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Research Paper

Scuba Tourist Motivations in Coastal and Marine Destinations

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Executive Summary

Marine and coastal tourism, which accounts for 50% of all global tourism, attracts many tourists to participate in various activities such as swimming, surfing, sunbathing, and other coastal recreation activities. This study examines the dimensions of scuba diving motivations that influence satisfaction and revisits intention in marine and coastal tourism. A quantitative survey of 408 international tourists was conducted in three popular coastal provinces in Thailand (Phuket, Phang-Nga, and Krabi), employing structural equation modelling to analyze the relationships between scuba diving motivation dimensions, satisfaction and revisiting intention. The findings revealed that three motivation dimensions—tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations—primarily influenced satisfaction. Additionally, these three factors significantly predict the revisiting intention. This study contributes to the marine and coastal tourism literature by providing insights into the motivation dimensions impacting satisfaction and revisiting intention that can assist tourism destination managers in developing effective strategies for scuba tourism. To enhance scuba diving tourism in the Andaman Coast, destination managers should focus on improving the quality and diversity of diving offerings, such as unique dive sites and diving offerings and attributes. Additionally, providing high-quality ancillary services such as comfortable accommodations, convenient transportation, and excellent dining options is essential. To attract and retain tourists, it is crucial to preserve the pristine natural beauty and marine biodiversity of the region through sustainable tourism practices. By implementing these strategies, destinations can enhance visitor satisfaction, encourage repeat visits, and contribute to the long-term sustainability of the marine ecosystem.

Keywords

Scuba-diving tourists, marine and coastal tourism, marine and coastal destinations, motivation, satisfaction

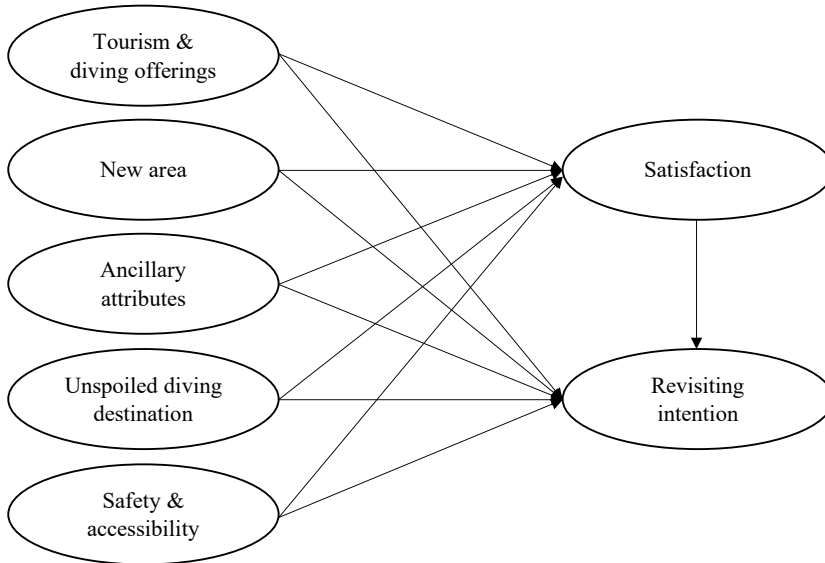
Introduction

Accounting for 50% of all global tourism and contributing 5.2% to the global GDP (One Ocean Foundation, 2024), the ecologically rich marine and coastal areas in tourism significantly attract visitors to explore marine and coastal destinations and attractions with various activities from water sports to cruise and diving tourism (Blancas et al., 2010; Carvache-Franco et al., 2020a; Orams & Lueck, 2016; Pérez-Maqueo et al., 2017; Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2023). Among approximately 19 million foreign visitors in Thailand annually, over 300,000 international tourists visit Thailand specifically for scuba diving activities, along with a robust domestic diving community of approximately 80,000 certified Thai divers (Ministry of Sport and Tourism, 2024). Therefore, diving tourism represents a substantial segment and has become a one of the key drivers of Thailand's tourism economy.

Driven by increasing interest in nature-based experiences, marine and coastal tourism has gained significant attention in recent years. To effectively manage and promote these destinations, it is crucial to understand the motivations of tourists. Research has shown that factors such as adventure, cultural exploration, and environmental consciousness influence tourists' choices (Carvache-Franco et al., 2020; Dean et al., 2019; Fluker & Turner, 2000; Giddy & Webb, 2018; Hasan et al., 2021). By understanding these motivations, destination managers can develop strategies to attract and retain visitors while ensuring the sustainability of marine and coastal environments. Research on marine and coastal tourism has primarily focused on understanding tourists' motivations. However, there is a growing recognition of the importance of visitor satisfaction in influencing return visits. While studies have explored the relationship between motivation and satisfaction, further research is needed to delve deeper into this connection, particularly in the context of marine and coastal destinations (Brown, 2018; Kim & Thapa, 2018; Pestana et al., 2020; Schuhmann et al., 2019).

