Article

Segmentation by Motivations in Sustainable Coastal and Marine Destinations: A Study in Jacó, Costa Rica

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Abstract: Coastal and marine tourism offers a wide variety of activities that can be sustainable due to the characteristics of its natural and cultural attractions. The present study was carried out in Jacó, a sustainable destination with coastal and marine characteristics of Costa Rica, with the objectives (i) of identifying the motivations of tourist demand; (ii) segmenting the tourist demand; (iii) establishing a relationship between the segments and sociodemographic aspects; and (iv) determining the relationship between segments of demand and satisfaction and loyalty. This quantitative study collected a sample of 304 valid questionnaires on-site in June 2021. For data analysis, a factorial analysis and non-hierarchical K-means segmentation were performed. The results show five motivational dimensions: "Learning and coastal experience"; "Nature"; "Rest and safety"; "Water sports"; and "Nightlife"—and three segments of tourists: "Multiple motives"; "Passive tourists"; and "Eco-Coastal". The "Eco-Coastal" segment was the most satisfied in terms of enjoying the coastal nature of the destination. The "Multiple motives" group showed the highest intentions to return, recommend, and spread positive word of mouth. These findings will serve as management guides for coastal and marine destination managers and will help adapt these tourism sites to the new demand instigated by the global health crisis.

Keywords: motivation; segmentation; coastal; marine; tourism; sustainable

1. Introduction

In the year 2020, the COVID-19 virus, in a short period, caused an unprecedented global crisis with huge impacts on our political, social, and economic systems [1,2].

Globally, the pandemic has negatively impacted tourism [3–5]. On 28 January 2021, the World Tourism Organization UNWTO [6] reported 2020 as the worst year in the history of world tourism, with a 74% drop in international arrivals.

For Gössling et al. [5], this COVID-19 crisis poses the opportunity to reconsider a globally sustainable tourism transformation since, after the pandemic, people will seek adventure travel, natural spaces, and safe and quality experiences [7].

It is important to consider that the effective development of nature-based tourism can be beneficial for both the environment and people [8]. Now, the transformative possibilities of the COVID-19 pandemic for tourism and its sustainability have been mentioned in the literature when looking at the implications of recent pandemics for tourism, and the potential social and economic transformations, as some destinations will undoubtedly

reconsider the nature of their tourism industry and operate on more local and sustainable forms of tourism [9].

In this sense, it is appropriate to establish approaches that ensure an optimal balance between the quality of life and the environmental load that the planet can bear, which is even mentioned as a potential element to combat pandemics such as COVID-19. This implies identifying the critical points of environmental sustainability [10] and, finally, showing how useful sustainability indicators can be developed and validated in the tourism sector. It is worth emphasizing that the development of sustainable tourism is not easy to measure without breaking it down into small aspects represented by indicators [11].

Although coastal tourism has faced enormous challenges to balance environmental problems with tourism activities [12], coastal and marine destinations now have an excellent opportunity to adapt their tourist spaces using biosafety tourism protocols to make them suitable for visitors. This type of tourism includes a wide variety of activities, such as sports, wellness stays, nature and wildlife observation, and volunteering and education activities [13]. Likewise, coastal tourism can be understood as a part of marine tourism since both are closely linked, considering that the coastal zone is the point of departure and return for marine activities such as sailing, diving, cruises, deep-sea fishing, and whale watching [14]. Coastal and marine destinations can also offer tourists visits to local communities, water sports, marine flora and fauna sightings, ecotourism, and local cuisine [15].

The study of motivations has been considered crucial for the development of coastal and marine destinations, and is a critical factor in visitors' decision-making process [16]. Tourist motivations are a set of needs that move people to become involved in tourist activities [17]. The push motives are those forces that make the tourist travel; in contrast, the pull motives are related to the attraction power of the visited destination due to its attributes and attractions [18]. These motives include tourists' reasons for traveling, their wishes, what they want to fulfill from the trip, and why they choose a specific destination [19].

On the other hand, segmentation is the primary method for deciding which consumer groups to target, determining how to use resources more efficiently, and evaluating different competitive strategies [20]. In this way, satisfaction and loyalty have been considered essential factors in tourist behavior. Satisfaction relates to the choice of the destination, the consumption of products or services, and the decision to return [21,22], and loyalty is the tourist's intention to repeat the visit, characterized by positive word of mouth and the feeling of satisfaction for the experience they had [23].

In this scenario, Jacó is one of the most important coastal and marine destinations in Costa Rica, characterized by its contribution to the local economy and the country's tourism activity. Jacó is located 15 km from the Carara National Park, recognized for its exuberant fauna and dense tropical jungle with several kilometers of trails open to visitors. Surfing and boogie boarding are the main activities in this coastal area due to the consistent wave conditions, allowing it to host international competitive tournaments. In addition, Jacó is considered a friendly city for national and foreign travelers, with international cuisine and aquatic and maritime activities of all kinds.

In this context, to date, there has been no segmentation of the demand by motivations in sustainable coastal and marine destinations with tourist attractions of nature and culture. In light of this research gap, this study was conducted in Jacó, a sustainable coastal and marine destination in Costa Rica, with the objectives of (i) identifying the motivations behind tourism demand; (ii) segmenting tourism demand; (iii) establishing the relationship between segments and sociodemographic aspects; and (iv) determining the relationship between segment demand and satisfaction and loyalty.

