

CONTRIBUTIONS OF SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN BRAZIL

CONTRIBUIÇÕES DE PRÁTICAS SUSTENTÁVEIS PARA A CONSOLIDAÇÃO DO TURISMO SUSTENTÁVEL NO BRASIL

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – *This research aims to analyze sustainable practices of 421 tourists, through a quantitative study (survey method).*

Design/methodology/approach – *The questionnaire identified the choices and attitudes related to transportation, lodging, environmental impact, social responsibility, tours, airfare purchase, shopping, food, local culture and nature.*

Findings – *The results showed that most respondents say they practice sustainability when traveling as tourists and try to assist other tourists by teaching and transmitting the principles of minimum impact whenever there is an opportunity. However, some research results are worrisome: only 19.72% of the respondents plan their trips thinking about the environmental impact and only 17.58% verify if the lodging environment adopts sustainability practices. In addition, 46.56% were indifferent about buying in stores and restaurants with sustainable practices.*

Originality/value (mandatory) – *Thus, there is still much to evolve regarding better choices and attitudes. With the development of sustainable practices, it will be possible to achieve favorable tourism for all.*

Keywords - *sustainable practices, tourism, sustainability.*



RESUMO

Objetivo - Esta pesquisa visa analisar as práticas sustentáveis de 421 turistas, por meio de um estudo quantitativo (método survey).

Desenho / metodologia / abordagem - O questionário identificou as escolhas e atitudes relacionadas a transporte, hospedagem, impacto ambiental, responsabilidade social, passeios, compra de passagens aéreas, compras, alimentação, cultura local e natureza.

Resultados - Os resultados mostraram que a maioria dos respondentes afirma praticar a sustentabilidade quando viaja como turista e tenta auxiliar outros turistas ensinando e transmitindo os princípios do mínimo impacto sempre que há oportunidade. No entanto, alguns resultados da pesquisa são preocupantes: apenas 19,72% dos entrevistados planejam suas viagens pensando no impacto ambiental e apenas 17,58% verificam se o ambiente de hospedagem adota práticas de sustentabilidade. Além disso, 46,56% ficaram indiferentes em comprar em lojas e restaurantes com práticas sustentáveis.

Originalidade / valor (obrigatório) - Assim, ainda há muito a evoluir em relação a melhores escolhas e atitudes. Com o desenvolvimento de práticas sustentáveis, será possível alcançar um turismo favorável para todos.

Palavras-chave - práticas sustentáveis, turismo, sustentabilidade.

1 INTRODUCTION

International tourism increased 6% in 2017, according to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) (BRASIL, 2018), so the sector is the third largest exporter in the world and it is responsible for 10% of the world Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to the Ministry of Tourism (BRASIL, 2017a), in 2016, Brazil registered a record in the influx of foreign tourists, with 6.6 million visitors who injected more than twenty-one billion Brazilian Reals into the national economy, generating employment and income.

Given this scenario, the challenge is to harmonize economic, social and environmental development, so that tourist practices can continue happening. The option for more sustainable choices during tourist practice can favor the behavior change and the adoption of new habits in the daily life of individuals and organizations.

The destination provides the experience, be it behavioral or perceptual, cognitive or emotional, explicit or implicit (Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007). It is understood that tourist practices offer the possibility of establishing interpersonal relationships, interactions and action in society that can contribute to sustainability.

In this sense, the social action can consist of the action of individuals who think in a similar way, or even collectively, to produce cultural and political changes in interpersonal relationships, in families, organizations, communities or nations. Closs and Antonello (2014) defend the idea that a transformative social action can produce changes in individuals and in the way that they learn, that is, instead of passively accepting the reality defined by others, people can develop communicative skills to negotiate meanings and objectives.

Research on tourist behavior are quite common (Fratu, 2011) and its sustainable practices (Tyrväinen *et al.*, 2014). Silva and Monticelli (2016) conducted a survey to identify habits related to behavior of the tourism client, especially with a focus on sustainable tourism. The theoretical basis used to support the research instrument was Carone and Rocha (2009) and the results indicated that sustainable tourism is still not seen clearly by tourists and that sustainable attitudes are not always considered when planning and making tourism travel.

