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Reducing the Attitude-Behavior Gap in the Context of Sustainable Tourism

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The aim of the thesis is to answer the two following research questions: how can the attitude-behavior gap in sustainable tourism be reduced and how can the barriers that limit consumers' pro-environmental behavior be overcome? The overall objective of the thesis is to give insight to the importance of implementing and promoting the goals of sustainable development in the Finnish tourism sector. The thesis further examines how Finnish society views sustainable development and what initiatives the society has taken to implement its objectives.

Sustainable development is receiving greater importance due to the increased awareness of environmental issues. An extensive amount of academic literature deals with the sustainable consumer, attempting to understand their perceptions, intentions, attitudes and behaviour. This thesis presents theories from behavioral science (psychology, marketing), which could be utilized to change consumer behaviors for environmentally sustainable results. Research studies presented in this thesis show that travellers are consistently becoming more concerned and aware of current environmental issues, especially on climate change. Thus, they are opting for more sustainable solutions. Considering this, companies should seek to create sustainable strategies that minimise consumers' attitude-behavior gap, i.e. find ways to translate consumers' good intensions into actual behavior.

Several rationales are suggested in academic literature concerning the reasons behind the attitude-behavior-gap and why it exists. According to Nolan, et al. (2008) one of the most influential elements revolves around the individual self. Consumers are more prone to behave pro-environmentally when there are some forms of self-benefits involved in the action. Carrigan & Attalla (2001) argue, that high price or low quality of ethical products and services along with the lack of information about product/service attributes, might be of influence (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). Research by Lorenzoni, et al., (2007) examines a few of the identified limitations that clarify inconsistencies between personal engagement and public interest. A major universal reason, that the public states is the inadequate political actions and the weak governmental participation (Lorenzoni, et al., 2007).

| Keywords | attitude-behavior gap, pro-environmental behaviour, sustainable development, sustainable consumption, sustainable tourism |

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Glossary

CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FNCSD	The Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development
GHG	Greenhouse gas
SD	Sustainable development
SDGs	Sustainable development goals
SME	Small-to-medium enterprise
TPB	Theory of planned behavior
UN	United Nations
UNWTO	United Nation's World Tourism Organization

1   Introduction

Consumers are consistently becoming more knowledgeable about social, economic and environmental issues. They report willingness to overcome these issues by embracing more responsible lifestyles and new forms of consumption. As reported by the 2017 Eurobarometer, European consumers' consciousness on social and environmental affairs is becoming mainstream. Consumers continue to express vast concern about the environment and to perceive climate change as an issue that affects them personally. As shown in the 2017 Eurobarometer, there is support for stricter legislation to settle environmental problems, especially by introducing heavier fines for breaches of environmental legislation. Moreover, the respondents want more actions to protect the environment and state that this responsibility should be shared by European citizens, companies, industries, national governments and the EU (European Commission, 2017).

According to UNCED 1992, as cited by Robins 1999, the dominant cause of the degradation of the global environment is the unsustainable model of production and consumption (Robins, 1999). It is noteworthy that consumers are the key to driving sustainable production (OECD, 2008). Growth in the number of responsible consumers would encourage change in current production processes. A responsible consumer pays attention to the entire life cycle of the product and by doing so implements consumption models that revise these old production practices towards more sustainable ones. This could encourage companies to become more environmentally and socially responsible. Consumers can influence a more sustainable society by placing pressure on actors such as local governments, producers, etc., through their overall buying behavior (Signori, et. al., 2015).

Regardless of the meaningful advances in the levels of awareness which the Eurobarometer 2017 highlights, most EU citizens have not changed their accustomed buying and consumption behavior or lifestyle despite their pro-environmental attitudes. From this can be noted that ethically aware consumers do not always act according to their attitudes and stated beliefs. Consumers oftentimes state to have positive intentions and attitudes to sustainable consumption (Trudel and Cotte, 2009). Nonetheless, they are not consistently executing sustainable behaviors (Devinney, et al., 2006). This so-called attitude-behavior gap has special value for marketers, that are focusing on ethical products and services (Carrington, et al., 2010). Comprehending the gap between

consumers good intentions and actual behavior and understanding how to reduce the gap is also beneficial for companies, non-profit organizations and policymakers for increasing sustainable usage (Prothero et al., 2011). In short, most consumers intend to make sustainable purchases and report valuing sustainability. Nonetheless, when they make decisions about what kinds of products to purchase, they often lose their initial positive intentions.

Promoting sustainable production and consumption processes are essential aspects of sustainable development. Many government policies focus on preventing the environmental impacts of unsustainable industrial production practices mainly through taxes and regulations. Promoting and marketing sustainable consumption is evenly important in limiting negative environmental externalities and providing markets with sustainable products and services (OECD, 2008).

The overall objective of this thesis is to examine the reasoning behind the attitude-behavior-gap and how to overcome the barriers that limit consumers pro-environmental behavior. Specifically, this thesis aims to provide proposed actions to reduce the attitude–behavior gap in the context of environmentally sustainable tourism.

This thesis aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How can the attitude-behavior gap in sustainable tourism be reduced?

2. How can the barriers that limit consumers' pro-environmental behavior be overcome?

The research methodology is qualitative and focuses on existing research studies and academic publishing relating to the subject. The research was conducted through analyzing information gathered from academic journals, articles and books.

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2 Linking Tourism with Sustainable Development Goals

The benefits of being an ecologically sustainable business vary from company to company. For the most part there is support that the sustainability aspect facilitates recruitment and strengthens employee commitment to the company. This also offers new business opportunities as well as the opportunity to position differently in the market (Ramm-Schmidt, M., 2018). These assets shed light as to why companies should opt to operate in an ecologically sustainable way. The impact of sustainable values on travelers' purchasing decisions is growing at a fast rate. Distributors and partners also place requirements upon and demand evidence of responsible practices from service providers. Some international tour operators require their partners to carry out responsible business plans or certifications as an annex to their cooperation agreement (Jänkälä, 2019). According to Jänkälä (2019), a responsibly operating company that can communicate its activities and values in a way that meets customer wants leads to future success. Responsible companies' customer satisfaction and perceived quality are also higher (Jänkälä, 2019).

2.1 Sustainable Development

According to the United Nations, sustainable development (SD) is defined as the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (United Nations, 1987).

The way tourism organizations and companies prioritize, implement and promote SD affects their surrounding communities and the environment. Effective implementation of SD objectives in the travel industry is necessary to prevent environmental deterioration and even improve its' present state. Scientific research, such as the Fifth Assessment Report, (IPCC, 2014) on climate change shows that more visible and tangible actions need to be implemented to change the current course. The intergovernmental panel on climate change concluded, that there is more than a 95 percent chance that human actions over the last 50 years have caused global warming (IPCC, 2014). The relationship between SD and climate change is easily demonstrated through, for

example, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. GHG emissions are a significant source of climate change (US EPA, 2018) and thus, the rate that companies and societies prioritize and implement SD principles directly correlates with the amount of GHG emissions they produce. According to Lenzen, et al., (2018), tourisms global carbon footprint has risen from 3.9 to 4.5 $GtCO_2e$ between 2009 and 2013. This is four times more than was formerly estimated, accounting for about 8 percent of global GHG emissions, transport being a major contributor (Lenzen, et al., 2018).

