








A Systematic Review of Marine Tourism's Environmental, Economic, and Behavioral Dimensions

Suhaimi^{1*}, Tri Lestira Putri Warganegara¹, Iskandar Ali Alam², Andala Rama Putra Barusman²,
M. Yusuf Sulfarano Barusman²

¹ Department of Management, University of Bandar Lampung, Bandar Lampung 35142, Indonesia

² Graduate School, University of Bandar Lampung, Bandar Lampung 35142, Indonesia

Corresponding Author Email: suhaimi@ubl.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

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Marine tourism has experienced rapid growth owing to its substantial contribution to the global tourism industry and the increasing demand for nature-based experiences. This study conducts a systematic literature review on marine tourism to gain insights into various aspects of the industry, including environmental impacts, economic valuation, and visitor behavior. The methodology involved searching the Scopus database using two sets of keywords to identify 151 relevant articles. Subsequently, these articles were screened for relevance based on their authors, titles, years, journals, and citations. This review emphasizes critical research areas, including tourists' memories, sustainable management of coastal environments, experiential satisfaction, economic value of marine parks, and consequences of environmental disruptions. Future research should explore topics such as the influence of technology, climate change repercussions, funding models for marine conservation, local community implications, potential for ecotourism, and awareness initiatives to promote responsible marine tourism. These five theories—Resource-Based View (RBV), Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), systems theory, stakeholder theory, and the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) -provide a comprehensive theoretical foundation for marine tourism research.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the present era, marine tourism has gained considerable prominence owing to its substantial contribution to the global tourism industry and the increasing demand for unique, nature-based experiences [1, 2]. However, the rapid growth of this industry also presents numerous challenges, such as environmental degradation, climate change impacts, and the need for sustainable management practices [3]. To comprehend the intricate aspects of marine tourism and promote its sustainable development, it is crucial to examine the literature and identify key research areas that have shaped the field [4].

One such area is the role of visitors' memories in designing powerful interpretive experiences [5]. This study highlights the importance of understanding how tourists process and recall their experiences, allowing tourism providers to create memorable and impactful encounters that foster a deeper connection with the marine environment. By developing more effective interpretive strategies, marine tourism operators can promote conservation messages and encourage responsible tourism behaviors, ultimately contributing to the long-term sustainability of the sector.

Researchers have extensively focused on the impact of marine debris on tourism income in coastal areas, as demonstrated in a study by Groeneveld et al. [6]. This study

highlights that tourists' attitudes towards marine pollution can influence their overall satisfaction and likelihood of returning, which in turn can affect tourism revenue. Therefore, implementing effective waste management techniques and marine conservation policies is vital for maintaining environmental health and economic stability in coastal regions.

The literature also explores the impact of various factors on tourist satisfaction and the likelihood of visitors returning to marine destinations [7]. These factors encompass the economic, social, and environmental elements that together shape the overall marine tourism experience. Understanding how these variables affect tourist satisfaction and revisitation intentions can inform destination management and marketing strategies, thereby ensuring that the marine tourism industry remains competitive and sustainable.

The valuation of marine parks has been another focus of research, with a particular emphasis on developing countries, such as the Seychelles [2]. This study highlights the economic benefits of marine protected areas, both in terms of direct revenue generation and the provision of ecosystem services. Such information can help policymakers and conservationists build support for the establishment and maintenance of marine parks, ultimately safeguarding precious ecosystems and fostering their sustainable use for tourism [1]. For instance, marine tourism can have both positive and negative environmental effects, such as the ecological consequences of

stewardship. By designing interpretive experiences that engage tourists emotionally and intellectually, tourism providers can potentially inspire pro-environmental behavior (PEB), thereby fostering a conservation mind-set among visitors. This approach aligns with sustainable tourism objectives by integrating education and awareness into the visitor experience, potentially encouraging tourists to adopt more responsible behaviors in marine and wildlife environments.

Krelling et al. [23] in "Differences in perception and reaction of tourist groups to beach marine debris that can influence a loss of tourism revenue in coastal areas" examined the impact of marine debris on beaches on tourist perception and the potential revenue loss for coastal areas. This study identifies variations among tourist groups in their perceptions of and reactions to marine debris, with 128 citations. Krelling et al. [23] showed how marine debris affects tourists' perceptions, satisfaction, and likelihood of returning to coastal areas, ultimately influencing revenue. This study underscores the critical need for effective waste management strategies for marine tourism. Addressing marine debris not only preserves ecosystems but also ensures economic sustainability by

maintaining the attractiveness of these destinations. Furthermore, this study demonstrates the significance of tailoring education and awareness campaigns to specific tourist groups, promoting behavioral changes to reduce waste, and protecting coastal environments.

Jarvis et al. [7] in "The impact of economic, social, and environmental factors on trip satisfaction and the likelihood of visitors returning" investigated the determinants of trip satisfaction and revisit intentions. This research underscores the significance of economic, social, and environmental factors in tourist satisfaction with 89 citations. This study showed that a comprehensive approach encompassing economic, social, and environmental factors is crucial for enhancing tourist satisfaction and promoting revisit intentions. Sustainability in marine tourism requires balancing these three dimensions to create optimal and rewarding visitor experiences. For example, offering environmentally responsible accommodations, facilitating local community engagement, and conserving natural environments can augment visitor satisfaction, while supporting long-term ecological and socioeconomic sustainability.

Table 1. 10 most cited research studies

Authors	Titles	Year	Journals	Cited by
Ballantyne et al. [5]	Visitors' memories of wildlife tourism: Implications for the design of powerful interpretive experiences	2011	Tourism Management	340
Krelling et al. [23]	Differences in perception and reaction of tourist groups to beach marine debris that can influence a loss of tourism revenue in coastal areas	2017	Marine Policy	128
Jarvis et al. [7]	The impact of economic, social and environmental factors on trip satisfaction and the likelihood of visitors returning	2016	Tourism Management	89
Mathieu et al. [2]	Valuing marine parks in a developing country: A case study of the Seychelles	2003	Environment and Development Economics	61
Ghermandi et al. [22]	Jellyfish outbreak impacts on recreation in the Mediterranean Sea: Welfare estimates from a socioeconomic pilot survey in Israel	2015	Ecosystem Services	58
Schuhmann et al. [24]	Visitors' willingness to pay marine conservation fees in Barbados	2019	Tourism Management	48
Giglio et al. [25]	Marine life preferences and perceptions among recreational divers in Brazilian coral reefs	2015	Tourism Management	46
Carvache-Franco et al. [26]	Segmentation, motivation, and sociodemographic aspects of tourist demand in a coastal marine destination: a case study in Manta (Ecuador)	2020	Current Issues in Tourism	29
Carvache-Franco et al. [27]	Segmentation of foreign tourist demand in a coastal marine destination: The case of Montañita, Ecuador	2019	Ocean and Coastal Management	21
Isa and Ramli [28]	Factors influencing tourist visitation in marine tourism: Lessons learned from Fisheries Research Institute (FRI) Aquarium, Penang, Malaysia	2014	International Journal of Culture, Tourism, and Hospitality Research	18

