

Escape to the Edge: A Systematic Review of Island Tourism*

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Abstract: Island tourism is currently showing a thriving development trend, as the demand for vacation and leisure travel continues to increase, making island tourism a popular choice. This study aims to a systematic review focusing on quantitative analysis current research on island tourism using the Web of Science citation database. The research covers 32 years and visualizes keyword co-occurrence, clustering, publication years, etc., through software to obtain a knowledge map of authors, disciplines involved, and more. Additionally, a detailed analysis of the current status of domestic and international island tourism is conducted through knowledge maps such as keyword co-occurrence and clustering. The study found that there are fragmentation issues in island tourism research, with a lack of systematic frameworks and guiding mechanisms. Current research mainly focuses on aspects such as island tourism resources and environments, tourist relationships, and island residents' perceptions, but lacks the construction of a framework for sustainable development of island tourism on a comparative basis. The results of this study will help reveal the hotspots and trends in island tourism research, providing important references for the academic community and tourism industry, and promoting further development and research in the field of island tourism.

Keywords: Island tourism; Systematic literature review; Web of Science

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邁向邊緣：海島旅遊的系統性文獻回顧

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摘要：當前，海島旅遊正呈現蓬勃發展的趨勢，隨著度假休閒旅遊需求持續增長，海島旅遊成為熱門選擇。本研究旨在利用 Web of Science 引文數據庫，對海島旅遊研究進行以定量分析為核心的系統性綜述。研究涵蓋 32 年跨度，通過軟件可視化關鍵詞共現、聚類、發表年份等，獲取作者、涉及學科等知識圖譜；同時，通過關鍵詞共現與聚類等知識圖譜，對國內外海島旅遊研究現狀進行細緻分析。研究發現，海島旅遊研究存在碎片化問題，缺乏系統性框架與指導機制。當前研究主要聚焦於海島旅遊資源與環境、遊客關係、島嶼居民感知等方面，但缺乏基於比較視角的海島旅遊可持續發展框架構建。本研究結果有助於揭示海島旅遊研究的熱點與趨勢，為學術界與旅遊業提供重要參考，推動海島旅遊領域的進一步發展與研究。

關鍵詞：海島旅遊、系統性文獻回顧、Web of Science

1. Introduction

1.1 Current status of island tourism research and development

With over 180,000 islands worldwide, each possessing unique political, socio-economic, and natural backgrounds,¹ island tourism has emerged as a significant contributor to local development. Compared to mainland destinations, island tourism is often regarded as distinct and enchanting,² making islands highly attractive to tourists. Tourism development has become an integral part of macroeconomic objectives for most policymakers, governments, and private individuals/institutions among others.³

Compared to land-based tourism, island tourism has significant differences. Firstly, based on the definition of islands, according to the Island Protection Act enacted in our country, islands are defined as land areas surrounded by sea on all sides and above the water level during high tide, including inhabited and uninhabited islands. Although island tourism in our country is developing rapidly, there are not many definitions of island tourism. In the relevant domestic literature, few documents clearly define island tourism.⁴ Many scholars often refer to the basic definition of islands given by Lu Kun when defining island tourism.⁵ He believes that island tourism is a continuously developing tourism activity that can meet tourism needs, including specific island geographical spaces, and unique natural and cultural tourism resources, and can promote the social, cultural, and economic development of islands. The distinctive appeal of island destinations stems from their

¹ Tiago, Teresa, Sandra Dias Faria, João Luís Cogumbreiro, João Pedro Couto, and Flávio Tiago, "Different Shades of Green on Small Islands," *Island Studies Journal* 11. 2 (2016): 601-618.

² Nunkoo, R., & Gursoy, D, "Residents' Support for Tourism: An Identity Perspective," *Annals of Tourism Research* 39.1(2012): 243-268.

³ Roudi, S., Arasli, H., & Akadiri, S. S, "New Insights Into an Old Issue-examining the Influence of Tourism on Economic Growth: Evidence from Selected Small Island Developing States," *Current Issues in Tourism*, 22.11(2019): 1280-1300.

⁴ Apostolopoulos, Y., & Gayle, D. J, "Island Tourism and Sustainable Development: Caribbean, Pacific, and Mediterranean Experiences," *Bloomsbury Publishing USA* (2002).

⁵ Lu, Kun, "Research on Island Tourism Development in Shandong Province" (Doctoral dissertation, Qingdao: Master's Thesis, Qingdao University, 2004).

weather conditions, climate, and awe-inspiring landscapes, which establish a captivating and sought-after contrast to the mainland.

Historically, the islands primarily relied on agriculture, fisheries, and handicrafts for economic self-sufficiency.⁶ The limitations of these resources have placed greater pressure on the tourism industry, leading to its contribution to island development. According to the “Global Island Tourism Destination Competitiveness Ranking Research Report (2019),” out of the 31 countries and regions where tourism accounts for over 20% of GDP, 21 are composed of islands, accounting for approximately 67.7% of the total.⁷ The rapid development of island tourism not only promotes socio-economic progress in island regions but also becomes a new growth point for the global tourism industry.

At the same time, islands, due to their limited resources and fragile environment, suffer from degradation as island tourism develops.⁸ In comparison to the mainland, island ecosystems are relatively vulnerable. Scholars have highlighted the consequences of tourism development on islands. As a result, many researchers have dedicated their efforts to the study of island tourism, focusing on areas such as island tourism resources and development, development strategies, market research, and sustainable development. In recent years, scholars have also shown interest in the ecological security of island tourism and the interaction between island and inland tourism spaces.⁹ This prompts us to analyze the current state of island tourism research and explore future research directions in this field.

⁶ Markwick, M. C, “Tourism and the Development of Handicraft Production in the Maltese Islands,” *Tourist Geography*, 3 (2001): 29-51.

⁷ Zhou, Bin, Xu, Jinming, Yu, Hu, and Jin, Jianying, “Research Progress and Implications of Island Tourism: An Analysis of International English Journal Articles,” *Chinese Ecotourism* 11.4 (2021): 548-566.

⁸ Harrison, David, “Tourism and the Less Developed World: Issues and Case Studies,” *Cabi Publishing* (2001).

⁹ Xiaobin, M., Biao, S., Guolin, H., Xing, Z., and Li, L, “Evaluation and Spatial Effects of Tourism Ecological Security in the Yangtze River Delta,” *Ecological Indicators* 131 (2021): 108-190.

1.2 Research reasons, objectives and significance

1.2.1 Research reasons and the goal of island tourism literature review

To cope with the rapid development of island tourism and better harness it as an emerging economic growth driver, as well as gain a better understanding of the overall characteristics, important issues, and frontier areas of island tourism research,¹⁰ this study aims to review island tourism and determine the current literature's insights on this topic. It attempts to quantitatively explore of island tourism through information visualization analysis, and reviews the literature on island tourism, including research hotspots and trends in international islands. Specifically, this study reviews the literature on island tourism over the past 30 years to understand the development history and trends of this field, and to identify what is known and what needs further exploration in island tourism research.¹¹ To better understand the current situation and existing issues of island tourism, to organize existing research findings on island tourism, and to provide references and guidance for future research, helping researchers identify research trends and hot issues in island tourism that are conducive to the economic and social development of certain regions, and providing relevant research evidence for policymakers to guide the formulation and implementation of policies.