The complexity of social problems can be overcome by a new ethical and moral behavior developed by a new attitude towards the problems and their consequences. Problems need to be analyzed collectively. For that, it is necessary to strengthen the bonds of collaboration, participation, cooperation and solidarity between citizens (Madruga, 2009).



It is about establishing healthy relational practices, fundamental for the experience to happen, because it is through this experience people meet physically. A practice is oriented towards a purpose (research, problem solving, innovation) and can be understood as desirable or not depending on the social actor in question. Relational practices allow actors to connect with the socially constructed space in a meaningful way. In addition, knowledge can be promoted by different social actors both explicitly and implicitly, so relational practices are the result of the interaction between different functions that social actors assume, rules and structures that regulate these interactions and tools that they use (Cunha, 2009).

Therefore, it is believed that the experiences caused by sustainable tourist practices can become a way of learning and can also be a personal and collective maturation. The non-obligation to perform tasks stimulates interest in other activities and in the search for information and experiences that often go unnoticed in daily life (Dumazedier, 2000).

According to Stamboulis and Skayannis (2003), the changes that occur in society and the diffusion of information and communication technologies affect the creation, production and consumption of tourism products. For the authors, there is a trend towards more personalized tourist products, which move away from mass tourism. There is an increase in people looking for something different and an increasing number of companies that are concerned with offering tourism that can be considered memorable. An example is the Cambará Eco Hotel, located in Cambará do Sul – Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), which is concerned with the preservation, maintenance and recovery of the environment, as a way of instructing tourists through environmental education, enabling entertainment, leisure and practical solutions for tourism development in the region.

Based on this, the purpose of this study was to identify sustainable tourism practices that reflect the behavior and choices of tourists. This work is part of a Master’s dissertation that aimed to analyze sustainable practices in tourism.

2 SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN TOURISM

The concept of sustainable tourism and its applications can be understood in different ways depending on the interests of those involved (local population, public administration, businessmen, tourists) and the context in which they are used (Butler, 1999). Therefore, public or private organizations are usually based on principles that can guide the planning and execution of sustainable actions.

Some instruments have already been created to assess sustainability in the tourist destination (Box 1). However, this is a complex process and there is no consensus on the best way to do it. Depending on the destination, different indicators must be considered to better analyze sustainability. The assessment helps to achieve the objectives and brings theory closer to practice, but with regard to tourism and sustainability, there is still much to be done to get out of the field of rhetoric (Cordeiro, Leite, & Partidário, 2010).

Box 1- Instruments for assessing the sustainability of tourist destinations

| Instruments | Author/Institution | Aspects analyzed |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Ecological Footprint | Wackernagel & Rees (1996) | Amount of land area and water of an ecosystem necessary to maintain the standard of living of a population through the use and consumption of material and energy resources, as well as for the assimilation of the waste produced. |
| Tourism Sustainability Barometer | Ko (2001, 2005) | Ecosystem (land, water, air, species and populations, use of resources) and human system (health and population, wealth, education and culture, community, equity). |



| Instruments | Author/Institution | Aspects analyzed |
|---|---|--|
| Sustainable Tourism Indicator System | WTO (2004) | Well-being of the receiving communities; cultural aspects; community participation in tourism development; tourist satisfaction; health and safety; economic benefits from tourism; protection of natural values; management of scarce natural resources; |
| Sustainable Tourism Indicator System | WTO (2004) | Tourism impacts associated with the generation of waste and pollution (air, sound and visual); control of tourist activities; destination planning; design of products and services; and the sustainability of tourism services and operations. |
| Destination Scorecard | National Geographic Traveler (Partidário, 2004) | Environmental and ecological quality of the destination; social and cultural integrity; conditions of the built heritage (archaeological, historical and existing structures); aesthetic, natural and built attractiveness; quality of tourism management, that is, the characteristics of tourism development: appropriate character, benefits for the local population that encourage the protection of the place, and information to tourists about the place and its function in that destination; future perspective for the destination in terms of sustainability considering the dominant practices and protection policies. |
| Core Set Indicators | Eurostat (EUROPEAN COMMUNITIE, 2006) | Relationship between the growth of tourism and its impact on the quality of the environment. |
| Model for measuring sustainability performance in tourism | Franzoni (2015) | Sustainability performance based on three levels: local community, tourist destination and autonomous organizations considering the social, competitive and economic dimensions. |

Source: prepared by the authors.

