

Global research trends of Hindu Studies– through the lens of Web of Science database

S. Navaneethakrishnan¹

Abstract

Hindu studies is the study of the traditions and practices of the Indian subcontinent, especially Hindu culture related to religion, languages, literature, philosophy, history, arts and society, in all periods and in all parts of the world. Due to insufficient awareness of Hindu studies, there is a need for the development of these research studies at global level. As such the main objective of this study was to identify global research trends of research publications related to the Hindu Studies. The research method of this study was a quantitative method especially scientometric analytical method using R-studio software and MS excel. Research publications indexed in Web of Science database up to the end of year 2020 were retrieved by using the 'Topic terms' as 'Hindu' or "Hinduism" or "Hindu Studies" or "Hindu Civilization" or "Hindu Culture" for analytical purpose. There were a total of 4563 publications including all types of documents published from the year 2001 to 2020. The analysis of the total 4563 publications reveals that the entire publications were contributed by 7480 authors affiliated to 2646 institutions. Journal articles occupied predominant position sharing 73% (n = 3341) percent of total study data. Research growth of publications was increased with positive indicators. In respect to the country productivity, the leading role in Hindu research was United States and it was followed by India. Journals namely South Asia-journal of South Asian studies, International journal of Hindu studies, Journal of Asian studies were given priority to publish the research findings. Among the keywords used in these publications 'hindukush', 'hindu nationalism', and 'south india' were given priority. This study recommends publishing more research articles on Hindu studies at international level to increase the research productivity and to take measures to improve the international visibility of Sri Lankan authors.

Keywords: Hindu Studies; Hinduism; Web of Science; Research trends

¹Lecturer, Department of Sanskrit, Faculty of Hindu Studies, University of Jaffna, Sri Lanka
(E-Mail: ksnavan@univ.jfn.ac.lk)

Introduction

Religion plays a central role in societies around the world and the nations of the world are now realizing the necessity of it. Sri Lanka as a multi religious country have to travel through the initiatives to develop harmony and understanding among the various religious groups in the society. Hindu studies is the study of the traditions and practices of the Indian subcontinent, especially Hindu culture related to religion, languages, literature, philosophy, history, arts and society, in all periods and in all parts of the world. In the current context, it is having a significant impact on Asia and the rest of the world. Due to insufficient awareness of Hindu studies, there is a need for the development of these research studies at global level.

Objective

The main objective of this study was to identify global research trends of research publications related to the Hindu Studies. Further this study try to identify the growth trend of research, active journals, productive country, and preferred keywords.

Methodology

The research method of this study was a quantitative method especially scientometric analytical method using R-studio software and MS excel. The required data for the analysis of this study was collected from WoS database, considering the availability and reliability of data. Research publications indexed in Web of Science database up to the end of year 2020 were retrieved by using the 'Topic terms' as 'Hindu' or "Hinduism" or "Hindu Studies" or "Hindu Civilization" or "Hindu Culture" for analytical purpose. A total of 4563 bibliographic records of publications were downloaded. There were a total of 4563 publications including all types of documents published from the year 2001 to 2020. Collected data was exported in RIS format with complete bibliographic records for analysis.

Literature review

One of the major statistical study of Hackett, C., Grim, B. J., Stonawski, M., Skirbekk, V., Potančoková, M., & Abel, G. (2012) reported the Global Religious Landscape.

Report has assembled data on the size and geographic distribution of eight major religious groups – including the religiously unaffiliated – as of 2010.

Christianity in its Global Context, 1970–2020: Society, Religion, and Mission, a report produced in 2013 by researchers at the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts, offers a timely overview of the changing demographics of Christianity and Christians' activities over the past 40 years while looking forward to the next ten years.

