



A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON STUDIES ON SUSTAINABILITY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE IN TOURISM *

TURİZM ALANINDA SÜRDÜRÜLEBİLİRLİK VE KÜLTÜREL MİRAS İLE İLGİLİ YAPILAN ÇALIŞMALARLA İLİŞKİN SİSTEMATİK BİR LİTERATÜR TARAMASI

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Abstract: Cultural heritage, as the subject of tourism activities, gives destinations a competitive advantage in terms of tourism. With the sustainability approach, they also offer solutions to certain problems in the field of tourism. For this reason, both cultural heritage and sustainability approaches are two important issues that can be associated with each other in the field of tourism. From this point of view, in this research, it is aimed to determine the current situation of the international literature on sustainability and cultural heritage and to make suggestions to guide the national studies to be carried out. In this research, the studies published with the keywords 'Sustainability' and 'Cultural Heritage' in the Web of Science database between 2000-2022 were analyzed using the systematic literature review method. Within the range of these criteria, it was determined that there were 109 studies and 32 of these studies were carried out in the field of tourism. The findings show that the number of studies has increased significantly since 2019, however, there are few studies based on theory. In addition, it was determined that data was collected by questionnaire, interview method, mixed quantitative data collection method. The majority of the research was published by *Sustainability* journal; and half of the papers analyzed were case studies.

Keywords: Sustainability, Cultural heritage, Tourism, systematic Literature Review, Web of Science

Özet: Kültürel miras, turizm faaliyetlerine konu olarak destinasyonlara rekabet avantajı kazandırmaktadır. Sürdürülebilirlik yaklaşımı esas alındığında turizm ile ilgili belirli sorunlara da çözüm sunmaktadır. Bu nedenle turizm alanında hem kültürel miras hem de sürdürülebilirlik yaklaşımı birbiri ile ilişkilendirilebilecek iki önemli konu olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Buradan hareketle, bu araştırmada sürdürülebilirlik ve kültürel miras ile ilgili uluslararası alanyazının mevcut durumunun belirlenmesi ve yapılacak ulusal çalışmalara yön gösterici önerilerde bulunulması amaçlanmaktadır. Derleme olarak gerçekleştirilen bu çalışmada 2000-2022 yılları arasında Web of Science veri tabanında 'Sürdürülebilirlik' ve 'Kültürel Miras' anahtar kelimeleriyle yayınlanmış çalışmalar sistematik literatür taraması yöntemi ile analiz edilmiştir. Bu kriterler doğrultusunda 109 çalışmanın olduğu, bu çalışmaların 32 tanesinin turizm alanında gerçekleştirildiği belirlenmiştir. Bulgular, çalışmaların 2019 yılından itibaren önemli ölçüde arttığını ve teoriye dayandırılmış az sayıda çalışmanın olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca yapılan araştırmalarda anket, görüşme yöntemi, karma nicel veri toplama yöntemi ile verilerin toplandığı, en fazla araştırmanın *Sustainability* dergisinde yayınlandığı, incelenen araştırmaların yarısının vaka çalışması olduğu belirlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sürdürülebilirlik, Kültürel miras, Turizm, Sistematik literatür taraması, Web of science

* Produced from PhD research of the author.

