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Article

The responsible behavior of tourist: The role of personnel factors and public power and effect on the choice of destination

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Review article

The responsible behavior of tourist: The role of personnel factors and public power and effect on the choice of destination

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of social engagement, the concern for sustainable tourism, the exemplarity of public power on responsible behaviour of tourist, and the effect of the responsible behaviour on the choice destination. A 544 questionnaires were completed and structural equation modeling with AMOS was used to test the hypothesis. The findings highlight a positive effect of the determinants studied on responsible behavior of the tourist. It is only the concern with sustainable tourism what has no significant effect on the responsible behavior. Otherwise, the effect of responsible behavior of tourist on the choice of destination is positive.

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1. Introduction

The current economy is an economy that is increasingly becoming service-oriented. Tourism is one of the primary economic sectors in our economy. However, the tourism ability to create job opportunities does not preclude the threats imposed by mass tourism. These threats can be economic, as little benefit reaches local populations; cultural and environmental, as many natural resources are abused.

However, as consumers have become more interested in their well-being, they have developed the desire to be more and more responsible. As a result, new forms of tourism that foster sustainable tourism have emerged. Such forms include agro-tourism (either the good management or the agricultural know-how); ecotourism (including the touristic sites preservation), and solidarity tourism (which maintains synergetic relation between the tourist and the host population in order to reduce poverty). [Diallo, Diop-Sall, Leroux, and Valette-Florence \(2015\)](#) called for creating sustainable tourism strategies that have social and ecological dimensions. Therefore, the following questions about the different agents in tourism are raised: Do the tourist's ecological concern and social engagement determine their responsible behavior? How does the tourist's perception of the role of public power influence their behavior? How does responsible behavior influence the tourist's choice of destination?

The answer to these questions is fundamental for both for the enterprises, as it will guide their social marketing, and for public administrations, which will set an example of responsible tourism. Besides, previous works focused on the ecological dimension of sustainable tourism ([Leroux & Pupion, 2009](#)), emphasizing the choice of green hotels and their ecological offers without taking into account the social dimension. In fact, few researchers are interested in the relation between the tourist's social engagement and responsible behavior ([Diallo et al., 2015](#)) or even the relation between the exemplarity public power on its responsible behavior and its effect on the choice of destination.

First, our research aims to prove that responsible behavior depends on personal factors like the tourist's social engagement and their concern with sustainable tourism. Second, we maintain that responsible behavior depends also on contextual factors such as the public power and the environmental strategies implemented by the government to establish a more environmentally-friendly tourism. These strategies range from initiating specific programs, raising public awareness on responsible behavior, etc. Finally, our research aims to reveal the effect of responsible behavior on the choice of destination. In other words, this article aims to study; first and foremost, the effect of social engagement, the tourist's concern with sustainable tourism, and the effect of the exemplarity of public power on the tourist's responsible behavior; second, the effect of responsible behavior on the tourist's choice of destination.

Indeed, previous works stressed the importance of the action of public authorities in tourism ([Bramwell, 1998](#)). They identified the positive effects of the ecological orientation of tourism ([Alessa, Bennett, & Kliskey, 2003](#)). They showed that social engagement positively affects the socially responsible behavior of tourists ([Diallo et al., 2015](#)). They also proved that the environmental and social aspects of the travel as well as the protection of the environment are of major importance in the tourist's choice of destination.

To our knowledge, no research has tackled the simultaneous effect of social engagement, the tourist's concern with sustainable tourism, and the exemplarity of public power on the tourist's responsible behavior. Likewise, rare are the research papers which tested the effect of the tourist's responsible behavior on the choice of destination.

At the theoretical level, our research analyses the tourist's responsible behavior with reference to personal factors; that is, the social engagement and the concern with sustainable tourism, and contextual factors; that is, the exemplarity of public power. It also examines the effect of responsible behavior on the choice of destination. On the practical level, touristic enterprises should promote sustainable tourism by introducing more effective measures. Similarly, public administrations have to manage their reputation by respecting the other and the society, taking into account the social engagement and the consumer's involvement in sustainable tourism. In this article, the literature review, the research hypotheses, and the conceptual model will be presented in the first place. Then, the retained methodology that we used in our empirical study will be explained. After testing the research hypotheses, we will display the obtained results.