Furthermore, motivation is essential to comprehend all types of tourism; few researchers have examined the motivation of scuba divers, who comprise one of the micro-scale groups (e.g., AKKOÇ, 2020). Nonetheless, limited research has tried to elucidate the reasons behind scuba diving tourists. The motivations of diving tourists in the context of marine and coastal tourism are notably unexplored in research (Tunestad, 2023). Therefore, this article aimed to (1) identify the motivations of international scuba tourists to engage in scuba diving and how these motivations influence their satisfaction with the diving experience and related destination attributes in marine and coastal tourism in marine and coastal destinations, and (2) analyze the motivational dimensions that predict revisiting intention in marine and coastal destinations (See Figure 1). Acquiring these goals is crucial and necessary to determine the targeted tourists' motivation in order to create effective destination marketing strategies. This study is significant for several reasons. These include marketing, sustainability, infrastructure planning, the development of local communities, and safety improvement, particularly concerning the appeal of marines and coastal destinations. Another crucial aspect of this research is bringing conservation and environmental awareness into diving tourism. Such endeavors can help preserve delicate marine ecosystems for future visitors. Hence, they are key in reverting scuba diving to responsible tourism development.

Figure 1
Research Framework



While previous studies have examined select dimensions of scuba diving motivation, none have simultaneously tested all five motivational factors within a maritime destination. This study fills this gap by empirically analyzing the combined impact of tourism and diving offerings, new areas, ancillary attributes, unspoiled diving destinations, and safety and accessibility on scuba divers' satisfaction and revisit intention.

Literature Review

Overview of Scuba Diving Tourists

Scuba diving tourism demands a multidisciplinary approach to grasp the complex relationships among visitors, marine ecosystems, and the tourism sector. It emphasizes the interests of those who love exploring underwater landscapes, encountering marine life, and finding new dive sites. Li et al. (2022) and Bratic et al. (2021) find that scuba diving tourists' travel patterns—such as frequency of diving trips, choice of destinations, preferred diving operators, and duration of stay—can influence both their diving-related behaviors (e.g., respect for marine life, adherence to safety protocols, and environmental awareness) and broader tourist behaviors (e.g., cultural sensitivity, support for local economies, sustainable practices, and engagement in educational activities). Hence, scuba diving tourists are driven by adventure, marine life encounters, escape, challenge, social connection, photography, and environmental awareness. Scuba divers are motivated by a variety of factors, including relaxation, adventure, education, and environmental conservation. Understanding these motivations can help destinations tailor their offerings to attract and retain divers. Research has shown that factors such as the desire to explore, learn, and connect with marine environments, as well as the pursuit of unique experiences, influence scuba diving tourist's travel behavior (Bentz et al., 2016).

Motivations in Marine and Coastal Destinations

Motivations are an assortment of spiritual and biological needs and desires that drive us to perform specific actions (Mutanga et al., 2017). Therefore, tourist motivations are defined as a combination of needs that drive a person to participate in tourist activities (Marconi et al., 2022). The conceptualization of motivation originates in the literature on consumer behavior (Farmaki, 2012). Scholars in tourism and travel extensively study motivation (e.g., Bentz et al., 2016) as it is fundamental to the consumer decision-making process and a crucial concept in understanding tourist behavior. The study by Dann (1981) provides an alternative interpretation of motivation in the context of tourism and travel, defining it as “a meaningful state of mind that adequately disposes an actor or group of actors to travel, and that is subsequently interpretable by others as a valid explanation for such a decision.” Dann’s (1981) “push and pull motivation theory” differentiates between internal (push) and external (pull) factors that influence travel decisions. Push factors are intrinsic motivations that drive individuals to travel, such as the desire for adventure, relaxation, escape, novelty, personal challenge, or social interaction. In contrast, pull factors are external destination attributes that attract tourists, such as unique dive sites, marine biodiversity, high-quality diving infrastructure, favorable weather conditions, and safety regulations. While research often emphasizes pull factors to understand tourist motivations, a more holistic approach that considers both internal and external drivers is essential for effective destination marketing and management (Fraiz et al., 2020; Su et al., 2020; Suhartanto et al., 2018). In this study, push and pull factors are measured using survey items adapted from previous tourism motivation research, capturing aspects such as adventure-seeking tendencies (push) and perceptions of destination attractiveness (pull). Research on motivations in coastal and marine destinations is still limited, and further empirical investigations, particularly those involving data collection from diverse tourist groups and destinations, are needed to establish consistent methodologies and frameworks. This would help create a more standardized body of literature in this area (Papageorgiou, 2016).

