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Review Paper

Local Wisdom in Global Tourism: A Bibliometric Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Research on local wisdom in tourism has expanded rapidly, yet its global publication dynamics, intellectual structure, and thematic evolution remain insufficiently mapped. This study provides a bibliometric analysis of 673 English-language journal articles indexed in Scopus and published between 1980 and 2026. Using Bibliometrix R-Package for performance analysis and VOSviewer for keyword co-occurrence and thematic evolution mapping, the study examines publication and citation trends, leading countries, institutions, authors, and journals, as well as the conceptual structure of the field. The findings identify three phases of development: an initiation phase (1980–1999), an expansion phase (2000–2014), and a rapid growth phase (2015–2026). Research output is concentrated in a limited number of countries, particularly Indonesia, China, the United States, Australia, and Thailand, while the conceptual structure reveals five major thematic clusters linking tourism with local culture, Indigenous knowledge, sustainability, community-based tourism, and traditional ecological knowledge. Thematic evolution shows a shift from geographically grounded case studies and social change toward stronger emphasis on local wisdom, tourism villages, cultural heritage, ecosystem services, regenerative tourism, and circular economy. These trends suggest that local wisdom is increasingly positioned not merely as a cultural attribute, but as a knowledge-based foundation for sustainability-oriented, community-based, and socio-ecological tourism development. This study is limited to English-language journal articles indexed in Scopus, which may underrepresent relevant publications from other databases, languages, and regional publication outlets. Nonetheless, it offers a global overview of how local wisdom has been conceptualised and developed within tourism scholarship.

Keywords: local wisdom, indigenous knowledge, sustainable tourism, bibliometric analysis

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the most dynamic and influential sectors in the global economy, contributing to economic growth, job creation, and cultural exchange (Cavalcante et al., 2021; Palacios-Florencio et al., 2021). However, the expansion of mainstream tourism often triggers environmental degradation, socio-cultural disruption, and socio-economic inequality. Increases in tourist arrivals, infrastructure development, and the commodification of space can undermine environmental carrying capacity and cultural integrity through the overconsumption of local resources, the conversion of community living spaces, and the erosion of cultural values (Butler, 2021). These conditions highlight the need for alternative tourism frameworks that prioritise local communities, sustainability, and inclusivity (Campos et al., 2024; Trip et al., 2021).

One prominent approach to destination planning and management involves the utilisation of local wisdom. Local wisdom refers to a historically accumulated set of values, norms, practices, and knowledge embedded in community life and transmitted across generations (Handayani & Suparno, 2023; Helmi et al., 2023). In practice, local wisdom is not merely a form of cultural heritage, but also functions as a knowledge system that guides how communities manage resources, maintain social relations, and sustain continuity through customary rules, rituals, and everyday practices (Tetelepta et al., 2023). For this reason, local wisdom is highly relevant to sustainable tourism, particularly in supporting destination governance rooted in local culture, community participation, and ecological sustainability (Maryani & Indrianty, 2024; Widari et al., 2025). Accordingly, local wisdom should not be viewed merely as a cultural attraction packaged for tourists, but as a foundation for tourism planning and management that is sensitive to local socio-ecological contexts (Pardosi et al., 2026).

In the broader literature, community-based knowledge is often discussed through related terms such as indigenous knowledge, traditional knowledge, and local knowledge (Onyancha, 2024). This broader conceptual field suggests that such forms of knowledge are generally understood as place-based, socially embedded, and closely tied to the historical experience of particular communities (Zent, 2025). In general, indigenous knowledge refers to culturally distinctive ways of knowing that emerge from the long-term interactions of Indigenous communities with their natural and social environments, whereas traditional knowledge emphasises knowledge, innovations, and practices that have developed over long periods and are transmitted across generations (Hurlbert et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, local knowledge refers more specifically to the knowledge, skills, and capabilities that develop within a particular place and social context, including among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities (Antweiler, 2004). Although these terms are not always used uniformly, they broadly point to forms of knowledge that are practical in orientation and shaped by intergenerational experience (Ellen et al., 2005; Grenier, 1998). Against this conceptual background, local wisdom may be positioned close to these concepts, although it should not be treated as a fully interchangeable category. In substantive terms, local wisdom likewise refers to knowledge embedded in community life and enacted through customary rules, social relations, and locally grounded practices of resource management within specific socio-ecological contexts. This understanding is consistent with the way local wisdom operates in community-based governance and sustainability practices (Maryani & Indrianty, 2024; Pardosi et al., 2026; Tetelepta et al., 2023; Widari et al., 2025). However, an uncritical use of local wisdom still risks reducing it to a symbolic cultural label rather than recognising it as a living and dynamic epistemic domain (Mahaswa & Syaja, 2025). Reflecting this conceptual and thematic diversity, a number of bibliometric and thematic studies have examined local wisdom and related knowledge systems in tourism and adjacent fields.

Previous research has analysed the role of local wisdom in sustainable tourism management (Judijanto, 2025), mapped local wisdom scholarship in Southeast Asia (Muis & Sintang, 2025), explored

innovation in local wisdom in tourism (Herawan et al., 2024), and examined its relevance to sustainable cultural heritage conservation (Lusianawati et al., 2023). While these studies provide an important foundation, they remain limited by their focus on specific subdomains, regional contexts, or narrower analytical scopes. As a result, the global research landscape of local wisdom in tourism remains insufficiently mapped, particularly with regard to publication dynamics, key actors, conceptual structure, and thematic evolution.

To address this gap, the present study provides a global bibliometric analysis of 673 Scopus-indexed journal articles published between 1980 and 2026 that explicitly link tourism with local wisdom and related terms. Drawing on a structured search strategy that combines “tourism” with the terms “local wisdom,” “indigenous knowledge,” “traditional knowledge,” “traditional practice*,” and “local value*,” the study offers a systematic mapping of the field. Specifically, it aims to: (1) analyse historical trends in publications and citations on local wisdom in tourism; (2) identify the countries, institutions, authors, and journals that occupy central positions in this field; (3) map the themes that shape the conceptual structure of research on local wisdom in tourism; and (4) trace the evolution of these themes over time.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Bibliometric analysis

This study adopts a bibliometric approach to map the development and knowledge structure of research on local wisdom in tourism. It focuses on two widely used bibliometric techniques: performance analysis, which summarises productivity and citation impact at the level of authors, institutions, countries, and journals, and science mapping, which explores the intellectual and conceptual structure of a field through networks of relations among documents, authors, and keywords (Wang et al., 2024; Wu et al., 2023). Following current methodological guidelines, these techniques are integrated into a single analytical framework to provide a comprehensive understanding of publication patterns, key actors, and thematic structures in the field (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017; Donthu et al., 2021).

2.2. Data collection

Data were retrieved from the Scopus database on 25 October 2025. Scopus was selected because of its broad multidisciplinary coverage, stable indexing quality, and widespread use in bibliometric studies in tourism and the social sciences, making it appropriate for capturing the interdisciplinary character of research on local wisdom in tourism (Ng, 2022; Sdrolia & Zarotiadis, 2019). To capture variation in terminology while maintaining a clear focus on tourism, a Boolean query was applied to the TITLE-ABS-KEY fields: (“indigenous knowledge” OR “local wisdom” OR “traditional knowledge” OR “traditional practice*” OR “local value*”) AND “tourism”. This search strategy was designed to retrieve publications that explicitly connect tourism with local wisdom and related knowledge terms used in the literature.

The search was conducted without restrictions on publication year. The initial results were then refined using the following inclusion criteria: journal articles only, final publication stage, journals as the source type, and English as the publication language. No subject area restrictions were applied in order to preserve the interdisciplinary character of research on local wisdom in tourism, which spans tourism studies, environmental studies, cultural heritage, and the social sciences.

