

(Research/Review) Article

Integration of SOR Models in Explaining Traveller Behavior: A Systematic Literature Review of Empirical Studies from 2019–2025

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Abstract: This systematic literature review explores the application of the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model in understanding tourist behavior, focusing on empirical studies from 2019 to 2025. The tourism industry, a key economic driver globally, necessitates a deep understanding of tourist behavior to develop effective marketing strategies and enhance the tourist experience. The SOR model, which examines the impact of external stimuli on tourists' psychological and emotional responses, offers a comprehensive framework for analyzing tourist behavior. This review synthesizes findings from recent studies to highlight how external stimuli such as destination image, social media marketing, and sensory experiences affect tourists' perceptions, motivations, and behaviors, influencing their loyalty and intention to revisit destinations. It also discusses the role of internal factors, including satisfaction, trust, and tourist engagement, in mediating the response to external stimuli. The findings suggest that understanding these dynamics can help destination managers and tourism marketers design more targeted and sustainable marketing strategies. The review also identifies gaps in the current literature and provides recommendations for future research, particularly in the integration of digital technologies and the increasing importance of sustainability in tourism behavior..

Keywords: Stimulus Organism Response (SOR) Model; Tourist Behavior; Destination Image; Social Media Marketing; Revisit Intention.

1. Introduction

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Tourist behavior is one of the main topics in the study of tourism marketing management(Armutcu et al., 2023; Zhang, 2021). As one of the fastest-growing industries, tourism has a very important role in the global economy. In this context, understanding tourist behavior is key for destination managers and stakeholders to design marketing strategies that are effective, engaging, and can improve the travel experience(Jackson, 2025). With the rapid growth of the tourism industry, various approaches have been developed to study tourist behavior, one of which is through the use of the SOR (Stimulus Organism Response) model which can provide deeper insight into how tourists respond to stimuli provided by their surrounding environment(Asyraff et al., 2023; Wu & Wang, 2025).

In recent decades, the tourism sector has undergone a major transformation, with increasingly diverse travel destinations and ever-increasing demand from different parts of the world(Tso, 2017; Yepez & Leimgruber, 2024). For example, the international tourism sector is growing significantly, driven by increased per capita income, technological advancements, and ease of access through transportation and digitalization. This phenomenon makes the tourism industry more dynamic and complex, requiring a more sophisticated approach to understanding the factors that influence travelers' decisions.

In tourism marketing, understanding tourist behavior is essential. The actions taken by tourists, such as choosing destinations, planning trips, and ultimately making decisions to visit specific tourist attractions, are influenced by a variety of factors. These factors can be external

factors (such as advertising or destination promotion) or internal factors (such as personal motivations, past experiences, or perceptions of destinations) (Ho et al., 2024). Understanding these behaviors can help stakeholders in the tourism industry design products and services that are more relevant and in line with the market's desires.

The application of effective models to analyze traveler behavior is a challenge for academics and marketing practitioners. One of the models that began to be used to explain the behavior of tourists is the SOR model. This model provides a comprehensive approach to understanding how external stimuli (stimulus) provided by the environment can affect individual reactions or responses (responses), which through internal processing (organisms) are influenced by psychological and social characteristics (Nieves-Pavón et al., 2023; Scott et al., 2024).

The SOR model has been widely used in consumer and traveler behavior studies to explore a variety of variables that influence travelers' decisions, from emotional experiences induced by stimuli, to long-term decisions such as loyalty and repeat visits (Nieves-Pavón et al., 2023; Wei et al., 2025). Some research suggests that understanding how stimuli (e.g., travel promotion or experience at a destination) affect travelers' psychological reactions (e.g., satisfaction, positive affect), will in turn impact their travel behavior decisions, including intentions to return and recommend the destination to others. The use of the SOR model in traveler behavior research offers several significant advantages. First, the model allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the causal relationship between the stimulus provided by the destination and the response of tourists (Deng et al., 2025). Using this model, researchers were able to identify the key variables that influence travelers' decisions and how each element in the SOR model interacts. Second, the model provides a deeper understanding of the internal processes that occur within travelers as they respond to the stimuli received. Many tourism studies tend to focus on external factors such as promotions or advertising, but the SOR model helps emphasize the importance of internal factors, such as travelers' perceptions and emotions, which are no less important in influencing their decisions (Sun et al., 2023). Third, the SOR model can be applied flexibly in various tourism contexts, both in the study of domestic and international tourist behavior. By considering the social, cultural, and emotional aspects of this model, the study was able to explore more profound factors in tourist behavior, which are not only limited to purely rational or utilitarian behavior, but also involve more complex psychological aspects (A. Lee et al., 2025; Zhu et al., 2025).

