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Research Trend of User-Generated Content in Tourism

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Abstract: The habit of sharing travel experiences on social media is increasingly attached to modern life today, making the theme of User Generated Content (UGC) in tourism never be uninteresting topic to research. Research on UGC in tourism grew 30.31% over the last 10 years. This study uses a bibliometric approach to analyze the database from Scopus with the keyword "User Generated Content" AND Tourism, in the period 2014 – 2023. 504 documents were found from the database and use PRISMA to select, narrowing it down to 321 documents that were used as units of analysis. The application "Biblioshiny R package Bibliometrix" is used for data analysis and visualization. The results showed that the theme with "online", "findings" and "reviews", is still a research trend in the future.

Keyword: UGC, Tourism, Bibliometric, Research Trend

INTRODUCTION

The existence of social media has changed the world of tourism into something that has never been thought of before. A travel experience used to be only stored in diaries and personal photo albums is now spread on social media and has become public consumption. Social media has become a channel to share tourism experiences (Sulistyanto et al., 2022) both good and bad. This experience is shared in the form of content that we now know as User Generated Content (UGC).

UGC is a general term that includes various media and creative content created by users and contributors, disseminated in both digital and non-digital formats (Bruns, 2016). Similarly, according to (Daugherty & Bright, 2010) UGC is media content produced by the public rather than by paid professionals and primarily distributed online. Although the spread of this content has been around for quite some time, the potential for ordinary consumers to communicate with and influence mass audiences only occurred after the advent of internet technology and the development of social media networking sites such as YouTube, Facebook and others. UGC can be developed by individuals or collaboratively, as well as produced, modified, shared, and

consumed. UGC is also related but broader than e-WOM (electronic Word of Mounth) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Wahab in (Netto, 2009) defines Tourism as the activity of deliberate and temporary movement of people from one area to another. Tourism is considered an "invisible" industry whose products are consumed directly when produced. While the World Tourism Organizations defines tourism as a social, cultural and economic phenomenon that involves the movement of people to a country or place outside the environment, usually for personal or business/professional purposes. Tourism can be considered as a combination of individuals, businesses, organizations, or places that provide a travel experience. Tourism is a multidimensional, multifaceted activity that touches many different lives and economic activities (Cooper, 1993). It can be concluded that the tourism phenomenon arises due to travel activities or the movement of people from one place to another.

The content of the travel experience shared on social media has become a reference for other prospective tourists. UGC is generally considered more "honest" than content created by tourist destinations or service providers. Ultimately, technological developments have made UGC one of the sources of information inherent to consumers, and increased consumers' ability to obtain information about products and services (Bertot et al., 2010) which fundamentally changed the patterns of travel and leisure intention and consumption (Hudson & Thal, 2013). This finally makes UGC and tourism an inherent and connected.

The development of research on UGC in tourism is growing every year, the theme studied is not only in the context of tourism science, but also by various other fields of science such as economics, information technology, psychology, and the environment. This shows that the study of UGC in tourism is a multidimensional study.

As it develops rapidly, it is necessary to conduct periodic studies of the literature on UGC in tourism to be able to map and see existing research trends. According to Rousseau in (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017), the study of literature interprets the important role in synthesizing the findings of previous research to effectively use the existing knowledge base to develop insights and provide a data-driven mindset in its practice. We chose to conduct a bibliometric analysis because this analysis has a systematic, transparent, and reproducible approach process based on scientific statistical measurements (Broadus, 1987). According to (Benckendorff & Zehrer, 2013) bibliometric analysis is a statistical analysis of publications that provides a quantitative picture of the academic literature. By using bibliometric data, we gain a broad understanding of how the research pool on a particular field has evolved over time. Data in the database, such as authors, author keywords, abstracts, and other data is analyzed using a variety of approaches. In contrast to other techniques, bibliometrics provide a more objective and reliable analysis. The increasing volume of new research, conceptual developments, and diverse data are the circumstances in which bibliometric analysis is instrumental in providing a structured analysis of large amounts of information, to infer trends over time, themes studied, identify changes in the boundaries of disciplines, also detect the most productive researchers and institutions, and to present the "big picture" of existing research (Crane, 1972).

