

Research Progress and Prospect of Chinese Tourists' Environmental Responsibility Behavior in Recent Years

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ABSTRACT

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), the "five-in-one" strategy has been put forward to the national "14th Five-Year Plan" tourism development plan, which clearly emphasizes the need to promote the construction of ecological civilization and the high-quality development of tourism. As the main actors in tourism activities, tourists have become important participants and implementers of ecological civilization construction in tourist destinations, and their social behaviors in the process of tourism have received extensive attention. However, on the whole, the research on tourists' environmental responsibility behavior still lags behind the needs of practical development, and few studies have been systematically sorted out and analyzed, which limits the innovation and development of relevant policies. In order to track the research trend of tourists' responsible behavior, this paper systematically sorted out the relevant literature on domestic tourists' environmental responsibility behavior in recent years, and sorted out and analyzed its conceptual connotation, structure and scale, as well as its influencing factors and theoretical perspectives. On this basis, this study clarifies the future research direction from the perspectives of various stakeholders in the tourism process, so as to provide countermeasures and suggestions for relevant government management departments, residents and tourists to manage and cultivate environmentally responsible behaviors, and promote the construction and high-quality development of ecological civilization in tourism destinations.

KEYWORDS

Tourists; Environmentally Responsible Behavior; Research Progress; Prospects.

1. INTRODUCTION

As a strategic pillar industry of China's national economy, tourism has become a rigid need for people's better life in a moderately prosperous society. Known as a "smokeless industry," tourism is inherently consistent with ecological civilization construction [1]. The 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed the "Five-sphere Integrated Plan" for social, political, economic, cultural, and ecological civilization construction. The 19th National Congress emphasized the harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature, and the report of the 20th National Congress and the "14th Five-Year Plan for Tourism Development" clearly stress promoting ecological civilization construction and high-quality tourism development. Tourism has become an important field for practicing the concept that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets." Therefore, the ecological civilization construction of tourist destinations is not only an objective reflection of national policies in the tourism field but also an inevitable requirement for the healthy development of tourism [1]. As the main actors in tourism activities, tourists have become important participants and implementers in the ecological civilization construction of tourist destinations, and their social behaviors during tourism have attracted widespread attention [2]. In reality, with the significant increase in the number of tourists in the post-pandemic era, various uncivilized behaviors of tourists

at tourist destinations have exerted great pressure on the local environment, ranging from wanton damage to surface vegetation and littering to vandalism of cultural relics and geological landforms [3], as well as the negative "demonstration effect" of tourists' inappropriate behaviors on local residents. A good ecological environment is the premise and basic guarantee for ecological civilization construction and high-quality tourism development [4]. Since tourists' environmentally responsible behavior helps improve the environmental quality of tourist destinations and promote the protection of historical and cultural relics, achieving the sustainable development of tourist destinations, cultivating and guiding tourists to adopt environmentally responsible behavior has become an urgent issue in the tourism industry [5].

With the development of the times and changing requirements, research on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior has increasingly become a focus in the academic community. Scholars have studied the formation and influence mechanisms of environmentally responsible behavior from different theoretical perspectives [4,23,51,56]. However, overall, research on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior still lags behind the needs of practical development, limiting the innovative development of relevant policies. Moreover, as China's tourism enters the post-pandemic era with new trends emerging [6], few studies have conducted systematic combing and analysis. To track the research dynamics of tourists' responsible behavior, this paper systematically collates relevant literature on domestic tourists' environmentally responsible behavior in the past five years, combing and discriminating their conceptual connotations, structural dimensions and measurement scales, and influencing factors. Based on this, combined with the perspectives of various stakeholders in the tourism process, this study clarifies future research directions to provide countermeasures and suggestions for government management departments, local residents of tourist destinations, and tourists to manage and cultivate the practice of environmentally responsible behavior, and promote the ecological civilization construction and high-quality development of tourist destinations.

