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Sustainable Tourism Planning During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Semi-Systematic Literature Review and Bibliometric Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this study is to synthesize research results on the topic of sustainable tourism planning during the COVID-19 pandemic using the Scopus database. **Method:** A semi-systematic literature review (SSLR) with identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion on bibliometric analysis. **Results:** Research shows that the topic of sustainable tourism planning during the COVID-19 pandemic still offers extensive research opportunities; the pandemic has had both positive and negative impacts on tourism sustainability; and that tourism sector recovery requires multi-stakeholder collaboration involving communities, government, the private sector, academics, and tourists, taking into account environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects. The findings of this study indicate that publications on sustainable tourism planning during the COVID-19 pandemic still offer opportunities for deeper exploration in this context. **Novelty:** This study provides a comprehensive synthesis of trends and directions for the development of sustainable tourism planning during the COVID-19 pandemic, while emphasizing the importance of a multi-stakeholder collaborative approach as the basis for the recovery and sustainability of the tourism sector post-pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

The current COVID-19 pandemic inevitably impacts various sectors. At the global economic level, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a very significant impact on the economy. The Covid-19 pandemic triggered an economic crisis, and it is estimated that the fastest economic recovery will be in 2022 (Zetzsche & Congsiglo, 2020). To respond to the pandemic crisis, the world has implemented lockdown measures to control the spread of the virus and has conducted intensive testing and tracing, as well as economic stimulus policies to limit the adverse impact (Fauzia, 2021; Woodward, 2009).

One of the most dynamic key drivers of the economy is the tourism sector. Tourism as a dynamic sector relies heavily on the adoption of strategic planning approaches (Segeda et al., 2025; Stokes, 2008). Tourism planning is a critical aspect of tourism development, as it provides a framework for the sustainable and responsible management of tourism resources and activities (Baloch et al., 2023). Tourism planning is a coordinated relationship between current and future conditions for determining goals, strategies, and sustainable actions to achieve the success of local communities and tourists (Martins, 2018; Padin, 2012). Without tourism planning, socio-cultural problems will arise as tourism grows, leading to economic inequality and environmental problems (Auliya, 2019). Tourism planning is a decision-making process that is integrated with the goals and direction of future tourism sustainability, development, and cooperation at the local, regional, national, and international levels (Hanrahan & Kelly, 2016; Risteskia et al., 2012;

Timothy, 1998). The concept of sustainable tourism has gained significant attention in recent decades as a means to balance the economic, social, and environmental impacts of the tourism industry. Sustainable tourism seeks to minimize the negative effects of tourism activities while maximizing the positive outcomes for local communities, the environment, and the industry itself (Fowler et al., 2022). In tourism sustainability activities, community participation plays an important role in planning, implementation, supervision, and maintenance (Setijawan, 2018). Related stakeholders also support the process in various ways. Sustainable tourism also considers the impacts of the present and future in its development (Yoeti & Gunadi, 2013).

However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a contraction of between 45 and 70 percent in the international tourism economy, and international arrivals contracted by around 70 to 75 percent in 2020, effectively returning international tourism to the level of 30 years ago (Dempster & Zimmer, 2020). The contraction in the tourism sector certainly requires a large-scale recovery program and collaboration among the various parties involved. Recovery in the tourism sector is not only about large-scale policies but also requires targeted, mature planning so the recovery process can proceed quickly and precisely. The opening of new tourism destinations without proper planning will have a long-term negative impact on the environment, social structure, and culture, whereas if planning is implemented, tourism can have a positive impact on sustainability (Timothy, 1998). In the 2030 Agenda, the tourism sector is not specifically mentioned in the context of sustainable development. However, the tourism sector contributes to the targets of goals 8 (inclusive and sustainable economic growth), 12 (sustainable consumption and production), and 14 (sustainable use of marine and ocean resources) both directly and indirectly (Go & Kang, 2023).

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has caused a significant decline in the global tourism sector. Many tourist destinations are experiencing a decline in income, negatively impacting the local and national economies. Sustainable planning can help the sector recover and ensure future resilience. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a severe impact on the tourism industry worldwide. In terms of planning, tourism not only involves the community as the object but also the roles of the government, the private sector, and Academia. The government, through tourism agencies, provides services, prepares documents to achieve national tourism planning goals, and strengthens public-private partnerships in tourism marketing (Camilleri, 2024). Academia is one of the important supporting actors in this process (Ramos, 2009). Academia supports tourism planning activities through active and passive participation.

Active participation means that Academia helps the planning process with the government, while indirect participation occurs through scientific work based on research results and service activities. There are four levels of scientific work, namely (1) basic, theoretical, and methodological innovations, (2) individual studies, articles, and report, (3) synthesis of research knowledge, (4) actionable message: policy brief dan policy paper; academic articles are usually at the second level in the hierarchy in policy input (Siswanto, 2010; WHO, 2004). The article is a literature review of published work

on sustainable tourism planning during the COVID-19 pandemic. The focus of this article is on where articles on sustainable tourism planning during the Covid-19 pandemic were published, the condition of the tourism sector during the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism sector planning during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the sustainability of the tourism sector during the Covid-19 pandemic.

RESEARCH METHOD

The literature review in this article uses a semi-systematic approach. A semi-systematic literature review (SSLR) is a multidimensional synthesis of topics that allows researchers to map themes, theoretical approaches, and commonalities within the scope of the review's objectives (Moazic et al., 2021; Transfield et al., 2003). The SSLR step in this article is divided into two parts: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion, with bibliometric analysis. The first stage, identification, was done through database selection and keyword selection. The literature search for SSLR used the Scopus database and was conducted in June 2024. Selection of keywords to build the relevance of the topic of sustainable tourism planning during the Covid-19 pandemic: in the Scopus database, the selection of keywords is narrowed to the article title, abstract, and keywords. The strings used are "sustainable tourism planning" OR "sustainable planning" OR "tourism planning" OR "planning tourism" OR "sustainable tourism" OR "tourism sustainability" AND "Covid 19" OR "Covid-19" OR "Coronavirus Disease 2019" OR Coronavirus OR "new normal era" OR "Corona Virus Disease" OR pandemic OR recovery OR "Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2" OR "SARS-CoV-2" OR plague OR restrictions, with these strings 44 articles were detected with restrictions on the articles published in the range 2019 to 2024.

The results are 44 articles with details: 1 article from 2019, 9 articles from 2020, 26 articles from 2021, 2 articles from 2022, 3 articles from 2023, and 1 article from 2024; the articles are presented in English, Spanish, Chinese, Portuguese, and with document types in the form of articles, conference papers, book chapters, and editorials. The early 2019 time span was selected because, in that year, the coronavirus was discovered. Furthermore, the screening and eligibility stage, at this stage filtering is carried out in the form of restrictions or limits in the form of the language used is English (40 articles were detected), complete articles can be accessed with the limit All Open Access, Gold, Hybrid Gold, Bronze, Green (21 articles were detected), and document searches are specialized only articles and conference papers (21 articles were detected). Finally, 21 articles were used. The literature search was conducted in June 2024. The following PRISMA design is used in the literature, as seen in Figure 1.