

Mapping Research on Memorable Tourism Experiences and Adventure Tourism: A Bibliometric Analysis of Twenty-Two Years

Manoj Kumar*, Amrik Singh*, Nihal Kapoor*, Rajan Sharma*, Abhishek Kumar* and Uday Bhanu†

Abstract

This research endeavours to analyse the intellectual structure, scientific productivity, theme development, and current trends concerning Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) and Adventure Tourism research between 2003 and 2025 through a bibliometric approach. Even though there has been considerable academic focus on the concept of memorable tourism experience, very few studies have undertaken a bibliometric analysis incorporating both MTEs and adventure tourism aspects. The study attempts to connect this gap by conceptually analysing 350 English-language research papers indexed on the Scopus database through 108 publications. It is established that there was a steady growth rate of almost 19% every year, which highlights the increasing popularity of this research field. In total, 887 researchers have engaged in MTEs and adventure tourism research, and almost 25% of the published articles had some level of international collaboration involved. Three research questions are addressed in this study, namely: (1) Which countries are most productive in terms of publication and citation? (3) What are the prominent thematic topics and future research directions? Results show that China dominates in research output, followed by Indonesia, Australia, and Portugal. Through citation analysis, two seminal works by Tung and Ritchie (2011) and Kim et al. (2010) have been identified as highly influential, significantly affecting the conceptualization and operationalisation of MTEs. In terms of thematic mapping, the analysis conducted using VOSviewer and Biblioshiny software shows that the major topics are memorable experience, satisfaction, revisit intention, place attachment, and emotion,

* Centre for Promotion of Ecological, Adventure, Health and Cultural Tourism, School of Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Management, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Dharamshala; nagajitourism11@gmail.com; amriksingh@hpcu.ac.in; nihalkapoor160@gmail.com; rajan2599sharma@gmail.com; abhishekkumar01070@gmail.com

† Department of Tourism and Travel Management, School of Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Management, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, India; udayb96@gmail.com

while the emerging topics are sustainability, well-being, authenticity, and post-pandemic behaviour in tourism.

Keywords: Memorable Tourism Experiences, Adventure, Tourism, Biblioshiny, VOSviewer.

Introduction

Because travellers now look for significant, emotive, and unforgettable experiences rather than just services and attractions, the study of memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) has grown in significance in tourism research. (Tung and Ritchie, 2011) Traveller pleasure, destination perception, inclination to return, and good word-of-mouth are all significantly influenced by memorable encounters. An essential setting for producing such unforgettable experiences is provided by adventure tourism, which entails active participation, risk, thrill, and emotional engagement. (Chen and Rahman, 2018). Scientific studies indicate that memories influence perceptions and guide individuals' behaviours (Bluck, 2003). Furthermore, recollections of experienced events are proven to influence future decision-making (Pillemer, 2003). Nevertheless, few studies have investigated the relationship between the MTEs and variables such as sensory experiences, visitor satisfaction, destination attachment, revisit intentions, and good word-of-mouth communication. (Chen et al., 2020). Few studies have thoroughly evaluated the overall development of research linking MTEs with adventure tourism, despite the fact that numerous studies have looked at visitor satisfaction, destination loyalty, and revisit behaviour. (Chen and Rahman, 2018). Businesses focus on offering memorable or unforgettable experiences for the tourists (Zhang et al., 2018). The consequence of bibliometric analysis is that it allows us to discover patterns in publications, prominent authors, key organizations, significant articles, collaboration networks, and new areas of research. That is why this paper presents a scientific map of MTE and adventure tourism literature based on their evolution and directions for further research. (Bec et al., 2018). Against such a backdrop, researchers and practitioners are keen to discover patterns: what sorts of experiences linger with travelers, how they are created in different contexts, and how these learnings may be applied to marketing and destination management practice (Knobloch et al., 2016). Bibliometric analysis has become a strong tool for charting the scientific landscape within this field. In contrast to conventional narrative reviews, bibliometric methods quantitatively review large sets of literature, distinguishing key pieces of work, collaboration networks, emergent themes, and research gaps (Hood, W. W., and Wilson, C. S., 2001). Science mapping and performance analysis are two major bibliometric tools that graphically represent relationships among authors, citations, keywords, and institutions, providing a complete "bird's-eye view" of the evolution of knowledge and enabling an insight into research trends and scholarly

collaboration (Cobo et al., 2011). Visualization software such as VOSviewer and Biblioshiny augment bibliometric knowledge by providing interactive co-authorship, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence mappings, thereby allowing researchers to navigate scholarly networks, determine trends, and grasp structures of knowledge more intuitively and effectively (Van Eck and Waltman, 2009). From 2003 to 2025, studies of memorable experiences in adventure tourism expanded rapidly, at an average annual growth of 19%, with signs of developing complexity, strong worldwide collaboration, and high multidisciplinary engagement from various scholastic and professional backgrounds (Pessin et al., 2022). The phenomenon of memorable tourism experience (MTE) represents one of the most important domains in tourism studies due to the fact that positive and memorable tourism experiences affect tourists' satisfaction, loyalty, revisit intention, and word-of-mouth communication to a great extent. Although previous research studies have investigated MTEs at the theoretical and practical level, much attention has been paid to destination image, tourist satisfaction, revisit behavior, and service quality. Few studies have explored the knowledge structure, co-authorship, thematic development, and productivity of studies regarding MTE and adventure tourism. To date, no literature can be found that provides an integrative bibliometric study on the topic under review.

