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Tourist Sustainable Behavior of Marine Tourism Destinations in North Sulawesi

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Citation

Pandowo, M. H. C., Maradesa, D., & Ogi, I. W. J. (2024). Tourist sustainable behavior of marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi. *Journal of Fintech, Business, and Development*, 1(2), 11–24.

Submitted: 30-Oct, 2024

Accepted: 30-Nov, 2024

Published: 12-Dec, 2024

Vol. 1, No. 2, 2024.

 10.62762/JTAE.2024.000000

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Abstract

One of the challenges of today's global climate change is caused by environmental degradation. Sustainable actions are needed including in the tourism industry to create sustainable behavior in order to create a sustainable tourism industry. The purpose of this study was to conduct a study of sustainable behavior of tourists visiting marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi. The research method is quantitative in the form of a survey. The data taken is primary data with a sample of tourists visiting popular marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi. Sampling is incidental and data analysis is inferential statistical data analysis. The findings of the study indicate that the UTAUT 2 model, namely the relationship between hedonic motivation, price value, and habit, influences sustainable behavior which is mediated by behavioral intention in tourists who care about sustainable marine-based tourism.

Keywords: sustainable behavior, tourists, tourism industry, destinations, marine tourism

Introduction

Research Background

Sustainable tourism behavior is part of the concept of sustainable behavior, an action that aims to protect the natural and social environment (Tapia-Fonllem et al., 2013). The term sustainable behavior in practice has similarities with pro-environmental behavior (Karp, 1996). Sustainable tourism behavior is an action of traveling with the aim of protecting the natural and social environment. Sustainable tourism behavior is important at the present time to help maintain the tourism and social environment so that it remains sustainable and continuous.

Marine tourism is one of the tourism sectors with the potential to support economic development, particularly for communities in coastal areas and small islands. Marine tourism destinations are characterized by unique attractions, such as the beauty of the sea, beaches, and coastal ecosystems. These destinations also offer various water-based activities, such as diving, snorkeling, surfing, and boat trips, which take advantage of the natural beauty of the sea and the biodiversity of the underwater ecosystem. Additionally, cultural tourism around coastal areas further enhances their appeal. However, the high level of tourism activity in marine destinations has negative environmental impacts, such as damage to marine ecosystems, pollution, and overexploitation of natural resources.

In response to these challenges, the concept of sustainable behavior has emerged as a critical focus in managing marine tourism destinations. This concept emphasizes actions that ensure the long-term preservation of the environment, social well-being, and economic stability. In the context of marine tourism, sustainable behavior entails the active involvement of tourists, local communities, and destination managers in preserving environmental cleanliness, minimizing the use of single-use plastics, adhering to conservation regulations, and promoting environmentally friendly tourism practices.

In Indonesia, marine tourism serves as one of the cornerstone sectors of national tourism, thanks to the country's unique position as an archipelagic nation with the world's second-longest coastline. This remarkable potential not only captivates domestic travelers but also appeals to a significant number of international tourists. North Sulawesi as one of the main tourist destinations in Indonesia and a new national leading tourism area with Likupang as one of the eight leading marine tourism destinations in Indonesia is starting to improve itself, especially in adapting to new tourist behavior patterns, one of which is sustainable behavioral tourism.

By strengthening the implementation of sustainable behavior, marine tourism destinations can not only maintain their appeal but also ensure that their benefits are preserved for future generations. This approach represents a strategic step toward achieving a balance between the exploitation of tourism potential and environmental conservation in the management of marine tourism. In line with this, the tourism industry must adapt to the trend of sustainable tourism behavior by identifying the key

determinants and driving factors behind sustainable tourism practices.

This study utilizes the UTAUT 2 model to analyze the factors that influence the sustainable tourism behavior of tourists to marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi. The UTAUT models have been widely used in the context of new technologies, but they have rarely been applied to non-technological services (Vila et al., 2021). The implications of this study are in the form of understanding the sustainable behavior of tourists visiting marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi.