Tourist motivation, particularly in marine and coastal destinations, is a crucial factor influencing travel decisions. Studies (e.g., Albayrak et al., 2019; Chang et al., 2014) have identified various push and pull motivations, including the desire for knowledge, nature immersion, photography, relaxation, escape, and the allure of sun and sea. Additionally, destination attributes, safety, accessibility, and unique experiences play significant roles in attracting tourists to specific locations. Table 1 presents findings from previous studies that identified five key motivational factors influencing scuba diving tourists: tourism and diving offerings, new areas, ancillary attributes, unspoiled diving destinations, and safety and accessibility. While prior research has explored pull motivations, such as the pursuit of new experiences, the need to escape daily routines, and an appreciation for marine environments (Jeong, 2014), there remains a notable gap in understanding how these motivations interact and shape scuba tourists’ decision-making.

Table 1
Scuba Diving Motivation

Authors	Tourism & diving offering	New area	Ancillary attributes	Unspoiled diving	Safety & accessibility
Albayrak et al. (2021)	X	X	X	X	X
Akkoc (2020)	X	X		X	
Caber & Albayrak (2016)	X	X	X	X	X
Carvache-Franco et al. (2023)	X			X	
Fuchs et al. (2016)		X			X
Merwe et al. (2011)	X	X	X	X	
Mylonopoulos & Moira (2019)	X		X	X	X
Suardana et al. (2014)	X	X		X	

Several critical knowledge gaps remain unaddressed in the literature. First, while ancillary attributes, including accommodations, transportation infrastructure, and non-diving activities, are recognized as important elements of a tourist experience, there is limited empirical research on their direct impact on scuba divers' satisfaction and revisit intention. Second, although the appeal of discovering new dive sites has been acknowledged, its role in shaping satisfaction and long-term loyalty remains understudied. Third, while the term “unspoiled diving destinations” is widely used in tourism marketing, there is no standardized academic definition. Destinations such as Phuket, Phang-Nga, and Krabi are often considered pristine, but it remains unclear what specific environmental, ecological, and management factors contribute to this perception (e.g., low environmental degradation, marine biodiversity, limited tourist overcrowding). Lastly, previous studies have examined these motivational factors individually, but little is known about how they collectively influence scuba tourists' decision-making, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. Addressing these knowledge gaps will provide a more integrated framework for understanding scuba diving motivations and offer valuable insights for destination marketing and sustainable tourism development.

Tourists Satisfaction

Tourist satisfaction is a key aspect of all types of tourism including the scuba diving experience. Tourist satisfaction plays a crucial role in influencing travel decisions. It is assessed based on how tourists perceive the products and services offered at a destination. However, individual satisfaction levels can vary widely depending on personal experiences (Al-Ansi & Han, 2019; Martin-Santana et al., 2017; Wu et al., 2018). The motivation of scuba tourists to diving spots is a topic of interest in the field of tourism and recreation. Scuba diving offerings—including renowned dive sites, high marine biodiversity, clear water visibility, and professional diving services—are key factors influencing divers' satisfaction with the actual diving experience. Meanwhile, destination-related attributes such as comfortable accommodations, diverse regional cuisine, and accessible transportation contribute to overall satisfaction with the location. Albayrak et al. (2019) conducts a study on the motivations of scuba diving tourists and finds that diving offerings such as famous diving spots, reasonable accommodations, regional cuisine, and the presence of diving companies are significant motiva-

tors for scuba tourists. However, Merwe et al. (2011) indicates that reasonable accommodations and regional cuisine also contribute to satisfaction. The study by Fieger et al. (2019) finds that novelty, knowledge, and experience are linked to satisfaction. Tourists who are motivated by multiple factors—such as adventure, relaxation, and cultural exploration—are more likely to have diverse and fulfilling experiences, which can enhance their overall satisfaction (Carvache-Franco et al., 2020b).

A new diving area plays a crucial role in shaping scuba diving tourists' satisfaction and their intent to return. Key factors influencing satisfaction in new dive sites include the availability of novel diving experiences, diverse underwater landscapes, and unique marine biodiversity, all of which contribute to divers' decision-making regarding revisitation (Lucrezi et al., 2018; Lusby et al., 2008). Pratminingsih et al. (2014) found that tourists motivated by unique underwater biodiversity and adventure are more likely to experience heightened satisfaction, reinforcing the importance of offering diverse and ecologically rich dive locations.