2. SELECTION OF RESEARCH LITERATURE

This paper mainly uses the CNKI database platform to retrieve domestic Chinese literature. Using CNKI, we searched with "environmentally responsible behavior" as the theme. Since there are different term expressions for "environmentally responsible behavior" in the academic community [7], such as "pro-environmental behavior," "environmentally accountable behavior," "environmental protection behavior," "ecological behavior," "sustainable behavior," etc., but the conceptual connotations of these terms are basically consistent [8]. Therefore, to enhance the comprehensiveness, systematicness, and scientificity of literature retrieval, we further searched with themes such as "environmentally accountable behavior," "pro-environmental behavior," "environmentally friendly behavior," "environmental protection behavior," "ecological behavior," "ecological civilization behavior," "ecological responsible behavior," "ecologically friendly behavior," "environmental concern behavior," "environmentally significant behavior," and "sustainable behavior." To ensure literature quality and thematic relevance, we used advanced retrieval with the time range from January 1, 2017, to December 31, 2023, and selected CSSCI journals in the category of Chinese academic journal sources. Initially, 500 documents were retrieved. Then, we read and studied the titles and abstracts of the retrieved documents and conducted a second screening based on the following criteria: (1) the research field is tourism; (2) the research object is tourists. After the second screening, 66 documents were finally retained. Based on these, this paper mainly conducts a literature review and prospects on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior.

3. RESEARCH PROGRESS ON TOURISTS' ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR

3.1. Conceptual Discrimination

Although the academic community has different explanations for the concept of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, with slightly different disciplinary stances and theoretical perspectives, the conceptual connotations of these terms are basically consistent [8]. The concept of environmentally responsible behavior originates from environmental psychology and refers to any action taken by individuals or groups to promote the sustainable use of the environment [2]. In addition to "environmentally responsible behavior," scholars also use terms such as "pro-environmental behavior" [9], "environmentally friendly behavior" [10], "environmental protection behavior" [11], "environmental conservation behavior" [12], and "environmentally accountable behavior" [13].

3.2. Structure and Measurement of Tourists' Environmentally Responsible Behavior

There are significant differences in the structural dimensions of the scales in existing literature. Lee et al. [14] first systematically developed a scale for tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, summarizing it into seven dimensions: hands-on behavior, persuasion behavior, financial behavior, pro-environmental behavior, civic behavior, environmentally friendly behavior, and sustainable behavior. This provided a measurement tool for the quantitative study of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior in tourism contexts. Since then, a large number of scales for tourists' environmentally responsible behavior have emerged, mostly developed using grounded theory or following others' scales [15,16], which can be roughly divided into single-dimensional and multi-dimensional scales. In terms of multi-dimensional scales, Qiu Hongliang [17] believes that tourists' environmentally responsible behavior is a multi-dimensional construct composed of compliant environmental protection behavior, consumption-based environmental protection behavior, conservation-based environmental protection behavior, and promotional environmental protection behavior, and summarizes 18 measurement indicators based on the local Chinese tourism context. Liu Hongbo et al. divided tourists' environmentally responsible behavior into proactive environmentally responsible behavior and compliant environmentally responsible behavior, constructing nine items such as "persuading peers to take positive actions for the wetland natural environment" and "spending time reading articles or books on wetland environmental protection" [18]. Luo Wenbin and Xie Haili et al. divided tourists' environmentally responsible behavior into two dimensions: self-restraint behavior and protection-promoting behavior [16,19]. However, more scholars agree with the single-dimensional view. Zhang Qiongrui et al. constructed 19 items such as "I believe that as long as everyone is environmentally friendly, the environment will be improved," "People important to me all hope that I will take action to protect the park's environment," and "Protecting the environment in this park is a wise choice," and studied the driving factors of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior based on the Theory of Planned Behavior [20]. Chen Hu extracted measurement items from credible research literature to form a scale, which consists of 14 items on the tourism image of historical blocks, 3 items on tourism satisfaction, and 3 items on environmentally responsible behavior, totaling 18 items, to study the driving influence of the tourism image of historical blocks on environmentally responsible behavior [21].

In general, although the reliability and validity of the scales for tourists' environmentally responsible behavior have been increasingly recognized by the academic community, there are still many directions worthy of in-depth research. Many scholars use only a single dimension to measure tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, which cannot fully reflect the connotative characteristics of this behavior. How to explain and predict the important characteristics of the connotation of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior from multiple dimensions is worthy of in-depth exploration.

