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Exploring Tourist Behavior and Sustainability in Island Tourism: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the relationship between tourist behavior and the sustainability of island tourism through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach based on the PRISMA 2020 protocol. Data were obtained from two main databases, namely Scopus and ScienceDirect, covering publications from 2021–2025. In the initial identification stage, 733 articles were found. After going through the screening, eligibility, and inclusion processes, 53 articles were obtained that met the criteria for further analysis. The analysis was conducted bibliometrically and thematically to map tourist behavior variables, frequently used theories, and the geographical distribution of global research. The results show that the dominant theories used are the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Service Quality (SERVQUAL), and Social Exchange Theory (SET). The most frequently studied variables include tourist satisfaction, destination loyalty, destination image, and revisit intention. Thematically, the research focuses on three main areas: (1) sustainable practices and environmental awareness, (2) tourist experience, satisfaction, and revisit intention, and (3) destination image, local culture, and loyalty formation. Geographically, publications are dominated by Europe, followed by ASEAN and non-ASEAN Asia. The results of this study provide a conceptual contribution to strengthening tourist behavior models that support the sustainability of island destinations and enrich the global research direction in the field of sustainable tourism.

Keywords: Island Tourism, Tourist Behavior, Sustainability, Revisit Intention, Tourist Satisfaction, Destination Loyalty, Systematic Literature Review.

INTRODUCTION

Islands as tourism destinations have a strategic position in the development of sustainable destinations due to their fragile ecological characteristics and dependence on limited resources. (Shang et al., 2025). In the context of sustainable development, island tourism not only serves as an economic driver through increased income, employment opportunities, and technology transfer, but also faces pressures on environmental sustainability due to excessive tourism activity. As shown by (Ajuhari et al., 2023), Increasing tourist visits without proper management of carrying capacity puts pressure on natural resources, degrades

ecosystems, and reduces the quality of tourism experiences. This challenge highlights the dilemma between economic growth and environmental conservation, a key issue in sustainable tourism management in island destinations.

Although island tourism is often the focus of sustainability research, most previous studies still emphasize the environmental and economic dimensions, while the behavioral dimension of tourists is relatively neglected. (Rahmadian et al., 2022). Existing literature focuses primarily on ecological impacts and governance policies, while analysis of how tourist satisfaction, experiences, perceived value, and revisit intentions contribute to destination sustainability remains limited. This creates a significant research gap, particularly in understanding the psychological factors that drive sustainable behavior among island tourists. (Wei et al., 2025) In *Escape to the Edge: A Systematic Review of Island Tourism*, researchers emphasized that island tourism research remains fragmented, emphasizing resources and community perceptions rather than integrating tourist behavior with sustainability issues. This study failed to develop a comprehensive theoretical framework that explains the relationship between behavioral dimensions, sustainability, and the ecologically vulnerable island context. Therefore, a new review linking tourist behavior with the principles of sustainable island management is needed.

Furthermore, (Rahmadian et al., 2022) *A Systematic Literature Review on the Use of Big Data for Sustainable Tourism* highlights the potential of big data for analyzing tourist behavior and environmental impacts. However, its use is still predominantly in urban contexts and has not been specifically applied to small islands prone to overtourism. This demonstrates a gap between advances in digital analytics and their practical application in sustainable tourism management in insular regions. From a destination innovation perspective, (Azmi et al., 2023) identified seven key themes in new destination development, including sustainability and product diversification. However, the review did not highlight aspects of tourist behavior as a determinant of sustainability. In the context of island tourism, tourist behavior (such as ecological awareness, revisiting intentions, and cultural engagement) plays a significant role in the carrying capacity of local ecosystems and economies. Meanwhile, (Kozak & Kozak, 2016) emphasizes the relationship between positive psychology, happiness, and tourist well-being. However, this eudaimonic approach has not been linked to environmental responsibility or social sustainability in island destinations. This means that the affective dimension of the tourism experience has not been integrated with sustainable development goals. In this study, (Rivetti et al., 2025) *Research examining the pro-environmental behavior of religious tourists* found that spiritual motivation influences sustainable practices at destinations. However, this research was limited to mainland religious sites and did not include island destinations, even though islands have distinct dynamics related to accessibility, environmental awareness, and ecological pressures. This underscores the importance of studies linking tourist motivation and sustainable behavior in the island context.

