

# Future tourism policies formulation: A systematic literature review

Hakim Lakhli<sup>1\*</sup>, Amina Boumaize<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Research Laboratory in Economic Competitiveness and Managerial Performance (LARCEPEM), Faculty of Juridical, Economic and Social Sciences – Souissi, Mohammed V University of Rabat, Morocco*

\*Corresponding author: [hakim.lakhli@um5r.ac.ma](mailto:hakim.lakhli@um5r.ac.ma)

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## Abstract

Systematic literature reviews (SLRs) on tourism policy (TP) formulation remain rare. This study conducts an SLR to identify determinants shaping future tourism policies. Using article comparative analysis, grounded coding techniques, and the PRISMA protocol, the research reviews studies published in English and French (1960–2024) across SCOPUS, Web of Science, and JSTOR. Thirty-seven key papers provide a conceptual framework under three policy paradigms: Fordist tourism policies focusing on mass promotion and visitor numbers, sustainable policies prioritizing long-term economic, ecological, and socio-cultural balance, and post-/neo-Fordist tourism policies enhancing competitiveness through comparative and competitive advantages. The findings highlight the actual weakening of Fordist approaches while reinforcing sustainability priorities and competitiveness strategies in future TP formulation. Substantially, the study advances the field by articulating an integrated theoretical and practical framework aligned with each of the three paradigms - promotional massification, sustainability, and competitiveness - which can be mobilized by both academic researchers and policy-makers in the formulation of future tourism policy architectures and programs.

**Keywords:** Tourism Policy, Tourism Development, Systematic Review, Bibliometrics

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## 1. Introduction

Tourism policy (TP) systematic literature reviews (SLRs) are not widely studied by the academic field, this lack is due to the limited number of theoretical and empirical investigations. Especially in terms of TP formulation frame and determinants (Guo, et al., 2019). Existing systematic reviews deal with specific aspects of TP, notably sustainability implementation. Which gained a large historical importance, under the global pressures of durability, since the beginning of the 1980s, following a significant academic and experimental interest (Sakalasooriya, 2021; WCED, 1987). Currently, this focus on sustainability is strengthened by “Tourism in the 2030 Agenda”, and aligns with the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (UNWTO, 2017). If systematic literature reviews (SLRs) on the formulation of tourism policies are limited in number and scope. Narrative literature reviews are more extensive, and covering broader thematic areas. Research and experimentation on tourism policy began after the World War II (Edgell, et al., 2019). The earliest academic paper to explore TP through the lens of political science was made by Harry G. Matthews “International Tourism and Political Science Research” (Matthews, 1975). Shortly after, Alberto Sessa published “The Tourism Policy” (Sessa, 1976), the first article to profoundly address tourism policy formulation from an economic and development-oriented

perspective. Both appeared in the *Annals of Tourism Research*, marking significant milestones in the academic study of TPs.

Tourism policy is defined as a set of regulations, rules, directives, objectives, and development/promotion strategies that provides a framework, within which collective and individual decisions are made directly affecting the development of tourism, and daily activities within a destination (Vanhove, 2002). Many decades later, the tourism policy literature gained a distinct, structured, and robust body of knowledge, strengthened by policymakers' empirical experimentation (Airey, 2015). TP appears to have reached a stage characterized by an abundance of frameworks and models. Referring to Thomas Kuhn's theory of scientific revolutions structure, the maturity of a scientific field is marked by the establishment of a paradigm and the pursuit of research in an esoteric or sophisticated form (Kuhn, 1962; Melesse, 2013). Regarding its recent advancements, the global pandemic of 2020 triggered a transition in tourism policy paradigms, raising numerous questions about the formulation of tourism policies in the post-COVID-19 era (Kennell, 2020). For instance, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) highlights that the COVID-19 shock has brought a radical, future-oriented transformation in tourism. This shift emphasizes long-term, agile policy strategies that prioritize sustainability and competitiveness (OECD, 2022). This study, employing the systematic literature review method, addresses a unidirectional research question with a direct effect (Hansen, et al., 2022). What are the determinants shaping the formulation of future tourism policies for destination development in the post-COVID-19 era?

To articulate the research problem, this work is presented as a state-of-the-art analysis and a comprehensive examination of the body of knowledge surrounding tourism policy frameworks before and after the COVID-19 period. Its objective is to develop a conceptual framework aimed at qualitatively modelling the evolution of tourism policy formulation through an exhaustive, systematic, valid, and in-depth investigation.