We thus bear in mind that this study provides a substantial influence on the works, through the bibliometric analysis of MTEs and adventure tourism research on a large scale, where papers were published between 2003 and 2025. This study aims to thoroughly map and judgmentally examine the intellectual structure, research productivity, thematic evolution, as well as future avenues for memorable tourism experiences & adventure tourism literature using bibliometric analysis methods. This study pinpoints the top countries, institutions, authoritative papers, collaboration networks, and topical trends while providing a sequenced research agenda for future tourism researchers and practitioners.

This study analysed publications related to "Memorable Tourism Experiences" and "Adventure Tourism" in the Scopus database using bibliometric analysis. This helps identify trends in Memorable Tourism Experiences and Adventure Tourism studies, allowing for recommendations for future research. Our project aims to address the list of research questions:

RQ1: Which nation possesses the highest number of research outputs in this field, and how have publication numbers, citation counts, and author activity changed over time?

RQ2: What are the top ten most significant articles about memorable tourism experiences and adventure tourism?

RQ3: What are the primary research subjects and developing trends in this field?

Literature Review

MTEs were the initial scholars to develop a scale capable of measuring MTEs in a quantitative form. The scale has seven dimensions: hedonism, refreshment, local culture, meaningfulness, knowledge, involvement, and novelty (Kim et al., 2010). Recalling Memorable Tourism Experiences. Managing and improving the recall of such pleasant memories for tourists is an appropriate marketing approach for showcasing the modest edge in today's competitive tourist marketplace. The tourist experience is a multivariable blend of subjective elements that impact how travellers feel and perceive their tour, with the notion of MTEs. Tourism experiences are a complex notion that cannot be easily distinguished. It encompasses an entity's particular assessment of the phases preceding, as well as those following, a journey (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). Furthermore, the role of MTEs in building emotional memories during travel was elaborated upon. Further works linked MTEs with experiences with local cuisine, smart tourism technology, wildlife tourism, and heritage tourism. Nonetheless, such studies focused primarily on an empirical analysis and were case-based and contextual. Only very few works have conducted systematic reviews on the overall body of literature in this field from a bibliometric perspective, which could help integrate fragmented knowledge into a cohesive framework (Mahdzar et al., 2015).

MTE is thought to refer to the "positively remembered tourism experience after the occurrence of the event" (Kim et al., 2010). Moreover, based on cross-cultural research, we created and tested a scale to measure Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs). The scale revealed seven distinct proportions of experience: enjoyment, rejuvenation, local culture, meaningfulness, learning, novelty, and involvement. Enjoyment (hedonism) as a dimension captures the enjoyable aspect of tourism experience consumption. This dimension fits the existing literature, which stresses that tourism products, by their nature, have an emotional element. (Tung and Ritchie, 2011). This chapter highlights hedonism, novelty, involvement, and meaningfulness as key predictors of tourists' revisit intentions, with a particular emphasis on the pivotal role that memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) play in determining destination loyalty and fostering long-term tourist-destination relationships (García-Pérez and Castillo-Ortiz, 2024). This new overview integrates more than 262 publications on memorable tourism experiences and identifies central dimensions that encompass cognitive, affective, sensory, behavioral, and relational aspects. Determinants like authenticity, uniqueness, and quality are associated with increased satisfaction and loyalty. The research points out both theoretical contributions and managerial implications for designing tourism products. (Sinaga, A.H., Situmorang, S.H., and Sembiring, B.K.F. 2024). A systematic review of gastro-tourism highlights the long-lasting impact of memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) on tourist behavior,

emphasizing authenticity, involvement, and sensory attractions as pivotal factors in determining satisfaction, revisit intent, and destination loyalty (García-Pérez and Castillo-Ortiz, 2024). Bibliometric analysis of wildlife tourism identifies Australia and the journal *Tourism Management* as major contributors, with conservation and management emerging as key research themes, as revealed through science mapping methods that identify primary trends, collaborations, and knowledge patterns. (Nasir et al., 2024). This study develops and tests a multi-item scale to assess memorable tourism experiences (MTEs) of leisure tourists across ten experiential dimensions, thereby providing a comprehensive framework for evaluating tourists' perceptions, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions. (Chandralal and Valenzuela, 2015).

Aim of Study

This study aims to methodically map and assess the global intellectual structure, research output, topic development history, and identify current trends in Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) and Adventure Tourism literature from 2003 to 2025 based on bibliometric techniques. The objective of this study is to write a bibliometric study of the present works, identifying dominant countries, institutions, influential publications, collaboration networks, and upcoming study instructions, while overcoming the lack of sufficient bibliometric analyses limited only to MTE adventure tourism cross-experience.

Methodology

The present study uses bibliometric analysis as the main research method to examine the growth of Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) and the Adventure Tourism study. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative method employed to assess journal trends, citation frameworks, collaboration networks, and thematic change in a research domain. Usually, it is used to help find key papers, key authors, leading institutions, as well as emerging trends in research.

The current work employs two primary bibliometric techniques: science mapping and performance analysis. Science mapping examines the field's intellectual structure using co-citation analysis, keyword co-occurrence, bibliographic connection, and co-authorship networks; performance analysis concentrates on publication productivity, citation impact, and institutional contributions.