Other weaknesses also emerge in the study of technology and big data. (Rahmadian et al., 2022) which is still descriptive and has not identified the behavioral pathways of tourists towards sustainability. In addition, many previous SLRs, for example (Azmi et al., 2023; Wei et al., 2025) ignoring the socio-cultural and psychological dimensions of tourists that determine the long-term sustainability of a destination. As a result, sustainability discourse is still treated as a governance or economic issue, not a behavioral one.

Therefore, the study "Exploring Tourist Behavior and Sustainability in Island Tourism: A Systematic Literature Review" is crucial for filling the integrative gap between tourist behavior, sustainability dimensions, and the geographical context of islands. The urgency of this research also arises from the geographical disparity in publication distribution. Global bibliometric analysis shows a predominance of studies conducted in Europe, the Pacific, and China, while Southeast Asia, particularly Indonesia, remains largely underexplored. (Azmi et

al., 2023; Shang et al., 2025). Given that Indonesia has thousands of islands and relies heavily on the tourism sector as a primary economic source, locally context-based studies are urgently needed to enrich the global representation of tourist behavior in sustainable island destinations. Therefore, this research is crucial to address the empirical and theoretical gaps regarding the dimensions of tourist behavior in island tourism and to make a tangible contribution to the development of behavior-based sustainable tourism policy strategies.

Research Objectives and Questions

RQ1: What are the main behavioral variables studied in island tourism research?

RQ2: What behavioral theories are most frequently applied in sustainable island tourism studies?

RQ3: Which regions and countries dominate the global research landscape in island tourism?

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, following the PRISMA 2020 (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines. This method was chosen because it allows for a systematic, transparent, and replicable literature review process, minimizing researcher bias and ensuring that the review results reflect the current state of research. (Page et al., 2021) The SLR approach is an ideal method for critically identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing previous research results based on strict selection criteria, so that it is relevant for producing conceptual maps and future research directions.

The main focus of this research is to analyze and synthesize scientific literature related to tourist behavioral variables in island tourism, the theoretical frameworks used to explain these behaviors, and the geographic distribution of island tourism research globally. The research process follows the four main stages of the PRISMA protocol: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. (Page et al., 2021). The first stage (identification) aims to collect all relevant scientific articles based on predetermined keywords. The second stage (screening) is carried out to eliminate duplication and select articles based on title and abstract. The third stage (eligibility) assesses the suitability of articles through a full-text review. Finally, the fourth stage (inclusion) generates a list of articles that truly meet the inclusion criteria for further analysis. This approach was adopted from a similar SLR study by (Wei et al., 2025) dan (Ajuhari et al., 2023), which has successfully mapped research trends and gaps in island tourism comprehensively.

Using a PRISMA-based SLR design, this study not only conducted a descriptive review but also thematic and bibliometric analyses to uncover research hotspots, dominant theories, and the global distribution of research. This analysis is expected to produce an evidence-based synthesis that illustrates the direction of development of tourist behavior research in the context of island tourism sustainability.

Data Source and Search Strategy

Data Source

Data was collected from the Scopus and Sciencedirect databases, selected as the most comprehensive and internationally recognized academic repositories for high-quality publications. The search was conducted on English-language articles, spanning the period 2021 to 2025, to ensure only recent publications reflecting the latest developments in island tourism research focused on sustainability and tourist behavior. This five-year focus also aims to highlight post-COVID-19 pandemic dynamics that have significantly impacted global tourist behavior patterns and preferences.

Search Strategy

The search strategy uses Boolean search query logic to combine primary keywords and relevant synonyms. The search formula is designed as follows:

("island tourism" OR "island destination" OR "small island tourism") AND ("tourist behavior" OR "behavioral intention") AND ("sustainability" OR "sustainable tourism")

This combination aims to capture the entire relevant literature with a research focus on the behavioral dimensions of tourists in the context of sustainable island tourism.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

1. Inclusion Criteria

Articles were included in the analysis if they met the following criteria:

1. Publication type: Peer-reviewed scientific articles published in reputable journals indexed by Scopus.
2. Research focus: Studies discussing island or coastal tourism and linking it to tourist behavioral variables such as satisfaction, experience, loyalty, revisit intention, happiness, or perceived value.
3. Sustainability context: Articles linking behavioral aspects to sustainability dimensions (environmental, social, or economic).
4. Full-text availability: Articles were available in full in English.
5. Publication period: Articles published between 2021 and 2025 to represent current research trends post-COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Exclusion Criteria

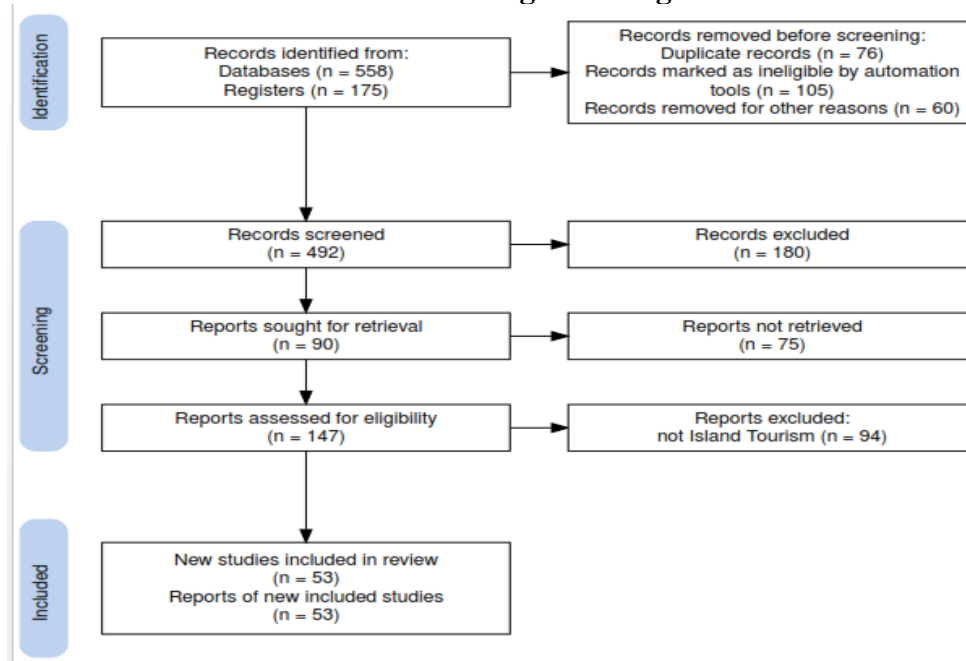
Meanwhile, articles were excluded from analysis if:

1. Documents that are conference papers, book chapters, editorials, commentaries, or non-academic policy reports.
2. They do not focus on the island destination context or are not relevant to tourist behavior.
3. They do not explicitly discuss sustainability aspects.
4. They are duplicate publications from the same source or preprint versions.
5. Articles that are solely conceptual commentary without empirical data or systematic analysis.

PRISMA Diagram Flow

From this Prisma process, 53 articles were obtained that were suitable for further analysis with the following article selection order:

Prism Flow Diagram Image



The identification process for this study was conducted using two major academic databases, Scopus and ScienceDirect, covering publications from 2021 to 2025. In the initial stage, a total of 733 records were identified, consisting of 558 from databases and 175 from additional registers. During the preliminary screening, 241 records were removed due to duplication (n = 76), automation ineligibility (n = 105), and other exclusion reasons (n = 60), leaving 492 records for screening.

At the *screening* stage, 180 records were excluded because they were not relevant to the research focus. From the remaining pool, 90 reports were sought for full-text retrieval; however, 75 reports could not be accessed. Consequently, 147 reports were assessed for eligibility based on inclusion criteria. Of these, 94 reports were excluded because they did not specifically address *island tourism* contexts.

Finally, 53 studies met all inclusion criteria and were included in the final synthesis. These articles formed the empirical foundation of this Systematic Literature Review, aiming to map global research trends on tourist behavior and sustainability in island tourism between 2021 and 2025. The overall selection process adhered to the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, ensuring transparency, rigor, and replicability in the identification, screening, and inclusion of relevant literature.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Analisis Bibliometrik

This bibliometric analysis aims to understand the direction of research developments on tourist behavior in the context of sustainable island tourism between 2021 and 2025. The interpretations in this analysis are based entirely on 53 Scopus-indexed articles. This study focuses on how global and regional research dynamics highlight the dimensions of tourist behavior, environmental sustainability, and the transformation of island destinations amidst social, economic, and technological changes.