On the other hand, domestic scales for tourists' environmentally responsible behavior mainly refer to Western scales, without considering the particularity of the Chinese local context. Therefore, using mixed methods to explore scales for tourists' environmentally responsible behavior in the Chinese local tourism context is a research proposition worthy of experimentation [8].

3.3. Analysis of Influencing Factors

Most of the current literature on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior focuses on the study of influencing factors and driving paths, which can be roughly divided into three entry angles:

The first is the demographic characteristics angle: For example, Xie Haili studied the group differences in environmentally responsible behavior among different tourist groups characterized by education and occupation [19]. Fang Yuanping divided the research objects into two groups: adolescent tourists and adult tourists, and analyzed the differences in the influencing factors and generation paths of their pro-environmental behavior [22].

The second is the tourists' individual emotions angle: 1. Perceived value and place attachment: Zhang Ting emphasized creating tourists' perceived value of the tourist destination, enhancing tourists' perception, and effectively stimulating tourists' place attachment emotions to the destination, thereby triggering a resonance in tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [23]. Xu Ningning explored the influence mechanism of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior from the perspectives of cultural identity and psychological ownership [24]. Scholars have introduced cognitive factors (perceived value) and emotional factors (place attachment) into the model, forming a "combination of reason and emotion" research path [25,26]. 2. Tourist experience and satisfaction: Chen Hu et al.'s study on historical blocks showed that tourist satisfaction has a significant positive impact on environmentally responsible behavior [21]. Dou Lu took emotional response and satisfaction as intermediate variables to explore the impact path of tourists' crowding perception on environmentally responsible behavior [27]. He Xuehuan believes that tourism consumption is tourists' service experience at the tourist destination, so the service quality of the tourist destination has an important impact on tourists' attitudes and behaviors, thus taking perceived service quality and tourist satisfaction as influencing factors of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [28]. 3. Tourists' emotions: Qi Xiaoxiao used place attachment as a mediating variable to deeply analyze the influence mechanism of awe, a type of individual positive emotion, on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior in religious mountain scenic areas [29]. Niu Jingqi took internal and external dual evaluations as the entry point to reveal the dual-driving route of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior intentions in the context of ecotourism embodied perception [30]. Gao Yang explored the internal relationship between tourists' well-being and their environmentally responsible behavior from a comprehensive perspective [31]. Zhang Yuangang studied the influence of nostalgic emotions of tourists in ancient village tourist destinations on their environmentally responsible behavior [32]. 4. Tourists' ecological values: Some scholars have studied the transformation mechanism of how ecological values go from "concept" to "action," demonstrating the impact of ecological values on environmentally responsible behavior [33,34]. Li Wenming studied the driving mechanism of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior in historical and cultural blocks with environmental knowledge as a moderating variable [35]. 5. Tourist-environment fit: Cai Libin [1] and Cheng Wenqian [36] explored the influence mechanism of tourist-environment fit on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior.

The third is the objective situation of the tourist destination angle: 1. Tourist destination policies: Huang Tao et al. introduced values and scenic area policies into the theoretical model of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior based on TPB theory, believing that scenic area policies have a positive regulatory effect on tourists' environmental behavior intentions [37]. 2. Tourist destination social responsibility: Cheng Weijin believes that the social responsibility of tourist destinations has a significant positive impact on the two dimensions of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior

(self-restraint behavior and protection-promoting behavior) [38]. 3. Environmental education: Yin Chengqiang believes that the perception of environmental education for tourists by tourist destinations and other subjects will improve tourists' professional literacy, thereby enhancing tourists' pro-environmental behavior [39]. Li Wenming believes that the tourist education carried out in red tourist destinations, in addition to the mainstream education on party and national identity and the inheritance of revolutionary spirit (red education), necessarily involves ecological civilization education (environmental education), and the direct goal of the latter is tourists' pro-environmental behavior [40].

