

Trends and Challenges in Indonesian Tourism Policy (2016–2025): A Systematic Literature Review

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Article History: Received on 8 September 2025, Revised on 6 October 2025,
Published on 18 December 2025

Abstract: This study aims to identify the latest trends in future Indonesian tourism research and explore the challenges and policies affecting the sector. Using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method, this study examines over 96 articles related to Indonesian tourism policy published between 2016 and 2025, analyzed through the Scopus database. This study focuses on key trends in tourism policy, such as digitalization, halal tourism, sustainable tourism, and local community empowerment. Furthermore, it explores the challenges facing the Indonesian tourism sector, including inadequate infrastructure, natural resource management issues, and the impacts of climate change. The findings suggest that policies supporting digitalization and sustainability have significant potential to improve the Indonesian tourism sector. This study also identifies the importance of collaboration between the government, the private sector, and communities to create inclusive and sustainable tourism. This research provides useful insights for developing tourism policies that are more adaptive, sustainable, and responsive to the dynamics of the evolving global market. Thus, this study contributes to understanding the future direction and challenges of tourism management in Indonesia and offers evidence-based solutions to advance the sector towards a greener and more sustainable direction.

Keywords: Community Empowerment, Halal Tourism, Indonesian Tourism, Public Policy, Sustainable Tourism

A. Introduction

The Indonesian tourism industry has experienced significant development over the past few decades. As one of the most reliable sectors for economic growth, it faces various new trends that could shape its future. The Indonesian government has actively encouraged foreign investment in tourism to achieve a target of more than 7 million foreign tourists by 2023, doubling the previous figure (Jabir et al. 2024). One emerging

trend is halal tourism, which is attracting Muslim travelers and has the potential to contribute significantly to state revenue, although challenges related to regulations and market dynamics still need to be addressed (Wazin et al. 2024). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the digital transformation in tourism, leveraging social media to promote tourist destinations, providing a solution to the negative impact of the pandemic on the sector. However, the halal tourism sector still faces challenges related to technology, market demand, and financing, which impact its potential for growth (Suryani 2024). Another trend gaining popularity is sustainable tourism, which emphasizes a balance between short-term economic gains and long-term environmental sustainability (Tjiptono et al. 2022).

Along with these evolving trends, significant challenges for Indonesian tourism policy have also emerged. One example is global economic disruption affecting consumer spending patterns, with high airfares and inflation hampering tourism sector growth (Koerner, Sushartami, and Spencer 2024). Indonesia also faces challenges in infrastructure management, inter-agency coordination, and terrorism risk management, all of which impact sustainable tourism development efforts (Hulu, Gandi, and Mulyana 2025). Sustainable tourism practices face challenges in finding a balance between economic growth and environmental protection, as seen in the water scarcity in Bali and environmental degradation on small islands (Triyono et al. 2024).

This study aims to identify the latest trends in future Indonesian tourism research and to explore the challenges and policies facing the sector. By understanding the policy challenges and emerging trends, it is hoped that this study can provide a more comprehensive picture of how Indonesian tourism policies can adapt to encourage the development of a sustainable tourism sector that is responsive to the needs of a dynamic global market. This study will answer three main research questions: RQ1: What are the future trends in Indonesian tourism research? RQ2: What are the challenges and policies in Indonesian tourism and how do these affect Indonesian tourism development? A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is an important method used to comprehensively analyze and synthesize existing research bodies, providing a structured approach to understanding trends, challenges, and opportunities in a particular field (Singh, Kumar, and Dana 2025; Surbakti et al. 2025).

B. Methods

This study was conducted using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. The primary objective of SLR is to identify all empirical evidence that meets the established article selection criteria to answer the proposed research question or hypothesis (Moher et al. 2009). This is because SLR requires an explicit and structured approach to

searching and evaluating evidence, allowing for in-depth analysis of the information. In this study, the PRISMA flowchart recommended for systematic reviews and meta-analyses was also used as part of the selection process for articles relevant to the formulated research question (Moher et al. 2015; Page et al. 2021). The four stages in the article selection process based on the PRISMA diagram include identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and selection of articles for inclusion in this SLR study (Page et al. 2021). Therefore, this SLR study encompasses five main elements in processing the obtained articles: search strategy, selection criteria, selection procedures, data collection, and data analysis.