1. Research Trends per Year (2021–2025)

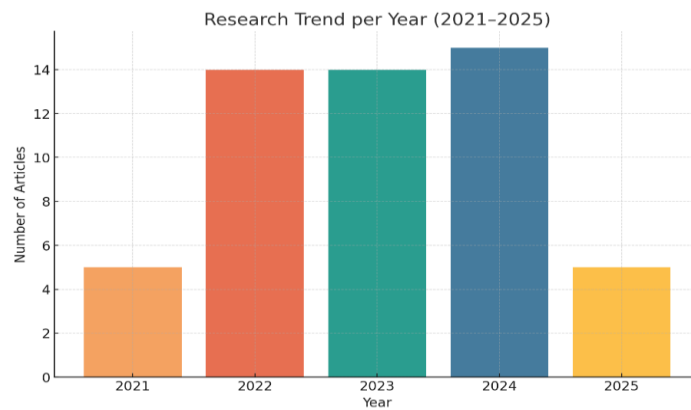


Figure 1. Number of trend articles per year

Figure 1 above shows the development of the number of scientific publications related to sustainable island tourism and tourist behavior from 2021 to 2025, based on an analysis of 53 Scopus articles in the SLR matrix. Overall, the graph shows a fluctuating pattern but tends to increase in three key years: 2022, 2023, and 2024, with 14, 14, and 15 publications, respectively. Conversely, 2021 and 2025 show lower numbers, with 5 articles each. This pattern reflects the dynamics of academic research closely related to changing global conditions and the post-pandemic transformation of tourism paradigms.

2. Distribution of Research Locations and Areas

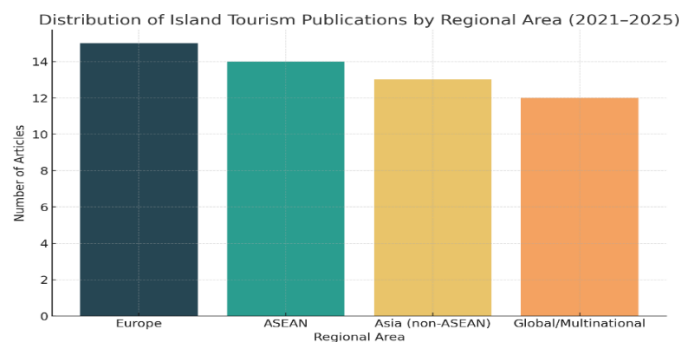


Figure 2. Island Tourism Publications Based on Region

Figure 2. above shows the distribution of island tourism research by region, grouped into four main areas: Europe, ASEAN, non-ASEAN Asia, and global/multinational studies. Of the 53 articles analyzed, Europe tops the list with 15 publications, followed by ASEAN (14 articles), non-ASEAN Asia (13 articles), and global/multinational studies (12 articles). This distribution reflects that island tourism research has become a global issue across regions, with varying focuses, according to the geographic, social, and policy conditions of each region.

The ASEAN region focuses on 14 publications out of the 53 articles analyzed. The majority of research comes from Malaysia (6 articles) and Indonesia (4 articles), followed by Thailand and Vietnam. Indonesia is still behind Malaysia, with relatively few studies (only 4 articles). This is despite being the world's largest archipelagic country with over 17,000 islands and possessing enormous tourism potential.