INTRODUCTION

The terms ‘sustainability’ and ‘cultural heritage’ have been visible in literature in the last years of the 20th century, and the number of scientists working in these fields is increasing day by day, which enables scientific outputs in this field to diversify exponentially (Açııcı, Ertaş, and Sönmez, 2017; Chhabra, 2010; Demir, Pelit, and Türkoğlu, 2018; Du Cros, 2001; Feng, Chiou and Wang, 2021; Ghirardello, Walder, de Rachewitz, Erschbamer, 2022; Güneş, Pekerşen, Nizamlioğlu, and Ünüvar, 2019; Harfst, Sandriester, and Fischer, 2021; Hidalgo- Giralt, Palacios-Garcia, Barrado-Timon, and Rodriguez-Esteban, 2021; Karapınar and Barakazı, 2017; Kaşlı, Cankul, Köz and Ekici, 2015; Kim, Whitford, and Arcodia, 2019; Loulanski and Loulanski, 2011; Megeirhi, Woosnam, Ribeiro, Ramkissoon and Denley, 2020; Roslan, Ramli, Razman, Asyraf, Ishak, Ilyas and Nurazzi, 2021; Özgüt, Yücelen, Güden, and Ilkhanizadeh, 2022; Pekerşen, Güneş, and Selçuk, 2019; Sangchumngong and Kozak, 2020; Varol, 2020; Yeniasır and Gökbulut, 2018). Due to the various sub-divisions determined by different researchers, the wide scope of both terms, and their suitability for interdisciplinary studies, there are various studies on these subjects. However, sustainability and cultural heritage are of special importance in terms of tourism (Du Cros, 2001; Karapınar and Barakazı, 2017) since various scientists have believed for many years that the negative effects of tourism activities can be reduced by these approaches. In addition, cultural heritage, both intangible and tangible, plays a positive role in ensuring sustainability and sustainable development (Pereira Roders and Von Oers, 2011). Addressing Goal 11 of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development launched by the United Nations, Nocca (2017) and Lerario (2022) specifically argue that cultural heritage will have a critical impact on the sustainable development process, which makes it a real drive for sustainability (Antonini, Favaretto ve Pretelli, 2021). On the other hand, sustainability provides policymakers with a framework on how to preserve heritage values and hand them down to next generations. Considering all these reasons, this study aims to analyze the scientific studies made with the keywords ‘*Sustainability*’ and ‘*Cultural heritage*’ related to tourism between the years 2000-2022 with the method of systematic literature review and reveal systematic data about the studies. It is believed that the framework that will be created with this data will provide a macro-level perspective for scientists.

In order to reach higher sample numbers, international databases are preferred. *Web of Science*, with a large number of high-impact scientific materials (Lopez, Moreno-Guerrero, Lopez Nunez, and Pozo Sanchez, 2019), is one of the most widespread databases internationally. Also, it historically has a wider scope, and its functionality is higher than that of other databases (Norris and Oppenheim, 2007). For these reasons, the *Web of Science* database was preferred. In addition, it is believed that the use of the systematic literature review method in this research increases the contribution of this study to the literature in terms of research methodology. A systematic literature review stands out as an innovative and different method when compared to other research methods in the literature. It has been found that the studies carried out with this method constitute a source for different scientific research and projects. “*The findings synthesized from previous studies with a systematic literature review guide researchers and practitioners both theoretically and practically*” (Yavuz, 2022, p. 359). Additionally, no study was found related to the subject of this study conducted through a systematic literature review. Therefore, the article is believed to provide scholars working in this field with a deeper understanding of the subject. In this respect, it is thought that the study has original value and will contribute to the literature.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Sustainability and Tourism

The natural resources used by humans on our planet are limited, and irreversible damage is inflicted on these resources depending on the way of use. Scientists conduct research and propose various strategies to eliminate or minimize these adverse effects of humans. The first meetings where natural resources, the environment, and sustainability were brought to the agenda at the international level were the conferences held in Stockholm and Paris in 1972. Emphasizing the negative effects on the environment in these conferences, it was stated that development

strategies should be designed in a way that takes the environment into account, i.e., as 'in a sustainable way' (Çavuş and Tanrısevdi, 2000). This expression is often used together with the term 'Development' in the literature. The European Commission defines the term "Sustainable development" as "meeting the needs of the present while ensuring that future generations can meet their own needs" (European Commission, 2023). Similarly, the United Nations Organization describes the same term as "seeking to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability to meet those of the future" (United Nations, 1987, p. 39). Based on these explanations, it can be stated that the wellbeing of future generations is taken into account in the activities carried out within the scope of development. For this reason, it is possible to define the term 'sustainability' as 'minimizing the negative impact on the environment during economic and social activities and meeting the needs by taking into account future generations'.