Mathieu et al. [2] in "Valuing marine parks in a developing country: A case study of the Seychelles" evaluated the economic value of marine parks within the context of a developing nation, emphasizing the significance of marine conservation efforts in promoting tourism. This study received 61 citations. This study shows the economic importance of marine parks in developing countries, highlighting their roles in both revenue generation and ecosystem services. These findings demonstrate the significance of marine protected areas (MPAs) as instruments for conservation and economic development. Investment in MPAs not only preserves biodiversity but also generates sustainable income streams through ecotourism. This study posits that the valuation of ecosystem services can bolster arguments for funding and

maintaining conservation initiatives in marine tourism destinations.

Ghermandi et al. [22] in "Jellyfish outbreak impacts on recreation in the Mediterranean Sea: Welfare estimates from a socioeconomic pilot survey in Israel" investigated the economic impact of jellyfish outbreaks on recreational activities in the Mediterranean. This study provides welfare estimates based on a socioeconomic pilot survey with 58 citations. This study examines the economic repercussions of environmental disruptions, specifically jellyfish outbreaks, on recreational activity. This emphasizes the necessity for adaptive strategies to address such impacts, which are increasingly relevant in the context of climate change. From a sustainability perspective, the findings underscore the importance of proactive environmental monitoring and

management to mitigate risks, thereby ensuring the resilience of marine tourism activities and safeguarding livelihoods dependent on them.

Schuhmann et al. [24] in "Visitors' willingness to pay marine conservation fees in Barbados" evaluated tourists' willingness to pay for marine conservation initiatives in Barbados. This study provides insights into the potential funding mechanisms for marine conservation projects with 48 citations. This study demonstrates tourists' propensity to contribute financially to marine conservation initiatives. This finding demonstrates the potential of implementing user-pay systems such as conservation fees to fund the preservation of marine ecosystems. Such models can establish a sustainable revenue stream for conservation, while fostering a sense of responsibility among tourists. This approach aligns with the principle of ensuring the economic viability of tourism while protecting the natural resources upon which it depends.

Giglio et al. [25] in "Marine life preferences and perceptions among recreational divers in Brazilian coral reefs" examined recreational divers' preferences and perceptions of marine life in Brazilian coral reefs. The study provides insights into diver preferences, which can be utilized to inform marine conservation and management strategies, with 46 citations. This study investigated divers' preferences and perceptions of marine biodiversity, offering valuable information for the development of tailored and meaningful diving experiences. This finding emphasizes the significance of educating divers on the importance of coral reef conservation. By aligning tourism offerings with environmental objectives such as promoting sustainable diving practices, operators can achieve a balance between customer satisfaction and the preservation of fragile marine ecosystems.

Carvache-Franco et al. [26] analyzed the factors affecting tourist demand in Manta, Ecuador, and Carvache-Franco et al. [27] (Ecuador) analyzed the factors affecting tourist demand in Manta. This paper provides a detailed analysis of tourist segmentation, motivation, and sociodemographic aspects with 29 citations. This study identifies the segmentation, motivation, and sociodemographic aspects that influence tourist demand in coastal destinations. Sustainability implications include tailoring marketing strategies and tourism services to diverse tourist profiles, while ensuring that growth in demand does not lead to environmental degradation. Such targeted approaches can help to create sustainable tourism models that cater to visitor preferences without compromising ecosystem health.

Carvache-Franco et al. [27] in "Segmentation of foreign tourist demand in a coastal marine destination: The case of Montañita, Ecuador" examined foreign tourist demand in Montañita, Ecuador. This study, which has garnered 21 citations, emphasizes the significance of understanding tourist preferences and motivations for effective destination management. This study demonstrates the importance of understanding foreign tourists' motivations and behaviors for effective destination management. These findings can be used to enhance sustainability practices by developing culturally sensitive and environmentally responsible tourism products that align with visitor expectations, while promoting conservation and community engagement [29].

Isa and Ramli [28] investigated the factors influencing tourist visitation in marine tourism: "Factors influencing tourist visitation in marine tourism: Lessons learned from Fisheries Research Institute (FRI) Aquarium Penang, Malaysia" investigated the factors affecting tourist visitation

in marine tourism using a case study from the FRI Aquarium in Penang, Malaysia. This study identifies the critical factors that influence visitor numbers using 18 citations. This study shows critical factors driving visitation in marine tourism, providing valuable insights for managing visitor numbers sustainably. By comprehending these factors, operators can implement strategies to distribute tourist flow, mitigate environmental stress, and enhance visitor satisfaction. For example, promoting off-peak tourism and environmentally sustainable attractions can contribute to visitor satisfaction and sustainability.

These studies collectively emphasize the integration of environmental, economic, and social dimensions into marine tourism to achieve sustainability. Key findings include the significance of fostering environmental awareness, implementing effective waste and resource management, leveraging conservation funding mechanisms, and promoting visitor satisfaction through tailored and eco-conscious offering. Collectively, these results provide a framework for developing sustainable marine tourism practices that balance ecological preservation with economic and social benefits. Furthermore, these studies offer valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of marine tourism, and establish a foundation for future research and practices aimed at promoting the sustainable development of this vital industry. Conducting a systematic literature review on visitor behavior and marine tourism is essential for several reasons. This approach not only facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge in the field but also helps identify gaps and opportunities for future research. The following discussion outlines several key reasons why undertaking a systematic literature review on this topic is important.

Comprehensive understanding of visitor behavior

A systematic literature review facilitates a comprehensive analysis of extant research on visitor behavior within the context of marine tourism. Through the synthesis and critical evaluation of findings from numerous studies, we examined crucial factors such as tourist perceptions (e.g., scenic beauty, water quality), attitudes (e.g., conservation-oriented behaviors, willingness to pay conservation fees), and actions (e.g., littering, engagement in eco-friendly activities). This understanding has enabled researchers and practitioners to identify the determinants of tourist satisfaction and dissatisfaction. For instance, studies indicate that factors such as marine debris negatively impact tourist experiences and the likelihood of return, while positive encounters with wildlife foster conservation attitudes. By analyzing these dynamics, tourism managers can develop interventions, such as eco-tourism programs or interpretive experiences that promote sustainable tourism behaviors [30].