The review conducts visualization analysis of island tourism research from several aspects, such as co-occurrence of keywords, clustering, and publication years, to obtain knowledge maps of authors, and disciplines involved, as well as keyword co-occurrence and clustering. Furthermore, the study utilizes qualitative visual analysis to analyze the present state of island tourism on both domestic and international levels. Through the analysis, this study discovers that island tourism research exhibits significant phased characteristics, which can be divided into three stages: embryonic, exploratory, and development. The existing research on island tourism is rich in achievements, with diverse

¹⁰ Zhou, Bin, Xu, Jinming, Yu, Hu, and Jin, Jianying, "Research Progress and Implications of Island Tourism: An Analysis of International English Journal Articles," (2021): 548-566.

¹¹ Sharpley, R, "Island Tourism or Tourism on Islands?" *Tourism Recreation Research* 37.2 (2012): 167-172.

research areas and disciplines involved, but theoretical research noticeably lags behind practice, and the breadth and depth of research are insufficient. Case studies are predominant, research methods are mostly qualitative, and they mainly focus on regions with abundant tourism resources and more mature tourism development. By analyzing the identified issues, this study provides a better research agenda for the future.

1.2.2 Significance of island tourism literature review

The systematic review and analysis of the research outcomes on island tourism, identifying knowledge clusters in island tourism research, can provide an overall understanding of the research status, hotspots, and trends. This literature review holds three significant implications. Firstly, gaining a comprehensive understanding of the inherent rationale behind the development of island tourism research contributes to the enhancement of research on island tourism and its underlying theories. Secondly, exploring the frontiers of island tourism research contributes to advancing in-depth research and the overall development of island tourism. Thirdly, investigating the evolutionary path of island tourism research aids in promoting the theoretical research and practical development of island tourism globally.

2. Methodology

2.1 The Method - Systematic Quantitative Literature Review (SLR)

Systematic review papers differ from traditional narrative reviews in the way they provide objective, replicable, systematic, and comprehensive coverage of a defined area.¹² SLR requires meticulous documentation of the procedures used to survey the literature and to select papers such that another researcher can replicate it.¹³ The advantage of this type

¹² Weed, Mike, "Sports Tourism Research 2000-2004: A Systematic Review of Knowledge and a Meta-Evaluation of Methods," *Journal of Sport & Tourism* 11.1 (2006): 5-30.

¹³ Pickering, Catherine, and Jason Byrne, "The Benefits of Publishing Systematic Quantitative Literature Reviews for Phd Candidates and Other Early-Career Researchers," *Higher Education Research &*

of review is that similar results should be obtained if the procedure is repeated.

Literature metrics is a field that employs mathematical and statistical techniques to assess and forecast the present state and future trends of science and technology, utilizing various quantitative measures derived from literature. It serves as an effective tool for identifying authors, literature, and their interconnections. In this paper, we use COOC software to visualize and analyze island tourism research in terms of co-occurrence, clustering, and chronology of keywords to obtain knowledge maps of authors and disciplines involved, as well as co-occurrence and clustering of keywords. The knowledge map of authors is used to show the core authors in the field of island tourism development research; the keyword co-occurrences are utilized to investigate the research hotspots in the domain of island tourism development and unveil shifts in the developmental trajectory of the research frontier within a given timeframe.

2.2 The Systematic Review Data Source and Data Collection

The data for this study were collected from the Web of Science database, which is globally recognized as the largest and most comprehensive repository of academic information resources. It encompasses a wide range of disciplines and boasts the largest storage capacity among similar databases worldwide.

In the papers where “island” and “tourism” related words were located within two words from each other in the text were selected and analyzed, as described below. To ensure the accuracy of the literature, after replacing synonyms, the remaining 1184 papers were used as the sample for analysis, which was used to analyze the research hotspots and development trends of island tourism in China and abroad.

During the data collection process, a keyword search methodology was employed, wherein a set of predefined key terms was carefully chosen as “island,” “tourism,” “island tourism,” and “systematic literature review,” by adapting the research approach of Tasci et al.¹⁴ Consequently, a title-based keyword search was conducted, taking into account

Development 33. 3 (2014): 534-48.

¹⁴ Tasci, Kenan, and Halim Tatli, “Short and Long-Term Correlation of Social Security Expenditure and

multiple inclusion and exclusion criteria for the database search. Excluded from the review were book reviews, reports, research in brief, commentary papers, research letters, short communications, viewpoints, and discussion papers. Only fully peer-reviewed articles from hospitality and tourism journals, written in English, were considered for the analysis process.

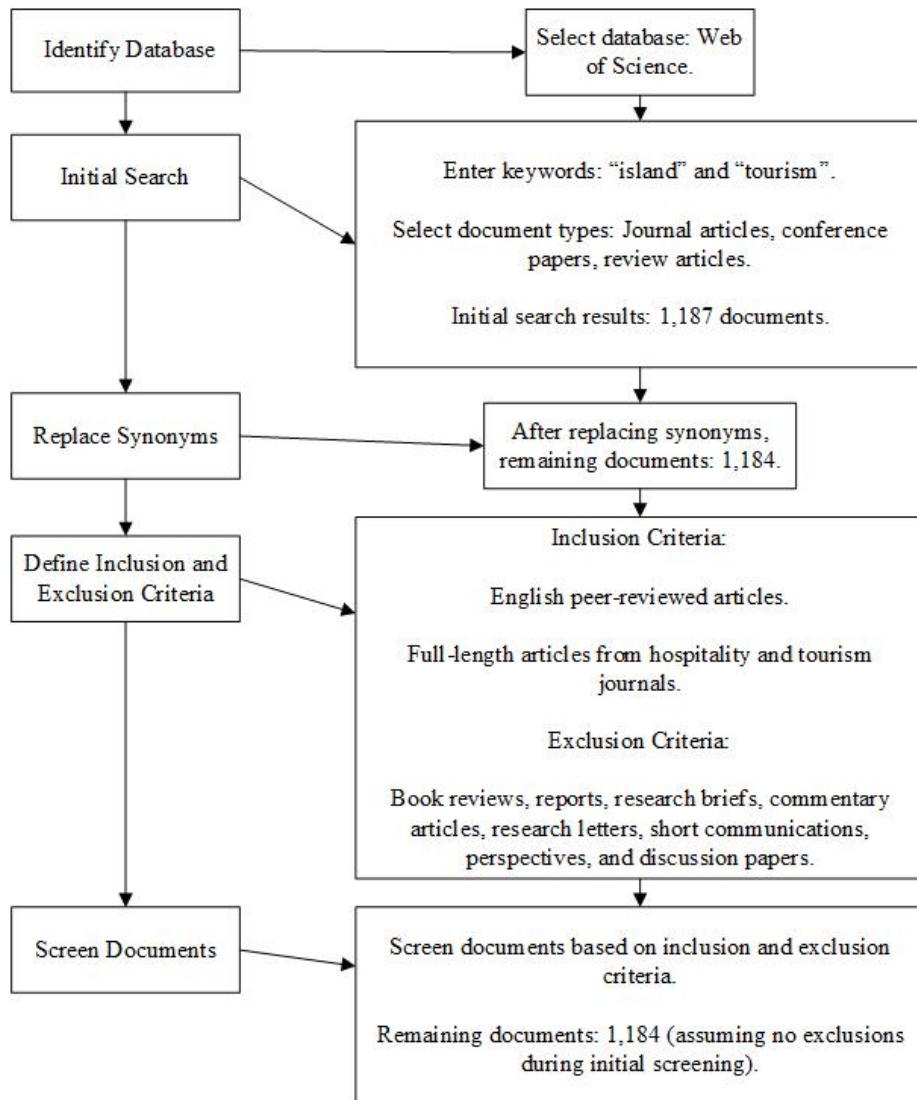


Figure 1. Data Source and Data Collection Flowchart

2.3 Data analysis

Subsequently, the collected data from the 1,184 journal articles were analyzed by inputting them into an Excel spreadsheet. The following data elements were standardized during this process:

Authors: The names of authors were standardized to ensure consistency, as some authors may have used different name variations in their published papers.

