

Article

Insights for Pro-Sustainable Tourist Behavior: The Role of Sustainable Destination Information and Pro-Sustainable Tourist Habits

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Abstract: In recent decades, the impositions of environmental sustainability have resulted in severe challenges for the tourism sector. It is not enough to make tourist destinations greener and more circular. It is necessary to encourage pro-sustainable behavior among tourists. This research aims to explore the role of available reliable information on the sustainability of destinations in relation to the pro-sustainable habits of tourists and to investigate changes in tourist behavior related to travel and tourism. In addition, it aims to assess the influence of tourists' pro-sustainable habits on changes in their behavior regarding travel and tourism. For this, a sample of 25,711 residents in Europe-27 were considered, collected through the Flash Eurobarometer 499 database (attitudes of Europeans against tourism, autumn 2021) by GESIS—Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences. A quantitative analysis was performed using the Partial Least Square method. The results reveal that the available reliable information on the sustainability of destinations positively influences the adoption of pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits and changes in tourist behavior, guiding them towards pro-sustainable travel and tourism preferences. Furthermore, pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits positively influence pro-sustainable changes in tourist behavior. This study provides accurate and accessible information on the sustainability of destinations, promoting pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits and encouraging the adoption of conscious behavior during travel to work towards a more sustainable tourism industry, which is responsible in regard to the environment and to local communities.

Keywords: sustainable tourism; pro-sustainable tourist behavior; pro-sustainable habits of tourists; sustainable tourism information; environmental sustainability



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1. Introduction

Global tourism is responsible for a significant carbon footprint (around 10%), contributing to environmental degradation and climate change [1,2]. Suppose there is no substantial change in current policies and business practices by 2050, then, if that is the case, the projected growth in tourism will consume 154% more energy and 152% more water, emit 131% more greenhouse gases and provide a 251% increase in solid waste [3]. As a result, several organizations are calling for tourists to adopt more pro-environmental behaviors (PEBs) during their travels [4,5]. PEBs refer to actions individuals or groups take to promote the sustainability of natural resources and environmental protection [6]. Habits of pro-sustainability are habits people adopt to live more sustainably. Therefore, PEBs are actions individuals take to reduce their negative environmental impacts [7]. PEBs include using public transport, reducing energy and water consumption, and properly disposing of waste [8]. The formation of PEBs is influenced by promoting certain factors, such as moral obligation, and inhibiting other factors, such as moral disengagement [4,9].

Sustainable information about a tourist destination is also important in forming PEBs. Sustainable information on tourist destinations refers to information that promotes sustainable tourism practices and helps visitors make responsible environmental choices during their travels [10,11].

Sustainable information about a tourist destination seeks to guide tourists on how to adopt sustainable practices during their trips to minimize the environmental and cultural impacts of tourism in regions [10,12]. This includes information on environmental activities, local conservation efforts and ways to reduce environmental impacts when travelling. For example, providing information about eco-friendly accommodations, local recycling programs, and sustainable transportation options can help tourists make more sustainable choices [13]. By providing sustainable information about tourist destinations, tourists can make more informed decisions, helping to increase PEBs [14].

In this context, tourists' interest in sustainable tourism is growing. A Booking.com survey found that 72% of travelers believe people must make more sustainable choices to save the planet for future generations [4]. Moreover, Aman, Hassan, Khattak, Moustafa, Fakhri and Ahmad [8] showed that tourists' PEBs could improve quality of life, reduce environmental footprints and contribute to sustainable development in tourism. Therefore, tourists must receive more sustainable information about tourist destinations to encourage PEBs. Unfortunately, tourism can negatively impact the environment in the form of pollution, habitat destruction and biodiversity loss [13]. However, these negative impacts can be reduced by promoting sustainable information about tourist destinations and encouraging PEBs. What is the impact of promoting sustainable information about tourist destinations and the encouraging of pro-environmental behavior on reducing the negative impacts of tourism? Promoting sustainable information about tourist destinations can be an effective tool for encouraging PEBs among tourists. This is because such information provides evidence of the effectiveness of these behaviors and increases tourists' abilities to adopt them [4]. PEBs are key to ensuring the environmental sustainability of tourist destinations [4]. Empirical research has shown that sustainable management of sites can be achieved by applying nudge techniques and norms and values theories [14]. Moreover, tourists' environmental awareness significantly improves quality of life, reduces environmental footprint and promotes PEBs [8]. Tourists' pro-environmental behaviors in travel destinations exhibit social attributes of altruism and collective action [7], reinforcing the importance of encouraging such behaviors. Therefore, providing sustainable information about tourist destinations can encourage tourists to act sustainably and reduce the negative environmental consequences of tourism activities [4,8]. High environmental awareness and knowledge can help tourists comply with sustainable development practices, while insufficient knowledge can lead to forgetfulness about environmental issues [8].

