

Exploring Trends and Future Paths in Tourism Villages Research: An Intellectual Mapping

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Abstract

Sustainable tourism development in rural villages requires in-depth literature exploration. Bibliometric analysis reveals new themes and trends in village tourism research. The use of strategic diagrams enhances understanding of sustainable tourism research, particularly in rural villages. This approach uncovers new research opportunities and areas for future studies. Researchers searched the WOS database for rural tourism and tourist villages, focusing on scholarly journal publications from 2014 to 2023 in English. They employed advanced bibliometric techniques to examine the changing landscape of village and rural tourism research. Key identified themes include place attachment, traditional villages, and destination image. The analysis shows the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in creating sustainable tourism strategies, with a focus on understanding emotional ties to destinations and enhancing the significance of traditional villages. Future research should integrate cultural, social, and environmental dimensions into village tourism development, involving tourists in creating memorable experiences. The research underscores the significance of holistic and interdisciplinary approaches in promoting sustainable development. Nevertheless, constraints encompass scant bibliographic information, regional partiality, and inadequate examination of stakeholders' viewpoints regarding sustainable tourism growth.

Keywords: *Village Tourism, Rural Tourism, Bibliometric Analysis, Science Mapping, Enhance Strategic Diagram.*

Introduction

In recent years, the paradigm of sustainable tourism development has increasingly pivoted towards rural tourism villages, garnering significant academic attention. This shift reflects a broader understanding of the multifaceted impacts of tourism on rural communities and environments. Several studies, utilizing bibliometric analysis, have aimed to map the development and path of this discipline. However, a predominant focus on performance metrics within these studies has led to an underutilization of more sophisticated analytical frameworks, such as the three-dimensional strategic diagram, in identifying emergent and trending themes in village tourism research (Ferreira, Silvério, Márcia F. Vaz, & Paula Odete Fernandes, 2022; Guan & Huang, 2022; Hočevár & Bartol, 2016; Karali, Das, & Roy, 2021; Ruiz-Real, Uribe-Toril, Torres, & Pablo, 2021; Siddiqui, Parahoo, Sadi, & Afzal, 2021; Singhania, Swain, & George, 2022). This gap signifies an urgent need for a comprehensive and nuanced exploration of rural tourism literature (Shafin et al., 2022).

Bibliometric analysis, as an evaluative and investigative tool, examines the corpus of scientific publications within specific academic domains. This approach includes the collection, manipulation, and assessment of bibliographic data from diverse scholarly sources, including literary pieces, journals, and dissertations. The objective is to uncover patterns and trends within the literature, identify seminal works and pivotal contributors, and gauge the overall impact of research within the field (Kim, Kang, & Lee, 2021; Merigó, Mas-Tur, Roig-Tierno, & Ribeiro-Soriano, 2015).

Within tourism studies, bibliometric analysis serves as a key instrument to discern the state-of-the-art and current consensus on various topics. This methodology not only helps in tracing the evolution of thought and practice in tourism research but also assists in uncovering nascent research avenues and unexplored areas ripe for investigation. Consequently, it facilitates a more targeted and informed approach to future

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research endeavors, ensuring that emergent gaps in knowledge and understanding are adequately addressed (Li et al., 2022).

The utilization of the three-dimensional strategic diagram in bibliometric analysis offers an enriched perspective. It allows for a more dynamic and multidimensional understanding of the tourism village research landscape. Accordingly, this study seeks to answer several pivotal questions: (RQ1) What constitutes the current state-of-the-art in tourism village research? (RQ2) What are the emerging and trending research topics within this domain? (RQ3) What potential avenues exist for future research in tourism village studies?