This article is structured, after this introduction, in a second section where a review of the scientific literature is carried out; a third section where the methodology used in the research is presented, a fourth section which presents the results of the study, and a fifth section that shows the discussion. The article ends with the conclusions and the bibliographical references used.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Tourist Demand Motivations in Coastal and Marine Destinations

Tourist motivation is considered a factor that rationalizes tourist behavior [24]. In this sense, Meng et al. [25] define tourist motivations as a mixture of the needs and desires of tourists that shape their tendency to enjoy a tourist attraction or destination.

Coastal tourist cities offer great ecological, cultural, and economic benefits that make them especially attractive [26]. Therefore, tourism has become a relevant activity with considerable financial gain for many coastal cities [27]. The literature, for example, has mentioned the relevance of guiding promotional activities in the direction of diversifying the tourist offer, instead of promoting the specific characteristics of the sites [28]. It has been perceived as an industry that helps the regional economy since a significant number of tourists visit the coastal areas [29].

In this regard, research on motivations in coastal and marine destinations can be found from various perspectives. First, some studies have focused on push and pull motivations. Jeong [30], for example, identified escape and novelty as push motivations and active marine activities and static marine activities as the pull motivations in Seoul, South Korea. He stated that active marine activities should attract more tourists with novelty push motivations, whereas static marine activities would suit tourists with escape push motivations. Similarly, Sastre and Phakdee-Auksorn [31] studied the travel patterns of British tourists visiting Phuket, Thailand. They found that the tourists' push motivations were to have fun, rest and relax, and escape from daily routine, and the environment. In contrast, the main pull motivations were natural sceneries and landscapes, beaches and hospitality, and the friendliness of the people. With a similar approach, but only studying push motivations, Güzel et al. [32] established six motivational factors: curiosity, relaxation, escape, sport and active life, extravagance, and travel bragging in Antalya, on the Mediterranean coast of southwestern Turkey.

Other research has focused on motivations in coastal and marine destinations without the push and pull factors. For example, Van Der Merwe et al. [33] conducted a study at five marine sites in South Africa and identified four motivational factors. The results reported the dimensions of escape and relaxation as travel motives, consistent with other investigations; however, time usage and personal attachment were unique factors identified in this study. Other authors have detailed tourist motivations to visit the destinations' attractions. For example, Rid et al. [34] performed a motivational segmentation in Gambia and found four motivational dimensions: heritage and nature; authentic rural experience; learning; and sun and beach.

Similarly, in a study in the coastal city of Salinas in Ecuador, Carvache-Franco et al. [15] established six motivational dimensions: authentic coastal experience; heritage and nature; learning; novelty and social interaction; physical activities; and sun and beach. These authors asserted that all dimensions revolve around the sun and the beach, nature, culture, and social aspects. Moreover, Yao et al. [35] found novelty, leisure and sport, multiple experiences, and self-realization as the four primary motivations of yachting tourists in China. Finally, Le Corre et al. [36] identified enjoying nature, escaping personal and social pressures, achievement/stimulation, and physical fitness as the motivational aspects of recreational users of French coastal and marine protected areas.

Although various motivations were found in the previous studies of coastal and marine destinations, only some appeared recurrently: sun and beach, culture, escape, novelty, and social aspects. However, until now, the motivations during a pandemic in coastal and marine destinations have not been analyzed. Due to this lack of information our first research question arises: RQ1: What are the tourist motivations in sustainable coastal and marine destinations?

2.2. Demand Segmentation in Coastal and Marine Destinations

The segmentation strategy can be used to identify specific tourist groups, offer better tourist packages, increase benefits for destinations, and develop more efficient tourism

policies or marketing planning [37]. For these reasons, market segmentation has been applied according to the characteristics of each destination, whether cultural, ecotourism, gastronomic, urban, or coastal.

In coastal and marine destinations, several findings have been reported on demand segmentation. For example, Rudež et al. [38] identified four tourist segments in Portorož: (i) friends-oriented visitors, interested in walking, eating, enjoying the nightlife, and lying by the pool; (ii) wellness visitors, primarily engaged in water sports, going to spas, events, playing tennis and golf, and gambling in the casinos; (iii) curious-passive visitors, involved in going for walks, eating out, visiting historical sites, enjoying the nightlife, and shopping; and (iv) multifarious visitors, driven by going for walks, going out in the evening, eating, and visiting historical and cultural places. Similarly, Rid et al. [34] segmented tourists by motivations and found four groups: (i) heritage and nature seekers, highly motivated to visit natural and cultural sites; (ii) multiple-experience seekers, with no attraction toward the sun and beach activities but to heritage/nature and authentic rural experiences, learning local dances and languages; (iii) multiple-experience and beach seekers, with various types of motivations, including the sun and beach nature activities, such as bird watching and fishing; however, were only of moderate interest; (iv) finally, the sun and beach seekers were mainly interested by the sun and beach and, compared to other groups, attributed the greatest importance to the sun and beach and swimming tourism.

Furthermore, Sung et al. [39] segmented foreign tourists in Taiwan by their motivations into five groups: scenery/knowledge seekers; accessibility/expenditure seekers; relaxation/relation seekers; novelty/experience seekers; and sport/service seekers. Albayrak et al. [40] also conducted a cluster analysis in Antalya, Turkey, and found four groups with diverse motivations to engage in diving, namely, enthusiastic positivists, youthful hedonists, amateur explorers, and single regulars.