This article aims to conduct a systematic review of studies that integrate the SOR model in understanding tourist behavior, especially those published in the 2019–2025 period (J. Li et al., 2024). The main focus of this study was to explore how this model is used to explain traveller behavior in a variety of contexts, including the influence of external stimuli (such as promotion, sensory experience, and destination imagery) as well as how organismal factors (such as perception, motivation, and personality) affect traveller responses. In addition, this article also aims to identify gaps in the existing literature and offer recommendations for further research. By reviewing existing empirical findings, it is hoped that this article can contribute to the development of tourist behavior theories and provide practical insights for tourist destination managers and tourism industry players to design a more interesting and satisfying travel experience for tourists (Juliana et al., 2024; Sbai et al., 2023).

This research is very important given the increasingly fierce competition in the global tourism industry. By understanding the factors that influence travelers' decisions and how they respond to the stimulus provided by destinations, managers can design marketing strategies that are more effective and more in line with travelers' preferences and expectations (Ho et al., 2024). In addition, understanding traveler behavior also helps in designing a more personalized and emotional travel experience, which can increase travelers' loyalty and satisfaction, as well as extend their stay. Through this article, it is hoped that a more holistic understanding of tourist behavior can be created using the SOR model, so that stakeholders in the tourism industry can implement the findings of this research in the development of their destinations and marketing strategies (Armutcu et al., 2023; Lemy et al., 2021).

2. Literature Review

The literature review in this article aims to provide an understanding of the theory of tourist behavior, the SOR model, and its relevance in previous research. By exploring the existing literature, we will discuss the various factors influencing tourist behavior as well as how the SOR model is integrated in recent studies, specifically from 2019 to 2025. This

literature review will provide a solid theoretical foundation for the analysis of the empirical findings in this article.

2.1. Traveler Behavior Theory

Tourist behavior has been a major focus in tourism marketing research over the past few decades. As consumers, travelers make decisions based on a variety of factors that affect them, both rationally and emotionally. Tourist behavior is generally influenced by two major categories, namely internal factors and external factors (Gan & Ouyang, 2022; Sbai et al., 2023).

1. Internal Factors

Internal factors include the psychological and emotional aspects of the individual, such as motivation, perception, attitude, personality, and previous experiences. Travelers' motivation to travel can be driven by a variety of reasons, from the need for relaxation to the search for new experiences. Theories of tourist motivation, such as the push and pull model (Crompton, 1979), classify motivation into two categories: factors that "push" tourists to leave (e.g., seeking an escape from everyday routines) and factors that "attract" them to a particular destination (e.g., natural beauty or cultural wealth).

2. External Factors

External factors include stimuli from the environment, such as promotions, advertisements, available information about destinations, as well as experiences experienced by tourists at tourist sites. For example, information about a destination conveyed through social media or recommendations from friends or family can influence travelers' perception of the places they visit.

Tourist behavior is the result of the interaction between these internal and external factors. Therefore, it is important to examine how these factors are interconnected and influence travelers' decisions in choosing tourist destinations or other tourism products.

2.2. Model SOR (Stimulus Organism Response)

The SOR (Stimulus Organism Response) model was first introduced by Mehrabian and Russell in 1974 as a theory of environmental psychology that aims to explain how individuals respond to external stimuli in their environment. The model consists of three main components (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974):

1. Stimulus (S)

Stimuli are external factors that affect an individual, such as stimuli from the physical environment, advertising, promotions, or social interactions. In the context of tourism, this stimulus can be in the form of destination image, service quality, and sensory experiences experienced by tourists in certain destinations. For example, images or promotional videos of destinations that highlight the natural beauty or local culture can act as a stimulus that attracts the attention of tourists.

2. Organism (O)

Organisms refer to the internal processes that occur within individuals when they receive stimuli. This process involves processing information that is psychological and emotional, such as the perception, motivation, personality, and personal experiences that travelers have. The organism acts as a mediator between the stimulus and the response, which means that how individuals process these stimuli will be greatly influenced by their psychological state. For example, a person who is more open to new experiences may respond more positively to stimuli from a tourist destination than a more conservative person.

3. Response (R)

A response is a reaction produced by an individual after processing a stimulus. In the context of tourism, this response can be in the form of a tourist's decision to visit a destination, buy tourism products, or even share their experience on social media. This response can be immediate, such as a decision to buy a plane ticket, or more long-term, such as a decision to revisit a particular destination or recommend it to others.