The results of this research prove the important role that individual and contextual factors play in the tourist's responsible behavior. Regarding the effect of responsible behavior on the tourist's choice of destination, the tourists who are preoccupied with the environment take into consideration the environmental and social aspects of the destination of their choice.

Finally, we will analyze the theoretical and practical implications of this research, underlining its limits and future venues of research.

2. The literature review

This section analyses the different concepts exploited in this research.

2.1. The concept of the tourist's responsible behavior

Drawing on the work of [François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz \(2009\)](#), the tourist's responsible behavior is defined in the context of tourism as the consumption of a service that has a positive impact on the tourist's environment and the use of purchase power as an expression of their social and environmental concern. In different domains, certain researchers have classified tourists in terms of their sensibility and environmental engagement ([François-Lecompte & Prim-Allaz, 2009](#); [François-Lecompte & Valette-Florence, 2004](#); [Gonzalez, Korchia, Menuet, & Urbain, 2009](#)).

In the domain of tourism, [François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz \(2009\)](#) define a tourist behaving responsibly with reference to five factors: The willingness to sacrifice their comfort, the desire to travel with a responsible tour-operator, the intention to safeguard local resources, the acceptance not to travel too far, and finally the desire to protect the cultural and natural heritage of the visited areas. Basing on these characteristics, [François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz \(2009\)](#) managed to come up with two types of responsible tourists: those "the sustainable adventure" and the "neo-sustainable". These tourists have the profile of ethical travelers who respect the social, cultural, and natural capital of the visited areas. They avoid air-polluting means of transport. Previous works have put into relief the different actions taken by the tourists in order to behave responsibly. According to [Yu, Chancellor, and Cole \(2011\)](#), financial actions reinforce the ecological footprint of tourism and support tourism-related small businesses. In terms of physical and social actions, they maintain strong relations between the tourists and the host populations.

2.2. The concept of social engagement

No accurate definitions of social engagement figure in the literature. According to [Diallo et al. \(2015\)](#), social engagement is often confused with civic engagement which stands for what the person says they do by taking part in civic society to protect the environment. [Yu et al. \(2011\)](#) show that social engagement is a form of environmental activism where the individual is actively involved in organizations and environmental manifestations.

However, [Diallo et al. \(2015\)](#) define social engagement as "a person's involvement in an exchange activity that consists in giving or receiving a thing from people with whom they are interacting with no exterior hindrances". This definition integrates the "internalist" dimension of the social engagement which refers to the tourist's real engagement that measures what an individual actually does to protect the environment. According to [Leroux and Pupion \(2009\)](#), social engagement is more of a quest for self-building and for the ideal rather than for conformity.

2.3. The concept of the concern with sustainable tourism

According to [François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz \(2011\)](#), this concept of PST approximates the individual values of Stern's pro-environmentalist behavior-model (2000). Many researchers have focused on the concern with the environment in general ([Elgaaied, Bernard, & Bertrandias, 2013](#)). For [Stern \(2000\)](#), the PST is viewed in two different ways. In the first vision, the concern with the environment is perceived as a relative attitude toward environment-related problems. In the second vision, the concern with the environment is viewed as a person's general attitude toward the environment in general and it is thus related to a value ([Stern, 2000](#)).

According to [Dembkowski and Hanmer-Lloyd \(1994\)](#), the concern with the environment is simultaneously an element of the individual belief system and a system of values and attitudes. In fact, certain researchers deal with the PST as having three

dimensions; that is, a cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions. The cognitive dimension is related to the individual's knowledge of environmental problems. Granzin and Olsen (1991) show that those who are interested in their environment are those who spend more time learning and finding knowledge about environmental problems. The affective dimension is based on the individual's feelings toward the environment, its deterioration and protection. It involves emotional reactions related to environmental problems. According to Fiorello (2011), the focus on the environment is not necessarily a consequence of a rational idea about protecting the environment and about finding solution to these problems. Finally, the conative dimension can be determined as the tendency to take action and make contributions to protect the environment (El aoud, 2008). According to Fiorello, expressing concern with the environment is not enough. The individual should have the will and desire to save their environment.