## 2. Methodology

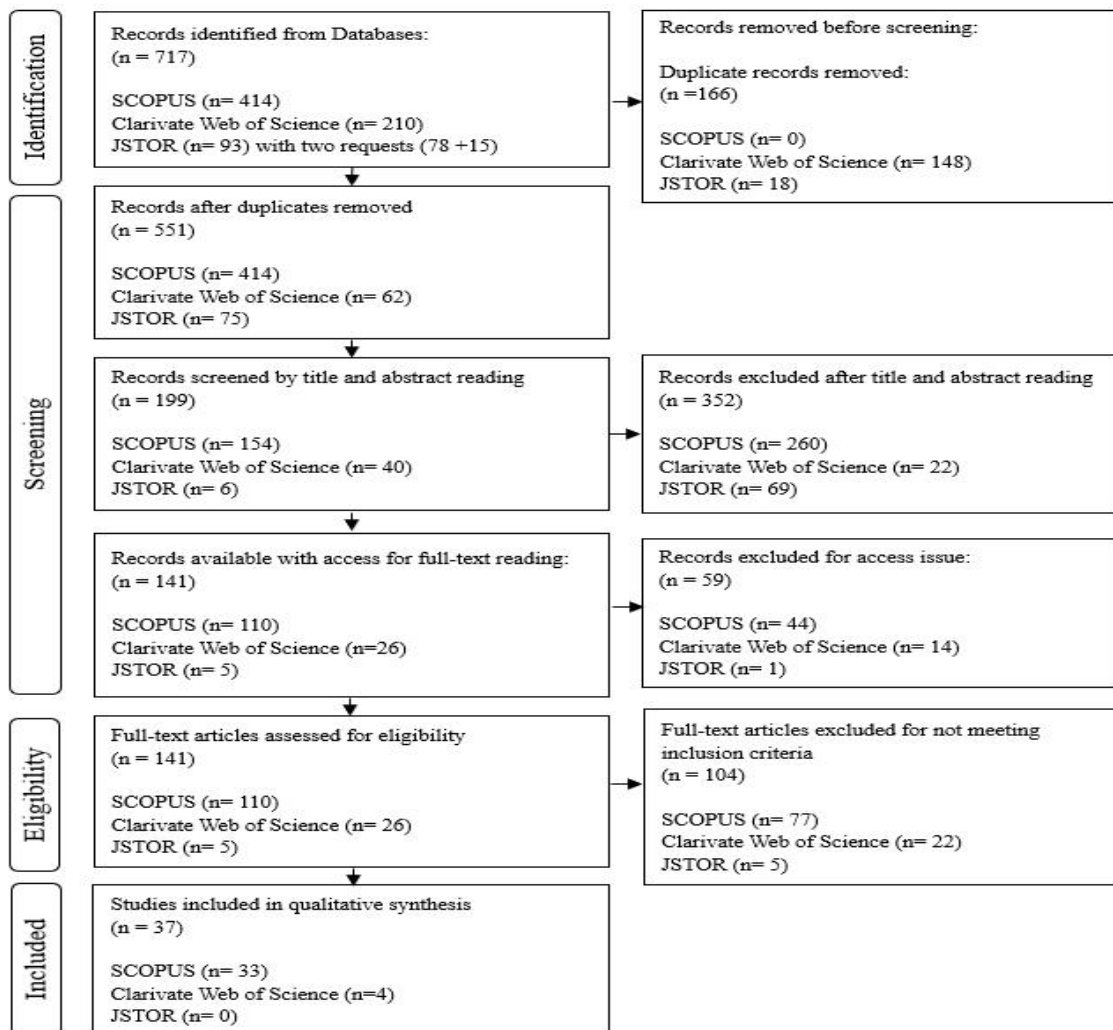
Following the PRISMA protocol (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) (Page et al., 2021; Sharif et al., 2019), and in response to the research question, the papers included in the review meet the following criteria, indexation in the three databases SCOPUS, Clarivate Web of Science and JSTOR. A publication date between 1960-2024, all types of documents are concerned, including grey literature. The keyword query is constituted in the form of "tourism polic\*" both on SCOPUS and Clarivate Web of Science with mandatory mention sorting by title. For adaptation to the technical particularities of JSTOR, two requests were formed: "tourism policy" and "tourism policies" always with an obligatory mention in the title. Only papers published in two languages (English and French) were included in the three databases due to the mastered languages by the authors. Adding French papers helps to extend the review scope and coverage (however, no French paper met the research criteria).

By filtering, the search categories that were retained on SCOPUS are, business, management and accounting or social sciences or economics, econometrics and finance or not defined. So on Clarivate Web of Science are, hospitality, leisure, sport and tourism or management or economics or business or business finance or social sciences interdisciplinary. No filter on JSTOR has been applied. Due to exclusion criteria, studies published in other languages and outside the three databases mentioned were not subject to selection, the same for those outside the study period. Adding to that, documents not containing a conceptual framework or an

analysis by qualitative or quantitative dimensions, determinants and/or variables (items) relating to the formulation, implementation or evaluation of tourism policies were excluded from the review. No minimum requirement for citations per accepted article was imposed.