Organizations such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, called Travel Forever, in addition to establishing sustainability criteria for tourist destinations, also presents rules and performance indicators for hotels and tour operators. The concern involves the elimination of poverty and environmental sustainability in order to benefit: socially and economically, the local communities; cultural heritage; and the environment, always trying to minimize negative impacts (Kanni, 2011).

In the field of tourism, sustainable practices must go beyond purely environmental concepts to also consider the problems of local populations (Jiménez Martínez & Hirabayashi, 2003). Considering the principles of global and national relevance, it is understood that any action, taken by individuals and public or private organizations, in order to be considered sustainable, must seek the conservation of natural and cultural resources, the economic viability of tourism and social equity.

The development of sustainable tourism, according to what the WTO suggests, follows five principles, as shown in Box 2:

Box 2 - Principles for the development of sustainable tourism

| Principles: |
|---|
| Natural, historical, cultural and other resources related to tourism are conserved with the purpose of continuing to be used in the future, while bringing benefits to today's society. |
| Tourism development is planned and managed with the aim of not generating serious environmental or socio-cultural problems for the tourist area. |
| The general environmental quality of the tourist area is maintained and improved where necessary. |
| A high level of tourist satisfaction is maintained in order that the tourist destinations retain their market value and popularity. |
| The benefits of tourism are widely extended to the whole of society. |

Source: Adapted from WTO (2003).

Actions focused on sustainability can be applied by different types of companies related to tourism, but it is more common to find cases in hotels and travel agencies. Since 2012, the Brazilian Association of Tour Operators (Braztoa) has highlighted tourism organizations that invest in the development of more



sustainable initiatives for the sector, rewarding organizations in six categories: Braztoa members, travel agencies, resorts, lodging facilities, tourism partners and innovative projects.

BWT Operadora, located in Paraná, was awarded in 2017, by the category associated with Braztoa (Braztoa, 2017). Since 2015 the company has been developing the “Better World Together” project, which brings together a series of initiatives to make the world better, from recycling materials to actions to prevent cancer. An example of its search for a less polluted world is the *Adote uma Caneca* (Adopt a Cup) campaign, which aims reduce the use of disposable cups within the company. The last action of the project is *Trem do Natal da Melhor Idade e das Crianças* (Christmas Train for the Best Age and Children), which benefited more than five hundred people with a day on the tracks, on the railroad that connects Curitiba to Morretes (Paraná, Brazil).

In the travel agencies category, *Baluarte Pousada e Ecoturismo* (Baluarte Hotel and Ecotourism) received the award for creating the “*Passeio Circuito Praias*” (Beach Circuit Tour), whose idea is to insert tourists into the region’s fishing community, which lies between the Delta of Parnaíba and the Lençóis Maranhenses (Braztoa, 2017). During the activity, interested people can get to know the natural attractions, handicrafts and local cuisine, based on seafood and, that way, getting in touch with the residents. Thus, it is possible to value the initiatives of the population, seeking solutions to stimulate trade and reduce the migration of families to other cities.

Founded in 2007 in Gramado (Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil), the Vento Sul Turismo agency has also been awarded in 2014 and 2015 for performing educational promotional actions aimed at consolidating sustainable products and practices (Braztoa, 2014; Braztoa, 2015). The company created sustainable routes in the agricultural communities of Gramado to promote tourism in the region, involving families who open their homes and share with visitors their customs and values, their memories and their passion for their origins.