In the tourism sector, François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz (2011) show that the focus on sustainable tourism is obvious mainly through sustainable travels. Sustainable traveling can be realized by avoiding polluting the environment (using non-polluting means of transport), getting involved with the host population (live like the locals in order to maximize their economic revenues), respecting the environment and being in touch with nature (the idea of being in close proximity with nature).

2.4. *The exemplarity of the public power*

The environmental politics and the public power exemplarity represent a contextual factor and a form of control (Fiorello, 2011). In the domain of environment, the public powers affect the tourist's motivation and make them adopt an ecological behavior. In this context, it appears that when the public decision-makers consult the managers about the different ways of reducing consumption or behaving responsibly reveal their regular responsible behavior. These authors maintain that the consumer's involvement in the process of decision making helps them change their habits.

In the tourism sector, Diallo et al. (2015) view the public administrations actions as a responsible public management from which the local community, natural and economic environments benefit. However, although the public power exemplarity concept is a major concern in studies focusing on the importance of responsible tourism, it is not well-studied by the current works on tourism. Fiorello (2011) shows that the public power exemplarity provides reliable and sufficient information to the citizens, delivers coherent discourses and takes into account the citizens' opinions.

2.5. *The choice of destination*

According to some researchers, the destination is defined as a geographical zone, a country, an island or a town. They consider the touristic destination as a product that is in a part "given" and in the other part "artificial". The "given" part refers to the natural features of the touristic destination such as the climate, the scenery, the mountains, and the historical monuments, etc. As for the "artificial" part, it refers to the functional characteristics of travels, such as the means of transport and hotel services that are adaptable to the clients' preferences.

The choice of destination is one of the main elements in the decision process. This latter is influenced by a certain number of psychological (internal) and non-psychological (external) factors. According to Um and Crompton (1990), the choice of destination process is viewed from four different angles: First, the choice of destination is considered as a cognitive process involving the consumer's needs and the evaluation of alternatives. Second, it is perceived as a reasoned action determined by the attitude underlying the action and the influence of social groups. Third, the choice of destination is considered like an economic activity where the selected alternative maximizes its usefulness. Fourth, the choice of destination is perceived as the search for entertainment combined with the deemed competence. Therefore, choosing the destination provides the tourist with optimal satisfaction. These four steps can be summarized through three dimensions (Um & Crompton, 1990): the need for satisfaction which integrates all the aspects motivating the travel like novelty, relaxation, challenge, and learning. (2) the social agreement reflecting the tourist's acceptance of the social groups' opinion and (3) the "travelability" which manifests itself by taking into account different variables like money, time, and health. We will focus next on the research hypotheses and the proposed conceptual model.

3. *The research model and the hypotheses*

We present the justification of the hypotheses before proposing a graphic representation of the research model.

3.1. *The effect of social engagement on the tourist's responsible behavior*

Witkowski and Reddy (2010) found that social engagement is behind responsible behavior in different contexts. Fiorello and Bagri, Gupta, & George (2009) highlighted the social manifestations such as the consumer's participation in the community and social activities. These activities sensitize the citizens by changing their attitudes. In the tourism context, Diallo et al. (2015) show that socially-engaged tourists are likely to take more well-thought of consumption-decisions. Social engagement fosters the cognitive and perceptual mobiles within the tourist in order to initiate responsible behaviors. These authors found out that tourists

are socially motivated to take actions in favor of responsible tourism. Basing on this discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1. The tourist's social engagement influences directly and positively their responsible behavior.

3.2. *The effect of the concern with sustainable tourism on the tourist's responsible behavior*

Fiorello (2011) indicated that the person's concern with the environment in general is apparent through their interest with the different environmental domains (recycling, saving energy, green consumption, etc.). Elgaaied et al. (2013) showed that the people who are interested in the environment have the tendency to avoid less environmentally friendly products and boycott irresponsible enterprises (avoidance policy). Singh and Gupta (2013) underlined that environmental preparation influences consumption behavior. In the touristic domain, François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz (2011) showed that tourists develop more responsible behaviors when they are interested in sustainable tourism (traveling less far, sacrificing their comfort, etc.). We suggest the following hypothesis:

H2. The more the tourist is engaged with sustainable tourism, the more they adopt a responsible behavior.

