A Bibliometric Study and Visualization of Research Trends on Dark Tourism

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Abstract. Bibliometric is a scientific method that studies past developments, current trends, and potential advancement in a particular academic discipline. The study utilized the Bibliometric tool to examine 116 data retrieved from the Scopus database based on inclusion criteria. The study period spans from 2008 to 2023, as there were 0 to1 publications before that timeframe. The Vos viewer and Biblioshine software are utilized to analyze bibliometric indicators related to dark tourism, including authorship collaboration, top publishing journal, prolific authors, leading countries in research output, global collaboration, total citations of countries, and keyword network visualization analysis. The study enhances comprehension of the theoretical and conceptual framework of previous works, providing a base for further study and enriching scholarly discourse on dark tourism, emphasizing its multidisciplinary nature.

Keywords: Dark Tourism, Tourism Industry, Bibliometric

1. Introduction

There is a growing trend of people seeking out novel touristic experiences to fulfill various reasons. This has resulted in the segmentation of the market and the rise of more niche typologies like "dark tourism."[1] The growing interest on the topic resulted into several studies across different fields which led the researcher to study the research trend for the period 2008 to 2023. The scientific study provides significant insights into global publication trends, making it a valuable resource for researchers and industry specialists in numerous sectors.

The phrase "dark tourism" came to the attention of scholars in the early 1990s as they investigated the link between tourist destinations and sites of violence and tragedy.[2] Consequently, researchers and academics have conducted a deluge of studies to probe various facets of Dark Tourism, and bibliometric analysis has emerged as a helpful approach to study and comprehend the research landscape in this domain.

Lennon and Foley are the early advocates of the term "dark Tourism" to delineate the connection between dark tourist sites and a particular fascination with death, the eerie, and the supernatural.[3] Seaton and other scholars have used terms such as 'thanatourism', 'morbid tourism', and 'dark places' to describe this practice.[4] Stone argues that fatalities, disasters, and atrocities in the context of tourism are becoming more common and widespread. This presents chances for visitors who are interested in witnessing both natural and simulated death. [5] Engaging in dark tourism as a means for individuals within a social dimension to address existential concerns and find personal significance. This is seen as crucial for understanding reality, maintaining social harmony, and ensuring the preservation and continuity of one's sense of security and overall well-being.[6] Dark tourism have both academic and psychological importance for tourists, allowing them to gain a deep understanding of historical events [7]. Dark tourism is a recently established practice that involves reflecting on and ingesting the

remains of deceased individuals, so shaping our understanding of mortality and its significance. This concept has been discussed by researchers such as P. R. Stone[8]. In addition, death has social/cultural importance attached to it, in order to enhance historical awareness dark tourism should be linked to the tourist practices, customs, political, and the economical system [9] [10][11]. Consequently, there is an increasing trend of individuals intentionally or as part of a broader leisure plan, visiting different locations, attractions, and exhibitions that showcase death, suffering, brutality, paranormal occurrences, stories, myths, and horrifying events. Currently, Ukraine is actively promoting visits to locations like Bucha and Irpin, where Russia is said to have committed war crimes. Distinguishing the eerie aspects of dark tourism from the importance of safeguarding historical remembrance. [12].

2. Methodology

The Table 1 depicts the methodology adopted for the execution of current work. The stage 1 of the bibliometric analysis involves extraction of total 219 data using keyword "Dark Tourism" OR "Morbid Tourism" OR "Genocide Tourism" OR "Thanatourism". Stage 3 filters the data on the basis of inclusion criteria limited to subject area of Business Management & Accounting, Social Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Economics, Econometrics & Finance, Arts & Humanities, Psychology. Further filtration is done on the basis of document type which includes letter & editorial (1 each), review (7), conference proceedings (4), books (10), book chapters (17) and articles (83), wherein language is limited to English. The last filter is time period of 2008 to 2019 because publications before 2008 were 0-1 per year. Final stage involves 116 documents for analysis using VOSviewer and Biblioshiny. The literature on the concept of Dark Tourism is examined by analyzing publication production, publications by research area the top relevant countries, journals, authors, author collaboration pattern, keyword frequency to determine the research trend on dark tourism.