Research Objective

This study specifically analyzes the factors that influence the sustainable tourism behavior of visitors to marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi

Literature Reviews

UTAUT 2 Model

The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), introduced by Venkatesh et al. (2003), is a comprehensive framework designed to predict technology adoption within organizational contexts. This model consolidates various earlier theories of technology acceptance, including the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Combined TAM and TPB (C-TAM-TPB), the Motivation Model (MM), the Model of Personal Computer Utilization (MPCU), the Innovation Diffusion Theory (IDT), and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Venkatesh et al. identified four key factors that influence an individual's intention to use and actual usage of information technology: performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions. Although UTAUT gained widespread recognition, the model was later expanded by Venkatesh et al. to include three additional constructs: hedonic motivation, price value, and habit, evolving into what is known as UTAUT2.

Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism according to the Federation of Nature and National Parks (Arida, 2015) explains that sustainable tourism is all forms of development, management, and tourism activities must pay attention to the integrity of the environment, economy, social, and welfare of natural resources and culture that exists for a long period of time. Sustainable tourism focuses on local communities who must be involved in various activities and share fairly in the benefits obtained both in terms of social or cultural, economic, and can create jobs directly or indirectly. Sustainable tourism is part of tourism activities that are currently developing with increasing accommodation, population, and the development of investment in the tourism sector which is expected not to have a negative impact on the environment and other aspects in the future. Which is necessary to reduce negative impacts by maximizing existing potential by developing tourism to be better and creating tourism that aims to be enjoyed in the future and not only in the present (Sunarta & Arida, 2017).

Marine Tourism Industry

The marine tourism industry is a tourism sector related to tourism activities in sea waters or beaches, such as snorkeling, diving, surfing, and so on. The concept of the marine tourism industry emphasizes the development of marine tourism potential as an alternative to improve the local economy and conserve the marine environment. This industry also offers a different experience for tourists who want to explore the beauty of the underwater world and other water activities (Tegar & Gurning, 2018). The marine tourism industry has great potential to spur economic growth and regional development by increasing the number of tourist visits, creating jobs, and increasing local income. In addition, the development of the marine tourism industry can contribute to environmental conservation and the preservation of biodiversity, thus providing a positive impact on the community and the surrounding environment. This is in accordance with the principles of sustainability in tourism which place the balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects as the main focus of tourism development (Briandana, et al., 2018).

Sustainable Behavior

There are several terms with different definitions to describe behavior related to the environment such as: ecological behavior, pro-environmental behavior, environment friendly behavior, sustainable behavior, or green behavior but the term emphasizes the active participation of individuals and actions/behaviors to solve or prevent environmental problems. Sustainable behavior is individual behavior that aims to protect the natural and human/social environment (tapia-Fonllem et al., 2013). Sustainable behavior requires people to engage in actions that are aimed at caring for others and simultaneously protecting their biophysical environment (Nanggong, 2018). Tapia-Fonllem et al. (2013) stated that sustainable behavior is behavior that is instilled in advance (anticipatory), namely behavior that is oriented towards the future, because it considers the needs of future generations that are met with the satisfaction of current needs. This is because in sustainable development (sustainable development) active protection is carried out on natural resources, while at the same time maintaining human resources, which is considered as important as protecting the ecosystem. Further, according to Tapia-Fonllem et al, there are at least four behaviors that are included in sustainable behavior, namely: pro-ecological, frugal, altruistic, and equitable actions behavior.

Previous Research

Villa et al. (2021) used the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT2) model to analyze tourists' purchase intentions regarding a thermal suite. The model was originally designed to analyze users' acceptance of new technologies. The original contribution of this paper is to apply it to a non-technological service. Specifically, data were collected through a questionnaire administered to a sample of 810 potential Spanish spa-goers. A consistent partial least squares (PLSc) SEM technique was used. The proposed model explains 53.3% of the variance in Purchase Intentions regarding the thermal suite. Performance expectancy is the variable that plays the

biggest role in tourists' purchase intentions, followed by hedonic motivation.

