



# How do people negotiate through their constraints to engage in pro-environmental behavior? A study of front-country campers in Alberta, Canada



Farhad Moghimehfar<sup>a,\*</sup>, Elizabeth A. Halpenny<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Ecosystem Science and Management, University of Northern British Columbia, 3333 University Way, Prince George, BC, V2N 4Z9, Canada

<sup>b</sup> Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, 2-130G University Hall, Van Vliet Complex, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2H9, Canada

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural aspects of constraints were studied.
- Negotiation mitigates the negative influence of constraints on behaviors.
- Motivations and knowledge influence perception of constraints and negotiation.

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received 22 December 2015

Received in revised form

29 June 2016

Accepted 1 July 2016

### Keywords:

Constraints

Negotiation

Motivation

Knowledge

Pro-environmental behavior

## ABSTRACT

This study examined structural models of associations among constraints to pro-environmental nature-based tourism behavior, negotiation through these constraints, motivations to engage in pro-environmental behavior, and knowledge of pro-environmental activities. Three types of constraints (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural) were investigated to obtain a detailed understanding of barriers to pro-environmental tourism behavior. Structural models were tested using data obtained from front-country campers ( $n = 1009$ ) in Alberta, Canada. Results showed that constraints negatively and directly influence intention. Negotiation and knowledge positively and directly influenced intention. Motivation and knowledge directly and negatively influenced constraints, and directly and positively influenced negotiation. The mitigating effect of negotiation on the association between constraints and intention was supported by the data. The theoretical and practical implications relating specifically to constraints to engaging in pro-environmental nature-based tourism activities are emphasized.

© 2016 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

In North America, nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation play an important role in many aspects of people's lives. From enjoyment of the aesthetics of the natural world to its contribution to physical and mental well-being, nature-based tourism activities have been very popular in recent decades (Clawson & Knetsch, 2013). The value of protecting natural resources increases along with the growing demand for this type of tourism. Among different nature-based tourism activities, camping is a very popular type of outdoor recreation with a high level of people-nature interaction

(Cole, 2004; Van Heerden, 2008). Camping, which ranges from spending at least one night in a basic tent to staying in a full-service campground in a luxury recreational vehicle (RV) or upscale cabin, continues to be a popular North American recreation activity (Ellis, 2010).

Nature-based activities play a major role in Canada's tourism industry. For instance, Alberta Parks, the provincial park management department for Alberta, reported that 77% of the provincial residents had visited provincial parks at some point in their lives. In 2014, over 1,300,000 park visitors stayed in Alberta Parks' campgrounds (Alberta Parks, 2014). Many other campers used random or free camping sites in the province. The popularity of camping illustrates the importance of studying campers' pro-environmental behavior during their stay in this type of accommodation. The high levels of human-nature involvement during camping activities as well as the consumptive nature of accommodation activities

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [farhad.moghimehfar@unbc.ca](mailto:farhad.moghimehfar@unbc.ca) (F. Moghimehfar), [elizabeth.halpenny@ualberta.ca](mailto:elizabeth.halpenny@ualberta.ca) (E.A. Halpenny).

increase the chance of negative environmental impacts (Cole, 2004; Leung & Marion, 1999; Marzano & Dandy, 2012). Therefore, promoting environmentally friendly camping activities and facilitating people's pro-environmental behavior is necessary in order to attain environmentally sustainable nature-based tourism. One of the main ways to achieve this objective is by understanding the constraints that individuals perceive in relation to engaging in pro-environmental camping practices. This paper elaborates on this topic.

A review of pro-environmental behavior literature reveals a number of empirical investigations of constraints to engaging in environmentally responsible behavior in different settings (Bamberg & Möser, 2007; Steg & Vlek, 2009; Tanner, 1999). However, many of these studies focused on contextual constraints (e.g., limitation of time, income, money, infrastructures, etc.) and did not include the psychological and sociological aspects of constraints to human behavior. Steg and Vlek (2009), in their review of the pro-environmental behavior literature, indicated that constraints (i.e., contextual factors) had not been systematically investigated or included in theoretical approaches. Therefore, study of constraints to engaging in pro-environmental behavior during outdoor recreation activities seemed necessary in order to fill this gap.

Previous studies also have revealed that constraints do not always prevent an action. In fact, people try to overcome their constraints through negotiation (Jackson, Crawford, & Godbey, 1993; White, 2008). These studies claimed that people utilize behavioral or cognitive strategies when they face constraints that may result in continuation of the restrained behavior.