Literature on PEBs in tourism highlights the importance of tourists' PEBs in improving quality of life, reducing environmental footprint and promoting sustainable tourism [8]. Zhang, et al. [15] found that integrating a multi-level model, which considers national park management and individual behavior, can contribute to developing knowledge about PEBs. Meanwhile, Li and Wu [16] highlighted that PEBs in tourist destinations exhibit social attributes of altruism and collective action. However, the literature still lacks studies that point to effective strategies to encourage tourists to have more sustainable practices during their trips, and more studies are needed considering different contexts [17,18]. Conducting new studies is important for several reasons. Firstly, sustainable tourism helps to protect the environment, natural resources and wildlife [19]. Second, it provides socio-economic benefits for communities living in tourist destinations [10]. Third, it conserves cultural heritage and creates authentic tourism experiences [20]. Thus, more research is needed to explore how PEBs are promoted among tourists and how to measure their effectiveness in promoting sustainable tourism practices [4,13].

The literature also points to sustainable information on tourist destinations being essential to promote sustainable tourism practices [21,22]. Sustainability represents a key competitive advantage for tourist destinations, but most lack comprehensive information

on sustainable practices [17]. Recent research explores the use of ‘nudges’, environmental cues, that encourage desired behaviors, and normative theories of value beliefs, as potential approaches to facilitate sustainable destination management [14,23]. However, more research is needed to provide tourists with reliable and accurate information about sustainable tourism practices [22,24]. Therefore, it is important to make tourists aware of the environmental problems caused by tourism and provide them with sustainable information to encourage PEBs and to reduce negative impacts of tourism on the environment. How do sources of information on the sustainability of destinations cause changes in the behavior of tourists and induce pro-sustainable tourism and travel habits? How do pro-sustainable tourism and travel habits lead to changes in tourist behavior?

This research explores how reliable information about the sustainability of destinations can influence changes in travel and tourism behaviors and habits towards more environmentally friendly practices.

This paper presents three important contributions. Firstly, it highlights the fact that reliable information on the sustainability of tourist destinations positively promotes conscious and pro-sustainable travel behavior. With such information being accessible, tourists can be encouraged to make more responsible decisions regarding the destinations they choose to visit. Secondly, it emphasizes that the availability of accurate and accessible information on the sustainability of destinations can contribute to adopting pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits. Tourists with access to clear and reliable information are likelier to adopt more sustainable travel practices, such as waste reduction and resource conservation. Finally, it highlights that adopting pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits positively impacts the promotion of conscious and pro-sustainable travel behaviors. Tourists who already adopt these habits are more likely to continue to do so in the future and can positively influence others to do the same.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Factors Influencing Changes in Tourist Behavior

Tourism significantly impacts local communities, and tourists are increasingly aware of these impacts. With the emergence of sustainable tourism, there is a growing emphasis on responsible travel, which considers the social, economic and environmental impacts of tourism on local communities [10,25]. Currently, tourists are more interested in experiencing local culture and supporting local businesses than in mass tourism activities [26,27]. This shift in tourist behavior has a more positive impact on local communities and provides a more meaningful travel experience for tourists [28].

The pandemic of COVID-19 also resulted in changes in tourist behavior. Due to travel restrictions and border closures, tourists generally travel less and spend more time on holiday in their home countries [29]. The mode of transportation to destinations changed. Tourists opted for private transport, such as cars and trailers, rather than public transport, due to concerns about the spread of the virus [30]. These changes in tourist behavior had a major impact on the tourism industry, with tourism-dependent economies being hit the hardest [31].

Tourists are also becoming more aware of their impacts on the environment and are changing their travel behaviors accordingly. This includes choosing eco-friendly accommodation, using public transport or cycling to reduce carbon footprint and supporting sustainable tourism practices [32]. However, tourists are not always willing to make substantial changes in their behavior, such as reducing travel frequency or avoiding high-carbon activities [32]. Factors such as previous travel experience, travel cost and travel time also affect tourist behavior [30,33,34].

This context suggests that factors influencing changes in tourist behavior can be influenced by sustainable information about destinations. Therefore, reliable information about destinations’ sustainability can influence tourists’ pro-sustainable behavior, leading them to adopt responsible tourism practices. Thus, the relationship between factors influencing changes in tourist behavior and sustainable information is mutual, in that sustainable

information can influence tourist behavior and, at the same time, tourist behavior can indicate the effectiveness of such information in promoting responsible tourism practices.

2.2. Sustainable Information about Tourist Destinations

Tourism is an important activity for the global economy but can also negatively impact the environment, local communities and cultural heritages. Sustainable tourism aims to minimize these negative impacts and promote responsible travel practices. Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices apply to all forms of tourism, including mass tourism, and all types of destinations [35,36]. However, sustainable tourism promotes and develops less mass tourist destinations or sustainable alternatives [10]. Truly sustainable and responsible tourism should make destinations more suitable for people to live in and to visit [37,38]. Ecotourism is one of the most popular forms of sustainable tourism, which promotes responsible consumption and sustainable behavior [39]. Due to its close links with other sectors, sustainable tourism has been defined as an important contributor to all three dimensions of sustainable development (environmental, social, and economic) [10,25].

