

Personal values and the theory of planned behaviour: A study of values and holiday trade-offs in young adults



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Personal values impact value-congruent intentions through attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control.
- Value trade-offs have a greater impact on the TPB constructs than isolated values.
- The total effect of self-enhancement versus self-transcendence on intentions was larger than that of SN and that of PBC.
- The total effect of openness-to-change versus conservation on intentions was larger than that of SN.

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ABSTRACT

Prior studies have ignored information inherent in the structure of people's values when investigating their impact on tourism decisions. This study examined how personal values trade-offs along two bipolar values dimensions (self-enhancement versus self-transcendence and openness-to-change versus conservation) impacted young adults' travel decisions. A two-staged survey of 299 young adults obtained personal values (at time 1) and value-expressive holiday preferences within a theory of planned behaviour (at time 2). Both bipolar values dimensions predicted attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control towards value-congruent holidays. The total effect of personal values on intentions was larger than that of subjective norms for both dimensions and larger than that of perceived behavioural control for the self-transcendence versus self-enhancement dimension.

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1. Introduction

Prior studies have shown personal values impact tourism preferences (e.g., Lee, Soutar, & Louviere, 2008; Madrigal & Kahle, 1994). However, research has ignored the critical role the structure of personal values plays in predicting behaviour (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003). Further, research on personal values in tourism has often focused on one or two constructs of interest, which limits our understanding of the full impact of values on decision processes. Here, we combined the theory of personal values and the theory of planned behaviour to see how personal values trade-offs impact the travel decisions of young adults.

2. Literature review

Personal values are *trans*-situational motivational life-goals that

serve as guiding principles in people's lives (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992). It is widely understood that values are activated and likely to guide behaviours when they are brought into conflict in a decision making process. As many decisions, including tourism decisions, are likely to activate both congruent and conflicting values, it is crucial to understand people's values systems, rather than the priority given to a single value (Schwartz, 1996). Values theory posits a circular motivational continuum that underlies the conflicts and compatibilities among values (Schwartz, 1992). Schwartz (1992) summarised these trade-offs along two bi-polar dimensions: Openness to change (OC) versus Conservation (CO) and Self-transcendence (ST) versus Self-Enhancement (SE). These bipolar dimensions are integrated in the theory of planned behaviour in Fig. 1.

In the theory of planned behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, 1991) intentions (Int) are determined by three antecedents: attitudes toward a focal behaviour (Att), perceptions of important others' (dis) approval of the performance of the behaviour (subjective norms – SN), and perceptions of the ease or difficulty of performing the behaviour (perceived behavioural control – PBC). While Ajzen and Fishbein

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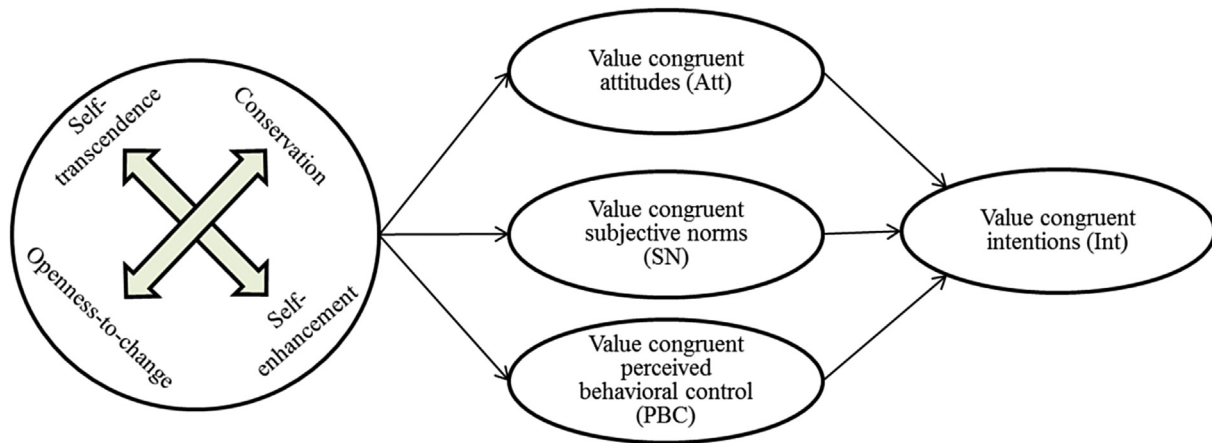


Fig. 1. Proposed influence of values on the theory of planned behaviour.

(2005) suggested individual differences, such as personal values, may impact all three antecedents in their model, no studies have examined their impact on all three antecedents.

Here, for the first time, we examined the impact values trade-offs have on all three antecedents to intentions to go on a value-expressive holiday. If a holiday alternative is congruent with a person's value priorities it is more likely to be preferred, whereas if it is conflicting it is more likely to be rejected, suggesting:

Hypothesis 1. The two bipolar values dimensions will have a positive impact on:

- Attitudes toward value-congruent holiday options;
- Subjective norms toward value-congruent holiday options; and
- Perceived behavioural control towards value-congruent holiday options.

Hypothesis 2. Attitudes toward going on a value congruent holiday will have a direct positive impact on behavioural intentions.

Hypothesis 3. Subjective norms toward going on a value congruent holiday will have a direct positive impact on behavioural intentions.

Hypothesis 4. Perceived behavioural control toward going on a value congruent holiday will have a direct positive impact on behavioural intentions.