There are also scholars who study from the perspective of reference groups. For example, Fang Yuanping believes that reference groups represented by relatives, friends, celebrities, and experts influence our attitudes and behaviors and shape our habits and concepts [22]. In addition, some scholars comprehensively analyze the influencing factors of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior by combining multiple angles. Luo Wenbin integrated seven major factors including personal characteristics, perceived value, destination experience, destination involvement, local characteristics, environmental attitudes, and place attachment to explore their impact on environmentally responsible behavior [41]. Qu Ying, based on the environmental psychological characteristics of mass tourists, explored the interactive effect of external driving forces and internal obstacles in the process of generating their desire for pro-environmental behavior [42].

3.4. Theoretical Perspective Analysis

The formation mechanism of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior has received much attention, and the path exploration is mainly based on the following theories: First, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which believes that factors such as subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, environmental attitudes, values, and scenic area policies have significant driving effects [37]. The TPB posits that behavioral intention is the most direct factor affecting behavior, and behavioral intention is influenced by behavioral attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control [20]. Second, the Social Support Theory, where social support refers to individuals' perception of available social resources, and based on this, tourist destination support is extended, believing that tourist destination support can directly promote tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [43]. Third, the Place Attachment Theory, where the mainstream view in tourism divides place attachment into two dimensions: place dependence and place identity, believing that tourists' environmentally responsible behavior is influenced by place identity and place attachment [18]. Fourth, the Individual Emotion Theory, which believes that positive emotions have a significant positive impact on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [29]. Fifth, the Environmental Theory, which believes that soundscape cognition and soundscape thinking affect tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [11]. Sixth, the Norm Theory, where Wang Hua studied the influence of group norms on tourists' willingness for environmentally friendly behavior from the perspective of group norms [44], and Li Congzhi used the Norm Activation Theory to study the influence of human-land emotions on environmentally responsible behavior in forest parks [13]. Seventh, the "Cognition-Emotion-Attitude-Behavior Intention" model, which believes that the formation of individual behavior includes four stages: cognition, emotion, attitude, and intention, which have a certain order in the formation process of individual behavior and are a gradual process [45]. Li Rui studied the relationship effect among tourists' environmental concern, environmental emotion, and pro-environmental behavior based on this model [46]. Huang Jingbo empirically analyzed the roles of four explanatory variables - tourists' environmental knowledge, perceived value, perceived consumption efficacy, and environmental attitude - in the formation process of tourists' environmentally friendly behavior [47].

Some scholars also combine two or more theories to explore the driving paths of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior. For example, He Xuehuan combined the "Stimulus-Organism-Response" (S-O-R) theory and the Signal Theory to study the driving path of tourists' environmentally

responsible behavior. The S-O-R framework integrates cognition, emotion, behavior, etc., and well reflects the generation process of individual behavior. In the tourism consumption context, how tourist destinations design and transmit strong positive signals, and how tourists decode or perceive these signals, is of great importance for tourists' destination selection [28]. Tian Zemin studied the driving factors of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior based on the Theory of Planned Behavior and the Broken Windows Theory [48].

3.5. Research Method Analysis

(1) Data Collection

Data collection in existing studies mainly uses the questionnaire method [9-13]. It also supplements with qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews and participatory observation [43]. Mainstream research uses self-report Likert rating scales, with measurement scales mainly being Likert 5-point scales [19] or 7-point scales [23]. These studies require respondent tourists to select the appropriate grade options from the questionnaire to evaluate their own environmentally responsible behavior. According to the distribution characteristics of tourists, data collection is carried out through methods such as random sampling, convenience sampling, and census sampling. Except for mixed studies, the number of valid questionnaires in most literatures is between 300 and 700. In recent years, some studies with multi-round questionnaire surveys have begun to appear. For example, Hong Xueting et al. took undergraduates majoring in tourism management at a certain university as the survey objects, and through longitudinal surveys, used paired sample t-tests and least squares method to compare the environmental attitudes and behaviors of the same batch of tourists before, after, and three months after the tour [49,50].

