



Sociology of Food Tourism Research Opportunities: A Bibliometric Analysis

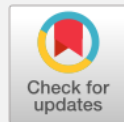
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ABSTRACT

This research aims to formulate sociological research opportunities in food tourism. The study uses the literature review method with bibliometric analysis to find the most discussed issues and opportunities for discussing new issues that have not been widely discussed. This research used VOSViewer software edition 1.6.18 to analyze 3,055 research articles on the ScienceDirect website from 1999-2023. The publication period is divided into three according to the ability to download articles, which can only download 1000 articles in each period. This research analyzed the development of publications, publishers, scope, main keywords, clusters, density visualization maps, overlays, and food tourism sociology research networks. The analysis found that the research on the sociology of food tourism has increased, but sociology journals have not become publishers with the highest number of articles. Research opportunities exist on the topics of policy, inequality, and migration. Opportunities also exist in relating new and old topics to other topics. Previous studies have not studied much of the interactions between actors providing food and other actors forming food tourism destinations. It is suggested that further research covers the topics of policy, inequality, migration, sociological theorizing of food tourism, and interactions between actors in the production of tourist attractions.

Keywords: *Bibliometric Analysis; Food Tourism; Literature Review; Sociology*



1. Introduction

Sociological research focuses on a variety of social conditions. Sociology research domains can include current social conditions, historical sequences, moral issues, policies, structures and institutions in society, behavior and interactions, and social domains in the micro and macro spheres (Collins, 1989). The broad scope of sociological research can be drawn from sociological theory, which covers many research domains in other scientific fields (Ritzer, 1990, Holzhauser & Eggert, 2021). Sociological research has developed in the fields of education (Diamond, 2018; Lingard, 2021), religion (Altglas & Wood, 2018; Jung & Park, 2020), health (Dmitrieva & Frolov, 2020; Henwood & Marent, 2019), even in natural sciences (Joksić, 2022; Zeynep & Sever, 2020).

The broad scope of sociological research opens up research opportunities in tourism. Tourism sociology researchers have proposed a research agenda focusing on diversity and eclecticism (Cohen, 1979). The development of tourism sociology research further shows the dynamics of tourism sociology research. The research direction is towards research on deglobalization and nationalistic movements (Cohen & Cohen, 2017), the social impact of tourism (Movassaghi, 2022), the socio-political context on tourism development (yu Park, 2022), and sustainable tourism from a sociological perspective (Sharma et al., 2021).

One of the fields of tourism is food tourism. Food tourism is an important part of tourism in Indonesia. As part of cultural tourism, Culinary has a product portfolio of 60% of all Indonesian tourism products (Kementerian Pariwisata Republik Indonesia, 2015; 2018). Food tourism development has high potential because Indonesia has many food tourism resources (Komaladewi et al., 2017; Wijaya, 2019). Food tourism has become a city tourist attraction (Purnomo, 2021a). Food tourism can promote sustainable tourism development and community empowerment (Purnomo, 2016, Purnomo, 2021b; Purnomo, 2021c; Purnomo, 2021d).

Research on food tourism in Indonesia has discussed a lot about actors providing culinary services (Darsana & Susanti, 2022; Maranisya, 2021). Previous research has also extensively discussed visitor experience (Agyeiwaah et al., 2019; Widjaja et al., 2020), culinary tourism development (Mahfud et al., 2018; Wardani et al., 2018), and location and resource mapping culinary tourism (Ekowati & Widiyanto, 2021; Wijaya, 2019). A literature review of food tourism research discusses the focus and research objectives of culinary tourism in Indonesia (Darsana & Susanti, 2022; Putra, 2021). Literature reviews on an international scale have discussed the prospects for marketing strategies (Liberato et al., 2020), technological developments in the development of culinary tourism (Schimperna et al., 2021), the development of culinary tourism (Manola & Koufadakis, 2020; Rachão et al., 2019), and developments in studies on food tourism (de Jong et al., 2018; Nair & Mohanty, 2021).