Identification of knowledge gaps

Through a systematic literature review, researchers can identify areas where the current knowledge of visitor behavior and marine tourism is insufficient or contradictory. This process facilitates the identification of gaps in the existing research, thereby enabling targeted, relevant, and impactful future studies. Addressing these knowledge gaps is crucial for enhancing our understanding of visitor behavior and advancing marine tourism research. For example, there may be a paucity of studies on the impact of technology (e.g., virtual reality tours) on marine tourism, or limited comprehension of how climate change-induced disruptions influence visitor behavior. Contradictory findings such as those related to the willingness of different demographic

groups to pay conservation fees also highlight areas for further investigation. Identifying these gaps ensures that future research is directed at addressing pressing issues, such as how to design adaptive management strategies for destinations affected by environmental disruptions. This step is essential for advancing theoretical frameworks and practical approaches to marine tourism.

Enhancing marine tourism management

A comprehensive understanding of visitor behavior can inform destination managers and tourism operators on the development and implementation of strategies that promote responsible tourism practices. Understanding visitor behavior is crucial for destination managers and tourism operators to develop strategies that balance visitor satisfaction with environmental conservation [31]. For instance, insights into visitor preferences can inform sustainable designs for tourism infrastructure such as eco-lodges or waste management systems in marine parks. Behavioral studies can guide the development of educational programs that enhance tourists' awareness of their environmental impact and encourage responsible practices [32] such as avoiding single-use plastics or participating in beach clean-up activities. By understanding how environmental conditions (e.g., water clarity and wildlife abundance) affect tourist satisfaction, managers can prioritize conservation initiatives to protect these key resources. Such informed strategies enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of marine tourism destinations, ensuring their economic viability while preserving their ecological integrity.

Promoting interdisciplinary research

Visitor behavior in marine tourism is inherently interdisciplinary, encompassing contributions from psychology (e.g., decision-making processes), sociology (e.g., group behaviors and cultural influences), economics (e.g., willingness to pay for conservation), and environmental science (e.g., the ecological impacts of tourism). A systematic review synthesizes findings from these fields, thus facilitating an integrated perspective. For instance, psychological insights may elucidate the factors influencing visitors' engagement in conservation behaviors, whereas sociological studies reveal the impact of peer influence on sustainable choices. Environmental studies can assess the ecological footprint of marine tourism, whereas economic research evaluates the viability of conservation funding models. By integrating these disciplines, a systematic review can provide a comprehensive understanding that can lead to innovative and practical solutions, such as the development of tourism programs that concurrently educate, entertain, and support conservation objectives.

A systematic literature review of visitor behavior and marine tourism is essential to comprehensively understand the topic, identify research gaps, inform management strategies, address environmental challenges, and promote interdisciplinary research. This approach establishes a foundation for future studies aimed at enhancing the sustainability of marine tourism and at protecting valuable marine ecosystems. This study aligns with several theories that are well suited to examining visitor behavior in marine tourism and its implications for sustainability. The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) provides a framework for understanding how tourists' attitudes, social norms, and perceived control influence their intentions and behaviors, such as engaging in environmentally responsible activities during their excursions. Service-Dominant Logic (SDL) emphasizes the co-creation of value between tourism providers and visitors, highlighting the

significance of interactive and experiential approaches in shaping positive behaviors and fostering conservation awareness. The stakeholder theory shows the necessity of considering the diverse interests of all parties involved in marine tourism, including tourists, local communities, and policymakers, to develop equitable and sustainable tourism practices.

Additionally, systems theory provides insights into the interconnected nature of ecological, social, and economic factors in marine tourism, offering a holistic perspective on how visitor behavior influences and is influenced by these components. The Resource-Based View (RBV) emphasizes the importance of preserving and leveraging unique marine resources and ecosystems as a competitive advantage for sustainable tourism. Collectively, these theories establish a robust foundation for analyzing visitor behavior, addressing knowledge gaps, and informing actionable strategies to enhance the sustainability of marine tourism, while protecting marine ecosystems and benefiting local economies.

1.1 Research gap

Although marine tourism has been extensively studied, significant gaps persist in understanding visitor behavior within the context of sustainability. The extant literature frequently focuses on isolated factors, such as environmental impacts or economic valuation, without fully integrating how tourist perceptions, attitudes, and actions contribute to or impede sustainable practices. There is also a dearth of interdisciplinary studies that synthesize insights from psychology, sociology, and environmental science to holistically address these complexities. Furthermore, research addressing the impact of technological advancements, climate change, and social media on visitor behavior in marine tourism remains insufficient. These gaps demonstrate the necessity of a systematic review to synthesize existing knowledge, identify inconsistencies, and propose actionable strategies for sustainable marine tourism management.

1.2 Research questions

1. What are the primary determinants that influence visitor behavior in marine tourism and how do these determinants interact within the context of sustainability?
2. What are the significant gaps and inconsistencies in the extant research on visitor behavior in marine tourism, particularly in relation to environmental, economic, and social dimensions?
3. How can insights into visitor behavior be used to develop effective strategies for sustainable destination management?
4. What role do interdisciplinary approaches play in advancing the comprehension of visitor behavior in marine tourism?
5. How can visitor behavior be influenced to achieve a balance between the protection of marine ecosystems and the economic and social benefits for local communities?

1.3 Research aim

The objective of this investigation was to conduct a systematic literature review on visitor behavior in marine

tourism to identify critical insights, gaps, and actionable strategies that can enhance destination management, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and promote the sustainable development of the marine tourism industry. This study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how visitor behavior is influenced by environmental, economic, and social factors, contributing to the protection and sustainable use of marine ecosystems while benefiting local economies.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study conducts a systematic literature review on marine tourism to gain insights into various aspects of the industry, including environmental impacts, economic valuation, and visitor behavior. After conducting a comprehensive search, articles were carefully screened for relevance to the marine tourism industry and visitor behavior. This involves evaluating the authors, titles, publication year, and journals, as well as the articles that have been cited to ensure their suitability for the research topic [33, 34]. The next step was to conduct a thorough analysis of relevant articles and extract important information, findings, and trends (See Figure 2) [35, 36].