This section describes the methodology used in the study, which integrates a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and content analysis to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the research topic. The research process included establishing inclusion and exclusion criteria, as described below. Furthermore, the search strategy was conducted using Scopus, chosen for its broad coverage and reliability in social science and education research.

The inclusion criteria for this review were as follows: (1) articles published up to October 28, 2025, (2) publications in English, and (3) publications focusing on the topic of public policy on tourism education in Indonesia, (4) publication type open access, (5) document type is final article, (6) country/territory Indonesia. Bibliometric analysis was conducted using VOSViewer to map bibliographic data, analyze citation networks, examine collaborations between authors, and identify frequently occurring keywords. The combination of these elements provides an overview of the intellectual structure and dynamics within the research field. By integrating bibliometric analysis and systematic reviews, this approach helps researchers organize empirical findings and map the development of research activities. In addition, this approach is also useful for identifying key contributions and emerging trends in the field (Ni and Abdullah 2025). The integration of these two approaches provides a comprehensive understanding of the research landscape (Musman et al. 2025).

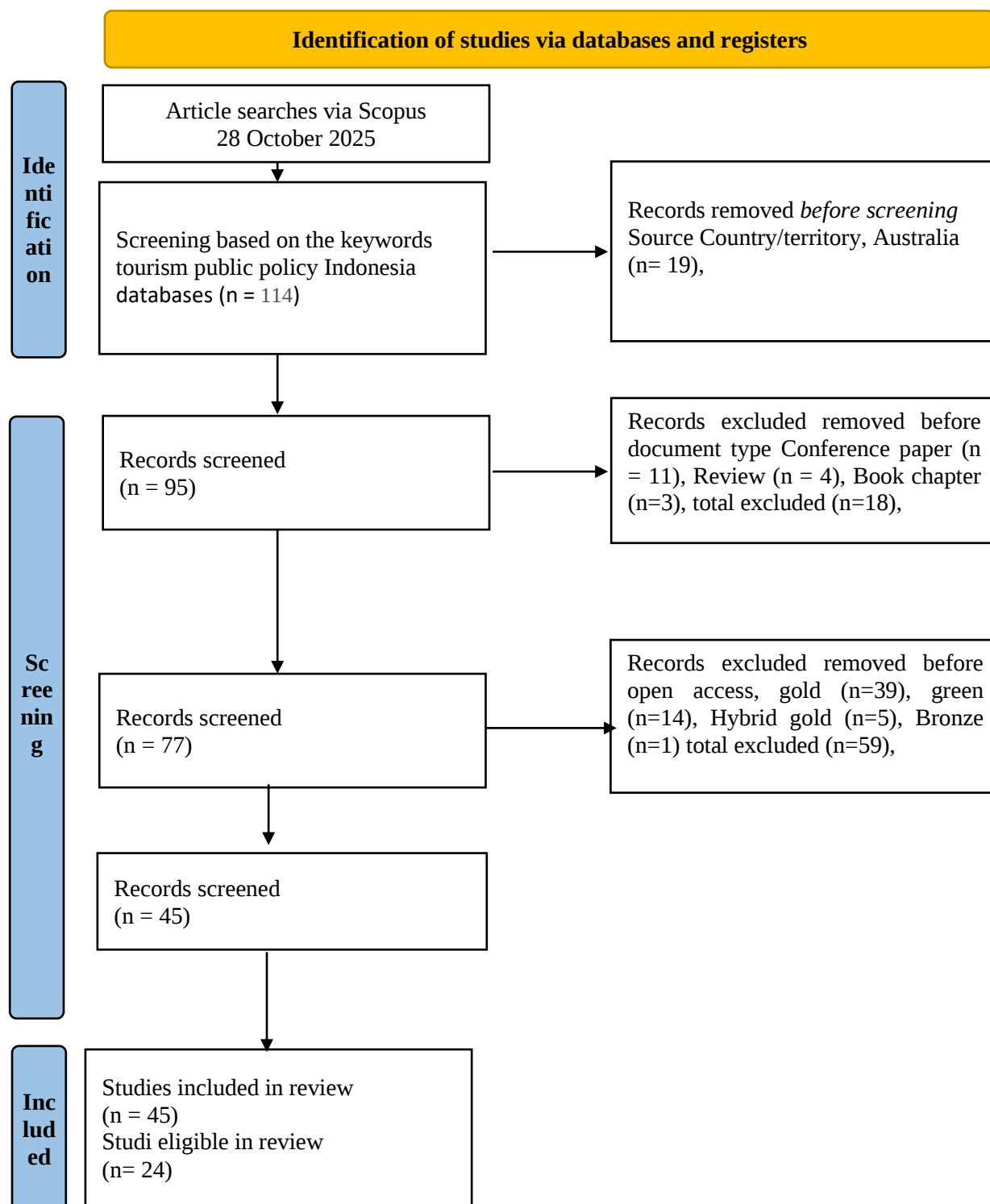


Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram of the Article Selection Process Flow

The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) diagram above illustrates the detailed flow in selecting articles for systematic research conducted on October 28, 2025. This process aims to filter and select relevant articles based on the keyword "tourism public policy Indonesia" in the Scopus database, with a focus on the publication of articles that meet certain research criteria.

The first step in this process was identifying articles from the Scopus database. At this stage, a total of 114 articles were found using relevant keywords. However, several articles were immediately excluded from the list based on specific criteria, including those originating from regions of Australia irrelevant to the research's geographic focus, reducing the total number of articles to 95.