Not many studies examine the development of sociological research in food tourism. Therefore, the research aims to formulate research opportunities for the sociology of food tourism. The research uses bibliometric analysis to find the most widely discussed issues and opportunities for discussing new issues that have not been widely discussed.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Food Tourism

Many terms, such as culinary tourism, gastronomy, gourmet and cuisine, know food tourism. The United World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) uses the term gastronomic tourism. Culinary refers to food (UNWTO & Basque Culinary Center, 2019, p. 8). The Indonesian government uses the term culinary tourism (Purnomo, 2020). The culinary term is considered to refer to the consumption side, so the gastronomic term is more appropriate to describe the process of food production and consumption in tourism (de Jong et al., 2018).

However, culinary terms are also considered more appropriate than gastronomic terms used to describe how to consume food (Batat, 2020; Liberato et al., 2020). Other studies use gastronomic terms to describe the dining experience, tourism development, and even the consumption side of food tourism (Kokkranikal & Carabelli, 2021; Sio et al., 2021; Umedovna & Oktyamovna, 2021). The term cuisine refers to certain types of food in food tourism (Dancausa-Millan et al., 2022; Lai et al., 2019). The cuisine is a type of food and gastronomy; food or culinary is tourism (Alonso & Kok, 2020; Kumar, 2021; Vázquez-Medina & Medina, 2020). However, other studies use cuisine as a form of food tourism (Mohanty & Sadual, 2019). Differences of opinion also exist in gourmet tourism. Gourmet refers to a particular type of food or seasoning, a style of serving food, and also a form of tourism (Dancausa-Millan et al., 2022; Férérol, 2018; Walter et al., 2022).

Hall & Sharples (2003, p. 11) use food tourism as a general term. The difference between culinary, gastronomic, gourmet and cuisine lies on a continuum of attention level and visitor goals. The term gourmet tourism shows the greatest attention of visitors to food, followed by gastronomy, cuisine, and culinary. Food is the main goal of visitors on a gourmet tour. Special visitors come to a place to enjoy certain foods on gastronomy and cuisine tours. Food is part of a culinary tour.

Research on tourism positions food as important because of food consumption during tourist trips (Havadi-Nagy, 2020; Kocevski & Risteski, 2018). Hall & Sharples (2003, p. 11) distinguish between food as tourism and food in tourism. Consumption of food due to hunger during travel is not included in the category of food tourism. Visitors come because there are different foods, referred to as rural or urban tourism, depending on the location of the food.

Referring to previous research, research on food tourism is related to food and food tourism destinations. Food is related to its type, place, culture, making, serving and consumption. Tourism studies view food as an attraction that is a tourist attraction (Kušen, 2010, 2017). A tourist destination or destination refers to a place with a system of attractions built by the activities of various actors (Everett, 2012; Jovicic, 2017; Kušen, 2010; Kušen, 2017; Lee et al., 2019; Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). Food becomes tourism because it experiences various processes involving food, actors and the activities of actors in building tourist attractions (Ellis et al., 2018). Food tourism studies also link food and food tourism destinations with regional development, environmental sustainability, justice, cultural change, politics and other social issues (Purnomo, 2016; Purnomo, 2021a; Purnomo, 2021b; Purnomo, 2021c; Purnomo, 2021d). Therefore, the study of food tourism involves many disciplines outside of tourism.

2.2. Sociology of Food Tourism

Sociology, as a realm of social science, has paid attention to food. Food is eaten and shows social institutions (Moya et al., 2022). Food shows the social status (Ma, 2015). One reflection of the culture of society is food (Murcott, 2019, p. 13; Stajcic, 2013, p. 5). Food consumption and production indicate change, status, differences, and social problems (McIntosh, 1996, p. 9). Food consumption and production are part of a sociological study of how to get, serve, and share (Beardsworth & Keil, 2002). Food in sociology means consumption, transfer and identity (Aktaş-Polat & Polat, 2020).