In essence, by integrating the three-dimensional strategic diagram into bibliometric analysis, this study aims to provide a more holistic and detailed understanding of the research trajectory in sustainable tourism, specifically focusing on rural tourism villages. This methodology plays a crucial role in propelling the discipline forward, not solely through delineating current understanding but also by emphasizing domains that require additional academic investigation and scrutiny.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher commenced their study with a comprehensive search in the Web of Science (WOS) database, a strategic selection grounded in its robust bibliographic index. This particular database was selected due to its robust indexing features, which enhance the accessibility of a diverse array of documents sourced from multiple publications. To navigate this resource effectively, the researcher employed a series of search queries that amalgamated diverse terms, utilizing a thesaurus specifically oriented towards tourism in rural areas. These queries were crafted to capture relevant literature. The queries for the WOS database search were as follows:

Topic: "Tourism Village" OR "Rural Tourism"

Publication Years: 2023 - 2014

Document Types: Article

Languages: English

Date extracted: April, 8th 2024

This strategic querying approach not only ensured the inclusion of a broad spectrum of concepts within the realms of rural tourism and tourist villages but also enhanced the precision and relevance of the search outcomes.

Initially, the query entered was “tourism villages or rural tourism,” resulting in 4074 documents. The subsequent procedure involved limiting the document's time period, set from 2014 to 2023. Moreover, solely scholarly journal publications were considered, leading to the exclusion of conference papers, literature reviews, chapters in edited volumes, and other forms. The language of the documents was English. The number of documents remaining at this point was 2010. The screening process for document completeness continued. No papers were found without author names. Consequently, all the existing documents could be used for further research.

The program of choice for scientific mapping and enrichment is VOSviewer 1.6.20. The type of analysis is co-occurrences with the author's keyword analysis unit, and uses full counting. Using the VOSviewer Thesaurus File to equate terms during processing. OpenRefine is used by the author to assist in the analysis of papers. Enhance strategic diagram is an extension of the current strategic diagram. In principle, it is nearly identical to the prior strategic diagram. A diagram is created for each term in the metadata bibliography. The relevance degree (centrality) and development degree (density) variables are used to map keywords. Keywords are divided into four quadrants in the strategy diagram: core/motor theme,

Cluster 3 (Blue) - "Quality of Experience and Tourist Satisfaction in Sustainable Village Tourism": The primary focus of this theme is on the quality of the tourist experience and their satisfaction, key elements in sustainable village tourism. High-weight keywords such as 'sustainable development', 'satisfaction', 'loyalty', and 'tourist satisfaction' highlight the importance of establishing impactful experiences for tourists, thereby enhancing the sustainability of tourist destinations.

These clusters collectively provide a comprehensive overview of the current research landscape in village and rural tourism, encompassing cultural, agricultural, innovative, and experiential dimensions. This bibliometric analysis offers insights into dominant themes and potential future directions for research and development in sustainable tourism in rural settings.

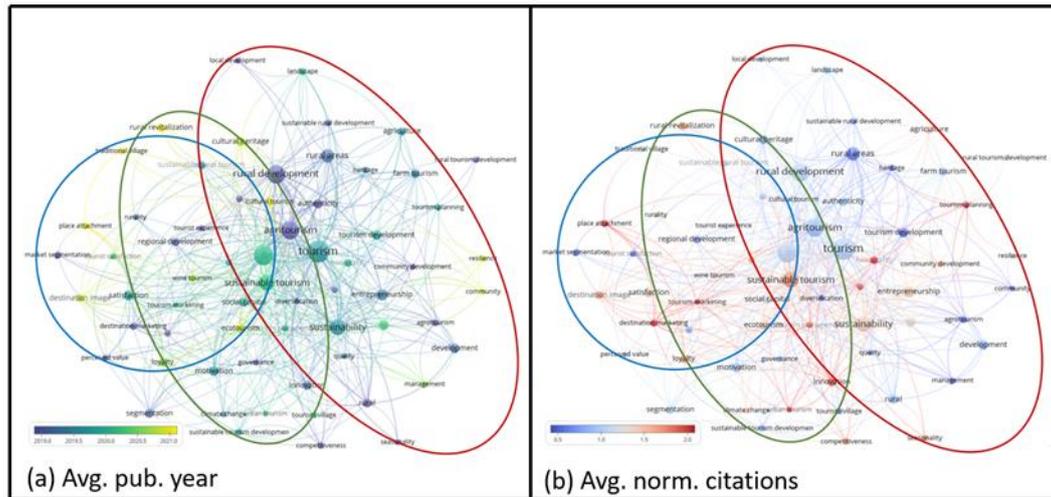


Figure 2. Overlay Visualization of Co-occurrence of Author Keywords in Tourism Village.