Previous research from (Marti-Parreño & Gómez-Calvet, 2020) entitled "Social Media and Sustainable Tourism: A Literature Review" conducted a bibliometric analysis of social media and sustainable tourism with metadata sources from the "Web of Science" from 2011 to 2019. This study does not specifically discuss User-Generated Content but social media as a whole. Another study from (Manosso & Ruiz, 2021) entitled "Using sentiment analysis in tourism research: A systematic, bibliometric, and integrative review" conducted a bibliometric analysis of research on online review sentiment towards the branding of tourism products and services. This study takes metadata from Scopus with the range of 2012-2021 and more specifically displays a bibliometric analysis of sentiment analysis rather than User-Generated Content. Sentiment analysis is built from information provided through text (reviews) to help

understand social sentiment towards their brand, product, or service. The main purpose of this paper is to draw an overview of the topic and the use of sentiment analysis approaches in tourism research.

Therefore, we consider it necessary to conduct a study on research on UGC in tourism. We use past 10 years articles as source to maintaining the relevance to the theme being researched. With a bibliometric approach to database of UGC and tourism between 2014 and 2023, hopefully we get better understand the evolution of the study so that it can be use as the basis for determining the direction of further research development. This research opens up opportunities to empower researchers to understand knowledge more thoroughly, identify knowledge gaps, gain novelty and position future research contributions.

METHOD

This research was conducted with a bibliometric approach, which aims to analyze trends that appear in articles and journals, patterns of collaboration in research, and to explore the intellectual structure of certain domains in the literature that still exists (Donthu et al., 2021). Bibliometric indicators can reveal the level of development of a science. The reliability in bibliometric indicators is influenced by two main aspects, namely the number of bibliometric databases and the identification of publications based on the data provided by the authors (Devos, 2011).

This study has 2 main objectives:

1. Knowing the performance of previous research. From this analysis, data will be obtained on journal production per year, the most influential journal sources, which articles are the most cited.
2. Conduct research mapping, in order to produce estimated data on research themes that will still develop in the future.

The metadata collection was taken from the Scopus database with the keyword "User Generated Content" AND Tourism, starting from 2014 to 2023. The Scopus database was chosen because Scopus is a database that indexes the publication of journal articles and literature from various sources by applying strict publication standards. The publication of Scopus-indexed articles has passed the review test by researchers and librarians from various disciplines.

The article that will be used as an analysis unit is a final journal's article. Other publication journals such as books, notes, editorials, reviews, and articles in press were not included in this study. The reason of this restriction is to answer the research objectives. As the result, we collected 504 documents from 270 sources. These 504 documents then filtered using the PRISMA method, resulting in 321 final articles as a unit of analysis. The screening process with the PRISMA model can be seen in figure 1.

PRISMA is an acronym for Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses, a guideline designed to help researchers systematically and transparently report why the review was conducted, what the researcher did, and what was found. The PRISMA model came into use in 2009 and was developed in 2020. PRISMA includes guidance that reflects advances in methods for identifying, selecting, assessing, and synthesizing studies (Page et al., 2021).

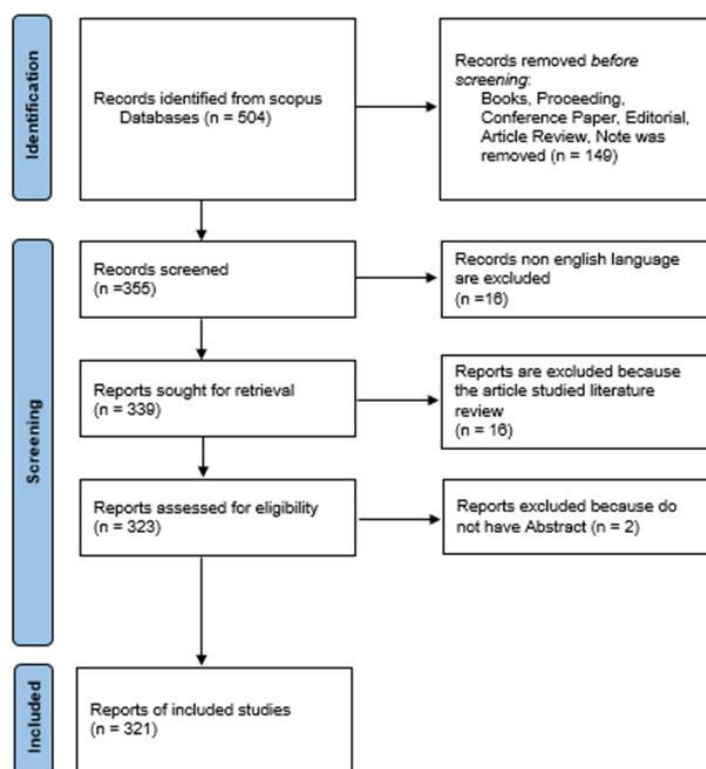


Figure 1. 1. Prisma Model

Source : Prepared by Author

Data analysis and visualization are carried out with the help of the Biblioshiny app, an application based on the R programming language. It is run in the R programming language, which is an open sources ecosystem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To be able to map and understand research trends, it is important to see which research articles are the most contributing, publisher, abstract of all documents used as a unit of analysis. Figure 2 illustrates an overview of the results of the initial database collected after selection through PRISMA which will be used as a unit of analysis.