The Sofitel Guarujá Jequitimar resort, located on the coast of São Paulo (Brazil), was awarded in 2017 for not producing more liquid effluents (sewage). The treated water is reused in several other activities at the hotel, such as cooling the air conditioning towers. This sustainable positioning also contributed to the reduction of water consumption. In 2014, Sofitel stopped spending R\$ 800,000 on water consumption, thanks to the reuse system (Braztoa, 2017).

The 2017 Braztoa Sustainability Award, in the category of lodging facilities, went to Pousada Piuval, which operates in the Pantanal Mato-Grossense (Braztoa, 2017). The project became a reference in water treatment plants when it reached the mark of ten thousand liters recycled per day, through the reuse of the water used in sinks, showers and air conditioning, directed to toilets. In addition, the inn has strong socio-cultural actions: all employees are from the region and Piuval is a partner of the Guia Mirim Project, responsible for training new guides at the destination.

In addition to those already mentioned, other national and international hotels are increasingly investing in infrastructure and practices that contribute to the well-being of the planet. Some are: Cambará Eco Hotel in Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), Hotel São Gotardo in Minas Gerais (Brazil), Hotel Ville La Plage in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), Hotel Canto das Águas in Bahia (Brazil), Hotel Viceroy Miami (United States), Hotel Renaissance Paris Vendome (France), NH Collection Roma Giustiniano (Italy), Radisson Blu Hotel (Germany), among others.

3 METHOD

This study consists of a research with a quantitative approach (Gil, 2008; Hair *et al.*, 2009) based on the survey method with application of questionnaires with tourists with a non-probabilistic sampling for convenience, forming a sample of 421 participants who were invited by social networks and electronic messages.



The questionnaire contained 36 questions related to sustainable practices considering the choices and attitudes related to: means of transport, accommodation, environmental impact, social responsibility, tours, purchase of airfare, shopping, food, local culture, nature. The questions were assessed using the Likert scale, ranging from “1 = strongly disagree” to “5 = strongly agree”.

Specifically, in order to verify the sustainable practices of tourists, the questionnaire contained 36 questions: questions 1 to 21 according to a survey on habits related to the behavior of the tourism client (Silva & Monticelli, 2016) and questions 22 to 36 based on the quiz “Are you a responsible tourist?” created by the Ministry of Tourism (BRASIL, 2016) and in the tips for a responsible tourist also proposed by the Ministry of Tourism (BRASIL, 2016a). Questions were elaborated and added to the instrument by Silva and Monticelli (2016) in order to make the analysis more complete.

The strategy used to achieve the objective of the survey method was the frequency of responses, mean and standard deviation). Statistical analyses were performed in Excel and SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Sciences software and the significance level considered was 5%.

The research was registered at *Plataforma Brasil* and was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the researchers’ institution.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to identify the sustainable practices of tourists, some procedures with the data obtained through the answered questionnaires were performed. The means, standard deviation and frequencies of disagreement, indifference and agreement were identified. Questions 6, 16, 21, 22, 27, 31, 32 and 36 in Table 2, where there was an inverted Likert scale, were adjusted to calculate the mean. The table below was organized in descending order of averages.

Table 1 - Mean, standard deviation and frequency of responses to the Sustainable Practices construct items