The methodology of this systematic literature review adhered to a structured and rigorous process to ensure a

comprehensive and focused selection of articles pertinent to marine tourism and visitor behavior. The process commenced with a search of the Scopus database [37, 38], which was selected for its extensive coverage of peer-reviewed literature across multiple disciplines. Two sets of keywords were used to identify relevant studies. The first set, comprising "literature," "review," "marine," and "tourism," aimed to identify general reviews and discussions related to marine tourism, yielding 120 articles. The second set, consisting of "visit," "behavior," "marine," and "tourism," targeted research specifically addressing visitor behavior in marine tourism, resulting in 31 additional articles. The initial search yielded 151 articles for further evaluation. Subsequently, a screening process is conducted to refine the selection [39, 40]. Titles were examined to identify studies explicitly linked to marine tourism and visitor behavior. The abstracts were then assessed to confirm the relevance of the articles to the research objectives, particularly their focus on sustainability, visitor dynamics, and tourism management. The keywords provided by the authors were also evaluated to ensure alignment with the core themes of the study, such as environmental conservation, tourism dynamics, and sustainable practices. Articles that focused solely on marine biodiversity without a connection to tourism, or those discussing non-marine contexts, were excluded during this phase.

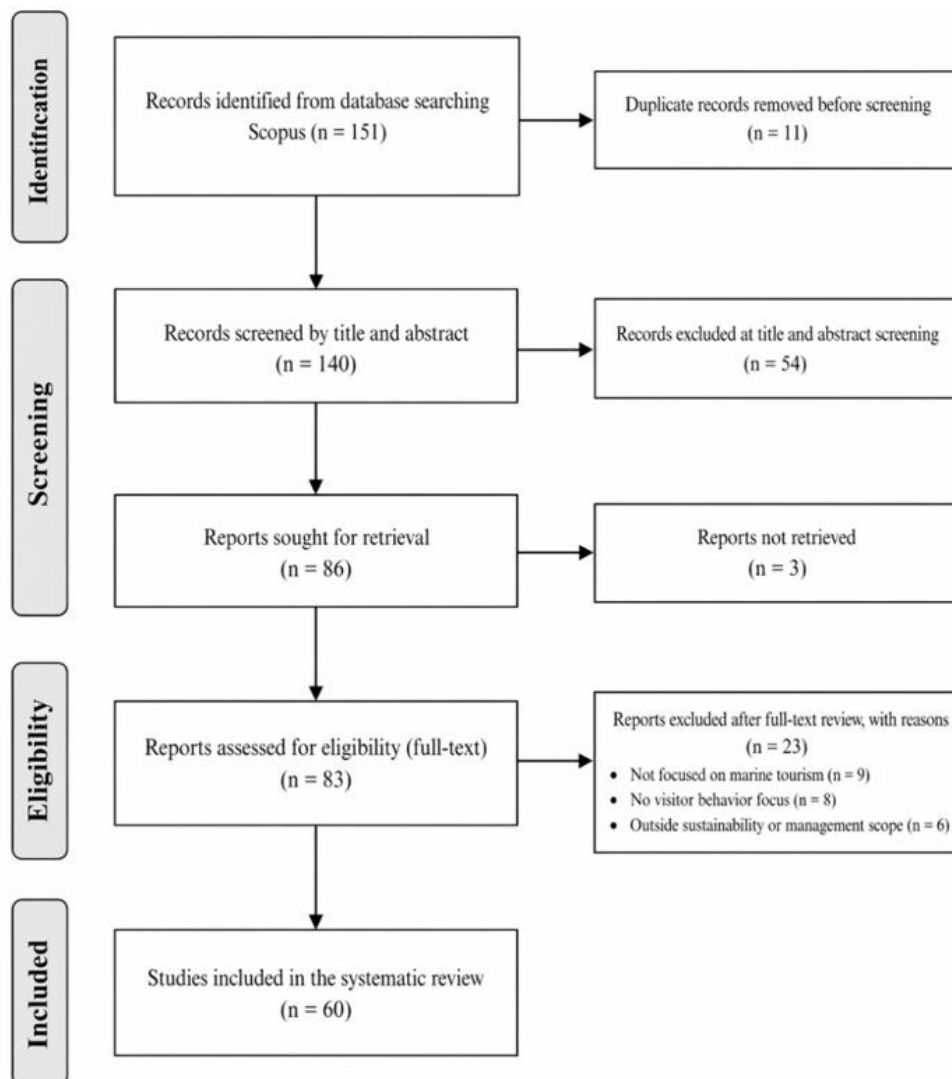


Figure 2. Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flow diagram of study selection

Following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) -based selection process shown in Figure 2, the initial Scopus search identified 151 records using two keyword combinations related to marine tourism and visitor behavior. Before screening, 11 duplicate records were removed, leaving 140 records for title and abstract screening. At this stage, 54 records were excluded because they did not sufficiently align with the study scope, resulting in 86 reports being sought for retrieval. Of these, three reports could not be retrieved, and 83 full-text reports were assessed for eligibility. During the full-text review, 23 reports were excluded for specific reasons: nine were not focused on marine tourism, eight did not address visitor behavior, and six were outside the sustainability or tourism management scope. Consequently, 60 studies were included in the final systematic review. This stepwise process strengthens the transparency and reproducibility of the review by clearly distinguishing the initial search results from the final body of studies included for synthesis.

This screening process aims to focus on articles that provide substantial insights into the marine tourism industry and visitor behavior [41]. Once the relevant articles were determined, a thorough analysis was conducted to extract pertinent information, findings, and trends. The analysis stage is divided into two main aspects of marine tourism: 1) Leveraging Business Marketing in Marine Tourism and 2) Understanding Visitor Behavior in Marine Tourism: Enhancing Customer Experience. These aspects were investigated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the marine tourism industry and offer valuable insights that can be used to inform future research and policymaking.

The systematic literature review method is a useful tool for researchers to evaluate a considerable amount of literature on marine tourism and visitor behavior, as demonstrated by Spinelli and Benevolo [19]. By analyzing the diverse aspects of the industry, this approach allows for the development of sustainable management strategies and knowledgeable decision-making for marine tourism destinations and stakeholders.

