

The mediating effect of environmentally responsible behavior in the relation between environmental awareness and travel behavior of tourists

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Abstract

Community Based Tourism (CBT) is not a tourist segment, but an alternative model of tourism development that reinforces the receiving communities as protagonists in the planning and implementation of tourist activities within the territories. Researches that aim the perspective of tourists in these new models represent an attempt to fill a gap in the literature, considering that the endogenous nature of CBT contributes to the deepening of investigations from the perspective of supply. Therefore, the present investigation aimed to test the relation between environmental awareness and the declared behavior of tourists on a travel, using environmentally responsible behavior as a mediator of this relation. For this, it was developed an opinion survey, of a descriptive nature and quantitative approach, using a sample of 227 tourists who consumed community-based experiences in the municipality of Santo Amaro (MA). As main results, it was evidenced that the environmentally responsible behavior positively and significantly affects the declared behavior in travel of these consumers, and the experience of CBT presents reinforcing characteristics of a sustainable tourism, also empirically. In addition, an instrument for measuring the behavior of tourists in alternative models in Brazilian reality was tested, serving as a subsidy for new tests, and new validations. Finally, the findings are not conclusive, but suggestive that the alternative model of tourism development - CBT - has a strong association with the environmentally responsible behavior of tourists and induces the maintenance of territories, with a focus on environmental conservation. Furthermore, it is suggested that the next studies consider evaluating new scientific bases and extending documentary sources to other text types, in addition to articles. Beyond, the use of probabilistic sampling should be considered for the operationalization of the research, as it allows more reliable results to the population reality, minimizing the number of biases. It is also recommended that the new studies promote comparative analysis between conventional and alternative models, using the same methodological procedures for each context. Therefore, this research advances by situating the tourist as a relevant actor in the conduct of alternative tourism projects, in this case, the CBT.

Keywords: Alternative Model; Tourism; Sustainable tourism; Tourist Behavior; CBT.

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