



Public awareness on wildlife conservation: A systematic literature review

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ABSTRACT

Background: Wildlife conservation has become an increasingly urgent global issue as biodiversity continues to decline. Despite the critical importance of conservation, public awareness regarding its significance varies widely across different countries. By exploring how different countries approach this issue, the study seeks to identify strategies to improve awareness and contribute to the global discourse on wildlife preservation.

Methods: This research employed a qualitative approach using a systematic literature review. The review process utilized tools such as Publish or Perish software and the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure a comprehensive analysis. A total of nine journal articles were selected for comparison through a structured identification and screening process. Relationships among the data were further analyzed and visualized using VOSviewer software, providing an in-depth understanding of the trends and patterns in public awareness and conservation strategies across different countries. **Findings:** The results of the systematic literature review revealed that all nine countries studied recognize the importance of wildlife conservation in preserving biodiversity. Despite this shared understanding, the strategies employed to enhance public awareness differ significantly, reflecting cultural, social, and institutional contexts. Effective methods identified include integrated communication strategies, which involve mass media and public relations campaigns to disseminate conservation messages. Educational initiatives, such as incorporating conservation topics into school curricula and public lectures, also emerged as key approaches. Additionally, leveraging animal-related content, including videos and storytelling rooted in local wisdom, has proven effective in engaging communities and fostering a deeper connection to conservation efforts. **Novelty/Originality of this article:** This research contributes to the field of wildlife conservation by providing a comparative analysis of public awareness strategies across diverse countries. The study highlights the critical role of public awareness in ensuring the success of conservation programs and offers actionable insights into how different approaches can be adapted to various contexts. The novelty lies in its emphasis on cross-cultural strategies, enabling countries to learn from one another and adopt best practices to enhance public participation in conservation efforts.

KEYWORDS: systematic literature review; public awareness; wildlife conservation.

1. Introduction

Indonesia is the second country with the highest biodiversity index in the world after Brazil, at 418.78 (Ayuningtyas, 2024). Based on these data, Indonesia is home to 12% of the world's mammals and has 39% of the 515 mammal species. Not only that, still referring to previous data, Indonesia is also inhabited by 16% of the world's reptiles, 36% of the 1,531

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bird species, and 10% of flower species. These data show how Indonesia is a country that rich in biodiversity. Ten countries with the highest biodiversity index can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Ten countries with the highest biodiversity index

Countries	Biodiversity Index
Brasil	512.34
Indonesia	418.78
Colombia	369.76
China	365.84
Mexico	342.47
Australia	337.18
Peru	330.12
India	301.63
Ecuador	291.58
United State	280.13

Biodiversity is all life that encompasses plant species, animals, genes, microorganisms, ecosystems, and ecological activities that occur within them (Sutoyo, 2010). Through its biodiversity, Indonesia also has a vast ecosystem. One of the biodiversity that Indonesia has is wildlife. It is predicted that there are 300,000 species of wildlife in Indonesia. This number means that 17% of the world's animals are in Indonesia. In fact, when compared to the land area in the world, Indonesia's land area is only 1.3%. Indonesia also has 515 species of mammals, 1,539 species of birds, and 45% of the world's fish, living in Indonesia (Profauna, n.d.). In the ecosystem, the existence of wildlife has a fairly central role (Sartika, 2023b). First, as one of the biodiversity, each species plays a special role in its environment. One species is lost, it will have an impact on the sustainability of other species. Second, the stability and health of the ecosystem includes pollination, seed dispersal, and pest population control. Third, wildlife functions as a resource for humans such as a source of food and medicine. Fourth, as a cultural and spiritual value. Certain wildlife species are closely related to cultural and spiritual heritage. Fifth, wildlife also plays a role in the development of education and research for humans. Finally, the existence of wildlife indicates the health of the ecosystem. A decrease in the wildlife population indicates an imbalance in the ecosystem.