3.3. *The role of exemplarity of public power in the tourist's responsible behavior*

Fiorello (2011) showed that the role of Government may affect the sense of self-determination in the context of eco-responsible behavior. This influence is a function of perceived exemplarity of public power and the sense of confidence that it generates within the citizens. Lavergne, Mouquet, Thuiller, and Ronce (2010) stressed that the provided information to the citizens and their participation in decision-making have a positive impact on their motivation and acceptance to change behavior. Fiorello (2011) shows, thus, that public power plays a positive role in motivating citizens which means that the more the person views the public power as perfect, the more they tend to change their behavior. Diallo et al. (2015) confirmed the results of previous work by showing that actions of public power have developed in favor of more responsible tourism. Consequently, we postulate the following hypothesis.

H3. Exemplarity public power directly and positively influences the tourist's responsible behavior.

3.4. *The role of the tourist's responsible behavior in the choice of destination*

Budeanu (2007) shows that the tourist's decision is dependent upon individual, material and cultural attributes. Responsible tourists often opt for touristic destinations that respect the environment. During the process of choosing their destination, German and Dutch tourists wish to enjoy the good environment of their destination. Similarly, British tourists deem it important that their vacations do not harm the environment. In their study, Goodwin and Francis (2003) showed that 32% of British tourists have chosen the kind of vacations that are intended to reduce the negative impacts on the destination. They are willing to pay up to 3% of the value of their vacations to book in eco-labeled hotels. Chafe (2005) confirms these results by showing that 62% of Australians prefer hotels having a system of ecological-label and 24% of German tourists are disappointed in the hotel's poor environmental policies. Goodwin and Francis (2003) showed that German tourists tend to inquire about the environmental aspects of their touristic destination. In this context, 80% of tourists focusing on sustainability state that the environmental and social aspect of the travel as well as the protection of the environment are of major importance in their choice of destination. In the view of the above, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4. The tourist's responsible behavior has an effect on their choice of destination.

Fig. 1 gives a graphical representation of the proposed conceptual model.

Following the presentation of research hypotheses and the conceptual model, we are to present the research methodology (data collection, the variables measurement).

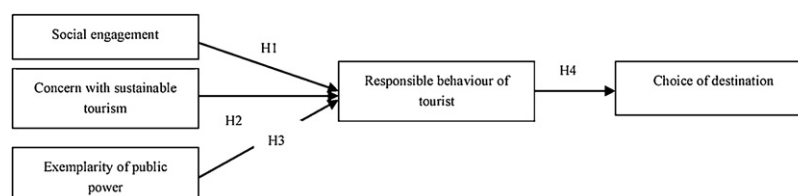


Fig. 1 – Conceptual model and hypotheses.

4. The research methodology

To test the proposed conceptual model, an empirical study with an exploratory and confirming nature has been conducted among tourists. The choices related to data collection, samples, different measurement scales, and methods of data analysis take into account the different debates pertaining to the measurement method (Akrou, 2010; Gerbing & Anderson, 1988).

4.1. Data collection

Sustainable tourism concerned the general public, so we tried to obtain a homogeneous set of samples. That is why; we published the link on sites which meet our desire for diversity. Also, we have posted the questionnaire link on social media, general forums, but also on sustainable tourism-related forums intended for all (young people, women, seniors, men). The respondents were requested by email to complete the questionnaire online in the period between early June and late July 2016. The purpose behind the online collection of data is to limit the problem of social desirability that a face-to-face study might create (Diallo et al., 2015) and to avoid geographical barriers.

Every respondent had to fill in the questionnaire and forward it to another potential respondent interested in sustainable tourism. For practical, financial, and deadline-reasons, we have chosen a convenient sampling method. Only volunteered participants were kept in the study; that is, only those who actually wanted to participate and answer the questionnaire. The final

Table 1 – List of used items.