Everett (2019) proposed that the evolution of food tourism studies occurred in three stages. First, economic studies focus on positivism, production, and profits. Second, the study of geography focuses on place and space. Third, identity and consumption as the focus of cultural and critical studies. Ellis et al. (2018) grouped two focus studies on food tourism, marketing and management, and culture and identity. Food tourism studies focus on policies, digital

technology developments, human agency, urbanization, sustainability, and global networks (de Jong & Varley, 2017; 2018; Everett, 2019; Henderson, 2019).

Before their publication, Lefebvre, a spatial sociology theorist, proposed that tourist attractions were built due to an organized, centralized and planned process (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 84; Thurnell-Read, 2012). This approach proposes that geographically, tourist attractions, including food tourism, occur due to the activities of actors in production and consumption involving many actors. The process results can promote justice or citizen exclusion (Chiodelli, 2013). Through this approach, the study of food tourism enters the realm of critical studies involving cultural, identity, and structural studies. This approach examines unequal interactions between food service providers such as restaurants (Bristow & Jenkins, 2018; Meneguel et al., 2019), local producers (Privitera et al., 2018; Scheyvens & Laeis, 2019), factories (Stoffelen & Vanneste, 2015), street vendors (Henderson, 2019; Pilato et al., 2021), farmers or fishermen (Alonso et al., 2017; Fountain et al., 2021), and governments as planners (Purnomo, 2021b; Purnomo, 2021c; Purnomo, 2021d).

In conclusion, sociology examines food, interactions between actors, the formation process, and the impact of food tourism development. The sociological study of food tourism is very broad because it involves the production and consumption of food, the production of food tourism spots, and the various structural and cultural forces accompanying it.

3. Research Methodology

This research used a literature review method with bibliometric analysis. Article data is processed using the VOSViewer software. Bibliometric analysis with VOSViewer software has been used to examine the development of food tourism research (Anam, 2022; Öğretmenoğlu et al., 2022).

This research carried out the following steps: First, it determined the data selection formula using the word “sociology of food tourism” in articles published on the ScienceDirect website. The publications presented on the ScienceDirect website are publications from 1999-2023. This research chose the entire publishing period. ScienceDirect publishes articles from Elsevier publishers through research articles, reviews, parts of books, and short communications. This research chose ScienceDirect because the website provides the oldest quality articles in the world. The selection of the ScienceDirect website has drawbacks because it does not include articles published outside of Elsevier publishers. This research selected the data only in the research article type journal. The restrictions are made following the research objectives to obtain an overview of the development of sociological research in food tourism. Data collection was carried out on October 20, 2022. The results of the first stage of selection obtained data for 3,055 articles. These results may add up as 2022 and 2023 are not over yet.

Second, the researcher grouped the data period. Grouping is done based on the maximum number of data provisions that can be downloaded (1000 articles). The second stage produces three time periods (Table 6). Third, researchers perform data processing using VosViewer software edition 1.6.18 in each period. Researchers do not only analyze keywords (Zhang & Shaw, 2020). The researcher chose co-word analysis, word analysis of the title, keywords, abstract and content to examine the co-words that appear in the four groups (van Eck & Waltman, 2009). The researcher chose five co-words, meaning there were five mentions of “sociology of food tourism” in the title, keywords, abstract and content. The researcher does not select or eliminate certain keywords at this stage because he wants an overview of the entire article. The number of keywords, co-occurrence, and thresholds for each period are shown in Table 6.

Fourth, perform data analysis with cluster analysis and data visualization in VOSViewer. Researchers compared data visualization with previous research to find out the challenges of sociological research in food tourism.

4. Results

4.1. Development of Publications, Publishers, and Research Scope

A search using the keyword “sociology of food tourism” from 1999-2023 found the highest number of publications in 2021. Sociological research articles on food tourism began to increase in 2006 and decreased drastically in 2023.

