

Retrospective Analysis of Trends in Pilgrimage Tourism Research

C. Veera Sankara Reddy

*Research Scholar, Department of History,
Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh*

Krishna Naik Khatravathi

*Professor, Department of History,
Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapuramu, Andhra Pradesh*

ABSTRACT

Authors reviewed academic research published in pilgrimage and religious tourism during 2010 to 2019 to know the growth, influence and themes of the research. Authors used bibliometric studies to review the documents published over a decade. Through an advanced search, authors found 1907 articles and analyzed them using various tools such as Microsoft excel and VOS viewer data visualization tool. Various bibliometric tools were used to study the yearly progress document, citations and keyword analysis. Year-wise publication analysis shows that there is an increased output of the research over the years. Research on pilgrimage tourism contributed from a variety of disciplines. The most cited and published author works are from the field of medicine. Authors are affiliated mainly to the Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia followed by the Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, United States published the most. The most productive country is the United States of America, a productive journal in terms of publications is an international journal of religious tourism and pilgrimage, and most cited publications are from annals of tourism research. The most frequently published topics are pilgrimage, religious tourism tourist, hajj, diseases, and Saudi Arabia. This work is useful for understanding the progress, productivity and leading research topics in pilgrimage tourism.

Keywords: *Religious Tourism, Pilgrimage, Spirituality, Bibliometric analysis, Keyword Analysis.*

Introduction: Religious tourism and pilgrimage is a growing global phenomenon that surpasses theoretically and practically (Alecu, 2015) and fastest emergent form of tourism (Ebadi, 2015). Pilgrimage is the common and one of the most important religious and cultural phenomenon of human civilization over the period, and an important integral part of several religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Christianity (Collins-Kreiner, 2010). As per the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) estimates over 900 million tourists visit various religious and pilgrimage tourism destinations worldwide (World Tourism Organisation, 2011).

There is an increased interest in pilgrimage tourism research from various disciplinary backgrounds is historians, sociologists, anthropologist, geographer, psychologist, economist and many more (Collins-Kreiner, 2010). For instance, a study conducted by Zhuang et al, (2019) emphasized community perception on religious tourism impacts and their support for tourism development (Zhuang & Li, 2019), Verma and Sarangi (2017) studied attributes related to service quality, motivational factors, safety, satisfaction and loyalty of religious tourism at large religious events like Kumbha Mela in India (Verma & Sarangi, 2019), the impact of religious tourism on urbanization and demographic change (Shinde, 2017) performance analysis of Christian religious tourism activities (Pillai et al. 2017) satisfaction evaluation of tourist visiting sacred destinations (Malodia & Singla, 2017).

Similarly several studies concentrated on management aspects of religious tourism (Buzinde et al. 2014). For example, the economic and non-economic contribution of religious tourism (Singh et al. 2018), governance and management of religious tourism (Shinde, 2018), investment, promotion and marketing of religious tourism (Geary, 2018), commercialization and linkages between yoga and spiritual tourism (Bowers & Cheer, 2017), comparative price analysis of Islamic religious tourism (Ladki & Mazeh, 2017). A study detailed the policy, planning, and development of tourism in the context of religious and pilgrimage destinations in India (Shinde, 2012).

Bulatovic (2019) argued that religious tourism is quite complex and challenging in underdeveloped destinations and studying the attitudes of the local community is important for the development of religious tourism (Bulatovic, 2019) motivations for the religious tourism is an important factor to be considered for a better understanding of religious tourism. Collins-

Kreiner, (2010) conceptualized the major issue and arguments involved in pilgrimage tourism over the years (Collins-Kreiner, et al., 2010). A study found that religious tourism is an important contributor to the promotion of heritage and socio-cultural and economic development of the place (Redžić, 2019). Ramírez et al. (2018) explored the educational motivations and their impact on the learning experience in pilgrimage tourism (Ramírez et al. 2018). A study on perspectives on tourism and hospitality research by reviewing the academic research and study revealed that there is increased research, including religious tourism (Seyfi et al. 2018). All these studies concentrated on various aspects of pilgrimage tourism in the context of management, promotion, impacts, issues, and challenges. However, there are very few studies looking at the concept of pilgrimage tourism as a whole holistically. This particular study concentrates on the bibliometric analysis of the published research over the years.