Concepts	Items of measure	Sources
Responsible behavior of tourist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I accept to invest in local projects related to sustainable tourism • I am willing to invest my time and energy to realizing projects for sustainable tourism. • I accept to pay more in order to compensate for my ecological footprint. • I would like to spend my money on the visited territory for the benefit of the local population. • I pay close attention to the resources of the visited country. 	Diallo et al. (2015)
Social engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am enthusiastic about helping the society. • I am aware of the society's concerns. • I am not careful about other people. • I am passionate about sharing new social experiences. • I like to spend my free time with under-privileged populations. • I would like to learn more about social phenomena. 	Elgaaied et al. (2013)
Concern with sustainable tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am very involved with sustainable tourism. • Human beings are abusing tourism. • I am willing to reduce my consumption in order to help tourism. • Major political changes are necessary for the protection of sustainable tourism. • Strict anti-pollution laws should be enforced. 	
Exemplarity of public power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The elects and decision-makers do their best to fix the problem of sustainable tourism. • The elects and decision-makers give an example of sustainable tourism. • The elects and decision-makers' discourses are coherent concerning sustainable tourism. • The elects and decision-makers pay heed to the citizens' opinion concerning sustainable tourism. 	Um and Crompton (1990)
Choice of destination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A trip to the country will be a lot of fun. • Climate is a major factor in my decision to visit the country. • I do a wide variety of things in the country. • A trip to the country is likely to enhance my feeling of well-being. • I can participate in outdoor recreation activities which I particularly enjoy in the country. • I will travel to the country because a friend or family member wants to go there. • I consider a trip to the country to be challenging. • I am likely to meet many people with different intents and life styles in the country. • The country is likely to be a good place for me to relax. • The attractive natural environment is one of the major reasons for selecting the country as a destination. 	Um and Crompton (1990)

sample (N=544) was diverse in terms of sex, age, social and professional status, and nationality (French, Canadian, Egyptian, British, Moroccan, etc.).

4.2. The measurement of the variables

The measuring instruments of the constructs have been adapted from previous works. Minor modifications were made to make them fit the context of our study. To make sure of the facial validity and content validity, we have conducted semi-directive interviews with 22 tourists and collected the reviews and recommendations from tourism-specialized university teachers in order to evaluate the reliability of the measuring instruments. The conducted interviews and the obtained recommendations made it possible to clarify the wording of the items and to add more to the existent measuring scale. Once the questionnaire was written, we have conducted a pre-test with 22 tourists using the debriefing method which consists in exchanging points of view, interpretations, and information. This has led to the reformulation of certain questions to ensure understanding. The measuring items of the constructs have been evaluated on Likert scale with five echelons from 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree” (Table 1).

The measuring scale of the tourist’s responsible behavior: The tourist’s behavior is measured using a three-dimensional indicator (financial, physical, and social dimensions). The used scale in our study is adapted from the works of Diallo et al. (2015) and Lee, Jan, and Yang (2013). This scale involves five items that refer to responsible actions in the domain of sustainable tourism at the financial, physical, and social levels.

The measuring scale of social engagement: the measuring scale of social engagement has been adapted from Diallo et al. (2015) in relation to sustainable tourism. This scale is made of five items that take into account the adapted “internal” vision of social engagement in this research.

The measuring scale of the concern with sustainable tourism: Measuring the concern with sustainable tourism takes into consideration the environment in general (Elgaaid, 2013). There is not a single measuring scale that focuses only on the concern with sustainable tourism. The measuring scale used in our study is adapted from the NEP scale (New Environment Paradigm) of Dunlap and Van Liere (1978), with minor changes were made to the conducted interviews in order to make it work for our study context.

The measuring scale of the exemplarity of public power: Previous studies have measured the exemplarity of public power in the context of waste sorting through four items which take into account the coherent discourse of public power, citizens’ opinions, etc. (Fiorello, 2011). In accordance with Fiorello’s research (2011) and on the basis of the conducted interviews, the term “Local public elects and decision-makers” replaced the term “public administration” in the items to avoid ambiguity.