Given the importance of the role of biodiversity in human life, biodiversity conservation is included in one of the Sustainable Development Goals (TPB/SDGs) in point 15, namely Life on Land. One of the points mentioned is stopping the loss of biodiversity (Amannullah, et al., 2023). Unfortunately, Indonesia is currently facing a decline in animal populations. The causes vary, ranging from illegal hunting, destruction of natural animal habitats, land conversion, illegal animal exports, and others. Globally, data from the Living Planet Report (2024) shows that the world's wildlife population has fallen by 73% from 1970-2020 (Purnama, 2024). Meanwhile in Indonesia, as of 2021, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) stated that Indonesia has 170 flora and 189 fauna that are critically endangered. Of the 189 fauna, 29 classes of Aves or birds, 11 classes of reptiles, 3 classes of amphibians, 26 classes of mammals, and the rest are marine animals. Komodo, the largest type of lizard in the world that is only found in Indonesia, is also included in the list of endangered animals (Bimo, 2021b).

To maintain biodiversity, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) has formulated several activities that can be carried out, namely releasing wild animals back into their habitat, working on wildlife birth rates, restoring ecosystems, and establishing conservation areas (KLHK Press Release, 2023). These efforts are certainly not only the responsibility of the government, but also the entire Indonesian people. Darajati, et al. (2016) stated in the book Indonesian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2020, there are three communication strategies to support biodiversity management goals, namely mainstreaming: communication, education, and public awareness, as well as periodic monitoring and evaluation. This study will highlight the importance of public

awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation, considering that the current condition of wildlife biodiversity is very necessary to maintain its sustainability. This condition is very interesting when compared to several other countries that also have large biodiversity, especially animals. The purpose of this study is to see how public awareness in several countries is formed and plays a role in wildlife conservation activities. There are nine countries that will be compared, namely Kenya, Peru, Vietnam, Canada, Northern India, Malaysia, Brazil (Amazon), Uganda, and Indonesia. Interestingly, four of the nine countries are on the list of the ten countries with the highest biodiversity index.

2. Methods

This research was compiled using a qualitative method with a Systematic Literature Review. This study aims to synthesize the results of previous studies with similar topics (Siswanto, 2010). Researchers searched for literature through the Publish or Perish software with the keywords "wildlife conservation", "public awareness", "social media", and "campaigns". The title column is filled with the keyword's "awareness" and "conservation". The search year is limited to five years, namely from 2019-2024. The reason for choosing this time span is based on the novelty of the research. Researchers are looking for the latest data and research related to public awareness and wildlife conservation.

From the search results, 1,000 articles were obtained which were then reprocessed using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) method to assess the suitability of keywords with the articles obtained. After going through the selection process through PRISMA, from 1,000 articles, nine journal articles were selected that were stated to be in accordance with the research objectives for comparison. This process can be seen in Figure 1.

