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Traveller's mindsets and theory of planned behaviour

Abstract

Prior studies have established the importance of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) in predicting travellers' intentions and behaviours. However, recent research advocates that individuals' mindsets provide an important framework for understanding their behaviour. The relationship between the two has not yet been examined. Thus, this article explores the relationship between mindsets and the theory of planned behaviour. A survey of 312 respondents was undertaken in Lisbon, Portugal. PLS-SEM was used to test the validity of the scale items and the hypotheses. The results suggest that travellers' mindsets predict attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control.

Keywords: Fixed mindset; Growth mindset; Implicit theories; Theory of planned behaviour; Travellers' desires; Travellers' intentions.

Traveller's mindsets and theory of planned behaviour

Introduction

It is without doubt that the theory of planned behaviour helps to explain tourists' intentions and behaviours (e.g., Quintal et al., 2015; Ye et al., 2017). Nevertheless, recent research advocates that individuals' mindsets can also explain their behaviour (e.g., Park & John, 2012; Murphy & Dweck, 2016; John & Park, 2016). If these two theoretical approaches are related to behaviour, the following question arises: Is there any relationship between them? As far as the authors are aware, no research has examined the effects of travellers' mindsets. In the present study we combine travellers' mindsets and the theory of planned behaviour to explain travellers' desires and intentions (to revisit and recommend a destination). The present research contributes to the tourism literature by examining the relationships between travellers' mindsets and the extended theory of planned behaviour.

Literature Review

Mindsets are "the beliefs that people have about the nature of human characteristics" (Murphy & Dweck, 2016, p. 127). The foundation that supports mindsets is the implicit theories of intelligence. According to prior studies, the two implicit theories of personality (i.e., entity theory and incremental theory) translate into mindsets, with entity theory representing fixed mindsets and incremental theory representing growth mindsets (Murphy & Dweck, 2016; Park & John, 2016). Fixed mindset individuals believe that qualities (i.e., intelligence or competence) are set in concrete, whereas growth mindset individuals believe that people are able to change and develop through effort and experience (Murphy & Dweck, 2016). Prior studies have shown that mindsets influence behaviours. For example, Rai and Lin (2019) found that fixed mindset individuals prefer risk-averse investments, whereas growth mindset individuals prefer riskier investments.

In the theory of planned behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), human beings are considered rational. According to this theory, intentions are determined by attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Attitudes refer to "the degree to which a person has a favourable or unfavourable evaluation or appraisal of the behaviour in question"; subjective norms refer to "the perceived social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour" (Ajzen, 1991, p.

188); and perceived behavioural control is defined as the person's perception of the ease of performing a behaviour (Armitage & Conner, 2001). Ajzen and Fishbein (2005) suggest that these three focal constructs are subject to individual differences. The present study examines the impact of consumer mindsets on the three focal constructs of tourist intentions (i.e., intentions to revisit and recommend the destination). In addition, it explores whether travel desires fully mediate the effects of attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control on intentions (Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001) (see Figure 1).

Consumer desires can be regarded at two levels of abstraction (Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010; Jiang, Zhang, Ke, Hawk, & Qiu, 2015). At the lower level, they are associated with consumer needs or product benefits that can be obtained from product attributes. At the higher level, desires are associated with individual values or life goals and self-enhancement (Kilbourne & LaForge, 2010), as we argue in the present study. Rokeach (1973) claims that beliefs, attitudes and values are organized in an integrated cognitive system. A desire is a value which is considered as a single belief which guides actions and judgements. A destination desire may be viewed as a driver of purchase or intention to visit (Sarkar, 2014; Boujbel & d'Astous, 2015). In a romantic relationship, passion and intimacy are present without a sense of commitment (Sternberg, 1986). Hence, not all desires result in commitment or purchase. However, when a tourist is engaged in fantasies and day-dreams about a destination, the desire to revisit the destination arises (Shimp & Madden, 1988; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2004).

According to Gollwitzer *et al.* (1990), while attitudes provide reasons for behaviours, motivations provide impetus for actions. Desires in the form of tourists' wishes provide direct motivation for behaviours (Bagozzi, 1992; Bagozzi Dholakia, & Basuroy, 2003), acting as catalysts to transform motivations into actions (Oliver, 1999; Perugini & Bagozzi, 2001). Thus, we included travel desires in our model to test its role in the tourism context.