Other authors have used the recreation experience to segment visitors in coastal and marine destinations, as was the case of Lee et al. [41] in Liuqiu Island in Taiwan, who divided tourists into four groups: (i) multi-experience recreationists, who enjoy all the constructs of recreation experiences; (ii) aestheticists, with the highest scores for experiential aesthetics and the lowest in experiential learning; (iii) hedonists, with lower recreation experience levels than the other three groups; and (iv) knowledge seekers, with more aesthetic appreciation and learning experiences. Likewise, on the west coast of Ireland, Pafi et al. [42] carried out an experiential market segmentation based on community experiences of coastal landscapes. They found four segments with significant alignment to communities around sustainable, ethical, and locally sensitized forms of tourism: blue health seekers, nature escapers, pristine seekers, and heritage explorers.

This variety of segments revolving around the sun, the beach, nature, and culture were classified by Onofri and Nunes [43] into only two groups in a worldwide coastal and marine study. These authors argued that the only tourist segments are the 'greens', who choose a coastal destination because they strongly prefer cultural and natural environments, and the 'beach lovers', with a marked tendency for the beach. Likewise, Carvache-Franco et al. [44], in Montañita, Ecuador, found four types of foreign visitors: (i) 'the eco-coastal tourists', motivated by the climate, the sand, and the contact with nature; (ii) the "indifferent tourists', with low scores in almost all the motivation criteria and not a clear relation to any of the three identified dimensions; (iii) the 'water sports tourists', drawn by surfing and enjoying the sun and the beach; finally, (iv) 'sun and beach tourists', mainly driven by rest and relaxation along with sun and beach activities.

Current studies show that the groups can vary according to the characteristics of the destination and confirm the existence of segments related to the sun and the beach, nature, culture, and even multi-motive groups. For instance, Le Corre et al. [36] found four segments: solitaries, anti-stress performers, socializers, and explorers. Furthermore, Carvache-Franco et al. [45], in the Galápagos Islands, Ecuador, identified two different groups of visitors. The first, 'multiple motives' tourists, had high scores in all the motivational variables, including sun and beach. The second group, 'eco-coastal' tourists, wanted

to experience marine life and national parks, discover new things and learn about their flora and fauna. Carvache-Franco et al. [15] also found two segments in Salinas, Ecuador: 'beach lovers', made up of tourists driven to the sun and the beach and rest and related to the sun and beach motivational dimension; and 'multiple coastal motives', with high scores in all motivational variables, including nature.

These previous works show the relevance of market segmentation in the coastal and marine destinations that offer a wide range of activities, such as beaches for recreation, navigable tours, and visits to local communities, natural, and cultural sites. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the demand and improve the products and services at the current time. Although there are multiple criteria to segment the market, frequent clusters such as sun and beach, multiple motives, and eco-coastal motivations have been identified in previous research. However, in coastal and marine sustainable destinations, the literature is still scarce. This is why our second and third research questions arise: RQ2: What are the demand segments in sustainable coastal and marine destinations? and RQ3: What is the relationship between segments and sociodemographic aspects in sustainable coastal and marine destinations?

2.3. Satisfaction and Loyalty in Coastal and Marine Tourism

Among the main findings on the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty in coastal and marine tourism, Pestana et al. [46] stands out with a study in Portugal, which concluded that satisfaction could mediate the relationship between motivations, emotions, and behavioral intentions. Moreover, on Kien Island, Giang, Vietnam, Huyen and Nghi [47] found that novelty positively impacts visitor loyalty in marine and coastal adventure tourism. Finally, in Phuket, Thailand, Sangpikul [48] identified beach attractions and local communities' hospitality as crucial factors of the tourism experience that influence visitor loyalty to island destinations.

From another perspective, Goffi et al. [49] established that sustainability affects large-scale coastal package tourists' satisfaction and return intention. In a sun and beach destination, Alipour et al. [50] identified that a destination image positively impacts tourists' attitudes since visit intentions and word of mouth were enhanced by improving visitors' attitudes towards 3S tourism. In another study, Prayag [51] highlighted three aspects that predict tourists' revisit intentions to a destination: scenery and natural attractions, reputation, and friendliness of people. Concerning the relationship between the segments and satisfaction and loyalty, for Carvache-Franco et al. [15], tourists with higher motivation levels also have higher levels of satisfaction and intentions to return since their study identified the multiple motive visitors as the most satisfied in a coastal and marine destination. In another investigation, Carvache-Franco et al. [45] stated that the multiple motive segment has the highest intention to return, recommend, and spread positive word of mouth about the destination compared to the other groups.

In summary, several previous findings have tried to relate motivations with loyalty in coastal cities. Still, to date, no similar results have established the relationship between the segments and the satisfaction and loyalty in these sustainable, nature-based destinations. However, the most recurrent in the literature have been: novelty, social aspects, sun, and beach. Therefore, our third research question arises. RQ4: What is the relationship between demand segments and satisfaction and loyalty in sustainable coastal and marine destinations?

3. Methodology

3.1. Study Area

Costa Rica is a country of tourist relevance in Central America. It offers paradisiacal Caribbean and Pacific coast beaches, making it a popular destination for coastal tourism and ecotourism. This country was recognized as the Best International Health Destination in the first edition of the Healthy Places 2021 awards granted by the prestigious Men's Health magazine in its Spanish version and aimed at the male public interested in destinations to enjoy a summer of health and well-being, always in search of a healthy lifestyle [52].