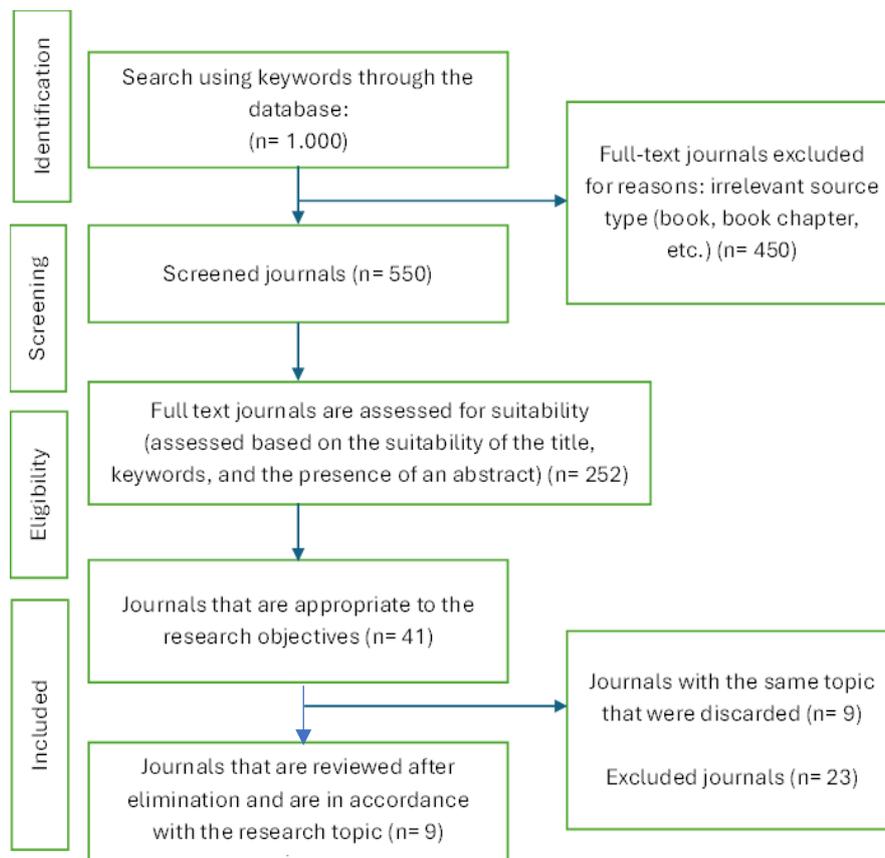


Fig. 1. The PRISMA diagram of the selection process determined the nine articles to be compared

The next analysis was conducted using VOSviewer software to involve the distribution of publication years of journal articles according to the keywords entered. In addition, the resulting network map also provides an overview of the network or relationship between data. The network map serves as a valuable tool for understanding how various themes, concepts, and keywords interlink across the selected literature, offering a comprehensive overview of the research landscape.

3. Results and Discussion

Based on the number of articles analyzed, the following network map illustrates the relationship between keywords. This bibliometric mapping can be a reference for subsequent research with broader literature. Bibliometric analysis network map can be seen in Figure 2.

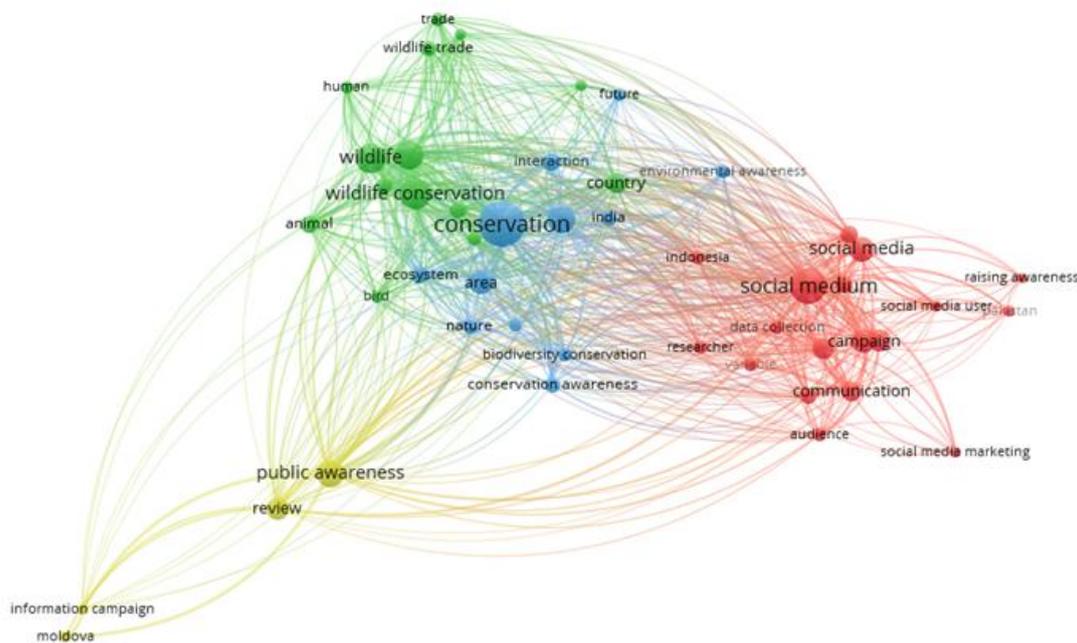


Fig. 2. Bibliometric analysis network map (network visualization)