3. Frequently Used Theories

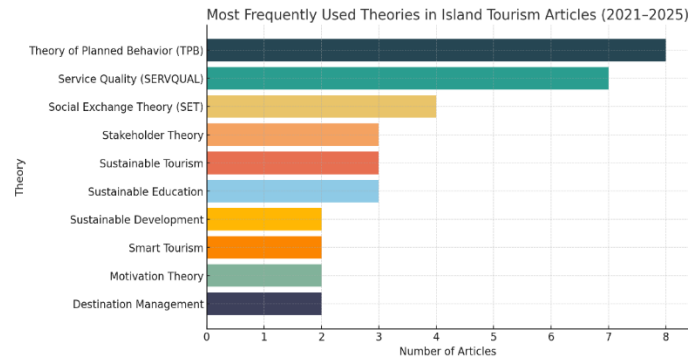


Figure 3. Theories used in Island Tourism

Based on Figure 3, the most widely used theory in island tourism research for the 2021–2025 period is the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), with eight articles, followed by Service Quality (SERVQUAL) and Social Exchange Theory (SET). These three theories serve as the primary framework for explaining tourist behavior, service quality, and social relations in island destinations. Meanwhile, theories such as Stakeholder Theory, Sustainable Tourism, and Smart Tourism demonstrate a new trend toward integrating tourist behavior, sustainability, and destination technology.

4. Most Frequently Used Behavioral Variables

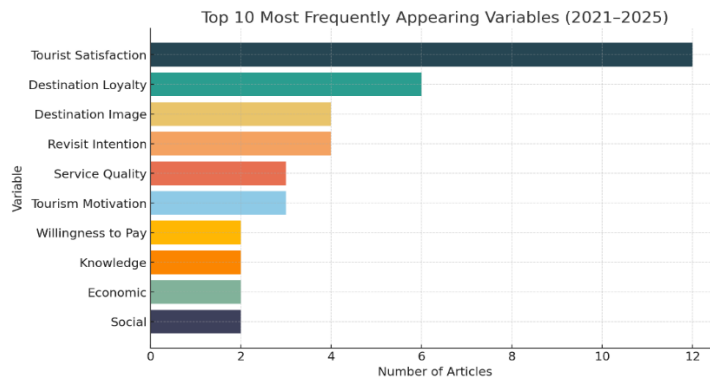


Figure 4. Top frequently used behavioral variables

Based on the graph above, the most frequently appearing variable in island tourism research for the 2021–2025 period is Tourist Satisfaction, followed by Destination Loyalty, Destination Image, and Revisit Intention. The most common relationship pattern found is Service Quality → Tourist Satisfaction → Revisit Intention / Destination Loyalty, indicating that satisfaction is the primary link between service quality and tourist loyalty.

Categorically, variables such as Service Quality, Destination Image, and Tourism Motivation act as determinants; Tourist Satisfaction and Experience Quality act as mediators; while Revisit Intention and Destination Loyalty serve as outcomes. Furthermore, new variables such as Willingness to Pay, Environmental Awareness, and eWOM have emerged, indicating a shift in research focus toward more environmentally conscious and sustainability-oriented tourist behavior.

5. Journal Publisher Trends

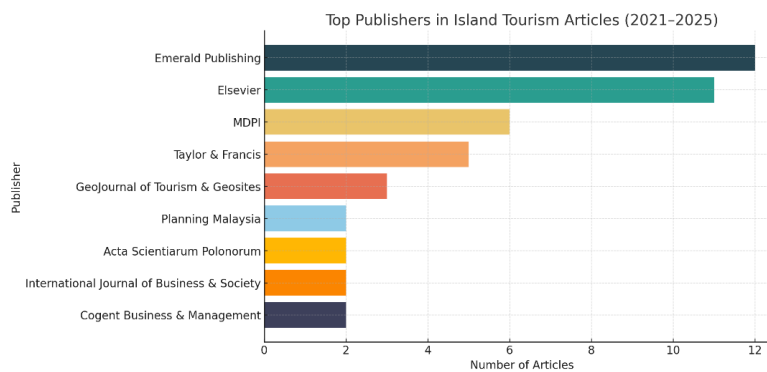


Figure 5. Journal Publisher Trends

Figure 5 shows that Emerald Publishing and Elsevier were the most dominant publishers in Island Tourism research for the 2021–2025 period, publishing approximately 12 and 11 articles, respectively. These two publishers primarily published studies on tourist behavior, sustainability, and island destination management. Meanwhile, MDPI and Taylor & Francis also contributed significantly through publications on sustainability and service quality. Several other publishers, such as GeoJournal of Tourism & Geosites, Planning Malaysia, and the International Journal of Business and Society, accounted for smaller contributions, indicating a global research focus on highly reputable journals (Q1–Q2 Scopus).