Beyond diving-specific factors, ancillary experiences also contribute significantly to tourist satisfaction. These refer to non-diving services and amenities that enhance the overall experience, such as accommodations, transportation, dining options, and recreational activities available near the dive sites. Studies by Cater et al. (2020) and AKKOC (2020) highlight a causal relationship between motivation and satisfaction in Turkey's scuba diving industry, emphasizing that ancillary experiences complement core diving attractions and enhance overall satisfaction. Recognizing the interplay between new areas and ancillary attributes is essential for destination managers and tourism stakeholders aiming to develop sustainable, attractive, and well-equipped diving destinations that encourage repeat visits.

Scuba diving tourists are motivated by a range of factors, including the desire for tranquility and solitude. Merwe et al. (2011) highlight the importance of quiet, peaceful, and uncrowded marine environments in attracting divers. Additionally, the social aspects of travel, such as opportunities to meet new people and interact with local communities, influence tourist choices (Neto et al., 2020). In additions, safety and security are paramount concerns for scuba divers, who often engage in potentially risky activities in unfamiliar environments. Effective destination management must prioritize safety standards, emergency response systems, and well-trained instructors to mitigate risks and ensure a positive diving experience. Additionally, accessibility to dive sites and easy access to services are crucial for tourist satisfaction. By addressing these factors, destinations can attract and retain scuba divers while promoting sustainable tourism practices (Albayrak et al., 2021; Caber & Albayrak, 2016; Carvache-Franco et al., 2020a; Pai et al., 2020). In conclusion, the motivations of scuba diving tourists to visit diving spots are influenced by various factors such as tourism and diving offerings, new areas, ancillary attributes, unspoiled diving destinations, and safety and accessibility. The primary hypothesis of the current study is to assess whether these motivations have an effect on overall satisfaction. This study specifically examines the relationship between scuba diving-specific motivations and satisfaction with the diving experience rather than general tourist motivations and overall trip satisfaction. The analysis focuses on how key pull factors—such as dive site offerings, marine biodiversity, safety, and accessibility—affect scuba divers' satisfaction and revisit intentions.

HI

Scuba diving-specific motivations (tourism and diving offerings, new areas, ancillary attributes, unspoiled diving destinations, and safety and accessibility) will lead to

significant satisfaction with the scuba diving experience in marine and coastal destinations.

Revisiting Intention

This study examines the factors influencing scuba divers' intention to revisit a diving destination. Research indicates that various factors, including destination attributes, personal motivations, and overall satisfaction, significantly impact revisit intentions (Bentz et al., 2016; Hasan et al., 2020; Palau-Saumell et al., 2019). By comprehending these factors, destination managers can formulate effective strategies to attract and retain scuba divers. Understanding the factors influencing tourist revisit intentions is essential for effective destination management (Yoon & Uysal, 2005). Research has shown that environmental factors, such as water quality, and the availability of services and facilities significantly impact tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions (Dagustani et al., 2018; Schuhmann et al., 2019). The role of new areas in influencing revisit intention remains debated. While previous research has shown that tourists are motivated by novelty-seeking and exploration (Albayrak et al., 2019; Carvache-Franco et al., 2021), visiting a new area typically satisfies a one-time experience rather than encouraging repeat visits. However, in the context of scuba diving, new diving sites within a familiar destination can offer diversified underwater experiences, which may encourage revisits (Pratminingsih et al., 2014). Repeat divers may return to a destination if it continuously offers new dive sites, diverse marine biodiversity, or improved diving conditions. Thus, while novelty plays a role, destination management strategies that introduce new dive locations or improve existing ones could contribute to long-term diver retention.

Scuba diving tourism can have both positive and negative impacts on marine environments, including coral reefs. However, it can also motivate tourists to visit destinations and contribute to local economies (Hawkins, 2005). Factors such as ancillary services, unique experiences, and destination attributes play significant roles in influencing tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions (Albayrak et al., 2019; Bintarti & Kurniawan, 2017; Palau-Saumell et al., 2019; Sangpikul, 2018). Safety and security concerns in scuba diving tourism can be categorized into two dimensions: diving-specific safety and destination-related safety. Diving-specific safety refers to factors such as the availability of certified instructors, adherence to safety protocols, emergency response systems, and underwater risk management. On the other hand, destination-related safety includes general travel security, transportation reliability, and health and crime-related concerns. Previous studies have highlighted that a safe diving environment—ensuring proper safety regulations and training—plays a key role in diver satisfaction (Albayrak et al., 2021). Additionally, a secure destination with low crime rates and reliable infrastructure can enhance tourists' confidence in revisiting a location (Hasan et al., 2017). Understanding both dimensions of safety is essential for designing effective safety policies that cater to both diving-specific risks and broader travel security concerns. Consequently, considering the findings of past research and the absence of current information within the context of dive tourism, the following hypothesis is established.