Bibliometric Analysis: (Cooper, 2015), Bibliometric techniques determine how a selected research paper affects or influences other studies. The study of how various fields produce literature is known as bibliometrics. (Hood and Wilson, 2001). Performance analysis and science mapping are

two bibliometric techniques mentioned by the researchers (Cobo et al., 2011). In performance analysis, we work on publication and citation metrics. Whereas Science mapping includes seven steps: data retrieval, pre-dealing out, network extraction, regularisation, mapping, analysis, and visualization (Cobo et al., 2011). In science mapping, we work on citation analysis, co-citation analysis, co-word analysis, co-authorship, and bibliographic coupling. We had also used R software, which is the open-source software that helps researchers with data analysis using a Biblioshiny platform that is built & designed by (Aria and Cuccurullo, 2017). Bibliometrics is used mostly for quantitative analysis of scholarly research, but is being used more and more for practice-based studies. Its two main methodological approaches include science mapping to map knowledge structures and performance analysis to evaluate research productivity and impact. (Noyons et al., 1999), (Singh et al., 2025). VOS viewer is a software that assists users in creating and visualizing maps of data related to research. For instance, you can use it to visualize in what ways various authors or journals are cited together (co-citation maps), or to visualize the frequency with which particular keywords are co-occurring in papers (co-occurrence maps). These maps facilitate easy identification of trends and patterns in academic research. You can generate maps by employing various procedures, and VOS viewer will visualize them in an interactive and user-friendly manner (Van Eck and Waltman, 2009b). The process starts by collecting data from scientific databases and combining it using a program written in the R programming language. This combined data is then uploaded to a website for analysis. This method works well because it allows for different types of analysis and the creation of visual maps that reveal patterns and connections in the data. It also gives a broad, global view of scientific work. However, the results are displayed as static images or charts, meaning users can only view the information but cannot click or interact with it directly. (Pessin et al., 2022b). Furthermore, the use of MS-Excel is for editing the table and organising the data in a proper format.

The initial study: As illustrated in Figure 1, the first investigation generated 837 studies. After applying filters to only study publications published in English, the count remained at 837. When further limited to document-type articles published in English, the count went down to 633. The final dataset comprised 362 articles written in English. After choosing four relevant subject categories, the sample was narrowed down to 378 articles. Exclusions were then made, resulting in a final list of 350 articles for analysis.

Inclusion and Exclusion: After the refinement process depicted in Figure 1, 350 articles were shortlisted for the study. These articles cover diverse subject domains; however, in our study, four major disciplines were considered: Social Sciences, Environmental Sciences (EVS), Arts & Humanities, and Psychology. Research articles alone were considered,

clearly excluding conference papers and book chapters. The chosen articles were published between 2003 and 2025 to provide a thorough and recent coverage of the field.

Data Sources and Search Strategy

Reasons for choosing the Scopus database to extract the data:

1. Wider coverage of journals
2. Reliable citation indexing
3. Highly suitable for bibliometric analysis
4. Higher international coverage compared to other databases
5. Metadata that can be used in science mapping

Search string used in Scopus to retrieve the data in November 2025

TITLE-ABS-KEY (“memorable” “experience*”) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (“adventure” or “tourism”)

This search generated 837 documents.

To guarantee the data quality and relevance, the following criteria were used:

Publications should be written in English

Articles only

Period of publication: from 2003 until 2025

Subject: Social Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Psychology

Only journal publications

Excluded were:

Papers presented at conferences

Chapters in books

Editorials

Review papers

Not in the English language

Duplicates

In conclusion, the final dataset included 350 research

Data Analysis Tools

Analysis and visualization were done through Biblioshiny (R-Bibliometrix) and VOSviewer (version 1.6.20). For instance, descriptive statistics, thematic mapping, annual scientific output, and three-field plotting were done using Biblioshiny, while co-citation analysis, journal mapping, reference analysis, and collaboration mapping were done using VOSviewer.

For more robust results, iterative keyword refinement and manual duplicate elimination were performed. Also, a sensitivity analysis was done by doing a comparison between keyword variations and subject limitations to ensure consistent data.

Despite the comprehensive bibliometric databases provided by Scopus, there is a chance that some regional literature and/or literature in non-English languages will be left out. Future bibliometric analyses should consider the inclusion of Web of Science and Google Scholar databases to validate findings.

Result and Discussion

From the findings, it can be noted that China ranks first in terms of publication output, followed by Indonesia, Australia, and Portugal. This is attributed to the country's significant effort to invest in developing its tourism sector and ensuring that it has competitive destination markets. Moreover, the high output of other countries in the Asia region is indicative of a change in geographical distribution in terms of conducting tourism-related research, whereby attention is being shifted from tourism research being led by Western countries towards emerging tourist nations. The high productivity of institutions such as Hanken School of Economics, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and Sun Yat-Sen University is attributed to the presence of strong tourism research centres.

Systematic reviews are required to present detailed information on their methods and results so that readers may determine whether the Conclusions drawn are reliable and relevant. To make systematic review reporting clear and comprehensive, Page et al. (2021) have developed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) statement. This guideline supports transparency and completeness with a view to establishing uniform reporting in systematic reviews.

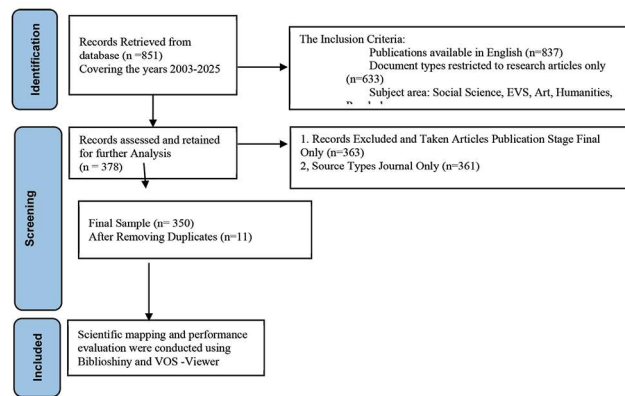


Figure 1: PRISMA Protocol

Source: Authors compiled from the Scopus Database

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Descriptive Data Statistics

Description	Results
MAIN INFORMATION ABOUT DATA	
Timespan	2003:2025
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	108
Documents	350
Annual Growth Rate %	18.89
Document Average Age	3.8
Average citations per doc	40.07
References	22542
DOCUMENT CONTENTS	
Keywords Plus (ID)	432
Author's Keywords (DE)	1162
AUTHORS	
Authors	887
Authors of single-authored docs	46
AUTHORS COLLABORATION	
Single-authored docs	46
Co-Authors per Doc	2.95
International co-authorships %	27.43
DOCUMENT TYPES	
article	350