B. Analisis Tematik

Thematic analysis in the study of sustainable island tourism aims to identify patterns, main themes, and directions of research development related to tourist behavior and the sustainability of island destinations. Through this approach, the results of the review of 53 articles can be classified into conceptual themes that reflect the current scientific focus, such as sustainable practices, tourist experiences, loyalty, and the role of local communities. Thematic analysis is a follow-up step after bibliometric analysis because it not only highlights publication trends and keywords but also provides conceptual meaning to the relationships between variables and research contexts. Thus, this analysis helps formulate policy directions and strategies for island tourism development that are more sustainable, based on scientific evidence and relevant to the global dynamics of tourism.

1. Sustainable Practices and Environmental Awareness

This theme highlights how sustainable tourism practices and environmental awareness are essential foundations for managing island destinations. Based on an analysis of 53 articles, sustainability issues consistently emerged in the context of tourist behavior, destination policies, and coastal environmental management innovations.

Study (Naparín et al., 2024) emphasized that the implementation of sustainable practices and local community involvement in small island destinations significantly impacts tourist loyalty. This indicates that tourists increasingly value destinations that practice ecological and social responsibility in their tourism activities. (Sun & Han, 2024) found that sustainable tourism management and environmentally friendly tourism motivations positively influence island tourists' post-travel attitudes, with the New Ecological Paradigm acting as a moderating factor that strengthens the relationship. Next, research (Sakcharoen et al., 2024), A study in Thailand broadened the perspective by measuring the carbon footprint of marine tourism on Sichang Island. The results showed that sea and land transportation are major

contributors to carbon emissions, thus highlighting the need for low-carbon tourism development and carbon offset policies. A similar approach was proposed by (Pontee & Bassetti, 2024) which underscores the effectiveness of Nature-based Solutions (NbS), such as wetland restoration and living shorelines, in increasing coastal resilience to flooding and erosion while providing ecological and social benefits.

Besides that, (Hamid et al., 2024) found that the gap between tourism development and responsible practices remains a major challenge on Redang Island, Malaysia. Multi-stakeholder engagement is key to truly implementing sustainable practices. Similar findings were also expressed by (Ali & Li, 2024) in China, where the success of sustainable tourism development on Dachen Island depends heavily on the balance of economic, social and environmental benefits felt by all stakeholders.

In the context of tourist behavior, (Valeyev et al., 2024) Research shows that tourists' awareness of recreational capacity and environmental quality significantly influences their satisfaction. Tourists tend to evaluate destinations that maintain cleanliness, safety, and ecological awareness positively. This is in line with the results of (An et al., 2024) in South Korea, which confirmed that environmental risk perception influences sustainable culinary tourism intentions, where tourists with high environmental awareness showed a preference for experiences with minimal ecological impact.

Overall, this theme reflects two major sub-foci. First, green behavior and eco-awareness, which emphasizes the behavior of tourists and the community toward environmental conservation, including their willingness to participate in environmentally friendly activities. (Naparín et al., 2024; Sun & Han, 2024) Second, low-carbon tourism and NbS, which highlight the efforts of island destinations to reduce carbon emissions and strengthen ecosystem resilience through nature-based solutions. (Pontee & Bassetti, 2024; Sakcharoen et al., 2024).

Thus, the theme "Sustainable Practices and Environmental Awareness" reflects a paradigm shift in island tourism from an economic orientation to an ecological and social one. Sustainable practices not only improve environmental quality but also strengthen tourist loyalty, expand community participation, and build a responsible destination image in the eyes of global travelers.

2. Tourist Experience, Satisfaction, and Revisit Intention

This theme focuses on the relationship between tourist experience, tourist satisfaction, and revisit intention, a key issue in research on tourist behavior in island destinations. Based on an analysis of 53 articles, the majority of studies confirm that the quality of the tourist experience is the result of the interaction between tourists and destination attributes such as attractiveness, amenities, accessibility, and socio-cultural interactions that shape tourists' perceptions and impressions of island destinations.