Author affiliations: We standardized the affiliations of authors, which involved removing articles like ‘the’ from the names of certain universities. In rare cases where errors were identified, corrections were made to the institution’s name.

By standardizing author names and affiliations, we aimed to ensure accuracy and uniformity in the dataset for further analysis. Year of publication; Title of the paper; Title of the journal; Keywords: all keywords as provided by the authors in the journal articles.

Using the collected spreadsheet data, a descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the evolution of the field over the years and identify the primary institutions of the principal authors, as well as the journals that publish articles related to the intersection of “island tourism” and “small island tourism”. Additionally, a thematic analysis was undertaken to determine the dominant research themes and topics explored in the selected articles. Conducting a thematic analysis is crucial for achieving the objective of any literature review paper.¹⁵ The second phase of data analysis involved identifying the research topics covered in the 1,158 selected papers by analyzing the text of their abstracts. Following the methodology outlined by Fereday et al.,¹⁶ thematic analysis was employed, which involves a meticulous process of identifying and examining themes by carefully reading and rereading the data. Both inductive and deductive approaches were utilized in this study for the analysis process.

¹⁵ Zhong, Cheng, Yida Deng, Wenbin Hu, Jinli Qiao, Lei Zhang, and Jiujuan Zhang, “A Review of Electrolyte Materials and Compositions for Electrochemical Supercapacitors,” *Chemical Society Reviews* 44.21 (2015): 7484-539.

¹⁶ Fereday, Jennifer, and Eimear Muir-Cochrane, “Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development,” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 5.1 (2006): 80-92.

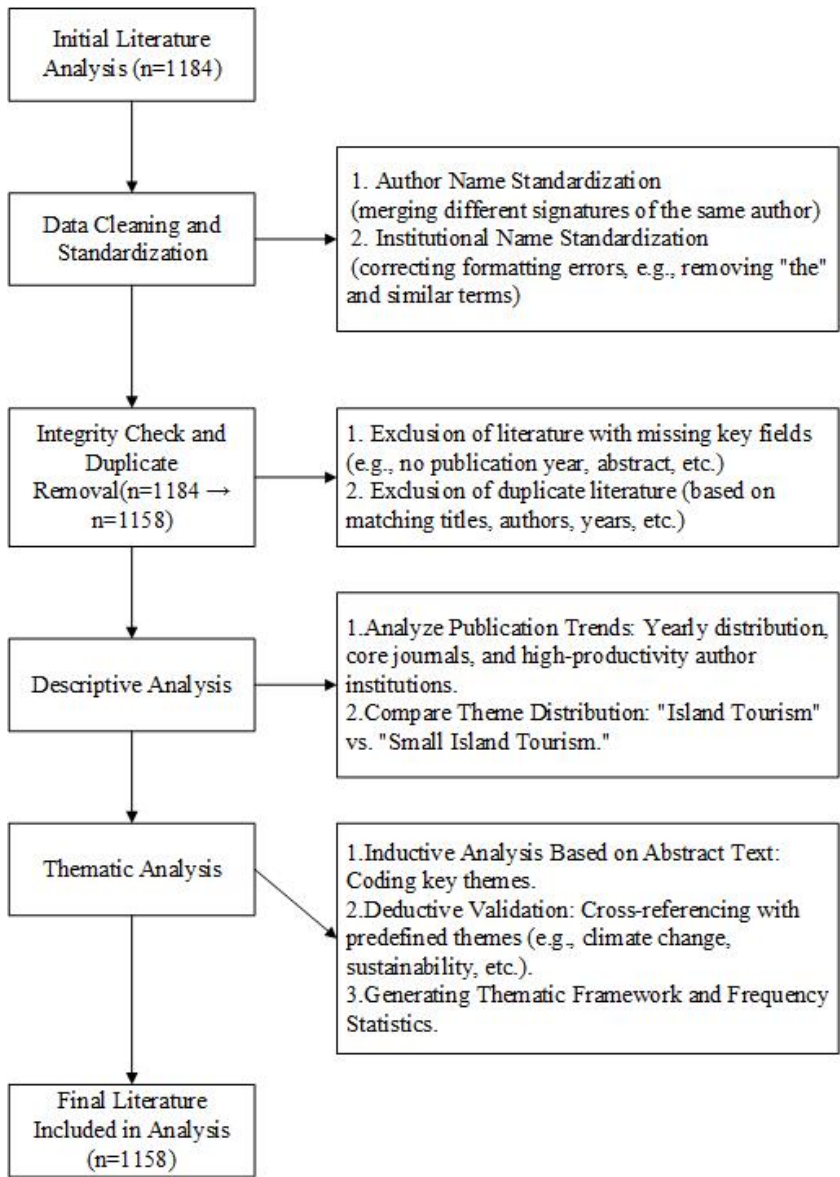


Figure 2. Data analysis Flowchart

3. Review Results and Findings

3.1 Descriptive analysis

The number of publications and the time of publication are both important criteria for the interest of a research field. In this paper, we searched the Web of Science for the subject

term of island tourism; and obtained 1184 papers in total. Figure 3 illustrates the publication count of small island tourism research between 1991 and 2022. The graph reveals a relatively stagnant trend in 2007, followed by a consistent growth period from 2010 to 2021. During this period, the number of journal articles rose steadily, increasing from 51 in 2010 to 131 in 2021. In just 11 years, the annual publication count more than tripled. In this paper, the history of island tourism research is categorized into three distinct stages: the budding stage, the exploration stage, and the development stage.

3.1.1 The Budding Stage (1991-2004)

In the early stage of emergence, island tourism attracted limited attention from scholars, resulting in a scarcity of research outcomes. During this stage, the development of island tourism and vacationing brought about a series of negative impacts on the local ecological environment, such as traffic congestion, freshwater stress, ecological degradation, and biodiversity loss.¹⁷ Research during this period focused on two main aspects: island development and management and the ecological disturbances and responses in island tourism. Qualitative methods dominated the research approach in this period.¹⁸

3.1.2 The Exploration Stage (2005-2010)

As island tourism gradually gained visibility, offering people an escape from the busy and noisy city life, research on island tourism also expanded. Due to the vulnerability of island ecosystems, any damage to the ecological environment can have long-lasting and severe negative impacts. Topics of focus during this period of island tourism research included the environmental pressures brought by a large influx of tourists, response mechanisms of island resources and environment, the relationship between local islanders

¹⁷ Zhou, Bin, Xu, Jinming, Yu, Hu, & Jin, Jianying, "Research Progress and Implications of Island Tourism: A Case Study of International English Journal Articles," (2021): 548-566.