On each database, an extraction of documents from search engine results in CSV and RIS format (inserted into Zotero software). Which refers to the selection process, whose works met the inclusion criteria were grouped in an Excel file, a selection value is assigned to each document after reading the title and abstract (1=selected for complete reading, 0=not sure if selected, 2=not selected). Then, a value is assigned to each document after quickly reading the full article (1 = selected for the review, 0 = not sure to be selected, 2 = not selected). At this stage, relevant studies were sorted by modifying the initial list of the bibliography on Zotero and inserting it directly into the qualitative analysis software Nvivo-14. Based on a comparative analysis methodology aimed at bringing together and processing a body or a set of researches theorizing a phenomenon or a theme by indicating the points of differentiation and similarity between the works. In order to provide a conceptual framework for mastering the object of the study (Shahrokh & Miri, 2019). The search covered a set of studies that were reviewed to determine their relevance based on the flowchart steps of the selection process, part of the PRISMA protocol (Sharif, et al., 2019). It appears as follows:

Figure 1: Flowchart of the study selection process

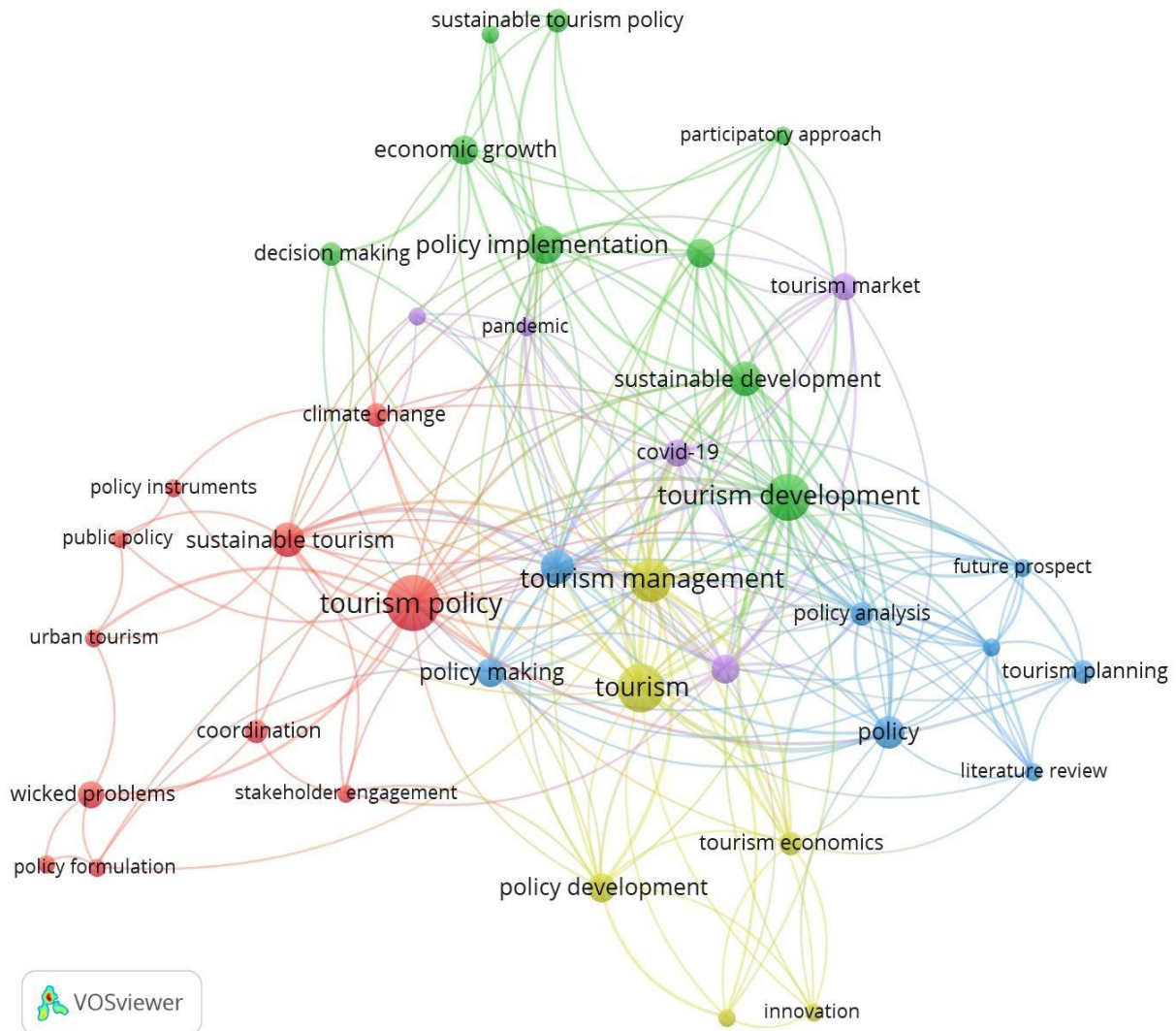


Source: Adapted by the authors from (Page, et al., 2021)