The figures presented are based on an analysis of scientific documents gathered between the years 2003 and 2025. It provides an overview of the quantity of published work (350 papers from 108 sources), the speed at which the research field has expanded (around 19% annually), and the level of citation of the research (approximately 40 citations per average paper). The abstract also informs us of the authors who wrote (887 authors, of which most papers were written by groups rather than individuals), and reveals that almost one in four papers is an international collaboration. Keywords

and references are given to indicate what subjects are sought after and how linked the research is. All of this data is collected and then mapped using software that enables us to perceive patterns in scientific activity over the years, but primarily in static depictions that enable us to look at, not touch directly, the data.

Citation Analysis

The following table enumerates some of the most cited research articles on memorable tourist experiences. In every entry, the time of publication, authors, title, journal where it was published, and the frequency with which it has been cited by other researchers are indicated. An example is the most-referenced paper by Tung and Ritchie (2011) that discusses what makes tourism experiences memorable, which has been cited more than 1,100 times, with an average of over 74 citations per annum. Another strongly influential paper is by Kim, Ritchie, and McCormick (2010), which created a scale to assess such experiences, which has been cited more than 1,080 times, with the largest yearly citation rate of 77 times per annum. The other research addresses particular contexts, including cruise tourism (Hosany & Witham, 2009), wildlife tourism (Ballantyne et al., 2011), place attachment through food-related experiences (Tsai, 2016), and tourists' well-being (Knobloch et al., 2016). Later research considers issues such as immersive heritage tourism (Bec et al., 2018) and the function of smart tourism technology (Jeong & Shin, 2019), which has a high annual citation rate of 53. All of these works have collectively informed us about how travel becomes memorable and enduring in memories among individuals, impacting tourism management, marketing, and design globally.

Table 2: The top ten publications most frequently cited by the authors

Year	Author	Title	Sources	Total Citations	Citation Per Year
2011	"Tung V.W.S.; Ritchie J.R.B. (Tung and Ritchie, 2011)"	"Exploring the essence of memorable tourism experiences."	"Annals of Tourism Research"	1113	74.20
2010	"Kim J.-H.; Ritchie J.R.B.; McCormick B. (Kim et al., 2010)"	"Development of a scale to measure memorable tourism experiences"	"Journal of Travel Research"	1087	77.64
2009	"Hosany S.; Witham M. (Hosany and Witham, 2009)"	"Dimensions of cruisers' experience satisfaction, and intention to recommend"	"Journal of Travel Research"	594	37.13

2011	"Ballantyne R.; Packer J.; Sutherland L.A. (Ballantyne et al., 2011)."	"Visitors' memories of wildlife tourism: Implications for the design of powerful interpretive experiences"	"Tourism Management"	434	28.93
2016	Tsai C.-T.S. (Tsai, 2016)	"Memorable Tourist Experiences and Place Attachment When Consuming Local Food"	"International Journal of Tourism Research"	378	37.80
2013	"Kim J.-H.; Ritchie J.R.B. (Kim and Ritchie, 2013)"	"Cross-Cultural Validation of a Memorable Tourism Experience Scale (MTES)"	"Journal of Travel Research"	334	27.83
2019	"Jeong M.; Shin H.H. (Jeong and Shin, 2019)"	"Tourists' Experiences with Smart Tourism Technology at Smart Destinations and Their Behavioural Intentions"	"Journal of Travel Research"	318	53.00
2016	Knobloch U.; Robertson K.; Aitken R. (Knobloch et al., 2016)"	"Experience, Emotion, and Eudaimonia: A Consideration of Tourist Experiences and Well-being"	"Journal of Travel Research"	298	33.11
2018	"Bec A.; Moyle B.; Timms K.; Schaffer V.; Skavronskaya L.; Little C. (Bec et al., 2018)"	"Management of immersive heritage tourism experiences: A conceptual model"	"Tourism Management"	266	38.00
2018	"Zatori A.; Smith M.K.; Puczko L. (Zatori et al., 2018)"	"Experience-involvement, memorability and authenticity: The service provider's effect on tourist experience"	"Tourism Management"	266	33.25

Source: The data is derived from the Scopus database

Total Number of Published Studies

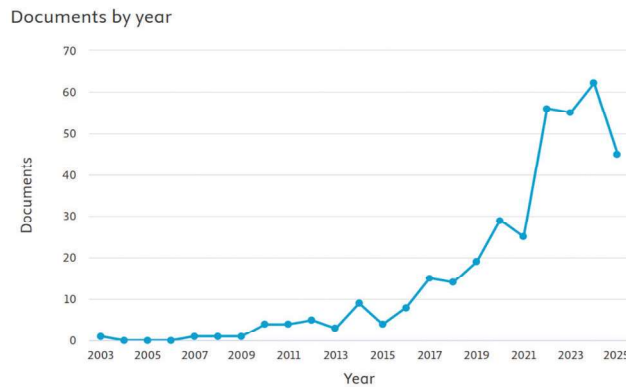


Figure 2: shows the publication Data. The figure was using the software Biblioshiny
Source: Data extract from the Scopus database

The graph explains the yearly number of papers between 2003 and 2025. Until around 2016, there was little to no growth, with the number of documents produced annually remaining under 10. From 2017 onwards, there was a gradual increase in production, reaching more than 15 documents a year in 2018. There was a marked slowdown in growth after 2020, with a sudden increase in documents, reaching its peak of nearly 60 documents in 2023 and over 60 documents in 2024. Notably, following this peak, a decline is noticeable in 2025, but the number is still well above the trend. Overall, there has been a dramatic growth in the number of documents over the ages, suggesting a surge in attention and activity in this field.