In Figure 2 the overlay visualization focusing on average publication year (a), there is a distribution of nodes representing keywords in articles based on their year of publication. Nodes with lighter colors (yellow) indicate the use of those keywords in more recent publications. Conversely, nodes with darker colors (dark blue) signify keywords associated with older publications. Another overlay visualization, namely the average normalized citation (b), displays the citation frequency of articles associated with specific keywords. Nodes that are colored red signify that the article has garnered a considerable amount of citations. Conversely, nodes in blue denote a decline in citation levels for those articles. Nodes in white suggest that the number of citations for those articles remains relatively low. This approach provides an intuitive view of the influence and relevance of research topics based on the level of citations they receive.

The current state-of-the-art in village tourism research not only accommodates existing trends and challenges but also anticipates future changes. These facets encompass a profound comprehension of the interplay between tourism and its influence on local identity, encompassing how tourism can uphold or modify cultural customs and societal principles. The emphasis on community-driven tourism, highlighting the empowerment and involvement of indigenous communities in the organization and administration of tourism, has also gained importance.

Moreover, an increasing fascination has been observed in the utilization of technology and digital media for the advancement of village tourism. This includes leveraging social media and digital platforms to entice tourists and convey the genuine essence of the village. Research also involves analyzing the impact of tourism on the environment and conservation efforts, including studies on the impact of climate change on rural tourist destinations and the necessary adaptations.

The notions of ecotourism and adventure tourism have risen as noteworthy topics, given the growing need for sustainable tourism encounters that involve direct interaction with the natural environment. These

studies often explore how village tourism can contribute to the preservation of natural environments while providing memorable experiences for visitors.

Research on village tourism recognizes the importance of global and regional interconnectivity. This includes understanding how global and regional policies, economic changes, and market trends can influence tourist villages. Consequently, a holistic and integrated approach in village tourism research becomes increasingly important to address these challenges and capitalize on emerging opportunities. This approach ensures that village tourism not only survives in a changing global context but also thrives in a sustainable and responsible manner.

To identify emerging or prevalent research themes within the domains of village tourism or rural tourism, enhanced strategic diagrams are employed, marking a novel innovation in bibliometric research methodologies (Judith, 2015; Shafin et al., 2022). This advanced approach involves dissecting the bibliometric landscape into eight distinct quadrants, each representing different attributes of the research topics based on keyword density, centrality, and the novelty or age of the publishing year.

This intricate analytical model allows for a multi-dimensional exploration of the research field. Keyword density reveals the frequency of topic occurrence, indicating areas of concentrated research interest. Centrality, conversely, evaluates the interrelatedness of a subject within the wider research web, elucidating its impact and significance across different sub-fields. The novelty or age factor provides insights into the evolutionary trajectory of the research, distinguishing between well-established areas and nascent, cutting-edge topics.

Through this approach, the analysis offers a comprehensive view, identifying both saturated and under-explored areas in village and rural tourism research. It enables scholars to pinpoint research frontiers and potential gaps, guiding future research directions. For instance, a quadrant with high keyword density but low centrality might indicate a well-researched area that is isolated and potentially ripe for interdisciplinary integration. Conversely, topics with high centrality and novelty may signify emerging trends that are becoming central to the discourse, warranting further exploration and development.

Furthermore, this procedural progress in bibliometric examination improves the capacity to track the development of research topics over time. By doing so, it provides critical foresight for academicians and policymakers in adapting to and shaping future trends in village and rural tourism research. This is especially relevant in a period where the hospitality sector is constantly impacted by elements such as technological progress, socio-economic changes, and global ecological challenges. Thus, the application of enhanced strategic diagrams in bibliometric studies is not only a reflection of academic innovation but also a necessary tool in the progressive understanding and development of the village and rural tourism sector.