**Figure 4 :** Bibliometric analysis of the selected studies (period between 2020-2024)



Source: authors using VOSviewer

Highlighting the prominence of topics such as tourism policy, sustainable tourism, tourism Bibliometric analysis of post-COVID-19 tourism policy research (Figure 4) with the same analysis parameters in figure 2, focusing on papers published between 2020 and 2024, underscores a shift toward sustainable tourism policies that balance economic priorities with long-term sustainability. Key themes include the impacts of the pandemic, stakeholder engagement, policy implementation, and innovation, reflecting the industry's need to recover and transform in the wake of global disruption. After completing the coding process (open, axial, and selective), the results reveal that 37 papers (figure 1) meet the inclusion criteria, illustrating that tourism policy formulation evolves across three theories. The first paradigm, often referred to as the global or "classic" model for tourism development, focuses primarily on tourism promotion. The second, described as "intermediate" emphasizes principles of economic, ecological and socio-cultural sustainability. Finally, the third paradigm, considered more "advanced" prioritizes competitiveness.

**Table 1 : Selected studies details**

N°	Studies (oldest to newest)	Contribution to the systematic literature review
1	(Sessa, 1976)	First article to address tourism policy formulation from an economic and development-oriented perspective.
2	(Jenkins, 1980)	One of the earliest articles to explore the economic determinants during the initial stages of tourism policy development.
3	(Baum, 1994a)	One of the earliest papers to discuss the integration of human resources as a core component of tourism policy formulation.
4	(Baum, 1994b)	Identifies both economic and non-economic factors influencing tourism policy formulation.
5	(Fayos Solá, 1996)	Explains the paradigm shift in tourism policy from mass (Fordist) tourism to competitive (post-/neo-Fordist) tourism.
6	(Smeral, 1998)	Bases tourism policy formulation on the competitive advantages of destinations, using Michael Porter's framework.
7	(Alavi & Yasin, 2000)	Establishes tourism policy grounded in comparative advantages, encompassing region-wide effects, mix effects, competitive effects, and allocation effects.
8	(Chambers & Airey, 2001)	Highlights the integration of cultural and indigenous community values in tourism policy formulation.
9	(Fayos-Solà, 2002)	Expands the application of Porter's theory of competitive advantage to tourism policy formulation.
10	(Vanhove , 2002)	Compares theories of tourism policy formulation, focusing on sustainability versus competitiveness.
11	(Farsari, et al., 2007)	Proposes a global conceptual framework for tourism policy formulation.
12	(Farsari, et al., 2010)	Develops conceptual mapping for sustainable tourism policy formulation.
13	(Goel & Budak, 2010)	Establishes tourism policy based on the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI), integrating economic and non-economic variables.
14	(Castellani & Sala, 2010)	Creates a measurement index for sustainable tourism policy formulation.
15	(Farsari, et al., 2011)	Advances conceptual mapping for sustainable tourism policy formulation.
16	(Farsari , 2012)	Introduces a refined conceptual framework for sustainable tourism policy formulation.
17	(Liu, et al., 2012)	Develops a global conceptual framework for tourism policy formulation.
18	(García, 2013)	Discusses the paradigm shift in tourism policies from Fordist to Post-Fordist models.
19	(Sánchez & Pulido-	Identifies key components of sustainable tourism policies.

N°	Studies (oldest to newest)	Contribution to the systematic literature review
	Fernández, 2014)	
20	(Maxim, 2015)	Explains critical components of sustainable tourism policies.
21	(Sun Wu, et al., 2021)	Qualitatively examines components of sustainable tourism policies.
22	(Khan, et al., 2021)	Investigates constructs underpinning sustainable tourism policies through qualitative analysis.
23	(Niavis, et al., 2021)	Focuses on socio-cultural resources, community roles, and environmental conservation for sustainable tourism post-COVID-19.
24	(Bui, et al., 2022)	Highlights governance action for restructuring and reinventing tourism policies post-COVID-19.
25	(Rasethuntsa & Perks, 2022)	Studies comparative and competitive advantages of destinations under post-crisis conditions.
26	(Movono & Stephenson, 2023)	Reviews the evolution of tourism policy trends influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic.
27	(Gordillo & Longart , 2023)	Explores the relationship between Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and competitive-sustainable tourism policies under COVID-19's impact.
28	(Schönherr, et al., 2023)	Focuses on the formulation of sustainable tourism policies post-COVID-19, aligning with global sustainability agendas.
29	(Anouti, et al., 2023)	Develops sustainable and competitive tourism policies based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
30	(Volić, 2023)	Examines the transition between sustainability and competitiveness in tourism policies post-COVID-19.
31	(Paddison & Hall , 2023)	Reviews the pandemic's impact on the evolution of sustainable tourism policies.
32	(Gruber, et al., 2024)	Studies the global framework of tourism policies under the influence of COVID-19.
33	(Kang, et al., 2024)	Analyzes sustainable tourism policy frameworks shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic.
34	(Loehr & Becken, 2024)	Examines the interplay between sustainable tourism policies and post-COVID-19 environmental challenges, particularly climate change.
35	(Hall, 2024)	Highlights governance actions for restructuring and reinventing tourism policies post-COVID-19.
36	(Amore, 2024)	Connects COVID-19, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and tourism policy frameworks.
37	(Edgell & Swanson, 2024)	Explores the dynamics of tourism policy formulation, state roles, and post-COVID-19 challenges.