Next, a screening process was conducted on the identified articles based on document type. At this stage, articles in the conference paper (11 articles), review (4 articles), and book chapter (3 articles) categories were excluded because they did not meet the established research criteria. After this removal, the number of articles remaining for further screening was 77. The next process was to screen the articles based on open access, which is an important criterion in this study. Articles that did not meet the requirements for open access, such as articles with paid access (gold), hybrid access (hybrid gold), and limited access (bronze), were excluded. A total of 50 articles that did not meet the requirements for open access were removed, leaving 45 articles for further consideration for the systematic review. In the final stage, the remaining 45 articles were deemed to meet the criteria for further review in this study. After evaluation and screening, 24 articles were finally selected for inclusion in the more in-depth systematic review. These articles were then analyzed to explore trends, challenges, and solutions in Indonesian tourism policy, as well as to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between public policy and tourism management.

The selection process for this article followed a highly systematic and transparent procedure, a hallmark of the PRISMA methodology. With clear and detailed steps, this study ensured that only relevant, high-quality, and accessible articles were selected for further analysis. Through this screening, this study aims to identify and evaluate Indonesian tourism policies more critically and based on robust evidence, and provide useful insights for developing better policies in the future. The analysis of the 24 selected articles is expected to provide a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities in managing Indonesia's tourism sector within the broader context of public policy.

This study focuses on findings from 96 articles in the Scopus database on green economy entrepreneurship. This data was obtained by identifying the number of

articles published, the year of publication, and the journal source. This study will also highlight the most influential elements in green economy entrepreneurship, including authors, affiliations, and countries involved.

C. Results and Discussion

Results

RQ1: What are the theoretical and practical implications of the future research perspective?