¹⁸ Mcdonach, Kenny, and Paul P Yaneske, "Environmental Management Systems and Sustainable Development," *Environmentalist* 22 (2002): 217-26.

and tourists, and the involvement of island residents in the management of island tourism.¹⁹ In terms of research methods, besides qualitative approaches, quantitative methods gained more application, as seen in the study by Côté- Lussier et al.²⁰

3.1.3 The Development Phase (2011-2019)

During this period, the island tourism industry entered a phase of vigorous development. These findings have prompted leading researchers to focus more on studying island tourism. The research scope became broader, and new areas of focus emerged based on previous studies. International island research focused on topics such as authentic island tourism, geotourism in islands, perception of island tourists and community residents, community participation in island tourism, and island habitat and ecological environment.²¹ It is worth mentioning that the rapid development of island tourism in China has contributed to the increasing number of research papers during this period. Chinese scholars, such as Yang Ying,²² explored the development model of island health tourism in the Zhoushan Archipelago. At the same time, research directions also involved the integration of island tourism with other industries and the impacts generated by island tourism. Wang Ping and others studied the integration of island tourism and agriculture in Zhuhai, while Peng Jing examined the social and cultural impacts of island tourism using Liuzhou Island in Guangxi as an example.²³ During this stage, there was a qualitative leap in research, but most of the articles were still practical and advisory, focusing on the application of regional island tourism resource development, with fewer theoretical studies

¹⁹ Hadwen, Wade L, Angela H Arthington, and Thorsten D Mosisch, "The Impact of Tourism on Dune Lakes on Fraser Island, Australia," *Lakes & Reservoirs: Research & Management* 8.1 (2003): 15-26.

²⁰ Côté-Lussier, Carolyn, Kevin Walby, and Justin Piché, "Covid-19 and Views of Imprisonment in a Sample of Prison Tourists," *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue Canadienne de Sociologie* 59.3 (2022): 412-26.

²¹ Ramkissoon, Haywantee, "Authenticity, Satisfaction, and Place Attachment: A Conceptual Framework for Cultural Tourism in African Island Economies," *Development Southern Africa* 32.3 (2015): 292-302.

²² Yang, Ying, & Guo, "Xu Research on the Development Model of Island Medical Tourism - A Case Study of Zhoushan Islands," *Special Zone Economy* 1 (2017): 108-110.

²³ Wang, Ping, Liu, Chunshan, Lou, Quansheng, & Tang, Yuanfang, "Study on the Integrated Development of Island Tourism and Agriculture in Zhuhai," *Marine Development and Management* 32.10 (2015): 107-110.

on island tourism.

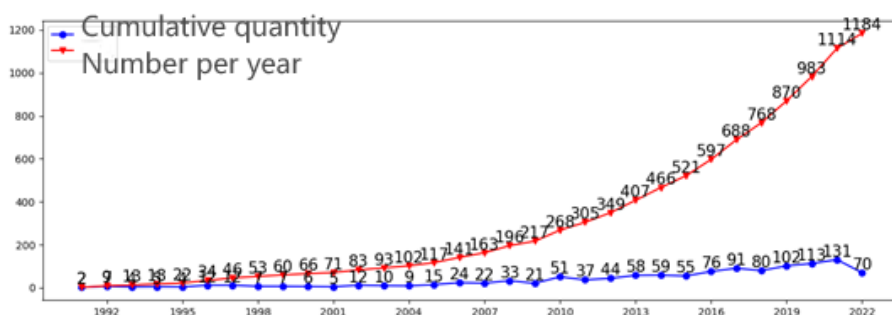


Figure 3. The annual publication count of small island tourism research (1991-2022)

3.2 The visualization analysis

The visualization analysis mapping of the core authors of the literature, as shown in Figure 4, has a total of seven nodes, where the size of the author node is proportional to the keywords and the inter-node connection indicates that the author and the article keywords are the same, and the thickness of the line segment is proportional to the use of keywords among the authors.

Authors who have each published nine times are the most prolific in frequency. They are ALONSO, ABEL DUARTE; SEETANAH,BOOPHEN; ADRIANTOM LUKY; OZAGIT HALE; CROES, ROBERTICO; PATEL, ARVIND; SCHEYVENS REGINA; STAUVERMANN, PETER JOSEF; CORES ROBERTICO. In Figure 4, the names of researchers who have authored a minimum of two publications are presented, the author has the same keyword in the article. From the observation of the community clustering map, we can see that most of the current foreign researchers on island tourism are scattered and do not closely cooperate with each other. The consistency of keywords among the few articles that study island tourism-related topics can indirectly indicate that these articles study similar topics.

In summary, scholars in the field of international island tourism research exhibit relatively loose collaboration, though some studies share similarities in their themes. Strengthening cooperation among researchers in the future could potentially drive more in-

depth and systematic advancements in this field.

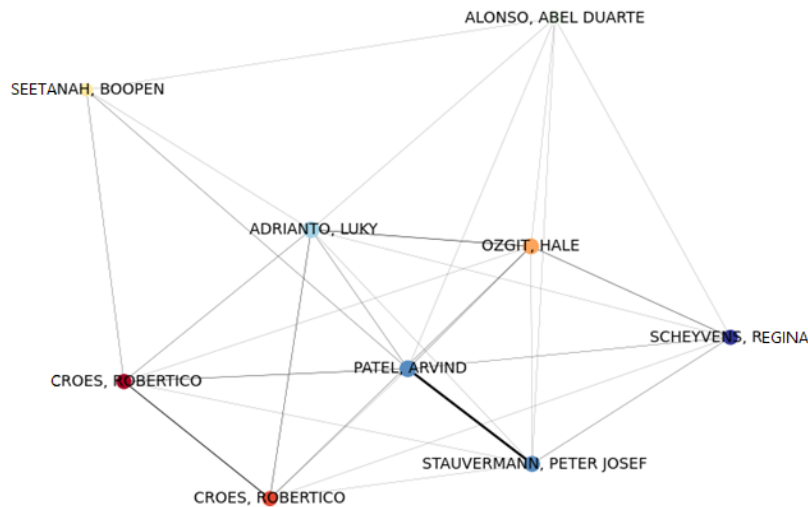


Figure 4. Researchers with at least two publications, the author has the same keyword (1991-2022)

3.3 Author Co-citation Analysis (ACA)

Chen Chaomei believes that the ACA can identify the core authors of a subject area and the strength of the relationships between collaboration and cross-citation.²⁴ ACA identifies the influence of authors in the field of tourism research by extracting author information from the bibliography and constructing an author co-citation network. Identifying academic communities or research schools within a field reveals the academic connections among authors. A higher co-citation frequency indicates a stronger relevance to their research topics. Additionally, it helps to uncover classic authors or significant literature within the domain.

The results of author co-citation in the international island tourism literature in the

²⁴ Chen, Chaomei, Chen, Yue, Hou, Jianhua, & Liang, Yongxia, “CiteSpace II: Identification and Visualization of New Trends and Dynamics in Scientific Literature,” *Journal of the China Society for Scientific and Technical Information*, 3 (2009): 401-421.

last 30 years can be seen in Figures 4 and 5, where the scholar Scheyvens and Momsen²⁵ argues that small islands are constrained by small size, ecological fragility and lack of resources, which seriously undermine the pride and initiative of islanders and limit the achievement of sustainable development goals for islands.