3. LEVERAGING BUSINESS MARKETING IN MARINE TOURISM

In this systematic literature review, we explore the multifaceted role of business marketing in marine tourism by examining the impact of marketing strategies on attracting visitors [24], promoting responsible practices [42], enhancing visitor experiences [43], building brand reputation [23], fostering collaboration [44], and contributing to industry growth and sustainability [45]. By synthesizing insights from various studies, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the importance of effective marketing within the marine tourism sector and to shed light on the best practices that can be adopted to preserve and promote marine ecosystems while maximizing visitor satisfaction and business success.

Business marketing plays a crucial role in the growth and sustainability of an industry [46]. By effectively leveraging marketing strategies, marine tourism businesses can attract visitors, promote responsible practices, and contribute to the preservation of marine ecosystems [47]. Business marketing is essential for raising awareness of marine tourism destinations and the experiences they offer [48]. By using various

promotional channels, including social media, print, and online advertising, businesses can showcase the unique attractions and activities available in the marine environment. This can help attract both local and international tourists, drive economic growth in coastal communities, and support the marine tourism industry [49].

Effective marketing can help marine tourism businesses communicate their commitments to responsible and sustainable practices [27]. This could include promoting eco-friendly tours, emphasizing the importance of preserving marine life, and highlighting conservation initiatives. By educating visitors about the environmental impacts of their actions and encouraging responsible behavior, marketing can play a vital role in fostering sustainable marine tourism [29]. Business marketing can help marine tourism providers tailor their offerings to match visitor preferences and expectations [25]. By understanding the interests and motivations of their target audience, businesses can develop unique and memorable experiences that cater to different market segments [26, 27]. For instance, marketing can help providers identify and target niche markets such as adventure tourism, cultural tourism, and ecotourism, allowing them to offer specialized experiences that set them apart from competitors.

A strong marketing strategy can help marine tourism businesses establish a positive brand reputation and foster customer loyalty [46]. By consistently delivering high-quality experiences and maintaining a clear focus on environmental stewardship, businesses can build trust with visitors and encourage repeat visits. Marketing can also help showcase success stories, testimonials, and positive reviews, thus further enhancing a company's reputation within the industry [6]. Quality experience refers to the subjective evaluation of tourists' interactions, emotional responses, and satisfaction levels during their sojourn to a destination [50, 51]. In the context of marine tourism, quality experiences are influenced by diverse factors including environmental conditions, service provision, recreational activities, and cultural encounters. These experiences play a pivotal role in shaping tourists' perceptions of value, satisfaction, and post-visit behaviors such as word-of-mouth recommendations and intentions to revisit. A high-quality experience not only meets tourists' expectations, but also frequently surpasses them by facilitating memorable and meaningful interactions.

Multi-day liveaboard diving expeditions provide tourists with opportunities to explore remote regions of the reef while experiencing luxurious accommodations in the water. These excursions typically include small-group dives, high-quality cuisine, and expert-led discussions regarding the reef's ecology, ensuring an immersive and superior experience. Snorkeling in the transparent waters of Silfra, situated between North American and Eurasian tectonic plates, offers a distinctive and memorable experience. Tourists frequently emphasize exceptional visibility (exceeding 100 m) and the unprecedented sensation of swimming between the two continents. The quality of the experience was further enhanced by highly trained guides who ensured safety and provided educational insights into the geology and ecology of the area.

Business marketing can facilitate partnerships and collaboration between stakeholders within the marine tourism industry [48]. By promoting cooperation between businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations, marketing can help create synergies that benefit both the industry and marine environment. For example, partnerships between marine tourism providers and local conservation organizations

can result in joint marketing campaigns, collaborative initiatives, and resource sharing, which can help advance sustainable marine tourism development [52].

Business marketing plays a pivotal role in marine tourism by raising awareness, attracting visitors, promoting responsible practices, enhancing visitor experiences, building brand reputation, and fostering collaboration. By employing effective marketing strategies, marine tourism businesses can contribute to the industry's growth and long-term sustainability, while ensuring the preservation of precious marine ecosystems [53].

4. UNDERSTANDING VISITOR BEHAVIOR IN MARINE TOURISM: ENHANCING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

In this chapter, we explore the importance of understanding visitor behavior in marine tourism by examining key literature on the subject. Visitor preferences, motivations, expectations, and satisfaction play crucial roles in shaping the overall customer experience [29]. Factors such as the presence of marine debris can influence visitors' perceptions and reactions, potentially affecting tourism revenue in coastal areas [23]. Meanwhile, the study by Jarvis et al. [7] emphasizes the impact of economic, social, and environmental factors on trip satisfaction and the likelihood of visitors returning to a destination.

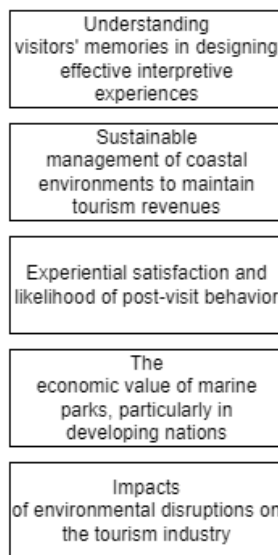
Valuing marine parks and conservation efforts also significantly contribute to customer experience in marine tourism [2]. For instance, Schuhmann et al. [24] found that visitors were willing to pay marine conservation fees in Barbados, indicating a growing awareness of the need to protect these environments. Moreover, research on recreational divers' preferences and perceptions of marine life

has highlighted the importance of offering tailored experiences that cater to individual needs [25].

Segmentation and understanding of the sociodemographic aspects of tourist demand in coastal marine destinations play a critical role in developing strategies to enhance customer experience [26, 27]. By examining visitor behavior through the lens of these studies, businesses can develop tailored marketing strategies and innovative products or services that cater to the unique needs of diverse customer segments. Additionally, this chapter emphasizes the importance of fostering responsible and sustainable behaviors among marine tourism participants, contributing to the preservation of marine ecosystems and long-term customer satisfaction and loyalty [5, 22].

Post-visit behavior, including revisit intention and word-of-mouth (WOM), is a critical outcome in marine tourism [54, 55]. Emotional feelings experienced during a trip are central to post-visit behavior, and experiential satisfaction is a key determinant of these behaviors [56]. Experiential quality, an internal evaluation of services during tourism activities, influences destination value, experiential satisfaction, and post-visits [57]. Destination value refers to the aggregate worth that tourists perceive in a destination, which is influenced by their experiences, satisfaction, and expectations [58, 59]. It encompasses multiple dimensions, including environmental quality, cultural richness, service delivery, and perceived uniqueness of the destination. Destination value plays a pivotal role in shaping tourists' satisfaction, influencing their post-visit behaviors, such as intention to revisit and positive word-of-mouth (WOM) recommendations. In marine tourism, destination value is further associated with sustainability, as the preservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural assets of marine destinations ensures long-term attractiveness and economic viability.