Figure 2. Overview of Selected Database Sources

Sources : Prepared by Author using Biblioshiny

Figure 2 shows that the data analysis unit consists of 321 articles, coming from 161 publishers written by a combined 843 researchers. During the 2014-2023 period, research on this theme has grown by an average of 30.31% per year and an average of 28.49 citations per document.

Annual Scientific Production

In 2014, there were only 6 publications on research with the theme of UGC in tourism, then increased to 65 publications throughout 2023. This figure shows that the theme of this research is in great demand and developing. Figure 3 shows a graph of the number of publications that have increased sharply over the past 10 years, in line with the development of both the tourism industry and the existence of social media that cannot be separated from our daily lives.

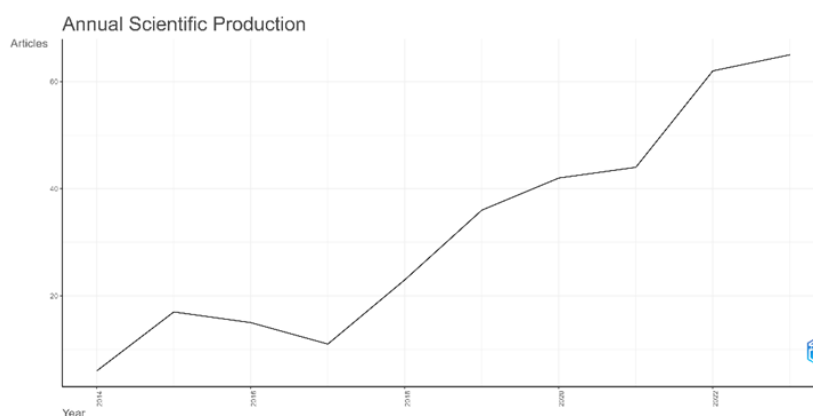


Figure 3. Number of UGC in Tourism Publications.

Sources : Prepared by Author using Biblioshiny

Most Influential Source

Figure 4 shows the 11 most influential sources that are in zone 1 according to Bradford's Law. Bradford's Law divides the distribution of research articles with certain themes into 3 zones equally. Zone 1 or core zone is the main zone where the Journal publishes many research articles with related themes. Next is zone 2 or average zone as a zone with a moderate/medium number of publications, followed by zone 3 or tail zone which publishes few articles with related themes (Nash et al., 2012). Journals that are in the core zone can be used as the main choice in finding references from previous research with the theme of UGC in tourism.

In the last 10 years, the Journal "Tourism Management" is the most productive journal to publish research on UGC in tourism with a total of 19 articles, and has been cited 2,553 times by other articles since 2014.

Interesting facts from the Sustainability Journal (Switzerland), this journal is a journal whose main focus is in the field of sustainability of human life such as the environment, culture, economy and society but is the second most productive journal that publishes research on UGC in tourism, it can even be said to be the most productive since 2018 with the publication of 18 articles. Another interesting thing is that there are also journals related to technology, because UGC is closely related to information technology and internet networks.

NO	SOURCE	Bradford's Law	TOTAL PUBLICATION (TP)	TOTAL CITATION (TC)	FIRST YEAR PUBLICATION (PY)
1	TOURISM MANAGEMENT	Zone 1	19	2553	2014
2	SUSTAINABILITY (SWITZERLAND)	Zone 1	18	240	2018
3	JOURNAL OF DESTINATION MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT	Zone 1	10	622	2015
4	JOURNAL OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM TECHNOLOGY	Zone 1	10	213	2014
5	CURRENT ISSUES IN TOURISM	Zone 1	9	210	2020
6	JOURNAL OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT	Zone 1	9	259	2019
7	JOURNAL OF TRAVEL RESEARCH	Zone 1	7	333	2019
8	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CONTEMPORARY HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT	Zone 1	6	429	2015
9	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF TOURISM CITIES	Zone 1	6	82	2017
10	JOURNAL OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM	Zone 1	6	102	2020
11	TOURISM MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES	Zone 1	6	249	2018

Figure 4. Most Influential Sources.