The measuring scale of the choice of destination: the measuring scale of the choice of destination used in this research is adapted from Um and Crompton (1990). It comprises 17 items related to the three dimensions of the choice of destination: the need to satisfy the tourist, the social dimension of choice of destination and the “travelability”. In our research, we have used only nine items which stand for the dimension of the need to satisfy, as they reflect the satisfaction of the tourist’s certain needs, namely the travel motivations such as relaxation, nature protection, discovery, etc. We present the study results regarding the validation of the measuring instruments and the structural model test (Research hypotheses).

5. Research results

In order to examine the measuring model and the structural one, the method of structural equations has been used according to Anderson and Gerbing (1988) through the method of maximum likelihood (with AMOS 18).

5.1. Validating the measuring instruments

The results of the exploratory factorial analysis of the control sample: First, we have conducted prior analysis in order to make sure that the variables used in our study are in consensus with the values of Kurtosis and of Skewness which are respectively inferior to 1/ and 1.5/ and that there are no missing values due to the online collection which secures the collection of only the completed questionnaires. Second, in order to verify the validity and the feasibility of the used measuring instruments, we have conducted exploratory factorial analysis of a control sample (N=152) respondents who are students in Marketing and who have a recent touristic experience). This exploratory phase helped us refine the initial items. We have kept the items with a sufficient correlation with their factors and which represent satisfying communities (>0.5). The retained factorial structures provide an accurate percentage of the explained variance (>60%). Finally, the Cronbach alphas value ($\alpha > 0.7$) indicates a good internal coherence of each of the measuring scales.

The results of the confirmatory factorial analysis of the final sample: The measuring models proved the structure and the validity of each measuring scale through confirmatory factorial analysis of the final sample (N=544) following Jackson, Gillaspay, and Purc-Stephenson’s recommendations (2009). Then, we have estimated the global measuring model which indicates a correct adjustment of data with the following indices: RMSEA=0.064, CFI=0.95, TLI=0.92, and $\chi^2/ddl=3.14$. Table 1 shows a good internal coherence at the level of each instrument. The Cronbach Alpha varies from 0.72 and 0.82 and the Joreskog Rho range from 0.68 and 0.87.

The convergent validity is satisfying for all scales. The factorial contributions are significant ($p < 0.05$) and the convergent validity Rho exceeds the recommended threshold by 0.50. To demonstrate the discriminating validity, we used Fornell and Larcker's criterion (1981) by comparing the Rhovc values and the square correlations among the constructs. According to these researchers, the discriminating validity of a latent variable is confirmed if it shares more variance with its observable variables than with other latent variables ($\text{Rhovc} > r^2$ among latent variables). The results indicate a satisfactory discriminating validity of the constructs (Table 2).

5.2. Testing the structure model

The proposed conceptual model correctly adjusts with the data. These are the obtained adjustment indices: RMSEA=0.071; TLI=0.91; CFI=0.94 and $\chi^2/\text{ddl}=2.345$. The direct effect of social engagement, concern with sustainable tourism, and the exemplarity of public power are evaluated by tapping on the t-test value and its associated p-value (Fig. 2). Fig. 2 shows that the tourist's social engagement has a significant positive influence on the tourist's responsible behavior ($\gamma=0.64$; $p < 0.01$). Also, the analyses show that the exemplarity of public power positively influences the tourist's responsible behavior ($\gamma=0.39$, $p < 0.01$) (validating the hypotheses H1 and H3). However, the concern with sustainable tourism does not have any significant effect on the tourist's responsible behavior ($\gamma=0.03$, $p > 0.05$). This rejects hypothesis H2. Furthermore, the results show that the relation between the tourist's responsible behavior and the choice of destination is positive ($\gamma=0.27$, $p < 0.01$) (validating H4). These results are to be discussed in Section 6.

6. Discussion, implications, limits and future research venue

This research puts forward the interest to study what determines a tourist's responsible behavior and its effect on the choice of destination. It highlights the relatively strong direct effect of social engagement, the concern with sustainable tourism and the exemplarity of public power on the tourist's responsible behavior. That is not the case with the direct effect of the concern with

Table 2 – Adjustment of indices and validity of the measuring instruments (N=544).