Table 1. Methodology

Stage 1	Data Extraction	Scopus Database (219 documents)
Stage 2	Keyword Selection	Dark Tourism, Morbid Tourism, Genocide Tourism, Thana Tourism
Stage 3	Inclusion Criteria Selection	**Subject Area:** Business Management & Accounting, Social Sciences, Environmental Sciences, Economics, Econometrics & Finance, Arts & Humanities, Psychology **Document Type:** Letter, Article, Book, Bookchapter, Review, Editorial, Conference Proceedings **Language : English** **Time Limit: 2008- 2023**
Stage 4	Analysis of Extracted Data (116Documents)	**Software**: VOSviewer and Biblioshiny **Analysis:** Authorship collaboration pattern, document type, productive authors, countries production and citation, countries collaboration, relevant journals, most researched keywords.

3.Results Analysis

The study on Dark tourism has gathered considerable amount of attention in the academic industry as initially Foley and Lennon used the phrase Dark Tourism in their most cited work on the topic. [13] Despite such interest there are aspects of it which are not explored in its entirety like relation between notable death and contemporary sociology, study of historical and geopolitical context of genocide, disaster memorial, means of education to learn about genocide, war crimes, work on more sustainable future for dark tourism places under tourist industry.[14] [15]. Though literature shows that countries like Africa, Cambodia, and china have adopted dark tourism in their tourist industry but country like India has no mention in the present literature. India can grow its tourism industry by including dark spots of pre and post independence era.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of authorship, showing that the majority of documents (49) were created by a single author. Conversely, the percentage of foreign collaboration is 19.83%, author collaboration with a mean of 1.85 per document.
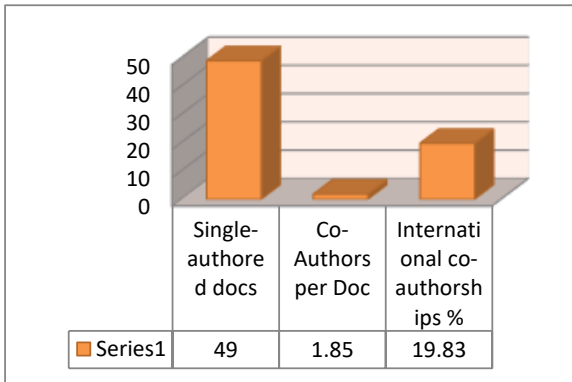

	Single-authored docs	Co-Authors per Doc	International co-authorships %
■ Series1	49	1.85	19.83

Figure 1 Authorship Collaboration Pattern

Figure 2 illustrates the pertinent sources about the subject of review. The majority of publications consist of articles, accounting for 68% of the total. Book chapters make up 7% of the publications, while reviews account for 5%. The smallest category consists of conference papers, which account for 3% of the total. Editorials and letters have coverage of 1% each.
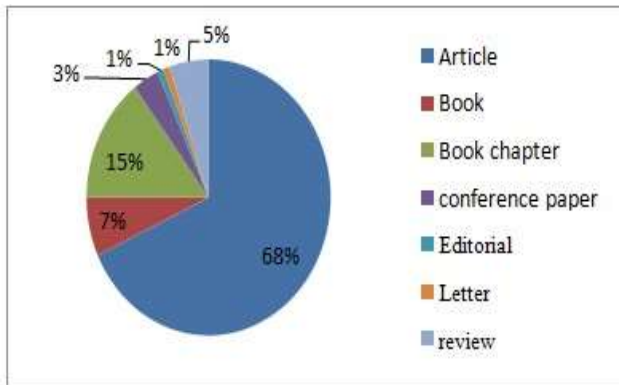
Figure 2 Document Type