State of the Art



Future Research Agenda

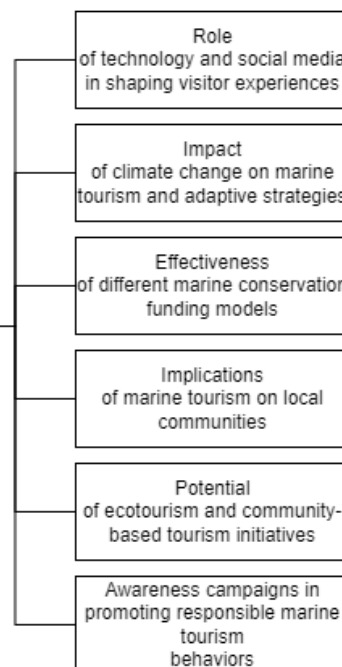


Figure 3. State of the art and future research agenda

Destination value, an extension of destination image and perceived value constructs, has been found to influence experiential satisfaction and post-visit behavior [59]. Marine tourism, a diverse set of deep-water activities [60], is a significant sector of the tourism industry. The study of experiential quality, destination value, experiential satisfaction, and post-visit behavior in the context of marine tourism could provide insights for sustainable tourism development. The Maldives offer pristine marine ecosystems in conjunction with luxurious accommodations and individualized experiences, such as underwater dining establishments or exclusive diving expeditions. These elements generate substantial destination value, attract affluent tourists, and promote sustainable tourism practices including coral reef restoration. The Galápagos Islands exemplify how conservation efforts can enhance destination value. Stringent visitor regulations and guided eco-tours ensure biodiversity preservation, while providing unique educational experiences. This equilibrium has earned the islands a reputation as premier marine tourism destinations. Reef conservation programs, such as citizen science initiatives in which tourists participate in reef monitoring, increase perceived value by combining environmental education with recreational activities. Visitors derive emotional satisfaction by contributing to conservation efforts.

Understanding visitor behavior and customer segmentation is essential for enhancing customer experience and promoting sustainable practices in marine tourism [27]. By tailoring services and amenities, marketing strategies, and resource allocation to specific customer groups, marine tourism businesses can cater to their clients' unique needs and preferences, while ensuring the sustainable use and preservation of marine ecosystems [61]. This contributes to a better overall experience for tourists and long-term success of the marine tourism industry.

Based on the explanations above, it can be concluded that the state-of-the-art and future research agendas for marine tourism are outlined in Figure 3.

Examining the current state of knowledge and delineating a future research agenda in marine tourism is imperative to advance our understanding of the industry, inform management strategies, address environmental challenges, and foster interdisciplinary research. These endeavors ultimately contribute to the long-term sustainability and viability of marine tourism.

5. STATE OF THE ART IN MARINE TOURISM RESEARCH

The state of the art in marine tourism encompasses a broad range of topics that explore various aspects of the industry, with a strong focus on sustainability and enhancing visitor experiences. This section provides an overview of five key areas of research in marine tourism.

5.1 Understanding visitors' memories in designing effective interpretive experiences

Research on visitors' memories emphasizes the significance of creating powerful and memorable experiences for tourists at marine tourism destinations. A better understanding of how visitors process and remember these experiences allows for the development of more effective interpretive strategies that

promote conservation messages and foster deeper connections with the marine environment. Ultimately, this contributes to responsible tourism practices and long-term sustainability.

5.2 Sustainable management of coastal environments to maintain tourism revenues

Studies focusing on the relationship between coastal environmental quality and tourism revenue have highlighted the need for sustainable management practices. This research shows that the perception and reaction of tourists to issues such as marine debris and pollution can impact their overall satisfaction and willingness to return. Implementing effective waste management and marine conservation measures is crucial for preserving tourism revenue in coastal areas.

5.3 Experiential satisfaction and likelihood of post-visit behavior

The impact of various factors, including economic, social, and environmental elements, on tourist satisfaction has been investigated in marine tourism contexts. A better understanding of how these factors influence tourists' overall satisfaction and likelihood of returning to a destination can help stakeholders tailor their offerings to meet tourists' expectations and desires, contributing to a thriving and sustainable marine tourism industry.

5.4 The economic value of marine parks, particularly in developing nations

Research on the valuation of marine parks, such as the study in the Seychelles, emphasizes the economic benefits these areas provide, both in terms of direct revenue and ecosystem services. Such information can aid policymakers and conservationists in garnering support for marine protected areas and other conservation efforts, particularly in developing nations, where resources may be scarce.

5.5 Impacts of environmental disruptions on the tourism industry

Research on jellyfish outbreaks in the Mediterranean Sea is a prime example of how environmental disruption can impact marine tourism. This study highlights the need for continuous monitoring of environmental changes and implementation of adaptive strategies to minimize the negative effects of such events on the tourism sector.

6. FUTURE RESEARCH AGENDA IN MARINE TOURISM

Development of targeted interventions and communication strategies to foster sustainable marine tourism. As marine tourism continues to grow and evolve, it is crucial to identify and address new research areas to ensure the industry's long-term sustainability. This section presents an overview of the six key topics for future research on marine tourism.

6.1 Role of technology and social media in shaping visitor experiences

Future research could investigate the impact of technology

and social media on marine tourism experiences, including how tourists use these platforms to research, plan, and share trips. This understanding can help tourism providers develop strategies to engage with tourists online and create memorable experiences that align with their expectations [62]. In the context of marine tourism, tourists may share their experiences on social media platforms for various reasons including social connections, self-expression, and recommendations. They may also want to inspire others or showcase their unique marine adventure. Understanding these motivations can help businesses develop social media strategies that encourage sharing and foster engagement [63].

Tourists often use technology and social media to research and plan their marine tourism experiences. They may browse friends' posts, read reviews, or follow relevant hashtags to gather information and inspiration for their trips. By understanding these behaviors, tourism providers can optimize their online presence and ensure that their offerings are visible and appealing to potential customers. Tourism providers can leverage social media platforms to engage with tourists before, during, and after their marine tourism experience. For example, they can provide real-time updates on weather conditions, promote special offers, or share user-generated content to showcase their services. Additionally, providers can use social media to gather feedback, identify trends, and understand customer preferences, ultimately enhancing the experience of marine tourism.