Information about sustainable destinations has become increasingly relevant for tourists seeking travel options that conform to responsible environmental and social practices [40,41]. Furthermore, sustainability commitments by destinations have become increasingly commonplace, with governments and businesses in the sector adopting measures to promote sustainable tourism development [21,22]. Promoting environmentally friendly tourism activities in destinations has also been a growing concern, with the provision of leisure options that value the preservation of nature and local culture. Accommodation sustainability certification is another important aspect, with hotels and hostels adopting sustainable practices that aim to reduce tourism activities' environmental and social impacts [42–44]. Moreover, the carbon footprint in the transportation of tourists is a topic under debate, with a search for alternatives that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, by means of, for example, the use of transportation, such as bicycles and electric cars [2,42].

In this context, sustainable information about tourist destinations can positively impact behaviors that support sustainable tourism [22,45]. When tourists receive information about the sustainability of their destination, they are more likely to develop travel and tourism habits that support sustainable development [9]. Tourists visiting protected areas are increasingly aware of the importance of environmental sustainability, and the need to create harmony between tourists and nature has become a priority [46]. Moreover, tourists may be willing to adopt sustainable tourism behaviors and seek sustainability information if tourist destinations become more sustainable [47]. Therefore, providing sustainable information about tourist destinations can lead to more sustainable and responsible tourism.

H1. *Available reliable information on the sustainability of destinations positively influences pro-sustainable travel behavior.*

Adopting travel and tourism habits that support sustainability is influenced by cognitive and affective mechanisms [48]. Tourists' pro-environmental behavior can promote sustainable tourism development [8]. Habits are also a key driver of tourists' environmental behavior, and integrating sustainability information can lead to the adopting of sustainable practices [49]. Therefore, providing sustainable information about tourist destinations can lead to adopting pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits, promoting sustainable tourism development.

H2. *Available reliable information on the sustainability of destinations positively influences the adoption of pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits.*

2.3. Habits of Pro-Sustainable and Pro-Environmental Behaviors in Tourism, Hospitality and Travel

Habits of pro-sustainability and pro-environmental behavior (PEB) are concepts that complement each other. Both concepts refer to behaviors and habits that reduce negative environmental impacts and promote sustainability. Thus, PEB specifically refers to behaviors positively impacting the environment [6,50]. On the other hand, pro-sustainability habits include behaviors that aim at a more sustainable life in general, including the environment and economic and social aspects [51,52].

In the context of the present study, PEBs refer to actions taken by individuals or groups to promote the sustainable development of natural resources and to protect the environment [6]. These behaviors include a general tendency to do things in an environmentally responsible manner, such as reducing energy consumption, recycling, and responsible waste disposal. PEBs can also be extended to the tourism, hospitality and tourism sectors, wherein tourists and businesses can take steps to reduce their environmental impacts. As people become more aware of environmental issues, tourists become more environmentally conscious and look for green tourism options [53]. Tourists' PEBs in tourist destinations exhibit social attributes of altruism and collective action [7].

PEBs in the travel, hospitality and tourism industries can take many forms. Shopping-related behaviors, such as choosing eco-friendly accommodations and products, can significantly reduce environmental impact [13]. Similarly, transport-related behaviors, such as using public transport, carpooling or choosing eco-friendly modes, also reduce carbon emissions and environmental impacts [54]. Other PEBs in tourism include traveling outside the peak tourist season, choosing less visited destinations, paying more to protect the natural environment and the local community, consuming local products during holidays, reducing waste and water consumption during travel, and contributing to carbon offsetting activities (e.g., tree planting) [4,7,15,55]. However, PEB induction has been recognized as one of the biggest challenges in achieving sustainable tourism and hotel consumption [56].

PEB formation is complex, and several factors can influence it. Moral obligation has been found to positively impact PEB intention, while moral disengagement can inhibit PEB formation [4]. Furthermore, research has found that good daily habits are associated with better destination behavior [55]. Thus, promoting and encouraging PEB in travel, hospitality, and tourism is essential to reduce environmental impact and to promote sustainable practices.

H3. *Pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits positively influence adopting pro-sustainable travel behavior.*

Figure 1 contains the research model and the formulated hypotheses.

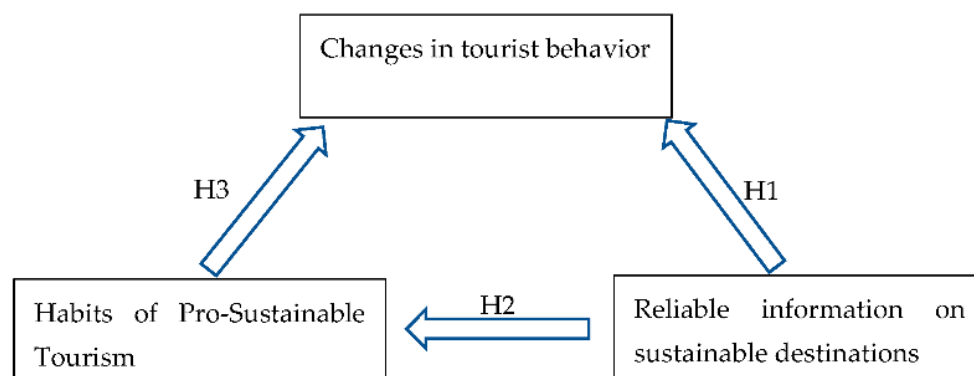


Figure 1. Research model.