Sources : Prepared by Author

Most Cited Documents

Citations analysis is carry out by connecting between two elements, where one element cites the other element (Smith, 1981). The closer the element, the stronger the relationship. The higher the number of citations a writer has, the more likely it is to cite and give direction to new research (Sulistyanto & Jamil, 2023). Figure 5 shows the 10 most globally cited documents. Global citations illustrate that these documents are also cited extensively by other studies outside the context of the theme of UGC and tourism (Batista et al., 2023).

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER	PUBLICATION YEAR	TOTAL CITATION	TC PER YEAR	TOPIC
MUNAR AM, JACOBSEN	Motivations for sharing tourism experiences through social media	Tourism Management	2014	683	62	Tourism experience sharing in social media
MARINE-ROIG E, CLAVE	Tourism analytics with massive user-generated content: A case study of Barcelona	Journal of Destination Marketing & Management	2015	253	25	Big data analytics to studying the online image via social media
MARIANI MM, DI FELICE	Facebook as a destination marketing tool: Evidence from Italian regional Destination Management Organizations	Tourism Management	2016	247	27	Using Social Media to promote destinations, and improves on the current metrics for capturing user engagement. Intention to share knowledge of Online Social Networks
BILGIHAN A, ET AL	Consumer perception of knowledge-sharing in travel-related Online Social Networks	Tourism Management	2016	232	26	Intention to share knowledge of Online Social Networks
TSENG C, ET AL	Travel blogs on China as a destination image formation agent: A qualitative analysis using Leximancer	Tourism Management	2015	223	22	Explored the role of blogs as a destination image formation agent
ZHOU L, ET AL	Refreshing hotel satisfaction studies by reconfiguring customer review data	International Journal of Hospitality Management	2014	220	20	Online hotel reviews about customer satisfaction
NARANGAJAVANA Y, ET AL	The influence of social media in creating expectations: An empirical study for a tourist destination	Annals of Tourism Research	2017	209	26	The use of UGC to receive tourist information and its effect on tourists' expectations.
HERRERO, ET AL	Explaining the adoption of social networks sites for sharing user-generated content: A revision of the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2)	Computers in Human Behaviour	2017	190	24	Acceptance and Use of Technology
LITVIN SW, ET AL	A retrospective view of electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	2018	177	25	eWOM in hospitality and tourism industry
LLOO RÁ-RIERA I, ET AL	A multidimensional analysis of the information sources construct and its relevance for destination image formation	Tourism Management	2015	173	17	Destination image

Figure 5. Most Global Cited Documents.

Source : Prepared by Author

The results of the bibliometric analysis show that the most cited research on UGC in tourism since 2014 is a study from (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014) entitled "Motivations for sharing tourism experiences through social media". This study emphasizes how the increasing role of UGC in tourism activities that affects businesses and tourist destinations. This study explores tourists' motivation towards social media and their desire to share their travel experiences

through various social media. The results show that there is a dominance of visual content, as well as the relevance of altruistic motivations and related communities. This research also reveals that the practice of sharing through social media emerged as a form of social skills and also emotional support.

UGC research in Tourism also shows how UGC plays a role in the management and marketing of a tourist destination, as discussed by research from (Mariani et al., 2016) entitled "Facebook as a destination marketing tool: Evidence from Italian regional Destination Management Organizations". The study looks at how travel destination managers in Italy are strategically using Facebook to promote and market their destinations, and improve current metrics to capture user engagement. Next research from (Bilgihan et al., 2016) entitled "Consumer perception of knowledge-sharing in travel-related Online Social Networks" discusses how tourists trust online reviews to get information and knowledge when making travel decisions. Research from (L. Zhou et al., 2014) entitled "Refreshing hotel satisfaction studies by reconfiguring customer review data" discusses how UGC and online reviews provide a comparative picture of traveler satisfaction. Research from (Narangajavana et al., 2017) entitled "The influence of social media in creating expectations. An empirical study for a tourist destination" investigates the underlying causes of the use of UGC in receiving tourist information and what effect it has on tourist expectations.