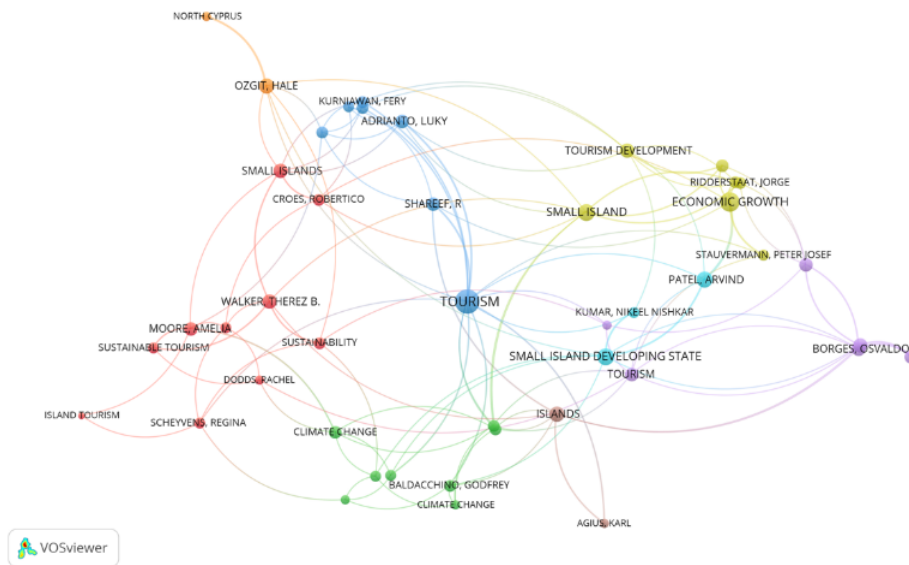


Figure 5. Bimodal Matrix Diagram

Through a comprehensive descriptive analysis of island tourism, it can be concluded that island tourism research has significant stage characteristics, which can be divided into three stages: the budding stage, the exploration stage and the development stage. The research content is broadly related to the development and utilization of islands, ecological disturbance of islands, sustainable development of island tourism, and the relationship between people and places in island tourism;²⁶ the initial research methods of island tourism are mostly qualitative, and theoretical research on island tourism in China is relatively small; most researchers on island tourism abroad are scattered and have not yet

²⁵ Scheyvens, Regina, and Janet Momsen, "Tourism in Small Island States: From Vulnerability to Strengths." *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 16.5 (2008): 491-510.

²⁶ Yeniasır, M., & Gökbulut, B, "Perception and Attitudes of Local People on Sustainable Cultural Tourism on The Islands: The Case of Nicosia," *Sustainability* 10.6 (2018): 1892.

formed close cooperative relationships.

3.4 Content and thematic analysis

3.4.1 Keywords analysis

Keywords are the core and essence of a research paper, providing a highly summarized and condensed representation of the literature topic. The more frequently a keyword appears, the more frequently it appears in the knowledge map, so mapping the keyword co-occurrence knowledge map can help us understand the research hotspots in the field.²⁷ In this study, a co-occurrence knowledge map of keywords was formed through the analysis of COOC and VOSviewer software. Through data preparation, building a co-occurrence matrix, and generating visual maps. According to the data presented in Figure 6, the keyword co-occurrence map of island tourism research contains a total of 40 nodes, usually the larger the network node and word number the higher the frequency of keywords,²⁸ so the frequency of keywords such as tourism, small islands, island tourism, climate change, sustainable tourism and small island development is relatively high. Keywords located in the center of the network are usually the core topics in the field. There are not many isolated nodes in the graph, indicating strong interrelationships between the keywords. Various nodes continuously appear in the graph, indicating the vitality of island tourism research and the high level of interest in island tourism. Various fields demonstrate the diversification and deepening of research topics and directions in island tourism.

Through the analysis of the keyword co-occurrence knowledge graph, the research hotspots and development trends in the field of island tourism can be clearly identified, providing valuable references for further research.

²⁷ Qian, J., Law, R., & Wei, J, "Knowledge Mapping in Travel Website Studies: A Scientometric Review," *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* 19.2 (2019): 192-209.

²⁸ Park, J., & Jeong, E, "Service Quality in Tourism: A Systematic Literature Review and Keyword Network Analysis," *Sustainability* 11.13 (2019): 3665.

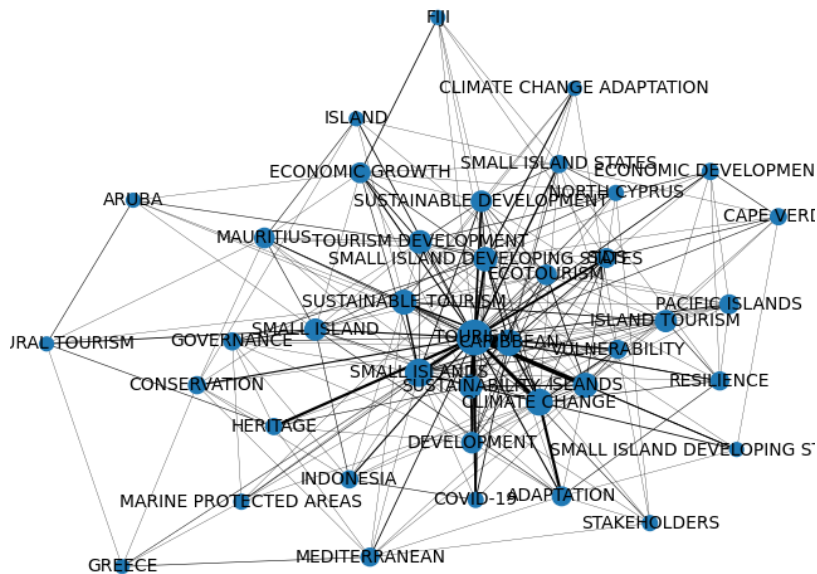


Figure 6. Keywords of the Island Tourism Co-Presentation Chart

3.4.2 Island Tourism Research Hotspots

Within this section, out of a selection of 1184 papers, island tourism research highlighted six primary themes. These six main themes were identified and illustrated in Figure7.

Island development and utilization

Island, related island and tourism products

The study of island sustainable development

Island tourism challenges and coordination with the people

Island climate change

Measures related to the island from the government

Form 1. Island Tourism Research Hotspots form

Keywords	Island tourism research hotspots
Economic Growth	Island development and utilization
Fiji	
Small Island States	
North Cyprus	
Vulnerability	
Stakeholders	
Marine Protected Areas	Island, related island and tourism products
Mediterranean	
Greece	
Mauritius	
Island	
Indonesia	
Conservation	The study of island sustainable development
Small Island Developing States	
Climate Change Adaptation	
Cape Verde	
Economic Development	
Island Tourism	
Pacific Islands	
Resilience	
Small Islands	
Sustainable Tourism	
Tourism Development	Island tourism challenges and coordination with the people
Sustainable Development	
Tourism	
Heritage	
SIDS	
Caribbean	
Covid-19	
Small island Developing States(SIDS)	
Ecotourism	
Development	
Climate change	Island climate change
Adaptation	
Cultural Tourism	Measures related to the island from the government
Aruba	
Small Island	
Governance	

3.4.2.1 Island development and utilization

By organizing keywords such as “stakeholders”, “vulnerability” and “economic development” it is found that the development of island resources should maximize the rational utilization of island tourism resources without destroying natural conditions. Scholars mainly focus on studying the development models and strategies of island tourism resources. Green hotels are the preferred choice for the sustainable development of islands. Yusof conducted a study on the different green practices of eco-lodge operators in Malaysia and found that most green practices on two different islands were similar, with differences observed in solid waste management.²⁹ A key discovery is that environmentally conscious and innovative eco-lodge operators are implementing novel green strategies to diminish waste, energy consumption, and water pollution. It can be seen that for the rational development and utilization of islands, operators need to adopt more reasonable strategies.