After all filters were applied, 673 indexed articles published between 1980 and 2026 were retained for analysis. Several articles dated 2026 had already been indexed in Scopus as final publications at the time of data retrieval and were therefore included. No additional manual full-text screening was undertaken. Instead, the research corpus was determined entirely by the Scopus query and filters, consistent with bibliometric studies that analyse metadata in titles, abstracts, and keywords to map the structure of a research field (Mishra et al., 2021; Öztürk et al., 2024). The process of identification,

screening, and final selection is summarised in Figure 1. The final dataset was exported in comma-separated values (CSV) format for further analysis.

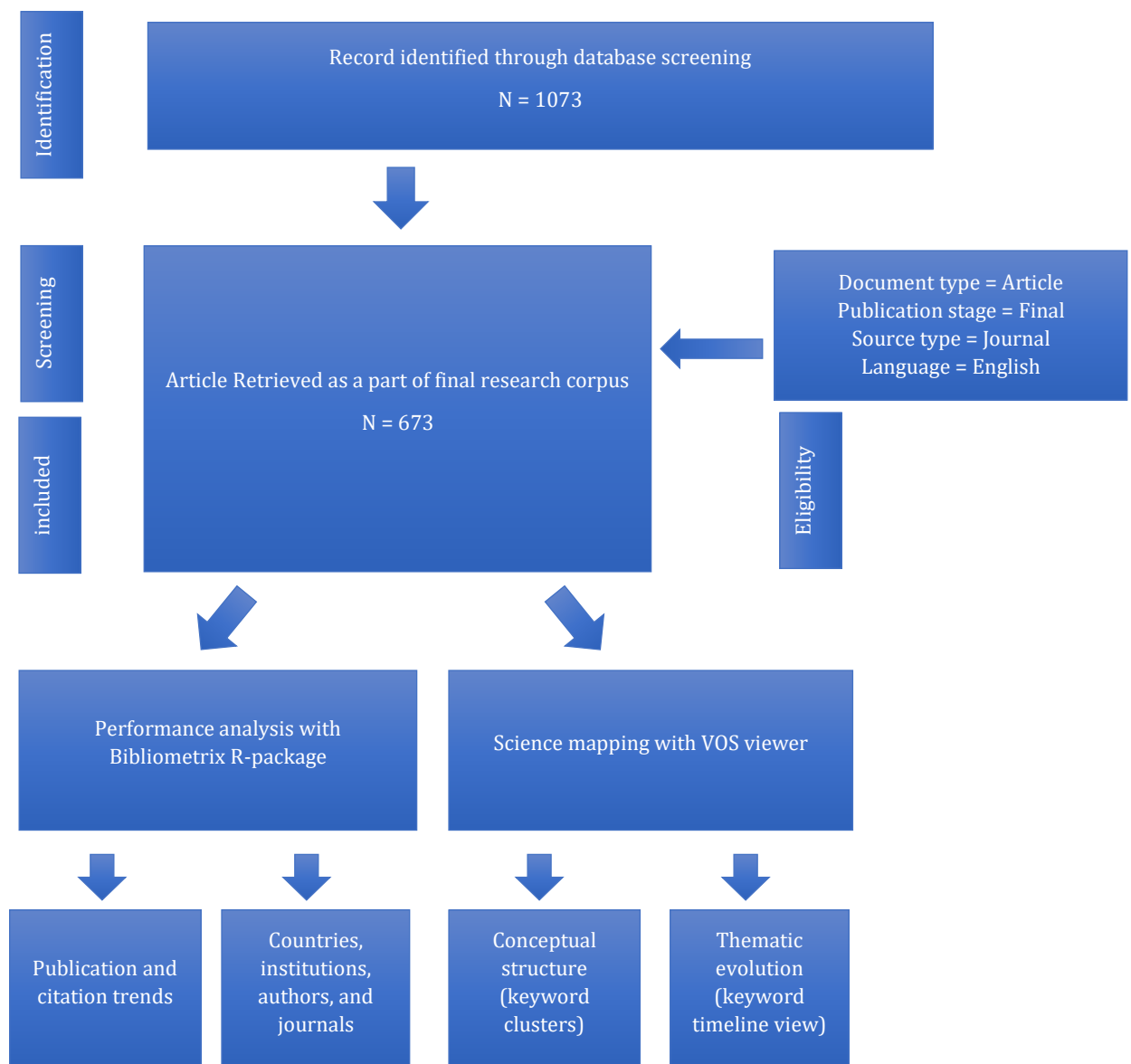


Figure 1. Flow diagram of bibliometric data identification, screening, and analysis
Source: Author analysis, (2025)

2.3. Analytical tools

Performance analysis was conducted using the bibliometrix R-package (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017) to generate descriptive indicators of publication and citation trends, geographical distribution and collaboration, as well as the productivity and influence of leading institutions, authors, journals, and articles. This analysis provided the empirical basis for identifying the main contributors, publication patterns, and citation performance that characterise the development of research on local wisdom in tourism.

Science mapping was conducted using VOSviewer version 1.6.20 (van Eck & Waltman, 2023). The analysis focused on co-occurrence networks of author keywords, with author keywords as the unit of analysis and full counting as the counting method. Prior to network modelling, author keywords were normalised in OpenRefine through a two-step clustering procedure to reduce fragmentation and

improve the consistency of the keyword network. First, key collision with fingerprint keying was used to detect and merge straightforward orthographic variants, such as differences in capitalisation and hyphenation. Second, the nearest neighbor method with Levenshtein distance was applied to identify lexically similar forms, including singular and plural variants and other closely related forms. For example, “local wisdom,” “Local wisdom,” and “Local Wisdom” were standardised as “local wisdom”; “ecotourism,” “Ecotourism,” and “Eco-tourism” as “ecotourism”; “indigenous knowledge” and “Indigenous knowledges” as “indigenous knowledge”; and “traditional practices,” “traditional practice,” and “traditional practises” as “traditional practices.” Candidate clusters were manually reviewed before being merged under a preferred form.

This normalisation step was undertaken to improve the reliability and interpretability of the thematic mapping results. From the 2,296 author keywords identified, only those with a minimum frequency of three occurrences were retained, resulting in a final co-occurrence network of 143 keywords. The overlay visualisation feature of VOSviewer was then used to trace the temporal evolution of research themes (Mishra et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2024).

3. RESULT

3.1. Descriptive analysis of the dataset

The dataset comprises 673 Scopus-indexed journal articles on local wisdom in tourism published between 1980 and 2026 in 356 sources. These publications provide a broad interdisciplinary corpus for examining the development of this field over time. As summarised in Table 1, the dataset also reflects a collaborative and thematically diverse body of research, involving more than 2,200 authors and a wide range of author keywords. Detailed bibliometric characteristics of the corpus are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Metainformation of the dataset

Description	Results
Information about data	
Timespan	1980-2026
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	356
Documents	673
Annual Growth Rate %	3,06
Document Average Age	5,87
Average citations per doc	18,44
References	5976
Document contents	
Keywords Plus (ID)	1962
Author's Keywords (DE)	2296
Authors	
Authors	2252
Authors of single-authored docs	121
Authors collaboration	
Single-authored docs	126
Co-Authors per Doc	3,55
International co-authorships %	24,96
Document types	
Full Articles	673

Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

Authorship patterns show that research on local wisdom in tourism is predominantly collaborative. The 673 articles were produced by 2,252 authors, with only 126 single-authored publications and an average of 3.55 authors per article. International collaboration accounts for 24.96 percent of the dataset, suggesting that although cross-country collaboration is present, much of the field is still developed through domestic or nationally concentrated research networks.