Concepts	Items of measure	Items of measure	Rh� of Jorskog	AVE
Responsible behavior of tourist	Resp1	0.81	0.915	0.703
	Resp2	0.78		
	Resp3	0.77		
	Resp4	0.89		
	Resp5	0.83		
Social engagement	Eng1	0.92	0.927	0.749
	Eng2	0.88		
	Eng3	0.87		
	Eng4	0.90		
	Eng5	0.85		
	Eng6	0.81		
Concern with sustainable tourism	CST1	0.78	0.815	0.775
	CST2	0.84		
	CST3	0.81		
	CST4	0.77		
	CST5	0.69		
Exemplarity of public power	Exp1	0.85	0.951	0.836
	Exp2	0.81		
	Exp3	0.92		
	Exp4	0.89		
Choice of destination	CD1	0.76	0.891	0.774
	CD2	0.71		
	CD3	0.88		
	CD4	0.74		
	CD5	0.89		
	CD6	0.84		
	CD7	0.79		
	CD8	0.77		
	CD9	0.83		

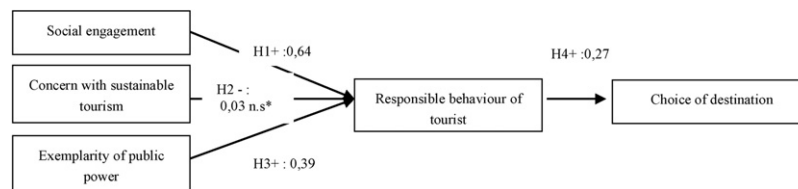


Fig. 2 – Synthesis of the results of the test of hypotheses. *Notes: n.s.=not significant; ** $p < 0.01$.

sustainable tourism on the tourist's responsible behavior. Results show, thus, that responsible behavior has an appreciable and positive effect on the choice of destination.

6.1. Discussion and theoretical implications

Although very few studies have tested this relation (Diallo et al., 2015), this research reveals the importance of social engagement on the tourist's responsible behavior ($\gamma=0.64$; $p < 0.01$). Doing so makes it one of the rare works that established a positive link between social engagement and the tourist's responsible behavior. Previous works have shown that social engagement encourages the person to adopt responsible behavior such as taking part in religious and political activities, national and socially-linked events (Lewis, MacGregor, & Putnam, 2013). In our research, it is the social engagement what incites the tourist to behave responsibly. This result confirms Prohaska, Anderson, and Binstock's works (2012) which showed that social engagement can determine individual decisions.

The tourist's responsible behavior can be more tenable when the tourist is already engaged with environmental issues and strongly believes that involvement in sustainable tourism is of paramount importance. In fact, François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz (2011) showed that when the tourist is involved with sustainable tourism, they develop a daily responsible behavior in order to conform to the environmental ideal. This result is also achieved in Bagri et al. works (2009) which showed that tourists engaged in sustainable tourism develop more responsible behavior.

Moreover, the perceived exemplarity of public power decides the tourist's responsible behavior ($\gamma=0.39$; $p < 0.01$). This result is in conformity with other previous researches which exposed the fact that decision-makers and the elect can actually make environmentally-friendly discourses and raise awareness about environmental problems. On the other hand, François-Lecompte and Prim-Allaz (2011) maintained that educational actions inculcate positive attitudes about sustainable tourism within the tourists. Therefore, activities conducted by public power provide enough information about sustainable tourism for tourists and encourage them to acquire a responsible behavior.

Therefore, we notice that the concern with sustainable tourism does not significantly influence the tourist's responsible behavior ($p < 0.01$). This result is consistent with other previous works which demonstrated the existence of a compromise/arbitration between reduction of the level of comfort and the environmentalist concern (François-Lecompte & Prim-Allaz, 2009). Hence, despite their concern with the environment, tourists are not always willing to make sacrifices in order to act responsibly. This is attributed to the fact that the context is closely linked to pleasure and not to sacrifice (François-Lecompte & Prim-Allaz, 2009). Robinot and Giannelloni (2010) pointed out that concern with the environment strategies in the tourism sector is not usually effective (the avoidance of polluting travels and the avoidance of changing towels daily in order to save detergent).