(2) Data Analysis

Data analysis mostly uses statistical techniques such as structural equation modeling (SEM) [20,21,55] to systematically analyze questionnaire data and explore the dominant variables, mediating variables, or moderating variables in the formation mechanism of environmentally responsible behavior. For example, Jiang Jinbo et al. used SEM to analyze 346 valid questionnaires and found that the nostalgic emotions of tourists in historical and cultural blocks did not have a direct significant positive impact on their environmentally responsible behavior but had an indirect impact through other factors [25]. In addition, some scholars use fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) to analyze data. For example, Sun Jiaojiao et al. used fsQCA, which analyzes the interaction of multiple variables, to explore the single and combined paths affecting tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [51]. Some scholars also use meta-analysis to integrate and analyze the influencing factors of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior. Luo Wenbin, Zhang Yuangang, etc., based on meta-analysis methods, selected data from a certain number of articles and systematically analyzed the relationship strength of the influencing factors of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [41,52].

4. LITERATURE REVIEW AND PROSPECTS

4.1. Measurement Indicators Mostly Derived from the Same Scholar's Scale, Need to Develop Matching Scales for Specific Tourism Contexts

The scales for tourists' environmentally responsible behavior mostly originate from the environmentally responsible behavior scales developed by Smith-Sebasto and Lee et al. in a Western cultural context [54]. Lee et al. [14] first systematically developed a scale for tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, summarizing it into seven dimensions: hands-on behavior, persuasion behavior, financial behavior, pro-environmental behavior, civic behavior, environmentally friendly behavior, and sustainable behavior. Although these scales have passed reliability and validity tests in research, the environmentally responsible behavior scales developed based on the Western cultural context

may not be suitable for China's national conditions, which are significantly different from Western cultures. The scale developed by Lee et al. is based on sample data from Taiwan region and lacks emic, localized research on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior derived from Chinese culture and collected from current mainland China sample data. Qiu Hongliang developed a measurement scale for Chinese tourists' environmentally responsible behavior using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques and revised and improved the scale through reliability and validity tests. Qiu Hongliang believes that tourists' environmentally responsible behavior is a multi-dimensional construct composed of compliant environmental protection behavior, consumption-based environmental protection behavior, conservation-based environmental protection behavior, and promotional environmental protection behavior, and summarizes 18 measurement indicators based on the Chinese local tourism context [17]. At the same time, tourists' environmentally responsible behavior intentions also differ in different types of tourist destinations. Future research should be based on the specific tourism context of tourists, clarify the dimensional structure of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, and develop scales for tourists' environmentally responsible behavior that conform to the background of the times, the type of local tourist destination, and the combination of tourists' subjective perception and objective reality.

4.2. Research Methods Mainly Quantitative Statistical Analysis, Need to Use Multiple Methods to Explore the Evolution Mechanism of Environmentally Responsible Behavior

Existing studies mostly use quantitative research methods to explore the driving factors and influence mechanisms of tourists' emotions and cognition on environmentally responsible behavior [12,18,21,23]. These studies have constructed the basic framework for the theoretical research of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, but there are also certain methodological limitations. The self-report scales constructed by researchers cannot accurately measure respondents' perceptions, and cross-sectional data at static times cannot accurately reflect the behavioral differences of the same individual in different time and space [30,54]. Some scholars have pointed out that the essence of tourism activities is social interaction. Considering that environmentally responsible behavior is a pro-social behavior, tourists may tend to cater to social expectations when filling out questionnaires, leading to positive biases in the survey results and thus affecting the authenticity of the research conclusions to a certain extent [30]. Regarding the limitations of questionnaires, when surveying psychological variables such as tourists' emotions and attitudes, respondents may feel social expectations, leading them to tend to be neutral or positive when reporting their feelings, affecting the authenticity of the research conclusions. In the future, qualitative methods such as interviews can be used to optimize the results and directly reflect local attributes [29]. Future research can also try to combine experimental methods, on-site observation methods, and in-depth interviews to reduce these limitations. Regarding the limitations of cross-sectional data, future research can collect data multiple times at key time points during travel and use these longitudinal data for time series analysis to further explore the causal relationships between concepts [30]. At the same time, diversified research methods can be adopted. For example, fsQCA can use small sample cases to assign and calculate the conditional and result variables of environmentally responsible behavior, identify potential asymmetric causal or explanatory relationships, and is suitable for exploring the causal relationships of new variables in the field of environmentally responsible behavior. For example, Luo Wenbin used fsQCA to explore the formation mechanism of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [41].