Additionally, Costa Rica was awarded the "Best Destination for Responsible Tourism" at the WTM Responsible Tourism awards Latin America, held virtually from Sao Paulo, Brazil [53].

Specifically, the present study was carried out on the coast of Jacó, a tourist beach city on the central pacific coast of Costa Rica and a quintessential surfing arena in this Central American country. Jacó has a territorial extension that includes 126,000 acres of ocean and 1700 acres of land. It is located less than two hours from the city of San José, the capital of the country. This coastal destination is one of the most preferred by national and foreign visitors due to its exotic beach, tropical climate, and vibrant nightlife.

Jacó is an ecological area of Costa Rica with a lush mountainous shoreline. The region is home to the surf town of Jacó, Carara Biological Reserve, and the important Manuel Antonio National Park, which harbors hundreds of native and exotic species of wildlife and foliage. In addition, its beach offers accessibility through sustainability with a 63 m-long ramp built from recycled plastic, allowing wheelchair access to the shore. This earned Jacó the title of the first beach in Central America with universal access in 2019.

Jacó's adventurous atmosphere makes surfing one of its primary activities. Nonetheless, horseback riding, offshore fishing, rafting, tours of various types, kayaking, riding quadricycles, boats, and catamarans are among the multiple things to do in this pleasant town. In this coastal destination, foreign investment in beach hotels has contributed to the development of tourist attractions. (Figure 1).
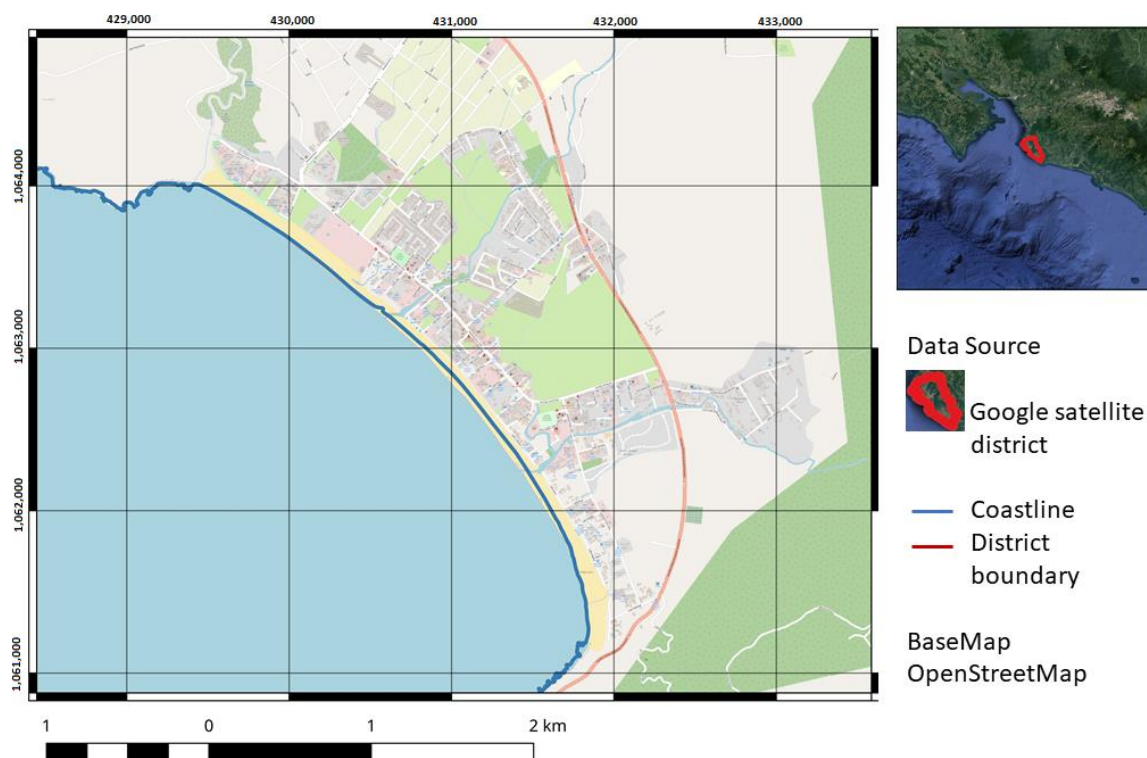
Figure 1. Geographic location of Jacó, Costa Rica.

3.2. Survey, Data Collection, and Analysis

The objectives of this study in a sustainable coastal and marine destination were: (i) identifying the motivations behind tourism demand; (ii) segmenting tourism demand; (iii) establish the relationship between segments and sociodemographic aspects; and (iv) determine the relationship between segment demand and satisfaction and loyalty. To achieve these research objectives, the methodology was based on fieldwork data, using a questionnaire based on previous studies about motivations and segmentation in coastal and marine destinations. The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions divided into four sections. First, the section on sociodemographic aspects and visitor characteristics included

closed questions adapted from the study by Lee et al. [41]. Second, the motivation to travel was measured through 25 items from the research by Rid et al. [34] and Carvache-Franco et al. [15]. These questions were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important). Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the final motivation scale was 0.93, which indicates good internal consistency between the elements of the scale. Third, satisfaction and loyalty were measured with questions adapted from the study by Kim and Park [54]. A five-point Likert scale was used for the satisfaction variable, ranging from 1 (not very satisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). The loyalty section also used a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (unlikely) to 5 (very likely).