Motivation also plays an important role in people's participation in particular behaviors. Literature suggests that highly motivated people perceive fewer constraints to perform a behavior (Hubbard & Mannell, 2001; Son, Mowen, & Kerstetter, 2008). This study explored the association among intention, constraints, negotiation, motivation, and people's knowledge of environmental camping practices. The influence of these factors on individuals' intention to participate in environmentally-friendly camping practices was also explored. For this reason, a structural equation modeling technique was employed to investigate different theoretically possible associations among these variables. A three-dimensional classification of constraints that considered psychological, social, and structural aspects of constraints to pro-environmental behavior was implemented in order to provide a deeper understanding of environmentally-friendly behavior constraints.

## 2. Literature review

Intention, defined as people's readiness to engage in a behavior (Ajzen, 1991), has been shown to be the most accurate immediate predictor of behavior in social psychology (e.g., theory of planned behavior, Ajzen, 1991; attitude behavior theory, Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). From classic studies of pro-environmental behavior such as Hines, Hungerford, and Tomera (1986/87) to Bamberg and Möser (2007) more recent meta-analytical study, the literature has confirmed the accuracy of intention as an immediate predictor of pro-environmental behavioral. Intention is capable of explaining a considerable amount of variation in behavior (Klößner, 2013; Sheeran, 2002). Therefore, this study employs intention as the immediate predictor of behavior that explains a great amount of variation in pro-environmental behavior. The following sections expand on constraints to engaging in pro-environmental behavior, cognitive and behavioral negotiation strategies people employ to overcome their barriers, motivation to engage in pro-environmental behavior, and finally knowledge of environmental camping as the major predictors of pro-environmental behavioral intention in this study.

### 2.1. Constraints to pro-environmental behavior

The major goal of social psychology is to predict human behavior. The theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980), the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), the model of predictors of environmental behavior (Hines et al., 1986/87), the norm-activation model (Schwartz & Howard, 1981), the value-belief-norm theory of environmentalism (Stern, 2000), and the model of pro-environmental behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002) are examples of approaches that have been used to explore people's pro-environmental outdoor recreation behavior. These approaches suggested several factors that predict human behavior in different contexts. However, the study of factors that constrain people from participation in pro-environmental behavior within a theoretical model have been neglected.

Restraining factors, known as barriers (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002), external factors (Jensen, 2002), contextual factors (Steg & Vlek, 2009), and constraints (Tanner, 1999) appear to play an important role in people's decisions to participate in pro-environmental behavior. Ajzen (1991) indicated that non-motivational resources (i.e., time and skills) play an important role in the performance of an action. Lack of these behavioral control factors that can be considered as constraints to engage in particular activities is directly associated with behavioral intentions.

In a review of pro-environmental behavior literature, Steg and Vlek (2009) noted that "in environmental psychology so far, except for a few studies [...], contextual factors have not been examined systematically, nor are contextual factors included in the theoretical approaches" (p. 312). Yoon, Kyle, Van Riper, and Sutton (2013) also emphasized this issue stating that: "there is a strong need to consider the role of constraints in attitude-behavior relationships [in environmental behavior studies]" (p. 460).

Tanner (1999) introduced objective, subjective, and ipsative constraints to the literature on barriers to engaging in pro-environmental behavior. Objective constraints refer to factors that influence the performance of an action. If these factors are not available the action may not occur or may be discontinued. Therefore, lack of these resources is the constraint. Examples of these resources are lack of time, income, knowledge, or social rules. Tanner defined subjective constraints as psychological barriers that influence individuals' intentions to participate in pro-environmental activities (e.g., lack of motivation or interest). Finally, ipsative constraints were considered as "barriers that prevent the activation of the alternative" (p. 147). For example, limitation of technology (e.g., absence of biodegradable detergents in some places) may prevent people from considering an alternative behavior which may result in negative environmental impacts. Overall, Tanner's findings supported the influence of constraints on preventing people from participating in pro-environmental activities.

Nordlund, Eriksson, and Garvill (2010) expanded on pro-environmental behavior barriers based on four attributes: contextual factors (i.e., physical, economic, and social contexts), personal capabilities (i.e., knowledge, time, and money), attitudinal factors (i.e., values, beliefs, attitudes, and norms), and habits. Nordlund and colleagues indicated that the study of pro-environmental behavior barriers that emphasized physical constraints and sociocultural aspects of barriers has neglected. They also believed that there is a lack of theoretical models in the literature.

Blake (1999) identified three sets of barriers to environmentally responsible behavior: individuality (i.e., personal attitudes), responsibility (i.e., the way external factors influence individuals' evaluation of consequences), and practicality (i.e., lack of structure).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7421459>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7421459>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)