There are similar resource characteristics among islands in China, leading to obvious spatial competition. Some scholars believe that since some islands share similar resource characteristics, a development model of regional cooperation and integration can be adopted to form a competitive force. Wang and others propose that a united zone should be established among the islands in the western part of Guangdong Province (including Zhanjiang, Maoming, Yangjiang, and Yunfu), using a model of regional cooperation and development. Scholars can provide development recommendations for islands from different perspectives to create unique and distinctive island tourism that suits each island.

3.4.2.2 Island, related island and tourism products

Keywords such as “Conservation”, “Mauritius”, “Indonesia”, “Greece”, “Mediterranean” and “marine protected areas” are associated with renowned island nations and regions. Most scholars have focused their research on regions and islands with a higher level of tourism development, with fewer studies conducted on island tourism in Africa and

²⁹ Yusof, Zeenat Begam Bt, and Mariam Jamaludin, “Green Practices of Small Island Chalet Operators in East Peninsular Malaysia,” *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 202 (2015): 340-50.

North America. Some studies have taken a purely rational approach to island tourism, addressing relevant issues. For instance, Khadaroo and Seetanah investigated how foreign direct investment (FDI) influences the economic advancement of Mauritius, contrasting it against domestic private and public investments.³⁰ In terms of tourism products, the selection of recreational activities by tourists on islands has become a distinctive tourism product observed across various islands. Li and Li examined surf clubs as their research subject to understand the actual service operations and analyze the comprehensiveness of their service operation systems.³¹ The service missions established by operators mostly align with the desired state and possess the ability to fulfill consumers' valued needs. The flow of service delivery and customer movement is marked and guided, and the pre-service training of staff enables customers to smoothly access various services, showcasing the effectiveness of training.

3.4.2.3 The study of island sustainable development

By summarizing the key terms “island sustainability”, “island economic development”, “climate change adaptation” and “small island development status”, can be summarized as the study of sustainable development of islands.

With the development of island tourism resources, a “boom in island tourism” has emerged in the tourism market. A large influx of tourists is heading towards island regions. However, the tourism development in these island areas is still immature. Faced with the influx of tourists, the island regions are struggling to keep up. The tourism facilities are still inadequate, and the management mechanisms are not well-established. At this stage, the development approach remains extensive. Consequently, scholars have started to explore the development strategies of island regions and the environmental degradation caused by tourism, which has prompted their concern for sustainable development in island

³⁰ Khadaroo, Jameel, and Boopen Seetanah, “Transport Infrastructure and Tourism Development,” *Annals of Tourism Research* 34.4 (2007): 1021-32.

³¹ Li, Zhirong, & Li, Yulin, “Case Study of Service Operation Analysis in Surfing Clubs,” *Fu Jen Catholic University Journal of Physical Education* 7 (2008): 137-151

tourism. Scholars have introduced various research methods and conducted extensive empirical research. For instance, Lim and Cooper used Kangaroo Island in Australia as a case study to identify the challenges faced by current sustainable development in island tourism.³² Based on this, they developed a new concept and approach to sustainable development. They employed a set of 15 island tourism condition indicators and a more accurate multifunctional interactive cyclic process to develop a new model called MIPC (Multifunctional Interactive Process for a new life Cycle).

3.4.2.4 Island tourism challenges and coordination with the people

Currently, island tourism has become the preferred choice for travelers, with keywords such as “ecotourism” “COVID-19 pandemic,” “small island developing states(SIDS)” and “heritage tourism” highlighting the challenges faced by island tourism. How to better integrate human and natural aspects is a question worth contemplating. Cheng and Wu studied tourist behavior in Taiwan’s Penghu region to promote sustainable tourism development.³³ They merged environmental understanding, the eco-consciousness of sustainable island tourism development frameworks, attachment to the location, and environmentally friendly conduct to form a sustainable tourism behavior model designed for tourists visiting island destinations. They provided recommendations for marketing and implementing sustainable island tourism, aiming to enhance tourists’ environmental knowledge and sensitivity towards the destination.³⁴ By possessing more environmental knowledge, tourists will strengthen their awareness of environmental protection.

³² Lim, Charles C, and Chris Cooper, “Beyond Sustainability: Optimising Island Tourism Development,” *International Journal of Tourism Research* 11.1 (2009): 89-103.

³³ Cheng, Tien-Ming, and Homer C Wu, “How Do Environmental Knowledge, Environmental Sensitivity, and Place Attachment Affect Environmentally Responsible Behavior? An Integrated Approach for Sustainable Island Tourism,” *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 23.4 (2015): 557-76.

³⁴ Huang, P. S., & Shih, L. H, “Effective Environmental Management Through Environmental Knowledge Management,” *International Journal of Environmental Science & Technology* 6 (2009): 35-50.

3.4.2.5 Island Climate Change

“Climate change” and “adaptation” have garnered significant attention from scholars. The WMO (World Meteorological Organization) “Statement on the State of the Global Climate in 2019” highlighted that the global average sea level rise rate is approximately 3.24 millimeters per year, with projections indicating a continued rise in sea levels over the next century. Given that many island nations possess low-lying terrain and extensive coastlines,³⁵ island tourism activities are susceptible to the impacts of rising global temperatures, sea level increases, and the proliferation of extreme weather events.³⁶ The Balearic Islands in Spain are renowned Mediterranean island tourist destinations, but their ecological habitats are susceptible to the impacts of climate change, subsequently influencing tourist decision-making.³⁷ Consequently, enhancing the adaptability of islands to climate change and bolstering the resilience of tourism destinations have emerged as crucial research topics for scholars.³⁸ Thomas et al., investigated developing island countries and discovered that different groups, such as scientists, fishermen, and policymakers, hold diverse perspectives on climate change in islands.³⁹ Additionally, cognitive factors and religious issues also influence their viewpoints. Many developing island countries prioritize renewable energy in their concerns regarding climate warming.

³⁵ Mohamad, Diana, Azizi Bahauddin, and Badaruddin Mohamed, “Tourism Development Progress of Two Islands of Malaysia: The Locals’ Perspective Towards Climate Change,” *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes* 8.5 (2016): 534-48.

³⁶ Ridderstaat, Jorge, Marck Oduber, Robertico Croes, Peter Nijkamp, and Pim Martens, “Impacts of Seasonal Patterns of Climate on Recurrent Fluctuations in Tourism Demand: Evidence from Aruba,” *Tourism Management* 41 (2014): 245-56.

³⁷ Moreno, Alvaro, “Impact of Climate Change on Island Tourism-the Balearic Islands: Impacts, Vulnerability and Critical Management Issues,” In *Disappearing Destinations: Climate Change and Future Challenges for Coastal Tourism* (2011): 218-32.

³⁸ Olausson, Pär M, Evangelia Petridou, and Dimitri Ioannides, “Seeking Resilience through Tourism in Greenland: A Cautious Outlook in the Risky Era of Climate Change,” *Paper presented at the 10th ECPR General Conference* (2016): 7-10.

³⁹ Thomas, Adelle, April Baptiste, Rosanne Martyr-Koller, Patrick Pringle, and Kevon Rhiney, “Climate Change and Small Island Developing States,” *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 45.1 (2020): 1-27.