### 3.1. Fordist theory

For the initial stage of destination development, tourism policy often aligns with Fordist principles, emphasizing mass tourism. This approach emerged and gained prominence in the aftermath of the Second World War (1939–1945), particularly during the "Thirty Glorious Years" (1945–1975). This era was characterized by robust economic growth, near-full employment, a rapid rise in purchasing power, and the emergence of a mass consumer society, laying the groundwork for the widespread expansion of tourism (Crafts & Toniolo, 2012; Tsartas & Lagos, 2013). Fordist tourism, also referred to as mass tourism, emerged prominently between the 1950s and 1970s. It is defined by the standardization and mass production of rigid, pre-packaged tourist products offered at affordable prices. This approach primarily catered to a broad, relatively inexperienced audience with average incomes. The demand was driven by the allure of tourist resorts that promoted the iconic "3S model"—sun, sea, and sand—as the cornerstone of their appeal (Turnsek, et al., 2020).

Mass tourism policy is formulated through a combination of strategic axes aimed at attracting international visitors and enhancing the destination's appeal. Key components include the promotion of the destination abroad and significant investments in basic local infrastructure, as well as air, road, and maritime transportation networks. Additionally, an urban and rural planning, the development of tourist-specific infrastructure plays a crucial role, particularly through the expansion of accommodation capacity, including classified hotels and restaurants, and the establishment of ancillary services like museums, entertainment parks, and other recreational facilities (García, 2018). Furthermore, mass tourism policy involves identifying key poles of attractiveness and implementing indicative planning through partnerships between public and private sectors. This includes contracts with multinational hotel chains, tour operators, and airlines to ensure coordinated development.

Efforts also focus on product development, creating local tourist packages, streamlining institutional tourism structures, and providing professional training to enhance the skills of human resources. The policy framework is also supported by regulation, and laws tailored to accommodate the rapid growth of tourism activity. However, these initiatives often place limited emphasis on the protection of natural and cultural resources, or on improving the quality of labor market skills (García, 2020; Tsartas & Lagos, 2013). These tourism policies adopt the concept of "Hard Tourism" with a predominantly driving economic focus. Their primary objectives include boosting foreign exchange earnings, contributing to the stabilization of the balance of payments, and enhancing the income levels of the local population (Fayos Solá, 1996; Krippendorf, 1982; Turnsek et al., 2020).

### 3.2. Sustainability theory

In the context of international debates on sustainability during the early 1980s, and prior to the academic theorization of the sustainable tourism concept, scholars examining tourism policies emphasized the critical importance of environmental and socio-cultural factors in tourism development. This perspective was reflected in the concept of "Soft Tourism," which emerged as a response to the paradox of "tourism destroys tourism." This paradox highlighted how overexploitation and resource depletion caused by mass tourism models ultimately undermine the very attractions that draw visitors. "Soft Tourism" prioritized improving the quality of life for local communities, ensuring that tourism development benefitted indigenous populations while preserving their natural and cultural heritage (Baum, 1994a; Guo et al., 2019; Krippendorf, 1982).

With the conceptualization of sustainable tourism, tourism policies (TPs) designed for this purpose are defined by three key dimensions: the economic sustainability of tourism activities, ecological sustainability, and heritage or cultural sustainability. These dimensions collectively aim to balance economic growth with the preservation of natural environments and the safeguarding of cultural and historical assets (Farsari, 2012; Tsartas & Lagos, 2013). In terms of economic sustainability, tourism policies are formulated to achieve multiple goals. These include the responsible consolidation of mass tourism by rejuvenating destinations relative to their life cycle, attracting new market segments, controlling growth by aligning visitor numbers with the destination's infrastructure capacity, and reducing reliance on tour operators through direct marketing (Schönherr, et al., 2023) . This continuous development of local tourism products and services is achieved by enhancing tourist and para-tourist infrastructure, such as transport systems. Additionally, enriching the mass tourism product through diversifying recreational activities, and promoting responsible tourist consumption behaviors (Farsari, 2012; Niavis et al., 2021).

Also, marketing strategies focus on repositioning destinations with an emphasis on responsible and participatory tourism, while demarketing approaches are used in saturated destinations to maintain high-quality standards in accommodation, catering, and recreational services. Furthermore, TPs aim to improve local labor markets by increasing employment and entrepreneurship, particularly for women, and ensuring the survival of tourist businesses beyond their initial stages of creation (18 months) (Anouti et al., 2023; Schönherr et al., 2023). Managing seasonality by smoothing (distributing) tourist demand throughout the year seasons, and diversifying the local economy by minimizing imports, especially from multinational chains, is also key to economic sustainability (Farsari , 2012). Also, TPs support indigenous communities through initiatives like promoting local SMEs, encouraging equitable tourism income distribution, and improving residents' access to education and training (Schönherr et al., 2023; Vanhove, 2002).