Based on Figure 2, a visual representation of the relationship between keywords related to conservation, social media, and public awareness is shown. The green color represents the cluster of 'wildlife' and 'wildlife conservation'. The blue color represents the concept of 'conservation' and 'nature'. The red color represents 'social media activity'. Finally, the yellow color represents the cluster of 'public awareness'. In this network map, 'conservation' is the largest concept and is the center that is connected to other keywords around it. Meanwhile, the lines connecting each node show the relationship between concepts. The thicker the line, the stronger or more frequent the connection between the two concepts. Overall, this network map shows that wildlife conservation is closely related to social media activity and public awareness. Social media campaigns can be used to raise public awareness about conservation to reach a wider audience.

The nodes connecting "conservation" with green and blue colors show the importance of the relationship between nature and wildlife in conservation issues. Overall, this network map illustrates the close relationship between conservation, wildlife, public awareness, and social media campaigns. Meanwhile, when viewed from the systematic literature review of the nine journal articles analyzed (Table 2), each country also shows a close relationship between public awareness and conservation activities. Before reaching awareness and conservation actions, initial knowledge needs to be built (knowledge) first. In building

knowledge, the approach used can vary depending on the characteristics of the community. For example, in Kenya, knowledge is built with local wisdom through local stories or myths. Kenya is home to elephants, animals that are respected and have their own sacred value. Even the Maasai tribe (a tribe in Kenya) believe that if they find an elephant placenta in the grassland while herding, it means good luck in having lots of livestock in the future (Ochieng et al., 2021). This is interesting because it describes the unique character of the country. This approach can also potentially be used by similar countries that still uphold local wisdom stories or local community beliefs. One of them is Indonesia, as is done in Indonesia, specifically in Ambon City through outreach efforts to the local community (Sahusilawane & Latupapua, 2023).

Another country in the analysis, Peru, illustrates that knowledge of a wildlife and the desire to carry out conservation are determined by good environmental education. Environmental education will automatically build public awareness of the role of conservation in maintaining natural ecosystems (Guidino et al., 2023). The same thing was also found in a study in Malaysia. Effective education can be preparation for involvement in conservation efforts (Latif et al., 2024). This is also in line with a study conducted by Vladova (2023), that environmental education can form good literacy and understanding that aims to guide responsible attitudes, activities, and decisions towards the environment. Ideally, environmental education has been included in the curriculum from an early age. In developing the environmental education curriculum, at least it can be useful for building an understanding of conservation in increasing environmental awareness, implementing sustainable practices in daily basis, encouraging the development of green technology, formulating environmental education-based policies, increasing community participation, and inheriting a healthy environment for the future.

Another influencing factor is community knowledge of animals' form. This is in line with the results of a study in Northern India which stated that community knowledge and awareness of the conservation of the Western woolly flying squirrel species is quite limited. The reason is because the species was only rediscovered after being assumed extinct because it had not been seen for 70 years (Chetia & Chatakonda, 2024). Daily community interactions with wildlife, such as living around a conservation national park and making a living around it, also influence awareness and desire to be involved in conservation. In a study in Vietnam, people living around the Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park were willing to give part of their income to conservation programs (Truong, 2022). One way that can also be done to increase wildlife conservation efforts is through ecotourism. With ecotourism, visitors can interact with wildlife. This has positive impacts such as awareness and understanding of wildlife conservation; financial benefits for residents; opening new jobs through the construction of lodging, restaurants, and others; and the potential for increasing agriculture. However, ecotourism also has the potential to have negative impacts such as disturbing sensitive animal species; creating animal dependence on humans, for example through feeding; to fragmentation of areas that have the potential to limit movement and access to search for food sources which can result in hunting competition, and aggressive actions such as predators (A. B. Miller et al., 2023; Marras, 2021). Local community-based ecotourism is a good effort in developing and managing ecotourism for the sustainability of wildlife conservation (Alam & Nayak, 2024; Barker, 2024; Tarimo & Olotu, 2020).