With the Brundtland Report published by the United Nations in 1987, the term of sustainability began to be associated with tourism. Based on the definitions given above, there are three main elements to adapting the concept of sustainability to tourism: *Tourist, tourism attraction and tourism industry*. "There will need to continue to be people who wish to visit elsewhere. There will need to continue to be 'other places or sites that allow access for visitors. Third, there will need to be a continuing role for some people to be recompensed (usually in a monetary form) for bringing these previous two domains together (Kuhn, 2007, p. 289). For touristic destinations, collaboration among stakeholders in tourism, including visitors, governmental bodies, policymakers, tourism businesses, and other related groups, is required to ensure sustainability (McGrath et al., 2020). It can be achieved with help of an equal contribution of each of the abovementioned stakeholders to the process. If any of these is damaged in a way that threatens its existence in the process, it may cause a move away from the targets of sustainability.

For destinations, sustainable tourism involves multiple levels of stakeholders whose needs and wants must be taken into consideration in tourism visioning, planning, development, management, and marketing. Multi-stakeholder perspectives of tourism communities can include visitors, central government, local government, public policy makers, destination planners and managers, tourism entrepreneurs and business operators and their staff, as well as local communities including residents, special interest groups, and indigenous traditional owners of the land.

One of the important steps taken to develop an understanding of sustainable tourism was the 1992 United Nations Conference in Rio de Janeiro. In the report titled *Agenda 21*, the relationship between sustainable development and tourism was revealed in more detail than in previous years (United Nations, 1992). The United Nations World Tourism Organization defines the concept of sustainable tourism that expresses this relationship as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities" (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2023). In conclusion, it is understood from the above-mentioned developments that sustainable tourism activities are conducted for the wellbeing of future generations.

Considering the human factor in tourism activities, the importance of the sustainability approach is better understood. The effects of tourists on the environment in the destination they visit (for example, the destruction of the environment) also have negative consequences for other elements in the tourism system (Yoon, Gürsoy and Chen, 2001, p. 370). In other words, the effects on the environment cause a decrease in the support given by the local people or administrations to tourism activities due to the consequences it creates. This situation leads to the formation of indirect negative effects as well as direct negative effects and causes the multidimensional negative effects of tourism activities. Therefore, the sustainability approach is of critical importance in terms of minimizing all these effects in tourism activities and is expected to engage visitors in sustainable processes with the help of policymakers and their strategic decisions.

Cultural Heritage and Tourism

The term of heritage is defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as "*Our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations,*" and this is not limited to concrete collections (monuments or objects); it also includes oral traditions, social practices and rituals, and practices and customs related to nature and the universe (UNESCO, 2023). For this reason, it is divided into tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the literature. There are common prerequisites for values to be considered heritage in both the tangible and intangible fields. "*In order for a value to be considered cultural heritage, it has to come from the past and must be considered important in order to be moved to the future for any or more reasons*" (Yalçınkaya and Güzel, 2022, p. 178). Then, they are adopted and protected as cultural heritage.

Roders and Van Oers (2011, p. 6) claim that cultural heritage is as diverse as the human population in the universe. This diversity is due to the unique creation of man by nature and therefore the differentiation of his knowledge, skills, and experiences. This situation also enriches the cultural values of individuals and communities. At the end of the 20th century, it was understood that these values were important in terms of developing the sense of belonging of individuals and giving them an identity in the constantly-changing universe. The low level of awareness and consciousness about cultural heritage reveals the necessity of protecting cultural heritage values and passing them on to future generations. In this process, led by UNESCO, world and cultural heritage lists were created, and heritage values that were considered important worldwide and that fulfilled the predetermined standards by their governments have been taken under protection within the scope of these lists. Later on, it was understood that intangible values were as important as tangible values, therefore, the Convention for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage was signed by UNESCO in 2003. The common goal of all these steps is to ensure the sustainability of cultural heritage values and transfer them to future generations by protecting them.