Three of the 10 most cited studies discussed destination images. The first study written by (Roig & Clavé, 2015) entitled "Tourism analytics with massive user-generated content: A case study of Barcelona" analyzing big data from social media to find out the image of the online destination of the city of Barcelona. The study analyzed travel blogs and online travel reviews written in English by travelers who have visited the city in the past 10 years. The results are UGC data information is very useful in the application of business intelligence in destination management, both in the context of developing and assessing marketing strategies. This strengthens Barcelona's ability to develop the city as a destination with the right concept and strategy. Next study from (Tseng et al., 2015) entitled "Travel blogs on China as a destination image formation agent: A qualitative analysis using Leximancer" explores how the role of travel blogs as eWOM functions as an image forming agent for tourism destinations in China. The content on the blog that comes from English-speaking countries has helped build a positive image of tourism destinations among international tourists. Another study, titled "A multidimensional analysis of the information sources construct and its relevance for destination image formation" (Llodrà et al., 2015), also discusses how the image of a tourist destination often depends on information and content generated by tourists (UGC).

Research from (Litvin et al., 2018) entitled "A retrospective view of electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management" discusses the impact of eWOM in the hospitality and tourism industry and the changes it causes. Research from (Herrero et al., 2017) entitled "Explaining the adoption of social networks sites for sharing user-generated content: A revision of the UTAUT2" also discusses the sharing experience, but from the point of view of technological use.

Corpus Text

Corpus text assumes that words that often appear together have a thematic relationship with each other (Inamdar et al., 2020) in (Sulistyanto & Jamil, 2023). In this corpus text, you will see the frequency of words that often appear in the abstract. To better understand the direction of the research theme, the researcher excluded the phrases "tourism", "UGC User Generated Content", and "social media". The researcher also excluded phrases that have the meaning of research such as "analysis", "study" and "research".

Figure 6 shows the frequency of phrases that appear most frequently in the alphabet. The 3 most frequently appearing phrases are "tourist", "destinations", "experiences". These studies

have shown how the role of tourist experience in UGC shapes the impression of a destination which will later become information for other tourists. The increasing attachment of social media in daily life plays a major role in shaping the impression of tourist destinations (Ma et al., 2018). The content that tourists share through social media (UGC) affects the perception and intention of tourists to travel (Hudson & Thal, 2013) and contributes to the overall destination image.



Figure 6. Word Cloud

Sources : Prepared by Author using Biblioshiny

The phrases "reviews", "online", and "data" also often appear, showing that online reviews are something that tourists pay great attention to before making decisions both to travel and choose a tourism service provider (Ruiz, 2021).

Co-occurrence Analysis

Co-occurrence analysis calculates the appearance of entities in a group of units. In bibliometrics, co-occurrence analysis is used to examine the relationship between two pieces of bibliographic data that appear in the article (X. Zhou et al., 2022). Co-occurrence analysis of abstracts helps us to explore conceptual networks and trends of research themes. The abstract indicates the content of an article, so this analysis can also show the evolution of research themes related to social media and tourism

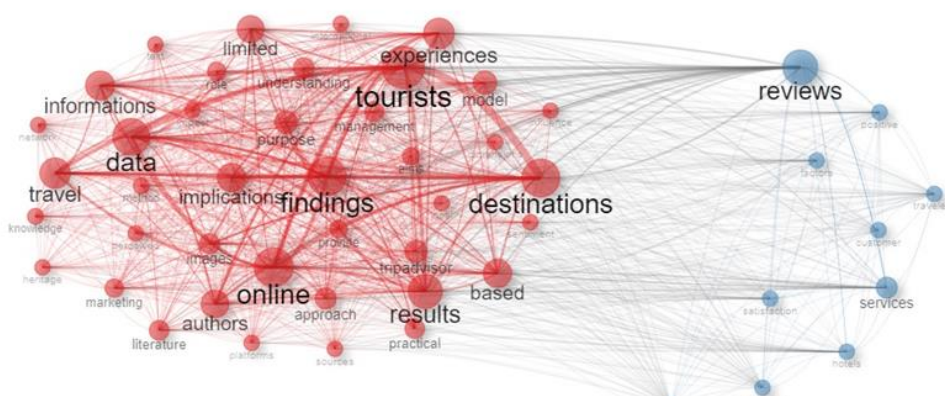


Figure 7. Phrase Cooccurrence.

Source : Prepared by Author using Biblioshiny

Congruent with this explanation, Figure 7 shows phrases such as "destinations", "tourist", "online" being one of the main clusters in the research theme. Other clusters are "reviews", "travelers", "services" and others.