The Most Relevant Affiliation: Top ten universities

Table 3: Publication university-wise

Affiliation	Articles
Hanken - Svenska handelshögskolan	10
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	10
Sun Yat Sen University	10
Taylor's University Malaysia	10
University of Johannesburg	9
Universidade do Algarve	9
Manchester Metropolitan University	9
Universidade de Aveiro	9
Griffith University	9
Tartu Ülikool	7

Source: Statistics sources from the Scopus database

The table displays the articles per institution. Hanken - Svenska handelshögskolan, 'The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Sun Yat-Sen University and Taylor's University Malaysia have the most articles in this list, which is 10 articles per institution. The University of Johannesburg follows this, Universidade do Algarve, Manchester Metropolitan University, Universidade de Aveiro, and Griffith University, each with 9 articles. Finally, Tartu Ülikool has 7 articles, the smallest quantity in this list.

Three Field Plot Map

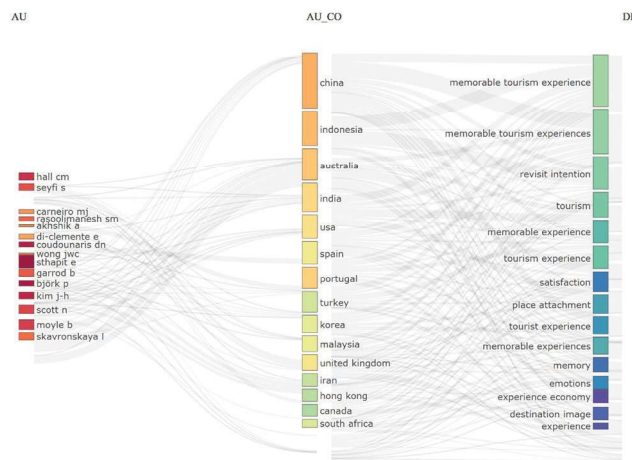


Figure 3: Three-field plot graph showing the association between sources (left), Country (Middle), and Keyword (Right) for Memorable tourism Experiences (MTE) and adventure

Source: Extracted from RStudio using the Scopus database

The chart shows the relationship between three groups: authors, countries they are associated with, and popular research trends in tourism research. The chart lists some authors in the first column, with each author's name associated with a colour. In the second column, several countries, such as China, Indonesia, Australia, India, the USA, etc., are listed to show the geographical origin of these authors. The connections between the authors and countries are indicated by lines. Finally, in the right column, the chart shows the key research themes these authors focus on, including "memorable tourism experience," "revisit intention," "place attachment," "satisfaction," "emotions," and so on. This chart represents the multiple researchers with different nationalities who are engaged in different themes of tourism research, demonstrating the multidisciplinary and international nature of this field.

Top 10 Most Productive Countries

Table 4: Publications by Countries

Country	Frequency
China	96
Indonesia	79
Australia	76
Portugal	70
India	61
USA	61
UK	50
Spain	48
Malaysia	44
South - Korea	39

Source: Data extracted from the Scopus database

The statistics indicate frequency counts per country. China leads with a frequency of 96, then Indonesia with 79, and Australia with 76. The next is Portugal with 70. India and the USA each have a frequency of 61. There is a frequency count of 50 in the UK, followed by 48 for Spain. Malaysia has a frequency count of 44, and lastly, South Korea has the lowest count in this list with 39.

Thematic Evaluation Map Between 2003 to 2025. Map Generated by Biblioshiny

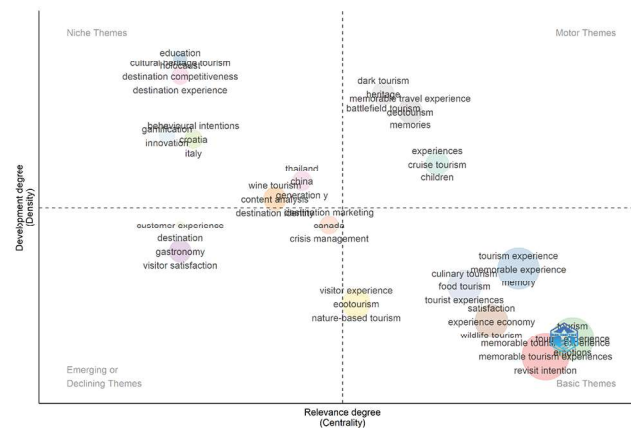


Figure 4: Thematic Evaluation 2003- 2025

Source: Extracted from RStudio using the Scopus database

This figure illustrates a flow diagram linking three components in tourism research: journals (left), countries (middle), and keywords/topics (right).

The coloured blocks on the left are the various tourism journals where studies are published. The column in the middle is countries, where studies or authors are located, e.g., China, Indonesia, Australia, and India are seen with prominence. The lines running across the diagram graphically map out how studies from individual countries are being published in certain journals and on what topics those studies are being conducted. The left side contains the broad topic areas of tourism studies, including “memorable tourism experience,” “revisit intention,” “tourism experience,” and more. For instance, lines may indicate that Chinese researchers tend to publish in some journals regarding “memorable tourism experiences.” This visualisation makes us observe how publications relate to geography and to research themes in memorable tourism, and what countries and journals are most productive, and what topics most frequently appear. Overall, the result is a dense web of flows and connections between tourism studies.

