



The role of generativity and attitudes on employees home and workplace water and energy saving behaviours



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Examines links between generativity and environmental attitudes and behaviour.
- Focuses on both energy saving and water saving, at home and in the workplace.
- Contributes to the CSR literature, focussing on the Iranian hospitality industry.
- Highlights implications for designing workplace environmental interventions.

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ABSTRACT

Building on prior studies in environmental behaviour and employee micro level CSR, this paper examines the role of generativity, encompassing thoughts towards the well-being of future generations and contribution to future society, and specific environmental attitudes on environmental behaviour in the home and workplace. The paper examines the relationships between these variables, including assessing spillover effects between home and workplace environmental behaviour via a quantitative survey methodology, within the hospitality industry in Iran. Analysis using PLS found generativity to be important in determining attitudes and, in turn, environmental behaviour both in the workplace and the home. However, a spillover effect between home and workplace behaviours was not found. Thus, this research adds to the limited literature on CSR at the micro employee level in tourism studies and highlights the effects of generativity on home and workplace behaviours, as well as potential directions for internal social marketing campaigns within tourism organisations.

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1. Introduction

The study of pro-environmental behaviour, that is “behaviour that harms the environment as little as possible or even benefits the environment” (Steg & Vlek, 2009, p. 309), has utilised a range of theories and models to describe and predict behaviour of individuals and communities. These studies have used an array of theories and models including operant conditioning, motivational, moral and value theories, theories of attitude, belief and intention,

theories of emotion and affect to predict both environmental behaviour and attitudes (Vinning & Ebreo, 2002). Steg and Vlek (2009) in their review of the area note that it is not yet clear which of the perspectives, theories and models is most useful in which situation and for which behaviour. They also recommend that contextual issues must also be taken into account, when deciding this.

Although a number of individual and organisational factors and their effects on environmental behaviour have been tested, this paper seeks primarily to understand the role of generativity in pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours, both in the home and the workplace. Generativity is “a resource encouraging people toward the public good, maintaining continuity from one generation to the next” (Urien & Kilbourne, 2011, p. 73), which has previously been

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applied to eco-consumption behaviour and intentions (Urien & Kilbourne, 2011) but has not, to the authors knowledge, been applied to broader environmental behaviours such as resource saving behaviours in the home and the workplace, particularly in the tourism industry. However, generativity is a variable which should be included within tourism research due to the inheritance (Chhabra, 2009; Garrod & Fyall, 2000) and intergenerational (Jepson, 2011; Nasser, 2003) aspects of both tourism and sustainability. Hence, the first objective of this study is to examine the effect of generativity on environmental attitudes and behaviours in the home and in the workplace.

In addition, the majority of work examining environmental behaviour has focused on home behaviour, consumption behaviour or the role of communities while comparatively little work has been done within organisations (specifically focusing on employee environmental behaviour) or looked at the potential spillover effects between the home and the workplace. Although initial work within organisations assumed that employee environmental behaviour would be similar to home environmental behaviour, Andersson, Shivarajan, and Blau (2005, p. 302) highlight that the “determinants of pro-environmental behaviour within organisations are different than the determinants of other types of pro-environmental behaviour”. In general, employees do not have the same financial interest in the workplace as they do at home. Employees are not typically concerned with their energy usage and they have little context for how much energy they use because devices are often shared by multiple employees (Carrico & Riemer, 2011; Siero, Bakker, Dekker, & van den Burg, 1996). Only a few studies have made a direct comparison between home and workplace behaviour suggesting that overall experience of recycling in the home has a positive effect on recycling in the workplace (Marans & Lee, 1993) and that energy saving behaviour at home has a positive effect on energy saving behaviour at work (Manika, Gregory-Smith, Wells, & Graham, 2014, 2015). Manika et al. (2015) also suggest that this spillover effect may be greater for women than men. Hence, the second objective of this study is to address more comprehensively the links between home and workplace behaviour, and attitudes about environmental resource saving behaviours. This will contribute to extending the prior literature.