When considering the small-to-medium enterprise (SME) sector, economic, social and environmental responsibility can at best improve their competitiveness (FCG, 2018). The importance of corporate responsibility is increasing especially in the context of international activities, for example when a company applies for foreign financing such as investors or searching for new business partners. In a domestic context, corporate responsibility can have an immense impact on how the community perceives the company and its operations. Sustainability reporting has been mandatory for certain companies, such as large listed companies, since December 29, 2016 (FCG, 2018).

The negative externalities have been generally associated with the mass tourism sector and with large companies. Yet, implementing SD practices and initiatives is not only the responsibility of large companies but of all companies and organizations working in the tourism sector. As several European countries, Finland has a large SME tourism sector covering approximately 99 percent in total in the country. From this, 90 percent of all tourism businesses are being classified as micro enterprises employing less than 10 people (Peltonen, Komppula, and Ryhänen 2004, as cited in Seppala-Esser. et. al., 2009). The participation and involvement of all tourism operators in accordance with the objectives of SD is therefore essential. The environmental impact of even a small individual business needs to be taken seriously given their current multitude, as the cumulative effect on their surrounding environment can become extensive. A possible threat for the future is that the sustainability aspect in the tourism sector will not be considered in a holistic way (Jänkälä, 2019). Tourism as a sector necessitates the consideration of all aspects of SD. Sustainable values influence travelers' choices to an increasing degree and following the objectives and principles of SD will continue to be a valuable competitive advantage for tourism companies. New energy-efficient solutions can also generate savings and increase profitability (Jänkälä, 2019).

If SD initiatives are responsibly managed, countries that prioritize a sustainable agenda have the prospect of becoming new investment magnets. A growing number of countries demand a strong commitment to sustainability from foreign firms wanting to invest in their tourism markets. The movement is positive, as the tourism sector is amongst the largest industries globally accompanying annual revenues of $2300 billion dollars directly and $7600 billion indirectly. Moreover, 10 percent of the whole population is employed by tourism. In this extremely competitive market, the unique ecological and cultural assets of countries and regions give them a competitive advantage they should aim to hold on to and preserve (Mitchell, 2017).

The UN declared year 2017 as the year for sustainable tourism development (UNWTO, 2017). Sustainable tourism can be economically viable without causing devastation on the environment and local cultures. It focuses primarily on the tourists' carbon footprint and the local economy. According to Euromonitor International, as cited by Geerts (2017) international sustainable tourism incorporates the following concepts: eco-tourism, responsible tourism, green tourism, ethical tourism and enlightened tourism. Fundamentally, all these terms refer to the same matter with emphasis on slightly different topics (Euromonitor International, as cited by Geerts, 2017). For the purpose of this thesis, sustainable tourism as a concept was chosen because the outcomes of the study can be leveraged to all the aforementioned concepts. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2018), sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is considered as leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems (UNWTO, 2018).

3 Finland's Commitment to Sustainable Development

The Government established the Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development (FNCSD) in 1993 to promote SD in Finland. FNCSD's fundamental role is to plan Finland's national strategy for sustainable development (GNNCSDS, 2018). Its 2006 strategy is entitled: Towards sustainable choices: a nationally and globally sustainable Finland (GNNCSDS, 2018).

The FNCSD brought together 18 experts and civil servants to form a proposal for the society's commitment to sustainable development called "The Finland we want by 2050". The proposal was approved in December 2013. With this commitment, the government and the administration in co-operation with organizations, companies and citizens pledge to promote SD in all their operations (GNNCSDS, 2018). Finland's national strategy on SD carries out the full name "The Finland we want by 2050 –Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development" (kestavakehitys.fi, 2019). The goal is to commit the entire Finnish society to SD and to set up a new operating culture, in which SD is viewed as the foundation of all of its operations. This commitment entails the following eight tangible objectives to be reached by the year 2050:

1. Equal opportunities for well-being

2. A participatory society for all

3. Work in a sustainable way

4. Sustainable society and local communities

5. A carbon neutral society

6. A resource-wise economy

7. Lifestyles respectful of the carrying capacity of nature

8. Decision-making respectful of nature

(kestavakehitys.fi, 2019).

The vision of the society's commitment is a thriving, globally responsible Finland within the carrying capacity of nature. More than 240 actors from companies, ministries, schools, municipalities, civil society organizations and individuals joined the commitment by April 2016, by launching their own operational commitments (UN: Sustainable Development, 2017). For the purposes of these objectives, SD is recognized in terms of the wellbeing of the environment and people, a sustainable and healthy economy as well as the promotion of a sustainable lifestyle. The promotion of sustainable development calls for:

- a shared determination to solve problems, understanding, expertise and continuous, collaborative learning people who shoulder responsibility and bring about changes, as well as leaders and pioneers
- development of new solutions through joint efforts involving the public, private and third sectors and other operators; adjustment of values and attitudes, more effective and closer cooperation, and political guidance
- making full use of the potential offered by digitalization in a sustainable way
- more effective ways of operation
- research and evidence-based decision-making

(kestavakehitys.fi, 2018).

3.1   Implementing Sustainable Development Goals

The National Commission and the secretariat monitor the implementation and attainment of the objectives. The secretariat provides a reporting and monitoring platform for the affiliated parties and reports on the progress made in the implementation stage. The attainment of the shared objectives, milestones and individual commitments to specific measures are monitored on a real-time basis by means of impact and monitoring indicators (kestavakehitys.fi, 2016). Key players in the process of implementing and developing the SD strategies have been the Finnish National Sustainable Development Commission, including most ministries as well as the National Innovation Fund Sitra and the Technological Innovation Fund TEKES (Lepuschitz, 2014). The way in which solutions promoting SD are executed in practice contributes greatly to the achievement of the SDG's. Achieving them requires national, international and private funding.

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Additionally, resources from technology, science and innovation need to be mobilized to carry out the goals (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2017). The UN member states are committed to the implementation of the SDGs by means of finance. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (2017), a few of the most influential workable actions are commitments to fight corruption, to develop taxation and to combat illicit financial flows. Agreements that support SD are crucial for success (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2017).

To sum up, the FNCSD engages various societal actors for the promotion of SD strategies. Moreover, FNCSD works as a high-profile SD partnership network with links to the government and collaborations with the other European SD networks. The FNCSD synchronizes national SD protocols with the SD work of the European Union and the United Nations.