4.3. Influencing Factors Mostly Based on Western Classic Theory Model Variables, Need to Analyze the Role of Cultural Factors Based on China's National Conditions

Current domestic research on the influencing factors of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior mostly relies on Western theories such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) [20], Place Attachment Theory [12], and Individual Emotion Theory [53]. These theories are all rooted in Western cultural values. The biggest difference between Chinese and Western cultures in cultural values lies in different ways of thinking. Western culture is more of a "logical" thinking, emphasizing "principles" and "reasoning." They always prove or reason a conclusion under certain principles or assumptions, emphasizing the logic behind an event. In contrast, Chinese culture focuses on "summarization" and "induction," emphasizing more on explaining a phenomenon from a social perspective. These differences in thinking logic will inevitably lead to behavioral differences. The actual effect or theoretical adaptability of using theories generated based on Western society to study Chinese local social phenomena remains to be investigated. Tourism activities are fundamentally social activities where tourists leave their habitual environment and enter a non-habitual environment. Tourists may engage in uncivilized behaviors in the non-habitual environment due to the lack of constraints from their habitual environment, or take actions that do not match their true selves to enhance their "face" to cater to social expectations. At the same time, the local government is the designer and promoter of tourism activities in the area, dominating the development of tourism activities. With the explosive development of social media, the spread of network information has an increasingly greater impact on tourists' behavioral choices. Therefore, future research should combine China's unique cultural factors and national conditions to study the impact of social media and network evaluations (Weibo, Douyin, Ctrip, etc.) on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, as well as the differences in tourists' social behaviors in China's complex social environment (such as social conformity psychology and "face" psychological). It can also use China's unique cultural thoughts (such as Confucianism) to study the driving paths of traditional values on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior.

4.4. Research Perspectives Mainly on Domestic Tourists, Can Combine the Characteristics of Cultural Heterogeneity between China and the West to Study Differences in Environmentally Responsible Behavior of Domestic and Foreign Tourists

The differences between Chinese and Western cultures are like two completely different paintings. In China, values are rooted in thousands of years of civilization traditions. Confucianism emphasizes the establishment of ethical morality and social order; Taoism emphasizes individual freedom and the pursuit of spiritual peace; Mohism focuses on social and fair interests, etc. These schools have formed the cornerstone of traditional Chinese culture, each contributing unique values, laying the foundation for the development of Chinese culture, influencing generation after generation of Chinese people, and reflecting the diversity and inclusiveness of Chinese culture. Western culture emphasizes individualism and freedom. In Western culture, freedom is regarded as a supreme value, which is not only reflected in the political field but also integrated into individuals' lives, such as freedom of thought and religious freedom. At the same time, individualism is another flag of Western culture, emphasizing individual independence and autonomy, encouraging people to pursue personal goals and happiness. Such cultural differences between China and the West, such as religious beliefs and values, will inevitably lead to different tourism behaviors of domestic and foreign tourists. Although existing studies have found that religion can inspire individuals' awe emotions, thereby influencing their environmental values, attitudes, and behaviors [29], there is a lack of in-depth research combining the differences between China and the West in this regard. Most existing studies start from the perspective of domestic tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, with less research on the connections and differences in environmentally responsible behavior between Chinese and Western

tourists. Future research directions can explore in more depth how differences in religious beliefs, social etiquette, values, etc., between China and the West affect the relationship between tourists and the environment, as well as between tourists and local residents, and thus influence tourists' environmentally responsible behavior.