3.2. Annual scientific production and citation trends

Scientific production on local wisdom in tourism began from a very limited and inconsistent base. Between 1980 and 1999, only 10 articles were identified, with the first publications appearing in 1980 and 1981 and several subsequent years showing no recorded output. This pattern indicates that, during its initial phase, research on local wisdom in tourism remained sporadic and had not yet developed into a stable or sustained area of international scholarship. The growth in annual publications and associated citation dynamics is presented in Figure 2.

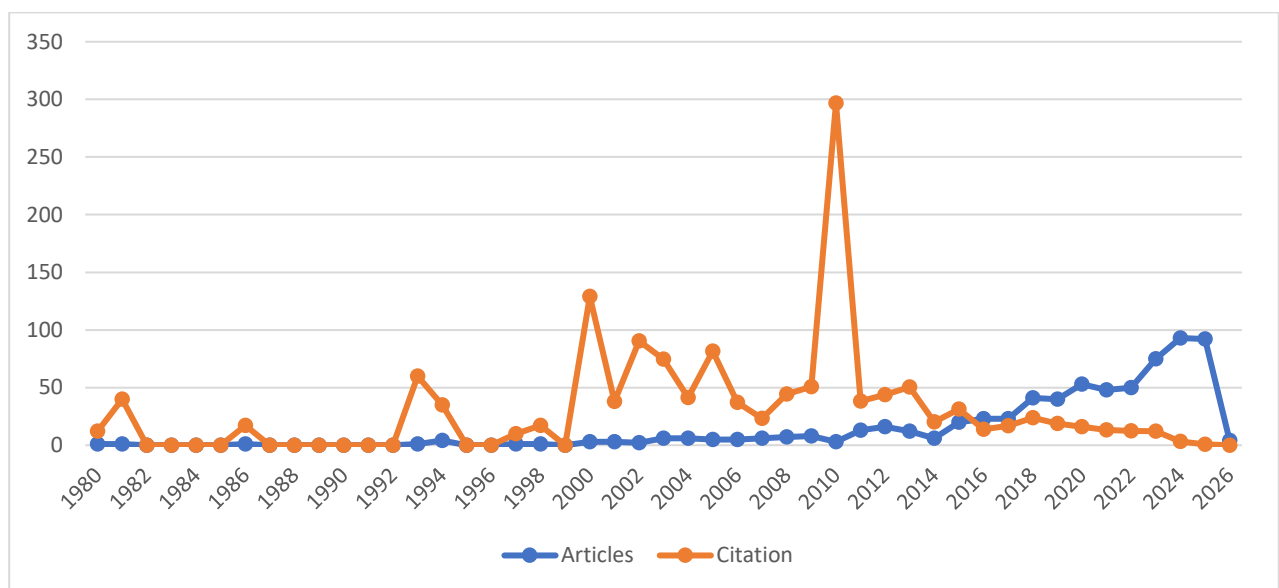


Figure 2. Variations in the number of published articles
Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

The second period (2000–2014) marks a phase of more stable expansion. Annual publication output increased from 3 articles in 2000 to 16 in 2012, before remaining at a comparatively higher level with 12 articles in 2013. In total, 101 articles were published during this period, with an average of around 7 articles per year. Compared with the preceding phase, this pattern suggests that research on local wisdom in tourism had begun to develop into a more consistent and visible area of international scholarship.

The third period (2015–2026) marks a phase of rapid growth and clear acceleration in publication output. Annual production increased to 20 articles in 2015 and continued to rise sharply, reaching 93 articles in 2024 and 92 in 2025. In total, 562 articles were published during this period, with an average of nearly 47 articles per year. This means that the large majority of the dataset was produced in the most recent phase, indicating that research on local wisdom in tourism has expanded quickly and become far more visible within international scholarly publication.

From the perspective of citation impact, average citations per article tend to be higher in the early and middle phases of the field's development. Several years in the early 2000s recorded particularly high averages, including 90.5 citations per article in 2002, 81.6 in 2005, and a peak of 296.67 in 2010.

This pattern suggests that although the corpus was still relatively small during these periods, it already contained several highly influential and foundational publications. By contrast, more recent publication years have lower average citation counts, which should be interpreted cautiously, as newer articles have had less time to accumulate citations.

3.3. Geographical distribution of publications

An analysis of author affiliations shows that research on local wisdom in tourism spans a broad range of national contexts. A total of 71 countries contributed to the 673 articles in the dataset. As shown in Figure 3, this distribution indicates that the topic has been examined across multiple continents, although publication output remains unevenly distributed across countries.

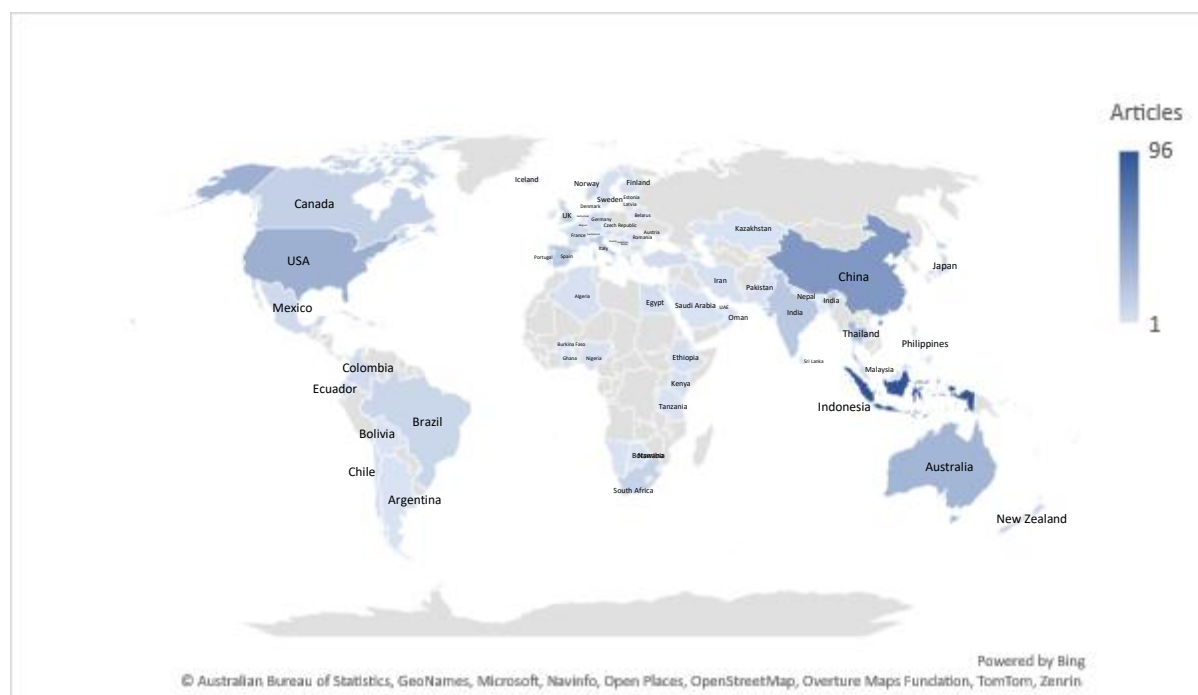


Figure 3. World distribution of the publications
Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

Publication output is strongly concentrated in a relatively small group of countries. Indonesia ranks first with 96 articles, followed by China with 51, the United States with 35, Australia with 31, and Thailand with 27. Other notable contributors include India, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, South Africa, Japan, New Zealand, and Brazil. Overall, this pattern highlights the leading role of Asian and Oceanian countries, while also showing that the field has gained a notable, though more limited, presence in parts of Europe, North America, and South America. It also suggests that the visibility of the field is shaped both by the strong presence of empirical cases in regions such as Asia and Oceania, where local wisdom-based tourism, tourism villages, and community-based tourism are widely documented, and by unequal research capacity and access to international publication channels.