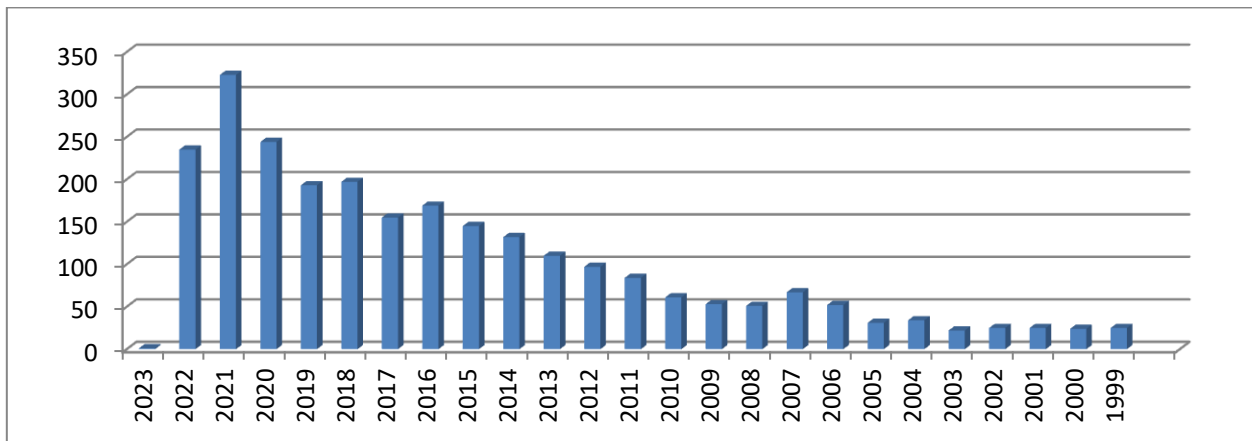


Figure 1. Development of Publications on the Sociology of Food Tourism 1999-2023

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

The journal that publishes the most articles is the Annals of Tourism Research. Most publications are in journals with a tourism focus, followed by journals focusing on spatial (land use, geography, landscape). There is no sociology journal in the list of journals with the highest published articles.

Table 1. Name of the Journal with the Most Publications 1999-2023

No.	Journal Name	Number of Publications	Focus and Scope
1	Annals of Tourism Research	348	Tourism
2	Tourism Management	213	Tourism
3	Journal of Rural Studies	185	Rural
4	International Journal of Hospitality Management	121	Tourism
5	Land Use Policy	101	Land Policy
6	Geoforum	84	Geography
7	Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences	72	Social and Behavior
8	Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	70	Tourism
9	Journal of Business Research	66	Business
10	Tourism Management Perspectives	61	Tourism

No.	Journal Name	Number of Publications	Focus and Scope
11	Journal of Cleaner Production	56	Clean Production
12	Marine Policy	56	Marine Policy
13	World Development	55	World Development
14	Ocean & Coastal Management	47	Ocean and Coastal
15	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management	45	Tourism Destination
16	Futures	35	Future
17	Technological Forecasting and Social Change	34	Weather Technology
18	Ecological Economics	29	Green Economy
19	Environmental Science & Policy	29	Environment
20	Journal of Environmental Management	28	Environment
21	Social Science & Medicine	27	Social Sciences in Medicine
22	Mobilities	26	Human Movement
23	Women's Studies International Forum	25	Women
24	Landscape and Urban Planning	23	Landscape and Planning
25	Political Geography	21	Geography

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

Based on the journal's scope (subject areas), journals with the scope of social sciences publish the most articles. Sociology research is common in social sciences, although it is also possible that it exists in the scope of other journals. However, **Table 2** shows that not a single sociology journal is the publisher of most sociology of food tourism articles.