4.5. Research Objects Mostly Focus on Tourists as a Single Subject, Need to Compare the Behaviors of Various Stakeholders and Analyze Their Differences and Connections

For a long time, research on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior has mainly focused on the individual level of tourists, paying attention to the impact of individual differences on their environmentally responsible behavior, and emphasizing tourists' own environmental protection awareness and the one-way commitment to the environmental protection of tourist destinations formed based on this, with less attention paid to the main role of tourist destinations in managing tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, especially in guiding tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [43]. Although tourists are the main actors in tourism activities, they are not the only participants. In the entire tourism activity process, stakeholders such as tourist destinations, local community residents, and relevant managers are also important participants. The cultivation of environmentally responsible behavior is not the responsibility of a single group but requires the efforts of the whole society. We cannot focus only on tourists but also need to increase attention to other stakeholders in the research process. The comparative study of the environmentally responsible behavior of tourists and local residents in tourist destinations has also become an important topic of concern for scholars in recent years, mainly including two aspects: one is the difference study of the formation mechanism, and the other is the influence study of the interaction mechanism [54]. The research on the formation mechanism of environmentally responsible behavior between tourists and local residents in tourist destinations is mainly to compare the differences in their driving paths on the same basic theoretical model. Future research can, based on theories such as the Theory of Planned Behavior, Individual Emotion Theory, Motivation Protection Theory, and Place Attachment Theory, compare and analyze the driving factors and action mechanisms of environmentally responsible behavior of different types of tourists and local residents. Regarding the management of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior by tourist destinations, future research can, based on theories such as Social Support Theory and Tourist Destination Social Responsibility Theory, analyze the cultivation and regulation of environmentally responsible behavior of tourists and community residents by tourist destinations, enterprises, and local governments.

4.6. Tourists' Environmentally Responsible Behavior Mostly Treated as a Result Variable, Need to Increase Analysis of Its Influence as an Antecedent Variable

Due to thinking inertia and path dependence, existing studies mostly treat tourists' environmentally responsible behavior as a result variable, using different theoretical frameworks to explain its formation mechanism, while ignoring the analysis of its influence as an antecedent variable [54]. In future research, we can try to use environmentally responsible behavior as an antecedent variable or control variable as much as possible to explore its impact on aspects such as the image of tourist destinations, environmental perception, the attitudes of local community residents, and the implementation of environmental policies.

4.7. Research Contributions Mainly Theoretically Innovative, Need to Classify Tourists in Different Tourism Contexts and Backgrounds to Strengthen Practical Guidance

Existing studies mostly treat tourists, the main body of tourism activities, as a whole to study the influence of different factors on their environmentally responsible behavior and the formation process

of their driving paths. Most studies focus on the macro theoretical contributions of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior without conducting classified and detailed research on tourists of different types and backgrounds, resulting in an overly broad and general scope of research objects, thus making the practical guiding significance less obvious. Because tourists have obvious individual characteristic differences, such as gender, age, education, occupation, economic income, and cultural level, their tourism motivations vary, leading to different tourism choices. For example, Fang Yuanping divided the research objects into two groups: adolescent tourists and adult tourists, and analyzed the differences in the influencing factors and generation paths of their pro-environmental behavior [22]. Secondly, different tourists choose different travel modes, and their travel styles during the tour also vary. Similarly, the mechanisms of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior in different types of scenic areas may also have certain differences [48]. Therefore, when studying tourists' environmentally responsible behavior, we should conduct targeted research according to tourists with different types of backgrounds to make our research more practically guiding. In recent years, some scholars have begun to study tourists' environmentally responsible behavior in different tourism contexts. For example, Yang Zhandong, based on the characteristics of camping tourism being close to nature, studied the formation path of camping tourists' environmentally responsible behavior based on the "Leave No Trace" attitude and put forward suggestions: believing that campers should strengthen their perception of environmental restorability and environmental protection awareness [55]. Dou Lu took urban ecological parks as an example to study the impact of tourists' crowding perception on environmentally responsible behavior, providing an effective path for managers of urban ecological parks to improve tourists' environmentally responsible behavior [27]. Zhu Xuotong studied rural tourists' environmentally responsible behavior from the perspective of ecological civilization [56]. Liu Jia, based on the theoretical framework of "Cognition-Attitude-Behavior," explored the driving mechanism of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior formation in the context of coastal tourism, providing decision-making references for the sustainable development of China's coastal tourism in the new era [57]. Li Wenming took bird-watching tourists in Poyang Lake National Wetland Park as the research object to provide suggestions for scenic area managers to guide and improve tourists' pro-environmental behavior [58]. Tourists are actually a complex social group. If we only treat them as a unified group for macro research, our research may be one-sided. Future research can classify tourists with different backgrounds, and based on characteristics such as different tourism motivations, travel modes, and tour time spans, compare and analyze the differences in environmentally responsible behavior of different types of tourists and their influencing factors.