In this study, a bibliometric analysis of trends in religious and pilgrimage tourism research during the period of 2010–2019, as retrieved from the Scopus database, is described. The mentioned period is taken as a decade, mainly to understand the trends in the recent years. The analysis included the year-wise publication output, trends in research, and productive journals in terms of the number of documents published and citations received over a period of time. The study also elucidated on the most productive countries, most productive authors, and their affiliation and institutions. Cluster analysis of productive authors and their citations, productive journals, and trends in research using word count analysis is visualized by using the VOSviewer visualization tool.

Bibliometric Analysis and Pilgrimage Tourism:

Bibliometric analysis is a systematic analysis and mapping of academic research to measure the scientific publications (Ramos-Rodríguez & Ruíz-Navarro, 2004). Bibliometric analysis is an emerging aspect of research, widely used in the recent past to know the scientific contribution of a wide variety of disciplines or journal, journal rankings, productive countries and regions, and citations impact over a period of time (Vishwakarma & Mukherjee, 2019; Jamal, et al., 2008; Kollé, et al., 2018) and explains the state-of-art of research to be explored (Della et al., 2019).

Studied religious tourism development and analyzed the progress of the research in terms of journal and discipline contribution, authors and region wise contribution of research, and presented a map of religious tourism nexus and trends. Contribution of the research over a

decade of time on the aspects of politicization of religion (Collins-kreiner, 2020). Kim and King, (2019) reviewed the scholarly work in religious tourism and evaluated 84 studies on religiously motivated tourism by using thematic and content analysis. Results found that there is a diverse contribution of research from inters and multidisciplinary fields looking beyond motivation. (Kim & King, 2019). Navickiene, (2019) explored the perspectives on the practice of green pilgrimage tourism in the context of Lithuania by using document and content analysis. The study revealed that this is a recent phenomenon and deals with taking responsibility for their actions and reducing consumption and practising environmental principles. Tourists are positive about the initiative (Navickiene, 2019). A study provided systematic classification and mapping of research published religious and spiritual tourism with 181 papers published in the scientific database.

This study concentrated mainly on a number of publications produced over a period of time followed by the top journals that published papers (Heidari, et al., 2018). Collins-kreiner, (2016) proposed a systematic framework for the evolving phenomenon of pilgrimage tourism and used the product life cycle model to explain the changes that happened in the research related to religious tourism over a period of time (Collins-Kreiner, 2016). Hall (2015) study contributed to citation analysis of the journal of tourism recreational research (Hall, 2015). However, the previous studies concentrated on various aspects of religious and pilgrimage tourism, research work focusing on systematic scientific production of tourism knowledge in terms of publications, organizations contribution, country-wise publication, citation analysis is indeed vague.

Methodological Framework:

Authors carried out a bibliometric analysis of scientific papers indexed in the Scopus online database and the database is accessed in March 2020, applying keyword search strategy: (TITLE-ABS-KEY ("religious tourism") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (pilgrimage) and PUBYEAR > 2010 AND PUBYEAR < 2019. We chose to limit the time period to over a period of 10 years, starting from 2010 to 2019. Open access article consists of 299 followed by others with 1608. Total 1907 documents are selected and this 1565 of the article and 342 review papers used for further analysis and authors excluded editorials, research or practitioner notes, and corporate reports, survey reports and selected only published papers. The following table 1 shows the search strategy

Table 1 Data search strategy

Search word	"religious tourism", pilgrimage
Category of data & Title Subject	Scopus: Article title, Abstract, Keywords
Subject Area	All
Document Type	Journals and Conference Proceedings
Time Period	> 2010 AND PUBYEAR < 2019
Language	English
Query String	(TITLE-ABS-KEY ("religious tourism") AND TITLE-ABS- KEY ("pilgrimage")) AND PUBYEAR > 2010 AND PUBYEAR < 2019
Search Date	March 2020
Source: Authors elaboration	

Document search included article title, abstract and keywords and results refined to access including open and other publication year from 2010 to 2019, the author includes all, source title includes all the journals indexed in Scopus, keywords all, affiliated organization and country includes all; source type is limited to journals, language is limited to English. Then the export documentation setting included citation information, bibliographic information, abstract and keywords, funding and other details, and the same is exported into comma-separated values (CSV) with an excel spreadsheet, and in addition to this manual coding and data entry is applied wherever necessary. Microsoft Excel, VOSviewer software and SPSS (Ver.20) were employed for analysis, with manual coding when necessary. The word ‘document’ in the study is interchangeably used for the article and paper or publication.