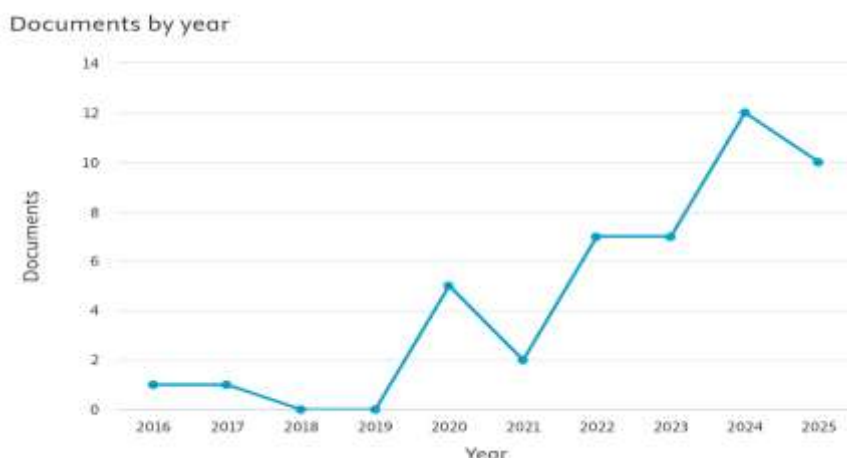


Figure 2. Number of Documents Published 2016-2025

Based on data analysis obtained in Scopus, filtered by Indonesia as the country of origin, an increasing trend in the number of publications related to Indonesian tourism policy can be seen in recent years. From 2016 to 2019, the number of published documents was very limited, with almost no publications detected in 2017 and 2018, indicating that research on Indonesian tourism policy was still very minimal during that period. However, from 2020 to 2022, a significant surge in the number of publications was observed, particularly in 2021, indicating that this topic is beginning to receive greater attention in the academic world, along with the increasing focus on the recovery of the tourism sector after the COVID-19 pandemic.

From 2023 to 2025, although the number of publications decreased slightly, a steady upward trend was still observed, with a peak in 2024. This indicates that despite the slight decline, Indonesian tourism policy remains an important focus of academic

research, particularly regarding the development and recovery of the tourism sector post-pandemic and the challenges faced by the government in managing the industry. Overall, these findings indicate that Indonesian tourism policy has become a growing topic, with greater attention beginning in 2020, likely due to global events affecting the tourism sector and changes in social and economic dynamics in Indonesia.

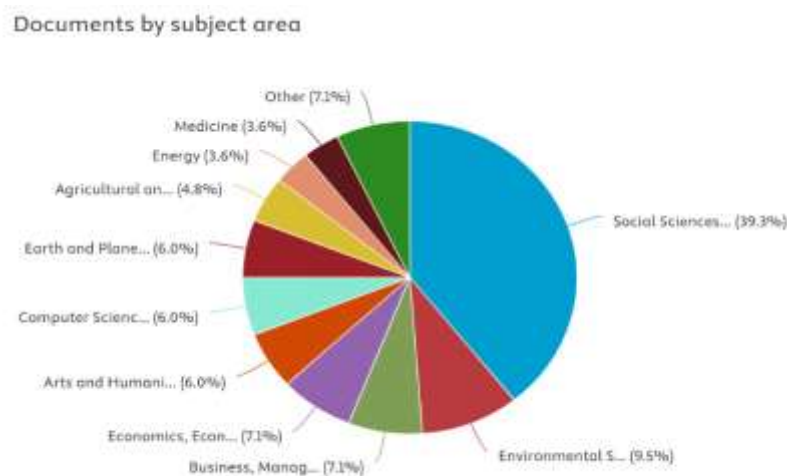


Figure 3 Subject of Publication Area Document

Based on the graph presented, this data shows the distribution of documents published in Scopus. Of the total documents analyzed, the majority focused on social sciences, accounting for approximately 39.3% of the total. This indicates that the majority of research on Indonesian tourism policy tends to be social, involving analysis of policy, socioeconomics, and its impact on society.

The Environmental Sciences sector followed with 9.5%, indicating a focus on environmental impact and sustainability in Indonesian tourism policy. Meanwhile, the Business, Management, and Economics and Econometrics sectors each contributed 7.1%, indicating the presence of research on economic and managerial aspects of tourism policy. Arts and Humanities, Computer Science, and Earth and Planetary Sciences also contributed 6%, indicating studies that combine technology and the arts in tourism development. Other fields, such as Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Energy, and Medicine, contributed smaller percentages, at 4.8%, 3.6%, and 3.6%, respectively, indicating that while research related to health, energy, and agriculture exists, they are not as prominent as the social and environmental sectors in Indonesian tourism policy research. Overall, this graph demonstrates the dominance of the Social

Sciences in research on Indonesian tourism policy, with a growing focus on sustainability and natural resource management issues.