Figure 3 displays the authors who have made significant contributions to the current topic area and have been very productive. The authors D.M Buda and Korstanje have each produced a total of 5 documents. Buda's writings have received a total of 408 citations between 2013, 2015, and 2020, while Korstanje's documents have received a personal greatest citation count of 34, specifically in 2015. The second most productive author list includes Sharpley and Mackenzie, both with 4 documents apiece. However, Sharpley has an impressive overall citation count of 979 for the years 2008 and 2009, while Mackenzie's total citation count is far lower, with only 3 citations for 2011 and 4 citations for 2013-2014. The third most productive author is P.R. Stone, who has written 3 documents. Despite this relatively low number, Stone has a commendable overall citation count of 339 for the year 2009. Therefore, it may be concluded that Sharpley and P R Stone are the leading researchers in the field of dark tourism, as evidenced by their extensive citation counts.
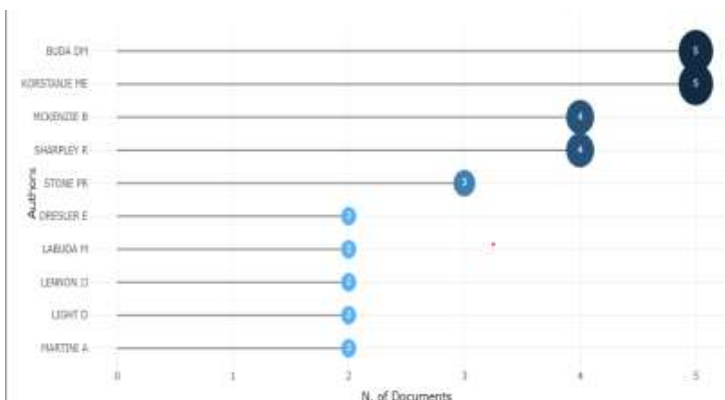

Figure 3 Productive Authors

Countries with the high publications and citations are shown in Figure 4. The major work on Dark tourism is by the UK, with 39 production frequency. Leeds University, West Scotland University, Central Lancashire University, and Durham University are its key partners. UK has 208 TC, third in citations. The Netherlands leads in citations with 400 TC and a production frequency of 10. Overall Canada ranks 2nd with 16 production frequency and 218 TC but international collaboration is low. The US ranks 3rd in output and 4th in TC with 197 TC but has good collaborations with other nations. The US has strong ties to Florida, Kent State, and Las Vegas universities. Despite low citation counts of 13 and 9 TC, Japan, New Zealand, and Slovakia are productive. Low-production nations like Israel, Ireland, and Macedonia have total citation values of 105, 71, and 55. The UK, USA, Canada, and the Netherlands have excellent productivity and citation scores, making them ideal for collaboration.

Figure 4 Countries Production and Total Citation

Table 2 is an extension of the analysis in Figure 4 as it displays the top major collaborating countries around the globe. In terms of work production and frequency of global collaboration United Kingdom top the list as its has collaboration with major nations like Austria, Slovenia, India, Spain wherein USA's frequency of collaboration is maximum with India and Ireland. USA major collaboration is with Argentina, Australia and Ireland. Japan's major collaboration includes Austria, Spain, and Thailand. Netherland has major ties with Italy with major frequency with Newland. The study gives that developed nations like UK majorly and USA is helping countries to enhance research on the topics of Dark Tourism/Genocide tourism/Morbid Tourism as highest cited authors like P R stone, Sharpely have major affiliations from these countries.

Table 2 Countries Collaboration

World Top Collaboration	
UNITED KNGDOM	Austria,Cuba,India,Ireland,Japan, Netherlands,Slovenia,Spain,Switzerland AndUSA
USA	Argentina, Australia,Ireland
JAPAN	Austria,Spain,Thailand
NETHERLANDS	Italy And New Zealand
NEW ZEALAND	Germany And Portugal
ARGENTINA	Bulgaria And Indonesia