Thematic Map

There are various ways to analyze and visualize academic research themes, one of which is with thematic maps (Jingyuan & Muñoz, 2020). The thematic map divides the cluster distribution into four quadrants, and the coordinate system consists of centrality (x-axis) and density (y-axis). "Centrality" measures the intensity of its relations with other clusters, the more and stronger the links, thus indicating that the cluster is a research "issues" that is considered important by the scientific community, while "density" characterizes the strength of the links that bind the words that make a cluster. The stronger this link, the more research issues that correspond to the cluster constitute a coherent and integrated whole (Callon et al., 1991). In simple terms, "centrality" indicates the number of citations to the theme, while "density" indicates the number of research publications on the theme. Thus, the research theme is classified in 4 quadrants with these two values, each representing a specific theme module, and it will be displayed from the relevant abstracts of the bibliography.

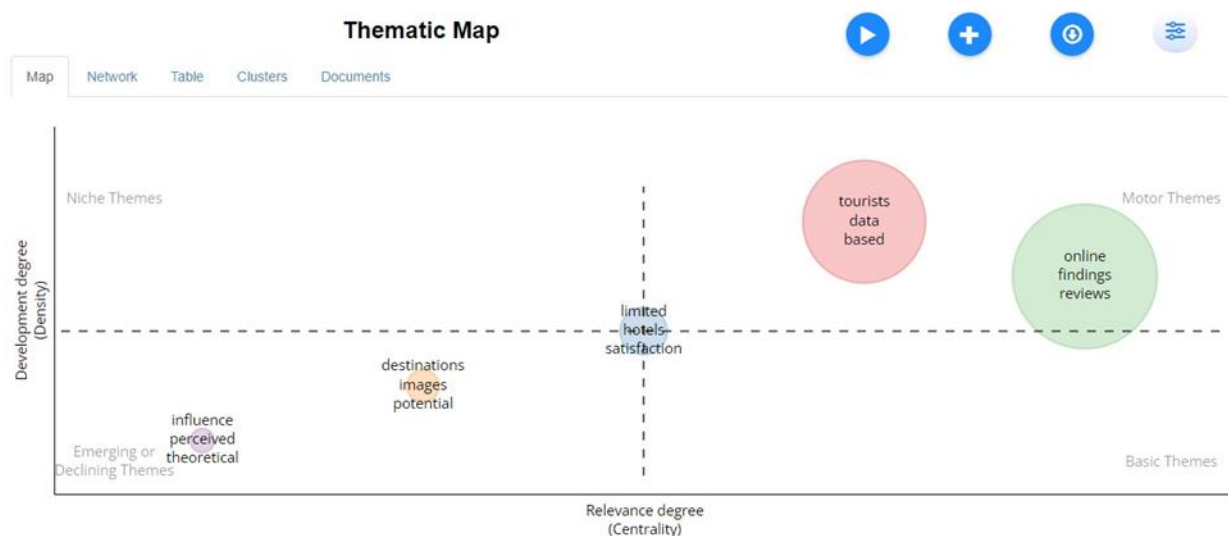


Figure 8. Thematic Map

Source : Prepared by Author using Biblioshiny

There are no themes in quadrant 2 "niche themes" (top left), nor quadrant 4 "basic themes" (bottom right). Right in the middle of the quadrant is a theme with the phrases "limited", "hotels" and "satisfaction". In the 3rd quadrant of "emerging or declining themes" (bottom left position) there are "influence", "perceived" and "theoretical" themes. The theme in this quadrant has two possibilities, either it is no longer interesting to research, or it is new research that has not been widely published.

Meanwhile, in quadrant 1 (upper right position) which is also called "motor themes" contains "tourist", "data", "based" theme clusters, which means that this theme cluster has been widely cited by research on other theme clusters and there have been many publications with this theme. Still in quadrant 1 there are other clusters with themes "online", "findings" and "reviews" and their positions are more to the right and more downwards, meaning that this cluster has fewer publications but has greater centrality or influence on other research themes. These themes are relatively still going to be a trend for future research

CONCLUSION

In general, theme of UGC in tourism has always been an interesting thing to research, this is proven by the rapid development of research and its wide spread. Research on this theme is interesting because it is very attached to daily life, this is evidenced by the soaring research due to the increasing use of social media and changing the overall tourism pattern.

This research takes the theme of UGC in tourism in a broad context, so that the conclusions produced are general. However, this study can still describe thematic mapping and research trends that are still and will develop in the future.

The limitation of this research lies in the source of the database that only takes from Scopus. Future research may be able to explore other database sources to enrich the research findings.

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