Table 2. Journal's Scope and Number of Articles

No.	Journal's Scope (Subject Areas)	Number of Articles
1	Social Sciences	1,855
2	Business, Management and Accounting	1,193
3	Environmental Science	829
4	Agricultural and Biological Sciences	595
5	Economics, Econometrics and Finance	284
6	Arts and Humanities	197
7	Energy	170
8	Psychology	163
9	Earth and Planetary Sciences	148
10	Medicine and Dentistry	97

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

4.2. Research Clusters in Each Period

The development of tourism sociology research in the early period (1999-2012) found 2245

keywords, and 36 met the five-keyword occupancy threshold. The tourism keyword has the highest occurrence frequency and total relationship strength. The following keywords do not directly indicate tourism studies. The word sustainability, rural development, agriculture, and the environment can be the focus of development, environment, and agriculture studies. Only in the eleventh keyword is a word in the scope of tourism studies, namely hospitality. Hospitality has been the title of several tourism journals and schools.

Table 3. Keyword, Occurrence, and Total Link Strength Period 1999-2012

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Tourism	22	16
Sustainability	16	11
Rural Development	9	8
Agriculture	7	7
Environment	11	7
Identity	13	7
Biodiversity	10	6
Globalization	6	6
Australia	5	5
Globalisation	5	5
Hospitality	7	5
Migration	6	5
Multifunctionality	7	5
Place	6	5
Policy	8	5
South Africa	5	5
Space	6	5
Values	5	5
Conservation	9	4
Culture	6	4

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

The following period found 3437 keywords, and 76 met the occurrence threshold. The tourism keyword fell to the third position, and the sustainability keyword became the keyword with the highest occurrence frequency and total link strength. The hospitality keyword fell to 18th place. As in the previous period, other keywords do not directly indicate tourism studies.

Table 4. Keyword, Occurrence, and Total Link Strength Period 2013-2018

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Sustainability	30	21
China	25	20
Tourism	26	19
Climate Change	19	17
Mobility	13	14

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Adaptation	9	13
Culture	11	13
Consumption	8	11
Ecosystem Services	23	11
Identity	14	11
Conservation	9	10
Experience	8	10
India	9	10
Place	5	10
Agriculture	6	9
Gender	15	9
Governance	15	9
Hospitality	10	9
Innovation	11	9
Place Attachment	9	9

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

Recent research in 2019-2023 found 4053 keywords, and 80 met the five-keyword occurrence threshold. The tourism keyword fell to the fourth position, and the hospitality keyword rose to the 16th. In the latest research period, some keywords refer directly to food tourism, namely authenticity and restaurant. Both are not included in the 20 keywords with the highest occurrence frequency and total link strength.

Table 5. Keyword, Occurrence, and Total Link Strength Period 2013-2023

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
COVID-19	42	23
Social Media	14	17
Sustainability	28	17
Tourism	21	16
Authenticity	18	14
China	25	13
Resilience	17	13
Adaptation	6	11
Bibliometric Analysis	13	11
Climate Change	16	11
Governance	17	11
Perceptions	7	10
Power	7	10
Sharing Economy	11	10
Gender	15	9
Hospitality	11	9
Content Analysis	7	8

Keyword	Occurrences	Total Link Strength
Ecosystem Services	15	8
Pandemic	9	8
Restaurant	10	8

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

VOSViewer presents cluster data showing the keyword groups that have the strongest co-occurrence. Keywords with the highest frequency of occurrence and total link strength in one cluster indicate center. **Table 6** shows only the restaurant keywords that do not cluster centers.

Cluster one is a collection of keywords with the highest total occurrence frequency and total link strength. Cluster one center did not show keywords directly related to tourism in the three periods.

Table 6. Period, Number of Articles, and Main Topic of the Cluster

Period	Number of Articles	Number of Clusters	Cluster	The Main Topic of Each Cluster
1999-2012	651	6	1	Sustainability
			2	Hospitality
			3	Identity
			4	Environment
			5	Sustainable development
			6	Tourism
2013-2018	908	8	1	Culture
			2	Sustainability
			3	India
			4	Tourism
			5	China
			6	Ecosystem service
			7	Innovation
			8	Mobility
2019-2023	996	9	1	Sustainability
			2	Tourism
			3	Social media
			4	Authenticity
			5	Hospitality
			6	Content analysis
			7	Gender
			8	COVID-19
			9	Climate change

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

4.3. Map of Density Visualization, Overlay Visualization, and Network Visualization

The density visualization map shows red for cluster one. **Figure 2** shows the density of research in the first period related to sustainability, which is the densest or most researched

cluster. Research opportunities that are rarely carried out are in research related to the environment, social capital, and sustainable development.