4   The Current Global Travel Market

According to figures from the UNWTO, international tourism was performing well in 2017 with steady growth levels and destinations worldwide received 956 million international tourists from January to September 2016 (ITB Berlin, 2016/17). That was a 4 percent increase, which is near to the tourism industry's long-term growth rate. The amount of worldwide outbound travel grew by 3.9 percent, led by Asia (+ 11 percent), containing 18 percent growth in the fast-developing Chinese market, and the United States (+ 7 percent). European outbound travel grew by 2.5 percent, with positive growth from the United Kingdom (+ 6 percent) and Germany (+ 4 percent). Moreover, worldwide inbound tourism increased by 4 percent in the first nine months of 2016 (ITB Berlin, 2016/17). The travel market in 2016 was smaller than in 2014, due to currency fluctuations and political uncertainty restraining travel growth. Currently, the global travel market is anticipated to expand. Generally strong travel regions such as the United States and Europe will be large growth drivers, but Asia Pacific is anticipated to lead growth, specifically as its mobile and online environments mature (Rausch, et al., 2017).

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The OECD (2018) identifies four megatrends shaping tourism by 2040. These are evolving visitor demand, sustainable tourism growth, enabling technologies, and travel mobility (OECD, 2018). Predictable short-term developments will include growing environmental awareness, increasing supply of service packages based on nature and wellbeing, new evolving visitor groups, rise of smaller tourist destinations, accessible tourism, local food, and changes in marketing communications (Jänkälä, 2019). Tourism's sustainable growth requirement emphasizes a low-carbon and resource-efficient global economy such as food production and waste minimization and putting pressure on reducing tourism emissions and considering the social and cultural well-being of residents (Jänkälä, 2019).

Millennials and young travelers that are prioritizing in experience travel are expected to drive growth. They also advance the sector towards more mobile and more smartphone-utilized usage. Artificial intelligence is also leading a new way of mobile innovation in the travel sector (Visit Finland, 2017). Ever-evolving digitalization opens new possibilities for tourism. With help of these technical solutions it is easier for companies to advertise their services internationally. However, the competition specifically for international customers is getting tougher and thus, companies need to up their investments in international visibility (Jänkälä, 2019).

The growth in experience travel has led the consumer shift away from material ownership towards real experiences (World Travel Market, 2016). A study conducted by Airbnb in 2016 discovered, that several millennials regard travel much more meaningful than other priorities, like purchasing a house or owning a car (Airbnb, 2016, as cited by OECD, 2018). As the consumer's preferences are shifting away from material possessions, this movement poses an opportunity for tourism businesses to offer authentic travel experiences that can improve the state of the local community and the environment. An untouched and clean nature has been one of the core strengths of Finland's inbound tourism.

Figure 1 below shows the number of tourists by continent from 1950 to the present and the forecast up to 2030.
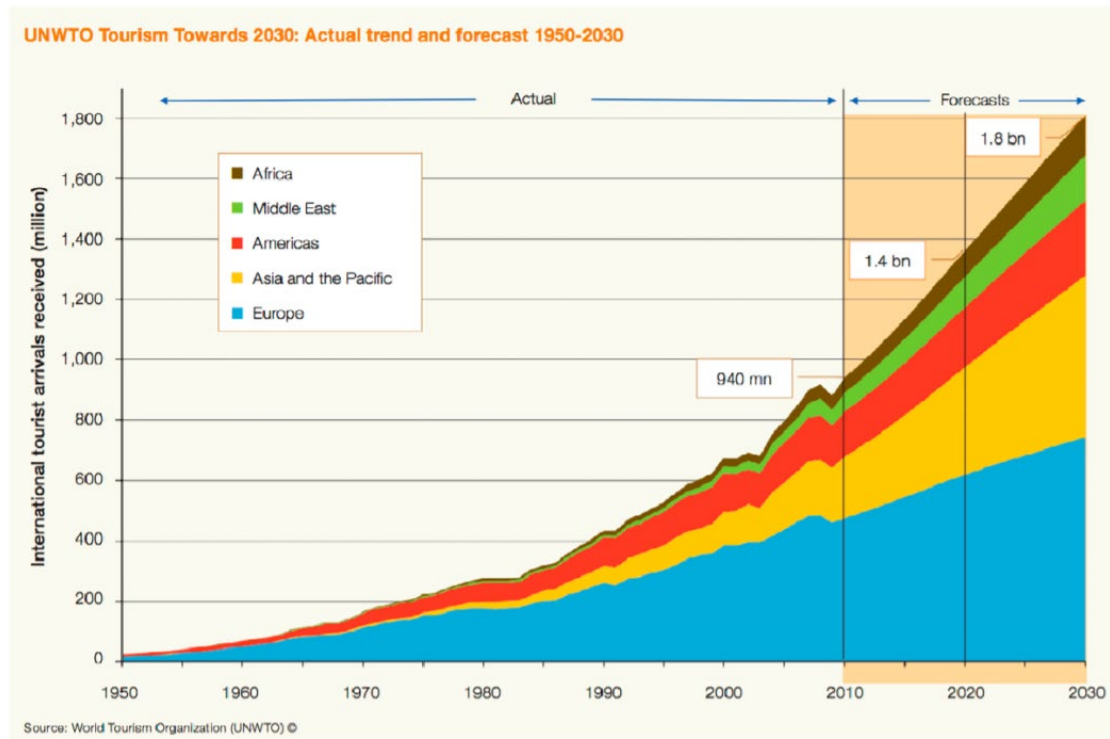

Figure 1. UNWTO World Tourism Barometer and Statistical Annex, March/April 2018

According to the forecast, the amount of international tourist arrivals globally is anticipated to rise by approximately 3,3 percent yearly from 2010 to 2030. Meaning, international tourist arrivals is going to rise by around 43 million per year, in comparison with an average increase of 28 million a year from 1995 to 2010. The strongest growth per region is the Pacific and Asia, where arrivals are anticipated to rise by 331 million to 535 million in 2030.

According to recent study conducted by UNWTO (2018), the tourism industry is rapidly growing: around 5 percent to 7 percent yearly (UNWTO, 2018). Even though the industry's growth increasingly revolves around the sustainable agenda (Nature travels, 2018), the current growth rate presents threats, specifically for the conservation of the environment. With the annual increase of people travelling, the burden on popular tourist

destinations increase as well. To get all parties involved, implementing and promoting sustainable and responsible travel is essential. Thoroughly planned and implemented sustainable tourism can be an economic opportunity and a prosperous conservation strategy for the local communities (Nature travels, 2018). Given that the sector grows at such a high rate and poses great opportunities for foreign investors, it is necessary that the growth is well managed for the protection of the environment and local communities (Mitchell, 2017).

4.1 Tourism in the Finnish Economy

Economic factors have substantial influence on consumers decisions and behavior. Economic incentives, designing new policies and strategies can encourage pro-environmental behavior (Kollmus, et al., 2002).

The tourism sector accounted for 2.5 percent of Finland's GDP in 2017. The turnover for the sector's core cluster amounted to EUR 9.7 billion in 2017, with an ongoing upward trend (Jänkälä, 2019). According to OECD (2016), Finland's tourism strengths are its nature-based cultural heritage, the Finnish way of life, the meeting of east and west, technology, modern culture and creativity. In recent years, tourism sector in Finland has grown more than other sectors, with an annual consumption of more than EUR 14 billion, and possible growth to EUR 20 billion by 2025. The number of international travelers has doubled since the year 2000, producing revenue of EUR 4.4 billion in 2013. In 2013, the value generated by tourism totaled to EUR 4.3 billion, which is 2.5 percent of Finland's GDP. According to the tourism account, the tourism sector employed about 136,700 persons in 2013 which is 5.8 percent of Finland's active work population. The use of agency workforce is prevalent especially in the restaurant sector. Growth in tourism employment since 2007 has been approximately 16 percent. According to estimates, tourism will employ 180,000 people in 2025 (OECD, 2016).