Results and Discussion

This section of the research study deals with the results of the research output of religious tourism in terms of year-wise publications, productive authors and author citation analysis, journals and journal citation analysis, institute, and countries.

Year wise publication output

Publication trends of pilgrimage tourism research over ten years of time are displayed in **Figure 1** and show exponential growth starting from 2010 to 2019, and the year-wise publications of articles are in the year 2010 there were (103) publications followed by the year 2011 (130), the year 2012 (131), 2013 (187); 2014 (197); 2015 (171); 2016 (218); 2017 (214); (268) and the year 2019 (288). In 2010 there were only 103 articles published and in the year 2019 the number rose to 288 exponentially. On an average 190 articles were published in a year. On average 190 articles were published in a year. This growth corroborates that there is increased research in the field of religious and pilgrimage tourism over a period of time.

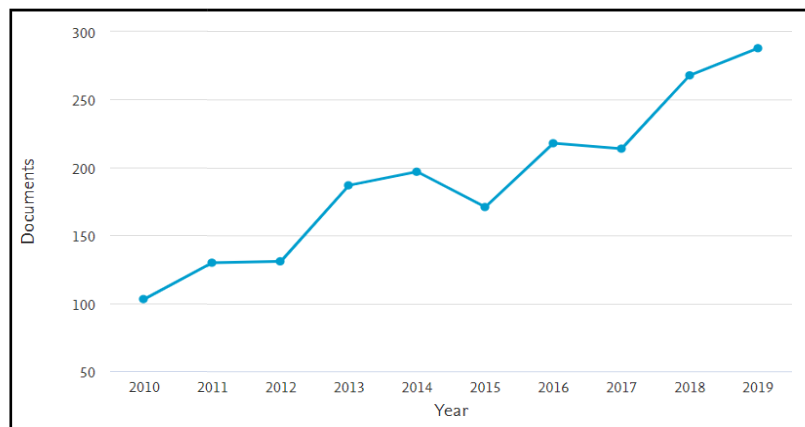


Figure 1. Year wise publication output (*Source:* Authors own elaboration)

Most productive researchers

Researchers who have contributed the most and appeared on the top ten lists from 2010 to 2019 were selected for the analysis, and the same is shown in Figure 3. Similarly, the most-cited authors are visualized in Figure 4. Among the top ten researchers, the highest contributed articles over ten years are 29 publications, and the lowest is 8 publications. The highest number of documents published by Memish, Z.A. 29 (816 citations), and others followed in decreasing order, such as Gautret, P. 20 (436 citations), Yezli, S. 13 (235 citations), Al-Tawfiq, J.A. 12 (325 citations), Benkouiten, S.10 (274 citations), Shinde, K.A. 10, Brouqui, P. 9, Azhar, E.I. 8 (70 citations), Collins-Kreiner, N. 8 (339 citations), Parola, P. 8 (207 citations), publications. It is observed that authors affiliated to Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia contributed more to religious tourism research. Interestingly top ten researchers and their

research area are related to medical and health aspects of religious tourism. Table 2 shows the authors contribution and their affiliation.

Table 2 Most productive authors and their publications and affiliation

No	Author (s)	Publications	Citations	Affiliation
1	Memish, Z.A.	29	816	Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
2	Gautret, P.	20	436	IHU-Méditerranée Infection, Marseille, France
3	Yezli, S.	13	235	Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
4	Al-Tawfiq, J.A.	12	325	Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, United States
5	Benkouiten, S.	10	274	Direction de la Recherche en Santé de l'Assistance Publique des Hôpitaux de Marseille, France
6	Shinde, K.A.	10	76	University of Melbourne, Parkville, Australia
7	Brouqui, P.	9	247	Aix Marseille Université, Marseille, France
8	Azhar, E.I.	8	70	King Abdulaziz University, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
9	Collins-Kreiner	8	339	University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel
10	Parola, P.	8	207	IHU-Méditerranée Infection, Marseille, France