Ecological sustainability is addressed by reducing the overconsumption of non-renewable resources such as water and energy, through measures like recycling and wastewater treatment, and promoting the use of renewable energy sources, particularly for classified accommodation establishments. TPs also focus on nature conservation by protecting natural resources and ecosystems through land use planning, including zoning and regulations for protected tourist areas. Raising tourist awareness about environmental issues and controlling visitor flows to these areas according to local capacity. Additionally, the promotion of ecological and environmental certification for tourism businesses is encouraged (Farsari et al., 2011; Khan et al., 2021). Urban management practices, such as reducing pollution and waste, managing air quality, and addressing traffic and noise, are important for ecological sustainability in urban destinations (Farsari, 2012; Movono & Stephenson, 2023).

Regarding socio-cultural sustainability, TPs emphasize the conservation and maintenance of socio-cultural resources, including heritage sites, archaeological elements, and local traditions. Financing mechanisms for preserving and promoting these elements are developed, along with intensive promotion of local products (Khan, et al., 2021) . Ensuring that tourism activities contribute to the conservation of local traditions, values, and community well-being is vital, alongside minimizing overcrowding, enhancing security, and addressing potential negative impacts such as crime or terrorism (Yang, et al., 2022). Additionally, the deployment of thematic infrastructure, such as modernizing hotel and tourist facilities to align with ecological standards and traditional design, strengthens the destination's heritage image (Farsari, et al., 2011) . Collaboration with local NGOs and international institutions like

UNESCO is encouraged to safeguard and promote cultural and heritage sites (Maxim, 2015; Paddison & Hall, 2023).

In addition, an effective approach to sustainable tourism also requires a comprehensive planning, political will, and collaboration between public and private sectors. TPs should include provisions for risk management, crisis prevention, and industry regulation reforms aimed at sustainability. The promotion of knowledge management and continuous learning within the tourism sector ensures that sustainability practices are continuously integrated and adapted to evolving challenges (Khan et al., 2021; Maxim, 2015).

### **3.3. Post-/neo-Fordist tourism theory**

Following the global rise of Fordist or mass tourism policies, a new phase of post-/neo-Fordist tourism policies emerged at the beginning of the 21st century in response to the evolving demands of modern consumers, particularly the consumerist tourists of the 1980s and 1990s. This transition was shaped by significant shifts in lifestyles and preferences, which necessitated flexible and customizable travel options. The post-/neo-Fordist era introduced transformative changes, including the adoption of new technologies, innovative production techniques, contemporary management strategies, and an increasing emphasis on addressing environmental challenges (Liasidou, 2022). In fact, post-/neo-Fordist tourism era, often referred to as "The New Age of Tourism" which is defined by several key features, including hyper-segmentation of demand, and increased flexibility of production, and distribution actors within the tourism value chain. This flexibility enables businesses to swiftly adapt to emerging trends and consumer preferences (Cecilia et al., 2011; Poon, 1994). Unlike the vertical or horizontal integration seen in mass tourism. Post-/neo-Fordist tourism is marked by diagonal integration, where tourism businesses and clusters utilize new technologies to expand their involvement in key activities beyond traditional leisure services.

This integration allows businesses to continuously engage with their target customers through a broader range of services, such as travel insurance, car rentals, on-site security, and even the recovery of valuables (Vanhove, 2015). In fact, competitiveness is widely defined as a synergy between comparative advantage (David Ricardo in the origin of the theory) and competitive advantage (Michael Porter in the origin of the concept) for tourist destination (Gonzalez-Rodríguez, et al., 2023). Comparative advantage highlights the unique endowments of destinations, such as natural, cultural, human resources, and aplenty else (Algieri, et al., 2018). While competitive advantage emphasizes (in addition of factor endowments that express comparative advantage) demand conditions, market and organizational structures, related and support activities, government action, and management of specific events (Estevão et al., 2018; Wardana et al., 2020). As well, post-/neo-Fordist, also competitive tourism policies are shaped by the principles of comparative advantages theory, and the conceptual framework of competitive advantage framework. With the objective of achieving and maintaining sustainable profits, whether ordinary or exceptional relative to both regional and international competitors (Mosedale, 2024).

### **3.4. Post COVID-19 era and tourism policy theory**

After the COVID-19 crisis, international tourism policy theory has shifted toward greater emphasis on sustainability and destination competitiveness. The traditional model of mass or Fordist tourism policy is increasingly viewed as outdated, though it is unlikely to vanish entirely (Nepal, 2020). Despite this persistence, most of mass TP components are receiving less attention in contemporary tourism literature, as it is widely regarded as an inadequate, and potentially risky approach to addressing the complex challenges of post-pandemic

tourism development (Engel, 2021). Regarding the statement that the formulation of pure mass tourism policies is claimed gradually as non-resilient, ineffective, and damaging approach to the various aspects of post-pandemic tourism environment. In contrast, sustainable tourism policies have taken center stage, playing a pivotal role in tackling the challenges of restructuring, and reinventing the tourism sector during this transformative era (Desbiolles, 2021; Florencio et al., 2021).