Cultural heritage values are regarded as important resources in terms of ensuring the diversity of tourism activities and increasing the competitiveness of destinations in the sector. Being aware of this situation, many scholars have carried out scientific studies on the relationship between tourism and cultural heritage (Çetin, 2010; Hughes and Carlsen, 2010; Alberti and Giusti, 2012; Hall, Baird, James, and Ram, 2016; Chung, Lee, Kim, et al. Koo, 2018; Sarı, 2022). In these studies, the importance of cultural heritage values in terms of tourism activities is emphasized. In addition to these studies in the tourism literature, there are both national and international studies in which cultural heritage is evaluated together with the concept of sustainability (Açııcı, Ertaş, and Sönmez, 2017; Chhabra, 2010; Demir, Pelit, and Türkoğlu, 2018; Du Cros, 2001; Feng, Chiou and Wang, 2021; Ghirardello, Walder, de Rachewitz, Erschbamer, 2022; Güneş, Pekerşen, Nizamlıoğlu, and Ünüvar, 2019; Harfst, Sandriester, and Fischer, 2021; Hidalgo- Giralt, Palacios-Garcia, Barrado-Timon, and Rodriguez-Esteban, 2021; Karapınar and Barakazı, 2017; Kaşlı, Cankul, Köz and Ekici, 2015; Kim, Whitford, and Arcodia, 2019; Loulanski and Loulanski, 2011; Megeirhi, Woosnam, Ribeiro, Ramkissoon and Denley, 2020; Roslan, Ramli, Razman, Asyraf, Ishak, Ilyas and Nurazzi, 2021; Özgit, Yücelen, Güden, and Ilkhanizadeh, 2022; Pekerşen, Güneş, and Selçuk, 2019; Sangchumngong and Kozak, 2020; Varol, 2020; Yeniasır and Gökbulut, 2018). These studies reveal the importance of the sustainability of cultural heritage values in the field of tourism. Analyzing these studies with an innovative method such as a systematic literature review and digitizing their data in terms of their importance will shed light on the scientists who will work in this field.

METHODOLOGY

A systematic literature review was used as a method in the research. '*A systematic review is a review of a clear question that uses systematic and explicit methods to identify, select, and critically appraise relevant research and to collect and analyze data from the studies that are*

included in the review' (Moher, 2009, s. 264). Because it provides comprehensive data, systematic literature review is seen as a useful method in research on interdisciplinary studies (Pickering and Byrne, 2014; Yang, Khoo-Lattimore, and Arcodia, 2017). Studies conducted through systematic literature reviews have an exploratory nature.

It is aimed at determining the current situation of the international literature on sustainability and cultural heritage and making suggestions to guide the national studies to be carried out. The research draws a general framework for the scientific studies carried out between 2000-2022 in the field of tourism with both the keywords sustainability and cultural Heritage'. The selection of the specified time period is for the purpose of collecting data on the most recent studies. In this context, the year in which the studies were published, the journal in which they were published, the method, the theory (if used) they were based on, whether they were a case study, and their keywords are presented in a systematic way. In this way, the current state of the literature is presented from a holistic perspective to researchers who want to gain knowledge in this field.

In order to reach these studies, 109 studies with the keywords sustainability and cultural *Heritage'* were listed in the Web of Science database, which is one of the most widely used international databases, in March 2023. While listing the studies according to keywords, studies with keywords in which these words are included in the noun phrase (for example, *sustainability of cultural heritage, social sustainability, sustainability assessment, cultural heritage management, cultural heritage tourism, industrial heritage, memorial heritage, sustainable tourism*) were also taken into consideration. 109 studies were listed by publication year, journal, method, theory (if any), case study, and keywords. After this stage, it was examined whether the studies were related to the tourism discipline. First of all, the term 'tourism' was searched both in the keywords and in the study, and 31 studies with the expression 'tourism' were included in the analysis together with one more study with the keywords 'destination', 'visitor', 'museum', and 'experience'. In total, 32 studies were found appropriate to be analyzed.