H2

Scuba diving-specific motivations (tourism and diving offerings, new areas, ancillary attributes, unspoiled diving destinations, and safety and accessibility) will lead to

significant revisiting intention for scuba diving activities in marine and coastal destinations.

Chen and Tsai (2007) suggest a strong positive relationship between tourist motivation, satisfaction, and revisit intention. Studies have shown that motivated tourists are more likely to be satisfied with their experiences, increasing the likelihood of revisiting destinations (Back et al., 2021; Duan et al., 2020; Hasan et al., 2020). Scholarly study provides a broad range of information on tourist satisfaction with an experience and its negative or positive implications, such as its impact on revisiting a destination (Kim & Thapa, 2018). The previous research demonstrates that tourist satisfaction leads to the behavioral outcomes of revisit intention (Wang, 2016). Therefore, the following hypothesis is established.

H3: Satisfaction will lead to significantly revisiting intentions for marine and coastal destinations.

Methodology

Instrument

The current study employed a quantitative methodology to achieve the specified goals. First, a questionnaire was developed to collect data for the field study. This instrument was created based on various prior studies on motivation, its impact on satisfaction, and revisit intention variables. To ensure the accuracy of the measurement, back-translation was performed and the back-translated questionnaire was evaluated against the original items. Subsequently, error-free semantics were achieved through semantic matching, forward and backward translation matching, and discrepancy correction. Three scholars and tourism specialists completed the evaluation. The motivation questions were adapted from the investigations of Albayrak et al. (2019) and Carvache-Franco et al. (2022), comprising 18 items. The variables associated with satisfaction were derived from the Cater et al. (2020) study. The variables associated with revisit intention were derived from the Zhang et al. (2021) study. A five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ('strongly disagree') to 5 ('strongly agree'), was used to measure the scale items.

Sample and Data Collection

The study sample consisted solely of international scuba divers aged 18 and above, as this group represented the largest cohort of divers in Phuket, Phang-Nga, and Krabi. Only foreign divers were surveyed, given their prominence in the region. A pilot study was carried out with the help of 30 international scuba divers. Ten assistant researchers were trained and participated in this company's scuba diving tours on weekend days in May and June 2023. Following the dive, the interviewer gave the scuba divers an explanation of the research's purpose in English and asked if they would be willing to participate. All data collection was conducted in English, recognizing the fact that the sample understood English fluently. The questionnaires were collected using convenience sampling. All 450 questionnaires were gathered at the end of the process. Questionnaires with a string of identical responses or that were substantially incomplete were eliminated. This resulted of 408 valid surveys for analysis. Table 2 showed the sample demographics.

Table 2
Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic	(N = 408)	%
Gender		
Male	281	68.9
Female	127	31.1
Age (years)		
18 - 24	93	22.9
25 - 31	198	48.5
32 - 38	43	10.5
39 - 45	37	9.1
46 - 51	16	3.9
52 and above	21	5.1
Income (per month)		
1000 - 1500 USD	278	68.1
1501 - 2000 USD	76	18.7
2001 - 2500 USD	54	13.2
Origin by Continent		
Australia	251	61.5
Europe	66	16.2
Asia	39	9.6
Others	52	12.7
Diver Level		
Beginner	206	50.5
Intermediate	101	24.8
Advanced	41	10
Expert	26	6.4
Other	34	8.3
Diving Experience		
First time	258	63.2
Second time	83	20.3
Third time	28	6.9
Fourth time and more	39	9.6

Diver level was measured using self-reported responses based on certification and experience. Respondents were categorized into five levels: Beginner (no certification or Open Water certification), Intermediate (Advanced Open Water certification), Advanced (Rescue Diver certification), Expert (Divemaster or Instructor certification), and Other (specialty certifications or unclassified skill levels). These categories align with standard diving certification levels provided by recognized diving organizations such as PADI, SSI, and NAUI.

Diving experience was measured based on respondents' prior scuba diving participation. In this study, "first time" refers to divers who are visiting the surveyed destination (Phuket, Phang-Nga, or Krabi) for the first time, regardless of previous diving experience elsewhere. This means that some first-time divers at the destination may already have prior certification and diving experience in other locations. Conversely, those with "Second time" or more have previously dived at this destination at least once before.