3. Methods

3.1. Sample and Data Processing

The purpose of this research was to explore the role of available information on the sustainability of destinations in the pro-sustainable travel habits of tourists and changes in their behaviors regarding travel and tourism. In addition, it aimed to assess the influence of pro-sustainable tourist travel habits on changes in their behaviors regarding travel and tourism.

This study used a Flash Eurobarometer 499 database (Attitudes of Europeans towards Tourism, Autumn 2021), provided by GESIS-Leibniz Institute for Social Sciences and published in 2022. Data were collected by telephone and computer-assisted interviewing between 18–28 October 2021. The geographical coverage included residents from each of the 27 member states, aged 15 years and older. Sample processing was by means of probability (simple random). The sample consisted of 25,711 participants.

Regarding socio-demographic characteristics of the participants (Table 1), 48.5% were male, 51% female and 0.5% other. The average age of the participants was 47.9 years, with 9% being between 15 and 24 years old, 15.4% between 25 and 34 years old, 20.2% between 35 and 44 years old, 19.7% between 45 and 54 years old and 35.5% were over 55 years old. The sample was balanced in terms of the nationalities of the participants, with each nationality representing a maximum of 5% of the total sample. A total of 37.4% of the respondents lived in a large town, 34.5% in a small or middle-sized town and 28.2% in a rural area or village. Regarding professional occupation, 47.2% were employees, 14.2% were self-employed, 32.3% were without professional activity, and 6.4% were other.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characterization of participants.

	Frequency	Valid Percent
Gender		
Male	12 470	48.5
Female	12 881	50.1
Other	360	1.4
Age		
14 to 24	2 314	9.0
25 to 34	3 959	15.4
35 to 44	5 194	20.2
45 to 54	5 065	19.7
More than 55	9 179	35.7
Residence		
Large Town	9 616	37.4
Small- or middle-sized town	8 870	34.5
Rural area or village	7 225	28.1
Professional occupation		
Employees	12 136	47.2
Self employed	3 651	14.2
Without professional activity	8 305	32.3
Other	1 619	6.30

3.2. Variables and Items

Table 2 contains a summary of the variables and items contained in the research model. The “habits” variable was measured by nine items and was collected by question Q5 of the survey: “Q5 Are you prepared to change your travel and tourism habits to be more sustainable for the environment?”. Participants could choose multiple answers, the binary answer being: 1—yes; 0—no. As the participants could answer multiple options, this variable was considered as a score between 1–9.

Table 2. Variables and items.

Variables	Items
Habits	H1. Pay more to protect the natural environment
	H2. Pay more to benefit the local community
	H3. Take holidays outside of the high tourist season
	H4. Travel to less visited destinations
	H5. Contribute to carbon-offsetting activities (e.g., plant trees)
	H6. Consume locally sourced products on holiday
	H7. Choose transport options based on the ecological impact
	H8. Reduce waste while on holiday
	H9. Reduce water usage on holiday
Reliable Information	Inf1. The carbon footprint of transportation options
	Inf2. Eco-friendly tourism activities at the destination
	Inf3. Sustainability certifications of the accommodations
	Inf4. Sustainability commitments of destinations
	Inf5. Sustainability commitments of destinations
Tourist Behavior	B1. Change in transport mode to the destination
	B2. Less travelling overall
	B3. More holidays in my own country
	B4. More attention to the impact of tourism on local communities

The variable “reliable information” was measured by four items and was collected by question Q7: “How easy or difficult is it for you to find reliable information on the following aspects to plan your trips?”. Responses were obtained on a four-point Likert scale, with 1 being very easy to 4 being very difficult.

The “behavior” variable was measured by four items collected by Q1: “What long-term effects do you foresee on your travel behavior?”. Four items measured this response, and participants could choose multiple responses. Thus, the answer was binary: 1—yes; 0—no. As the participants could answer multiple options, this variable was considered in a score that varied between 1–4.

3.3. Data Analysis

A statistical analysis of the variables and the items that measured them was performed using SPSS software. Then, a factor analysis was performed, with an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with varimax-rotated factor matrices and a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) implemented in SPSS software. The EFA aimed to divide the items by factors, and the CFA confirmed the reflexive nature of measuring the items by the latent variables in the research model. The relationships between the variables in the research model were tested using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method in Smart PLS 3.0. The PLS is a suitable method since it does not require data normality (confirmed by the item not having a normal distribution in kurtosis and skewness statistics, as seen in the Appendix A)

and allows optimizing the relationships between variables and between variables and the items that measure them [57]. The items were also evaluated in terms of validity and reliability, using the following three measures, according to Hair, Sarstedt and Ringle [57]: (i) Cronbach's Alpha measurements ($C\alpha > 0.70$); (ii) composite reliability ($CR > 0.70$); (iii) Average Variance Extracted ($AVE > 0.50$). Discriminant validity was calculated by the following two metrics, as proposed by Leguina [58]: (i) the Fornell-Larcker criterion and (ii) the heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT). The measures of reliability, convergence and discriminant validity were performed using the Smart PLS 3.0. Finally, bootstrapping analysis was also performed in Smart PLS 3.0 to test the study hypotheses.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Analysis

The sample was composed of 25,711 participants. Tables 3 and 4 show the response frequencies of the participants to each item that measured the variables of the research model.