3. Methodology

A convenience sample of Australian university students (young adults) completed two online surveys three months apart, with values (BWV-r; Lee et al., in press) being asked at time 1 ($N = 353$) and the TPB questions (Ajzen, 1991) relating to their intentions to go on each of four value-expressive holidays being asked at time 2 ($N = 299$). The pretested value-expressive holidays were:

- An exciting holiday (reflecting Openness-to-Change);
- A prestigious holiday (reflecting Self-Enhancement);
- A well-organized holiday (reflecting Conservation); and
- A compassionate holiday (reflecting Self-Transcendence).

Two models were examined each reflecting one of the bipolar value dimensions. The first examined the influence the OC versus CO bipolar dimension (OC minus CO values) had on the TPB constructs for the OC minus CO holidays. The second examined the

influence the ST versus SE bipolar dimension (ST minus SE values) had on the TPB constructs for the ST minus SE holidays.

4. Results and discussion

All of the TPB constructs had good measurement properties (reliability, convergent and discriminant validity; see Table A1). The WarpPLS partial least squares program (Kock, 2015) was used to assess these properties and to estimate each model (Model 1: OC versus CO and Model 2: ST versus SE). The three TPB antecedents accounted for over 70% of the variance in intentions toward going on a value congruent holiday in both models (Table 1). The bipolar value dimensions significantly impacted all three TPB antecedents, supporting H1a, H1b and H1c. H2 (attitude on intention) and H4 (PBC on intention) were also supported, but H3 (SN on intention) was not supported in either model.

The value dimensions also had significant positive total effects on intention (OC versus CO $\beta = 0.31$; ST versus SE $\beta = 0.45$). In model 1, the effect size for the value dimension on intention ($d = 0.10$) was greater than for that of SN ($d = 0.04$), but not attitude ($d = 0.34$) or PBC ($d = 0.33$). In model 2, the effect size for the value dimension on intention ($d = 0.24$) was greater than for SN ($d = 0.01$) but not for attitude ($d = 0.44$) or PBC ($d = 0.32$).

We argued that a person's values structure, represented by the bipolar dimensions in our analysis, should add to the explanation of holiday intentions beyond that suggested by single values. In Table A2, we report the β s for the four higher order values on the TPB antecedents and assess the differences from the bipolar models. We found the bipolar β had significantly more influence than did the higher order values in 6 of the 12 comparisons and that there was no case in which the bipolar β had significantly less influence than did the higher order values.

Table 1
The standardized coefficients and effect sizes for the models.

	Model 1: OC versus CO ($N = 299$)		Model 2: ST versus SE ($N = 299$)	
	β	Cohen's d	β	Cohen's d
values \rightarrow ATT	0.31 ***	0.09	0.52 ***	0.27
values \rightarrow SN	0.16 **	0.03	0.33 ***	0.11
values \rightarrow PBC	0.39 ***	0.15	0.44 ***	0.19
ATT \rightarrow INT	0.44 ***	0.34	0.52 ***	0.44
SN \rightarrow INT	0.08	0.04	0.02	0.01
PBC \rightarrow INT	0.43 ***	0.33	0.39 ***	0.32
R ²	0.71		0.76	

** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

5. Discussion and conclusions

This study demonstrated the importance of examining personal values in predicting holiday decisions and the usefulness of applying the theory of planned behaviour in exploring value-intention relations. By revealing the significant impact of values on all three TPB antecedents, this study shows a greater effect of values than that shown in prior research (e.g., Goh, Ritchie, & Wang, 2017). It also demonstrates that the structure of values is important in the prediction of holiday intentions. This goes beyond previous studies that focused on the influence of single values in the tourism context (e.g., Goh et al., 2017). Marketers can use these findings to frame holiday products to target tourists' value trade-offs. Future research should investigate the impact of values structure on other tourism behaviors and in other samples. It should also investigate whether values, as relatively stable, *trans*-situational goals, have a more consistent effect on travel decisions over time, than situation specific travel motivations.

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data related to this article can be found at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2016.12.023>.

Appendix

Table A1

Means, reliability, AVE and correlations for each value dimension holiday model

Construct	Items	M(SD)	Construct Reliability	AVE	OC-CO	Att	SN	PBC
The OC versus CO Holiday (trade-offs between OC and CO holidays) N = 299								
ATT	4	1.90 (1.71)	0.93	0.76	0.31			
SN	2	0.38 (1.67)	0.83	0.71	0.16	0.49		
PBC	2	0.76 (1.50)	0.69	0.53	0.39	0.68	0.60	
INT	3	1.97 (1.93)	0.92	0.79	0.33	0.77	0.55	0.77
					ST-SE	Att	SN	PBC
The ST versus SE Holiday (trade-offs between ST and SE holidays) N = 299								
ATT	4	0.34 (2.29)	0.93	0.76	0.52			
SN	2	0.85 (1.94)	0.78	0.64	0.33	0.65		
PBC	2	0.25 (1.69)	0.70	0.54	0.44	0.75	0.75	
INT	3	0.40 (2.54)	0.96	0.88	0.54	0.83	0.66	0.80

Table A2

Path coefficients for the four higher order values and the bipolar value dimensions on the TPB constructs.

	OC-CO	OC	CO	ST-SE	SE	ST
Values → ATT	0.31	0.23	0.16*	0.52	0.35*	0.41
Values → SN	0.16	0.20	0.17	0.33	0.29	0.21
Values → PBC	0.39	0.13**	0.18**	0.44	0.24*	0.17**

Note. All coefficients were significant above the $p < 0.05$ level. Significant differences in path coefficients between the higher order and bipolar values are indicated by * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

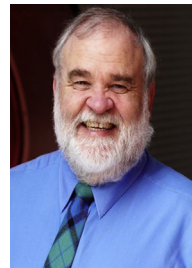
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