As the number of tourists increases, the concept of over-tourism has also affected some destinations in Finland as a phenomenon that requires monitoring. Although tourism has several positive effects on income and employment, the growth needs to be well managed. When negative effects reach a certain level, residents or tourists themselves begin to react. Tourism should grow in a controlled way and the capacity of the area

needs to be considered. In terms of population, Lapland has the highest amount of tourists travelling mainland Finland. Lives of the residents are influenced by e.g. rising house prices as they move from housing to tourism. In addition, environmental scattering has become a problem. Responding to the situation requires cooperation both at a regional and national level. Corrective measures can be taken for example by guiding tourist flows, leveling off peak seasons by prolonging the season, and pricing and targeting. However, it requires a common will and broad cooperation (Jänkälä, 2019).

At the end of 2014, the Government shut down the Finnish Tourism Board (FTB) as a separate agency and incorporated its functions into Finpro, the predominantly state-funded organization in charge for supporting Finnish SMEs in international markets and boosting foreign investment. The goal of the incorporation was to utilize synergies between the FTB and Finpro's internationalization services and strengthen public services for tourism companies. The core functions of promoting Finland's country brand internationally, aiding product marketing with companies and coordinating product development in tourism, have been continued by Visit Finland, as part of Finpro. Their work includes co-operating with ministries, travel businesses, transport companies and the Finnish regions on research, product development and, above all, the marketing of tourism to Finland abroad (OECD, 2016).

5   Consumer Buying Behavior

Understanding consumers' buying behavior is essential for companies to do business. An elemental marketing concept states that companies exist to satisfy consumers' wants. Their wants can be satisfied when marketers understanding the people who will use the products or services offered.

5.1   Goals, Wants and Beliefs in Buying Action

According to John O'Shaughnessy (1988), when considering consumer's reasons for buying, goals, wants and beliefs are the ones that lead to buying action.

People are generally sensitive to contrasts in the human condition and prefer to be, for example, knowledgeable and *not* ignorant, in control of life and *not* at the mercy of

events, and so on. The more agreeable positions constitute for a vision of good life and consumers track this vision in their pattern of purchases. This preferred vision can be viewed as a set of goals towards which consumers strive. These sets of goals give rise to wants. To want a product XYZ is to have a disposition towards using, consuming or possessing the product. A belief then is a disposition to accept certain statements. For consumers to want a certain product they must usually believe that the product will help them achieve the "good life" (O'Shaughnessy, 1988). Some sustainable behaviors can only take place when, as an example, essential infrastructure is arranged. When the consumer would have a goal of, for example, purchasing an electric car instead of a petrol-fueled car, the consumer's want could be that they want and prefer to be a responsible, not irresponsible, or conscious, not ignorant. The consumer could believe that their want will benefit or at least ease the negative externalities of pollution on the environment. This type of responsible consumer prioritizes collective social gain over self-interest. The state could offer incentives for people to act in a more responsible way for the benefit of collective gain by offering greater incentives for these types of purchases, such as tax allowances and/or building better infrastructure for charging the vehicles.

5.2 Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior

As reported by Kotler & Armstrong (2010), consumers' buying decisions are influenced by a mixture of external and internal influences. Buying behavior is affected by cultural, personal, social, and psychological factors (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Marketer's cannot control these factors, yet they can take them into consideration in the planning phase. A strong marketer understands consumer's culture, subculture, and social class and the role they take part in them. Consumer behavior is also affected by social aspects, such as the consumer's social roles, status and family. Personal characteristics, being the age and lifecycle stage, occupation, lifestyle, economic situation and personality and self-concept influence decisions as well (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

Figure 2 below shows the factors influencing consumer behavior according to Kotler & Armstrong, 2010.
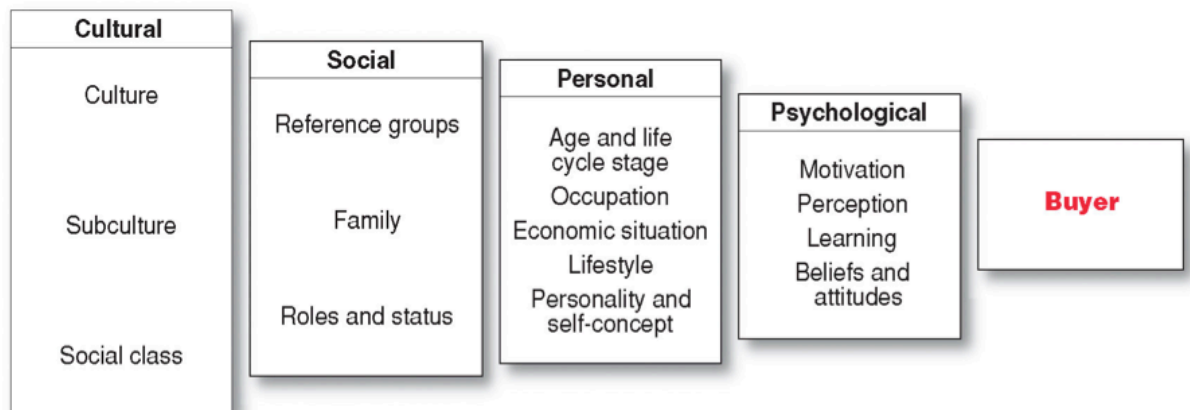

Figure 2. Factors Influencing Consumer Behavior (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

The consumer's choice results from this mixed interplay of cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors.

5.3   Decision-making Model of Sustainable Consumption

According to Hirsch, et al., (2015) explaining or changing behavior towards sustainable consumption begins with varying and codependent influence quantities of sustainable consumption. Figure 3 below provides an outline of a decision-making model for sustainable consumption derived from research studies, such as Balderjahn (2013), Carrington, et al., (2010) and Vermeier and Verbeke (2006). The model suggests that beliefs lead to attitudes, which consecutively derive intentions. The real buying behavior is guided by intensions.

