

INTENTION TO CHOOSE GREEN HOTELS IN CHINA: A CONCEPTUAL PIECE

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ABSTRACT

Research on green hotel selection is still in its preliminary stage in China, resulting in the lack of a standardized definition and coherent foundation. The purpose of this study is to conduct and conclude previous empirical studies from different perspectives (i.e., theory of planned behaviour model, demographic characteristics, value-belief-norm theory of environmentalism, psychographic characteristics, religiosity) related to green hotel selection in China, therefore, to develop a comprehensive understanding of Chinese consumer green hotel selection.

INTRODUCTION

According to Green Hotel Association (2020), Green hotels are environmentally friendly properties whose managers are eager to institute programs that save water, save energy and reduce solid waste, while saving money, to protect our one and only earth. A green hotel can be judged in China based on the national standard of Green Hotel Standards (LB/T007-2006) published in 2006 by the China National Commerce Commission (Wang, Wong, & Elangkovan, 2019). Nevertheless, research on green hotel selection (GHS) is still in its preliminary stage in China (Wang, Wong & Elangkovan, 2020), there is a lack of literature to review compared with the western literature and where the systematic framework is weak (Wang & Wong, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

TPB and GHS

In the original framework of the theory of planned behaviour (TPB), Ajzen (1991) postulated that attitude, subjective norm (SN), and perceived behavioural control (PBC) all have an influence on consumer behaviour respectively, and they are independent of each other. Certain studies revealed how those predictors significantly influence consumer GHS based on TPB (Nimri, Patiar, Kensbock & Jin, 2019; Olya, Bagheri & Tümer, 2019). However, Bashir, Khwaja, Turi &

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Toheed (2019) highlight that the possibility of mediation cannot be ignored in GHS literature. According to Wang, Wong, Elangkovan & Chee (2019b), attitude played a mediating role in the relationship between SN and PBC in China, which was also in line with the study by (Wang & Wong, 2020). Both studies suggest Chinese consumers tend to share their experience of GHS to significant others (e.g., relatives, friends, business partners, colleagues, etc.) leads to a positive green purchase attitude (GPA), subsequent, intention.

Demographic characteristics and GHS

Demographic characteristics is one of the most widely used methods to investigate consumer GPA and green purchase intention (GPI) compared to other segmentation measures (Wang, Wong & Elangkovan, 2020), because is more readily available, simple to understand, and can be applied easily to segment or predict problems (Wang et al., 2020). Nevertheless, certain studies have exposed the limited value of demographic characteristics for predicting GHS, due to those results are inconsistent and even controversial (Wang et al., 2020). Reported that Chinese consumers' age has a significant effect on GPA but has an insignificant impact on GPI. There is no significant difference between different age groups towards GPA and GPI, with exception of age group of 18-30 has a higher level of GPI compared to the under-18. There is no significant relationship between gender and GPA and GPI, even female more likely to exhibited positive GPA and GPI. Education level only significant influences GPI but not on GPA, and there is no difference between education groups. Further, income significantly influences GPA and GPI, and there is no difference between different income groups among Chinese consumers. Some findings from this study are consistent with previous research, but some cases revealed otherwise.

Belief, value and GHS

The nature of the relationship between beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour is complex (Chatzidakis, Hibbert & Smith, 2007). There is little evidence to support the argument that consumer beliefs, values, attitudes translate into GHS (Wang et al., 2020). The value-belief-norm theory of environmentalism (VBN) is the latest one can be used to explain consumer green purchase behaviour (GPB) influenced by pro-environmental values/beliefs. The VBN postulated that altruistic and biospheric value significantly influence GPB, also, egoistic or individualistic values negatively and significantly effect on GPB (Stern, 2000; Wang et al., 2020). Noteworthy, Wang et al. (2020) noted that a single measurement of egoistic/individualist values may not suit all setting. Chinese society is very high collectivistic one, along with Japan and Korea, compared to most western countries (Wang & Wong, 2020). Therefore, researchers need to confirm that there is a positive significant relationship between collectivistic values and GPB, this may, conversely, support the argument that a negative significant relationship exists between egoistic values and GPB (Wang et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Chinese green marketing is unique one compared to western countries, and Chinese consumers' understanding of GHS was still at a low level (Wang et al., 2020). As previous described, future research needs to take account of the findings

where GPA is influenced by SN under TPB model. Also, future research should apply a multi-dimensional model of values/beliefs (i.e., altruistic, biospheric, collectivistic) as antecedents for explaining Chinese consumer GPA and GPB towards GHS. The demographic characteristic is still can be considered as one ready/easy method for investigating Chinese consumer GHS, however, it only provides a basic understanding of Chinese consumer GPB towards GHS. Moreover, future research should consider to use both demographic and psychographic characteristics to predict consumer GHS, due to some researchers argued that psychographic variables have more influence compared with demographic characteristics (Wang et al., 2020b; Wang & Wong, 2020). Last but not least, Wang & Wong (2020) reported that religiosity as an individual's personal beliefs, it significantly influences Chinese consumer GHS, although China is an atheistic country, but it still has 600 million people who were religious (Wang et al., 2019). Hence, future research should consider the influence of religiosity on Chinese consumer GHS.

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