5 Personal Interest: (Ir-)Responsible Tourists

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Introduction

One of the key factors shaping the future of tourism is climate change (Becken & Hay, 2007; Dwyer et al., 2009; Nordin, 2005). Burns and Bibbings (2009) even predict "the end of tourism" should current consumption patterns prevail. There is an alternative to this future, but to develop "new imaginations for the sustainable development" of tourism we must understand the wicked problem of tourists' environmental behavior. Tourists' environmental behavior impacts on sustainable development to varying degrees (Becken et al, 2003; Metz et al., 2007) depending on whether they behave responsibly or irresponsibly. People consider holidays as a break from everyday life (Becken, 2004; Dolnicar & Grün, 2009) which suggests that people may behave differently when they are tourists. For this reason, this chapter explores tourists' uptake of environmental behaviors by examining their propensity to responsible environmental behavior while travelling. A better understanding of tourists' environmental behavior can lead to strategies that support collaborative actions "towards facilitating tourism development that is inherently sustainable" (Jennings, 2018). Environmental behavior is a very complex field of research (Hergesell, 2017). Such behavior is determined by a range of internal and external factors with the significance of these factors differing dependent on the person, the context and the type of behavior under study. The question is hence how to reduce 'irresponsible' behavior.

This chapter examines the influence of sociodemographic, psychological and situational factors on tourists' environmental behaviors and their interrelations on two levels: 1) the relationship between environmental behaviors in the home and holiday context; and 2) the relationship between general environmental behaviors and environmentally friendly holidaying behaviors. Following a presentation of the results, the chapter discusses the implications of collaboration for sustainable destination management.

The complexity of tourists' environmentally friendly behavior

There has been a growing interest among tourism researchers in studying the interplay between tourist behavior (Dolnicar & Grün, 2009) and the determinants of environmental behavior (Dolnicar, 2010). Normative models of behavior such as the one by Stern (2000) suggest the existence of common origins for environmentally friendly behaviors in the form of values. Based on this idea, current environmental policies assume "that small pro-environmental behaviours can spill over into motivating more ambitious and environmentally significant behaviours" (Thøgersen & Crompton, 2009: 143). Such positive spillover effects are intrinsic to models like self-perception theories, consistency theories and knowledge theories (Thøgersen & Crompton, 2009). According to self-perception theory, internal dispositions are inferred from behavior, meaning that undertaking an environmentally friendly behavior may change how one perceives oneself thus increasing the likelihood of engaging again in the same behavior and also in other environmentally friendly behaviors. Consistency theories (e.g. Festinger, 1957) suggest that people strive to behave consistently, i.e. they feel a cognitive dissonance behaving environmentally friendly in one area but not in another. One of the strategies to resolve this dissonance is to behave consistently. Knowledge theories propose spillover effects through learning. The engagement in one environmentally friendly behavior builds knowledge or skills that facilitate the uptake of other environmentally friendly behaviors.

While theoretical models suggest mechanisms that could explain positive spillover, these mechanisms are not certain to occur. Thøgersen and Crompton (2009) criticize the idea of positive spillover effects and its uptake in environmental campaigning, arguing that empirical studies could frequently not establish such effects, and that, in contrast, negative spillover effects could occur as noted in a range of studies (Barr et al., 2010; Becken, 2007; Hares et al., 2010; Randles & Mander, 2009; Stoll-Kleemann et al., 2001). The idea of negative spillover effects is also supported by cognitive dissonance theory, suggesting that denial and displacement mechanisms are frequently applied to deal with the dissonance in behavior. This means the environmental contribution of current behavior is exaggerated, the environmental commitment is displaced to another context, and powerlessness or external constraints are claimed.

While several focus group studies in tourism have underpinned the existence of denial mechanisms (Barr et al., 2010; Hares et al., 2010; Randles & Mander, 2009), empirical evidence for positive spillover effects are predominantly limited to behaviors that are somewhat easy to exert (Thøgersen & Crompton, 2009). This may be because they are most common or habitualized. Thøgersen (2004)

concluded that dissimilarities in various behavior components can preclude a feeling of dissonance and hence prevent positive spillover. Determinants include: 1) the amount of effort and resources needed; 2) the physical actions involved; 3) the setting (space/time); 4) the specific outcome; and 5) its perceived contribution to a superior goal.

Undertaking environmentally friendly behaviors for other reasons than to protect the environment, such as contributing to an alternative superior goal, has frequently been recognized (Stern, 2000; Whitmarsh, 2009). In other words, engaging in environmentally friendly behaviors to protect the environment has been found to arise from different underlying values. Stern (2000) differentiated 1) the egoistic, 2) the altruistic/social, and 3) the biospheric value orientation in which people behave based on the benefit for the environment. Each value orientation may encourage environmentally friendly behaviors dependent on the person's beliefs about adverse consequences (AC). The first type describes people who undertake environmentally friendly behaviors when perceived personal benefits outweigh perceived costs. The second type behaves environmentally friendly if this is believed to be for the good of a group of people even if it means a personal sacrifice. The third orientation describes people who behave environmentally friendly for the good of the environment regardless of the perceived costs and/or benefits to themselves or others. While these value orientations could be empirically identified (Axelrod, 1994), all value orientations coexist in a person. They may not only shift throughout a person's lifecycle, but also vary in dominance dependent on situational conditions (Jackson, 2005).

Behavioral studies provide inconsistent clues in regards to the stability of behaviors across contexts. The repetition of past behavior may encourage the development of habits, while the context is frequently a more important determinant of behavior than internal forces (Klöckner & Blöbaum, 2010). The former relates to the idea that repetitive behavior includes the use of heuristics, i.e. cues, which limit the control one exerts on a decision, acting 'habitual' (Jackson, 2005; Verplanken et al., 1997). The importance of situational factors is stressed by integrated models of consumer behavior which show that the inclusion of context-related constructs increases the explanatory power of models (Guagnano et al., 1995; Klöckner & Blöbaum, 2010).

The influence of situational conditions on the engagement in environmentally friendly behaviors was also stressed in tourism studies, e.g. by Barr and colleagues in their focus group interviews (Barr et al., 2011; Barr et al., 2010) and by Dolnicar and colleagues in their quantitative study on the stability of behaviors across lifestyle domains (home and holidays) (Dolnicar & Grün, 2009; Dolnicar & Leisch, 2008). The latter study segmented respondents based on their level of engagement in selected behaviors at home (recycling/waste avoidance,