Employee environmental behaviour has largely been studied in the context of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Within tourism CSR, research has focused across a wide range of sectors from museums and heritage (Edwards, 2007) to tour operators and airlines industry (Coles, Fenclova, & Dinan, 2011; Dodds & Kuehnel, 2010), although generally tourism CSR research is considered to be at an early, undeveloped stage (Coles et al., 2011). The largest focus however has been within the accommodation and hospitality industry (e.g., Ayuso, 2006; Bohdanowicz, 2007; Bohdanowicz, Zientara, & Novotna, 2011; Knowles, Macmillan, Palmer, Grabowski, & Hashimoto, 1999; Tsai, Tsang, & Cheng, 2012). This focus may be because hotels are suggested to produce higher than average consumption of energy and water than other commercial buildings, and therefore have a larger environmental impact (Bohdanowicz et al., 2011; Gossling, 2015). Additionally, within both wider and tourism specific CSR, research has largely focused on institutional (e.g., laws, standards) and organisational (macro research on boards and management groups) aspects, while ignoring those aspects at the individual or micro level, such as the role of internal stakeholders (e.g., employees; Chun, Shin, Choi, & Kim, 2013; Hansen, Dunford, Boss, Boss, & Angermeier, 2011). While tourism CSR research has explored the micro level in connection to tourists' opinions, the role of employee behaviours is largely unknown with only a few exceptions (Chou, 2014; Deery, Jago, & Stewart, 2007; Wells, Manika, Gregory-Smith, Taheri, &

McCowlen, 2015). This knowledge gap exists despite employees being the core target for internal behaviour change CSR initiatives, particularly in the services industry due to the close relationship between employees and consumers (Chou, 2014; Coles et al., 2011; Wells et al., 2015). Therefore, the third objective of this research is to further understand employee environmental behaviour and the links between specific environmental attitudes and behaviours.

On the basis of these gaps in the literature, this paper seeks to examine the links between home and workplace energy and water saving behaviours, within the under-researched tourism context, and to examine the influence of generativity on these relationships. Energy and water saving behaviours have been chosen as past research (Bohdanowicz et al., 2011; Gossling, 2015) highlighted these as the most resource-consuming behaviours and with large negative environmental impact in the hotel industry and are often the focus of social marketing interventions within hotels (see for example: www.greenhotelier.org/our-themes/energy/uk-hotels-making-huge-savings-on-energy-and-water/). They are also two types of resources that employees are using at home on a daily basis and, thus, spillover between the two settings could be examined. More specifically, the research examines how generativity influences employees' attitudes towards energy and water resource saving in the home and at the workplace as well as their energy and water resource saving behaviour both at home and in the workplace. Such relationships are important for hospitality organisations interested in developing their corporate social responsibility with action at the employee level and provide valuable knowledge to those wishing to develop internal social marketing campaigns directed to employees. The paper is organised into four main sections. Firstly, the literature on generativity, attitudes towards the environment and environmental behaviours are reviewed. Secondly, the paper presents hypotheses informed by the literature review. Thirdly, the methodology and analysis are presented exploring the influence of generativity on environmental friendly attitudes and behaviour in the home and at the workplace. Fourthly, the paper discusses the results and, finally, the paper presents a number of managerial implications, limitations and opportunities for further research.

2. Literature review

2.1. Generativity and environmental behaviour

Generativity is an important element of healthy adult development and is a “concern for and commitment to the well-being of future generations [and] may be expressed in teaching, mentoring, volunteer work, charitable activities, religious involvements and political activities” (McAdams & Logan, 2004, p. 16). McAdams and de St. Aubin (1992) conceive generativity as seven interrelated features: cultural demand, inner desire, generative concern, belief in the species, commitment, generative action, and person narration each of which is interlinked (for example generative action is motivated by cultural demand or inner desire). Generativity has been linked to increased social involvement (Hart, MacAdams, Hirsch, & Bauer, 2001), increased political consciousness/activity (Huta & Zuroff, 2007; Peterson, Smirles, & Wentworth, 1997; Peterson & Stewart, 1996), all forms of political expression (Peterson et al., 1997), volunteering (Agostinho & Paço, 2012) and social motives (Peterson & Stewart, 1993). It has also been studied alongside personality (Peterson et al., 1997) where individuals displaying higher levels of generativity scored highly on the Big Five factors of Extraversion and Conscientiousness and were open minded and interested in imaginative endeavours. Most recently it has been linked to consumer behaviour and in particular attitudes towards ads and products that are generatively positioned (Lacroix

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