Finally, adapting to recent developments in digital communication, efforts to increase public knowledge and awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation can also utilize mass media and new media (social media). In this case, an effective, integrated, and interesting/entertaining communication strategy can also increase awareness of conservation. In Uganda, the integration of public relations practices through mass media (including journalists) and tourism practices (through cultural festivals or parades) can also effectively increase awareness of the importance of conservation (Gessa et al., 2024). Not only through mass media, but social media can also be an effective platform for building public awareness of conservation. A study in Brazil through social media Facebook and Instagram which focused on the conservation of the Pied tamarin or *Sanguinus bicolor*

species (a primate endemic to Brazil), showed that there was an increase in audience response to content published in the period 2019-2021 (Sobroza et al., 2022). In Indonesia, a study also shows that a variety of content (in this study, video content) can also easily build knowledge and awareness of the importance of conservation (Anggraini et al., 2019; Saputro & Haryadi, 2021). Meanwhile in South Africa, social media is also used to introduce one of the cat species, the Caracal. Through this project, searches for "Caracal" on the internet have doubled. In addition, the Caracal's posture, which is like a domestic cat, has increased public attention in contributing to conservation (Leighton & Serieys, 2024; Fischer et al., 2022). However, on the other hand, social media also has the potential to increase animal exploitation, poaching, and even increase tourism in certain animal conservation areas (Bergman et al., 2022). What is also interesting, in a study conducted by Shreedhar (2021), it was shown that the video content they uploaded on Facebook can also raise awareness to donate. There is an interesting finding in this study, namely that the character of the animal species displayed can influence the audience's desire to get involved in donating.

Of all the conservation efforts, the presence of the government plays a major role in the success of conservation. In a study in Canada on awareness of bee species conservation, the results were not very good. Respondents said that the government is the main element in organizing conservation activities through appropriate policies and budgets. After that, it was followed by researchers and non-governmental institutions as communicators and educators in building knowledge and awareness of conservation (Van Vierssen Trip et al., 2020). Comparison of public awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation in nine countries can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of public awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation in nine countries

Country	Title	Author	Public Awareness on Wildlife Conservation
Kenya	Awareness of traditional knowledge and attitudes towards wildlife conservation among Maasai communities: The case of Enkusero Sampu Conservancy, Kajiado County in Kenya	Christine Nyangweso Ochieng, Thuita Thenya, Parita Shah, George Odwe (2021)	Awareness of wildlife conservation can be built through traditional values (mythical stories, sacred values) and produce positive attitudes towards wildlife conservation.
Peru	Public knowledge and awareness of the conservation of the common bottlenose dolphin (<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>) along the central coast of Peru	Chiara Guidino, Sarai Cortez-Casamayor, Elizabeth Campbell, Mateo Cajaleón, Nelly Peña-Cutimbo, Mauricio Delgado, Jenyffer Moran-Valverde, Yvette Arbulu-Vercauteren, Aldo S. Pacheco (2023)	Most respondents know the species of bottlenose dolphins. This knowledge will lead to an environmental awareness movement and concern for conservation and protection of the ecosystem. To increase conservation activities, environmental education is needed, reducing pollution and protecting natural ecosystems.
Vietnam	Community awareness and participation in biodiversity conservation at Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park, Vietnam	Dinh Duc Truong (2022)	Local communities generally have a high perception and awareness of the values of biodiversity and conservation in PN-KBNP. This positive perception comes from the close interaction of household daily livelihoods with the national park. In addition, local communities are willing to