Ebrahimi, Ali and Akmar Ismail, Maizatul and Ale Ebrahim, Nader and Ale Ebrahim, Nader and Jaafar, Salinah, (2016) studied Publications on Islamic Studies from 1980 to 2015. In this study they evaluated global publication of Islamic studies from 1980 to 2015 of all subject category of the Science Citation Index based (SCI) on the Web of Science (WoS) which was produced by Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), USA. Investigation shows that most of the publications are produced in non-Muslims countries.

Senel, Engin&Mamdapur, GhouseModin. (2020) studied and reported holistic Evaluation of Buddhism Literature through a Bibliometric Analysis of Global Publications Related to Buddhism Between 1975 and 2017. A total of 25,267 articles were analyzed and annual publication number increased gradually by year and the peak year for the literature was 2017.

Limitations

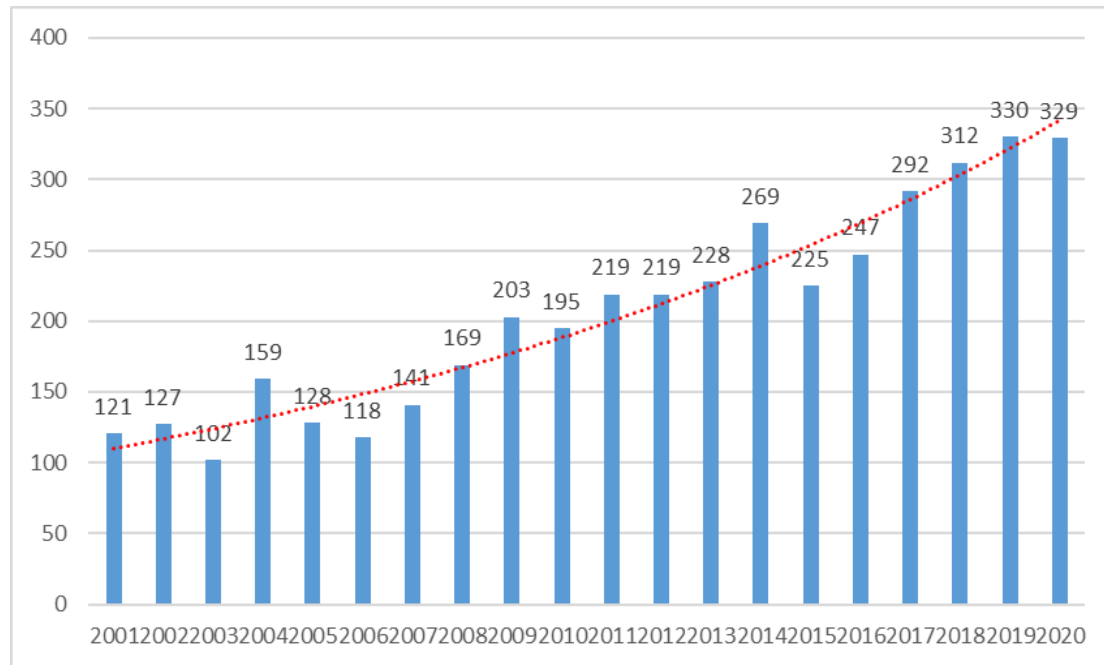
This study had three limitations. First, Preference given to get the dataset from WoS in this preliminary study since WoS is the one of the most reliable databases in academic literature. Second, this study could only reach back to the documents published within the year 2001-2020 considering the sufficient availability of documents. Third, due to insufficient bibliometric or scientometric studies in this field, the study could not compare the outcomes with the previous reports in the literature.

Analysis

The analysis of the total 4563 publications reveals that the entire publications were contributed by 7480 authors affiliated to 2646 institutions. Average citations per document was 9.882. Total number of Author's Keywords of the entire publications was 9239. Among the authors, Number of authors of single-authored documents was 2018 and Number of authors of multi-authored documents was 5462. Collaboration Index was 3.1.