2.3. Related Studies on the SOR Model in Tourist Behavior

The SOR model has been applied in various studies to understand consumer behavior in the context of tourism. A number of studies have shown that this model can be used to analyze various aspects of the traveler's experience, from their perception of tourist destinations to their decision to visit those places. Here are some related studies that use the

SOR model in the context of tourism (Asyraff et al., 2023; Nieves-Pavón et al., 2023; Wu & Wang, 2025):

1. Study on Destination Image and Tourist Satisfaction

Several studies, such as those conducted by Kim and Chen (2020), have shown how the image of a destination (as a stimulus) affects the perception of tourists (as organisms), which in turn influences their decision to visit the destination. They also found that a positive image of a destination is directly related to traveler satisfaction, which ultimately contributes to loyalty and intention to return for a visit.

2. Study on Travel Experience and Customer Satisfaction

Another study by (Wang et al., 2024) used the SOR model to analyze how sensory tourism experiences, such as interaction with nature, quality of service, and the atmosphere of destinations, affect travelers' satisfaction and their intention to recommend destinations to others. The results suggest that pleasurable sensory experiences can amplify tourists' positive responses to destinations.

3. Study on the Role of Social Media in Traveller Behavior

A more recent study by (Y. Y. Lee et al., 2023) examined how social media as a stimulus affects tourist behavior. Social media not only disseminates information about destinations, but it also creates strong emotional expectations in travelers, which influences their response to travel decisions. They found that social media increases the motivation of tourists to visit destinations that have been promoted, as well as strengthens social connections between tourists through sharing experiences.

This literature review shows that the SOR model provides a robust approach to understanding traveller behavior. Through the analysis of stimuli (such as destination imagery, quality of service, and sensory experience), organisms (psychological and emotional processes that influence travelers' perceptions), and responses (actions taken by tourists), this study can provide deeper insights into the factors that influence travelers' decisions (Çiki, 2025; Nieves-Pavón et al., 2023; Thomas & Wee, 2022; Zhu et al., 2025). In the context of tourism, it is important to consider the integration of the SOR model to examine the internal and external factors that influence tourist behavior, as well as understand how the various elements in this model interact to create a more satisfying and sustainable travel experience. Further research in this area can provide practical recommendations for destination managers to improve the tourist experience and improve the effectiveness of tourism marketing strategies.

3. Methods of systematics

In this section, we will outline the methodology used to conduct the relevant Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with the integration of the SOR model in explaining tourist behavior, focusing on empirical findings published between 2019 and 2025. This study aims to identify, analyze, and summarize relevant studies that apply the SOR model in the context of tourism, as well as provide insights into the application of this model in understanding the factors that influence tourist behavior (W. Li et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2025).

3.1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The literature selection process is conducted based on strict inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure only relevant and quality studies are included in this SLR (Carrera-Rivera et al., 2022; Mengist et al., 2020). The criteria are as follows:

a. Kriteria Inclusive:

1. Articles published in the Scopus indexed journal between 2019 and 2025.
2. Research that explicitly applies the SOR (Stimulus Organism Response) model to analyze tourist behavior.
3. Articles that use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methodologies in the analysis of tourist behavior.
4. Studies relevant to tourism topics, both in domestic and international contexts.
5. Articles that are fully accessible and contain empirical data or research findings that can be evaluated.

b. Exclusion Criteria:

1. Articles that don't use the SOR model or don't focus on traveler behavior.
2. Studies published before 2019.
3. Literature that is not fully accessible or does not provide sufficient data for analysis.
4. Articles that only discuss theories without attributing empirical findings or model applications in the context of travelers.

3.2. Literature Search Procedure

The literature search procedure is carried out by accessing several reputable academic databases to ensure that the identified studies are of quality and relevant (Chigbu et al., 2023; Snyder, 2019). The databases used in this search include:

- Scopus: The ultimate database for searching internationally indexed journal articles, covering a wide range of disciplines, including marketing and tourism management.
- Google Scholar: To expand your search and find articles that may not be indexed in Scopus.
- JSTOR and ProQuest: To identify related literature that may not be found in other databases.

The search was conducted using the following keywords:

- "Stimulus-Organism-Response Model in Tourism"
- "S-O-R Model in Tourist Behavior"
- "Tourist Behavior and S-O-R Model"
- "Empirical Studies on S-O-R Model in Tourism"
- "Cultural Tourism S-O-R Model"
- "Destination Image and S-O-R Model in Tourism"

By combining those keywords, we can ensure that the articles found are relevant to the topic of this research.