The fieldwork was carried out in the coastal and marine destination of Jacó in Costa Rica during the weekends of June 2021. The population consisted of tourists over 18 years of age, both nationals and foreigners. Convenience sampling was used according to the availability of tourists to answer the questionnaires. In addition, the representativeness of the tourist population was taken into account to ensure that the sample was similar to the population. Thus, the surveys were administered to the groups of tourists with the greatest presence in this coastal city. However, to a lesser extent, surveys were also distributed to groups of tourists with less presence on the Jacó coast.

The surveys were administered while the tourists were engaged in recreational or rest activities by teachers and previously trained students of the Tecnológico de Costa Rica. A 10-survey pilot test was carried out during the middle of the first day of the study to find errors and improve the survey. Once the questionnaire was validated, the surveys were self-administered. Three hundred and three valid questionnaires were gathered as the sample size. To obtain the most reliable results, the researchers considered a margin of error of ±5.6%, a confidence level of 95%, and a variance of 50%.

A factorial analysis was performed as a statistical analysis technique to reduce and interpret the motivational variables. The varimax rotation method was used to minimize the number of variables with high factor loadings. Likewise, the Kaiser criterion was implemented to obtain the number of factors, only retaining factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. The KMO index (Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin) and Bartlett's test of sphericity were also used to determine whether the model was adequate.

Additionally, a non-hierarchical K-means segmentation was used to find the different segments according to the motivational variables. Moreover, the Kruskal–Wallis H test confirmed the differences in the means between the groups, and the Mann–Whitney U test was used to identify where these differences were between the means. Likewise, the Chi-square test was used to analyze the relationships between the segments and other variables such as sociodemographic variables, satisfaction, and loyalty. Once the data were collected, it was organized, tabulated, and analyzed with the SPSS Version 25 program.

4. Results

4.1. Sociodemographic Aspects of the Samples

According to Table 1, the sample consisted of national (15.2%) and international tourists (84.4%). The largest group of visitors came from North America (77.6%), followed by other continents such as Africa, Oceania, and Asia (14.2%). In addition, most tourists were from the United States (66.3%) and Costa Rica (13.5%). Among the population, 52.1% were women and 47.9% were men. Furthermore, most visitors were single (57.4%) and married (29.4%). The majority were between 21 and 30 years old (49.8), followed by those between 31 and 40 years old (17.8%). University students were the largest group (62.4%), followed by tourists with secondary education (24.4%). In addition, most of the tourists were private employees (43.9%) and students (23.1%). For most of them, it was the first time visiting this destination (53.8%), followed by those visiting it for the second time (29.7%). Likewise, they fancied traveling with friends (33.3%) and family (30.4%). The majority of visitors spent 4 days and 3 nights (39.3%) and 3 days and 2 nights (24.8%) at Jacó. Most of these tourists' monthly income was less than USD 500 (22.1%), and between USD 1500 and USD 1999 (15.2%). Finally, the biggest percentage of visitors wanted to spend between

USD 100 and USD 149 per day (31.7%), followed by those who hoped to spend between USD 150 and USD 199 per day (24.8%).

Table 1. Factor analysis of motivations.

Variable	Component					Factors
	1	2	3	4	5	
Interest in myths and legends	0.850					Learning and coastal experience
Interest in experiencing historical attractions	0.748					
Interest in local languages	0.741					
Interest in experiencing culture and traditions	0.718					
Interest in learning traditional dances	0.711					
Interest in staying among the coastal population	0.683					
Interest in typical coastal gastronomy	0.665					
Interest in the history and culture of Jacó	0.634					
Interest in sharing experiences with the local population	0.622					
Interest in the lifestyle of the coastal population	0.600					
Interest in local crafts	0.567					
Wanting to visit family and friends	0.556					
Recognizing the importance of tourism in natural spaces		0.810				Nature
Recognizing the importance of marine coastal tourism		0.772				
Experiencing marine wildlife sites and national parks		0.701				
Interest in experiences related to the coastal landscape		0.660				
Knowing the flora and fauna		0.529				
Interest in their tourist attractions		0.528				
Interest in rest and relaxation			0.795			Rest and safety
Interest in safety and protection			0.757			
Interest in the environmental quality of air, water, and soil			0.708			
Interest in the importance of water sports				0.774		Water sports
Wanting to see things I don't normally see				0.705		
Interest in the importance of swimming				0.648		
Interest in the nightlife					0.847	Nightlife
Cronbach's alpha	0.923	0.877	0.800	0.762	-	
Eigenvalue	10,460	2734	1474	1198	1004	
Variance explained (%)	41,838	10,937	5897	4793	4015	
Cumulative variance explained (%)	41,838	52,775	58,672	63,465	67,479	

4.2. Motivation of the Demand—Factor Analysis

A factor analysis was performed to reduce the variables into a smaller number of factors and improve the interpretation of the results. The Varimax rotation method was used to order the factors with very high or low factor loadings. The Kaiser criterion was implemented to find the number of factors, retaining only factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. Thus, five factors were obtained, representing 67.48% of the total variance. The Cronbach's Alpha of the factors varied from 0.92 to 0.76, with values greater than 0.70, indicating a good relationship between the variables that made up each factor. Factor loadings ranged from 0.53 to 0.85, above the critical value of 0.50 suggested by Hair et al. [55]. The KMO index was 0.93 (very close to 1), showing a high relationship between the variables; therefore, the proposed factor analysis was appropriate and robust. In addition, Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 4679.40$, $p = 0.000$), so the use of factor analysis was appropriate. Table 1 shows the results.