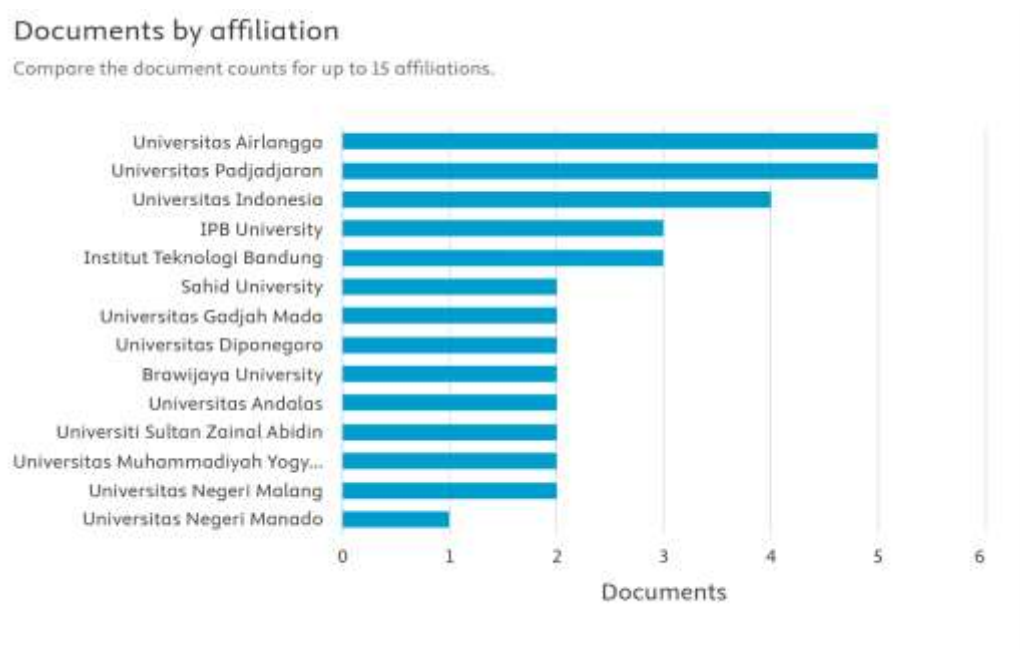


Figure 4. Documents Based on 15 Campus Affiliations in Indonesia

The graph below shows that the data shows the number of documents published in Scopus, reflecting the top 15 Indonesian universities affiliated with these publications. Airlangga University, Padjadjaran University, and the University of Indonesia occupy the top positions, each with more than three publications, indicating that these three universities have made significant contributions to Indonesian tourism policy research. IPB University and the Bandung Institute of Technology also made significant contributions, albeit at slightly lower rates.

Other universities contributing to this research include Sahid University, Gadjah Mada University, and Diponegoro University, each of which contributed one or two papers. The contributions from these universities demonstrate the diversity of educational institutions involved in the study of tourism policy in Indonesia, encompassing disciplines such as social sciences, economics, management, and public policy.

This study demonstrates that Indonesian tourism policy research is dominated by major Indonesian universities with active social science and management departments, while universities with smaller contributions may show potential for growth in this topic. This

diversity of affiliations also indicates that this topic attracts attention from various scientific fields, with a primary focus on social and economic-based research. As a professor in SLR research, I analyze that the involvement of leading universities demonstrates a consistency of interest in tourism policy, but there is still room for increased cross-disciplinary collaboration to gain more comprehensive insights into the issues facing the Indonesian tourism sector.