Figure 3 below shows the various social, individual, and situational factors, that affect the overall decision-making-process (Hirsch, et al., 2015).
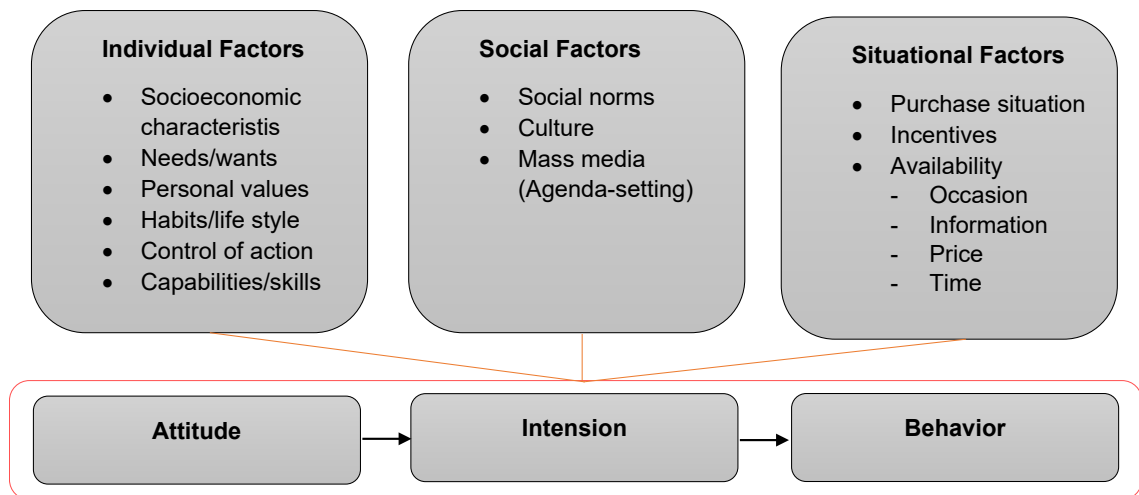

Figure 3. Decision-making Model of Sustainable Consumption (Hirsch D., et al. 2015) (based on Balderjahn, 2013; Carrington et al., 2010; Vermeier and Verbeke, 2006)

Individual factors contain socioeconomic characteristics, that are age, sex, education, income, needs, wants, motivation, personal values, and norms, habits, abilities to act (cognitive, time, price, and obtaining information) including action control in terms of ability to implement attitude or intention to purchase. Social quantities contain societal norms, fixed into cultural context along with mass media with its agenda-setting. Situational factors relate to the act of the purchase, being the purchase situation, incentives (such as political incentives) and consumption options, for example the availability of sustainable products (Hirsch, et al., 2015).

5.4   Attitude-behavior-gap

The attitude-behavior gap refers to the disconnect between what we say about our attitudes and what we do (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). The Co-operative Banks; who

are the ethical consumers? survey in 2005 shows a correlation between green attitudes and green behavior. There is a 30 to 3 ratio: 30 percent of consumers report being troubled over environmental issues and ethical integrity of products and services they buy. However, only three percent convert this attitude into behavior. Majority of people, whether concerned or not, continue to consume products the same way they previously have. They stay immune to green product proposals and can rationalize as to why they are not buying them (Hirsch, et al., 2015). The gap can be seen specifically in high-cost domains, where pro-environmental behavior demands substantial effort, like changing from the use of an own car to other means of transportation (public transportation, biking, walking) (Carrus, et al., 2008). Pro-environmental attitudes have been discovered to have a miniscule effect on actual sustainable behavior. The observation is unanticipated, since we are inclined to expect that people live in accordance with their stated values. Figure 4 below shows the difference between attitudes reported and actual behavior according to Hirsch, et al., (2015) based on Greenindex, 2012.
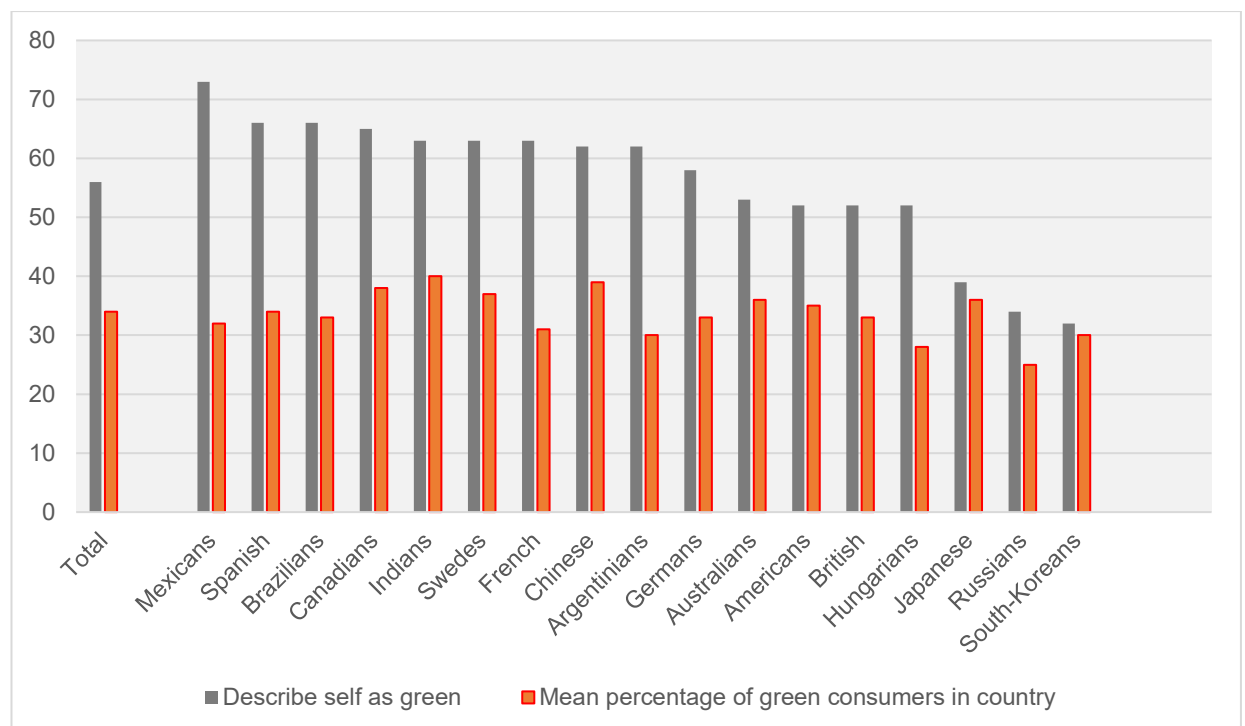

Figure 4. Attitude-Behavior-Gap (Consumers with Green Attitude Versus Average Actual Green Consumer Behavior in %) (Hirsch, et al. based on Greenindex, 2012)

Despite the attitude-behavior gap, concerns on the effect of the current consumption culture on the environment and society, and the increasing display of environmental and social issues in the media have led to better consumer awareness of their buying and consuming habits (Carrington, et al., 2010). Consumers do feel responsibility for the environment and look for ways to show these values through their act of sustainable purchasing and consumption behavior (Shaw and Shui, 2002).

Several rationales are suggested in the academic literature concerning the reasons behind the attitude-behavior-gap and why it exists. High price or low quality of ethical products and services along with the lack of information about product/service attributes, might be of influence. (Carrigan & Attalla, 2001). If consumers believed, that they have the power to influence by their buying behavior, they would most likely alter their consumption habits. Moreover, consumers would be more prone to alter their buying behavior, if they knew about the positive outcomes their actions have (De Pelsmacker & Janssens 2007). The influence of habits on pro-environmental behavior is significant (White, et al., 2018). When we wish to create a new habit, it must be practiced. We may be inclined towards changing our behavior, but not execute it, because we do not persist on practicing the new behavior before it has developed into an actual habit.