Tree Map



Figure 5: Tree map generated using Biblioshiny

Source: Derived from RStudio using the Scopus database

This is a tree map that illustrates different themes of tourism experience. The coloured blocks represent each different theme or keyword, and the magnitude of the blocks indicates the occurrence of its appearance or importance in the data. For example, the biggest and most dominant block is “memorable tourism experience,” which reflects its popularity with 43 mentions (8%). Also significant are other themes of “memorable tourism experiences,” “revisit intention,” and “tourism”, as blocks of significant size. The smaller blocks represent less popular concepts such as “place attachment,” “tourist experience,” “emotions,” and “satisfaction”. As

the blocks get smaller, more specialised topics such as “well-being”, “sustainability”, “authenticity”, “co-creation,” and even more recent topics like “COVID-19” appear, signalling the diversity and the breadth of the research areas within tourism studies. In all, the image provides a clear, colorful view of the dominance and interlinkage of a wide variety of themes in the field of memorable experiences in tourism.

Journals co-citations

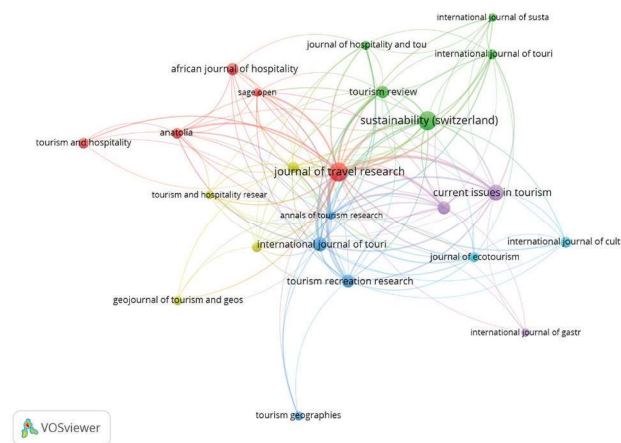


Figure 6: Journals co-citations. Figure Created from the Vos-Viewer

Source: Derived from The Vos-Viewer

This study investigates the citation patterns of publications on ‘memorable tourism experiences’ from Scopus data and mapped by VOSviewer. The 107 publications analysed were found in 23 journals, which were selected by the cut-off point of 40 citations. The study identified six clusters, which highlight the topical connections among the publications. There are five items in bunch one (red), five items in bunch two (green), bunch three (blue) has four items, bunch four (yellow) has four items, bunch five (purple) has three items, and bunch six (light blue/white) is formed with two items. These clusters represent a range of research communities in the arena of memorable tourism experiences. The network visualisation above shows 103 citation links with a total link strength of 555, revealing that the publications are well connected. This clustering displays the interconnections of research strands, a reflection of the intelligent building and development of research in this area.

References co- citation

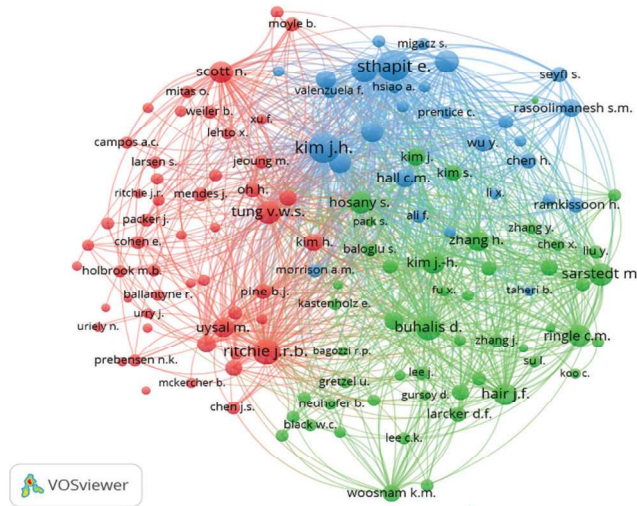


Figure 7: References co-citations. Figure Created from the Vos-Viewer
Source: Derived from The Vos Viewer software

The network represents the co-authorship and citation network among influential authors in the field. Each cluster of coloured author points out a group of authors who are close and connected in terms of collaborative research or citation, and it demonstrates distinct research communities in tourism. For example, the red cluster has authors such as Scott N., Tung V.W.S and Uysal M., while the blue cluster consists of Sthapit E., Kim J.H and Hall C.M. Sarstedt M., Buhalis D., and Hair J.F. are the core of the green cluster. The diameter of the circles indicates influence or the number of links in the network. The dense lines show the level of interaction and sharing between authors, showing that while there are different clusters, there is also much interaction between clusters. Overall, this diagram indicates the social network of tourism scholars is complicated; some prominent scholars are connecting different groups and leading tourism studies forward by generating publications and collaborations.

Conclusion of Study

The presented study represents a detailed bibliometric review of publications on Memorable Tourism Experiences (MTEs) and Adventure Tourism during 2003-2025. Based on the findings, there is a pronounced increase in scientific attention to MTEs, which is characterized by 350 publications in 108 publications and an annual growth rate of almost 19%. Moreover, it

can be stated that research concerning memorable experiences has become multidisciplinary as it covers various issues, including destination image, tourist satisfaction, revisit intention, place attachment, sustainability, and well-being.

According to the findings of the current paper, China represents the most productive country, while Indonesia, Australia, and Portugal occupy second, third, and fourth positions in publishing activities. The obtained data also indicate the growing role played by developing Asian countries in world tourism studies. The two highly cited pioneering studies made by scholars Tung & Ritchie (2011) and Kim et al. (2010) prove their significance for theoretical development and measurement of memorable tourism experiences. Network visualizations demonstrate the presence of strong international cooperation among scholars.

At the same time, it is clear from the results that the phenomenon of theoretical fragmentation continues to occur within topics like authenticity, co-creation, sustainability, and tourism behaviour after the pandemic. The bulk of the literature is descriptive, and there is still room for improvement in theory construction to increase understanding of the impacts of meaningful tourism experiences on tourist behavior.