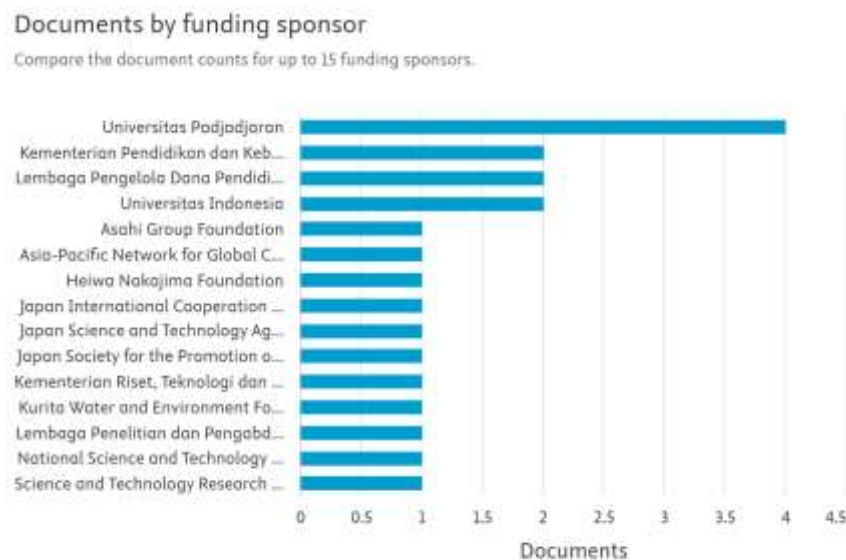


Figure 5. Distribution of Documents Based on Funding Sponsor

Based on the graph presented, funding sponsor data for each study is presented. This graph provides information on the top 15 funding sponsors supporting research on the topic. Padjadjaran University emerged as the main sponsor with significant funding contributions, followed by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Education Fund Management Institute, which also demonstrates a significant role in supporting research related to tourism policy in Indonesia. The University of Indonesia followed as a funding sponsor, contributing to funding several studies in this field. Several international sponsors, such as the Asahi Group Foundation, the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, and various related institutions from Japan, including the Japan International Cooperation Agency and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, also appeared to provide significant funding contributions. This indicates that although domestic funding is very dominant, there is also support from international institutions, reflecting global attention to Indonesian tourism policy, especially in the context of sustainability and international collaboration.

The dominance of Padjadjaran University as a funding sponsor indicates a strong initiative by Indonesian academic institutions to fund research focused on tourism policy. Furthermore, contributions from government agencies such as the Ministry of Education and Culture and international organizations demonstrate that Indonesian tourism policy has global relevance, attracting attention from various sectors, both domestic and international. For further research, it would be useful to explore how these funding relationships influence the direction and focus of research, and whether there is a tendency to fund certain topics that better align with national or international policy priorities.

Based on the analysis in Figure 8 below conducted using VOSviewer, a number of key keywords in green economy entrepreneurship and sustainable development research show different frequencies of occurrence and strength of relationships. The keywords entrepreneur were recorded as appearing (38), green economy (37), sustainability (29), sustainable development (26), Innovation (21), entrepreneurship (17), environmental economics (12), green entrepreneurship (16), small and medium-sized enterprise (7) these numbers indicate important links with the main concepts in this study. These numbers illustrate how frequently keywords appear in the analyzed literature and how strong the relationships between these topics are, which provides an in-depth overview of frequently discussed themes and their relevance in green economy entrepreneurship and sustainable development research.

Table. 1 Keywords by Author

Selected	Keyword	Occurrences	Total link strength
☒	tourism	6	5.00
☒	sustainable tourism	4	3.00
☒	economic growth	4	2.00
☒	ecotourism	3	2.00
☒	indonesia	5	2.00
☒	policy	2	2.00
☒	public policy	2	2.00
☒	covid-19	3	1.00
☒	cultural heritage	2	1.00
☒	halal tourism	2	1.00
☒	new normal era	2	1.00
☒	public welfare	3	1.00
☒	sustainable development	2	1.00
☒	tourism planning and policy	2	1.00
☒	willingness to pay	2	0.00

VOSviewer software output results

Table 1, based on this data, "tourism" is the most dominant keyword with 6 occurrences and a total link strength of 5, indicating that tourism is a central theme in this study. Furthermore, sustainable tourism (4 occurrences, link strength 3) and economic growth (4 occurrences) are other key focuses, indicating that sustainability issues and tourism's contribution to economic growth are a major concern in this study.