5.5   Barriers to Pro-Environmental Behavior

Examining why people behave pro-environmentally and what limits their pro-environmental behavior is rather multifaceted. Researchers of the subject have presented various theories but also contradictory findings. As an example, as reported by Gifford (2011), one of the most limiting factors influencing sustainable behavior change is ignorance (Gifford, 2011). Consumers are either uncertain how to change their behavior or are not knowledgeable enough of the negative environmental effects their behaviors have. This indicates, that educating and informing consumers could inspire positive, sustainable consumption and purchasing behavior (Nolan, et al., 2008). The observation resonates closely with the early US linear models, where environmental knowledge would solely lead to environmental awareness and interest, which would activate pro-environmental behavior. This rationalistic approach assumes that educating

consumers on environmental issues will naturally lead to increased pro-environmental behavior. Later research showed that it is much more multifaceted and predominantly, increased awareness and better knowledge has not led to pro-environmental behavior (Kollmus, et al., 2002).

Research by Lorenzoni, et al., (2007) examines few of the identified limitations that clarify inconsistencies between personal engagement and public interest. A major universal reason, that the public states is the inadequate political actions and the weak governmental participation. Other reasons relate to the free-rider effect[1]. Further, some limitations and barriers relate to expectations and social norms. Traveling can be viewed as an individual right and arguably, and at a point where people feel accustomed and comfortable to a specific way of living, their expectations and needs change (Lorenzoni, et al. 2007). Moreover, Lorenzoni, et al., (2007) present that most stated limitations are considered as means of rejection, rationalizing personal inconsistency between pro-environmental attitudes and actual commitment and behavior. Additionally, people use motives, such as skepticism to try and rationalize the non-behavioral change. Comfort and self-interest serve as an affirmation to non-behavioral change (Semenza, et al., 2008). When considering sustainable produce, the main purchasing barriers according to Hirsch et al. (2015) are rather high prices, insufficient or excessive amount of information and trust toward labels and certifications (Hirsch, et al., 2015).

5.6   Two Cognitive Systems

According to Daniel Kahneman, human cognition can be modeled as driven by two systems. System 1 functions quickly and automatically, with very little or zero effort and no sense of voluntary control. Most of the time our cognition is efficiently driven by system 1. System 2 assigns attention to effortful mental activities (Kahneman, 2012). It comes in when decisions or actions become complex and need attention. Specifically, the low involvement element of food items, because of daily purchase habits and relatively low prices tends to result in subconscious and automatic decisions based on system 1. In contrast to the system 1, the human mental system 2 is specifically vital for the

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[1] The free-rider-effect happens when people generally believe that personal input does not lead to significant results; as no one else is inclined to change, the personal contribution becomes insignificant (Lorenzoni, et al., 2007).

conversions of individual behavior to sustainable consumption. Decisions, which are based on the human mental system 2 are slow, rational, logical and conscious (Kahneman, 2012).

Below is table 1 of the two cognitive systems by Daniel Kahneman (2012).

	System 1 (intuitive)	System 2 (analytical)
Characteristics	- Automatic - Effortless - Unconscious - Driven by instinct - Without self-awareness and control	- Controlled - Effortful - Deliberate - Driven by deliberation and logic - With self-awareness and control
Role	- Assessing information and the situation	- Seeks new and missing information
What appeals	- Photos and videos, specifically those that show emotion - Names and faces, specifically those of familiar people	- Solving problems and challenges - In-depth storytelling, sparking curiosity

Table 1. Two Cognitive Systems (Daniel Kahneman, 2012)

According to Kahneman, when we have the notion of making rational decisions, our system 1 beliefs, biases, and intuition drive most of our choices. To influence more sustainable consumption, marketers could target our analytical mental system 2. Solving problems and challenges, in-depth storytelling, and sparking curiosity appeals to this system.

Figure 5. Oatly's ad campaign, below, sheds light on the environmental factors.

Isn't it strange that when we want to fly somewhere warm for a week of vacation, we can find out exactly how many tons of carbon dioxide it will take to get us and our luggage into that sun chair, yet it's almost impossible for us to know what impact different foods have on the climate?

It's double strange considering that the food industry generates nearly twice as many greenhouse gas emissions as all transportation combined — cars, buses, planes, trains, even personal jetpacks.*

So from now on, our products will be labelled with a number defining their climate impact. Our calculations are performed by a company called CarbonCloud and cover the product journey from grain field to store, including transportation, and are expressed in carbon dioxide equivalents (CO2e).

This means you can easily compare our products with others before you decide to buy them, just as soon as the entire food industry follows our lead, which they have to do now that we've officially and indiscreetly suggested it in a full page ad in The Guardian.

Figure 5. Oatly Campaign Ad (Library of Advertising Examples for Print and Digital, 2019)

Oatly is an example of excellent in-dept storytelling. Its attraction lies in its paradoxical value proposition. The brand bridges the gap between self-interest and altruism (collective social gain). Consumers can achieve personal health benefits and still make a good contribution to the environment by choosing their products (Fiedler, P., 2019)

5.7 The Theory of Planned Behavior

The attitude-behavior gap has been sought to be understood by models of ethical consumer behavior. One frequently used model for evaluating pro-environmental behavior is Ajzen's (1985) theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Chatzidakis, et al., 2007). The model proposes that buying intents of pro-environmental consumers are derived by internal ethics, moral norms and personal values (Arvola, et al., 2008). However, empirical evidence shows that while consumers are increasingly driven by the ethics of sustainable consumerism, the alteration in buying behavior is less seeming. Reported pro-environmental intentions seldom turn into actual buying behavior during purchasing situations (Devinney, et al., 2007). Consumer's do not state what they mean and do not mean what they state. A gap is observed between what people state they want and what they actually purchase when faced with that moment of truth. This social psychological theory of planned behavior hypothesizes that attitudes amongst other factors affect our behavior. Also, in the context of environmentally sustainable behavior, solely having a positive attitude does not predict environmentally sustainable travel choices. A noticeable attitude-behavior gap exists in sustainable tourism likewise (Bergin-Seers & Mair, 2009).