[Please, insert Figure 1 about here]

Hung (2018) argued that the travellers' mindsets are vital to the development of tourism and should be further explored. It has been shown that the travellers' mindsets (i.e., implemental or post-decisional) influence the attributes that affect destination and experience choice (Oppewal *et al.*, 2015). Similarly, we argue that travellers' mindsets (i.e., fixed or growth) may also influence the three focal constructs that predict travellers' desires and intentions. The properties of travellers' mindsets will, therefore, affect the three antecedents of travel desires and intentions differently. We predict that, as fixed mindset travellers believe that

personal qualities do not change, they will give more importance to subjective norms than will growth mindset travellers. Thus, we propose:

H1a-H1c. Travellers' mindsets have a positive influence on their attitudes towards destinations (H1a), subjective norms (H1b) and perceived behavioural control (H1c).

H2a-H2c. Travellers' attitudes towards destinations (H2a), subjective norms (H2b) and perceived behaviour (H2c) have positive influence on travel desires.

H3a-H3b. Travel desires have positive influence on travellers' intentions to revisit a destination (H3a) and intentions to recommend the destination (H3b).

Method

Convenience sampling was used to collect data from United Kingdom (UK) travellers at Lisbon Humberto Delgado International Airport. UK travellers were chosen because (i) they are considered one of the main groups of tourists who visit Portugal (Ceic, 2018; INE, 2018) and (ii) to avoid any bias that might be created by translating the questionnaire into several different languages. We surveyed only tourists visiting Lisbon and returning to the UK, not transit travellers. We asked them about their travel plans before administering the questionnaire.

A pilot test with 20 UK travellers was conducted before the questionnaires were distributed to the main sample to verify that the questions were well understood (e.g., no ambiguity). A further pilot test with 80 UK travellers was conducted to check the reliability of the measurement items. The values of Cronbach's alpha for all constructs were above the recommended, indicating reliability was achieved. Then, the questionnaire was administered using the face-to-face survey method. Data from a sample of 350 travellers was collected. In the event, 38 questionnaires were excluded from the sample, 25 due to missing values, 5 due to inconsistent responses and 8 extreme multivariate outliers. Thus, a sample of 312 respondents remained for the final analysis, which constituted an 89% usable response rate. The sample was evenly distributed by gender (56% male) and age group. The respondents had various different professions and most of them had completed higher education or vocational training.

The measures were taken from previous studies (see Appendix, Table A1). The items were measured on a 7-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, except for attitudes and revisit intentions, which were measured on a 7-point semantic differential scale. Fixed and growth mindsets were measured with three items adapted from Park and John (2012).

Following Park and John (2012), the growth mindset items were reversed. The items were averaged to form a composite index following Akhtar and Wheeler (2016). Higher scores indicated stronger fixed mindsets, whereas lower scores indicated stronger growth mindsets. Travellers' attitudes towards tourism destinations, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control were each measured using three items, following Quintal et al. (2015). Travel desires were measured using three items, following Perugini and Bagozzi (2001). Finally, revisit intentions and intentions to recommend were each measured using three items, following Quintal et al. (2015).

Findings

This study used SmartPLS 3.0 software and Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to assess the measurement properties (i.e., reliability, and convergent and discriminant validity) and to test the conceptual framework. All constructs had good measurement properties (see Appendix, Table A2). The consumers' mindsets and the three TPB focal constructs accounted for over 20%, 30% and 10% of the variance in travel desires, revisit intentions and intentions to recommend, respectively.

[Please, insert Table 1 about here]

The results support H1a (PC = 0.11, $t = 1.82$, $p < 0.05$), H1b (PC = 0.35, $t = 6.98$, $p < 0.001$) and H1c (PC = 0.21, $t = 3.88$, $p < 0.001$). Travellers' mindsets have a positive impact on their attitudes towards destinations, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. The results also support H2a (PC = 0.22, $t = 4.73$, $p < 0.001$) and H2c (PC = 0.29, $t = 5.59$, $p < 0.001$). Travellers' attitudes towards destinations and perceived behavioural control have positive influence on travel desires. However, the results do not support H2b (PC = 0.09, $t = 1.60$, $p > 0.05$). The positive impact of subjective norms on travel desires is not statistically significant. Finally, the results support H3a (PC = 0.32, $t = 6.99$, $p < 0.001$) and H3b (PC = 0.55, $t = 12.84$, $p < 0.001$); travel desires have positive influence on intentions to revisit and to recommend destinations.

As the results showed that subjective norms do not have a direct effect on travel desires, we examined whether this was due to the mediating effects of attitudes and perceived behavioural control. Previous studies have proposed that subjective norms directly affect attitudes and perceived behavioural control (Quintal et al., 2010). Thus, we argue that the relationship between subjective norms and travel desires is mediated by travellers' attitudes

towards the destination and perceived behavioural control. In addition, we also examined the mediation effects of subjective norms on the relationships between travellers' mindsets, attitudes and perceived behavioural control.