3.4.2.6 Measures related to the island from the government

To combine “Government” and “cultural tourism”, the government should take a long-term view, a more thorough elaboration of strategies and actions that foster the growth of tourism on the island. Based on the study of island resources, the government should combine the current situation of island resources with local conditions, and local characteristics, make functional zones for island tourism, and propose development strategies for island areas. Lan et al., studied the development of the agriculture and fishery industry in Penghu Island, Taiwan.⁴⁰ The government has made recommendations and suggestions on cooperative management strategies, traditional culture strategies, experiencing sustainable development strategies, leisure agriculture and fishery service system strategies, and integrated marketing strategies that are suitable for local development. The government management can coordinate the development of tourism, guide the right direction, introduce sound tourism policies and regulations, specify scientific tourism planning, and create a harmonious overall atmosphere. Dredge and other scholars have explored tourism management policies to enhance the visibility, legitimacy, and Significance of governmental directives in overseeing tourism on the island, and to provide policy protection for a good and orderly tourism market.⁴¹ The research also delved into the significance of governmental policies in tourism on the island, as well as their role in shaping a well-regulated tourism market.

⁴⁰ Lan, Yawen, Chen, Qiongzhu, & Yang, Qianzi, “Development Strategies for Leisure Agriculture and Fisheries in Penghu,” *Island Tourism Studies* 3.1 (2010): 30-56.

⁴¹ Dredge, Dianne, and Tazim Jamal, “Progress in Tourism Planning and Policy: A Post-Structural Perspective on Knowledge Production,” *Tourism Management* 51 (2015): 285-97.

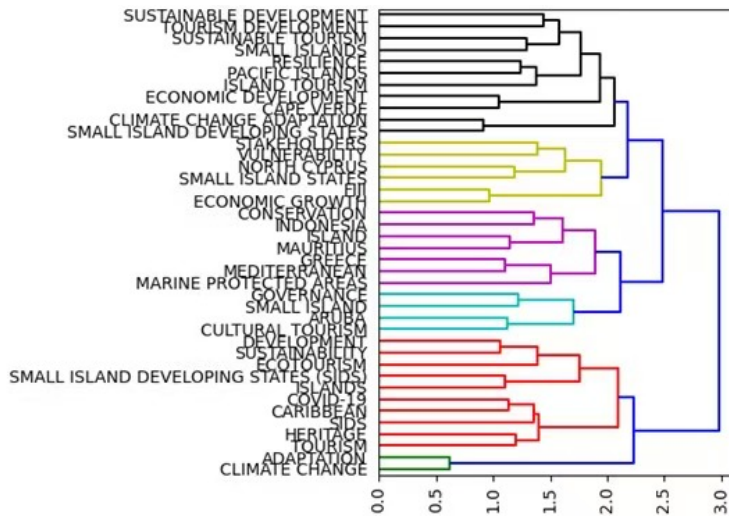


Figure 7. Cluster diagram of related similar matrix systems in the period 1991-2022

3.5 The evolutionary path of the topic

The evolutionary path of island tourism research is analyzed by observing the evolutionary path diagram of keyword themes, and the main evolutionary path of island tourism research is sorted out. “Island development and utilization - Island-related islands and tourism products-Island sustainability research - Island tourism challenges and human-earth coordination-Climate change on islands--Government measures related to island tourism” research path.

The period from 2006 to 2010 marked the initiation phase of island tourism, and with the increasing popularity of mass tourism, island tourism experienced significant growth. During this period, research primarily revolved around exploring the tourism resources of island regions. Evaluating the potential for tourism resource development is a crucial measure for determining whether these resources possess the necessary conditions to facilitate the development of the tourism sector and subsequently generate economic, social, and environmental benefits. Assessing the development potential of island tourism resources serves as a vital foundation for evaluating the current state of tourism resource development in a region and forecasting its prospects. For instance, drawing upon existing

domestic and international research on island tourism evaluation systems, Li Yuezheng and Li Pengsheng systematically assessed China's island tourism resources from three dimensions: tourism resource conditions, regional conditions, and location characteristics.⁴² They also established corresponding evaluation criteria for the indicators. Constructing an evaluation system for China's island tourism resources, they laid the groundwork and provided a reference for the planning and growth of island tourism in China. Furthermore, tourism products associated with islands also play a significant role in attracting visitors to island destinations.

The period from 2012 to 2018 witnessed a phase of rapid development in island tourism, leading to the emergence of diverse research topics. During this time, numerous keywords and hot topics emerged in the field. Research on the sustainable development of islands and the challenges faced by island tourism gained significant attention,⁴³ and the coordination between tourists' travel experiences and the islands themselves became prominent in the public eye. Regarding research on the sustainable development of islands, Figueroa & Rotarou found, through their study of Easter Island in Chile, that the perception of the residents towards the environment had increased after the development of mass tourism.⁴⁴ Easter Island also faced significant environmental governance issues, making the sustainable development of the island more complex. Survey results indicated that the residents recognized the negative impacts brought about by uncontrolled tourism development, but still supported the growth of the tourism industry as it served as the primary source of income and employment on the island. This highlights the growing importance of addressing the issue of coordination between people and the environment, and the urgent need to identify suitable approaches for sustainable development of local island tourism, learn from past experiences, and establish cooperative agreements to achieve their desired goals while effectively managing shared resources.

⁴² Li, Yuezheng, Li, Pengsheng, & Huang, Dan, "Construction Research of Evaluation System for Island Tourism Resources," (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, 2013).

⁴³ Dodds, R., & Graci, S, "Sustainable Tourism in Island Destinations," *Routledge* (2012).

⁴⁴ Figueroa B, Eugenio, and Elena S Rotarou, "Sustainable Development or Eco-Collapse: Lessons for Tourism and Development from Easter Island," *Sustainability* 8.11 (2016): 1093.

Since 2018, there has been a growing trend of diversified research in the field of island tourism. Scholars have continued to focus on studying the climate of islands and how governments can make more informed decisions. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 has further emphasized the need for governments and tourism management agencies to play a crucial role in decision-making, to facilitate the sustainable development of island tourism.⁴⁵

4. Discussion

By conducting an in-depth examination of the evolutionary backdrop and primary areas of emphasis in island tourism research, the field exhibits the following characteristics. In terms of literature growth, the field demonstrates a linear increasing trend, with the peak in publication volume occurring in 2021, indicating a sustained research interest. The research hotspots primarily revolve around stakeholders, vulnerability, economic development, conservation, Mauritius, Indonesia, Greece, the Mediterranean, marine protected areas, sustainable development of islands, economic development of islands, climate change adaptation, small island developing states, ecotourism, the COVID-19 pandemic, developing island countries, heritage tourism, climate change, adaptation, government, and cultural tourism. The evolution of research hotspots has progressed through six stages: island development and utilization, island-related islands and tourism products, research on sustainable development of islands, challenges faced by island tourism and coordination between people and the environment, climate change in islands, and government measures related to island tourism.

Through the analysis of research hotspots and their evolution in island tourism, it is found that the field went through an exploratory phase from 2005 to 2010. With the popularization of mass tourism and the emergence of island tourism, there has been a wealth of research outcomes in the field of island tourism, leading to diversification in

⁴⁵ Becken, S., & Loehr, J., "Asia-Pacific Tourism Futures Emerging from COVID-19 Recovery Responses and Implications for Sustainability," *Journal of Tourism Futures* 9.1 (2023): 35-48.

research areas and disciplines. Scholars primarily focused on exploring tourism resources in island destinations, but the research was relatively superficial and lacked depth and breadth.