Canada	Examining the public's awareness of bee (Hymenoptera: Apoidea: Anthophila) conservation in Canada	Nyssa van Vierssen Trip, Victoria J. MacPhail, Sheila R. Colla, Beatrice Olivastri (2020)	sacrifice part of their income to preserve biodiversity for current and future generations. General knowledge about bees is still low. Most respondents want communication about bee conservation to be carried out by the government. (top to down). Findings revealed that local communities have limited understanding of the Western woolly flying squirrel, requiring targeted education and awareness raising about the species and its conservation.
Northern India	Rarest of the rare: People's awareness and perceptions about the woolly flying squirrel in Uttarakhand Himalaya, Northern India	Hiranmoy Chetia, Murali K. Chatakonda (2024)	This study shows that respondents have positive attitudes towards marine conservation behavior and its relationship to future marine sustainability. Meanwhile, there is awareness of conservation efforts, but this does not directly translate into attitudes towards conservation behavior. Conservation readiness is related to the importance of effective preparation and education as involvement in conservation efforts.
Malaysia	The examination of conservation awareness, future sustainability, and conservation readiness on tourists' attitude towards marine conservation behavior in Malaysia's Marine Parks	S A Abdul Latif, F N Yazid, B Z M Farudz (2023)	The Pied Tamarin Project is one of the channels to promote activities or information and gets a lot of responses from followers. Although there is a bias in the use of social media (in terms of uneven internet access speeds in Brazil and beyond) as a tool to raise awareness of conservation, its use still needs to be increased.
Brazil-Amazon	"Sauins" on touchscreens: social media as a tool for pied tamarin conservation awareness	Tainara Venturini Sobroza, Aline Souza de Menezes Medeiros, Raiclicia Nayara Morais	The role of mass media and public relations is important in linking tourism and the public's desire to protect wildlife. Communication strategies such as tours with journalists, influencers, parades, or inclusion in education (public lectures, learning activities), as well as mass media coverage, can also be used to raise public awareness of the importance of wildlife conservation.
Uganda	The Role of Public Relations in Wildlife Conservation: Examples from Uganda	Simplicious J. Gessa, William Tayeebwa, Charles Tumwesigye,	Video is a valid media and can be used as an effective medium to increase awareness in children regarding animal conservation and protection, especially in this study, long-tailed monkeys (<i>Macaca fascicularis</i>).
Indonesia	Promoting Children Conservation Awareness of <i>Macaca fascicularis</i> Through Narrative Video	Fatimah Dwi Anggraini, Andreas Priyono Budi Prasetyo, Retno Sri Iswari (2019)	

4. Conclusions

From the results of a systematic literature review comparing nine countries through an extensive identification process that narrowed down to nine selected journal articles, several conclusions can be drawn. Biodiversity management, as part of wildlife conservation efforts, is recognized as an essential activity across the countries reviewed. Each country employs unique strategies and initiatives to raise public awareness about the importance of wildlife conservation. These diverse approaches offer valuable insights and potential models for countries to adopt and adapt in their conservation efforts. Several effective methods to enhance public awareness of wildlife conservation have been identified through the analysis. These include implementing integrated communication strategies, such as leveraging public relations activities with mass media involvement, conducting journalist tours, and promoting conservation education through media coverage. From an academic perspective, introducing biological conservation topics in educational curricula, such as through public lectures and interactive learning activities, can instill early awareness. In terms of entertainment, cultural parades with biodiversity themes can engage the public creatively. Additionally, audio-visual media, such as videos, can serve as compelling and accessible tools to educate communities. For regions that uphold local wisdom and storytelling traditions, incorporating narratives about animals and their roles in ecosystems can foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for wildlife conservation.

Based on these findings, several recommendations are proposed to further enhance public awareness and drive action in wildlife conservation. Environmental education should be integrated into curricula across all education levels, exposing individuals to conservation principles from an early age. Developing effective communication strategies, potentially in collaboration with influential environmental activists or influencers, can help disseminate messages widely and efficiently. Active community participation can be encouraged through direct involvement in conservation initiatives. Additionally, trained volunteers can conduct outreach programs to educate diverse societal groups. The use of technology, such as websites, mobile applications, and even interactive games, offers an innovative platform to introduce biodiversity and conservation topics in engaging ways. Finally, fostering more research and publications on wildlife-related issues can amplify the reach and impact of conservation messages. By implementing these recommendations, it is hoped that public awareness and involvement in wildlife conservation will grow, inspiring greater efforts and concrete actions to preserve biodiversity and protect the environment.

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