According to Table 1, the first factor obtained was "Learning and coastal experience", which was related to learning and experiencing historical attractions, culture, traditions, myths, and legends, sharing experiences with the coastal population, and learning about their lifestyles. This factor was the most salient, with 41.84% of the total variance. The second factor, called "Nature", was related to the flora, fauna, and experiences with landscapes, marine fauna, and national parks. It represented 10.94% of the total variance. The third factor, "Rest and safety", was related to rest, relaxation, safety, and environmental quality. It included 5.9% of the total variance. The fourth factor, called "Water sports", was related to water sports and swimming. This factor represented 4.79% of the total variance. Finally, the fifth factor, "Nightlife", was related to the destination's nightlife. This factor represented 4.02% of the total variance. These results answer our first research question, "RQ1: What are the tourist motivations in sustainable coastal and marine destinations?" since the motivations found were "Learning and coastal experience", "Nature", "Rest and safety", "Water sports", and "Nightlife".

4.3. Segmentation

A non-hierarchical K-means conglomerate analysis was made under the criterion of maximizing the variance between segments and minimizing the variance within each cluster. The best solution meeting the criteria established three conglomerates. In addition, the Kruskal–Wallis H test was used to find significant differences between the clusters related to the motivational variables. Likewise, the Mann–Whitney U index was applied to detect significant differences between the segments. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2. Segmentation by motivations.

Variable	Multiple Motives	Passive Tourists	Eco-Coastal	Kruskal–Wallis H	Mann–Whitney U
Learning and coastal experience	3.8	1.7	2.8	157,190	All
Nature	4.4	2.9	3.9	47,798	All except 1
Rest and safety	4.6	3.6	4.0	32,313	All
Water sports	4.3	2.9	3.7	21,135	There except 2–3
Nightlife	3.5	3.5	3.5	None	None

According to Table 2, the first segment, called "Multiple motives", grouped simultaneously tourists with high scores in all the motivational dimensions. These visitors travel to the destination to enjoy all the attractions and activities on the site. This group represented 43.05% of the sample. The second segment, named "Passive tourists", showed low scores in all the motivational dimensions, which means they are not very motivated to enjoy the attractions and carry out activities. This group included 13.25% of the sample, being the least representative. Finally, the third segment, called "Eco-Coastal", obtained high scores only for coastal, nature, and rest motivations. This segment represented 43.70% of the sample. In addition, all the groups had significant differences in the motivational variables, except in the "nightlife" variable, which means that all the segments have the same level of motivation to enjoy nightlife at the destination. Therefore, the second research question, "RQ2: What are the demand segments in sustainable coastal and marine destinations?" has been responded with three segments, "Multiple motives", "Passive tourists", and "Eco-coastal".

4.4. Segmentation by Sociodemographic Variables

Pearson's Chi-square test was used to analyze the relationship between the three segments and the significant sociodemographic variables. Variables that were not significant in the study, such as age, were not included. Table 3 shows the results.

Table 3. Segmentation by sociodemographic variables.

Variable		Multiple Reasons (%)	Passive Tourist (%)	Eco-Coastal (%)	Overall (%)	χ^2
Nationality	National	17.7	27.5	9.1	15.2	9128; $p < 0.05$
	Foreign	82.3	72.5	90.9	84.8	
Origin	North America	73.1	60.0	87.9	77.8	19,538; $p < 0.05$
	Europe			1.5	1.7	
	South America	7.7	12.5	3.0	6.3	
	rest of the world	16.9	27.5	7.6	14.2	
Professional activity	Student	10.0	42.5	30.3	23.2	37,073; $p < 0.05$
	Researcher/scientist	0.8			0.3	
	Entrepreneur/business Owner	10.0	10.0	11.4	10.6	
	Employee private	56.2	35.0	34.1	43.7	
	Employee public	11.5	5.0	6.8	8.6	
	Retired	1.5	2.5	4.5	3.0	
	Unemployed	3.8	5.0	7.6	5.6	
	Others	6.2		5.3	5.0	
Monthly income	Less than USD 500	10.8	32.5	30.3	22.2	21,104; $p < 0.05$
	From USD 500 to USD 999	12.3	12.5	12.9	12.6	
	From USD 1000 to USD 1499	16.9	12.5	14.4	15.2	
	From USD 1500 to USD 1999	20.0	15.0	10.6	15.2	
	From USD 2000 to USD 2499	11.5	10.0	8.3	9.9	
	From USD 2500 to 2999	13.8	10.0	9.1	11.3	
	More than USD 3000	14.6	7.5	14.4	13.6	
Average daily expense	less than USD 100	11.5	30.0	16.7	16.2	55,360; $p < 0.05$
	USD 100–USD 149	31.5	20.0	35.6	31.8	
	USD 150–USD 199	33.1	10.0	21.2	24.8	
	USD 200–USD 249	13.8		14.4	12.3	
	USD 250–USD 299	5.4	2.5	3.8	4.3	
	More than USD 300	4.6	37.5	8.3	10.6	

According to Table 3, the "Eco-Coastal" segment was mainly made up of foreign visitors and the "Passive Tourists" of domestic travelers. Most of the "Eco-Coastal" visitors were from North America, while most "Passive tourists" belonged to the rest of the world. Furthermore, the "Multiple motives" group mostly comprised private employees, whereas most "Passive tourists" were students. Both the "Multiple motives" and "Eco-Coastal" segments had the highest levels of income (more than USD 3000) and spent the most at the destination, ranging between USD 100 and USD 199. However, a smaller percentage of the "Passive tourists" spent more than USD 300 a day. Hence, these results answer the third research question, "RQ3: What is the relationship between segments and sociodemographic aspects in sustainable coastal and marine destinations?"