(Juliana et al., 2023) emphasizes that holistic experiences and experience quality, encompassing interactions with nature, local culture, and destination services, significantly influence satisfaction and revisit intentions. Experiences that engage the emotional, sensory, and social dimensions create vivid memories, although strong memories do not always directly influence revisit intentions. This demonstrates that destination elements such as natural beauty and the friendliness of local residents contribute to creating meaningful and profound experiences. (Rosli et al., 2023) found that a positive destination image, as a form of perception of destination attributes such as natural beauty, cleanliness, and facilities, influences satisfaction and revisit intentions through the mediation of tourist satisfaction. A strong destination image is rooted in positive experiences with the destination's services and attractions, making it an important factor in maintaining tourist loyalty. (Furtado et al., 2022) Research in Cape Verde showed that accommodation service attributes such as comfort,

cleanliness, and staff friendliness were key determinants of tourist satisfaction. The results showed that 90% of respondents expressed satisfaction and intended to return, demonstrating that service quality, as a destination attribute, plays a central role in building loyalty. (Linnes et al., 2023) in Hawaii added that local food experiences are an important part of a destination's cultural attributes, enriching the emotional experience for tourists and strengthening connections with the local community. (Ma et al., 2022) in Chinese island destinations shows that destination layout and ease of access to recreational resources contribute to shaping tourist behavior patterns and their perceptions of the quality of the experience.

Besides experience and destination image, satisfaction emerged as the strongest mediating variable in island tourism research. (Talukder et al., 2024) confirms that ecotourism service quality has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction and loyalty, with satisfaction being the link between service quality and revisit intentions. (Cao et al., 2021) highlights the importance of emotional attachment (destination attachment) that is formed through repeated interactions between tourists and destination attributes such as beautiful landscapes, serene atmosphere, and memorable personal experiences.

Overall, this theme contains two main sub-foci. First, "quality of experience → satisfaction → revisit intention," which describes the cognitive and affective pathways in shaping tourist loyalty based on perceptions of destination attributes. (Furtado et al., 2022; Ilhamalimy, Suhud, et al., 2025a, 2025b; Juliana et al., 2023; Rosli et al., 2023), Second, "emotional and memorable experiences", which highlights the role of emotional attachment and positive memories arising from tourists' interactions with local natural and cultural attractions (Cao et al., 2021; Ilhamalimy et al., 2025, 2025; Linnes et al., 2023).

Thus, a quality tourism experience reflects a destination's success in delivering a harmonious combination of attractions, amenities, accessibility, and social interactions that satisfy tourists. The stronger the emotional connection between tourists and the destination's attributes, the greater the likelihood of developing deep satisfaction and the intention to revisit on a sustained basis.

3. Destination Image, Culture, and Loyalty Formation

This theme highlights how destination image, local culture, and social interactions play a crucial role in shaping tourist loyalty to island destinations. Based on a synthesis of 53 articles, destination image has been shown to be one of the most influential factors in bridging tourism experiences and revisit intentions. A positive image is typically formed through tourists' lived experiences with the destination's natural attractions, cultural authenticity, and service quality (Carvache-Franco et al., 2022; Rosli et al., 2023) In this context, cultural engagement and authenticity are key elements that foster a sense of emotional connection with the destination. (Suarthana et al., 2024) In their research, they found that cultural interaction has a significant positive influence on tourist satisfaction and loyalty. Although cultural richness did not significantly influence satisfaction, it still positively impacted tourist loyalty. This means that tourists who experience the authenticity of local culture tend to develop an emotional attachment that encourages repeat visits.

In the context of luxury tourism, (Zain et al., 2023) confirms that social value and destination uniqueness play a significant role in increasing the satisfaction and revisit intention of tourists from Central Asia visiting Langkawi Island. These findings suggest that cultural differentiation and unique local experiences can be effective strategies in strengthening destination image and building long-term loyalty. (Suhud et al., 2024) highlighted the importance of destination communication and promotion strategies. They found that destination publicity significantly influences awareness, image, and preference, ultimately driving intention to visit. Therefore, building a strong destination image depends not only on

the quality of the tourism experience but also on a branding strategy that creates a positive perception in the minds of tourists.

Apart from cultural and promotional aspects, the influence of digital media is also an important element in forming the image and loyalty of a destination. (Rahman et al., 2023) confirmed that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and social media use have a positive influence on destination image, satisfaction, and tourist loyalty in Pakistan. The results of a meta-analysis by (Nguyen Phuc & Bui Thanh, 2022) strengthens these findings by demonstrating that eWOM plays a significant role in enhancing destination image, travel intention, and loyalty. In other words, digital communication is becoming a new pathway for building destination loyalty through increased exposure and curated online tourism experiences.