Table 3. Frequency of responses by participants to items that measured pro-sustainable habits in terms of travel and tourism and change in tourist behavior.

Variables	Items	Frequency (%)
Habits	H1. Pay more to protect the natural environment	34.30%
	H2. Pay more to benefit the local community	31.40%
	H3. Take holidays outside of the high tourist season	45.10%
	H4. Travel to less visited destinations	39.60%
	H5. Contribute to carbon-offsetting activities (e.g., plant trees)	32.30%
	H6. Consume locally sourced products on holiday	54.00%
	H7. Choose transport options based on the ecological impact	33.20%
	H8. Reduce waste while on holiday	48.30%
	H9. Reduce water usage on holiday	32.00%
Tourist Behavior	B1. Change in transport mode to the destination	18.40%
	B2. Less travelling overall	37.60%
	B3. More holidays in my own country	39.90%
	B4. More attention to the impact of tourism on local communities	27.10%

Table 4. Frequency of responses for the reliable information variable.

		Very Easy	Rather Easy	Rather Difficult	Very Difficult	Don't Know
Reliable Information	Inf1. The carbon footprint of transportation options	9.70%	24.7%	28.7%	16.30%	20.70%
	Inf2. Eco-friendly tourism activities at the destination	13.50%	40.20%	25.70%	6.20%	14.30%
	Inf3. Sustainability certifications of the accommodations	11.40%	33.80%	26.70%	9.10%	19.00%
	Inf4. Sustainability commitments of destinations	9.20%	31.80%	31.40%	9.80%	17.80%

The results revealed that participants were more willing to start consuming local products (54.00%) and to reduce waste (48.30%) during holidays. However, they were less willing to pay more for the benefit of the local community (31.40%), to reduce water consumption during holidays (32.00%) and to contribute to carbon offsetting activities

(32.30%). Regarding travel and tourism behavior changes, respondents were willing to take more vacations in their own countries (39.90%) and to travel less (37.60%). Despite this, they were less willing to change their modes of transport (18.40%).

Regarding the ease or difficulty in obtaining reliable information about tourist destinations, most participants found it easy or very easy to obtain information about environmentally friendly tourist activities. However, information about the carbon footprint of transport options is the information they had the hardest time obtaining.

4.2. Factor Analysis

Table 5 shows the factor analysis results implemented through an EFA and a CFA. Regarding the EFA, the initial 17 items were reduced to 6 items because variables of habits and tourist behavior were used in the score. These items were divided by 3 factors corresponding to each construct. Considering that the questions that gave rise to the indicators measuring the variables were collected through questionnaires, we carried out a common method bias (CMB) through the Harman one-factor test to assess whether there was any consistency in the responses or any bias. The research model contained three constructs with an accumulated variance of 70.89%. The largest factor explained only the 32.78% variance. Individually, no single factor explained a variance greater than 50%, so our data were unlikely to be affected by the CMB.

Table 5. EFA and CFA results.

Set of Items	1	2	3		
	Habits	Tourist Behavior	Reliable Information	Communality	Confirmatory factor loads
Habits	0.797			0.789	1.000
Tourist Behavior		0.816		0.724	1.000
Reliable Information					
Inf1.			0.731	0.754	0.769
Inf2.			0.784	0.926	0.764
Inf3.			0.753	0.778	0.785
Inf4.			0.793	0.778	0.782

Regarding the implemented CFA, Table 5 contains the confirmatory factor loads. All items had high confirmatory factor loads (>0.70), proving the reflective nature of the model, and no items had to be excluded.

4.3. Measures of Reliability and Validity

Table 6 contains the measures of reliability and convergence of the model obtained after applying the PLS method (Appendix B). The values obtained for Cronbach's Alpha ($C\alpha$), composite reliability (CR) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were higher than the reference values and, as such, the model has reliability and convergence.

Table 6. Measures of reliability and convergence.

	$C\alpha$	CR	AVE	Habits	Tourist Behavior	Reliable Information
Habits	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000		
Tourist Behavior	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.469	1.000	
Reliable Information	0.779	0.858	0.601	−0.222	−0.152	0.775

Table 7 presents the discriminant validity according to the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the HTMT analysis. The squared AVE values (diagonally in bold) were greater than the intervariable correlation coefficient, indicating a high level of discriminant validity. The value obtained for the HTMT scores was less than 0.90 and, as Leguina [58] suggested,

there was discriminant validity between the reflexive constructs. Furthermore, the model had an excellent fit, as indicated by the following: (i) the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) (0.934; reference value > 0.90); (ii) Normative Fit Index (NFI) (0.952; reference value > 0.90) and (iii) the Root Mean Square Approximation Error (SRMR) (0.065; reference value < 0.08).