To test the mediation effects we performed a bootstrapping analysis (5000 resamples) using PROCESS v3.0 model 4 (Hayes, 2013). The results of the mediation analysis are shown at Appendix (Table A3). Subjective norms fully mediate the relationship between travellers' mindsets and attitudes. However, subjective norms do not mediate the relationship between travellers' mindsets and perceived behavioural control. Finally, the results show that travellers' attitudes and perceived behavioural control fully mediate the relationship between subjective norms and travel desires.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study examines the relationship between travellers' mindsets and the theory of planned behaviour. In particular, this study demonstrates the applicability of travellers' mindsets and the TPB for predicting travel desires and intentions. The results show which particular travellers (fixed or growth mindsets) are more related to the three focal constructs in the TPB. Fixed mindset travellers focus more on subjective norms.

The results show that there is no direct effect between subjective norms and travel desires. Further investigation showed that the relationship is mediated by travellers' attitudes towards destinations and perceived behavioural control. These findings confirm Quintal et al.'s (2010) study that subjective norms directly influence travellers' attitudes towards destinations and perceived behavioural control. We also add to the literature by finding that attitudes and perceived behavioural control fully mediate the relationship between subjective norms and travel desires. In addition, the results show the mediating role of subjective norms on the relationship between mindsets and attitudes. However, the results show that subjective norms do not mediate the relationship between mindsets and perceived behavioural control.

Marketers can use these findings to develop enhanced communication strategies to increase travel desires and intentions. Fixed mindset travellers are different to growth mindset travellers, thus, they need to be approached differently, with a different type of communication style (Park & John, 2012).

The present study has some limitations. Future research should examine the impact of traveller's mindsets with other samples and other tourism behaviours using a longitudinal data set. It should also investigate different motivations and travellers' mindsets for predicting tourism behaviours. Finally, the questionnaire could be presented in other destinations, to

different nationalities, with other native languages, having validating the scales in these languages.

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Figure 1

Conceptual model of the relationship of mindsets on the theory of planned behaviour

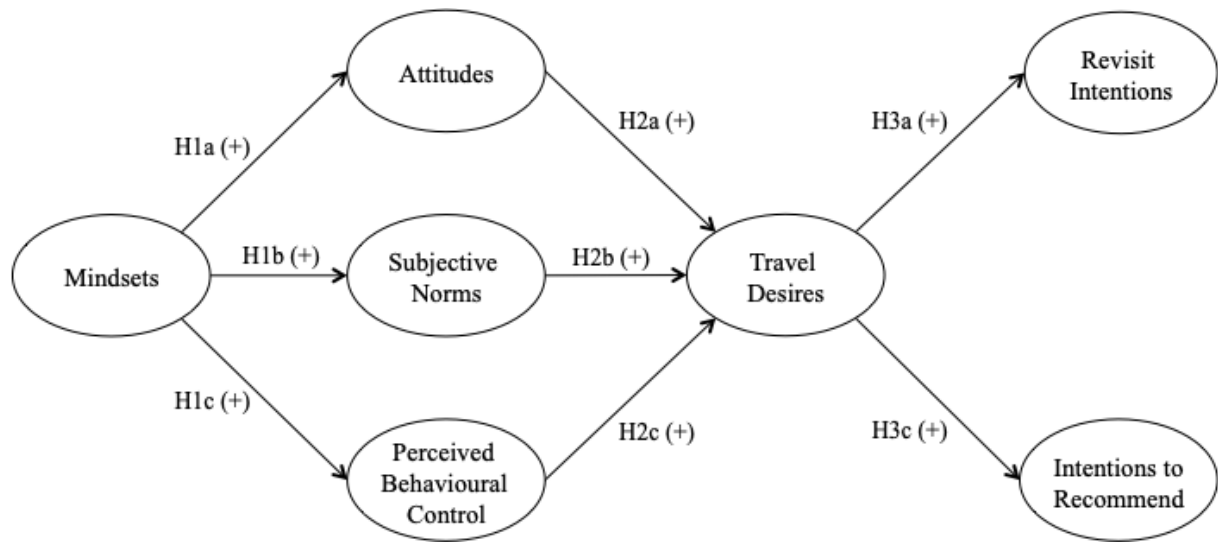


Table 1. Results of Structural Equation Analyses

Hypothesis	Relationship	PC	t-value	Result
H1a	Mindsets → Attitudes	.11	1.82*	Supported
H1b	Mindsets → Subjective Norms	.35	6.98***	Supported
H1c	Mindsets → Perceived Behavioural Control	.21	3.88***	Supported
H2a	Attitudes → Travel Desires	.22	4.73***	Supported
H2b	Subjective Norms → Travel Desires	.09	1.60 ^{ns}	Not supported
H2c	Perceived Behavioural Control → Travel Desires	.29	5.59***	Supported
H3a	Travel Desires → Revisit Intentions	.32	6.99***	Supported
H3b	Travel Desires → Intentions to Recommend	.55	12.84***	Supported