Below is the model of the theory of planned behavior by Icek Ajzen (1991). Consumer's intensions are built on three aspects: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral controls.
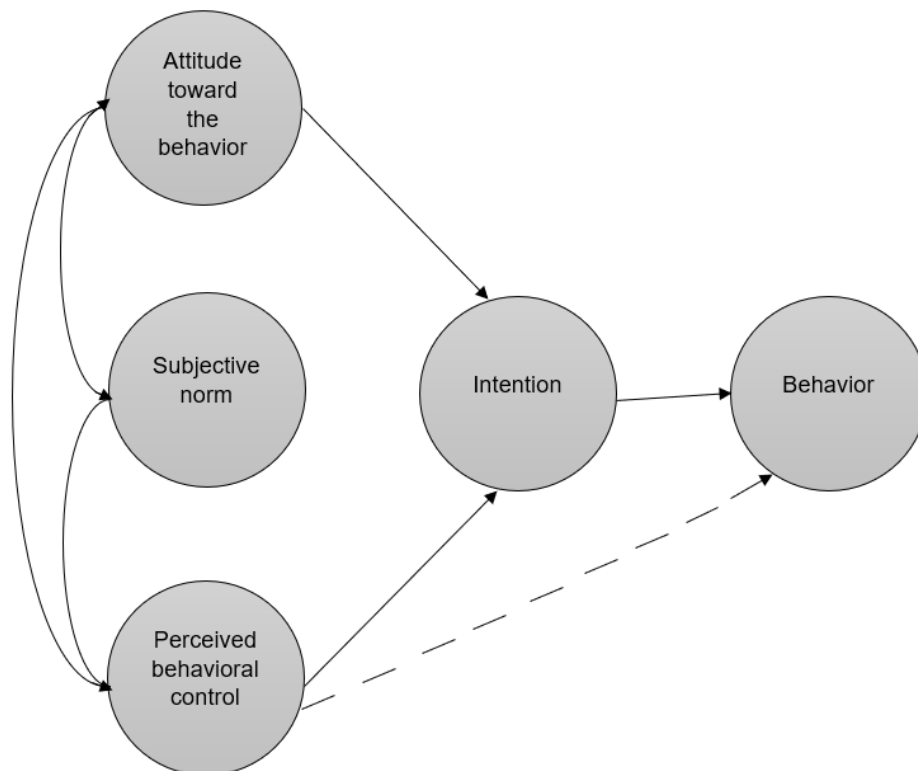

Figure 6. Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991)

Attitude in the figure is referring to the extent to which the consumer is positively prone towards the action. The perceived behavioral control refers to if the consumer has the belief, they can accomplish the desired behavior. Subjective norms refer to the extent to which the consumer perceives that others (friends, family, etc.) wish them to engage in the behavior (White, et al. 2018).

According to Reno, et al., (1993), in explaining the role of social norms when determining sustainable behaviors and attitudes, social norms are divided into two categories (Reno, et. al., 1993). The first being descriptive norms, that refer to what everyone else is

commonly doing. For example; 60 percent of your neighbors do recycle plastics. The second being injunctive norms, which refers to what you are supposed to do, meaning what is commonly acceptable or not acceptable by everyone else. For example; neighbors believe that you too need to recycle plastics. Descriptive norms (Nolan, et al. 2008) and injunctive norms (Reno, et al. 1993) can both influence sustainable behaviors.

Descriptive norms work best in various circumstances, if it conveys that the desired behavior is commonly done by others. A meta-analytic review of 30 studies conducted by Han & Stoel (2017) concluded that the theory of planned behavior consistently predicts responsible consumer behaviors. The subjective norms element has the strongest influence on sustainable intentions, which in turn leads to actual behavior change (Han and Stoel 2017).

6   Reducing the Attitude-Behavior Gap in Sustainable Tourism

OECD (2008) states, that encouraging people to engage in environmentally sustainable behavior is one of the greatest challenges facing our current world (OECD, 2008).

Optimally, sustainable tourism should, amongst other:

1) Maintain vital ecological processes and conserve biodiversity and natural heritage

2) Respect the cultural authenticity of the host communities, preserve the built, cultural heritage and their traditional values, as well as promoting intercultural tolerance and understanding.

3) Ensure sustainable long-term economic activities that provide socio-economic benefits for all stakeholders, including stable employment conditions and opportunities for income generation.

(FCG, 2018)

What are the elements that can influence our behavior when our attitudes do not?

According to Nolan, et al., (2008), marketers can apply two approaches to encourage consumers into engaging in pro-environmental behaviors. Firstly, they can apply self-benefit appeals to communicate benefits to the individual self for engaging in the desired behavior (Nolan, et al., 2008). Consumers are more prone to behave pro-environmentally, when there are some forms of self-benefits involved in the action. Taking as an example energy preservation, a benefit appeal to the self could be emphasized as money savings. Secondly, marketers can highlight the social aspects of behaving pro-environmentally, which can usually be obtained using social norms discussed previously. Those who believe, that they have the power to influence societal outcomes usually behave in a more sustainable way (White, et. al., 2018). When the behavior is made to seem more commonly engaged in, socially desirable and approved of, will make it easier for people to adopt.

6.1   Genuine Corporate Social Responsibility as an Asset

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is one way of promoting sustainable development. It is a corporate model, that supports business contributions to sustainable development. The aim is to create a counterbalance between environmental needs, economic interests, and social expectancy by incorporating the core idea of SD within the corporate strategy. Corporate sustainability is a corporate version of SD and CSR is a voluntary managerial approach to SD (Steurer, et al., 2005).

Customers' expectations in the global marketplace are frequently changing. Hence, there is a need for businesses to seek new ways to connect with their customers, recognize the current consumer expectations and to react to the competition. It is not adequate for hotels to implement sustainability practices solely to reduce costs. Also, airlines that are only focusing on technological innovations in order to enhance their environmental performance will not be enough. To accomplish sustainable tourism development to the fullest degree, companies will need to conduct also those kinds of sustainability practices that shape and advance experiences. As mentioned by World

Business Council for Sustainable Development, social obligations should not be just another cost. Contrarywise, a clear CR strategy could improve profitability, since it will lower costs by strengthening positive social effects. In addition, this kind of strategy helps to harmonize business and social values and can, therefore, identify also new commercial opportunities (World Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2000).

Ethically minded consumers are quick to recognize inconsistencies in corporate behavior or "green wash". Thus, corporations should conduct genuine CSR activities. Genuine CSR could work as one asset in helping to reduce the attitude-behavior gap. Authenticity is about being genuine and about being real, being whom you say you are. Being authentic matters since consumers can be skeptical towards companies. Consumers today are conducting more research than ever before about the products and services they choose to buy. They are looking closely at whether the values that a brand endorses are ones they themselves care about. In short, consumers care about purpose. However, they will not trust or believe in a company's purpose unless the business practices align with the purpose the company states to care about (Bennet, 2017). Moreover, authenticity as a factor is increasing in importance to consumers. Brands that will succeed over the long term are those that want to make life better. According to Bennet (2017) we live in an era of the purpose-driven brand and the most successful CSR practices are fixed in corporate life (Bennet, 2017).

The UN's sustainable development goals are becoming more considered in CSR reporting. According to a study conducted by KPMG in 2017, sustainable development goals are becoming a clear trend in CSR reporting. Sustainable development goals have resonated greatly with companies globally since their launch in less than two years. Approximately four from ten corporate responsibility reports from both N100 and G250 corporations make the relations between the company's CR activities and the SDGs. (Blasco, et. al., 2017).