The formulation of sustainable tourism policies must go beyond the pre-pandemic models based on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to incorporate and emphasize critical elements such as health and hygiene, safety and security, economic resilience, and durable demand. These include addressing risks like overcrowding, managing source market volatility, and benchmarking tourist behavior and trends. Additionally, the integration of high technology, measures to mitigate climate change, ecological conservation, reduction of environmental pressures, energy efficiency, and advanced training and qualifications for human resources are essential components (Purnomo, 2022; Srisawat et al., 2023). The post-COVID-19 era has significantly influenced competitive and post-/neo-Fordist tourism policy theory, reshaping the competitive foundations of tourism destinations. Factor endowments, as defined by Ricardo's comparative advantage theory and Porter's Diamond framework, now extend beyond traditional natural, cultural, material, and immaterial resources to include safety, technological integration, and robust healthcare systems. These elements are critical for fostering resilience and preparedness. Destinations perceived as secure, intelligent, and capable of managing crises will continue to enhance their competitive edge in the evolving global landscape (Fernando, 2021).

In addition to factor endowments, the components of competitive advantage have also undergone transformation. Demand conditions have shifted as travelers increasingly prioritize safety, sustainability, and flexibility. This has spurred greater interest in domestic tourism, nature-based destinations, and less crowded locations. Market and organizational structures have adapted by diversifying target markets, reducing reliance on volatile international flows, and integrating advanced digital systems to enhance adaptability and global competitiveness (Mahdi & Nassar, 2021). Related and support activities have experienced rapid innovation, with sectors such as transportation and hospitality adopting contactless technologies and emphasizing sustainability. Government action has been pivotal, providing financial support, modernizing infrastructure, and enforcing stringent health standards. Furthermore, the management of specific events, such as the pandemic, has underscored the importance of robust contingency planning and collaboration between public and private stakeholder, reinforcing destinations resilience and long-term competitiveness (Cordero et al., 2023; Farida et al., 2022).

### **3.5. Discussion, policy implications and limitations**

Using a qualitative comparative methodology grounded in a systematic literature review protocol, this study provides a comprehensive analysis of the determinants shaping the conceptual frameworks of Fordist (mass), sustainable, and competitive (post-/neo-Fordist) tourism policies. Particular attention is given to the evolution of these frameworks in the context of the post-COVID-19 era. The analysis highlights that academic and experimental interest has progressively shifted away from Fordist approaches, which were primarily concerned with mass promotion and maximizing visitor numbers, toward frameworks that emphasize sustainability and competitiveness. This transformation reflects a growing recognition that mass-oriented policies have generated instability and imbalance in global and local tourism systems, undermining their long-term adoption (Skagias et al., 2021). By

contrast, sustainable and competitive approaches offer stronger conceptual and practical bases for tourism development, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis.

The policy implications of this shift are substantial. First, future tourism policies must institutionalize resilience as a fundamental principle. The pandemic exposed critical vulnerabilities in the sector, especially concerning health, hygiene, and safety standards. Embedding these measures into governance systems ensures not only preparedness for future crises but also the restoration of traveler confidence as a condition for recovery as eventual shocks. Second, sustainability must be operationalized beyond rhetoric, with policies integrating measurable indicators such as energy efficiency, climate change adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and community well-being. Policymakers should establish regulatory frameworks and incentives that align the private sector with sustainability goals, while also developing monitoring systems capable of evaluating performance against recognized benchmarks.

Third, competitiveness strategies should emphasize diversification, innovation, and smart investments in green infrastructure, digital technologies, and creative tourism industries that reinforce comparative and competitive advantages in a more balanced way. Adding, inclusiveness must be central to the design of tourism policies. Development that excludes local communities not only generates inequalities but also undermines the social legitimacy of tourism systems. Policies should therefore foster equitable benefit distribution, job creation, skills development, and participatory governance mechanisms that embed local voices into decision-making processes. By combining resilience, sustainability, competitiveness, and inclusiveness, tourism policies can evolve into frameworks that are value-driven, innovative, durable, and socially legitimate, capable of guiding future destinations development.

Notwithstanding these contributions, the results of this study are constrained by several limitations that must be acknowledged. The review relied on only three databases - SCOPUS, Clarivate Web of Science, and JSTOR, which, while robust, may have excluded relevant publications available elsewhere. Furthermore, the inclusion criteria limited the corpus to articles published in English and French, potentially overlooking valuable insights produced in other linguistic contexts. The decision not to impose a minimum citation threshold may also have reduced the academic rigor of the review by allowing less visible contributions to shape the analysis. In addition, the exclusion of certain works without explicit variables or conceptual frameworks increased the risk of omission, and open-access restrictions prevented the inclusion of some recent publications.