In Figure 3 of the Enhance Strategic Diagram (Novel Pub. Year), the "Emerging" quadrant located in the top left highlights key terms with a high density of research but not yet fully centralized in the global tourism landscape. Terms like 'place attachment', 'rural revitalization', and 'wine tourism' are encompassed within this classification. 'Place attachment' reflects a profound aspect of the interaction between tourists and destinations, emphasizing the importance of understanding how personal experiences and emotions can influence tourist decisions and behavior. This indicates the need for more personalized approaches in tourism planning and development. 'Rural revitalization' and 'wine tourism', on the other hand, point to niche tourism trends that integrate elements of sustainability, local economies, and unique cultural experiences specific to a region.

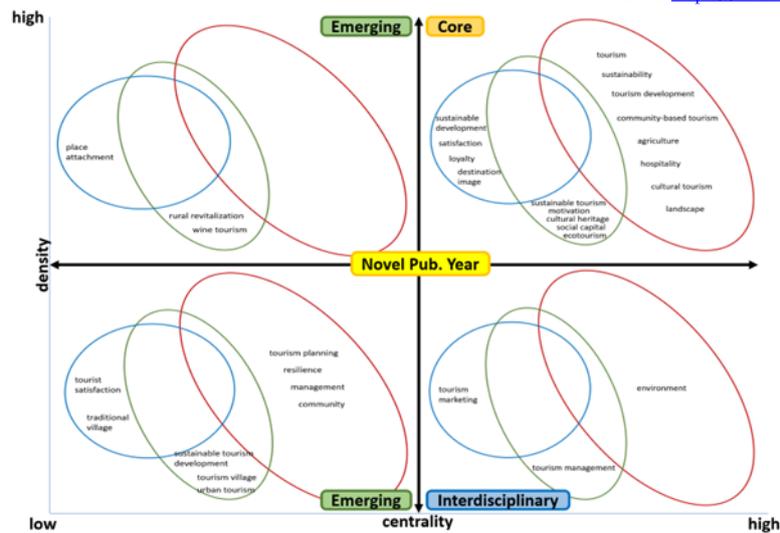


Figure 3. Enhance Strategic Diagram (Novel Pub. Year).

Meanwhile, the "Emerging" quadrant at the bottom left displays concepts that still have significant room for growth in tourism literature. 'Tourist satisfaction' and 'traditional village' are among them. 'Tourist satisfaction' denotes the degree of contentment encountered by tourists, serving as a crucial factor in gauging the effectiveness of a tourist destination. Satisfaction is closely related to the aspects of service quality, uniqueness of experience, and value gained by tourists. In-depth studies on tourist satisfaction can provide valuable insights for enhancing tourism products and services. Moreover, 'traditional village' leads us to explore how traditional villages can be preserved and utilized as valuable tourism assets, enriching tourism offerings with authenticity and rich cultural heritage.

Research on both quadrants is crucial to the generation of knowledge that can guide the implementation of optimal approaches in the realm of sustainable tourism advancement, with due consideration given to socio-cultural, economic, and environmental dimensions. This underscores the necessity for pioneering and flexible tactics that address immediate requirements while also ensuring long-term sustainability for forthcoming cohorts.

In Figure 4 illustrates the positioning of key terms that have been used in the tourism literature over a specific past period. The primary focus of this visualization is on the terms categorized in the "Obsolete" quadrant. The "Obsolete" quadrant, located at the bottom left, reflects terminology with minimal levels of centrality and density, indicating that these concepts have likely lost their relevance in modern tourism research. Terms such as "tourist experience" and "sustainable rural development," placed in this quadrant, may have been superseded by newer paradigms and concepts that are more prominent in recent studies.