3.3. Study Selection Process

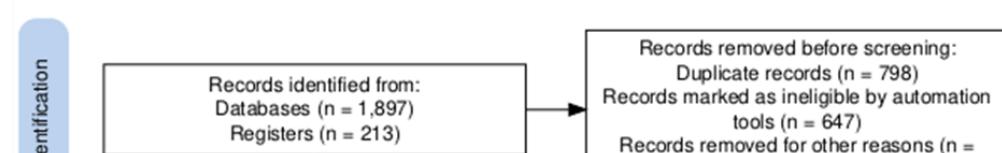
The selection of studies is carried out through several stages to ensure the quality and relevance of the studies included in this SLR. This selection process consists of (Hiebl, 2023; Mengist et al., 2020):

- Downloading and Filtering Titles and Abstracts
 - After a literature search, the articles found will be filtered by title and abstract to ensure that they meet the inclusion criteria.
 - Articles that don't use the SOR model or don't address traveller behavior will be removed from searches.
- Full Article Screening
 - Articles that pass the first stage will be read in full to assess their relevance and quality.
 - Studies that do not meet the inclusion criteria or do not provide the necessary empirical data will be excluded.
- Evaluation of Methodological Quality
 - Articles that have passed the selection will be evaluated based on the quality of the methodology used. We will examine the research design, sample size, data analysis techniques, and validity of the results.
 - Studies that have weak or unclear methodologies will be excluded.
- Screening by year of publication

Articles published before 2019 or after 2025 will not be included, as the focus of this SLR is the empirical findings of studies published in the 2019–2025 time frame.

3.4. PRISMA Flow Diagram

Identification of new studies via databases and registers



Fogure 1: Prisma Flow Chart 2025

3.5. Data Analysis Techniques

Once the relevant literature has been selected, data analysis will be conducted to identify key findings related to the application of the SOR model in traveller behaviour. The analysis techniques used include(Acharya et al., 2023; Nieves-Pavón et al., 2023; Scott et al., 2024):

a. Thematic Analysis:

The data will be analyzed thematically to identify patterns and themes that emerge in the selected studies. Some relevant themes may include the type of stimulus used, the organismal factors that affect the traveler, and the response generated by the traveler. These themes will be compared to identify trends and similarities among existing studies.

b. Qualitative Synthesis:

The results of the thematic analysis will be synthesized to provide an overview of how the SOR model is applied in the context of tourist behavior. This synthesis will provide a clearer understanding of the relationship between stimuli, organisms, and responses in traveler decision-making.

c. Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis:

Where possible, quantitative data from the selected studies (such as the influence of stimulus factors on traveller responses) will be analyzed using descriptive or inferential statistical techniques to delve deeper into the relationships between variables.

3.6. Quality and Validity of Studies

To ensure the validity and reliability of these review results, we will follow the guidelines set by PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses). In this case, the quality evaluation is carried out by checking (Shaheen et al., 2023):

- Research Methods: Ensure that the research included in this SLR uses valid and measurable methods to analyze traveller behavior.
- Sample Size: Checks whether the sample size used in the study is large enough to draw valid conclusions.
- Consistent Conclusions: Ensuring that the conclusions drawn in the article are in accordance with the empirical findings obtained and translated in a relevant manner.

3.7. Coding and Categorization

After thematic analysis, the articles found will be grouped based on the main themes that emerge (Ahmed et al., 2025). The categories that may be used to organize this study are as follows:

- Type of Stimulus: Identify the various external stimuli used in the study (e.g., destination imagery, quality of service, sensory experience).
- Organismal Factors: Analyzes how internal factors (such as perception, motivation, and personality) affect the response of travelers.
- Response Type: Categorizes responses generated by travelers, such as satisfaction, return intent, or destination recommendations.

3.8. Processing and Presentation of Results

The results of the analysis will be presented in the form of tables, diagrams, and narratives that summarize the important findings of the analyzed studies. The presentation of the results will follow a clearly organized structure to make it easier for readers to understand the contribution of this research to the development of understanding of tourist behavior using the SOR model (Binh Nguyen et al., 2023; Chigbu et al., 2023; Mcleod, 2024; Vespestad & Clancy, 2021).

Table 1 Article Review Results

N o.	Reference	Focus on Key Variables	Types of Methodology	Stimulus (S)	Organism (O)	Response (R)	Contribution & Relevance
1	(Gaffar et al., 2022)	Social Media Marketing → Destination Image → Visit Intention	quantitative (SEM)	Social Media Marketing	Perception, Emotional Response	Visit Intention	Showing the influence of social media marketing on the image of the destination and the intention to return to visit.
2	(Tam et al., 2024)	Social Media Marketing → Engagement → Loyalty	Quantitative (PLS-SEM)	Social Media Marketing	Engagement , Involvement	Loyalty	Expanding the application of the S-O-R model to examine social media interactions and tourist loyalty.
3	(Al Halbusi et al., 2020)	Physical & Social Servicescape → Co-created Value → Tourist Citizenship Behavior	Qualitative (Interview)	Physical & Social Servicescape	Value Co- Creation, Citizenship Involvement	Tourist Behavior	Connecting the physical and social environment to the civic behavior of tourists.
4	(Torabi et al., 2022)	Smart Tourism Technologies → Memorable Experiences → Revisit Intention	Quantitative (SEM)	Smart Tourism Technologie	Memorable Experiences	Revisit s	Demonstrate the role of smart travel technology in improving travel experience and return intentions.