Findings

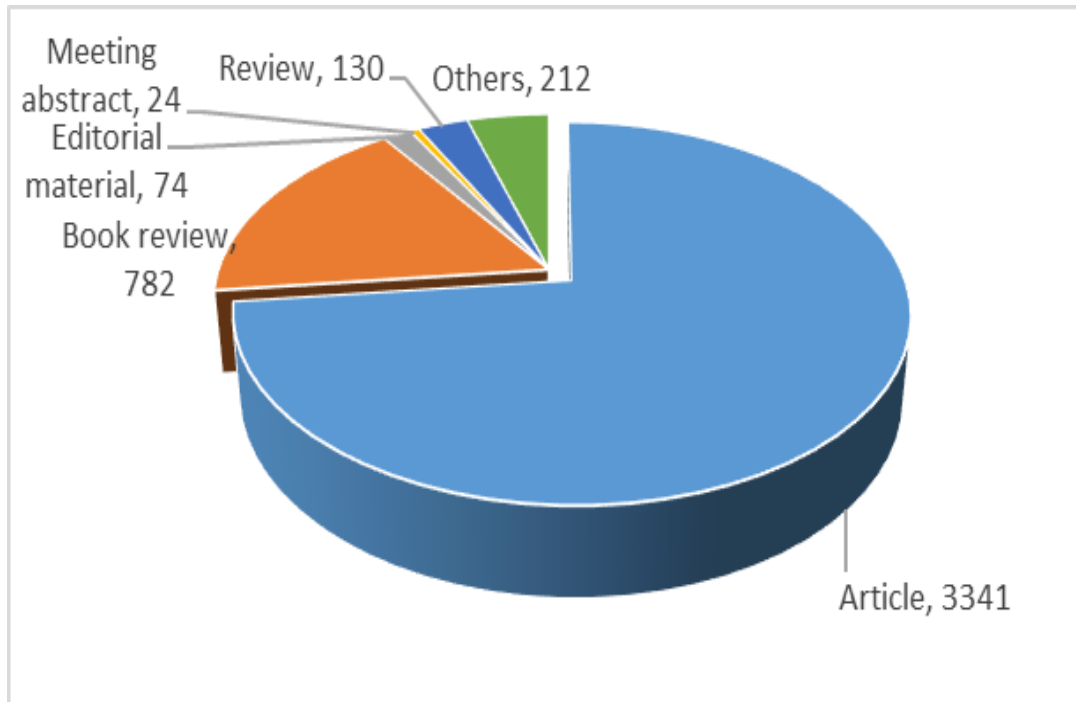
The findings of the analysis revealed that the Growth of publications was increased with positive indicators. The highest number of papers (330) published during the year 2019.