Table 7. Measures of discriminant validity.

	Fornell–Larcker Criterion			HTMT		
	Tourist Behavior	Habits	Reliable Information	Tourist Behavior	Habits	Reliable Information
Tourist Behavior	1.000					
Habits	0.469	1.000		0.437		
Reliable Information	−0.152	−0.222	0.775	0.172	0.259	

Note: AVE Square Root in bold.

The predictive relevance (Stone–Geisser Q^2) was also evaluated, based on the cross-validated redundancy approach and the effect size (f^2) of the endogenous variable habits and tourist behavior. As Q^2 was greater than zero (Q^2 of the habits = 0.149; Q^2 of the tourist behavior = 0.221), the estimated PLS model is relevant in predicting the dependent variables' habits and tourist behavior. According to the reference values of Cohen [59], the values obtained for the size effect (f^2) revealed that the constructs had a medium effect (habits > tourist behavior: 0.256; reliable information > tourist behavior: 0.203; reliable information > habits: 0.252).

4.4. Bootstrap Analysis

Table 8 shows the results of the bootstrapping analysis of the hypotheses considered in the research model. All relationships established between variables were significant. Facilitated access to reliable information on the sustainability of destinations positively influenced the adoption of pro-sustainable travel habits ($\beta = -0.232$) and tourism and changes in tourist behavior towards sustainable destination options ($\beta = -0.056$), confirming hypotheses H1 and H2. The results revealed that pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits positively influenced ($\beta = 0.424$) changes in tourist behavior towards sustainable destination options, confirming H3.

Table 8. Results of bootstrap analysis.

	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	p-Values	Confidence Interval	
					2.5%	97.5%
H1: Reliable information > Tourist Behaviour	−0.056	0.017	8.640	0.000	−0.061	−0.040
H2: Reliable Information > Habits	−0.232	0.015	9.064	0.000	−0.234	−0.211
H3: Habits > Tourist Behaviour	0.424	0.016	9.799	0.000	0.447	0.468

Note: (i) The scale of the Reliable Information variable went from 1–very easy to 4–very difficult. (ii) p -value < 0.001.

In Figure 2, we can see the estimation results of the initially proposed research model.

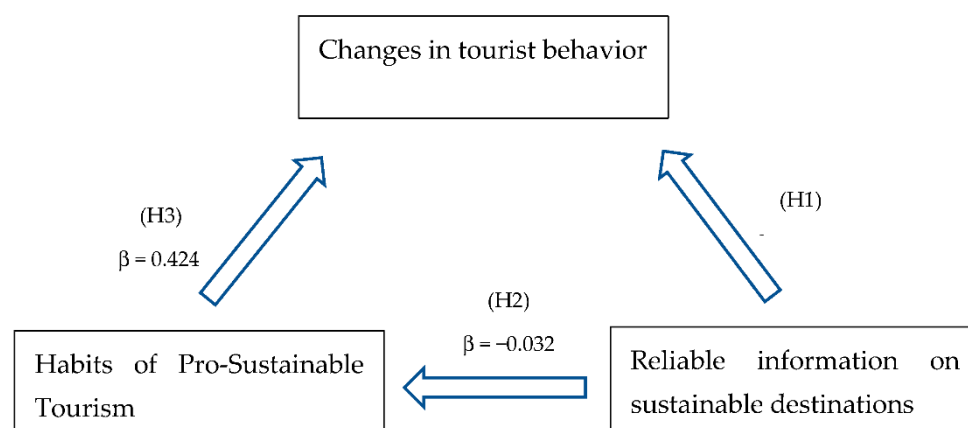


Figure 2. Results of estimation of the research model.

5. Discussion of Results

As the tourism industry continues to grow, it is critical to promote sustainable messages about tourist destinations and PEBs in the tourism industry. Thus, this paper fills several gaps in the literature by addressing the urgent need for sustainable tourism practices [60] since tourism contributes significantly to the economies of many countries worldwide [61]. However, it is important to highlight that most tourist destinations still lack comprehensive information on these practices [17], despite the negative impact of tourism on the environment.

In the following, we discuss the relationship between reliable, sustainable information about tourist destinations and pro-environmental behaviors in tourism. The following discusses the relationship between reliable and sustainable information about tourist destinations and pro-environmental tourism behaviors.

This study found that reliable information on the sustainability of destinations positively influences changes in tourist behavior, providing tourists with the information necessary to their developing concerns about environmental sustainability (H2). It was also confirmed that the available reliable information on the sustainability of destinations positively influences the adoption of pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits (H1). Therefore, tourists are likely to adopt pro-sustainable travel behavior when they have access to reliable information about the sustainable practices of destinations, which may influence their willingness to pay more if the sustainable practices of the destination contribute to improvement of the environment [62]. This is based on the idea that awareness about sustainability can lead to behavioral changes, such as choosing more sustainable options during the trip. For example, if a tourist knows that a particular destination is committed to reducing its carbon footprint, they are likely to choose eco-friendly modes of transport.