Theoretical contributions are made to the research by developing fragmented literature into a systematic body of knowledge and discovering promising future directions for tourism research. In future studies, it is necessary to overcome purely bibliometric approaches and work on empirical testing and multidisciplinary perspectives on research topics.

Practical Implication

The results obtained from this research provide substantial practical suggestions for tourism management professionals, destination planners, and policy makers. An understanding of memorable tourist experiences would enable destination planners to formulate better tourist products in order to enhance tourist satisfaction, emotional attachment, and re-visitation intention. The insights gained could be used by adventure tourism providers in creating more memorable experiences for tourists. For policymakers, such insights can contribute toward sustainable tourism planning, destination marketing, and community-based tourism development.

Theoretical Contribution

The theoretical contribution made by this study is in synthesising fragmented literature surrounding memorable tourism experiences and adventure tourism into a knowledge structure. This has been done through establishing the intellectual base for the field, key intellectuals contributing

to the field, the pattern of collaboration, and thematic developments within twenty-two years. Furthermore, this study has shown areas that need more conceptualization, including sustainability, co-creation, authenticity, and post-COVID-19 behavior. This makes it easier for scholars to develop strong theoretical frameworks from the scientific roadmap provided.

Importance of Study

Learning about what makes memorable tourism and adventure experiences worth studying is relevant to scientists and travel industry professionals alike. To researchers, having a look through all the published studies allows them to determine which topics are well-researched, identify research gaps, and be able to recognize emerging new concepts. This assists in determining what to study next and invites experts across disciplines to collaborate. For travel experience creators and policymakers, an understanding of what makes tourists recall their vacations can assist them in creating better trips, enhancing promotion, and coordinating strategies to make a destination more appealing and fun. The analysis, through the use of sophisticated computer applications like VOSviewer and Biblioshiny, offers everyone a clear picture of where things stand in the field today and equips them with information on how travel and adventure might shape up in the years ahead.

Limitations and Future Research

This study has approximately limitations. To start with, there is only one database used in this study, which is Scopus. It could be possible that other journals have been excluded because they are not part of Web of Science, Google Scholar, or other regional databases. Moreover, only English papers were selected from various journals, and it is possible that other local language papers are being missed. Another major limitation of bibliometric analysis is that it can only quantify the information, but not give much insight into it. Future researchers must consider using various databases, along with the application of a mixed-method approach using the bibliometric analysis approach with a systematic review of the literature. Machine learning and network dynamics analysis can also be helpful in future research.

Abbreviations

MTE – Memorable Tourism Experiences

Declaration of Generative AI And AI-Assisted Technologies in the Writing Process

The writers attest that generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) and technologies helped by AI were employed in the composition of this manuscript. These tools were utilised for the synthesis of literature, thematic

clustering identification, making academic language more precise, and tests of consistency in formatting. Nevertheless, all conceptualisation, interpretation of data, theoretical formulation, and ultimate decision-making about content were executed by the human writers. The incorporation of AI did not substitute for scholarly judgment but was used as an ancillary tool to augment efficiency and precision in scholarly communication. This is consistent with new trends in tourism studies where GenAI is increasingly being seen as a tool for data curation and knowledge mapping, as long as ethical standards are adhered to.

Funding

This study did not have any particular grant from public, commercial, or not-for-profit funding agencies. Nevertheless, some sources of funding for prospective studies are the Adventure Travel Conservation Fund (ATCF), which finances projects related to environmental conservation, culture preservation, and tourism schemes that practice sustainability around the world. Other applicable opportunities are the U.S. Economic Development Administration, which distributed \$750 million for state and competitive grants to enhance tourism infrastructure and workforce development. Tourism Cares also manages the Meaningful Travel Fund and Impact Travel Fund, funding community-level tourism businesses with capacity-building and sustainability-oriented grants. Researchers are encouraged to review these and similar initiatives when pursuing financial assistance for tourism-themed academic studies.

Data Availability

The dataset compiled and tabulated for this bibliometric analysis is accessible from the corresponding author on reasonable request. The raw bibliographic data were retrieved from Scopus and Web of Science databases through predetermined search strings on “memorable tourism experiences” and “adventure tourism.” Processed data, such as co-citation networks, keyword co-occurrence matrices, and thematic evolution maps, can be provided in CSV or VOSviewer-compatible formats for replication or additional analyses. Researchers who are interested in using the dataset are encouraged to contact the authors to explore collaboration or verification.

References

- Aria, M., & Cuccurullo, C. (2017). Bibliometrix: An R-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis. *Journal of informetrics*, 11(4), 959-975. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2017.08.007>
- Ballantyne, R., Packer, J., & Sutherland, L. A. (2011). Visitors' memories of wildlife tourism: Implications for the design of powerful interpretive