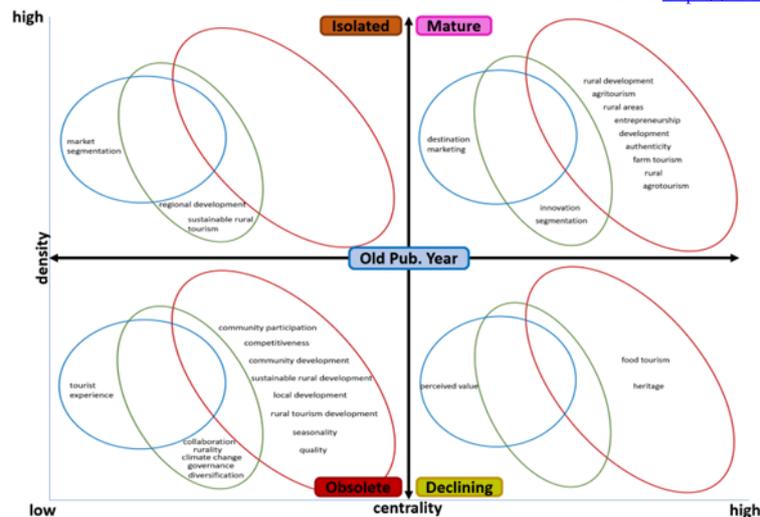


Figure 4. Enhance Strategic Diagram (Old Pub. Year).

In a broader context, the Enhance Strategic Diagram serves as a tool to aid academics and researchers in effectively navigating through thematic evolution within the field of tourism. It facilitates the identification of themes that have developed and integrated well, while also paving the way for discovering areas ripe for research innovation. The designation of the "Obsolete" quadrant is particularly noteworthy as an indicator of changing trends, guiding researchers to direct their focus towards adaptive and progressive thinking in response to the dynamics of needs and interests in tourism studies.

It is crucial to acknowledge that ideas that previously had a notable impact in discussions about tourism may now necessitate reevaluation or even restructuring to stay pertinent. In this regard, "tourist experience" and "sustainable rural development" can still offer value when viewed through a new lens or combined with contemporary approaches, such as the incorporation of technology in tourism experiences or innovative models in rural development emphasizing ecological and social sustainability.

Furthermore, this diagram challenges researchers to delve deeper into how concepts in the "Obsolete" quadrant can be revitalized or integrated within the currently evolving tourism framework. For instance, adapting "tourist experience" to include elements of sustainability, digitalization, and personalization, which have become mainstream trends. Similarly, "sustainable rural development" may require new approaches that consider climate change, the digital economy, and community participation.

In actuality, this could result in the creation of groundbreaking tourism approaches and regulations that not only take into account present patterns but also proactively anticipate forthcoming alterations. This aligns with the necessity to restructure tourism development strategies to be responsible, inclusive, and sustainable, supporting economic growth as well as cultural and environmental conservation simultaneously.

In the current domain of tourism research, several emerging and trending topics include: (a) Place Attachment: Research examining the depth of emotional connections that tourists form with destinations, looking at how personal and collective identities are shaped through interaction with places; (b) Rural Revitalization: Focus on efforts to revive the rural economy through tourism, which encompasses the preservation of cultural heritage, development of sustainable infrastructure, and empowerment of local communities; (c) Wine Tourism: A trend within the niche tourism segment, this area of research explores how activities related to wine—such as visits to vineyards, wine tasting events, and learning about viticulture—can strengthen the profile of a destination and contribute to the local economy; (d) Tourist Satisfaction: Studies that assess factors affecting tourists' level of satisfaction, including service quality, price, authenticity of experience, and the overall perceived value of their visit; and (e) Traditional Village: Research

aimed at uncovering the potential of traditional villages as tourism destinations by leveraging their unique history, culture, and environment.

These research areas offer insights that can be used to develop more responsible, inclusive, and sustainable tourism strategies, as well as to anticipate and respond to dynamic changes in tourist interests and behaviors. Sustainability and innovation are two overarching themes that continue to evolve, guiding the direction of tourism development to align with ecological, social, and economic principles. Interdisciplinary studies that integrate knowledge from environmental, technological, social psychology, and creative economy fields are increasingly being used as a framework to address the complexities of challenges in the tourism sector.