Rui et al. (2024) integrated the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology 2 (UTAUT2) and the design dimensions (ambience, spatial layout, innovation, and cultural contact) to investigate the factors influencing tourists' satisfaction and continuance intention. The research employed a convenience sampling method, selecting typical Chinese tourists who had experienced the digital nightscape tour as survey participants. A total of 650 responses were obtained. The results of Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) found that, firstly, UTAUT2, satisfaction, and ambience all directly predict continuance intention positively, with satisfaction having the strongest impact. Second, among the four variables of UTAUT2, social influence has the strongest impact on continuance intention. Thirdly, the design dimensions of the digital nightscape tour are very important, which indirectly affects continuance intention through satisfaction, with ambience having the greatest influence on continuance intention

Wut et al. (2023) presented a critical literature review on the tourist attitude–behavior gap and intention–behavior gap in sustainable tourism research and proposed future research directions. A systematic review was conducted using preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis (PRISMA) on the existing literature from the Scopus and Web of Science databases. Four emerging research trends were discovered in recent years: (1) increased use of mixed methods and surveys; (2) consideration of green or environmental knowledge; (3) role of green certification; and (4) consideration of tourist moral values. This review provided an overview of research on the attitude–behavior gap and the intention–behavior gap in sustainable tourism. This study proposed a new framework for the attitude–behavior gap and the intention–behavior gap, departing from the theory of planned behavior. It identified direct and indirect factors that influence sustainable tourist behavior, with sustainable tourist attitude and intention serving as mediators.

Research Model and Hypothesis

Research Model

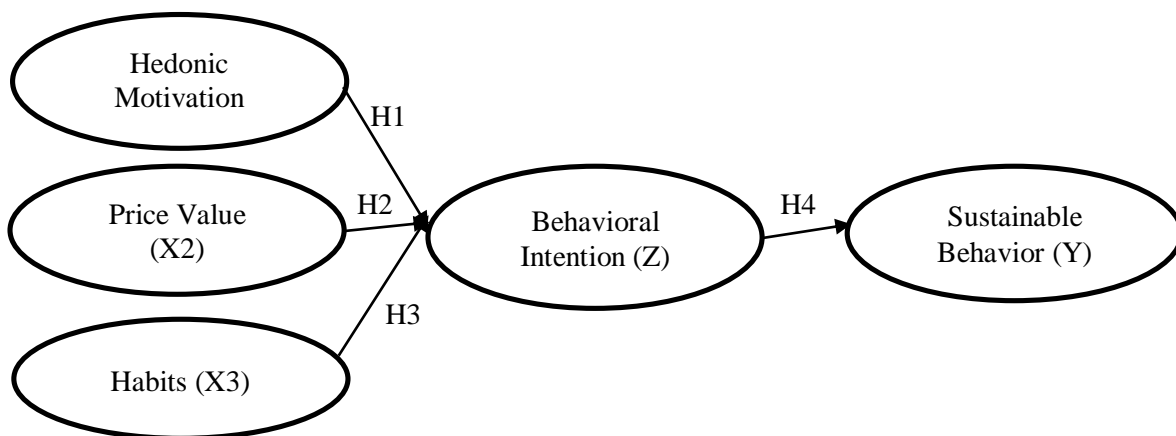


Figure 1. Research Model

Source: Literature Review, 2024

Figure 1 depicts the impact of hedonic motivation, price value, and habits on behavioral intentions and emphasizes the intermediary role of behavioral intention in shaping tourists' sustainable behavior in marine tourism destinations.

Research Hypothesis

H1: Hedonic motivation influences tourist behavioral intention in marine tourism destinations

H2: Price value influences tourist behavioral intention in marine tourism destinations

H3: Habits influence tourist behavioral intention in marine tourism destinations

H4: Behavioral intention influences tourist sustainable behavior in marine tourism destinations

Research Method

Research Approach

This research is a survey research using a quantitative approach. The form of research is explanatory research to explain the relationship between variables (correlational research), with the aim of testing the relationship between factors that influence sustainable behavior of tourism tourists visiting marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi.