The important periodical lists are helpful for aspiring writers to collect material about Dark tourism and choose suitable journals for publishing their work. Figure 5 shows the journals that have been the most productive from 2008 to 2023. In 2023, the journals "Annals of Tourism Research" and "Journal of Heritage Tourism" had the most number of publications, with 7 each. "Annals of Tourism Research" was the only journal publishing on this field from 2008 to 2011, while the other journal began publishing in 2012. The International Journal of Tourism Cities is ranked 2nd on the list, with 6 publications in 2023. The journal started publishing in 2018, with 4 publications in 2019-2020 and 6 publications in 2021-2022. The International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and Hospitality Research are ranked 3rd based on 4 publications in 2023. The journal has been publishing continuously since 2013, with an increasing number of works starting from 2019. In 2023, the journal of tourism geographies has published 4 works, with its initial publication dating back to 2018. When looking for material, prioritize journals with more recent publications to ensure relevance and accuracy. This research identifies the most significant source in relation to achieving the highest production levels and the production timescale.
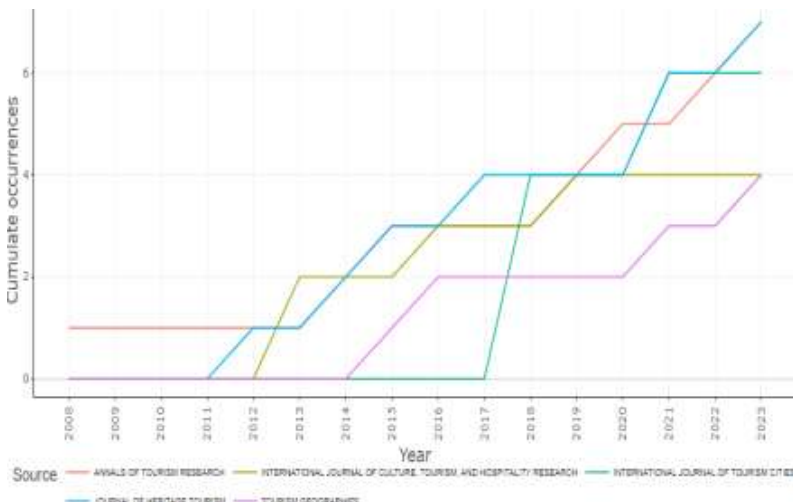

Figure 5 Most Relevant Journals with Timeline

Network visualization in Figure 6 is obtained from the map of common occurrences of keywords of the 582 keywords only 13 keywords met the threshold of appearing 5 times. Dark tourism, tourism and tourist destination are the most occurred with good link strength in the present study. Each keyword is represented by a dot the darker the color and bigger the size more is the frequency of that keyword like in Figure5 dark tourism in the centre is represented in green color and other most associated keywords like thana tourism, heritage tourism fall within the same network forming a cluster.

As mentioned above the network of most occurred keywords is denoted by 3 thematic clusters denoted by different color codes for better understanding:

Cluster 1 (red): Tourism is the major key term with frequency of 22. It has strong connection with other terms like theoretical study which appeared 6 times, emotions, memory and tourist behavior which appeared 5 times each.

Cluster 2 (green): The keyword Dark tourism has most frequent usage with 66 times occurrence it has strongest link with all other keywords in the network though it has strongest collaboration with tourist management and tourist behavior terms as it has shorter distance between them. Other prominent terms within the cluster are heritage tourism (5 times), thana tourism (6 times) and tourism management (6 times).

Cluster 3 (blue): Tourism development and tourist destination are the most used keywords in the cluster with frequency of 10 each. Other terms are death (6 times) with 10 link strength with dark tourism and literature review has frequency of 5.

The figure 6 clearly shows that the study on dark tourism as a tourist attraction within tourism industry has high market. The link of Dark tourism with other terms in the cluster form good research ground for future endeavors.
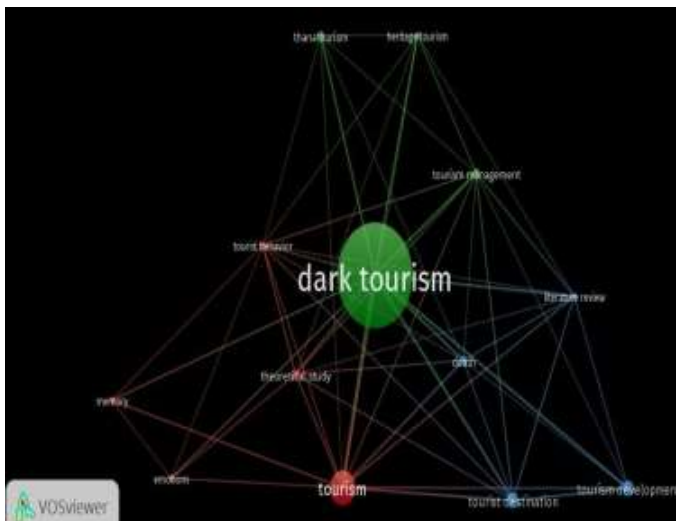