Table 1 Article Review Results

N. o.	Reference	Focus on Key Variables	Types of Methodology	Stimulus (S)	Organism (O)	Response (R)	Contribution & Relevance
5	(Primananda et al., 2022)	Social Media Marketing, Experience → Trust → Revisit Intention	Quantitative (Survey)	Social Media Marketing, Emotional Experience	Trust, Emotional Response	Revisit Intention	Examine the impact of social media marketing on trust and return intent.
6	(Kusumawati et al., 2025)	Co-Creation Experience → Involvement → Satisfaction	Quantitative (SEM)	Co-Creation Involvement Experience, Satisfaction	Involvement Experience, Satisfaction	Revisit Intention	Emphasizing the importance of collaborative experiences in increasing traveler engagement and satisfaction.
7	(Q. Li et al., 2024)	Destination Image, Service Quality → Satisfaction → Loyalty	Quantitative (SEM)	Destination Image	Satisfaction, Loyalty	Revisit Intention	Strengthen the relationship between destination image, service quality, and tourist loyalty.
8	(Khoa & Huynh, 2023)	Motivation → Perceived Value → Satisfaction	Quantitative (Survey)	Motivation	Perceived Value, Satisfaction	Revisit Intention	Identify the role of motivation and perceived value as factors in creating tourist satisfaction.
9	(Hossain et al., 2024)	Experience Quality → Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	Quantitative (SEM)	Experience Quality (Gastronomy & Accommodation)	Satisfaction, Revisit Intention	Revisit Intention	Shows that the quality of gastronomic and accommodation experiences reinforces satisfaction and return intent.
10	(Limonta et al., 2024)	Destination Image → Tourist Citizenship Behavior → Willingness to Sacrifice	Quantitative (PLS-SEM)	Destination Image	Tourist Citizenship Behavior	Willingness to Sacrifice	Provide empirical evidence of the relationship between destination image and travellers' social behaviour.
11	(Rosli et al., 2023)	Destination Image → Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	Quantitative (Survey)	Destination Image	Satisfaction, Revisit Intention	Revisit Intention	Confirming the mediating relationship between destination imagery and return intent.
12	(Manyanga et al., 2023)	Service Quality → Destination Image → Revisit Intention	Quantitative (SEM)	Service Quality	Destination Image	Revisit Intention	Showing the mediation path between service quality and destination image in shaping the intention to visit again.
13	(Shafiee et al., 2020)	Tourist Engagement → Relationship Quality → Tourist	Quantitative (PLS-SEM)	Tourist Engagement	Relationship Quality, Tourist Citizenship Behavior	Loyalty, Engagement	Introducing the social involvement of tourists as mediators in creating quality

Table 1 Article Review Results

N o.	Reference	Focus on Key Variables	Types of Methodology	Stimulus (S)	Organism (O)	Response (R)	Contribution & Relevance
		Citizenship Behavior					relationships and civic behaviors.
14	(Zulvianti et al., 2023)	Environmental Value → Destination Image → Satisfaction → Loyalty	Quantitative (SEM)	Environment al Value	Satisfaction, Loyalty	Revisit Intention	Explain the relationship between environmental values and tourist loyalty with moderation of religiosity factors.
15	(Nguyen Phuc & Bui Thanh, 2022)	eWOM → Satisfaction → Loyalty	Meta-analysis	eWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth)	Satisfaction	Loyalty	A meta-analysis examining the relationship between eWOM, satisfaction, and loyalty in tourism. Examine the non- linear relationship between
16	(Park et al., 2019)	Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	Quantitative (Non-Linear Analysis)	Satisfaction	Revisit Intention	Revisit Intention	satisfaction and return intention, providing a new perspective in the S-O-R model.
17	(Abbasi et al., 2021)	Tourist Behavior → Satisfaction → Loyalty	TPB Expansion Theory	Perceived Behavioral Control	Satisfaction, Loyalty	Revisit Intention	Extending the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) with tourist behavior variables for triangulation of the S-O-R model.
18	(Limonta et al., 2024)	Experience Quality → Satisfaction → Revisit Intention	Quantitative (SEM)	Experience Quality	Satisfaction, Revisit Intention	Revisit Intention	Identify the importance of experience quality in creating traveller satisfaction and return intent.