Beyond the countries with the highest publication output, the dataset also shows a long-tail distribution of contributions. A total of 32 countries each produced between 2 and 7 articles, while 24 other countries contributed only 1 article. This pattern confirms that although participation in the field is geographically broad, knowledge production remains heavily concentrated in a small number of highly productive countries, with many others appearing only marginally in the dataset.

3.4. Citation Impact and Scientific Collaboration among Countries

After examining the volume of article production and the geographical distribution of publications, the next step is to analyse the scientific impact and collaboration patterns of the countries that contribute most to this field. Table 2 presents the 10 countries with the highest total citation counts, along with their average citations per article, number of articles, and the proportion of publications resulting from international collaboration.

Table 2. Top countries/regions ranked by citations

Country	Total citations	Average citations per article	Articles	Single-country publications	Multiple-country publications	Multiple-country publications (%)
Australia	1724	55,6	31	22	9	29
China	1083	21,2	51	38	13	25,5
USA	1030	29,4	35	21	14	40
United Kingdom	761	42,3	18	10	8	44,4
Indonesia	573	6	96	82	14	14,6
Spain	545	30,3	18	10	8	44,4
Canada	515	36,8	14	10	4	28,6
Italy	296	16,4	18	10	8	44,4
India	166	8,7	19	18	1	5,3
Thailand	102	3,8	27	23	4	14,8

Source: Primary data analysis, 2025

In terms of total citations, Australia ranks first with 1,724 citations for 31 articles, followed by China with 1,083 citations for 51 articles and the United States with 1,030 citations for 35 articles. The United Kingdom and Indonesia occupy the next positions with 761 and 573 citations respectively. These countries are the main contributors in terms of cumulative citation impact within the dataset.

However, the pattern becomes more diverse when viewed from the perspective of average citations per article. Australia records an average of 55.6 citations per article and is the country with the highest mean impact. The United Kingdom and Canada also stand out, with averages of 42.3 and 36.8 citations per article, followed by Spain and the United States with 30.3 and 29.4 citations per article. By contrast, some highly productive countries such as Indonesia, India, and Thailand have much lower average citation counts, around 3-9 citations per article.

An additional important dimension is the structure of scientific collaboration. The data in Table 2 show that the United Kingdom, Spain, and Italy have the highest shares of internationally co-authored publications among the 10 countries, each with 44.4 percent. The United States also exhibits a strong level of international collaboration, with 40 percent of its publications resulting from cross country co-authorship, while Australia and Canada have shares of 29 percent and 28.6 percent respectively. China has around 25.5 percent of its publications produced through international collaboration. By contrast, several highly productive Asian countries exhibit lower proportions of international collaboration. Indonesia, Thailand, and India have less than 15 percent of their publications arising from cross country co-authored research.

3.5. Most productive institutions (affiliations)

To identify the research centres that are most active in the study of local wisdom in tourism, this analysis examines institutions with the largest number of publications in the dataset. Figure 4 presents

ten institutions with the highest outputs collectively account for a substantial share of the articles analysed.

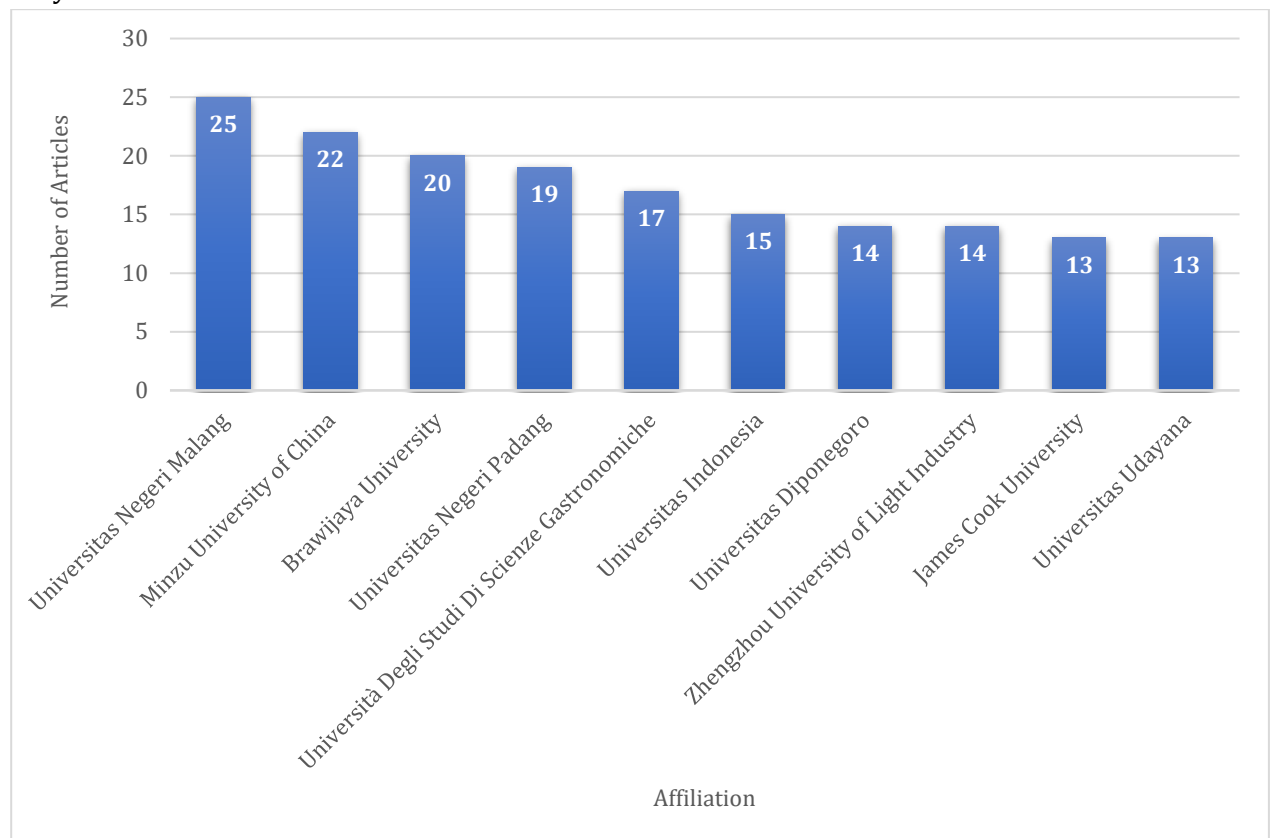


Figure 4: Top institutions by publication
(Source: Primary data analysis, 2025)

Universitas Negeri Malang ranks first with 25 articles, followed by Minzu University of China with 22 and Brawijaya University with 20 articles. Universitas Negeri Padang occupies the next position with 19 articles. Behind these, Università degli Studi di Scienze Gastronomiche contributes 17 articles, Universitas Indonesia 15, Universitas Diponegoro and Zhengzhou University of Light Industry 14 each, while James Cook University and Universitas Udayana contribute 13 articles each.