The national context is reflected in the five appearances of Indonesia, indicating that this research focuses more on case studies in Indonesia. Public policy is also a significant topic, with policy and public policy each appearing twice and having a similar link strength (link strength 2), although not as strong as sustainability and economics. Furthermore, keywords related to the impact of the pandemic, such as COVID-19, new normal era, and public welfare, indicate attention to the significant changes occurring in the tourism sector due to the pandemic. Niche topics such as halal tourism, cultural heritage, and willingness to pay also appear, indicating that this research engages with specific issues such as religious tourism, cultural heritage preservation, and tourists' attitudes toward the economic value they pay for tourism experiences. Overall, this analysis reflects that research on Indonesian tourism policy focuses on sustainability, post-COVID-19 resilience, and the relationship between public policy and economic growth, with room for further research on policy evaluation and cross-sector collaboration in developing a sustainable tourism sector in Indonesia.

Discussion

Future tourism research trends in Indonesia will point to a comprehensive transformation in digitalization, sustainability, crisis resilience, collaboration-based policies, and local community empowerment. These developments not only reflect changing tourist behavior post-pandemic but also point to new directions for more adaptive and inclusive destination management.

First, digitalization and the use of technology in the tourism sector will become a major trend. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of digital media as a primary means of tourism promotion. Local governments, such as Bogor Regency, have used Instagram to promote tourist destinations, emphasizing CHSE (Cleanliness, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability) standards to ensure safety and hygiene for tourists (Maulin Purwaningwulan and Ramdan 2022). In this context, future research will increasingly explore how technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and Big Data can be leveraged to enrich tourism experiences, analyze

tourist preferences, and optimize marketing strategies. Digital technology is also expected to assist in tourism destination data management, integrated reservation systems, and monitoring the environmental impact of tourism.

Second, sustainability and green tourism will continue to be central topics in Indonesian tourism research. Indonesia boasts vast natural and cultural riches, but its tourism management still faces significant challenges such as environmental degradation, lack of public awareness, and weak regulatory policies (Surgawati et al. 2025). Therefore, future research will emphasize the importance of green tourism, which combines technological innovation with environmentally friendly practices. This study will also highlight policies that encourage synergy between the government, businesses, and communities to create sustainable tourism. As suggested by (Ariyani and Fauzi 2022), sustainable tourism development must be based on a participatory approach, in which local communities play an active role in the planning and implementation of tourism policies. This approach not only strengthens social aspects but also ensures economic and ecological sustainability in destination areas.

Third, research on tourism resilience to crises will become increasingly important. The impact of the pandemic has demonstrated that the tourism sector is one of the most vulnerable to global disruptions. However, research by Ariyani and Fauzi (2024) shows that rural tourism destinations in Indonesia demonstrate remarkable resilience. Using the Adjusted Mazziotta-Pareto Index (AMPI), they found that rural tourism was able to recover more quickly thanks to social strengths, local economic innovation, and local government support. Future research will develop a more comprehensive tourism resilience model that takes into account socioeconomic factors, adaptive capacity, and risk mitigation strategies for natural disasters and global health crises.

Fourth, the role of government and integrative policies in tourism development will be the focus of future research. Good tourism management requires cross-sector coordination and collaborative governance between the government, business, and the community. The Kedung Ombo case study by Ariyani and Fauzi (2024) shows that integrated and well-governed policies can accelerate regional economic development while maintaining environmental sustainability. Future research will further highlight how public policies can be aligned with sustainable tourism practices and how the government can create a policy ecosystem that supports smart tourism and ecotourism. Furthermore, research will lead to the development of a national policy framework that is more adaptive to global changes such as the digitalization of the economy and the transition to green tourism.

Fifth, local community empowerment and community-based tourism (CBT) will be further strengthened. Research shows that local community involvement in tourism management can improve well-being and create a sense of ownership of tourist destinations (Sumarmi, Kurniawati, and Aliman 2020). This approach also helps create a balance between economic interests and environmental preservation. In the future, research will focus on how the CBT model can be integrated with digital and green tourism concepts, so that communities become not only beneficiaries but also key actors in tourism innovation.

In addition to these five key trends, future research will likely also address cross-cutting issues such as social justice in tourism, innovation in local culture-based tourism, and the impact of climate change on tourist destinations in Indonesia. Researchers will increasingly employ multidisciplinary approaches, combining economic, social, technological, and environmental perspectives to develop inclusive and resilient tourism management models.