6.2 Impact of climate change on marine tourism and adaptive strategies

Climate change is likely to have significant effects on marine ecosystems, with potential implications for marine tourism [64]. Future research should examine these impacts and develop adaptive strategies for tourism stakeholders to manage and mitigate consequences, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the industry. Climate change can cause shifts in species distribution, habitat loss, and altered migration patterns, which can negatively impact marine tourism experiences, such as wildlife watching, diving, and fishing. Rising sea levels, increased erosion, and ocean acidification can lead to the degradation of coastal environments, affecting tourism infrastructure and beach quality [65]. Altered weather patterns and an increased frequency of extreme events, such as storms and hurricanes, can affect marine tourism by disrupting travel plans and damaging infrastructure.

Implementing an ecosystem-based approach that prioritizes the health and resilience of marine ecosystems can help to maintain the quality of tourism experiences and promote sustainable practices. Developing and maintaining infrastructure that is designed to withstand the effects of climate change can help mitigate damage to tourism facilities and minimize disruptions to services. By diversifying tourism offerings, stakeholders can reduce reliance on vulnerable marine resources and create alternative experiences that are less susceptible to climate change. Increasing public awareness about the impacts of climate change on marine ecosystems and the importance of sustainable tourism practices can help generate support for adaptation efforts and promote responsible tourism behavior [47]. Fostering collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders, including tourism providers, local communities, government agencies, and researchers, can facilitate the development and implementation of effective adaptation strategies [64].

6.3 Effectiveness of different marine conservation funding models

Exploring alternative funding models for marine conservation, such as public-private partnerships, can provide insights into the best ways to secure the long-term sustainability of marine ecosystems. Research has compared the effectiveness of different models in achieving conservation goals and maintaining the viability of marine tourism [66]. Traditional conservation efforts often rely on public funding from governments, international organizations, and non-profit entities. Although this model can provide consistent financial support, it may be subject to budget constraints and shifting political priorities, potentially limiting the scope and effectiveness of conservation initiatives.

Private funding sources, such as philanthropic organizations and individual donors, can offer additional resources for marine conservation. Private funding can be flexible and responsive to specific needs but may lack the long-term stability and scale that public funding sources can provide. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) combine the resources and expertise of both public and private entities to achieve marine conservation goals [66]. By leveraging private sector innovation and efficiency with public sector support, PPPs can foster the sustainable management of marine resources, benefiting both conservation and tourism. Market-based approaches, such as payments for ecosystem services or biodiversity offsets, can create financial incentives for conservation while maintaining tourism activities. For example, dive operators may charge additional fees to support marine reserve maintenance, ensuring that visitors contribute to the protection of the ecosystems they enjoy. Blended finance models involve the strategic use of public, private, and philanthropic funding to leverage additional investments for marine conservation. This approach can help mobilize resources on a larger scale, improving the effectiveness and long-term stability of conservation efforts.

6.4 Implications of marine tourism on local communities

Studying the socioeconomic impact of marine tourism on local communities can help develop strategies that balance the benefits and costs among stakeholders [48]. This research can inform policies and management practices that promote equitable distribution of resources, ultimately fostering sustainable marine tourism development. Marine tourism has various economic, social, cultural, and environmental implications for local communities [67]. Positive impacts include job creation in sectors such as hospitality, transportation, and recreation services as well as local revenue generation that supports infrastructure development, public services, and community projects. However, negative impacts can arise from seasonal employment, economic leakage, cultural commodification, and social conflict.

Marine tourism can facilitate cultural exchange and revitalize local traditions while also increasing environmental awareness and promoting conservation efforts. However, unregulated or unsustainable practices can lead to resource depletion and pollution, negatively affecting marine life and local livelihoods. Studying the socioeconomic impact of marine tourism on local communities is crucial for developing strategies that balance benefits and costs among stakeholders. Future research can inform policies and management practices that promote the equitable distribution of resources, ensuring

that marine tourism development benefits local communities while preserving cultural and environmental integrity [67].

6.5 Potential of ecotourism and community-based tourism initiatives

Investigating ecotourism and community-based tourism initiatives in marine contexts can provide valuable insights into sustainable tourism practices that benefit both the environment and local communities [68]. Research should explore the potential of these models in fostering conservation awareness and responsible marine tourism behaviors. These sustainable tourism models can offer significant opportunities for protecting marine ecosystems while providing socioeconomic benefits to local communities. Investigating ecotourism and community-based tourism initiatives in marine settings can provide valuable insights into best practices for fostering conservation awareness, promoting responsible marine tourism behaviors, and empowering local communities to manage and benefit from their natural resources [1]. These models can help strike a balance between tourism development and environmental preservation, contributing to the long-term sustainability of marine tourism destinations [68].

6.6 Awareness campaigns in promoting responsible marine tourism behaviors

The findings of such research can be used to provide valuable insights and information for tourism management and policymakers to improve tourism practices at marine destinations [69]. This research can help identify effective strategies to promote responsible behavior among tourists and reduce the negative impacts of tourism on marine ecosystems. It can also help develop effective educational campaigns and awareness-raising programs that can inform tourists about the importance of protecting the marine environment and how they can contribute to sustainable tourism practices. Overall, the statement highlights the need for further research to address gaps in knowledge and to inform better tourism practices in marine destinations.

Research on user-generated content on social media can provide valuable insights into travelers' attitudes and behaviors, helping tourism management and policymakers improve practices in marine destinations [70]. Identifying effective strategies for promoting responsible behavior among tourists is essential for reducing the negative impacts of tourism on marine ecosystems. By developing targeted educational campaigns and awareness-raising programs, stakeholders can inform tourists of the importance of protecting marine environments and their role in contributing to sustainable tourism practices. These initiatives can empower tourists to make informed decisions, ultimately minimizing their environmental footprint and fostering more responsible marine tourism behavior. Further research addressing the knowledge gaps in this area is vital for driving better marine tourism practices and ensuring long-term sustainability [70].

7. THEORY APPROACH AND SELECTION FOR MARINE TOURISM RESEARCH

Choosing a suitable theoretical framework is essential in any research, as it guides the study and provides a way to

interpret the research findings. Several theories can be employed in marine tourism research, each offering a different perspective and focus. In this section, we consider five theories: RBV, SDL, systems theory, stakeholder theory, and the TPB.