Similarly, if tourists know that a particular destination is committed to reducing waste, they are likely to engage in sustainable waste management practices [63]. However, for conscious decision-making, the tourist must have access to appropriate and accurate sustainable information, which is often not easily accessible because managers in the tourism sector have difficulty associating cost savings and increases in tourist demand to primarily sustainable projects [64]. Furthermore, reliable information on tourist destinations can induce tourists to adopt pro-sustainable habits. These habits are a psychological reaction to the information about the tourist that can be promoted through the dissemination of information by technological means [65].

In addition, concern for environmental sustainability is increasingly valued by tourists, leading to the appreciation of companies that adopt sustainable practices. These results are in line with those indicated by Tang, Ma and Ren [9], Wang, et al. [66] and Rais and Berrada [67].

Finally, this study found that pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits positively influence pro-sustainable travel behavior (H3). This means that individuals already have

pro-sustainable habits in their travel and tourism and more developed environmental and social awareness, making them more likely to adopt sustainable behavior in destination decisions. Thus, the tourist tends to choose destinations that adopt sustainable practices, opt for less polluting means of transport or reduce the consumption of natural resources during the trip. This result aligns with those of Xu, Huang and Whitmarsh [6] and Tang, Ma and Ren [9]. Studies have shown that when there are pro-sustainable habits on a day-to-day basis, translating, for example, into principles of sustainable consumption, the same habits tend to be extended during the holidays. Many of these pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits were [22] adopted due to the pandemic, which made tourists more environmentally conscious, leading them to prefer inland destinations closer to nature [68].

6. Conclusions

6.1. Main Conclusions

Compliance with the principles of environmental sustainability has been a challenge that tourist companies have tried to respond to in recent decades. However, over and above providing sustainable travel and tourism offers, the tourism industry needs to guide the transformation of tourist behavior according to the principles of environmental sustainability. Thus, the present study aimed to explore the role of available information on the sustainability of destinations in the pro-sustainable travel habits of tourists and the transformation of tourist behavior. It also aimed to explore the influence of tourists' pro-sustainable travel habits on changes in travel and tourist behavior.

The results revealed that the available reliable information on the sustainability of destinations positively influences the adoption of pro-sustainable habits by tourists and transforms tourist behavior, providing it with principles of environmental sustainability. In addition, tourists with pro-sustainable habits regarding travel and tourism tend to adopt more environmentally sustainable behaviors when choosing tourist destinations.

6.2. Theoretical Implications

This study contributes to developing the literature on changes in tourist behavior, habits for pro-sustainable tourism and the availability of reliable information on sustainable destinations.

It was found that having access to credible information regarding the sustainability of travel destinations positively impacts pro-sustainable travel behavior, thus confirming H1. Credible information about the sustainability of a tourist destination is one of the most significant factors influencing pro-sustainable travel behavior. This, in turn, can affect tourists' choice of travel destinations. Tourists tend to behave more pro-environmentally in destinations that have well-established and accessible sustainable initiatives, which suggests that the availability of reliable sustainability information can influence travel behavior [55,69]. Providing accurate and accessible information about sustainable destinations can encourage tourists to make more sustainable travel decisions, significantly contributing to preserving the environment and local communities. Therefore, information on sustainability must be available in a clear and easily accessible way so that tourists can make informed and responsible choices when planning their trips.

It was also found that having reliable information about the sustainability of tourist destinations positively impacts the adoption of pro-sustainable travel and tourism behaviors, thus confirming H2. Tourists with knowledge about the sustainability of their travel destinations are more inclined to adopt pro-sustainable behaviors, such as waste reduction and resource conservation [70]. Therefore, providing reliable information about the sustainability of destinations can contribute to the adoption of pro-sustainable travel and tourism habits, which, in turn, can lead to a more sustainable and environmentally conscious tourism industry.

Finally, it was also found that adopting pro-sustainable travel and tourism practices positively promotes conscious and pro-sustainable travel behavior, thus confirming H3. Therefore, factors related to tourists' attitudes and perceptions of a destination as being sustainable positively impacts tourist intentions to visit such eco-friendly places [10,71]. Promoting pro-sustainable travel and tourism practices can lead to an increase in the adoption of conscious and pro-sustainable behaviors during travel, thus contributing to the preservation of the environment and local communities [72].