Results

Measurement Model

This research consisted of seven components: tourism and diving offerings, new areas, ancillary attributes, unspoiled diving destinations, safety and accessibility, satisfaction, and revisiting intention. When collecting behavioral and attitudinal data through self-surveys at a one-time point (Chang et al., 2010), common method bias was a potential risk (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To reduce this bias, the study guarantees that all participants understand the confidentiality of the survey as well as the questions. This study also employs Harman's one-factor test to identify frequent method bias quantitatively. The results of the exploratory factor analysis demonstrate that the common factor explains less than 50% of the variance in the model, showing a lack of concern about common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Furthermore, the model fit indices showed SRMR = 0.073, NFI = 0.093, the dULS < bootstrapped HI 95 % of dULS, and dG < bootstrapped HI 95 % of dG indicating the data fits the model well. The scale's reliability and validity were evaluated. Initially, the factor loadings were greater than 0.5, indicating that each construct was acceptable (Hair et al., 2014) (see Table 3). Cronbach's alphas ranged from 0.72 to 0.94, indicating that the variables were consistent across constructs (Nunnally, 1978). Additionally, convergent validity was confirmed. The composite reliability (CR) ranged from 0.84 to 0.94, greater than 0.70. When tested, the extracted average variance (AVE) ranged from 0.64 to 0.84, suggesting that CR and AVE indicated acceptable reliability and convergent validity.

The discriminant validity of the measurement model was assessed using Fornell-Larcker criterion analysis and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) analysis (Hair et al., 2014), indicating that discriminant validity was approved. As a result, the measurement displayed reliability and validity, making it ideal for evaluating all hypotheses (see Tables 4 and 5).

Structural Equation Model

The findings of the direct effect and hypothesis tests are presented in Table 6 and Figure 2. There were three dimensions of tourist motivations: tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations, and their effect on satisfaction. The results showed that H1a, H1c, and H1d were supported, while H1b and H1e were not supported. Moreover, the relationship between three factors of tourist motivation and revisiting intention was examined. Three dimensions of tourist motivation, namely, tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations, were positively and significantly associated with revisiting intention. The results showed that H2a, H2c, and H2d were supported, while H2b and H2e were not supported. Lastly, satisfaction played a crucial role in influencing revisit intention; thus, H3 was supported.

Table 3
Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Factors	Loading	Mean	S.D.	α	rho_A	CR	AVE
Tourism and diving offerings		3.95	0.60	0.78	0.82	0.86	0.60
Famous diving spots	0.71						
Reasonable accommodations	0.77						
Regional cuisine	0.77						
The presence of diving companies	0.83						
New area		4.24	0.61	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.84
New diving experiences	0.92						
Various spots to dive	0.92						
New underwater sceneries	0.91						
Ancillary attributes		3.90	0.67	0.84	0.85	0.89	0.67
Information resources about the spots	0.74						
Sightseeing places in the nearest spots	0.80						
Activities other than diving	0.81						
Scenery of the diving spots	0.92						
Unspoiled diving destination		4.02	0.64	0.83	0.84	0.89	0.67
Silence and quietness	0.79						
Not too tourists	0.79						
New people	0.75						
Not overcrowded	0.92						
Safety and accessibility		4.25	0.59	0.72	0.72	0.84	0.64
Safe diving spots	0.76						
Accessibility to diving spots	0.82						
Easy to access destinations	0.81						
Satisfaction		4.00	0.62	0.73	0.74	0.85	0.65
I am pleased with my diving experience.	0.75						
In comparison to my expectations, I am pleased with my diving experience.	0.85						
When I consider my time and effort, I am pleased with the diving experience.	0.82						
Revisiting intention		4.10	.46	0.79	0.81	0.88	0.70
I want to do scuba diving at the next travel destination in Andaman Coastal, Thailand.	0.83						
I am likely to do scuba diving in the future in Andaman coastal Thailand.	0.77						
If there is an opportunity, I would do scuba diving longer in Andaman coastal Thailand.	0.91						

Table 4
Fornell-Larcker Criterion Analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Tourism and diving offerings	0.78						
2. New area	0.52	0.97					
3. Ancillary attributes	0.31	0.34	0.82				
4. Unspoiled diving destination	0.40	0.54	0.45	0.82			
5. Safety and accessibility	0.52	0.79	0.36	0.55	0.80		
6. Satisfaction	0.39	0.46	0.41	0.50	0.47	0.81	
7. Revisiting intention	0.53	0.63	0.59	0.80	0.64	0.78	0.84

Table 5
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) Analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Tourism and diving offerings							
2. New area	0.60						
3. Ancillary attributes	0.38	0.40					
4. Unspoiled diving destination	0.48	0.60	0.54				
5. Safety and accessibility	0.70	0.80	0.46	0.70			
6. Satisfaction	0.51	0.55	0.53	0.64	0.64		
7. Revisiting intention	0.65	0.70	0.72	0.80	0.83	0.82	