Subsequently, the research shifted towards studying island-related islands and tourism products, and then towards research on the sustainable development of islands⁴⁶ and the challenges faced by island tourism, and the coordination between people and the environment. In recent years, research in this field has become more in-depth and specific, with a focus on climate change in islands and the measures that governments should adopt. Overall, the field has undergone a development process from shallow to deep, with continuous changes in research methods.

5. Conclusion

This review provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made in island tourism research to date, while also highlighting future avenues for exploration. The findings of this review have significant implications for theory development, practical applications, and societal impact.

Through COOC software, the knowledge map of international island research was mapped, and the descriptive analysis of issues such as descriptive analysis, research hotspots and evolutionary processes of island tourism was conducted. It was found that the research results on island tourism have the following characteristics:

From the focus on the impact of a single element of island tourism to the study of the cross-influence of endogenous relationships, the analysis of the surface gradually deepened to the analysis of the essence. From the nascent stage, the exploration stage, and then the development stage, the research theme moves from responding to, there is a growing need to prioritize preserving the ecological environment on islands in the face of tourism development. It is crucial to shift focus towards the main stakeholders of island tourism

⁴⁶ Ghina, F, "Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States," *Environment, Development and Sustainability* 5 (2003): 139-165.

destinations and their role in ensuring sustainable practices that minimize negative environmental impacts and the comparative analysis of the association between the two subsystems of human tourism activities and the ecological environment of the island under the framework of the territorial system of human-earth relationship, and finally to the government's formulation and adoption of relevant measures for the better development of the island tourism. The government has taken appropriate measures to change the analysis from factor impact to integrated regulation.

Island tourism island development, related islands, sustainable development, human-territory relations, island climate change and related policies, etc., although the current island tourism research re-ins a relatively large amount of literature, it is not difficult to find that these studies are fragmentary, country-specific research, research content focused on island tourism resources and environment, tourist relations, island residents' perceptions, concentrated in the development of coastal tourism. This has resulted in fragmentation of island tourism research and a lack of systematic framework and guiding mechanism to attempt to construct sustainable development of island tourism on a comparative basis, and a lack of in-depth theoretical exploration of spatial and spatial control of island tourism, industrial development strategies, and marine ecological compensation mechanisms.

The continuous development of island tourism has had a profoundly impacted on the society and culture of the island. Tourists bring fresh and exotic cultures, and the consumption of tourists at tourist destinations stimulates local economic growth, improves the living environment of destination residents, and drives the development of related industries such as catering, hotel, and retail industries. At the same time, the island tourism industry has brought some negative impacts that cannot be ignored, for example, the rejection of foreign tourists by island residents, the influx of a large number of island tourists causing environmental pollution, traffic congestion, and other problems, as well as irreversible environmental problems such as ecological imbalance and destruction of vegetation. Therefore, the scientific development of island tourism has been a concern of island tourism researchers for many years.

6. Suggestions

6.1 Enhancing the theory and methods of island tourism research

Theoretical innovation is an important pathway for advancing the standardization, scientification, and deepening of island tourism research. Considering the current relatively limited methods in island tourism research, future studies should engage in interdisciplinary research on island tourism. By utilizing analytical software for quantitative modeling and employing survey data, it is necessary to incorporate case studies, participant observation, in-depth interviews, experimental methods, and mixed research methods to enhance the scientific and normative nature of island tourism research.⁴⁷ Scholar Carlsen also mentioned the issue of sustainable development of island tourism in the book and emphasized the importance of theoretical innovation and interdisciplinary research methods in promoting island tourism research.

Theoretical innovation directions suggest introducing Complexity Theory and the Social-Ecological Systems Framework (SES Framework) to explain the nonlinear interactions among economy, ecology, and culture in island tourism. For instance, Ostrom's SES framework can be utilized to construct multi-level indicators (such as resource units, governance systems, and user groups) to analyze the threshold effects of sustainability in island tourism.

6.2 Apply theory into practice

After conducting a systematic analysis of island tourism, the effective methods and approaches derived from the analysis should be applied in practical settings. This will enable government management agencies to develop relevant policies, regulations, and mechanisms that are tailored to the specific context in terms of economy, socio-cultural, and resource environment. This shift will facilitate a transition from analyzing individual

⁴⁷ Carlsen, J., & Butler, R. (Eds.) "Island Tourism: Sustainable Perspectives," *CAB International* (2011).

factors to comprehensive regulation and control.⁴⁸ It is recommended to integrate Participatory Action Research into policy formulation, involving the government, residents, and businesses in co-designing compensation mechanisms (such as the community-led ecotourism model in Apo Island, Philippines).

6.3 Establish a systematic framework and guiding mechanism for island tourism

By examining the diverse models of island tourism resource development in islands with varying origins, environmental characteristics, and climates, in-depth comparative case studies can be conducted across different spatial contexts. This will facilitate a comprehensive exploration of topics such as spatial planning for island tourism, strategies for industry development, and mechanisms for compensating marine ecology.⁴⁹

It is recommended to Construct a framework. Introduce the "Triple Helix Governance Model" (government-business-academia collaboration), combined with Resilience Theory, to design multi-hazard response mechanisms (e.g., resilient infrastructure standards for typhoon-prone areas).

6.4 Applying scientific approaches to preserve the ecological resources of island tourism

A healthy ecosystem forms the basis for achieving sustainable development in island tourism. By employing scientific models, it is possible to establish an ecological indicator system, evaluation methods, early warning systems, and models for assessing the ecological health of island tourism. Furthermore, in infrastructure development and disaster risk reduction, the resilience characteristics of marine disasters should be considered to effectively protect the ecological well-being of island tourism.⁵⁰ Current ecological

⁴⁸ Petridou, E., Olausson, P. M., & Ioannides, D, "Nascent Island Tourism Policy Development in Greenland: A network perspective," *Island Studies Journal* 14.2 (2019): 227-244.

⁴⁹ Lück, M., & Higham, J, "Marine Ecotourism in the New Zealand Urban Context: Emerging Trends, New Challenges and Developing Opportunities," *Urban Tourism-Mapping the Future* (2003).

⁵⁰ Arkema, K. K., Verutes, G. M., Wood, S. A., Clarke-Samuels, C., Rosado, S., Canto, M., ... & Guerry, A.

research predominantly focuses on natural systems, yet the coupling mechanisms of social-ecological resilience (such as the role of traditional cultural knowledge in disaster response) remain underexplored. Insights can be drawn from cases of indigenous ecological knowledge in Pacific Island nations.

7. Limitation

By analyzing the research literature on island tourism, this study has provided insights into the knowledge base and research trends in the field. It has also offered predictions on the future direction of research, thereby advancing the systematization and maturity of island tourism studies. However, several areas require improvement:

Firstly, this study only collected English literature on island tourism from over the last three decades, the Web of Science Core Collection database has been extensively utilized and examined for scholarly research purposes, neglecting the inclusion of Chinese literature on the subject from databases such as CSSCI and CNKI. Future research should consider collecting data from multiple sources and utilizing various retrieval channels to ensure a comprehensive analysis. Additionally, including Chinese literature for comparative analysis would offer a more comprehensive perspective on the specific development of island tourism.

Secondly, in terms of software applications, this study employed COOC as the information metrics and visualization analysis software, which may be considered limited in scope. The results of data analysis would benefit from optimization. Future research should consider integrating software analysis tools such as Ucinet and Pajek to enhance the credibility of the research findings and conclusions.

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