6.3. Practical Implications

This study infers a set of practical implications. First, the study demonstrates that the European population is changing its behavior towards travel and tourism, looking for sustainable tourist offers. Second, by meeting the demand for sustainable travel and tourism, companies in the tourism sector meet tourist demand and protect tourist destinations. In this way, those responsible for making tourist decisions about destinations must design strategies capable of promoting pro-sustainable behavior in tourists, adjusted to the characteristics of the destinations and to tourists with different profiles. Third, reliable information on tourist sustainability contributes positively to the adoption of sustainable travel and tourism habits and changes in tourist behaviors. In this way, tourist companies play a vital role in disseminating reliable information about the sustainability of tourist destinations to attract more tourists and preserve local resources. Adopting technologies, such as virtual and augmented reality, social media and gamification via online media, can be good channels for communicating this information. Fourth, political decisions must focus on policies and regulations that encourage pro-sustainable habits in tourists, improving the population's behavior while traveling and contributing to a more daily sustainable society. Fifth, education about pro-sustainable habits can transform the daily lives of people, helping to ensure that consumers, whether of essential goods or of tourist trips, are guided by sustainability principles.

6.4. Limitations and Future Lines of Investigation

This study is not without limitations. The sample was collected through a secondary database, and, as such, the indicators used in this study were based on available data. The constructs used with different indicators could lead to different results, ideal for additional primary data collection for greater significance of the study. In addition, the database included responses from participants from several countries, and, in future studies, nationalities may be considered a moderate variable. Pro-sustainable habits and reliable information available on the sustainability of destinations only explain tourists' pro-sustainable behavior. In future studies, the personality traits of tourists, such as the big five, should also be considered. In addition, pro-sustainable habits were measured by indicators directly related to practices carried out by tourists during vacation trips. It would be interesting to assess how tourists adopt pro-sustainable habits in their homes and relate to habits when traveling. The database of this study considers a large sample of European participants without regard to socio-demographic characteristics. Thus, in future lines of investigation, gender, age, and education could be considered moderate variables of the research model to assess whether the results obtained would be different. Comparative studies between European countries are also suggested to explore the cultural role in tourists' habits and pro-sustainable behaviors. The variable information available on sustainable destinations does not consider communication channels. It would be essential to assess whether different types of information channels are important antecedents of tourists' absorption of sustainable information about destinations.

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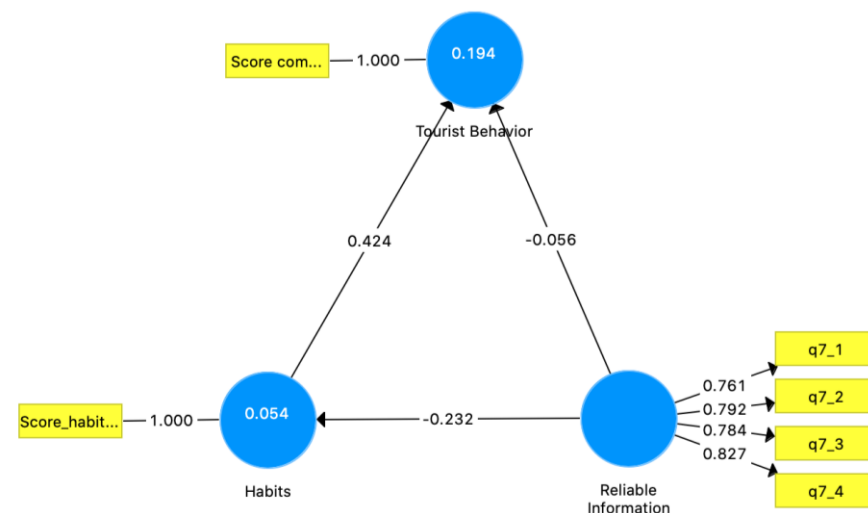
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Appendix A. Results of Skewness and Kurtosis Tests

		Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Tourist Behaviour	B1. Change in transport mode to the destination	1.631	0.015	0.660	0.031
	B2. Less travelling overall	0.511	0.015	−1.739	0.031
	B3. More holidays in my own country	0.456	0.015	−1.793	0.031
	B4. More attention to the impact of tourism on local communities	1.029	0.015	−0.941	0.031
Habits	H1. Pay more to protect the natural environment	0.662	0.015	−1.562	0.031
	H2. Pay more to the benefit of the local community	0.803	0.015	−1.356	0.031
	H3. Take holidays outside of the high tourist season	0.198	0.015	−1.961	0.031
	H4. Travel to less visited destinations	0.425	0.015	−1.820	0.031
	H5. Contribute to carbon-offsetting activities (e.g., plant trees)	0.755	0.015	−1.430	0.031
	H6. Consume locally sourced products on holiday	−0.16	0.015	−1.974	0.031
	H7. Choose transport options based on the ecological impact	0.712	0.015	−1.493	0.031
	H8. Reduce waste while on holiday	0.067	0.015	−1.996	0.031
	H9. Reduce water usage on holiday	0.771	0.015	−1.405	0.031
Reliable Information	Inf1. The carbon footprint of transportation options	1.45	0.015	0.102	0.031
	Inf2. Eco-friendly tourism activities at the destination	2.04	0.015	2.162	0.031
	Inf3. Sustainability certifications of the accommodations	1.579	0.015	0.494	0.031
	Inf4. Sustainability commitments of destinations	1.679	0.015	0.820	0.031

Appendix B. Model Obtained after Applying the PLS Method



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