Table 6
Direct Effect

Hypothesis	Antecedent	Consequence	Beta	f ²	T	P Values
H1a	Tourism and diving offerings	Satisfaction	0.13	0.05	2.590	0.011
H1b	New area		0.04	0.25	0.169	0.867
H1c	Ancillary attributes		0.19	0.05	3.609	0.000
H1d	Unspoiled diving destination		0.26	0.06	4.525	0.000
H1e	Safety and accessibility		0.23	0.25	0.944	0.347
H2a	Tourism and diving offerings	Revisiting intention	0.10	0.02	4.610	0.000
H2b	New area		0.05	0.11	0.433	0.665
H2c	Ancillary attributes		0.17	0.03	6.487	0.000
H2d	Unspoiled diving destination		0.42	0.04	12.021	0.000
H2e	Safety and accessibility		0.15	0.11	1.376	0.168
H3	Satisfaction		0.42	0.03	15.173	0.000

This study examined the indirect effects of tourist motivations, such as tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations, on revisit intention through the mediating role of satisfaction, suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The results suggest that satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between these motivations (tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations) and revisiting intention, indicating that satisfied tourists are more likely to return to the destination (see in Table 7).

Table 7
Indirect Effect

Antecedent	Consequence	Mediator	Beta	f ²	T	PValues
1. Tourism and diving offerings	Revisiting intention	Satisfaction	0.05	0.02	2.47	0.014
2. New area			0.02	0.10	0.17	0.867
3. Ancillary attributes			0.08	0.02	3.43	0.001
4. Unspoiled diving destination			0.11	0.03	4.32	0.000
5. Safety and accessibility			0.10	0.10	0.95	0.345

This study is the first to empirically test all five motivational dimensions simultaneously in a maritime destination. While previous research has explored these dimensions separately, our findings demonstrate the combined influence of tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations on both satisfaction and revisit intention. The results provide empirical evidence on how multiple motivational factors interact in shaping scuba divers' experiences, offering a more holistic framework for destination management.

Diver level was analyzed using a one-way ANOVA to assess its potential moderating effect on satisfaction and revisit intention. The results showed that diver level did not significantly influence these relationships ($p > 0.05$). However, descriptive statistics indicated that advanced and expert divers reported slightly higher satisfaction with diving offerings and unspoiled dive sites compared to beginners. Future research could examine diver level as a moderating factor using structural equation modeling (SEM) to provide deeper insights into its influence on tourist behavior.

Conclusions and Discussions

The findings highlight that satisfaction directly impacts revisit intention, supporting previous studies (Huyen & Nghi, 2019; Pestana et al., 2020). Moreover, traveler satisfaction and the chance of return are strongly correlated with visitor loyalty (Assaker et al., 2011). These findings further support the idea that, as Alexandris et al. (2006) confirmed, visitors seek high satisfaction when revisiting destinations to reminisce about positive memories and enhance their travel experiences. Therefore, the results of this study align with past research, indicating that satisfaction can increase tourist revisit intention in marine and coastal destinations. In addition, this study found a strong relationship between tourist motivation, satisfaction, and revisit intention in marine and coastal destinations. Motivations such as unique experiences, quality services, and pristine environments significantly influence visitor satisfaction and their likelihood of returning to the destination (Albayrak et al., 2019; Carvache-Franco et al., 2020; Pestana et al., 2020). Therefore, this study identifies tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations as the major motivations for marine and coastal destinations in the Andaman context.

This study finds that satisfaction plays a crucial role in mediating the relationship between tourist motivations and revisit intention in marine and coastal destinations. When tourists are satisfied with their experiences, they are more likely to revisit the destination. This finding aligns with previous research highlighting the importance of satisfaction in shaping tourist behavior (Abbasi et al., 2021; Bayih & Singh, 2020; Pestana et al., 2020). This study confirms that satisfaction plays a crucial role in influencing revisit intention. When tourists are satisfied with their experiences at marine and coastal destinations, they are more likely to return, regardless of their initial motivations, such as tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations. This highlights the importance of ensuring high-quality destinations and addressing tourist needs to foster loyalty and repeat visits.

While this study found certain motivations, such as tourism and diving offerings and ancillary attributes, significantly influenced tourist satisfaction and revisit intention, new areas and safety and accessibility did not impact tourist satisfaction and revisit intention. This study's findings contradict previous research highlighted the importance of new areas and safety and accessibility factors in attracting and retaining tourists (Sangpikul, 2018; Schuhmann et al., 2019). There are several possible

explanations for this study's results. One possible reason is that diver motivation is frequently shaped by personal experience. Consequently, newer diving locations can lack an obvious identity or defining characteristics that might appeal to tourists as much as in other areas. As a result, it can impact tourist satisfaction and the decision to revisit. While safety and accessibility are critical items for scuba divers, the present study concluded that they do not significantly influence tourist satisfaction or the intention to return. This may be attributed mainly to the strict regulations, safety standards, and diving certification requirements in the region, which may mitigate safety and accessibility concerns. However, visitor satisfaction relates very much to various other elements, which entail the comparison of perceived performance to expectations. Future research should explore the role of expectations in shaping tourist satisfaction and revisit intentions in more detail (Jiamsajjamongkol & Jarumaneerat, 2022; Lucrezi et al., 2018).