4.5. Relationship between Tourist Segments and Satisfaction and Return Intentions

Pearson's Chi-square test was used to analyze the significant difference between the three segments and the variables' satisfaction and intentions to return, recommend, and spread positive word of mouth. Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4. Segmentation with the variables of satisfaction and loyalty.

Variable	Multiple Motives	Passive Tourists	Eco-Coastal	χ^2
Overall satisfaction	4.37	3.48	4.87	91,039; $p < 0.05$
Return intentions	4.08	3.03	3.77	62,495; $p < 0.05$
Intentions to recommend this destination	4.25	3.63	3.80	40,216; $p < 0.05$
Intentions to spread positive word of mouth about Jacó	4.45	3.93	3.99	43.242; $p < 0.05$

According to Table 4, the "Eco-Coastal" segment had the highest level of satisfaction, which means that this group enjoys the coast and nature that the destination offers.

On the other hand, the "Multiple motives" was the segment with the highest intentions to return, recommend, and spread positive word of mouth. Therefore, this segment plays a vital role in securing economic and social benefits for Jacó. These findings answer our fourth research question, "RQ4: What is the relationship between demand segments and satisfaction and loyalty in sustainable coastal and marine destinations?" since the "Multiple motives" segment was the most satisfied, and the "Eco-Coastal" group showed the highest loyalty in this destinations, results that suggest that tourists most attracted by nature and culture are those who tend to return to these coastal and marine destinations.

5. Discussion

The first objective of this research was to identify the tourist demand motivations in a sustainable coastal and marine destination to answer RQ1. The results show five dimensions: "Learning and coastal experience", "Nature", "Rest and safety", "Water sports", and "Nightlife". These results are consistent with those previously reported in the literature. The first dimension, "Learning and coastal experience", was similarly found by Carvache-Franco et al. [15] under the name authentic coastal experience and by Yao et al. [35] as multiple experiences. Other academics, such as Rid et al. [34], Sastre and Phakdee-Auksorn [31], Carvache-Franco et al. [15], and Le Corre et al. [36] have identified the "Nature" dimension as heritage and nature, natural sceneries and landscapes, heritage and nature, and enjoying nature, respectively.

Furthermore, the "Rest and safety" dimension was previously found as rest and relaxation by Sastre and Phakdee-Auksorn [31] and relaxation by Güzel et al. [32]. Moreover, the "Water sports" dimension was described as active marine activities by Jeong [30], sport and active life by Güzel et al. [32], physical activities by Carvache-Franco et al. [15], and physical fitness by Le Corre et al. [36]. It should be noted that the last dimension, "Nightlife", has not previously been reported in coastal and marine destinations. Therefore, the main contribution of this study to the academic literature is to have identified five dimensions that had not been seen together before and to have found the "Nightlife" dimension in a coastal and marine destination with nature-based attractions. In other words, the motivations to visit these destinations revolve around "Nature", "Learning and coastal experience", and "Nightlife". Another contribution is to have established a dimension called "Rest and safety", which shows that tourists seek safety in coastal and marine destinations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In other words, travelers will look for natural sites and will look for biosafety standards to carry out recreational activities. What has changed in relation to the current studies is that the travelers count security among their motivations.

As a second objective, this study aimed to segment the demand in this sustainable coastal and marine destination with attractions based on nature and culture to respond to RQ2. The findings show three differentiated demand segments: "Multiple motives", with high scores in all the motivational variables; "Passive tourists", with low scores in all the motivational dimensions; and the "Eco-Coastal" group, highly motivated only for the coastal nature and rest. These findings are consistent with the previous literature. First, regarding the "Multiple motives" segment, similar groups were found by Rudež et al. [38], who called them multifarious visitors; by Rid et al. [34], who named them multiple-experience seekers; by Lee et al. [41], who labeled them as multi-experience recreationists; and finally, by Carvache-Franco et al. [45], who found them under the same name "Multiple motives". The second group, "Passive tourists", was previously identified as curious-passive visitors by Rudež et al. [38]; solitaries by Le Corre et al. [36]; relaxation seekers by Sung et al. [39]; and indifferent tourists by Carvache-Franco et al. [44]. Finally, the "Eco-Coastal" segment has been described under different names, as multiple-experience beach seekers by Rid et al. [34]; greens by Onofri and Nunes [43]; eco-coastal by Carvache-Franco et al. [44,45]; and explorers by Le Corre et al. [36]. This study's contribution to the academic literature is to have identified three segments with differentiated characteristics in a coastal and marine destination full of nature-based attractions.

As a third objective, this study sought to determine the relationship between segments and sociodemographic aspects in a sustainable coastal and marine destination to respond to RQ3. The findings show that the "Eco-Coastal" group was primarily composed of foreign visitors, mainly North Americans. The "Multiple motives" segment included mostly private employees, while the "Passive tourists" were primarily students. The "Multiple motives" and "Eco-Coastal" groups had the highest monthly income levels (over USD 3000), and both spent between USD 100 and USD 199 per day. These results contribute to the academic literature by revealing several significant relationships between these segments and sociodemographic aspects, a connection that has been scarcely researched.