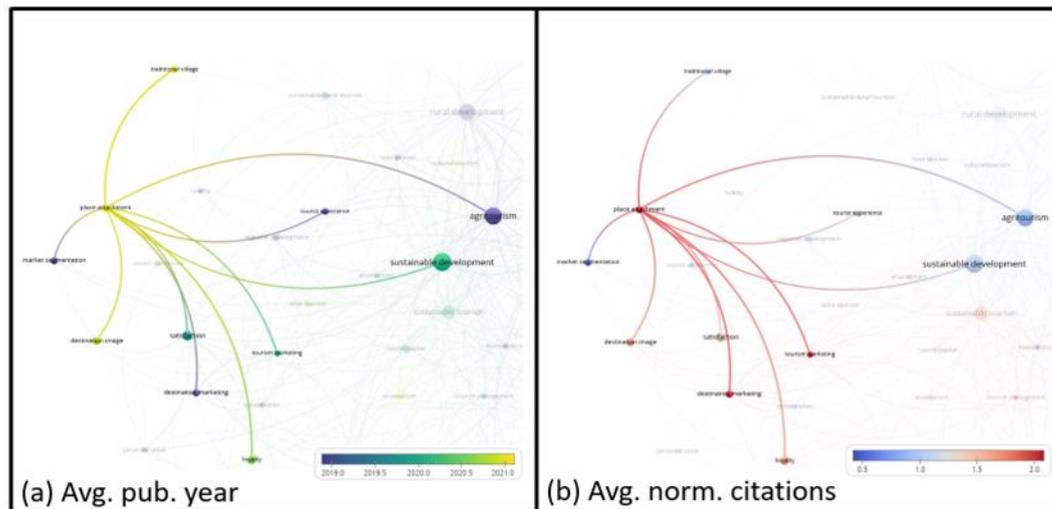


Figure 5. Enhance Strategic Diagram (Old Pub. Year).

In Figure 5, the positioning of 'place attachment' and 'traditional villages' in the 'emerging' quadrant suggests these topics are gaining traction and recognition in contemporary tourism research. This quadrant typically represents areas that are not yet fully established or explored but are showing significant potential for growth and development. The inclusion of these concepts in this specific quadrant indicates a burgeoning interest and acknowledges the need for more nuanced and comprehensive understanding in these areas.

The concept of place attachment, defined as the emotional and personal bond individuals form with specific locations, becomes highly relevant in the study of traditional villages. Such villages, rich in history, culture, and unique traditions, provide authentic and distinctive experiences that differ from mainstream tourist destinations. The focus in research could thus be oriented towards understanding how and why tourists develop strong connections with these traditional villages and the subsequent impact on the sustainability of rural tourism.

Moreover, exploring the relationship between place attachment and traditional villages within the context of this strategic diagram can provide insights into how feelings of closeness and ownership towards a place can enhance the value of a tourism destination. Identifying factors that foster place attachment in traditional villages, such as interactions with local communities, immersive cultural activities, and appreciation of conserved natural environments and heritage, becomes pivotal.

From a strategic standpoint, as indicated in the 'emerging' quadrant of the Enhance Strategic Diagram, research in this area holds vital implications for policymakers, destination managers, and stakeholders in the tourism industry. Understanding the dynamics of place attachment can guide the development of strategies aimed at enhancing tourists' emotional connections to places, while preserving the authenticity and sustainability of traditional villages. By understanding the elements that impact the development of place connection, there is a chance to create more significant traveler experiences, thereby enhancing traveler contentment, promoting return visits, and nurturing favorable verbal recommendations.

Findings and Discussion

The current research delineates a comprehensive understanding of the state-of-the-art in tourism village development, recognizing the integral role of culture, agriculture, and sustainable development. The focus on exploiting local assets and bolstering rural communities through tourism initiatives has emerged as a fundamental direction in this academic terrain. This approach not only fosters economic and social value in rural settings but also underscores the importance of sustainable practices.

Three principal clusters were identified, each underscoring a distinct thematic concentration within the domain of sustainable village and rural tourism:

Cluster 1 accentuates the synergistic interplay between local culture, agricultural endeavors, and sustainable development, highlighting the conservation of cultural values, the adoption of eco-friendly farming practices, and the endorsement of tourism activities that propel socio-economic progress in rural communities.