As a result, 32 studies were found suitable for analysis, while 77 studies were excluded. The frequency distributions of the data from the studies included in the analysis were demonstrated in tables, and the keywords were presented using the word cloud.

FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the publication years of the 32 studies analyzed. Studies in the field of tourism with the keywords 'Sustainability' and 'Cultural Heritage' were not encountered between the years 2000-2011. This shows that interest in the field of study with these keywords has increased in recent years. While the first study in this area was carried out in 2011, there was one (3.125%) in 2016, 2 (6.25%) in 2017, 1 (3.125%) in 2018, 4 (12.5%) in 2019, and 2020, respectively. 3 (9.375%) studies were carried out in 2016, 11 (34.375%) studies in 2021, and 9 (28.125%) studies in 2022. Considering the years in which the studies were conducted, there was only one study in the years of 2011, 2016, and 2018, while the year with the highest number of studies was 2021 with 11 studies.

Table 1.
Publication Year of the Studies

Year	Number of Publication	Year	Number of Publication
2011	1	2019	4
2016	1	2020	3
2017	2	2021	11
2018	1	2022	9

Table 2 shows the journals in which the analyzed studies were published. While 22 studies (68.75%) were published in the journal *Sustainability*, it was determined that the remaining 10 studies were published in 10 different journals. These are the Journal of *Cultural Economics*, *Tourism Management*, *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, *Current Issues in Tourism*, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *Open House International*, *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, and *International Journal of Heritage Studies*.

Table 2.
Journals of the Studies

<u>Journals</u>	<u>Number of Publications</u>
Sustainability	22
Journal of Cultural Economics	1
Tourism Management	1
Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research	1
Current Issues in Tourism	1
Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research	1
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	1
Open House International	1
Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal	1
Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change	1
International Journal of Heritage Studies	1

Table 3 shows the research methods for collecting data in the 32 studies analyzed. The number of studies conducted with qualitative research methods (12 studies, 37.5%) and the number of studies conducted with quantitative research methods (12 studies, 37.5%) are the same. The number of studies conducted with the methods listed in the categories called other (review study, mixed methods, letter from the editor, research note) stands out at 8 (25%).

Under the title of qualitative research methods, the most frequently used method is the interview method (6 studies), followed by more than one qualitative research method (4 studies) and document analysis (2 studies). The most preferred method under the title quantitative research

methods is the survey technique (7 studies), followed by the secondary data analysis method (5 studies). There are 5 (15.625%) review studies, 1 (3.125%) mixed method study, 1 (3.125%) letter from the editor, and 1 (3.125%) research note that are included in the scope of others.

Table 3.
Methods of the Studies

<u>Methods</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
<u>Qualitative Research Methods</u>	
Interview	6
More than One Qualitative Method	4
Document Analysis	2
<u>Quantitative Research Methods</u>	
Survey	7
Secondary Data Analysis Method	5
<i>Others</i>	
Mixed Methods	1
Review Studies	5
Letter from the Editor	1
Research Note	1

Table 4 shows the theories used in the analyzed studies. While theory was not preferred in 29 studies (90.625%), it was used in only 3 studies (9.375%). The theories used are *Semiotics Theory*, *Decision Support Systems Theory*, *Information Processing Theory* and *Landscape Theory*. Information Processing Theory and Landscape Theory are used in the same study.