Location and Place of Research

This study took place in North Sulawesi, specifically in marine tourism destinations.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection technique in this research is through primary data or distributing questionnaires via applications. Google forms to tourists visiting marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi.

Population and Sample of Research

The unit of analysis in this study is tourists visiting marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi Province. Sample is determined using Rao formula (1996) to determine the minimum number of samples when the population size is unknown. Based on the calculation of the formula, the number of respondents who will be used as research samples is at least 96.04 people. However, this study will take a sample of 100 respondents. The sampling technique uses is convenience sampling which is the collection of information from members of the population who are willing to voluntarily provide information by filling out questionnaires (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Research Instrument

The research instrument is tested for validity to ensure it measures what it is supposed

to. Reliability tests to make sure the results are consistent and dependable over time. These steps help ensure the data collected is accurate and trustworthy.

Data Analysis Techniques

Path analysis is a statistical method that uses linear equations to explore and understand the causal relationship between two or more variables. Path analysis is used to analyze the data and examine the direct and indirect relationships between variables.

Result and Discussion

Results

Based on the description of the respondents, the majority of the research respondents were as follows.

Table 1. Description of Research Respondents

Description	Information	Total	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	39	39
	Female	61	61
Age	<18	5	5
	18-20	18	18
	21-30	26	26
	> 30	51	51
Last education	High School/Equivalent	9	9
	Diploma (D1-D3)	19	19
	Bachelor (S1/D4)	64	64
	Postgraduate (S2/S3)	8	8
	Others	-	-
Work	State-owned enterprises	23	23
	ASN	12	12
	Student	6	6
	Private sector employees	55	55
	Others	4	4
Total		100	

Source: Data Processed, 2023

Table 1 illustrates that the participants in this study were dominated by respondents: female (61%), age above 30 years old (51%), with a bachelor's degree/D4 education (64%), and working as private employees (55%).

Research Instrument

Table 2. Results of Validity Test

Variables	Indicator	Correlation(r)	Sig	Status
Hedonic Motivation (X1)	X1.1	0.901	0,000	Valid
	X1.2	0.863	0,000	Valid
	X1.3	0.925	0,000	Valid

Price Value (X2)	X2.1	0.780	0,000	Valid
	X2.2	0.864	0,000	Valid
	X2.3	0.905	0,000	Valid
Habits (X3)	X3.1	0.911	0,000	Valid
	X3.2	0.775	0,000	Valid
	X3.3	0.875	0,000	Valid
Behavior Intention (Z)	Z.1	0.818	0,000	Valid
	Z.2	0.904	0,000	Valid
	Z.3	0.840	0,000	Valid
Sustainable Behavior (Y)	Y.1	0.876	0,000	Valid
	Y.2	0.871	0,000	Valid
	Y.3	0.885	0,000	Valid
	Y.4	0.782	0,000	Valid

Source: Processed Data (2021)

Table 2 shows that all items are valid because they have a calculated r value above the table r value, and also the r value is greater than the critical value, which is above 0.30 (> 0.30). This means that all indicators in this study are valid.

Table 3. Results of Reliability Test

Variables	Coefficient	
	AlphaCornish	Status
Hedonic Motivation (X1)	0.753	Reliable
Price Value (X2)	0.839	Reliable
Habits (X3)	0.877	Reliable
Behavior Intention (Z)	0.924	Reliable
Sustainable Behavior (Y)	0.719	Reliable

Source: Processed Data (2021)

Table 3 highlights that all variables are relabeled because they have a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.60 (>0.60). This means that all variables in this study are relabeled, and can be continued for path analysis and hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Testing

Structural Equation Model 1

Table 4. Structural Equation Model 1

Variables	B	Std Error	Beta Coefficient	TCount	Sig.	Information
(Constant)	3,800	1.100	-	-	0.001	
Hedonic Motivation (X1)	0.150	0.105	0.140	2,850	0.000	Significant
Price Value (X2)	0.130	0.095	0.120	2,680	0.000	Significant
Habits (X3)	0.600	0.110	0.580	5,450	0.000	Significant
R=0.601	Sig. F = 0.000				Number of Samples = 100	
R Square = 0.361	F count = 18.210				α = 0.05	