(Source: Authors own elaboration)

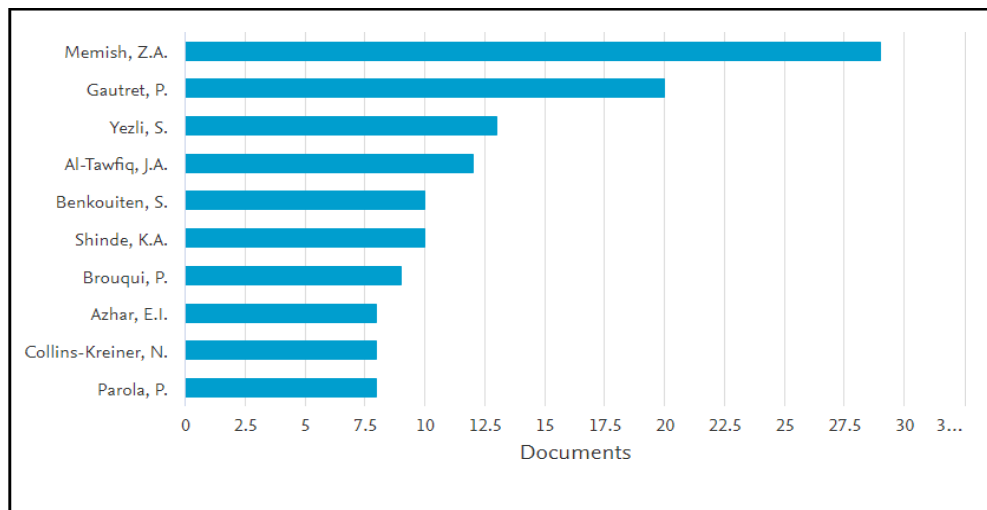


Figure 2 Author wise publication output (Source: Scopus Database)

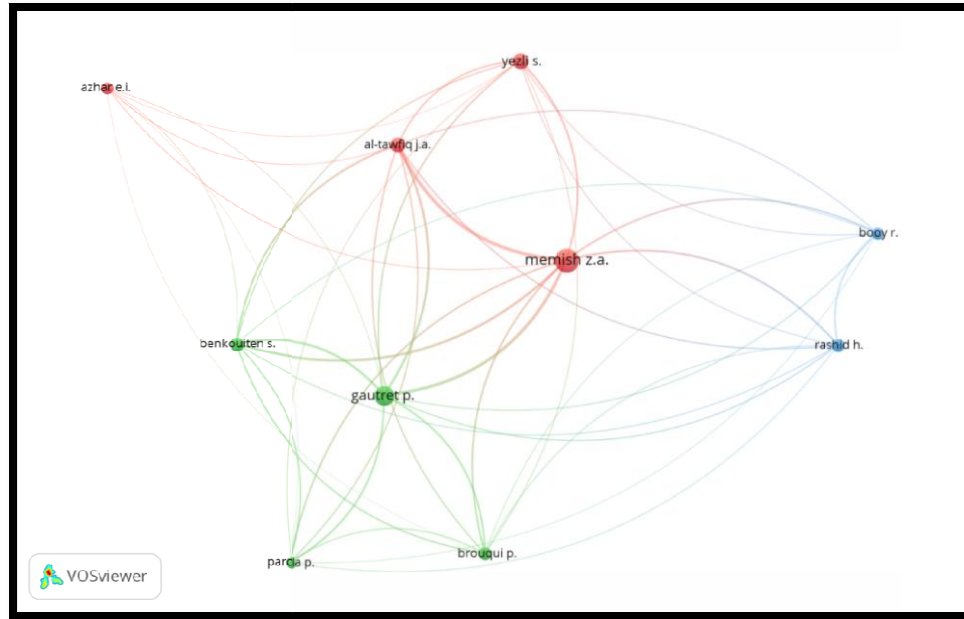


Figure 3 Author citation analyses (*Source:* Scopus Database)

Most productive institutes

Researchers produced a large number of documents by their affiliation shown in Figure 4. This analysis provides fascinating results on the author's affiliation, the highest number of documents published by the Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia, Saudi Arabia (40), other organizations followed in decreasing order by the University of Sydney, Australia 26, Aix Marseille Université, France (25), Alfaisal University, Saudi Arabia (24), King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia (21), The University of Oxford, UK (20), University of Haifa, Israel (19) and The University of Cambridge, UK (17). Results revealed that medical and health research institutes are at the forefront of religious tourism research.