Table 4.
Theories of the Studies

<u>Theory</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
No Theory	29
Semiotics Theory	1
Decision Support Systems Theory	1
Information Processing Theory Landscape Theory	1 (Both theory in one study)

Table 5 shows whether the analyzed studies are case studies or not. Accordingly, it was determined that half of the studies (16) were designed as case studies. The other half was carried out without adopting a case study approach.

Table 5.
Case Study of the Studies

<u>Case Study</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Yes	16
No	16

As can be seen in Figure 1, the keywords of the studies are shown through the word cloud method. It was determined that a total of 152 different keywords were used in 32 studies analyzed.

Figure 1.
Keywords of the Studies



Among the keywords used in the studies, those that were used only once were not included in the image, while those that were repeated two or more times were added to the word cloud image. The most used keywords were identified as *Sustainability* (20 times), *Cultural Heritage* (13 times), *Sustainable Tourism* (4 times), *Tourism* (4 times), and *Cultural Sustainability* (4 times).

Results and Discussion

In this research, 32 studies included in the field of tourism from 109 studies with the keywords of *Sustainability* and *Cultural Heritage* were analyzed through a systematic literature review. In the analysis, systematic data about the publication years of the studies, publication journals, methods, theories and keywords of the studies were presented.

As a result of the analysis conducted according to the publication years, it was determined that the number of studies has increased since 2019. The number went up from 4 in 2019 to 11 in 2021, which was the year that publications reached their peak thus far. When the journals in which the studies were published were examined, it was seen that 68.75% of the studies were published in the same journal (*Sustainability*). Mendoza, De La Hoz Franco and Gomez (2023) conclude in their systematic review study on technologies for the preservation of cultural heritage that *Sustainability* is the journal with the largest number of studies on the subject. Similar to the findings of this study, this indicates that scholars studying in this field mostly prefer to publish

their studies in *Sustainability*. However, journal diversity is important in terms of increasing the widespread effect of scientific data. For this reason, it is recommended that researchers choose different journals to publish their studies on these subjects or that journal administrations encourage scientists to study this subject.

The number of studies carried out with qualitative research methods and the number of studies carried out with quantitative research methods are seen to be the same, meaning that scholars studying in this field can find studies conducted with both quantitative and qualitative methods, which is ideal considering there are certain weaknesses and strengths in each research method (Choy, 2014). However, the rate of studies using mixed methods to minimize the weaknesses of both is only 3.125%. The researchers' use of mixed methods in their studies on this subject will ensure that these disadvantages are minimized. In the systematic review study of Fatoric ve Seekamp (2017) focusing on cultural heritage and resources threatened by climate change, the authors indicate that the writers' choice of methods might be affected by available data from case studies, which is similar to what was found in this research. It is regarded that the case study approach seems to have influenced the choices of the authors who focused on one single cultural heritage region or value like an archeological site or a historical structure (e.g., Feng, Chiou and Wang, 2021; Ghirardello et al., 2022; Sakdiyakorn ve Sivarak, 2016).

Only three of the 32 studies analyzed were based on theory. In 29 studies, no theory was identified. This is in line with the results of Doğan's (2022) research on theory-based studies in the field of tourism. While the percentage of studies based on theory among the studies examined by Doğan (2022) was 9.54%, that in this study was 9.375%. A qualified scientific study is expected to be based on a theory (Yıldırım, 2008). For this reason, scientists working on this subject need to base their studies on more theory.

When the studies were examined, whether they were case studies or not, it was found that the number of studies that adopted and did not adopt the case study approach was the same. This result is considered ideal as it provides scientists with a balanced data distribution. When the keywords of the studies are examined, it is seen that 152 different expressions are used. Considering that 136 of these were repeated only once, it can be seen how wide the scope of the studies was.

Considering the limitations of the study, it will be useful for future studies to examine studies in different databases in terms of database comparison. In addition, studies to be carried out by choosing a different method will enrich the data to be presented to scientists.

Ethics Committee Approval

Due to the nature of this study, no ethics committee is required.

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