Adj R Square = 0.341	k = 3; nk-1 = 100 - 3 - 1 = 96	ε1= 0.800
Behavior Intention (Z): $3,800 + 0.150X1 + 0.130X2 + 0.600X3 + \epsilon1$		

Source: Processed Data (2023)

The Behavior Intention (Z) equation is as follows:

$$Z = 3.800 + 0.150X1 + 0.130X2 + 0.600X3 + \epsilon1$$

The interpretation of table 4 as follows:

The intercept (constant) in the equation is 3.800, which is the expected value for Behavioral Intention when Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Habits are zero. 0.150, 0.130, and 0.600 are the regression coefficients for each Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Habits, consecutively. It shows that an increase in each of Hedonic Motivation (X1), Price Value (X2), and Habit (X3) leads to a corresponding increase in Behavioral Intention, assuming all other variables remain constant. All regression coefficients have significant T-count with p-value < 0.05), which indicates that Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Habits are significant in influencing Behavioral Intention. The R Square value is 0.361, which means that about 36.1% of the variability in Behavioral Intention can be explained by Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Habits in this model. Adjusted R Square value is 0.341, which is the R Square adjusted for the number of independent variables in the model. The significance value of F is 0.000, which indicates that the overall regression model is a significant model.

Structural Equation Model 2

Table 5. Structural Equation Model 2

Variables	B	Std Error	Variables	B	Std Error	Variables
(Constant)	3.100	1,200	-	-	0.000	
Hedonic Motivation (X1)	0.280	0.110	0.210	3,000	0.001	Significant
Price Value (X2)	0.220	0.105	0.160	2,800	0.005	Significant
Habits (X3)	0.590	0.115	0.390	5.100	0.000	Significant
Behavior Intention (Z)	0.410	0.100	0.290	4.100	0.000	Significant
R = 0.811	Sig. F = 0.000			Number of Samples = 100		
R Square = 0.658	F count = 46,320			α = 0.05		
Adj R Square = 0.645	k = 4; nk-1 =			ε2= 0.576		
Sustainable Behavior (Y): $3,100 + 0.280X1 + 0.220X2 + 0.590X3 + 0.410Z + \epsilon2$						

Source: Processed Data (2023)

The Sustainable Behavior (Y) equation given is as follows:

$$Y = 3.100 + 0.280X1 + 0.220X2 + 0.590X3 + 0.410Z + \epsilon2$$

The interpretation of table 5 as follows:

The intercept (constant) in the equation is 3.100, representing the expected value of Sustainable Behavior when Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, Habits, and Behavior Intention are zero. 0.280, 0.220, 0.590, and 0.410 are the regression coefficients for Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, Habits, and Behavior Intention, respectively. It shows that an increase in each of Hedonic Motivation (X1), Price Value (X2), Habits (X3), and Behavior Intention (Z) leads to a corresponding increase in Sustainable Behavior, assuming all other variables remain constant. All regression coefficients have significant T-count with p-value < 0.05), which indicates that Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, Habits, and Behavior Intention are significant in influencing Sustainable Behavior. The R Square value is 0.658, which means that about 65.8% of the variability in Sustainable Behavior can be explained by Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, Habits, and Behavior Intention in this model. The Adjusted R Square value is 0.645, which is the R Square adjusted for the number of independent variables in the model. The significance value of F is 0.000, which indicates that the overall regression model is a significant model.

Path Analysis

To examine the influence of mediating (intervening) variables in this study, the path analysis method is employed. Path analysis helps identify patterns of relationships among three or more variables (Ghozali, 2010).