The density of research on sustainability decreased in the second period and was replaced by research on culture. Attention to research on the environment has increased. Research opportunities rarely carried out the shift to the topics of innovation, government, and human movement.

The third period occurred during a pandemic, so COVID-19 became one of the research topics. The center of research density shifts back to the topic of sustainability. Research on social media, which in the first period was rarely done, has become the focus. The same thing happened to the topic of the government, which is still an opportunity for the second period. Attention to the topic of climate change is starting to exist. New research invitations are in policy, inequality, and migration.



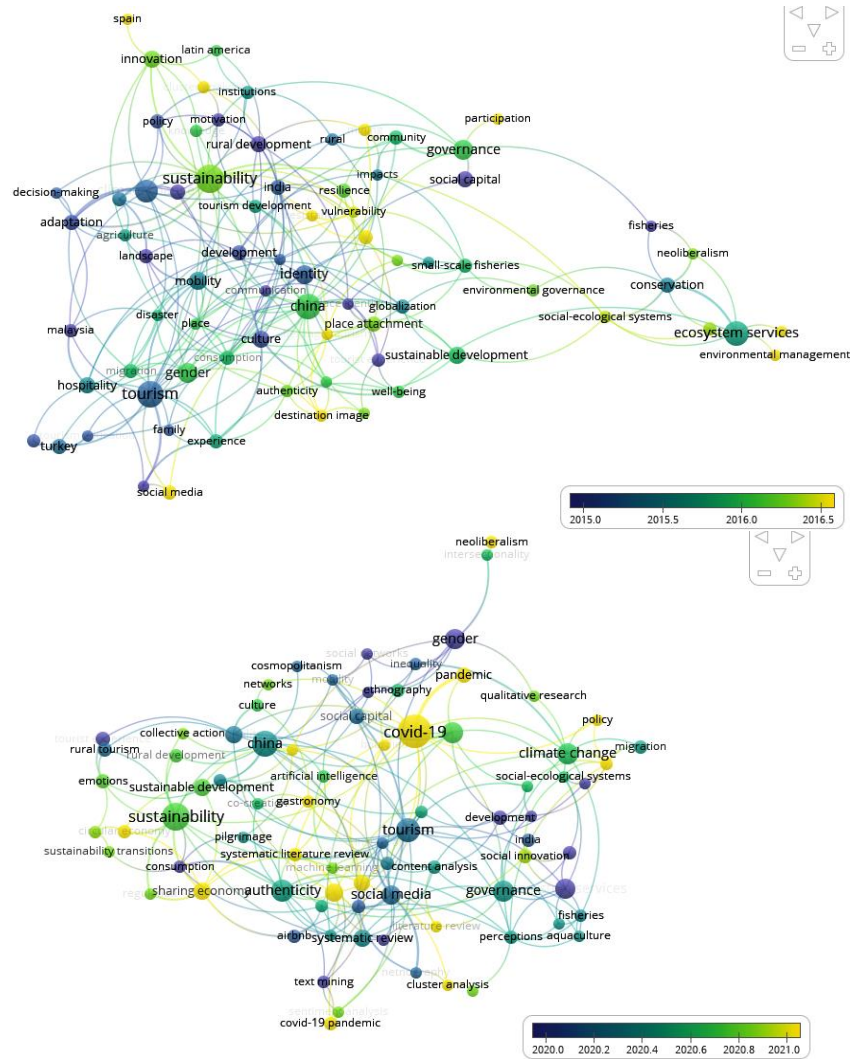


Figure 3. Overlay Visualization Map

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

A network visualization map shows the relationship between keywords. The number of networks between keywords shows the relationship with other keywords. The network visualization map in the first period shows that research on innovation, place, and social capital has the least connection with other keywords. The keywords place are only related to the environment, innovation with tourism, and social capital with sustainable development. Research on participation, environmental management and Spain has at least some relevance to other topics in the second period. The keywords neoliberalism and the covid-19 pandemic are the least associated with other keywords in the third period.