Source:

4. Results and Discussion

In this section, we will summarize the findings of various studies that use the SOR model to analyze tourist behavior, published between 2019 and 2025. These findings include the characteristics of the study found, the application of the SOR model in the context of tourist behavior, as well as the variation of the findings based on the dimensions of stimuli, organisms, and responses in the SOR model.

Characteristics of Found Studies

Based on the literature search, we found a number of studies that integrate the SOR model in understanding traveller behavior. Here is a general description of the selected studies:

- Number of Articles: We analysed 18 studies relevant to the application of the SOR model in the context of tourist behaviour. These articles were published in the Scopus indexed international journal between 2019 and 2025.
- Type of Methodology: The methodology used in this study varied, with most studies using quantitative approaches (such as Structural Equation Modeling [SEM] and Partial

Least Squares SEM [PLS-SEM]), as well as some studies using regression analysis or qualitative analysis.

c. Geographical Context: These studies cover diverse tourism destinations, both domestic and international, including destinations in Southeast Asia, Europe, and Latin America, such as Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, and Mexico. This shows the broad application of the SOR model in various tourism destination contexts.

Application of the SOR Model in Tourist Behavior

The SOR model is used in research to understand how external stimuli affect organisms (internal processes) which ultimately results in a response from tourists. Based on the studies analyzed, we identified the following elements in the SOR model:

a. Stimulus (S):

1. Social Media Marketing: Marketing through social media has proven to be an effective stimulus in influencing the image of destinations and return intentions. Research by (Gaffar et al., 2022; Tam et al., 2024) shows that social media marketing influences travelers' perceptions of destinations and strengthens loyalty and intention to return to certain destinations.
2. Tourist Experience: A tourist's direct experience, such as the quality of service or interaction with the social and physical environment of the destination, plays an important role in creating a positive image of the destination. A study by (Al Halbusi et al., 2020) shows how the quality of physical and social services can shape the traveller's experience that improves their civic behavior.
3. Digital Innovation (Smart Tourism Technologies): Smart tourism technologies (STTs) have also been found to function as a stimulus in improving the travel experience and return intentions. Zabih-Allah (Torabi et al., 2022) show that smart technology can create unforgettable tourist experiences, which has a positive effect on repeat visitor intentions.

b. Organization (O):

1. Tourist Satisfaction: Tourist satisfaction is one of the most discussed organismal variables in this study. Research by Andriani (Khoa & Huynh, 2023; Kusumawati et al., 2025) emphasizes the role of tourist satisfaction as a mediator between stimuli (such as social media marketing and destination image) and return intent.
2. Tourist Engagement: Some studies have also highlighted tourist engagement, such as in the study of (Shafiee et al., 2020), which showed how the social engagement of tourists is directly related to their civic behavior. This engagement, both emotional and social, strengthens travelers' connection with destinations, which affects their loyalty and intention to return.
3. Destination Trust: Trust in destinations plays an important role in increasing tourist loyalty. Primananda et al., (2022) found that trust formed through positive experiences and social media marketing strengthens tourists' intention to revisit.

c. Response (R):

1. Revisit Intention: Intention to return was one of the main responses measured in this study. Studies by (Manyangara et al., 2023; Rosli et al., 2023) show that return intentions are significantly influenced by tourist satisfaction and destination image.
2. Tourist Citizenship Behavior (TCB): Some studies have also identified that tourist citizenship behaviors (such as support for destination sustainability) are an important response to external stimuli. (Limonta et al., 2024) show that tourists who have a positive image of destinations tend to show behaviors that support the preservation of those destinations, either through advocacy or positive information-sharing behaviors.

Variation of Findings Based on Stimulus Dimensions

The different types of stimuli used in this study influenced the behavior of tourists in different ways. The most commonly found stimulus is social media marketing and travel experiences. Social media marketing, as discussed by (Tam et al., 2024), has a direct impact on destination imagery and return intent, suggesting that digital-based promotions can significantly influence travelers' decisions. In addition, the travel experience also plays a key role in creating a positive image of the destination. A study by (Al Halbusi et al., 2020) shows that the physical and social environment, such as the quality of services at the destination and the social interactions that occur there, can influence the response of tourists to the destination, both in terms of satisfaction and intention to return.

The Influence of Organismal Factors on Tourist Behavior

The internal factors that affect individuals in processing stimuli are very diverse, but tourist satisfaction is the most frequently mentioned factor. A study by (Khoa & Huynh, 2023) identified that motivation and perception value play an important role in creating tourist satisfaction. This satisfaction, in turn, serves as a mediator that connects external stimuli (such as destination imagery or social media marketing) to traveller responses (such as intention to return). In addition, tourist engagement was also found to affect their perception of destinations, as explained by (Shafiee et al., 2020), who showed that tourists who were more socially engaged with destinations tended to have higher satisfaction and were more loyal.