4.8. Research Results Mostly Provide Guidance for Tourist Destinations, Lacking Behavioral Guidance for Tourists Themselves and Local Residents

Existing studies mostly only put forward suggestions for the management of tourist destinations, with fewer suggestions for the behavioral norms of tourists and local residents. Cai Libin believes that although the rules and regulations of scenic areas will compulsively regulate tourists' behaviors in the environment through "hard measures" such as punishment, they often do not make tourists spontaneously form environmental protection awareness from the heart. At the same time, mandatory systems may become mere formalities due to insufficient popularization or supervision, and may even arouse tourists' resentment. However, the "soft emotions" towards the environment rooted in tourists' hearts will inspire tourists' awareness and sense of responsibility to protect the environment, and actively regulate their own behaviors and even assist destination managers in maintaining the environment. The academic community's attention to tourists' environmentally responsible behavior mostly originates from the various uncivilized phenomena of tourists at tourist destinations. As the main actors in tourism activities, tourists' behaviors are influenced by a combination of multiple factors, such as tourists' gender, age, education, values, the management level of tourist destinations, and the attitudes of local residents. At the same time, local residents, as an important part of the tourism process, their own social responsibility awareness levels and behaviors will also affect the

image of tourist destinations and bring normative or indulgent demonstration effects to tourists. Tourists' adoption of environmentally responsible behavior during tourism is actually a complex social phenomenon. If we only start from the perspective of improving the management level of tourist destinations without guiding and regulating the behaviors of tourists themselves and local community residents, it will be difficult to cultivate and consciously implement environmentally responsible behavior among various stakeholders. Future research directions can start from the perspectives of stakeholders such as tourists and community residents, study the driving paths of environmentally responsible behavior of different behavioral subjects, and put forward targeted suggestions. For example, some scholars divided the research objects into two groups: adolescent tourists and adult tourists, and finally gave guidance suggestions from the perspectives of tourists and management departments.

5. SUMMARY

This paper systematically combs the domestic literature on tourists' environmentally responsible behavior from 2017 to 2023, summarizes the existing literature from aspects such as conceptual connotations, measurement scales, influencing factors, and theoretical perspectives, and reviews and prospects the expansion space for future research in terms of index systems, research methods, research perspectives, and policy innovation. In the new era background, how tourists recognize environmentally responsible behavior, reflect on the environmental impact of their own behaviors, and spontaneously improve their environmentally responsible behavior are issues worthy of key attention in future research. Although rational factors have a good explanatory power for environmentally responsible behavior in a certain period, this rational research path also has great limitations [58]. Therefore, researchers have begun to seek new research paths from disciplines or fields such as psychology, sociology, and emotional geography, i.e., the emotional path. In recent studies on environmentally responsible behavior, more and more attention has been paid to the role of emotions, with variables such as social responsibility, place attachment, and emotional perception successively entering the research framework of environmentally responsible behavior. The exploration of the relationship between tourists' place attachment and their environmentally responsible behavior reflects a new trend in the research path of tourists' positive environmental behavior in tourism geography, shifting from rational to emotional, and also reflects a new direction in the management of tourists' environmental behavior in the industry, from rational management to emotional management [58]. In addition, excellent traditional cultural values, religious culture, social etiquette, etc., also play an important role in shaping tourists' environmentally responsible behavior. Future research needs to deeply excavate the ecological wisdom of traditional culture from typical cases, apply research results that conform to China's national conditions and local culture to environmental protection policy formulation and environmental education implementation, and gradually guide and cultivate the formation and implementation of tourists' environmentally responsible behavior based on tourists' personal cultural perception and identity.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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