3.6. Most productive authors

Table 3: Most productive authors

Main author name	Number of publications	Total citations	h-index	Year	Country
Pieroni Andrea	8	280	5	2013	Italy
Long Chunlin	5	273	5	2013	China
Sumarmi Sumarmi	5	67	4	2020	Indonesia
Liu Bo	4	257	4	2013	China
Dias Álvaro Lopes	4	149	4	2019	Portugal
Patuleia Mafalda Luísa De Almeida Serra	4	149	4	2019	Portugal
Hunt Carter A	3	14	2	2019	United States
Liu Lei	3	11	2	2020	China
González-Rodríguez María Rosario	3	138	3	2021	Spain
Hakim Luchman A	3	12	2	2021	Indonesia

Source: Primary data analysis, 2025

To identify key researchers, this analysis examines authors with the highest publication counts and citation impact. Table 3 lists the top ten authors based on productivity, where Pieroni Andrea (Italy) ranks first with 8 articles, followed by Long Chunlin (China) and Sumarmi (Indonesia) with 5 articles each. Subsequently, Liu Bo (China), Dias Álvaro Lopes, and Patuleia Mafalda (Portugal) follow with 4 articles each.

3.7. Distribution of journals

To identify the main outlets for publication, this analysis examines sources with the largest numbers of articles. Table 4 presents the ten journals with the largest contributions, with Sustainability (Switzerland) ranking first with 50 articles, far exceeding other journals; GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites ranks second with 19 articles, followed by the Journal of Sustainable Tourism with 18 and Current Issues in Tourism with 16 articles.

Table 4. Main journals of publication

Journal Names	Number of Articles	Total citations	h index	Start year
Sustainability (Switzerland)	50	795	17	2016
GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites	19	189	8	2018
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	18	833	16	1994
Current Issues in Tourism	16	535	13	2008
Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine	13	486	10	2013
Ocean and Coastal Management	10	164	7	2007
International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning	9	37	4	2016
Annals of Tourism Research	8	511	8	1981
Land	7	41	3	2018
Tourism Geographies	7	464	5	2003

Source: Primary data analysis, 2025

From the perspective of thematic coverage, these journals can be grouped into two broad families. Mainstream tourism journals such as the Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Current Issues in Tourism, Annals of Tourism Research, GeoJournal of Tourism and Geosites, and Tourism Geographies position local wisdom within broader discussions of sustainable tourism, destination development, and culture-based visitor experience. Meanwhile, interdisciplinary journals such as Sustainability (Switzerland), Land, the Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine, Ocean and Coastal Management, and the International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning link local wisdom to issues of ecology, land use, ecosystem services, and the planning of coastal and rural regions.

3.8. Most influential articles

To identify the scientific foundations that serve as key references in studies of local wisdom and tourism, this analysis examines the articles with the highest citation counts in the dataset. Table 5 presents the ten most cited articles reflect the most influential concepts, approaches, and theoretical frameworks in the literature.

The most highly cited article is by Raymond et al. (2010), titled "Integrating local and scientific knowledge for environmental management", with 870 citations. This article emphasises the importance of integrating local and scientific knowledge through participatory and reflective processes in environmental management. Several articles make important contributions to understanding the

relationships among local knowledge, ecosystem services, and social ecological systems. Reyers et al. (2009), Xu et al. (2005), González et al. (2008), and Moreno et al. (2018) show how changes in land cover, sacred knowledge, customary practices, and traditional land use affect ecosystem services, landscape conservation, and the management of complex social ecological systems, while also creating tourism opportunities. Together, these studies underscore that practices based on local wisdom form an integral part of the governance of social ecological systems.

Table 5. Top cited articles

Authors	Title	Year	Name of Journal	Number of cited
Christopher M. Raymond; Ioan Fazey; Mark S. Reed; Lindsay C. Stringer; Guy M. Robinson; Anna C. Evely. Sven Wunder	Integrating local and scientific knowledge for environmental management	2010	Journal of Environmental Management	870
Laurie Kroshus Medina	Ecotourism and economic incentives — an empirical approach	2000	Ecological Economics	299
	Commoditizing culture: Tourism and Maya Identity,	2003	Annals of Tourism Research	213
Reyers B; O'Farrell P.J; Cowling R.M; Egoh B.N; le Maitre D.C; Vlok J.H.J.	Ecosystem services, land-cover change, and stakeholders: Finding a sustainable foothold for a semiarid biodiversity hotspot	2009	Ecology and Society	200
Carlisle S; Kunc M; Jones E; Tiffin S.	Supporting innovation for tourism development through multi-stakeholder approaches: Experiences from Africa	2013	Tourism Management	196
Bellato L; Frantzeskaki N; Nygaard C.A.	Regenerative tourism: a conceptual framework leveraging theory and practice	2023	Tourism Geographies	193
Xu J; Ma E.T; Tashi D; Fu Y; Lu Z; Melick D.	Integrating sacred knowledge for conservation: Cultures and landscapes in Southwest China	2005	Ecology and Society	173
González J.A; Montes C; Rodríguez J; Tapia W.	Rethinking the Galapagos Islands as a complex social-ecological system: Implications for conservation and management	2008	Ecology and Society	168
Tse P & Crotts J.C.	Antecedents of novelty seeking: International visitors' propensity to experiment across Hong Kong's culinary traditions	2005	Tourism Management	158
Moreno G; Aviron S; Berg S; Crous-Duran J; Franca A; de Jalón S.G; Hartel T; Mirck J; Pantera A; Palma J.H.N; Paulo J.A; Re G.A; Sanna F; Thenail C; Varga A; Viaud V; Burgess P.J.	Agroforestry systems of high nature and cultural value in Europe: provision of commercial goods and other ecosystem services	2018	Agroforestry Systems	157

Source: Primary data analysis, 2025

Another group of articles highlights the relationships among innovation, collaboration, and tourism development in the context of local communities. Carlisle et al. (2013) emphasise the importance of multi-stakeholder collaboration and institutional support in promoting entrepreneurship and tourism enterprises owned by local communities in developing countries. (Bellato et al., 2023) propose a framework for "regenerative tourism" that combines Western scientific knowledge with the perspectives and practices of Indigenous communities, with the aim not only of maintaining but also of restoring and enhancing social ecological systems through tourism activities.

3.9. Conceptual structure: main thematic clusters

The co-occurrence analysis of author keywords identified five main thematic clusters that structure research on local wisdom and tourism. Based on 143 keywords that appeared at least three times out of a total of 2,296 author keywords in the dataset, the mapping reveals a network organised into red, green, blue, yellow, and purple clusters. Each cluster represents a group of closely related topics, while the links between clusters indicate how these themes are connected within the field. An overview of the keyword network is presented in Figure 5.