As a final objective, this study sought to determine the relationship between demand segments and satisfaction and loyalty in a sustainable coastal and marine destination to respond to RQ4. The results show that the "Eco-Coastal" group was the segment with the highest level of satisfaction, since this group enjoys the coast and nature of the destination. In addition, the "Multiple Motives" segment had the highest intentions to return, recommend and spread positive word of mouth; therefore, this segment will be crucial for the destination and the community to gain social and economic benefits. In this regard, few previous findings have addressed the relationship between demand segments and loyalty. Among them, Carvache-Franco et al. [15] identified the "Multiple motives" segment as the most loyal and satisfied. Therefore, the main contribution of this study to the literature is to have determined that it is possible to find satisfied coastal tourists in these nature-based destinations. This may be because this segment of tourists fancies getting involved in beach, coast, and water sports activities. Another contribution of this research is to have established that "Multiple Motives" tourists have the greatest loyalty to this type of coastal destination. Comparing the existing literature with our findings shows the contribution of our study to the academic literature.

As practical implications, this study also offers management guidelines for the managers of coastal and marine destinations. With this input, it will be possible to create products and services according to demand and work for the sustainability of coastal destinations.

6. Conclusions

Coastal tourism can be found in sustainable areas including activities related to nature and culture such as water sports, hiking, environmental education, visits to communities, flora and fauna sightings, local gastronomy, and recreational activities on the beach. It is also associated with marine tourism since the coast is the starting point for sports and recreational activities in the sea, close to these destinations with natural attractions.

Five motivational dimensions have been found in sustainable coastal and marine destinations with attractions based on nature and culture: "Learning and coastal experience"; "Nature"; "Rest and safety"; "Water sports; and "Nightlife". In addition, three segments of tourists are distinguished: "Multiple reasons" with high scores in all motivational dimensions and the highest level of intentions to return, recommend and spread positive word of mouth, so this segment is essential to benefit social and economically to the destination and the community. On the other hand, "Passive Tourists" scored low on all motivational dimensions. Finally, the "Eco-coastal" tourists were solely motivated by coastal nature and rest. Likewise, it was the segment with the highest level of satisfaction, which makes it a group that privileges the natural attractions of this coastal destination.

As theoretical implications, this study has identified the motivations and segments of a sustainable coastal and marine destination with attractions based on nature and culture, including the most satisfied and most loyal groups and their main sociodemographic characteristics. Therefore, this research sheds light on this topic by finding five motivations not previously reported by other authors in coastal and marine destinations. Likewise, it contributes to the literature by identifying three segments in line with other studies of coastal tourism and even adding other groups motivated by nature and culture. Hence, the importance of this destination valuing the incorporation of more local and sustainable forms of tourism, as the literature has suggested

As practical implications, managers of coastal and marine destinations with nature-based attractions and close to protected areas could mind the following recommendations derived from this research's findings. First, they should implement educational workshops, in conjunction with the community, on diverse topics such as gastronomy, typical dances, handicrafts with local products, local culture, and traditions, and create tours with cultural visits to further increase tourists' "Learning and coastal experience" motivations. Second, they should plan visits to the coastal zone that include sightings of marine flora and fauna, walks in nature, and tours of its tourist attractions to favor tourists' "Nature" motivations. Third, tourist establishments should improve their facilities, adapt the recreation and rest sites on the beach, including parasols, sunbathing chairs, etc., and keep on their safety measures, such as the use of masks, alcohol, and signs to remind visitors to stay six feet away from others and to wash their hands. They should also create and adapt sinks for handwashing and train their staff on current biosafety standards. These measures would keep tourists motivated toward "Rest and safety". Fourth, they should include activities related to surfing, bodyboarding, swimming, and sailing classes, among others, to increase visitors' "Water sports motivation". Finally, they must implement recreational activities at night, such as karaoke, contests, theme parties, festivals, and artistic performances to keep the visitors interested in the "Nightlife" of the coastal destination.

Additionally, to maintain the loyalty of the "Multiple motive tourists", it is crucial to improve the aforementioned motivational dimensions. It is also advisable to offer various services and products aimed at coastal and marine destinations with nature-based attractions to keep these visitors engaged. Furthermore, "Passive tourists" can be encouraged to visit this destination by providing activities related to water sports and visits to the communities to increase their motivational levels. Likewise, it is imperative to build satisfaction and loyalty strategies for this segment to boost their revisit intentions. Finally, the "Eco-Coastal" tourists can be drawn to the activities associated with water sports, flora and fauna sightings, and community visits. It is also essential to develop the satisfaction variables in coastal products and services to offer this group a pleasant stay. Lastly, it is also necessary to improve the "Nightlife" motivation to encourage the visit of the three segments found.

Despite these significant findings, this study must acknowledge a major limitation. Since the survey was administered in June, seasonal effects may limit the results considering that demand can vary in different seasons. Another limitation is that a scale of motivations for sustainable coastal destinations has been applied, as in the case of this study. Therefore, other motivations and segments could be found in other coastal destinations that do not have that environmental care in a natural and cultural environment. Finally, as a future line of research, it would be essential to carry out a study that analyzes the types of products offered in a coastal destination with attractions based on nature and culture.

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