Indonesian tourism faces various challenges in developing this sector. One of the main challenges is dependence on non-renewable natural resources, as noted in their article on digital promotion of local tourist destinations. This dependence makes it vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, which could threaten the future sustainability of the tourism industry (Maulin Purwaningwulan and Ramdan 2022). Furthermore, waste management at tourist destinations is also a major challenge, given the large amount of waste generated by tourist activities, especially in popular destinations like Bali and Lombok (Kurniawan et al. 2025). With the increasing number of visitors, waste and waste management are key issues that need to be addressed to maintain environmental quality.

Furthermore, infrastructure and accessibility issues also pose significant challenges. Although Indonesia is rich in tourist destinations, many regions still face limitations in basic infrastructure, such as adequate transportation and accommodation. Research suggests that the lack of supporting infrastructure in remote areas hampers the potential of the tourism sector, reduces the attractiveness of destinations, and slows economic growth in those areas (Sawir et al. 2024).

The Indonesian government has implemented several policies to support sustainable tourism development. One prominent policy is the implementation of halal tourism as a strategy to attract Muslim tourists, as explained by (Irfan, Rosyid, and Marjuni 2025). Halal tourism in Indonesia not only focuses on Muslim-friendly facilities but also aims to boost the regional economy through the development of tourism products based on local religious and cultural values (Irfan & Rosyid, 2025). This policy also encourages

collaboration between the public and private sectors to provide facilities that meet the needs of Muslim tourists, while simultaneously introducing Indonesian tourism products to the global market.

The government has also promoted community-based tourism as part of its local empowerment policy. Through this model, the government hopes to create tourism that is not only economically but also socially beneficial, by involving communities in the management of tourist destinations. This is explained by the emphasis on the importance of active community participation in every stage of tourism project planning and implementation to ensure sustainable benefits. Implementation of this policy is expected to improve the welfare of local communities while preserving cultural and environmental sustainability.

Government policies, such as the promotion of halal tourism and the development of community-based tourism, have shown a positive impact on Indonesia's tourism sector. These policies have helped increase the number of tourist visits, both domestic and international, which has a direct impact on tourism sector revenues and the local economy. Furthermore, these policies have strengthened Indonesia's competitiveness in the international market, particularly in the rapidly growing halal tourism market (Santoso et al. 2025).

However, challenges in implementing this policy remain. According to research by Prasojo et al. (2023), although halal tourism policies have shown great potential, there are still obstacles in terms of certification standards and service quality that must be met by tourism industry players to ensure they optimally meet the needs of the halal market (Prasojo et al., 2023). Furthermore, while developing community-based tourism can improve local welfare, the success of this policy depends heavily on the commitment and capacity of local managers, as well as support from local governments (Prasojo et al., 2023).

The limitation of this study lies in the use of Scopus as the primary database, which, while offering a wide scope and high-quality journals, does not include relevant local journals, especially those focusing on Indonesian tourism policy. This may lead to the omission of important literature published in local or regional journals not indexed by Scopus. To address this limitation, future research is recommended to complement the search by utilizing additional data sources such as Google Scholar, which has a broader coverage and includes various journals not indexed by Scopus. By combining these two sources, future studies can provide a more comprehensive understanding of Indonesian tourism policy, identifying both global trends and local challenges that might be overlooked in Scopus-based analysis alone.

D. Conclusion

Overall, the future of tourism research in Indonesia will move towards the integration of technology, sustainability, and human empowerment. This sector will become a laboratory for policy innovation that balances economic growth with natural and cultural preservation. With the support of the government, academia, and the community, Indonesian tourism has great potential to become a global example in building a smart, green, and socially just tourism system. The main challenges facing Indonesian tourism development include a lack of adequate infrastructure, unequal management of natural resources, and low public awareness of the importance of sustainability. However, government policies that support digitalization, sustainability, and local community empowerment offer significant opportunities to address these challenges. Policies that promote digitalization, sustainability, and a community-based approach have significant potential to improve Indonesia's tourism sector in the future. Through these policies, Indonesia can build a more inclusive and sustainable tourism sector capable of facing future global challenges.

E. Acknowledgement

We thank all parties who supported us in this article.

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