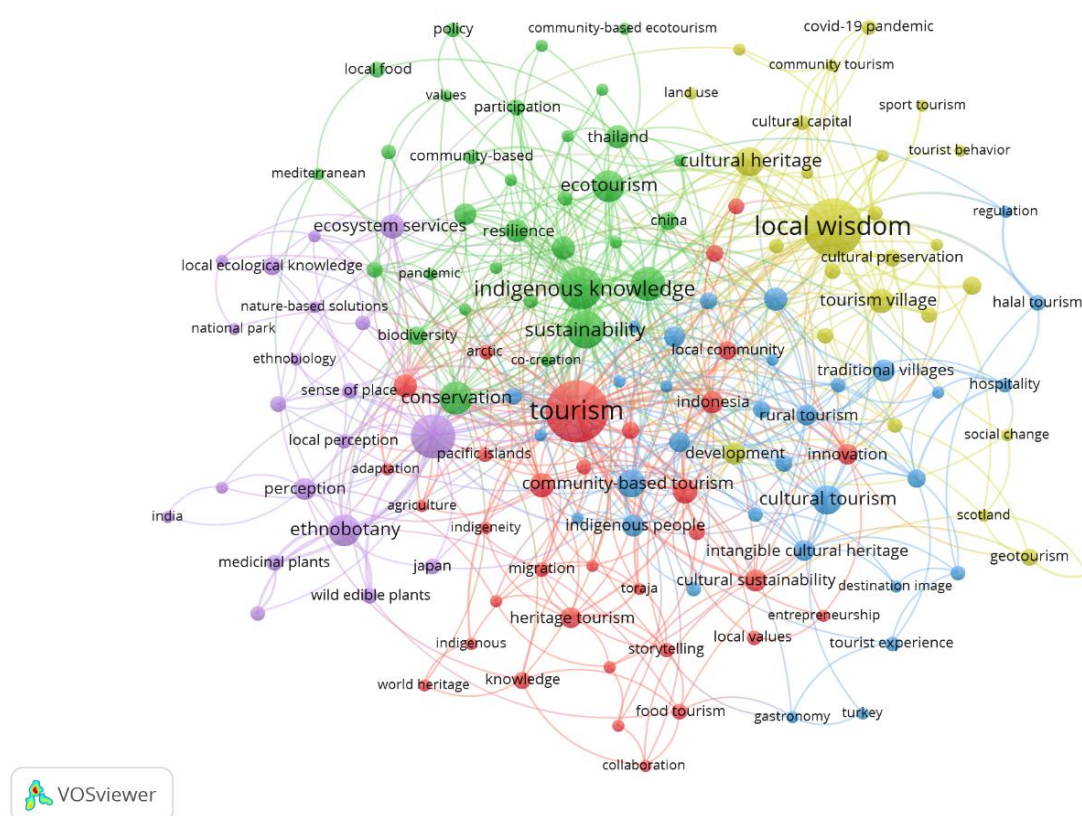


Figure 5. Identified keyword clusters
Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

The distribution of "tourism" and its proximities to other keywords is visualised in Figure 6. The red cluster is centred on the keyword "tourism", which functions as the main hub of the conceptual network. It frequently co-occurs with keywords such as "local culture", "heritage", "community", "development", "globalization", and "destination", indicating that tourism is positioned at the intersection of local identity, development processes, and destination formation. At the cross-cluster level, "tourism" is also strongly linked to "local wisdom", "sustainable tourism", "indigenous knowledge", and "traditional

[illegible]

Figure 6. Bidimensional image of tourism keyword
Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

The green cluster is visualised in Figure 7. The green cluster is organised around “indigenous knowledge”, “sustainability”, and “sustainable tourism”, which together form one of the main conceptual axes of the field. These keywords frequently co-occur with “conservation”, “protected areas”, “community”, and “ecotourism”, indicating a strong association between Indigenous knowledge, ecosystem management, and sustainability-oriented tourism development. At the cross-cluster level, “indigenous knowledge” and “sustainable tourism” are closely linked to “tourism”, “local wisdom”, and “traditional knowledge”, showing that the green cluster connects conservation-oriented themes with broader debates on tourism and community-based knowledge.

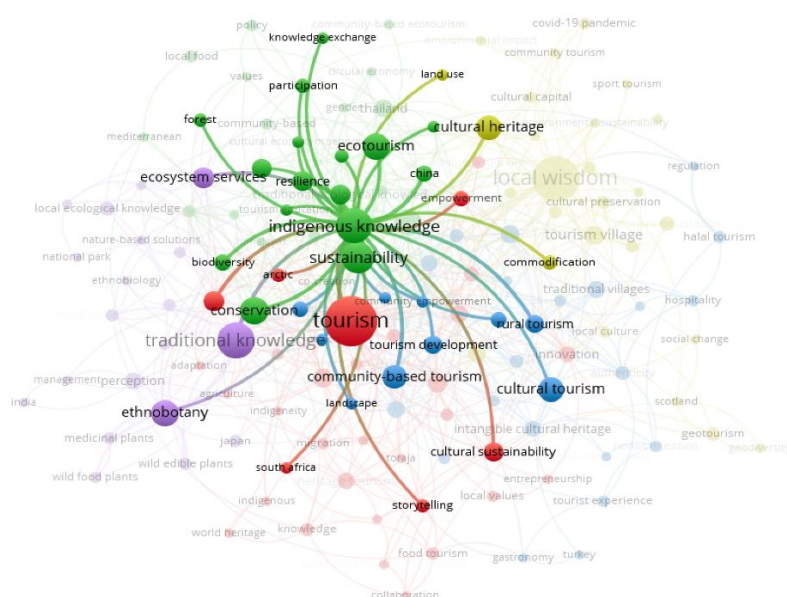


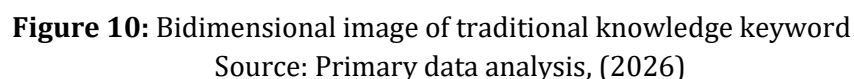
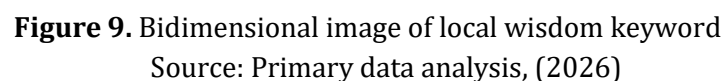
Figure 7. Bidimensional image of indigenous knowledge keyword
Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

[illegible]

Figure 8: Bidimensional image of community-based tourism keyword
Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

The position of “local wisdom” and its closest keyword connections are shown in Figure 9. The yellow cluster centres on “local wisdom” as a key bridging concept within the field. It frequently co-occurs with “village”, “rural tourism”, “cultural heritage”, and “community-based tourism”, indicating that local wisdom is closely associated with tourism village management, the design of cultural attractions, and locally grounded economic development. Keywords such as “participation” and “empowerment” further show that this cluster emphasises community involvement in decision-making and in the distribution of tourism benefits. At the cross-cluster level, “local wisdom” is strongly linked to “tourism”, “indigenous knowledge”, and “community-based tourism”, showing that it connects cultural, ecological, and development-oriented dimensions across the field.

The position of “traditional knowledge” and related ethnobotanical keywords is shown in Figure 10. The purple cluster centres on “traditional knowledge” as a domain strongly associated with ethnobotany and biodiversity-related knowledge. It frequently co-occurs with keywords such as “ethnobotany”, “medicinal plants”, “wild edible plants”, “local communities”, and “biodiversity conservation”, indicating a strong focus on the practical ecological knowledge that communities develop about plants and their environments. At the cross-cluster level, “traditional knowledge” is linked to “conservation” and “indigenous knowledge”, as well as to “tourism” and “community-based tourism”, showing that this cluster connects ethnobiological knowledge with broader concerns in conservation and tourism.



The temporal overlay analysis reveals a clear evolution in the thematic focus of research on local wisdom in tourism over time. As shown in Figure 11, the colour of each keyword node represents its average publication year, with darker tones indicating older themes and lighter tones indicating more recent ones. This visualisation provides an overview of the field's intellectual trajectory and shows how

conceptual priorities have shifted across four decades. The chronological analysis reveals a clear but non-linear evolution of research interests that can be grouped into four distinct phases.