Figure 6 Keyword Co- occurrences

4. Discussion

Dark tourism is a recently developed idea that takes an interdisciplinary approach. Due of its worldwide significance, the subject is studied internationally, with a particular emphasis on Western countries. The relevance extends beyond the tourism industry and holds significant value in the fields of international studies, cultural studies, media and broadcasting, business,

and economics. The results demonstrate the researcher's familiarity with collaborators from across the world, as indicated by the rate of international collaboration among authors. This collaboration is evident in the number of literature contributions in many domains such as arts, culture studies, and international relations.

Authors studying Dark Tourism should be aware of the details of highly regarded publication houses in order to find relevant literature and opportunities for publishing in this field. To identify appropriate journals with a wealth of literature, it is advisable to look for recent publications that are timely and relevant. Figure 5 illustrates the timeline of publications, indicating an increase in research work since 2008 in the annals of tourism research and Journal of heritage tourism. This demonstrates the ongoing relevance of the research area.

Access to data regarding countries that are actively engaged in this field facilitates potential collaboration and interchange of literary ideas. It also offers financing options for researchers working in specific field. The text is enclosed in the [16] tags. The main countries involved in production in this field are the UK, Canada, and the US, as shown in Figure 4. The collaboration between these countries is presented in Table 2.The United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) has significant partnerships with institutions in Austria, the Netherlands, India, and Switzerland. However, the Asian countries such as India, Indonesia, and Japan are merely suppositional. The information is valuable for researchers and market specialists in identifying the primary countries that are promoting the notion of Dark Tourism.

The occurrence of keywords assists in identifying the conceptual architecture within a specific study field and determining the significance of specific articles. Figure 6 depicts the examination of dark tourism within the tourism business, encompassing a range of
thematic investigations such as the exploration of emotions, changes in behavior, and historical occurrences. The significance of the issue extends beyond limitations and encompasses several dimensions in the fields of cultural studies, behavioral sciences, international studies, and history. Promoting the concept of black tourism within the tourist and hospitality industry can be highly lucrative for countries, particularly developing countries of Asia.

The research trend of Dark Tourism through bibliometric review indicates a robust and rapidly changing study landscape marked by extensive multidisciplinary cooperation and a wide range of thematic investigations.

5. Conclusion

Dark Tourism is a recent concept that has gained popularity due to advancements in the tourism business and research in cultural and political studies. Significant interest in the topic has been observed since 2008, with a notable rise in work throughout 2022 and 2023. Global trends analysis is predominantly utilized by Western countries such as the UK, USA, Netherlands, and Canada, whereas Asian and African countries show limited engagement in this area. Asia, Africa and Middle East's history contains numerous gloomy episodes that can serve as significant examples of historical events and ethical dilemmas. The collaboration of these countries with active countries can improve the research opportunities.

The keyword analysis indicates that dark tourism has a multidisciplinary relevance, with commonly used terms including dark tourism, historical tourism, death, tourism development, and memory. This research is significant in the tourism industry as it contributes to types of tourism. Heritage tourism is important for studying the history of various countries, serving as a

valuable educational tool. It also explores the impact of death in various episodes of World War I and II, as well as current situations in Russia and Ukraine, which adds importance to the field of international law and relations. Dark tourism's relation to psychology provides a research opportunity for psychological studies, as tourists with diverse emotions visit these locations and undergo psychological changes after witnessing places associated with gruesome demise and agony.

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