This study highlights the importance of tourist motivation and satisfaction in influencing revisit intention within the context of scuba diving tourism in Phuket, Phang-Nga, and Krabi. The findings suggest that factors such as tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations significantly impact tourist satisfaction, ultimately leading to increased revisit intentions.

Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to the understanding of scuba tourist motivation, satisfaction, and revisit intention. It identifies five key motivational factors: tourism and diving offerings, new areas, ancillary attributes, unspoiled diving destinations, and safety and accessibility. These factors can serve as a foundation for future research in the field of marine and coastal tourism. The findings suggest that satisfied tourists are more likely to revisit a diving destination. Additionally, factors such as tourism and diving offerings, new areas, ancillary attributes, unspoiled diving destinations, and safety and accessibility significantly influence tourists' motivations and, consequently, their satisfaction and revisit intentions. This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of scuba diving tourism by identifying key motivational factors and their relationships with satisfaction and revisit intention.

These results show that, despite the area's reasonably well-known diving destinations, most visitors traveled to the area for scuba diving because of its tourism and diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destination. In summary, the findings demonstrated that the motives of vacationing visitors who scuba dive could be better understood by applying Dann's (1977) Motivation Theory. Therefore, this study represents one of the initial attempts to apply this theory in this specific context. As a result of this research shows that there are three dimensions of tourist motivation; namely, tourism & diving offerings, ancillary attributes, and unspoiled diving destinations that can strongly pull tourists to dive in Phuket, Phang-Nga, and Krabi. Finally, this research highlights the theoretical implications of implementing strict preventive measures to improve effectiveness, increasing tourist satisfaction and intention to revisit, developing diverse theoretical frameworks to cater to divers of all levels to support tourism academic fields, and developing sustainable strategies to attract international tourists to marine and coastal destinations.

Practice Implications

This study suggests that to attract and retain scuba diving tourists in the Andaman Coast, destinations should focus on offering unique diving experiences, along with a

range of ancillary services and affordable pricing. By providing high-quality services and addressing the diverse needs of tourists, destinations can enhance visitor satisfaction and encourage repeat visits. This study highlights the significant potential of the scuba diving industry in Thailand, particularly in the regions of Phuket, Phang-Nga, and Krabi. By understanding tourist motivations and providing high-quality services and experiences, destinations can attract and retain divers, contributing to economic growth and sustainable tourism development. It is crucial to balance development with conservation efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of marine ecosystems.

This study's results suggest that the government should implement strict insurance policies to cover diving tourists, as safety is a significant concern for international travelers. This can reduce risks and elevate Thailand's diving standards to world-class levels. As a result, it can expand the market and increase opportunities for supporting scuba diving in Phuket, Phang-Nga, and Krabi destinations, fostering continuous growth under world-class safety standards. Additionally, the results of this research can be applied to the Andaman tourism strategy plan to practically develop security measures, risk management strategies, and enhance the quality of coastal and marine tourism. Furthermore, these results will be useful for operators and related sectors in coastal and marine tourism as they implement demand-driven sustainable development policies. The findings will be utilized to improve scuba tourists' revisit intentions and enhance divers' awareness to minimize their impact on the marine environment.

Limitation and Future Research

There are limitations to this research. Firstly, this study focuses on investigating the motivation of scuba tourists and satisfaction and revisiting intention only in Phuket, Phang-Nga, and Krabi, and selects to collect data only from international scuba tourists. Moreover, this study has a limitation in that it does not consider the cultural national backgrounds, diver level and diver experience of scuba diving tourists, which may significantly influence their behavior. Therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to divers from different cultural contexts. Additionally, this study has a limitation in that it did not explicitly consider the impact of economic factors, such as the cost of diving and living expenses, on tourist motivation and satisfaction. Future research should explore the role of these factors in influencing tourist behavior. Lastly, to better understand and obtain more valuable data on this specific tourist group, future studies should collect more data from online customers, such as local blogs and online scuba diving clubs, to develop big data analyses. Furthermore, future research should collect data from supply-side stakeholders, such as the public sector, the government sector, the academic sector, and the related operator sectors.

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