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Stakeholder Participation in Rural Tourism Development and Sustainability: Trends and Emerging Research Directions

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Abstract

This study aims to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis of the academic literature focusing on stakeholder participation in rural tourism development and sustainability. Peer-reviewed articles published between 2000 and 2024 were retrieved from the Web of Science and Scopus databases. Bibliometric performance indicators and science mapping techniques were applied to examine publication trends, citation structures, keyword co-occurrence networks, and thematic clusters. The findings reveal a substantial increase in scholarly interest after 2015, particularly in relation to sustainability, local residents' attitudes, tourist behavior, and rural development. Keyword co-occurrence analysis indicates that research has largely concentrated on the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of rural tourism impacts. Citation analysis further demonstrates that studies addressing community-based tourism, local support, and participation intention have generated significant academic influence. The results also show that empirical research is predominantly conducted in developing countries, while region-specific studies in Turkey remain relatively limited. By mapping the intellectual structure and thematic evolution of the field, this study identifies emerging research directions and highlights regional gaps that require further investigation in order to strengthen sustainable rural tourism policies and stakeholder engagement strategies.

Keywords: bibliometric analysis; rural development; rural tourism; stakeholder participation; sustainability