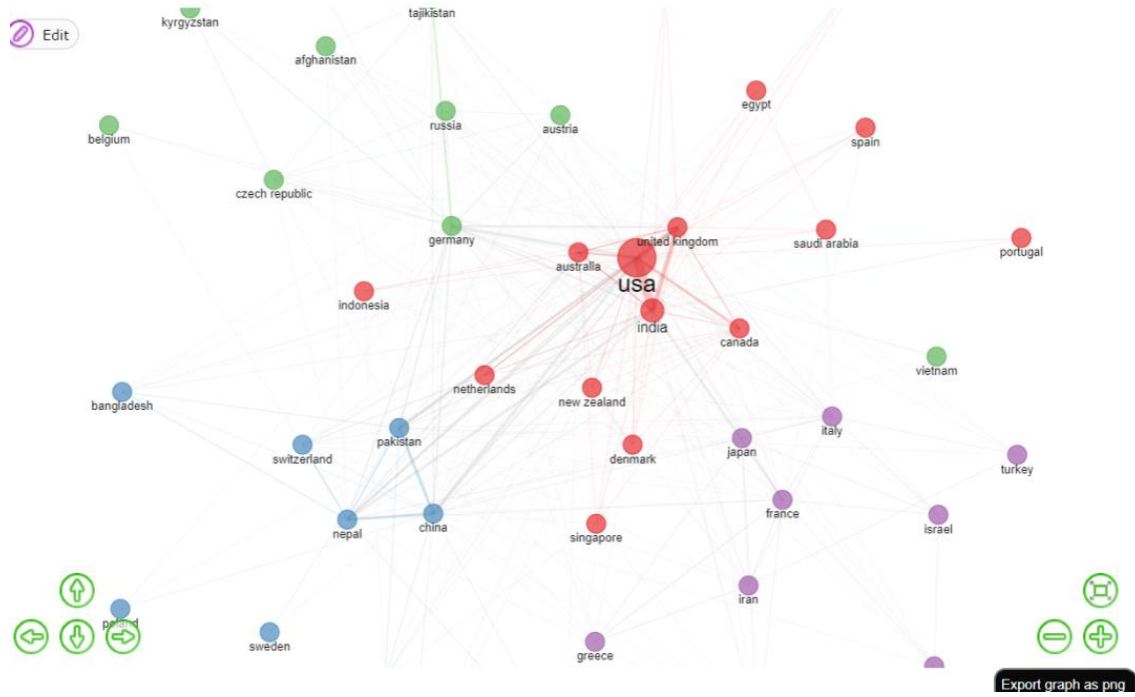
Among the productive authors, Rasul Golm is in the top position with 12 publications followed by Ratschbacher Lothar and Barua, Ankur. First two authors are from Economics background while third one is attached to the Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge.

	Author Name	Contributions
1	Rasul, Golam	12
2	Ratschbacher, Lothar	11
3	Barua, Ankur	10
4	Clooney, Francis X.	10
5	Hussain, Abid	10
6	Schurr, Bernd	10
7	Sharma, Eklabya	10
8	Smith, Frederick M.	10
9	Ghosh, A	9
10	Narayanan, Yamini	9

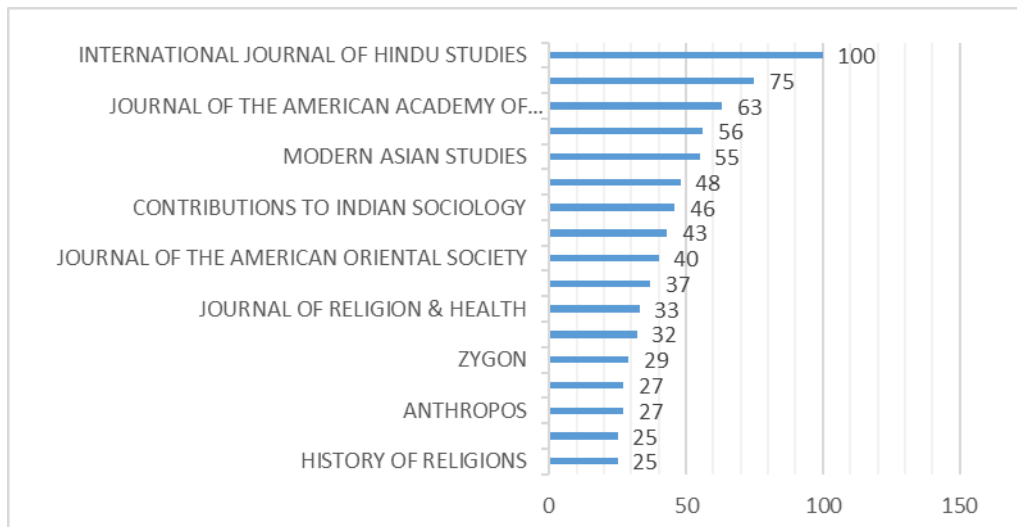
Journal articles occupied predominant position sharing 73% (n = 3341) percent of total study data.