In addition, authentic cultural experiences have also been shown to strengthen tourist loyalty through the emotional dimension. (Linnes et al., 2023) found that tourists in Hawaii are willing to pay more for local culinary experiences because they enrich the emotional experience and strengthen connections with the local community. Similarly, (Lees & Greenhalgh, 2024) emphasized that local gastronomic attributes play a significant role in enhancing tourist satisfaction in Vanuatu, (Cao et al., 2021) found that emotional attachment to a destination is formed gradually through the processes of motivation, cognition, and emotion before, during, and after the trip, thereby strengthening tourists' loyalty to the island destination.

Overall, this theme depicts two main interrelated strands. First, cultural engagement and authenticity, which addresses how meaningful cultural interactions and authentic experiences with local communities create satisfaction, emotional engagement, and loyalty among tourists. (Cao et al., 2021; Lees & Greenhalgh, 2024; Linnes et al., 2023; Suarhana et al., 2024; Zain et al., 2023). Second, destination branding and loyalty pathways, which explain how publicity, destination knowledge, and eWOM shape tourist awareness, image, and preferences that lead to repeat visit intentions (Hamdan et al., 2025; Ilhamalimy et al., 2025; Ilhamalimy, Suhud, et al., 2025a, 2025b). (Carvache-Franco et al., 2022; Nguyen Phuc & Bui Thanh, 2022; Rahman et al., 2023; Suhud et al., 2024). Thus, the formation of tourist loyalty is not only determined by individual experiences, but also by the symbolic and emotional power of local culture and the effectiveness of destination branding strategies in instilling a positive image in the minds of tourists.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion

The results of a Systematic Literature Review of 53 articles published between 2021–2025 provide a comprehensive overview of the current research directions in the field of island tourism with a focus on tourist behavior and sustainability.

Regarding RQ1 (main behavioral variables), findings indicate that island tourism research is dominated by behavioral variables related to tourist experience, satisfaction, revisit intention, and loyalty. Furthermore, variables that are increasingly emerging include destination image, service quality, eco-awareness, environmental attitude, and cultural engagement. Some studies are also beginning to explore new variables such as willingness to pay (Linnes et al., 2023), *perceived risk* (An et al., 2024), *eWOM* (Nguyen Phuc & Bui Thanh, 2022) and *low-carbon behavior* (Sakcharoen et al., 2024) as a reflection of the shift in tourist behavior towards more environmentally conscious tourism.

Answering RQ2 (the most frequently used behavioral theory), this study found that the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is the most dominant conceptual framework, both in explaining revisit intention, satisfaction, and sustainable behavior (Naparini et al., 2024; Rahman et al., 2023; Rosli et al., 2023). In addition to the TPB, theories such as Social

Exchange Theory, the SERVQUAL Model, the Sustainable Tourism Framework, the Experiential Marketing Theory, and the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) are widely used to explain the relationship between tourist perceptions, experience value, and pro-environmental behavior. This trend indicates that island tourism research is increasingly oriented toward psychological and ecological approaches that emphasize the balance between individual satisfaction and environmental responsibility.

Meanwhile, for RQ3 (dominant regions and countries), the results of the publication distribution analysis show that research on island tourism is spread relatively evenly across four main regions: Europe (15 articles), ASEAN (14 articles), non-ASEAN Asia (13 articles), and Global/Multinational (12 articles). Although the differences are not too significant, the European region ranks first with the highest number of publications, indicating a high level of attention to sustainability issues, coastal environmental management, and climate change adaptation in countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Croatia.

The ASEAN region ranks second, with significant contributions from Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. Research in this region focuses heavily on tourist behavior, service quality, and the role of local communities in managing sustainable island destinations. Furthermore, non-ASEAN Asia, such as China, South Korea, and Japan, focuses heavily on technology, ecotourism, and low-carbon tourism development. Thus, the global research landscape shows that while Asia remains a dynamic and contextually diverse region, Europe now holds the largest scientific contribution to sustainable island tourism, while ASEAN and non-ASEAN Asia play a significant role in strengthening behavioral and sustainability-based studies in tropical island regions.

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