Cluster 2 underlines the significance of innovation and local community engagement, advocating for a participatory model in rural tourism that can yield enduring social and economic benefits.

Cluster 3 delves into the essence of the tourist experience and satisfaction, suggesting that these are pivotal in the context of sustainable village tourism. This cluster brings to the fore the importance of 'place attachment', 'traditional village', and 'destination image'—three interrelated aspects that greatly influence tourist perceptions and experiences.

The analysis unravels the intricate relationship between tourists and traditional villages, where 'place attachment' emerges as a potent driver for enhancing tourist satisfaction and cultivating long-standing fidelity to a destination. Deepening our comprehension of 'place attachment' can lead to the creation of strategies that amplify the charm of traditional villages as enduring tourism spots (Novianti et al., 2020).

Moreover, the advent of digital technology has presented novel avenues for promoting traditional villages, enabling dynamic storytelling and the propagation of authentic destination values. Future research could investigate the amalgamation of digital technology with marketing strategies to elevate traditional villages' profile and strengthen their cultural identity globally.

Furthermore, 'place attachment' could significantly shape tourist perceptions and destination experiences. Investigating how this bond influences the destination image could offer substantial insights for destination management and marketing, and it could encourage tourists to engage in the conservation of local environments and culture.

Looking ahead, research is poised to make not only theoretical contributions to the scholarly discourse but also practical impacts that facilitate sustainability and innovation within the traditional village tourism sector. The narrative built on these three clusters calls for future investigations that integrate cultural, social, and environmental dimensions into village tourism development while actively involving tourists in the creation of genuine and memorable experiences.

Acknowledging the vital role of experiences that deepen 'place attachment', current studies point towards the pivotal position of 'traditional village' in providing authentic experiences that bolster the positive image of tourism destinations.

Future research directions include employing multidisciplinary approaches that amalgamate insights from environmental, technological, and socio-psychological perspectives, aiming to construct more sustainable and responsible tourism strategies. This is paramount for guiding policymakers and destination managers in strategic decision-making processes that reinforce tourist satisfaction and experiences, fortify 'place attachment', and optimize the destination image.

Conclusions

Recent research in the domain of village tourism reveals a strategic integration of culture, agriculture, and sustainable development as key to the sector's growth. The utilization of local assets and the strengthening of rural communities are central focuses, with the application of sustainable practices aiming to tap into the economic and social potential of villages.

Emerging and trending topics such as 'place attachment', 'traditional village', and 'destination image' play a significant role in this research. 'Place attachment' is observed to be a significant element that impacts the perceptions and experiences of tourists, thereby playing a pivotal role in shaping their enduring satisfaction and allegiance to the specific destination. The integration of digital technology in marketing and the preservation of the authentic values of traditional villages are also identified as key aspects.

This research has yielded three thematic clusters, each underscoring critical aspects of village tourism development, ranging from the integration of culture and agriculture to innovation and community involvement, and a focus on the quality of experience and tourist satisfaction. These clusters offer insights for future research that can support sustainable and innovative development in village tourism, considering environmental, technological, and socio-psychological aspects.

Research conducted in the realm of traditional village tourism emphasizes the necessity for comprehensive and interdisciplinary methodologies. These approaches aim not only to improve the quality of tourist interactions but also to support the enduring and mutually beneficial development of rural communities.

This study faces several important limitations. First, the analysis conducted is limited to available bibliographic data, potentially not encompassing the entire spectrum of existing or emerging research. Additionally, there is a potential geographic bias, where the study may disproportionately focus on specific regions, not fully representing the global context of village tourism. Moreover, the use of bibliometric methodology, while effective in identifying general trends, may not always capture the depth or complexity of specific issues in village tourism. Furthermore, the dynamic and rapidly changing nature of tourism means that the findings could quickly become outdated and less relevant to current developments in the industry. Lastly, the study may not comprehensively explore the perspectives of all stakeholders, including local communities, tourists, and tourism managers, in relation to the sustainable development of tourism villages.

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