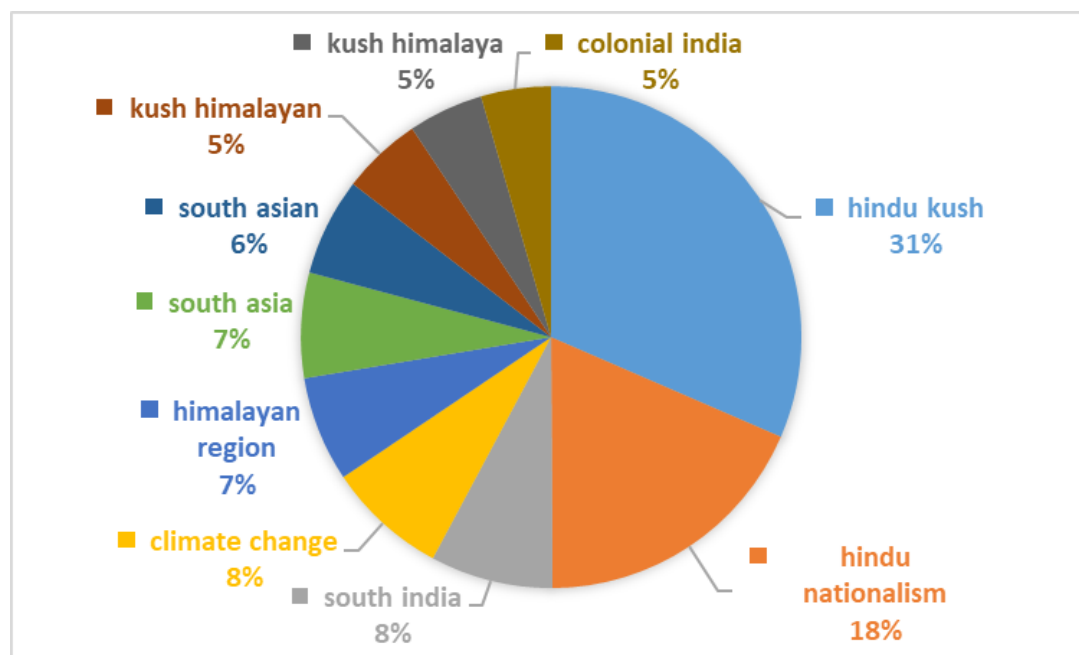
In respect to the country productivity, the leading role in Hindu research was United States and it was followed by India.



Journals namely South Asia-journal of South Asian studies, International journal of Hindu studies, Journal of Asian studies were given priority to publish the research findings.



Among the keywords used in these publications 'hindukush', 'hindu nationalism', and 'south india' were given priority.



Conclusion and Suggestions

This study recommends to publish more research articles on Hindu studies at international level to increase the research productivity and to take measures to improve the international visibility of Sri Lankan authors. Although number of studies related to religious topics have been raising by year, academic literature lacks a bibliometric study investigating Hindu Studies. Researchers from the countries with large Hindu population should be encouraged and supported to carry out more articles in Hindu Studies.

References

Christianity in its Global Context, 1970–2020: Society, Religion, and Mission' (2013) International Bulletin of Missionary Research, 37(3), pp. 164–164. doi: 10.1177/239693931303700308.

Ebrahimi, Ali and Akmar Ismail, Maizatul and Ale Ebrahim, Nader and Ale Ebrahim, Nader and Jaafar, Salinah, (2016) Publications on Islamic Studies from 1980 to 2015: An Overview (March 15, 2016). National Symposium on Al-Quran and Hadith Validation System (SAHIH 2016), 2016, pp. 1-1., Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2853038>

Hackett, C., Grim, B. J., Stonawski, M., Skirbekk, V., Potančoková, M., & Abel, G. (2012). The Global Religious Landscape. A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Major Religious Groups as of 2010. Washington.

Senel, Engin&Mamdapur, GhouseModin. (2020). A Holistic Evaluation of Buddhism Literature: A Bibliometric Analysis of Global Publications Related to Buddhism Between 1975 and 2017. Library Philosophy and Practice. 1-14.<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/4232>