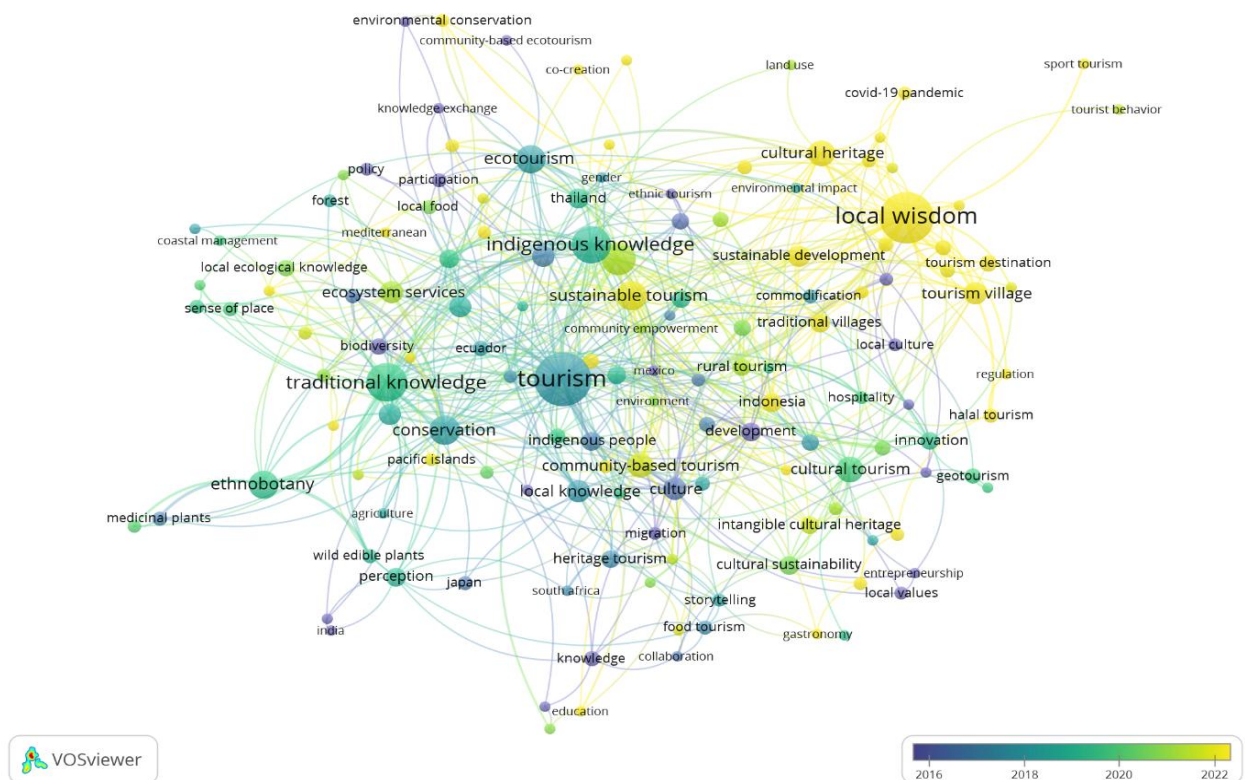


Figure 11. Keyword timeline view based on overlay visualisation of author keywords in the dataset
Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

The detailed thematic cluster in Table 6, showed on how the thematic focus of the field has shifted over time. The first phase, Basic Themes (2001–2010), is characterised by geographically specific and socially oriented keywords. Terms such as "scotland", "india", "social change", and "management" indicate that research during this period was still centred on case-based studies and on the social transformations associated with tourism development in particular locations. At this stage, the field was primarily concerned with describing how tourism intersected with local social dynamics, before keywords explicitly related to local wisdom and sustainability became more prominent.

The second phase, Transitional Themes (2011–2015), marks a shift toward more development-oriented research interests. Keywords such as "participation", "entrepreneurship", "economic impact", "knowledge", and "development" indicate that the field was moving beyond geographically specific social-change studies toward questions of tourism-led development, local participation, and destination management. In this phase, local knowledge begins to appear not only as a social or cultural feature, but also as a resource linked to economic development and planning agendas within tourism.

The third phase, Thematic Consolidation (2016–2020), marks a clearer integration of local wisdom into sustainability- and knowledge-oriented tourism research. Keywords such as "traditional ecological knowledge", "indigenous knowledge", "ecotourism", and "climate change", together with "culture", "tourism", "ethnobotany", and "traditional knowledge", show that the field was increasingly organised around the relationship between tourism, environmental sustainability, and community-based knowledge systems. The convergence of themes associated with the red, green, and purple clusters indicates a stronger connection between tourism studies, traditional and Indigenous knowledge, and

socio-ecological concerns. In this phase, local wisdom begins to appear not merely as a cultural backdrop, but as a more explicit component of sustainability-oriented tourism thinking.

The fourth phase, New and Emerging Themes (2021 to the present), highlights the emergence of more applied and forward-looking research themes. Keywords such as "local wisdom", "tourism village", "community-based tourism", "cultural heritage", "ecosystem services", "regenerative tourism", and "circular economy" indicate that the field is increasingly oriented toward destination management practices that are community-centred and linked to social-ecological restoration. The interconnections among the green, blue, and yellow clusters further show that local wisdom is now being integrated into tourism models that seek not only to reduce negative impacts, but also to generate ecological, social, and cultural benefits in more regenerative ways.

Table 6. Evolution of main keywords and thematic cluster

Phase	Keywords	Average publication year	Cluster
Phase 1: Basic themes (2001-2010)	Scotland	2001.67	Yellow
	India	2003.67	Purple
	social change	2005.67	Yellow
	management	2009.00	Purple
	participation	2011.20	Green
Phase 2: Transitional themes (2011-2015)	entrepreneurship	2011.67	Red
	economic impact	2012.00	Yellow
	knowledge	2012.17	Red
	development	2014.11	Yellow
	culture	2016.58	Red
Phase 3: Thematic consolidation (2016-2020)	traditional ecological knowledge	2017.00	Green
	tourism	2017.76	Red
	ecotourism	2018.00	Green
	climate change	2018.64	Red
	indigenous knowledge	2019.00	Green
	ethnobotany	2019.35	Purple
	traditional knowledge	2019.46	Purple
	ecosystem services	2021.00	Purple
	community-based tourism	2021.53	Blue
	local wisdom	2022.55	Yellow
Phase 4: New and emerging themes (2021-2026)	tourism village	2022.58	Yellow
	cultural heritage	2022.76	Yellow
	regenerative tourism	2023.75	Green
	circular economy	2024.67	Green

Source: Primary data analysis, (2026)

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Publication growth and citation dynamics

From the perspective of publication dynamics, the analysis confirms three phases in the development of research on "local wisdom" in tourism. The initiation phase (1980-1999) produced only a small number of articles and did not yet position "local wisdom" as a central focus. The expansion phase (2000-2014) was characterised by a steady increase in publications alongside the broadening of the literature on sustainable tourism, community-based tourism, and the recognition of local knowledge. The rapid growth phase (2015-2026) shows a sharp increase in the number of articles

published each year, which can be interpreted as a response to global agendas on sustainability, the recognition of indigenous rights, and the need for tourism models that are more equitable and resilient to climate change. This rapid growth is consistent with recent shifts in tourism scholarship that increasingly question extractive paradigms and position local and Indigenous knowledge not merely as cultural resources, but as knowledge systems that inform regenerative, community-oriented, and governance-sensitive tourism development (Bellato et al., 2024; Widari et al., 2025).

Citation patterns indicate that articles published between 2000 and 2010 tend to function as the main references. Works on ecosystem services, social ecological systems, community-based tourism, and conservation grounded in local knowledge constitute the intellectual foundation of this field. In this sense, the early citation base suggests that research on local wisdom in tourism was initially shaped less by a narrow cultural lens than by broader concerns with environmental management, social-ecological resilience, and collaborative forms of tourism development grounded in local knowledge (Carlisle et al., 2013; Raymond et al., 2010; Reyers et al., 2009). By contrast, the relatively low average citation counts of more recent publications reflect limited time for diffusion rather than low quality, which calls for caution when assessing the contribution of the most recent articles.

4.2. Geographical distribution and inequalities in knowledge production

The analysis of geographical distribution shows that research on "local wisdom" in tourism is global in scope but unevenly distributed. A total of 71 countries contribute to the 673 articles, yet publications are concentrated in a small group of countries, with Indonesia, China, the United States, Australia, and Thailand as the main contributors. This pattern reflects two key aspects. First, Asia and Oceania emerge as important locations because many practices of "local wisdom-based tourism", "tourism village", and community tourism have developed in these regions, thereby providing numerous empirical cases. Second, research capacity and access to international journals are uneven, so experiences from many other countries are recorded in the literature only to a very limited extent. This uneven distribution also points to an asymmetry in international tourism knowledge production, where language barriers, publication bias, and unequal access to leading journals make some regional experiences more visible than others, while many place-based perspectives remain marginal in global publication networks (David-Negre et al., 2025).