7.1 Resource-Based View

RBV of the firm, primarily proposed by Barney [71] in the 1990s, suggests that a firm's competitive advantage lies in its ability to exploit its unique bundle of valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources. In marine tourism, this theory can be used to explore how firms can leverage their unique assets (such as beachfront locations, marine biodiversity, proprietary technology, and local culture and knowledge) to create superior value for tourists and achieve a competitive advantage. Research may also investigate how marine tourism firms can best manage and develop their resources to ensure long-term sustainability, particularly given the importance of preserving marine ecosystems.

7.2 Service-Dominant Logic

Proposed by Vargo and Lusch [72], SDL shifts the focus from goods-dominant logic, which is rooted in the exchange of tangible resources, to an approach that sees service as the basis of all exchanges. In SDL, value is not determined by the producer but is co-created with consumers. This theory can be used to study how marine tourism providers co-create value with tourists through interaction and experience. Research could explore, for example, how tourists' active participation in marine activities (such as diving, eco-tours, or citizen science projects) contributes to their overall satisfaction and perceived value. Furthermore, it could investigate how this co-creation process influences tourists' attitudes towards marine conservation and their future intentions to engage in sustainable tourism practices.

7.3 Systems theory

Systems theory is an interdisciplinary theory on the nature of complex systems in nature, society, and science [73]. It proposes that systems cannot be understood by looking at their individual parts in isolation; instead, they must be viewed as a whole, considering the interactions among the system's components. In the context of marine tourism, this theory can help researchers understand the complex relationships and interactions between various stakeholders (tourists, tourism providers, local communities, and government bodies) and the marine environment. This approach might involve examining how changes in one part of the system (e.g., marine biodiversity loss due to climate change) affect other parts of the system (such as tourist satisfaction and local economies).

7.4 Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory, put forward by Freeman [74] in 1999, suggests that organizations should consider the interests of all stakeholders, not just shareholders, in their decision-making process. Stakeholders can be anyone who has an impact on or is influenced by a company's actions, such as employees, customers, suppliers, the local community, or the government. Applying this theory to marine tourism could help researchers understand how various stakeholders are affected by marine tourism activities. For instance, a study could examine how

marine tourism providers reconcile the often-competing interests of different stakeholders, such as ensuring tourist satisfaction while minimizing environmental harm or balancing economic growth with social justice.

7.5 Theory of Planned Behavior

TPB, developed by Ajzen [75], is a psychological theory that explains human behavior. According to the TPB, a person's behavior is determined by their intention to perform that behavior, which is influenced by their attitude towards the

behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. This theory can be used to understand tourists' intentions and behaviors in marine tourism settings. For instance, researchers might investigate how tourists' attitudes towards marine conservation, their perceptions of social norms (e.g., how their peers view conservation), and their perceived control over their actions (e.g., their belief in their ability to engage in sustainable tourism practices) influence their intentions to engage in responsible tourism behaviors and whether these intentions translate into actual behaviors.

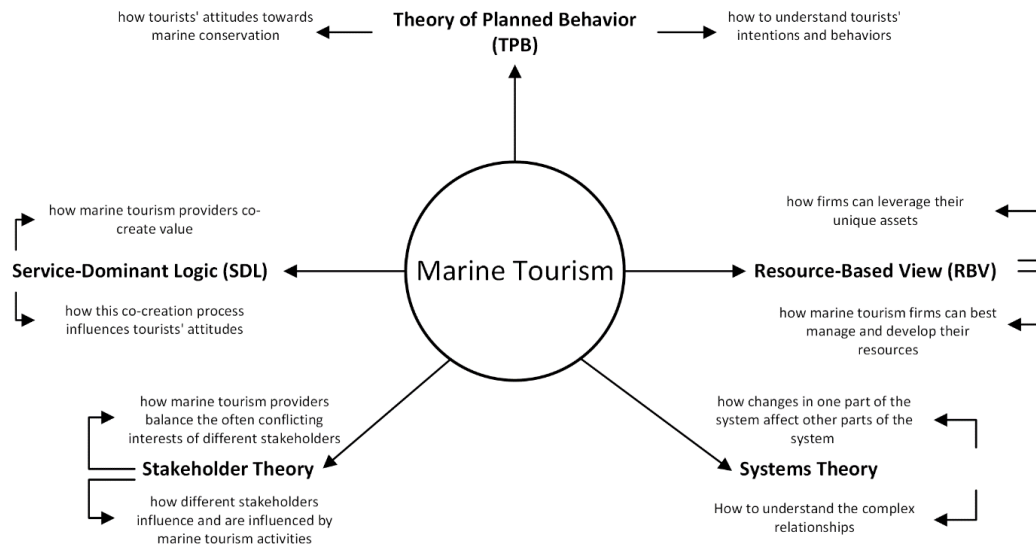


Figure 4. Theory approach

These five theories RBV, SDL, systems theory, stakeholder theory, and the TPB offer a comprehensive theoretical foundation for marine tourism research (see Figure 4). By choosing the most appropriate theory (or a combination of theories), future research can gain a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics at play in marine tourism, paving the way for effective interventions and strategies that promote sustainability in the industry.

8. CONCLUSIONS

This systematic literature review makes a significant contribution to the field of marine tourism by providing a comprehensive synthesis of existing research on visitor behavior and its implications for sustainable tourism practices. By identifying critical areas, such as visitors' memories, experiential satisfaction, and the economic value of marine parks, this review highlights the intricate connections between the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of marine tourism. It also sheds light on the impact of environmental disruptions and the importance of sustainable coastal management, emphasizing their relevance to long-term industrial viability.

The innovative aspect of this review lies in its interdisciplinary approach, integrating insights from psychology, sociology, economics, and environmental science to create a holistic understanding of visitor behavior. This multidimensional perspective enables the identification of research gaps and opportunities, such as exploring the role of emerging technologies, such as virtual reality and social media,

in shaping tourist experiences, assessing the implications of climate change on marine ecosystems, and examining new funding models for marine conservation. Furthermore, it introduces a forward-looking agenda by advocating for community-based and ecotourism initiatives and emphasizing their potential to balance environmental conservation with community empowerment and economic development.

The findings from this review provide actionable insights for tourism management and policymakers, encouraging the development of strategies that promote responsible tourist behavior, enhance visitor experiences, and mitigate negative environmental impacts. By bridging the theoretical understanding with practical applications, this review offers a roadmap for fostering the long-term sustainability of marine tourism, ensuring that its benefits extend to both local economies and the preservation of marine ecosystems. This dual focus on sustainability and innovation establishes this review as a valuable resource for guiding future research and advancing best practices in marine tourism.

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