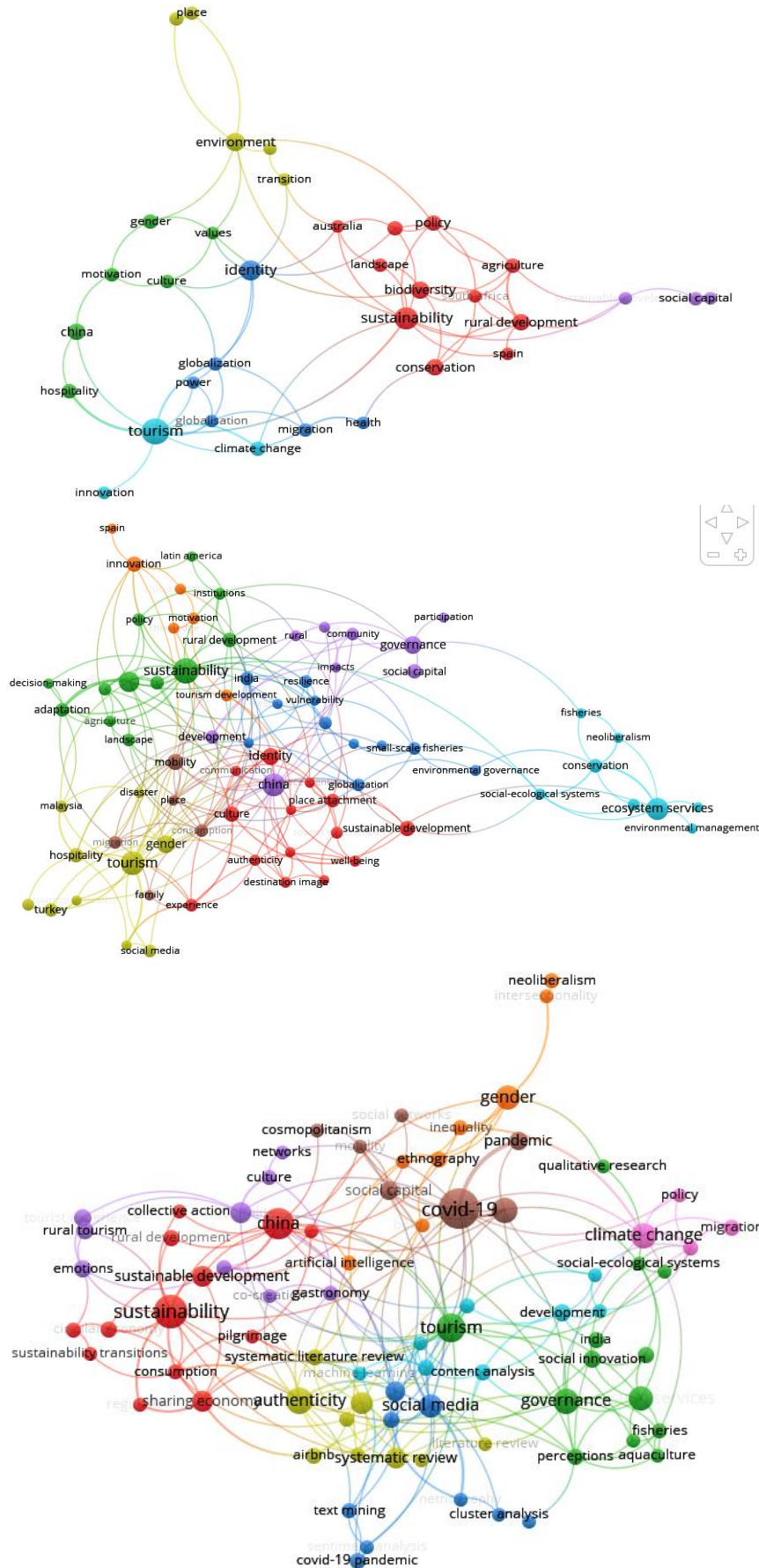


Figure 4. Network Visualization Map

Source: Processed from the ScienceDirect website, 2022

5. Discussion

The results of the bibliometric analysis do not show keywords that refer directly to terms in food tourism. Culinary, gastronomy, gourmet and cuisine are not the main keywords in the three periods. The results of the bibliometric analysis do not show debates about food and food tourism in previous studies (Batat, 2020; Dancausa-Millan et al., 2022; de Jong et al., 2018; Alonso & Kok, 2020; Kokkranikal & Carabelli, 2021; Mohanty & Sadual, 2019; Walter et al., 2022). The emergence of the keywords tourism, hospitality, and restaurant as the main keywords shows that several sociological studies of food tourism on the ScienceDirect website have placed these three topics as a focus. The occurrence of keywords does not indicate the focus of previous research on food tourism destinations and attractions (Everett, 2012; Jovicic, 2017; Kušen, 2010; Kušen, 2017; Lee et al., 2019; Saraniemi & Kylänen, 2011). Most of the focus is related to topics that link food and food tourism destinations with regional development, environmental sustainability, justice, cultural change, politics and other issues (Purnomo, 2016, Purnomo, 2021a; Purnomo, 2021b; Purnomo, 2021c; Purnomo, 2021d).

The emergence of the keywords identity, value, and culture show that studies have focused on the cultural side of food and food tourism (Akteş-Polat & Polat, 2020; Ellis et al., 2018). The side of food as social status and social institutions has not been widely discussed (Ma, 2015; Moya et al., 2022). Likewise, research on policy, digital technology development, urbanization, sustainability, and global networks has received attention (de Jong & Varley, 2017; 2018; Everett, 2019; Henderson, 2019). The attention still lacking is on the topic of agencies or actors. Restaurants and the government have gained attention (Bristow & Jenkins, 2018; Meneguel et al., 2019; Purnomo, 2020; Purnomo, 2021b; Purnomo, 2021c). Concerns about other food service actors have not become a major topic (Alonso et al., 2017; Henderson, 2019; Scheyvens & Laeis, 2019; Stoffelen & Vanneste, 2015).

