

Abstract

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Title: THE ATTITUDE-BEHAVIOR GAP ON THE PART OF GENERATION Z IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM	

Abstract:

Generation Z is expected to shape future tourism demand due to having unprecedented characteristics and a fundamental interest in sustainability. Within the process of sustainable tourism development, tourist behavior holds a critical role and constitutes an obstacle to change. Researchers have evidenced attitude-behavior inconsistencies among Generation Z travellers. While this attitude-behavior gap is particularly present in the tourism realm, the backgrounds of the phenomenon remain unclear – also among the allegedly sustainable Generation Z. This is where the master's thesis aimed to contribute, by answering the question: *Which factors have an influence on the attitude-behavior-gap of Generation Z in the travel context?*

As to date no theoretical framework can adequately assess tourist behavior-formation, a conceptual model was developed based upon an extended version of the Theory of Planned Behavior. The conceptual model built the base frame for the adopted quantitative methodology and the online-questionnaire employed.

The findings suggest ambivalence in the relationship between Generation Z and sustainable tourism. Although showing a positive attitude towards sustainable tourism and a strong intention to behave sustainably, there could be observed attitude-behavior-discrepancies. While attitudes showed a moderate impact on behavior, several other factors appeared to impact behavior-formation. Simple regression analyses revealed, that the intention to perform sustainable travel behaviors mediates the attitude-behavior relationship, while being influenced by the perceived role of social norms and behavioral control. However, the perceived control over performing sustainable travel behaviors was moderate. The results suggest, that although if Generation Z may have formed the intention to behave sustainably on holiday, the prevalence of perceived behavioral barriers such as a lack of sustainable infrastructure could still prevent this intention from being translated into a sustainable behavior. Further, while Generation Z seemed to transform their sustainability awareness into daily behaviors, the same did not apply to the tourism context. Nevertheless, spill-over effects between both behavioral contexts were still existent, meaning that members of Generation Z who behave sustainably at home are more likely to perform these behaviors while travelling. Taken together, the results suggest an attitude-behavior gap among Generation Z travellers which is impacted by several factors. However, the findings further uncovered an intention-behavior-gap, wherefore the question remains if unconsidered variables may additionally intervene in the attitude-behavior relationship among the generational cohort.

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