Finally, results show that the tourist's responsible behavior has a positive effect on the choice of destination ($p > 0.01$). This result accords with previous works which prove that the choice of vacation is strongly determined by the culture, the tastes and the concern with the environment (Carr, 2002). According to Budeanu (2007), tourists with preference for sustainability are into eco-labels and hotels offering touristic sustainable products. In this context, Fairweather and Maslin (2005) showed that the informative value of eco-labels positively influences the tourists' attitudes and bestows legitimacy to environmentalist actions.

6.2. Managerial implications

The results of this research point out the important role that individual and contextual factors play in the tourist's responsible behavior. First, this result entails a clear focus on the tourist's social concern. Previous works proved that in the tourism sector, advertising campaigns focus more on protecting the environment and on the ecological aspect of tourism. Yet, tourists tend to question the credibility of these publicities that stress the need to save the planet (Robinot & Giannelloni, 2010). Tourists are likely to develop mistrust issues which are noticeable in this research through the non-significant effect of the relation between the concern with sustainable tourism and the tourist's responsible behavior. Therefore, the managers of the tourism sector should work out marketing practices in tourism that put forward the social aspect which manifests itself through the respect of the other and of society by adopting a client segmentation strategy based on social engagement. Hence, managers of tourism marketing should launch advertising campaigns that adapts to every segment (Diallo et al., 2015). In fact, while certain tourists prefer the acquisition of responsible behavior, others are motivated by the search for pleasure without taking into account the social or environmental aspects.

Results related to the impact of the exemplarity of public power lead to important managerial consequences. Public agents are to make their actions more responsible and visible in terms of responsible tourism. They are also to give feedback to tourists about

the consequences of their responsible behavior. In effect, actions made by the public power increase the tourists' awareness of sustainable tourism and strengthen the tourists' trust. The decision makers and the elect should work on their images and reputation. According to [Fiorello \(2011\)](#), a well-reputed public administration has important positive consequences. Managing this reputation is very essential. In fact, the idea of putting together an educational system for sustainable tourism seems interesting. Such programs might include educational holiday travels that adhere to the principals of sustainable tourism. These travels follow the best social and environmental practices which nurture responsible behavior at an early age.

Regarding the positive effect of responsible behavior on the tourist's choice of destination, tourists preoccupied with the environment take into consideration the environmental and social aspects of the destination of their choice. As a consequence, the industry should create institutional contexts where sustainable touristic products can be improved. In this context, the hotel industry faces two challenges: it should invest in sustainable and innovative products and promote and encourage touristic sustainable behavior. [Fairweather and Maslin \(2005\)](#) maintain that eco-labels are among the most frequently used tools by touristy enterprises to promote environmental products and sensitize the clients. For [Budeanu \(2007\)](#), underlying these challenges, there are new opportunities for reinventing touristic practices..

6.3. Limitations and future venues for research

This research has many limitations that can be explored in future works. First of all, the work at hand is based on a one-dimensional approach of different concepts. However, a multi-dimensional measure is interesting to work with. For example, altruism can be dealt with as one dimension of social engagement. It is the same for the measures of promoting responsible behavior, the public power image, and the practical modalities of responsible behavior. Also, the incentives that prompt the tourist's responsible behavior (rewards and threats) should be tested through an empirical study.

Furthermore, this research focused on a sample of tourists of different nationalities. This international comparison helped better understand the responsible behavior of the tourist by taking into account the influence of culture. For example, according to [Noonan and Coleman \(2013\)](#), cultures rather focus on the Group behaviors than on the individual ones. It would be interesting to see if this reasoning applies to tourism ([Diallo et al., 2015](#)).

In addition, our conceptual model can be enriched with moderating variables like the age, the type of tourists, and the culture. Then it is possible to conduct a comparative study of the tourist's behavior, keeping in mind the cultural particularities of each culture. The more centered the culture on the group, the more environmentally responsible is the behavior ([Diallo et al., 2015](#)). Finally, our research model offers a static view of the tourist's responsible behavior. The obtained results capture the customer's behavior at time t. Making research at different times ensures the stability of the tested model and compare time t-behaviors with the tourist's effective behavior. However, having recourse to longitudinal studies necessitates the use of the selected data and the collaboration with hotels that would accept to invest in such a project.

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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