The appearance of the main keywords also does not directly indicate the topic of food production and tourism. The emergence of the keywords policy, government, gender, inequality, neoliberalism, place, space, and power shows that critical research that examines the structural processes of the formation of tourist attractions already exists (Chiodelli, 2013; Lefebvre, 1991, p. 84; Thurnell-Read, 2012). The absence of keywords regarding actors shows that research on interactions between food service actors in the formation of tourist destinations has not received special attention.

6. Conclusion

The development of publications, publishers, and scope of food tourism sociology research shows that the number of food tourism sociology studies has increased in each period. This increase has not yet entered sociology journals as the main publishers of research results. Regarding the realm of food tourism sociology research, the results of the bibliometric analysis show that sociological research publications still make food tourism an object of research. The development of the sociological theory of food tourism is still an opportunity for further research.

Topic analysis in clusters, density map visualization, overlays and networks show opportunities for diverse research foci of the sociology of food tourism. Food tourism research is not only related to tourism, authenticity, hospitality or restaurants. The results of the bibliometric analysis show invitations to the topics of policy, inequality and migration. Invitations also lie in relating new and old topics to other topics. Foodservice providers' interaction with other actors in forming food tourism destinations has not received special attention. This shows that research into the sociology of food tourism still requires further

studies regarding the interactions between actors in the production of tourist attractions.

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8. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author has declared no potential conflicts of interest concerning this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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