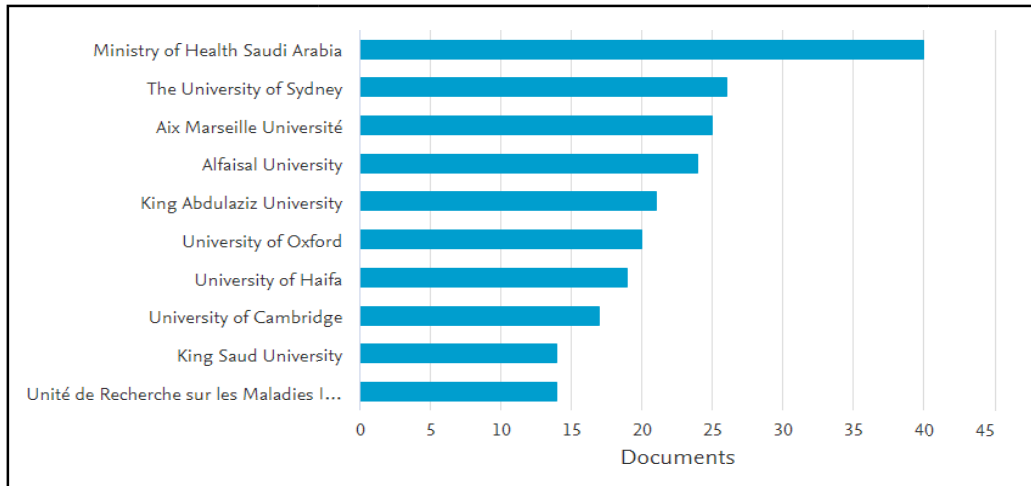


Figure 4. Institute wise publication output (*Source:* Scopus Database)

Most productive countries

Country-wise contribution of publications in religious tourism showed in Figure 5 during the year 2010 to 2019. The most productive country is the United States of America with (439) publications. Other countries on the list are the United Kingdom (246), Saudi Arabia (111), Australia (106), India (93), Canada (78), Israel (76), France (72), Germany (61) and Spain (49). It may be interpreted by taking the religion into consideration of the given countries; most of them are following Christianity followed by Islam and Hinduism.

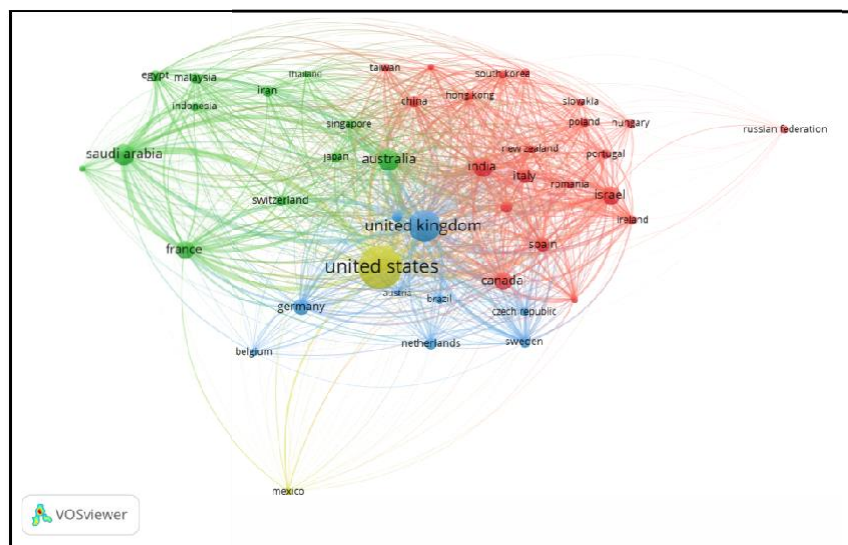


Figure 5. Visualization of most productive countries (*Source:* Scopus Database)