Tourist Response and Implications

The responses generated by tourists to stimuli, such as return intentions and civic behaviors, are a major part of this analysis. The findings show that intention to return is strongly influenced by the tourist experience and satisfaction that tourists gain during their visit. Research (Rosli et al., 2023) shows that a positive image of a destination increases tourist satisfaction, which in turn strengthens their intention to visit the destination again.

In addition, the civic behavior of tourists also emerged as a significant response in this study. Research by (Limonata et al., 2024) reveals that civic behaviors, which include support for destination sustainability, play an important role in strengthening tourist loyalty and enhancing their experience. With these findings, this article provides deeper insights into how the SOR model can be used to explain traveler behavior, as well as how stimuli, organisms, and responses interact to shape traveler travel decisions.

5. Comparison

Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings in this study provide confirmation and comparison with several previous studies that have integrated the SOR model in the analysis of tourist behavior. In general, our findings are in line with many previous studies that have shown that external stimuli (such as social media marketing and destination imagery) have a significant influence on traveller responses, both in terms of satisfaction, loyalty, and intention to return. For example, research by (Gaffar et al., 2022; Tam et al., 2024) also found that social media marketing plays an important role in shaping destination imagery and return intent, which is also reflected in this study.

However, there are also some slightly different findings. For example, our research found that Tourist Citizenship Behavior (TCB) mediates the relationship between destination imagery and intention to return, which is a new contribution of the SOR model in tourism studies. This is in contrast to research by (Limonata et al., 2024) which focuses more on motivation and satisfaction without emphasizing the more profound role of social behavior of tourists. In this context, our research introduces a new dimension in SOR, where social engagement and sustainability are important factors in increasing return intent, a finding that is more relevant to the dynamics of tourism that increasingly focus on sustainability.

In addition, our findings emphasizing the role of travel experience as a mediating factor between stimulus and response also support research by (Hossain et al., 2024), which indicate that the quality of travel experiences (gastronomy and accommodation) have a direct effect on satisfaction and intention to return. As such, our findings provide further evidence that end-to-end experiences, including sensory and emotional experiences, play a large role in travelers' decisions.

Contribution of the SOR Model in the Study of Tourist Behavior

The SOR model makes a significant contribution to deepening the understanding of tourist behavior, especially in relation to the influence of external stimuli on the responses generated. This model offers a more structured framework for understanding how factors such as social media marketing and destination imagery affect travelers' internal processes, which in turn results in responses in the form of decisions to revisit or engage in civic behaviors that favor destinations.

The application of the SOR model in this study is also relevant to the dynamics of today's tourism industry, where travelers are increasingly influenced by social and digital factors in their travel decisions. The influence of social media as a stimulus, for example, reflects the importance of digital platforms in shaping tourist perceptions and experiences. In an

increasingly connected world through social media, information about destinations spreads faster and influences tourists' intention to visit, which was not previously studied as much in the SOR model in previous studies. In addition, this model shows that tourist citizenship behavior (TCB) is increasingly important in the context of destination sustainability. As part of the response, this behavior suggests that travelers are not only oriented towards personal satisfaction, but also consider the social and environmental impacts of their visit. This is an important addition to the theory of tourist behavior that is increasingly relevant to the sustainability agenda in the global tourism industry.

Practical Implications for the Tourism Industry

Based on these findings, there are several practical implications that can be applied by tourism destination managers or tourism industry players to design more effective marketing strategies:

- a. Social Media Marketing Optimization: Tourist destination managers must make maximum use of social media to promote the image of the destination, because social media has proven to be one of the powerful stimuli in shaping tourist perceptions and increasing the intention to return to visit. Creating content that is engaging, authentic, and easy to share can strengthen the image of the destination as well as build traveler engagement, which in turn can increase digital loyalty and advocacy.
- b. Improving Holistic Travel Experiences: Based on the findings that travel experiences mediate stimulus and response, destination managers should focus on creating a well-rounded and meaningful experience for travelers. This includes quality of service, social interaction, as well as sensory experiences (such as sounds, sights, and smells) that can increase travelers' satisfaction and strengthen their intention to return.
- c. The Importance of Sustainability in Marketing Strategies: Given the growing importance of tourist citizenship behaviors, destination managers need to integrate sustainability values in their marketing strategies. Promoting destinations with a more environmentally friendly approach and inviting tourists to get involved in conservation efforts can be an effective way to build loyalty and reinforce a positive image of the destination.
- d. Personalization and Traveller Engagement: A more personalized experience and inviting travelers to participate in destination activities can increase their engagement, which will positively impact satisfaction and return intent. For example, using technology to offer a more interactive experience or empowering tourists to participate in environmental conservation activities.

