

Psychological Values and Attitudinal Predictors of Sustainable Tourism Consumption

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INTRODUCTION & AIM

Sustainable tourism consumption is shaped not only by utilitarian or economic considerations but also by psychological determinants. Personal values function as relatively stable guiding principles that structure evaluations and motivate pro-environmental orientations, thereby informing attitudes toward sustainable practices (Schwartz, 1992; Stern, 2000). Identifying value-based predictors of sustainable tourism attitudes is therefore essential for understanding how such attitudes are formed and maintained.

The present study examines whether specific value dimensions are associated with positive attitudes toward sustainable tourism and whether parental status and education level are linked to attitudinal differences. We expected higher endorsement of autonomy-, relational-, rule-, and security-related values to be associated with more favorable attitudes toward sustainable tourism.

METHOD

Design. Cross-sectional quantitative online survey.

Sample. N = 95 adults from Constanța and Tulcea counties, Romania; parental status: 48 non-parents (50.5%), 47 parents (49.5%); education: secondary (15.8%), university (47.4%), post-university (31.6%), doctoral (4.2%), postdoctoral (1.1%).

Measures.

Psychological values were assessed using four scales of the V21 Values Questionnaire:

Autonomy (M = 12.05, SD = 2.68),

Social Relationships (M = 11.66, SD = 2.70),

Rule Compliance (M = 11.18, SD = 3.21), and

Security (M = 10.00, SD = 3.28).

Positive attitudes toward sustainable tourism were measured using the PAST scale (M = 4.33, SD = 1.78).

Previous validation studies of the V21 questionnaire reported acceptable internal consistency for these scales (Autonomy: $\alpha = .64–.68$; Social Relationships: $\alpha = .62–.65$; Rule Compliance: $\alpha = .68–.71$; Security: $\alpha = .54–.60$).

Data analysis.

Spearman correlations were used to examine associations between values and attitudes.

Group differences by parental status were tested using independent-samples t-tests, and differences across education levels were examined using the Kruskal–Wallis test.

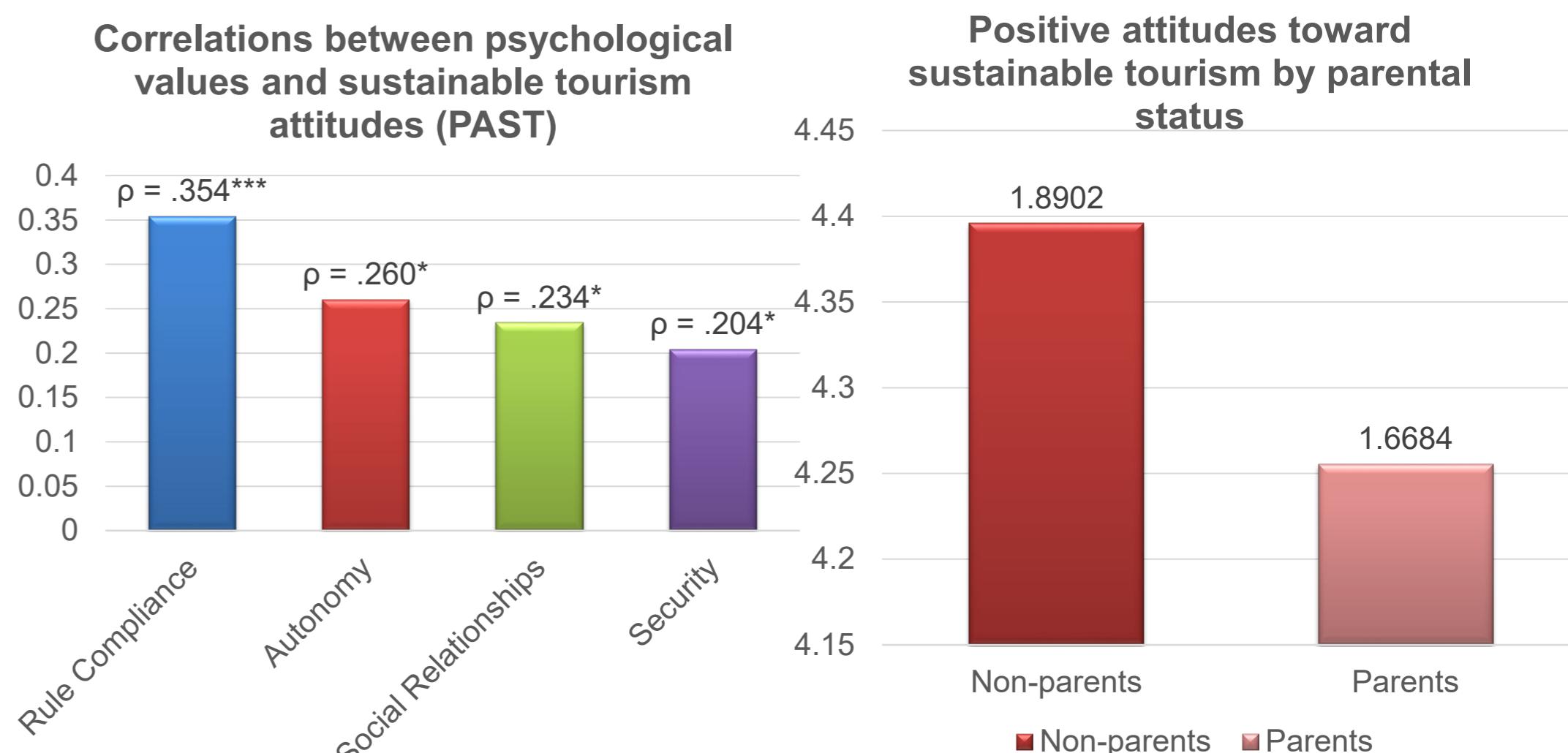
RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Spearman correlation analyses indicated that positive sustainable tourism attitudes (PAST) were significantly associated with all four value dimensions: Autonomy ($\rho = .260$, $p = .011$), Social Relationships ($\rho = .234$, $p = .022$), Rule Compliance ($\rho = .354$, $p < .001$), and Security ($\rho = .204$, $p = .047$).

The strongest association was observed for rule compliance, suggesting that normative and duty-based orientations play a central role in shaping favorable evaluations of sustainable tourism practices.

Group comparisons showed no evidence that parental status differentiates positive attitudes toward sustainable tourism (non-parents: $M = 4.40$, $SD = 1.89$; parents: $M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.67$; $t(93) = 0.38$, $p = .702$, $d \approx 0.08$). Similarly, education level was not significantly related to PAST (Kruskal–Wallis $H(3) = 3.223$, $p = .358$, $\epsilon^2 \approx .003$).

These findings indicate that value-based motivational orientations are more informative predictors of sustainable tourism attitudes than socio-demographic characteristics, consistent with theoretical models emphasizing the motivational role of values in environmentally significant behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Stern, 2000).



Note. Spearman correlations, N = 95. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$. **Note.** $t(93) = 0.38$, $p = .702$ (ns)

CONCLUSION

Psychological values, particularly orientations toward rule compliance, are positively associated with favorable attitudes toward sustainable tourism consumption. Parental status and education level show negligible associations with such attitudes, suggesting limited utility for demographic-only segmentation strategies. These findings support the development of sustainability communication and intervention approaches that explicitly activate and reinforce underlying value orientations.

FUTURE WORK

Future studies should replicate these findings in larger and more diverse samples, include behavioral indicators of sustainable tourism choices, and test multivariate models linking values, attitudes, and actual consumption behavior. Value-framed communication interventions represent a promising applied direction for promoting sustainable tourism practices.