6.2   SHIFT Framework

The SHIFT framework has been established, because encouraging sustainable behavior has widely been found as challenging. The framework summarizes the findings of consumer research into five key perspectives, that can be leveraged to understand factors behind consumer choices as well as appropriate communication angles. According to Sitra SHIFT report, consumers are prone to alter unfavorable and continue beneficial pro-environmental behaviors when marketers take into consideration how social influence, habit formation, individual self, feelings and cognition, and tangibility can be properly applied (White, et al. 2018). This framework helps to address the attitude-behavior gap examined in this thesis.

The framework first examines social factors, which are shown to have strong influence on consumers' engagement in sustainable behaviors. Making a behavior look socially approved, more commonly engaged in or socially desirable also makes it easier to adopt. Social norms refer to the notion that customers are influenced to engage in sustainable behaviors when other customers are doing the exact same behavior (descriptive norm) and when the social expectation is the appropriate factor to do (injunctive norm) (Reno, et. al., 1993). Social desirability then refers to the notion that customers are prone to apply sustainable behaviors, when they are perceived positively by others. Social factors have influence when the behavior is perceived as socially desirable or when the behavior can be linked to social groups that are important to the consumer itself. Social factors can be especially relevant for a given target market, such as millennials (White, et al. 2018). Social desirability bias links to the attitude-behavior-gap. Social desirability bias results when people answer to, for example, research surveys in a way they believe is socially and commonly accepted. Contrary to answering according to their real buying intent, they report what they feel is expected of them (Antonetti & Maklan, 2015).

The framework secondly examines habit formation. Habits usually form gradually by rerun action and are probable to occur naturally without much conscious control. People are prone to carry with them the habits they have developed throughout their lives and for several people, sustainable consumption behavior is not in line with their habits. One prevalent limitation to engage in sustainable behavior change is that the favorable behaviors appear too difficult and burdensome (McKenie-Mohr, 2000, as cited by White,

2018). Therefore, making the desired behavior easier to execute, could raise the likelihood of it to eventually becoming a habit. By making activities easier to do, like relocating recycling bins to approachable areas, will lead towards more sustainable behavior (Brothers, Krantz and McClannahan 1994; Ludwig, Gray and Rowell 1998, as cited by White, 2018). From the research can be noted that an altruistic or a rational message is not adequate for the most people to change their buying behavior. Habitual change is difficult even when the new behavior has noticeable advantages than the previous one had.

The framework thirdly examines the individual self. The report mainly addresses self-consistency, personal norms, self-efficacy, individual differences and self-interests in this section. Personal norms, as an example, can suggest that the person has a responsibility to carry out sustainable behaviors or a belief that others need to alter their behaviors (Stern 2000, as cited by White, et al., 2018). Therefore, personal norms can increase or discourage sustainable consumption behaviors, contingent on the type of the norm (Press and Arnould 2009; Thøgersen 2005, as cited by White, et al., 2018). When considering self-efficacy, marketers can influence consumers by making them feel, that they can carry out the wanted sustainable behavior. Marketers can high point how the desired behavior can create a significant impact and they can examine the interplay between self-interest (degree of consumer compromise) and efficacy (confidence in product being able to make a difference) (White, et al. 2018).

The framework fourthly examines feelings and cognition. Emotions that can be used to convince consumers to engage in sustainable behaviors include fear, guilt, pride and hope. For marketers to use these emotions effectively, it is important to understand people's perceptions of different aspects of sustainability. Guilt and pride vary in a lot of ways, but both are self-conscious emotions. A meta-analysis on pro-environmental behavior established, that guilt is a great foreteller of attitudes, perceived behavioral control and moral norms, that all affect sustainable consumer behavior and attitudes (Bamberg and Möser, 2007, as cited by White, et. al., 2018). The association of guilt with attitudes and perceived behavioral control is explained by the notion that those who expect more when behaving in non-environmentally friendly way also experience that sustainable behavior has more favorable effects and are more effortless to carry out. In occasions, where people feel guilt for their behavior, they also experience responsibility

to the environment and are then inclined to act in pro-environmentally the next time (Kaiser and Shimoda 1999, as cited by White, et al., 2018).

The framework fifthly and lastly examines Tangibility. Environmental pleas often urge people to carry out behaviors that are tangible and expensive in the here and now, yet the long-term results are very faraway in the distant future, which makes it distant from the individual self. Sustainability as a concept can seem psychologically distant and thus, making environmental issues and resolutions clear, apparent and tangible is relevant in engaging people (White, et al., 2018).

7 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to study how can attitude-behavior gap in sustainable tourism be reduced and how can the barriers that limits consumers' pro-environmental behavior be overcome. To achieve this, sustainable consumption, sustainable development and sustainable development goals were examined first and an explanation as to how these aspects link to tourism was provided. Further, the thesis presented an overview of the global travel market to gain insight into the industry and its importance regarding sustainable development. After this, varying models of consumer buying behavior and theoretical approaches were examined to get a better understanding of what eventually could lead consumer's' intensions to translate into actual pro-environmental buying behavior. Sustainable development as a concept was defined as well as the United Nations sustainable development goals and how the Finnish society views and implements these goals to action were outlined. Potential further research could focus on the eight tangible objectives of the Finnish society and how have these objectives been implemented specifically in the Finnish tourism sector. Moreover, when successful, has the implementation of these objectives increased consumers' pro-environmental buying behavior.

A literature review revealed that pro-environmental buying behavior can be encouraged with the help of various approaches, models and theories outlined in this thesis. Han & Stoel (2017) found that, subjective norms have a major impact on sustainable intents, that in turn they found has the leading result on positive behavior change. According to White, et al. 2018, consumers are prone to alter negative and sustain positive pro-

environmental behaviors when marketers recognize how social influence, habit formation, individual self, feelings and cognition, and tangibility can be properly employed (White, et al. 2018). Hirsch, et al., (2015) argue, that explaining or changing behavior towards sustainable buying behavior begins with varying and codependent influence quantities of sustainable consumption. Their decision-making model of sustainable consumption suggests that beliefs lead to attitudes, which consecutively derive intentions. The real buying behavior is guided by intensions. Various social, individual, and situational factors affect the overall decision-making-process (Hirsch, et al., 2015).

Based on theoretical findings, the factors that might stimulate or deter sustainable buying behavior were outlined and factors that may encourage sustainable purchase intention were proposed. Based on existing research, consumers' buying intentions are affected by a variety of different factors, and this thesis mainly focused on the influence of social and moral norms, perceived behavioral control and habits on consumption behavior. As well as analyzing how various aspects affect sustainable purchase intentions, the thesis also focused on which elements has the most influence in increasing consumer awareness to sustainability-related issues. According to Nolan, et al. (2008) one of the most influential element revolves around the individual self. Consumers are more prone to behave pro-environmentally, when there are some forms of self-benefits involved in the action.

To conclude, understanding consumer decision-making is fundamental to capacitate consumers sustainable behavior. Marketers can highlight the social aspects of behaving pro-environmentally, which can be obtained by using social norms. To influence our analytical mental system 2 (Kahneman, D., 2012), marketers could provide campaigns, that revolve around engaging consumers into solving problems and challenges, provide in-depth storytelling and thus spark consumer curiosity in sustainable consumption.

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