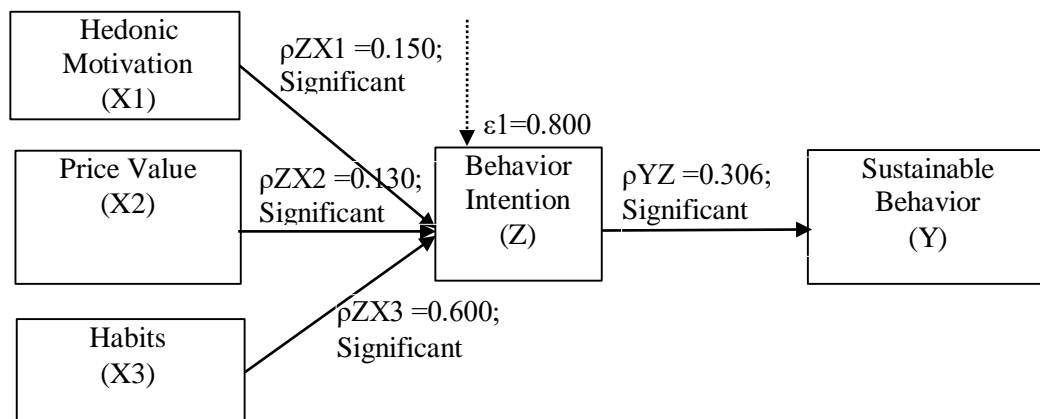


Figure 1. The Direct Influence

Source: Processed Data (2023)

Figure 1 demonstrates the direct influence coefficients for each variable relationship. The effect of Hedonic Motivation on Behavior Intention is 0.150, the effect of Price Value on Behavior Intention is 0.130, the effect of Habits on Behavior Intention is 0.600, and the effect of Behavior Intention on Sustainable Behavior is 0.600.

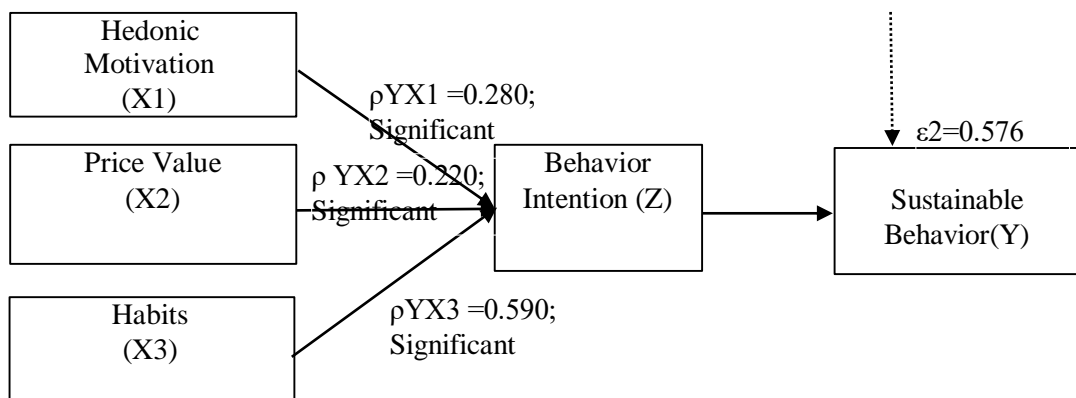


Figure 2. The Indirect Influence

Source:ProcessedData (2023)

Figure 2 highlights the coefficients of indirect influence for each variable relationship. The indirect effect of Hedonic Motivation, Price Value and Habits on Sustainable Behavior is 0.046 (0.150×0.306), 0.0398 (0.130×0.306), and 0.184 (0.600×0.306) consecutively, which, being smaller than the direct effect, supports the conclusion that Behavior Intention is not sufficiently able to mediate the influence of Sustainable Behavior.

Discussion

Hedonic motivation refers to the drive for pleasure and emotional satisfaction. In the context of marine tourism destinations, activities such as appreciating natural beauty, experiencing the thrill of diving, engaging in beach recreation, or relaxing in tranquil environments create positive emotional experiences for tourists. Research findings highlight the significant influence of hedonic motivation on behavioral intention, revealing that higher emotional satisfaction during a visit enhances tourists' intentions to revisit. Factors such as beach cleanliness, diversity of activities, underwater beauty, and comfortable facilities significantly contribute to hedonic motivation. Marine destinations that provide unique and enjoyable experiences are more likely to attract repeat visitors and foster positive recommendations.