The one-year timeframe for conducting the review further constrained the scope of the research, inevitably impacting its comprehensiveness. Finally, the coding process itself, although systematic, led to the exclusion of variables deemed insignificant due to their limited academic visibility or insufficient integration into ongoing debates. These limitations, while important, do not undermine the value of the findings; rather, they highlight the need for further research that expands the scope of databases, languages, and methodological criteria, and that deepens the theorization of the determinants underpinning tourism policy formulation.

The inclusion criteria for the review present certain limitations, with no imposition of a minimum citation threshold for selected articles may have inadvertently reduced the academic rigor of the chosen works. Furthermore, several articles addressing tourism policies were excluded due to the absence of specified variables or conceptual analysis frameworks, potentially increasing the risk of omission. Additionally, the exclusion of some recent articles owing to open-access restrictions further narrows the scope of the review, limiting its comprehensiveness. The research was carried within a constrained one-year timeframe,

covering all stages of the articles review and selecting process. Nevertheless, the use of an open, axial, and selective coding mechanism, grounded in a comparative methodology, inherently led to the exclusion of numerous variables (or items). These were deemed insignificant due to their limited academic visibility, reflected in a lack of theorization by multiple authors, or their insufficient integration into current or anticipated research contexts.

#### 4. Conclusion

This systematic literature review (SLR) following the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) research protocol, strengthened by a bibliometric visualization, is absolutely not the first review on tourism policy subject. Although, its focus on formulation determinants including the effect of COVID-19 pandemic, and offering an integral structured qualitative modelling of past, present and future theories behind TP formulation, make it interesting and valued. The investigation argues that three key theories shape tourism policy formulation. First, Fordist or mass tourism policies focus on commercial promotion designed to maximize visitor numbers. Second, sustainable tourism policies aim to develop destinations that prioritize long-term economic, ecological, and socio-cultural sustainability. Finally, post-/neo-Fordist policies emphasize destination competitiveness, combining comparative and competitive advantages to achieve and sustain both ordinary and exceptional profits, relative to regional and international competitors (García, 2020; Khan et al., 2021; Mosedale, 2024).

The COVID-19 crisis led to a significant departure from traditional Fordist tourism policies, driving a clear shift towards sustainable and competitiveness-focused frameworks (Nepal, 2020; Skagias et al., 2021). Despite its persistence, many components of mass TP are receiving less attention in contemporary tourism literature, as they are increasingly viewed as inadequate and risky in addressing the complex challenges of post-pandemic tourism development (Engel, 2021). If the formulation of policies pertaining solely to mass tourism is progressively criticized as non-resilient, ineffectual, and detrimental strategy for addressing the several facets of the post-COVID-19 tourism environment. On the other hand, throughout this revolutionary period, sustainable tourism policies have emerged as a key component in addressing the difficulties of restructuring and reinventing the travel industry (Desbiolles, 2021; Florencio et al., 2021).

The formulation of sustainable tourism policies must evolve beyond pre-pandemic models rooted in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to incorporate and prioritize essential elements such as health and hygiene, safety and security, economic resilience, and sustained demand. This includes addressing challenges like overcrowding, managing fluctuations in source markets, and monitoring tourist behavior and trends. Furthermore, integrating advanced technologies, adopting climate change mitigation strategies, promoting ecological conservation, reducing environmental pressures, enhancing energy efficiency, and advancing training and qualifications for human resources are crucial for building a robust and future-ready tourism industry (Purnomo, 2022; Srisawat et al., 2023). In addition, the post-COVID-19 era has reshaped tourism competitiveness by extending traditional theories of comparative and competitive advantage to emphasize resilience, safety, digital transformation, and sustainability. While factor endowments remain fundamental, their strategic value increasingly depends on destinations' capacity to ensure health security, integrate digital technologies, and respond effectively to crises. At the same time, changing tourist preferences, greater market diversification, technological innovation, and stronger public-private collaboration have become central drivers of competitiveness.

Overall, the pandemic has accelerated the transition toward a more resilient and adaptive tourism policy framework in which long-term competitiveness depends not only on resource endowments but also on institutional preparedness, innovation, and sustainable governance (Cordero et al., 2023; Farida et al., 2022; Fernando, 2021; Mahdi & Nassar, 2021). Policy makers, particularly tourism policy formulators (McLeod, 2023) are nowadays tasked with developing resilient, value-driven, innovative, and intelligent tourism policies. These policies must effectively combine sustainability and competitiveness determinants to maximize the economic, social, and environmental benefits of the travel and leisure industry (Volić, 2023). Lastly, the review of tourism policy formulation could be expanded to explore additional dimensions and variables, particularly through a deeper investigation of the post-COVID-19 era. A key avenue for future research lies in employing quantitative methods to validate and assess the relevance, accuracy, and feasibility of the determinants outlined by the three identified theories that shape tourism policies.

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