Note. PC: Path Coefficient; *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

Appendix

Table A1. Measurement items and path coefficients (PC)

Construct	Items	PC
<i>Travellers' Mindsets</i>		1.00
Fixed Mindset	Everyone is a certain kind of person, and there is not much that they can do to really change that. The kind of person someone is, is something basic about them, and it cannot be changed very much. People can do things differently, but the important parts of who they are cannot really be changed.	
Growth Mindset	Everyone, no matter who they are, can significantly change their basic characteristics. People can substantially change the kind of person they are. No matter what kind of person one is, (s)he can always change substantially .	
<i>Travellers' Attitudes</i>	<i>Generally speaking, my attitude towards this destination is:</i> Bad – Good Dissatisfied – Satisfied Unenjoyable – Enjoyable	0.84 0.90 0.85
<i>Subjective Norms</i>	Most of the people important to me suggested I should visit this destination I visited this destination after receiving recommendations from family/friends I visited this destination as it is popular among my family/friends	0.84 0.88 0.79
<i>Perceived Behavioural Control</i>	Nothing prevented me from visiting this destination Whether or not I visited this destination was entirely up to me I had complete control over whether or not I visited this destination	0.74 0.83 0.72
<i>Travel Desires</i>	I desire to travel to this destination in the near future My desire for travelling to this destination in the near future is I want to travel to this destination in the near future	0.84 0.86 0.84
<i>Revisit Intentions</i>	<i>My intention to revisit this destination in the next 12 months is:</i> Unlikely – Likely Impossible – Possible Uncertain – Certain	0.78 0.73 0.82
<i>Intentions to Recommend</i>	I will suggest this destination to my family/friends as a place to visit I will recommend this destination to anyone who seeks my advice I am happy to encourage family/friends to visit this destination	0.89 0.88 0.81

Table A2. Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, correlations and validities

	Mean	SD	CA	CR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Mindsets	4.47	0.96	1.00	1.00	1.00						
2. Attitudes	6.19	0.83	0.83	0.90	0.11	0.74					
3. SN	4.90	1.52	0.79	0.88	0.35	0.17	0.70				
4. PBC	5.18	1.29	0.65	0.81	0.21	0.31	0.20	0.59			
5. TD	5.53	1.22	0.81	0.89	0.18	0.33	0.19	0.38	0.72		
6. RI	4.16	1.52	0.68	0.82	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.29	0.32	0.61	
7. ITR	5.74	1.07	0.83	0.90	0.19	0.44	0.26	0.39	0.55	0.14	0.74

Note. The diagonal values in bold indicate the average variances extracted (AVE). The scores in the lower diagonal indicate inter-construct correlations (IC). SN: Subjective Norms; PBC: Perceived Behavioural Control; TD: Travel Desires; RI: Revisit Intentions; ITR: Intentions to Recommend; CA: Cronbach's alpha; CR: Composite reliability.

Table A3. HTMT Ratio

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Mindsets							
2. Attitudes	.12						
3. Subjective Norms	.38	.21					
4. Perceived Behavioural Control	.25	.43	.28				
5. Travel Desires	.20	.40	.23	.53			
6. Revisit Intentions	.03	.07	.11	.44	.43		
7. Intentions to Recommend	.20	.52	.33	.53	.66	.19	

Note. HTMT: Heterotrait-Monotrait

Table A4. Mediating effects

Relationship	Indirect Effect	Bias Corrected Bootstrap 95% Confidence Level		Direct Effect
		Lower	Upper	
M → SN → ATT	0.0282	0.0020	0.0612	0.01 ^{ns}
M → SN → PCB	0.0452	-0.0083	0.1058	0.19 [*]
SN → ATT → TD	0.0196	0.0017	0.0435	0.07 ^{ns}
SN → PBC → TD	0.0360	0.0088	0.0669	0.07 ^{ns}

Note. M: Mindsets; ATT: Attitudes; SN: Subjective Norms; PBC: Perceived Behavioural Control; TD: Travel Desires; ^{*} $p < .05$.