- experiences. *Tourism Management*, 32(4), 770–779. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2010.06.012>
- Bec, A., Moyle, B., Timms, K., Schaffer, V., Skavronskaya, L., & Little, C. (2018). Management of immersive heritage tourism experiences: A conceptual model. *Tourism Management*, 72, 117–120. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2018.10.033>
- Bluck, S. (2003), “Autobiographical memory: exploring its functions in everyday life”, *Memory*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 113–123.
- Chandralal, L., & Valenzuela, F. (2015). Memorable Tourism Experiences: scale development. *Contemporary Management Research*, 11(3), 291–310. <https://doi.org/10.7903/cmr.13822>
- Chen, H. and Rahman, I. (2018), “Cultural tourism: an analysis of engagement, cultural contact, memorable tourism experience and destination loyalty”, *Tourism Management Perspectives*, Vol. 26, pp. 153–163.
- Chen, X., Cheng, Z.F. and Kim, G.B. (2020), “Make it memorable: tourism experience, fun, recommendation and revisit intentions of Chinese outbound tourists”, *Sustainability*, Vol. 12 No. 5, p. 1904.
- Cobo, M. J., López-Herrera, A. G., Herrera-Viedma, E., & Herrera, F. (2011). An approach for detecting, quantifying, and visualizing the evolution of a research field: A practical application to the Fuzzy Sets Theory field. *Journal of Informetrics*, 5(1), 146–166. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joi.2010.10.002>
- Cobo, M., López-Herrera, A., Herrera-Viedma, E., & Herrera, F. (2011). Science mapping software tools: Review, analysis, and cooperative study among tools. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 62(7), 1382–1402. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.21525>
- Cooper, I. D. (2015). Bibliometrics basics. *Journal of the Medical Library Association JMLA*, 103(4), 217–218. <https://doi.org/10.3163/1536-5050.103.4.013>
- García-Pérez, L. E., & Castillo-Ortiz, I. (2024). Memorable gastro-tourism experiences: A systematic literature review. *Annals of Tourism Research Empirical Insights*, 5(2), 100158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annale.2024.100158>
- Hood, W. W., & Wilson, C. S. (2001). The literature of bibliometrics, scientometrics, and informetrics. *Scientometrics*, 52(2), 291–314.
- Hosany, S., & Witham, M. (2009). Dimensions of cruisers’ experiences, satisfaction, and intention to recommend. *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(3), 351–364. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287509346859>
- Jeong, M., & Shin, H. H. (2019). Tourists’ Experiences with Smart Tourism Technology at Smart Destinations and Their Behavioral Intentions. *Journal of Travel Research*, 59(8), 1464–1477. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287519883034>
- Kim, J., & Ritchie, J. R. B. (2013). Cross-Cultural Validation of a Memorable Tourism Experience Scale (MTES). *Journal of Travel Research*, 53(3), 323–335. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287513496468>
- Kim, J., Ritchie, J. R. B., & McCormick, B. (2010). Development of a scale to measure memorable tourism experiences. *Journal of Travel Research*, 51(1), 12–25. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287510385467>

- Knobloch, U., Robertson, K., & Aitken, R. (2016). Experience, emotion, and eudaimonia: a consideration of tourist experiences and well-being. *Journal of Travel Research*, 56(5), 651–662. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287516650937>
- Macias, R. C., & Garcia, F. A. (2021). Memorable tourism experience research: a systematic review of the literature. *Tourism Recreation Research*. <https://scihub.se/https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2021.1922206>
- Mahdzar, M., Shuib, A., Ramachandran, S., & Afandi, S. H. M. (2015). The role of destination attributes and memorable tourism experience in understanding tourist revisit intentions. *American-Eurasian Journal of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences (Tourism & Environment, Social and Management Sciences)*, 15(1), 32-39.
- Nasir, T., Raina, D. I., Wani, Z. A., Ridwan, Q., Hanief, M., Pant, S., & Rawat, Y. S. (2024). A bibliometric analysis of wildlife tourism research from 1991–2022. *Frontiers in Sustainable Tourism*, 3. <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsut.2024.1393525>
- Noyons, Ed C. M., Henk F. Moed, and Anthony F. J. Van Raan. (1999). Integrating Research Performance Analysis and Science Mapping. *Scientometrics* 46(3): 591–604. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf02459614>
- Page, Matthew J., et al. (2021). PRISMA 2020 Explanation and Elaboration: Updated Guidance and Exemplars for Reporting Systematic Reviews. *BMJ* (2021): n160. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n160>
- Pessin, V. Z., Yamane, L. H., & Siman, R. R. (2022b). Smart bibliometrics: an integrated method of science mapping and bibliometric analysis. *Scientometrics*, 127(6), 3695–3718. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-022-04406-6>
- Pillemer, D. (2003), “Directive functions of autobiographical memory: the guiding power of the specific episode”, *Memory*, Vol. 11 No. 2, pp. 193-202.
- Sinaga, A. H., Situmorang, S. H., & Sembiring, B. K. F. (2024). Memorable tourism experiences in tourism: A literature review. *Jurnal Akutansi Manajemen Ekonomi Kewirausahaan (JAMEK)*, 4(2), 148-157.
- Singh, A., Kapoor, N., Kumar, A., Sharma, R., & Kumar, M. (2025). “ Ecotourism” and” Sustainability”: A Bibliometrics Analysis using Biblioshiny and VOS viewer. *Journal of Environmental Management & Tourism*, 16(1), 49-67. [https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v16.1\(77\).04](https://doi.org/10.14505/jemt.v16.1(77).04)
- Stavrianea, A., et al. (2023). The Effects of Memorable Tourism Experiences... In: *Handbook of Tourism and Quality of Life Research*. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-51038-0_15
- Tsai, C. (2016). Memorable tourist experiences and place attachment when consuming local food. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 18(6), 536–548. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2070>
- Tung, V. W. S., & Ritchie, J. B. (2011). Exploring the essence of memorable tourism experiences. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(4), 1367–1386. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.03.009>
- Van Eck, N. J., & Waltman, L. (2009b). Software survey: VOSviewer, a computer program for bibliometric mapping. *Scientometrics*, 84(2), 523–538. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-009-0146-3>

- Zatori, A., Smith, M. K., & Puczko, L. (2018). Experience-involvement, memorability and authenticity: The service provider's effect on tourist experience. *Tourism Management*, 67, 111-126. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2017.12.013>
- Zhang, H., Wu, Y. and Buhalis, D. (2018), "A model of perceived image, memorable tourism experiences and revisit intention", *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, Vol. 8, pp. 326-336.