Most productive journals

Table 3 shows the most productive journals in terms of number of publications, citations and h-index and impact factor during the year 2010 to 2019. These journals produced a minimum of 13 journals over the years. International Journal of religious tourism and pilgrimage is the most productive journal in terms of number of publications over the years with 100 publications followed by the journal of religions with 22 publications. Annals of tourism research is the most productive journal in terms of citations (799) h-index (4.55) with 19 publications followed by travel medicine and infectious diseases with 216 citations cite score (0.19) and journal of heritage tourism with 137 citations and h-index (8) and cite score (1.44).

Table 3. Most productive journals with publications and citation

S No	Name of the Journal	No. of publications	No of Citations	h-index	Cite score
1	International Journal Of Religious Tourism And Pilgrimage	100	64	4	0.27
2	Religions	22	8	2	0.5
3	Annals Of Tourism Research	19	799	13	4.55
4	Ecumenical Review	19	9	2	0.07
5	Journal Of Heritage Tourism	17	137	8	1.44
6	Tourism	17	74	9	0.19
7	Travel Medicine And Infectious Disease	15	216	10	1.8
8	Culture And Religion	13	108	6	0.43
9	European Journal Of Science And Theology	13	24	3	0.5
10	International Bulletin Of Missionary Research	13	4	1	0.14

(Source: Authors own elaboration)

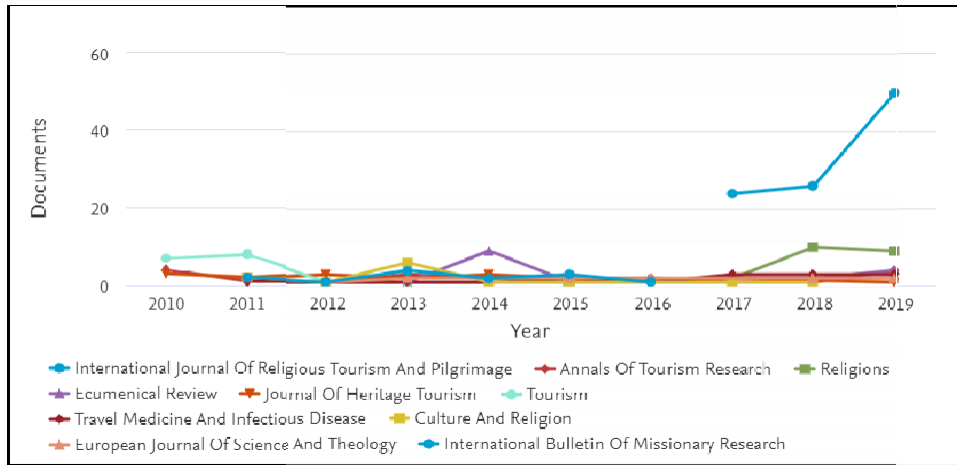


Figure 6. Most productive journals with number of documents

(Source: Scopus Database)

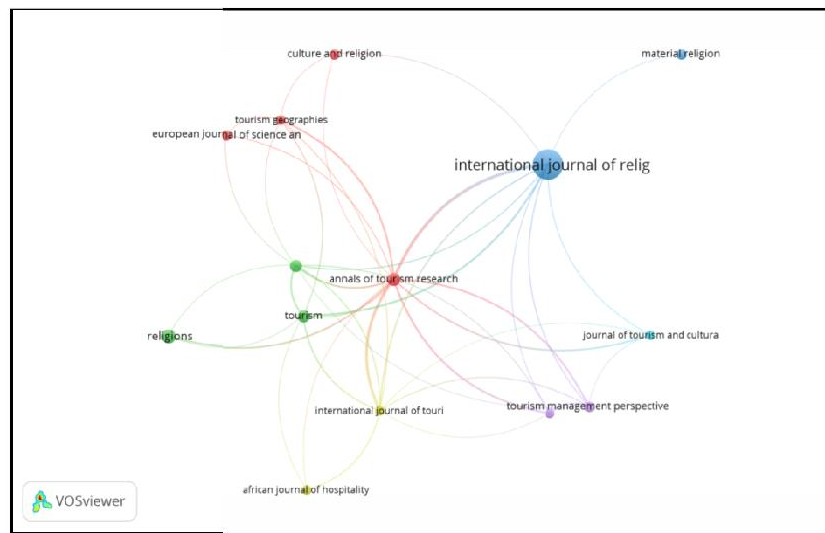


Figure 7. Productive journals based on citation (Source: Authors own elaboration)