Price value represents the tourists' perception of the balance between costs incurred and benefits received. Marine tourists often evaluate their experiences based on expenses such as entrance fees, accommodation, transportation, and activity costs relative to the satisfaction and benefits they derive. A significant relationship between price value and behavioral intention suggests that tourists perceiving the cost as commensurate with the quality of their experience are more likely to revisit the destination. For example, marine destinations offering competitive yet high-quality diving packages can strengthen tourists' intentions to repeat the experience.

Habits refer to consistent patterns of behavior, such as annual visits to coastal destinations or choosing marine tourism as a preferred form of relaxation. The significant relationship between habits and behavioral intention indicates that tourists

who habitually visit marine destinations are more likely to sustain this behavior in the future. Tourists who regularly visit specific marine tourism sites often demonstrate a stronger intention to return, driven by routines formed over time.

Behavioral intention represents tourists' intention to engage in sustainable practices at marine tourism destinations. Actions such as avoiding littering, preserving coral reefs, or supporting conservation programs reflect an intention to contribute to sustainability. Research indicates a significant relationship between behavioral intention and sustainable behavior, suggesting that stronger intentions to act sustainably translate into higher likelihoods of actual sustainable actions. For example, tourists intending to avoid single-use plastics during their visits are more likely to realize this intention when supported by adequate facilities.

Hedonic motivation, despite its significant impact on behavioral intention, does not effectively mediate sustainable behavior. For example, tourists who enjoy beach activities or diving may express intentions to revisit (behavioral intention) but may not necessarily engage in sustainable actions, such as preserving beach cleanliness or supporting marine conservation. Thus, stronger interventions are needed to direct hedonic motivation toward sustainable behavior.

Similarly, price value, while positively influencing behavioral intention, does not effectively mediate the relationship between price value and sustainable behavior. Tourists satisfied with the cost-value balance of their experience may intend to revisit but are not inherently driven to contribute to environmental preservation. This discrepancy highlights a focus on immediate satisfaction over social or environmental responsibility.

Habits, although significantly influencing behavioral intention, also face limitations in mediating sustainable behavior. Regular visits to marine destinations may strengthen the intention to return but do not necessarily extend to sustainable practices such as proper waste disposal or using eco-friendly facilities. Habitual behavior driven by external motivations, such as discounts or convenience, may lack the internal commitment required for sustainable actions.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

1. Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Habit have a significant influence on the Behavioral Intention of tourists. It shows that hedonic motivation, price value perception, and habits of tourists significantly influence their intention to behave sustainably when visiting marinetourism destinations.
2. In addition to the direct influence of Hedonic Motivation, Price Value, and Habit, Behavior Intention also plays an important role in influencing Sustainable Behavior. It shows that the intention to behave sustainably is a predictor of sustainable behavior itself.

3. Although hedonic motivation, price value, and habits significantly influence behavioral intention, they are less effective in mediating sustainable behavior. The indirect influence of variables through behavioral intention is weaker than their direct impact, suggesting that behavioral intention alone may not sufficiently bridge the gap between motivations and sustainable practices.

Recommendation

1. Hedonic Motivation that acts as the promotion strategy for marine tourism destinations in North Sulawesi must emphasize aspects that increase satisfaction and hedonic experiences of tourists, such as natural beauty, unique local culture, and interesting recreational activities.

2. Marine tourism destination operators need to ensure that the prices offered are commensurate with the experiences gained by tourists. This can be done through offering value-added tour packages or discounts for certain activities.

3. Given the important role of Habit and Behavioral Intention in influencing Sustainable Behavior, there is a need to increase environmental awareness among tourists. This can be done through educational campaigns on the importance of environmental conservation and sustainable practices that can be carried out during the visit.

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