Limitations and Further Research Directions

While this study provides important insights into the application of the SOR model in tourist behavior, there are several limitations that need to be noted:

- a. Geographical Context Limitations: This study focuses more on tourist destinations in Southeast Asia and some other countries, which may not fully reflect the behavior of tourists in other regions, such as Europe or the Americas. Therefore, follow-up studies that include more locations of international tourism destinations can provide a more comprehensive picture.
- b. Other Factors Influencing Traveler Response: While the SOR model can explain many aspects of traveler behavior, there are many other factors that may play a role in traveler decision-making, such as economic, socio-cultural, or even external factors such as global crises. Further research can explore these variables to provide a broader picture of tourist behavior.
- c. A More Integrated Approach to Technology: With the growing development of smart tourism technologies and digitalization in tourism, further research could focus on how they interact with psychological and social factors in the SOR model.

6. Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings

This article has identified and analyzed the application of the SOR (Stimulus Organism Response) model in explaining tourist behavior, focusing on studies published between 2019 and 2025. Based on the findings, some of the main points that can be concluded are:

- a. Stimulus: Various external stimuli, such as social media marketing, destination imagery, and travel experiences, have been shown to significantly influence traveler behavior. Social media marketing plays an important role in shaping the perception and image of a

destination, which in turn increases the intention of tourists to visit or return to the destination.

- b. Organisms: Internal factors, especially tourist satisfaction, engagement, and trust in the destination, play an important role in mediating the influence of stimuli on tourist responses. The satisfaction gained from a thorough and positive travel experience becomes the main mediator that connects external stimuli with the intention to revisit.
- c. Response: In response to the stimulus received and the internal processing that occurs, tourists exhibit Tourist Citizenship Behavior (TCB) that supports the sustainability of the destination, as well as the intention to return to the destination. This shows that tourists are not only looking for personal satisfaction, but also contributing to the preservation of the destinations they visit.

Overall, these findings confirm that the SOR model is highly effective in describing the dynamics that occur between external, internal, and response factors in traveler behavior. This shows how travel experiences influenced by external stimuli can influence travelers' decisions to revisit and play a role in supporting the sustainability of destinations.

Contributions of Studies to Theory and Practice. This research makes a significant contribution to the development of the theory of tourist behavior by integrating the SOR model into the broader study of tourist behavior. By utilizing this model, the study not only strengthens the understanding of the relationship between external stimuli and traveller responses, but also adds a new dimension, namely tourists' civic behavior in response to stimuli and their experiences.

In practical terms, these findings provide useful guidance for tourist destination managers and tourism industry players to design more effective and sustainable marketing strategies. Social media marketing, which has proven to be effective in shaping the image of destinations, can be used more optimally in an effort to attract new tourists and build the loyalty of existing visitors. In addition, improving the quality of the travel experience (both in terms of service and social interaction) can strengthen traveller satisfaction, which in turn increases their intention to return and behaves more in favor of the sustainability of the destination.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research opens up opportunities for further in-depth research on the application of the SOR model in the context of tourism. Some recommendations for future research include:

- a. Application of the SOR Model in Various Geographic Contexts: This study mostly focuses on tourist destinations in Southeast Asia and several other countries. Further research can extend coverage to other international destinations to compare differences in traveller behavior based on different geographical, social, and cultural contexts.
- b. Integration of Technology and Travel Experiences: With the development of technologies in the tourism industry, such as smart tourism technologies and virtual reality, further research can explore how these technologies serve as additional stimulus in the SOR MODEL. This will provide new insights into how technology can affect the traveler experience and their response to destinations.
- c. Influence of Social and Cultural Factors: Further studies can delve deeper into how social and cultural factors (e.g., the influence of family, friends, or social groups) influence travelers' responses to stimuli and how these factors interact with internal elements such as perception, motivation, and satisfaction.
- d. The Importance of Sustainability in Tourist Responses: Although this research shows that travelers' civic behaviors play an important role in supporting destination sustainability, there are still many aspects that can be explored further, such as how travelers engage in destination sustainability initiatives and the long-term impact of these behaviors on the tourism industry.
- e. Post-Pandemic Changes in Tourist Behavior: Given the profound impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on tourist behavior, further research could examine changes in tourist behavior post-pandemic, especially in terms of their desire to return, their travel patterns, and priorities in choosing tourist destinations.

With this broader research direction, the SOR model can be further applied and expanded to provide a more comprehensive understanding of traveller behavior, as well as contribute to designing more targeted and sustainable marketing strategies.

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