.* 2019;40(1):23–44. DOI: 10.1080/13632434.2019.1578737.
- [4] Noyons EC, Moed HF, Luwel M. Combining mapping and citation analysis for evaluative bibliometric purposes: a bibliometric study. *J Am Soc Inf Sci.* 1999;50(2):115–31.

- [5] Badan Pusat Statistik. Number of foreign tourist visits to Indonesia by nationality (visits), 2018-2022. Bps.Go.Id; 2023. Available from: <https://www.bps.go.id/indicator/16/1821/1/jumlah-kunjungan-wisatawan-mancanegara-ke-indonesia-menurut-kebangsaan.html>
- [6] Cucculelli M, Goffi G. Does sustainability enhance tourism destination competitiveness? Evidence from Italian destinations of excellence. *J Clean Prod.* 2015;111(B):370–82.
- [7] Yoopetch C, Nimsai S. Science mapping the knowledge base on sustainable tourism development, 1990-2018. *Sustainability (Basel).* 2019;11(13):3631.
- [8] Buckley R. Sustainable tourism: research and reality. *Ann Tour Res.* 2012;39(2):528–46.
- [9] Pan SY, Gao M, Kim H, Shah KJ, Pei SL, Chiang PC. Advances and challenges in sustainable tourism toward a green economy. *Sci Total Environ.* 2018 Sep;635:452–69.
- [10] Sharpley R. Tourism and sustainable development: exploring the theoretical divide. *J Sustain Tour.* 2000;8(1):1–19.
- [11] Rashid AG. Religious tourism – a review of the literature. *J Hosp Tour Insights.* 2018;1(2):150–67.
- [12] Rahman MK, Suhaiza Z, Musa G. What travel motivational factors influence Muslim tourists towards MMITD? *J Islam Mark.* 2017;8(1):48–73.
- [13] Kartal B, Tepeci M, Atli H. Examining the religious tourism potential of Manisa, Turkey with a marketing perspective. *Tour Rev.* 2015;70(3):214–31.
- [14] Li ZC, Huang HJ, Yang H. Fifty years of the bottleneck model: a bibliometric review and future research directions. *Transp Res Part B: Methodol.* 2020;139:311–42.
- [15] Liao H, Tang M, Li Z, Lev B. Bibliometric analysis for highly cited papers in operations research and management science from 2008 to 2017 based on Essential Science Indicators. *Omega.* 2019;88:223–36.
- [16] Lepp A, Gibson H. Tourist roles, perceived risk and international tourism. *Ann Tour Res.* 2003;30(3):606–24.
- [17] Noy C. This trip really changed me: backpackers' narratives of self-change. *Ann Tour Res.* 2004;31(1):78–102.
- [18] Buchmann A, Moore K, Fisher D. Experiencing film tourism authenticity & fellowship. *Ann Tour Res.* 2010;37(1):229–48.
- [19] Collins-Kreiner N. The geography of pilgrimage and tourism: transformations and implications for applied geography. *Appl Geogr.* 2010;30(1):153–64.

- [20] Mak AH, Lumbers M, Eves A, Chang RC. Factors influencing tourist food consumption. *Int J Hosp Manag.* 2012;31(3):928–36.