Keyword analysis

The most frequently used terms as keywords are related to the field of religious tourism has shown in Figure 8; pilgrimage, tourism, religious tourism are commonly used followed by the terms tourist, site, place, hajj, diseases and Saudi Arabia.

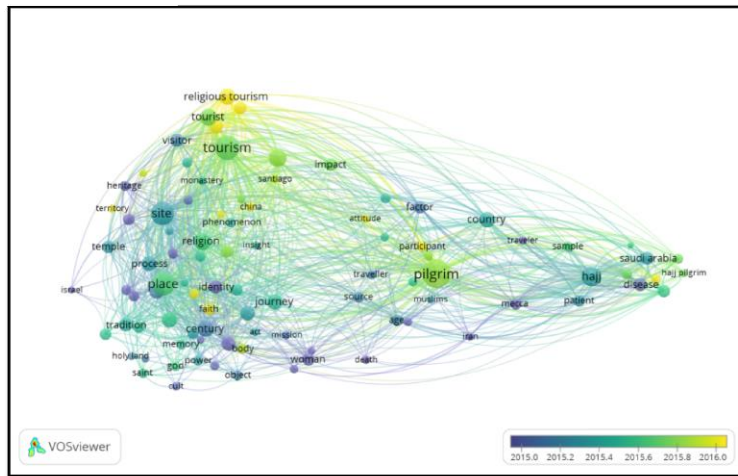


Figure 8. Cloud of keywords (*Source:* Authors own elaboration)

Discussion

Research in tourism, particularly in the context of religion and pilgrimage is one of the mature fields of study. These studies focused on qualitative, qualitative, and theoretical aspects of religious tourism. This study corroborated that there is an increase in scholarly work over the years, and also found there were studies in the field over a hundred years ago. Increasing scholarly work published in the leading journals is evidence of growing interest in the discipline (Kim & King, 2019), this was validated with this study as there is a number of journals from various disciplines such as medicine and health, sociology, psychology, anthropology, developmental studies, religious studies published papers. The yearly production of scientific publications is increasing immensely and this is evident in the study that the scholarly work over a period of time increased.

Pilgrimage tourism is considered worthy of examination by scholars from various disciplines (Kim & King, 2019) this evident in the study and interestingly studies from medicine and healthcare and geography increasingly produced research work. Similarly, the most cited and most published scholars are also from medicine, and this may be due to the concern over safety, travel-related health issues, pandemics. The topmost authors are affiliated mainly to the Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia followed by the Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, The United States.

Country wise contribution of publications in religious tourism came from The United States of America followed by the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Australia, and India (93). Further taking the religion into the consideration of the given countries; most of them are following Christianity followed by Islam and Hinduism. International journal of religious tourism, Annals of tourism research, travel medicine and infectious diseases and journal of heritage tourism contributed more in terms of a number of publications and citations.

Conclusion

In this study, authors elucidated the use of bibliometric analysis for analyzing the research the output of the religious tourism over a period of time. The scholarly contribution of research in religious tourism has increased exponentially. Similarly, the most cited and published author works are also from medicine, and authors are affiliated mainly to the Ministry of Health Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia followed by Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, United States. International journal of religious tourism and pilgrimage is the most productive journal in terms of the number of publications and annals of tourism research is the most productive journal in terms of citations and h-index followed by the journal of travel medicine and infectious diseases occupied as per citations. Most productive countries in terms of contribution of publications in religious tourism are the United states of America followed by the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Australia, and India. The most frequently used terms as keywords are pilgrimage, tourism and religious tourism are commonly used followed by the terms tourist, site, place, hajj, diseases, and Saudi Arabia.

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