The significant contributions from European and North American countries such as Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Norway indicate that this topic is also salient in established tourism and environmental literatures. However, the large number of countries that contribute only one or a few articles suggests that experiences of "local wisdom" in tourism in several regions, particularly parts of Africa and Latin America, remain underrepresented. The fact that international collaboration accounts for roughly one quarter of all articles points to the existence of global research networks, yet these networks remain centred on countries with the highest knowledge production. In other words, international collaboration may broaden the network, but it does not necessarily democratize knowledge production, because visibility in global tourism scholarship still tends to be mediated by countries and institutions with stronger access to leading publication channels (David-Negre et al., 2025). Going forward, more inclusive collaboration between institutions located at the core and the periphery of knowledge production is crucial for enriching global perspectives.

4.3. Core institutions, authors, and journals: concentration and interdisciplinarity

The analysis of the most productive institutions and authors reveals a concentrated actor structure. Several universities in Indonesia and China occupy the top positions in terms of publication counts, followed by institutions in Europe and Australia. This pattern reinforces the country level distribution and highlights the role of specific research groups as key drivers of knowledge production on "local

wisdom" and tourism. Broader bibliometric evidence in tourism also shows that productivity and influence tend to be concentrated in a relatively small number of authors, institutions, and countries, giving these actors a particularly prominent role in consolidating the field (Mulet-Forteza et al., 2019).

In terms of journals and highly cited articles, the interdisciplinary character of the field is clearly visible. Key articles are published not only in tourism journals but also in journals focusing on environmental studies, ecology, and social ecological systems. The literature on ecosystem services, "traditional ecological knowledge", and community-based conservation is interwoven with studies of ecotourism, "community-based tourism", "regenerative tourism", and the commodification of culture and gastronomy. This combination shows that the development of tourism grounded in "local wisdom" cannot be separated from debates on natural resource governance, social justice, and the transformation of social ecological systems across diverse contexts. This interdisciplinary pattern is consistent with broader tourism scholarship in which core tourism knowledge increasingly diffuses across cognate disciplines, linking destination development with environmental, socio-cultural, and governance concerns (Kouropalatis et al., 2024).

4.4. *Conceptual structure and thematic shifts in the literature*

The mapping of the conceptual structure identifies five keyword clusters that together define the landscape of this field. The red cluster places "tourism" as the central keyword that links "local culture", "heritage", "community", "development", "globalization", and "destination", portraying tourism as a space of negotiation between global processes and local contexts. The green cluster highlights "indigenous knowledge", "sustainability", "sustainable tourism", "conservation", "protected areas", and "ecotourism", underscoring the role of Indigenous knowledge in maintaining ecosystems and designing sustainability-oriented tourism. The blue and yellow clusters show how "local wisdom" is operationalised in community-based tourism and tourism villages through "community-based tourism", "empowerment", and "cultural heritage". Meanwhile, the purple cluster centres on "traditional knowledge" and "ethnobotany", pointing to the relationships between practical knowledge of plants, biodiversity, and opportunities for nature-based and educational tourism. Taken together, these clusters suggest that local wisdom in tourism is increasingly connected to place-based development, Indigenous knowledge systems, and the regeneration of interconnected social-ecological systems, rather than appearing as an isolated cultural theme (Bellato et al., 2023).

The analysis of keyword evolution shows that these themes have developed gradually. The initial phase is dominated by geographical case studies and social change. The transitional phase foregrounds "participation", "entrepreneurship", and "economic impacts". The thematic consolidation phase is marked by the growing prominence of "traditional ecological knowledge", "indigenous knowledge", "ecotourism", and "climate change". The most recent phase emphasises "local wisdom", "tourism village", "community-based tourism", "cultural heritage", "ecosystem services", "regenerative tourism", and "circular economy". This shift indicates that "local wisdom" is increasingly positioned not merely as a cultural identity marker but as a key component in the design of tourism models oriented toward sustainability and the restoration of social-ecological systems. This temporal shift is consistent with recent tourism scholarship that increasingly understands local and Indigenous knowledge not simply as cultural heritage, but as a foundation for regenerative, place-based, and socio-ecological tourism transformation (Bellato et al., 2024).

5. CONCLUSIONS

This study provides a global bibliometric overview of 673 Scopus-indexed journal articles published between 1980 and 2026 that explicitly link tourism with local wisdom and related terms. The findings

show that research on local wisdom in tourism has expanded across three main phases, while remaining unevenly distributed across countries and research networks. They also reveal a field structured around five thematic clusters and a clear thematic shift toward sustainability-oriented, community-based, and socio-ecological tourism development. Taken together, these results indicate that local wisdom has become an increasingly important knowledge domain in contemporary tourism scholarship.

First, the historical dynamics of the field show a clear three-phase development, moving from a sparse initiation phase to a period of gradual expansion and then to rapid growth after the mid-2010s. This pattern indicates that research on local wisdom in tourism has shifted from a marginal topic to a far more visible area of international scholarship. In the most recent phase, local wisdom increasingly appears as a knowledge-based foundation for sustainability-oriented, community-based, and socio-ecological tourism development, although many recent publications are still in the early stage of citation diffusion.

Second, the mapping of countries, institutions, authors, and journals shows that knowledge production in this field is global in reach but unevenly concentrated. Indonesia, China, the United States, Australia, and Thailand account for much of the publication output, while countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Spain display comparatively strong citation impact and international collaboration. These findings suggest that the field is shaped by a relatively concentrated set of actors and research networks, even as it draws on contributions from multiple regions and disciplinary traditions. They also confirm that research on local wisdom in tourism has developed as an interdisciplinary domain linking tourism studies with local knowledge, ethnobiology, and socio-ecological research.

Third, the conceptual mapping shows that the field is organised around five major thematic clusters linking tourism with culture and heritage, Indigenous and traditional knowledge, community-based and village-based tourism, and ethnobotanical concerns. Across this structure, tourism functions as a central hub, while local wisdom increasingly appears as a connecting concept across conservation, community-based livelihoods, and locally grounded tourism development. The analysis of keyword evolution further shows a shift from fragmented case-based studies toward themes such as ecosystem services, regenerative tourism, and circular economy, indicating that local wisdom is now more clearly embedded in sustainability-oriented and socio-ecological tourism thinking.

At the theoretical level, these findings provide a stronger quantitative basis for understanding local wisdom as an emerging knowledge domain in international tourism scholarship, particularly through its growing connections with sustainability, community-based tourism, and socio-ecological thinking. At the practical level, the concentration of publication output in a limited number of countries and networks, together with the growing prominence of themes such as tourism villages, community-based tourism, ecosystem services, and regenerative tourism, suggests that policymakers, tourism practitioners, and local communities should place greater emphasis on inclusive collaboration, locally grounded planning, and tourism initiatives that are aligned with local values and long-term sustainability agendas.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. It relies exclusively on Scopus-indexed English-language journal articles, which may underrepresent relevant research published in other databases, languages, and regional outlets. In addition, the dataset is determined by the search query and filters without manual full-text screening, and the thematic mapping is based on metadata that may not fully capture the complexity of arguments within individual studies. Future research should therefore expand the database coverage, incorporate multilingual and regional sources, and combine bibliometric analysis with systematic reviews or in-depth qualitative studies. Such work would be especially valuable for examining underrepresented regions, less visible research networks, and

emerging themes such as regenerative tourism, ecosystem services, and circular economy in greater depth.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Bagas Lanang Smesta: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Data Curation, Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Visualization, Project Administration

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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