| Question | M | SD | D % | I % | A % |
|--|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. I turn off the lights and turn off the equipment when I leave. | 4,72 | ,621 | 1,66 | 2,85 | 95,49 |
| 2. I turn off the tap while brushing my teeth. | 4,56 | ,853 | 4,28 | 5,46 | 90,26 |
| 3. I choose itineraries that allow me to know the culture and the natural beauty of the place. | 4,53 | ,656 | 0,95 | 6,18 | 92,87 |
| 4. I always turn on the air conditioning with closed doors and windows. | 4,52 | 1,011 | 7,60 | 2,85 | 89,55 |
| 5. Being viable and safe, I choose to go hiking to see the places I’m visiting. | 4,50 | ,755 | 2,85 | 6,65 | 90,50 |
| 6. I don’t worry about excess baggage, even if I have to pay extra for it. | 4,48 | ,824 | 90,26 | 6,41 | 3,33 |
| 7. I give preference to traditional meals of the place I’m visiting. | 4,26 | ,948 | 5,70 | 13,06 | 81,24 |
| 8. I would go on a city tour by bicycle or walking instead of using buses, if possible and safe. | 4,22 | 1,111 | 10,21 | 8,08 | 81,71 |
| 9. I prefer lodging facilities close to the places I want to visit, as this saves on transportation and contributes to the reduction of pollutant emissions. | 4,15 | ,924 | 5,70 | 14,01 | 80,29 |
| 10. I prefer to use public transportation (plane, train, bus) to travel for tourism. | 4,12 | ,956 | 5,46 | 21,85 | 72,69 |
| 11. When the hotel offers a bed/bath linen change system at the request of the guest, I do not request a daily change. | 4,05 | 1,197 | 13,06 | 12,59 | 74,35 |
| 12. On the beach, I wear water-resistant sunscreen to avoid polluting the sea and harming the marine fauna. | 4,02 | 1,097 | 9,98 | 19,00 | 71,02 |
| 13. When I practice outdoor activities, I carry a plastic bag for eventual waste disposal. | 3,99 | 1,246 | 15,44 | 13,06 | 71,50 |
| 14. When I shop on my tourism trips, I prefer the products sold and made by local residents. | 3,91 | ,958 | 6,18 | 26,60 | 67,22 |



| Question | M | SD | D % | I % | A % |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|
| 15. I try to take as few bags as possible, because the less bags, the less space to need to carry them. | 3,89 | 1,098 | 12,83 | 16,15 | 71,02 |
| 16. I take home plants, stones or shells as reminders of the natural environment I visited. | 3,87 | 1,260 | 69,60 | 13,54 | 16,86 |
| 17. In the city I am visiting, if public transportation is safe and available, I prefer to travel that way instead of renting a car or ride a taxi. | 3,86 | 1,169 | 14,25 | 15,92 | 69,83 |
| 18. I collect all waste produced and I separate recyclable materials from organic waste. | 3,77 | 1,212 | 19,48 | 15,68 | 64,84 |
| 19. I would buy a package from an agency that offers a carbon neutralization option, that is offsetting the emission of carbon dioxide by planting trees from my trip. | 3,62 | 1,205 | 17,10 | 24,23 | 58,67 |
| 20. When walking through the travel destination I take my reusable bottle and avoid buying water bottles that generate more waste. | 3,60 | 1,235 | 20,43 | 23,28 | 56,29 |
| 21. When walking through the travel destination, I always take what I brought home even though I find the same things there, not using local shops. | 3,56 | 1,042 | 52,50 | 33,25 | 14,25 |
| 22. Even when I travel for tourism, I prefer to eat in chain restaurants and snack bars known all over the world. | 3,50 | 1,160 | 52,97 | 27,08 | 19,95 |
| 23. I help educate other visitors by transmitting the principles of minimum impact whenever there is an opportunity to disseminate this responsible attitude. | 3,46 | 1,198 | 19,48 | 29,22 | 51,30 |
| 24. I worry about the impacts that my trip may have on the local community. | 3,38 | 1,160 | 21,61 | 30,88 | 47,51 |
| 25. I try to neutralize the impact of my travels on tourism (saving water, electricity, using biodegradable products, etc.). | 3,27 | 1,211 | 24,94 | 28,98 | 46,08 |
| 26. I like to visit cities that select ecotourism options. | 3,22 | 1,072 | 20,90 | 42,28 | 36,82 |
| 27. I prefer to stay on border of river, lakes, beaches and mountains to make the most of what nature has to offer, even if the place is of environmental preservation. | 3,17 | 1,260 | 41,09 | 29,93 | 28,98 |
| 28. I use reusable cloth or paper bags instead of plastic bags when shopping. | 3,10 | 1,273 | 32,78 | 25,65 | 41,57 |
| 29. On trips I like to shop in stores and restaurants with sustainable practices. | 3,09 | 1,062 | 23,75 | 46,56 | 29,69 |
| 30. I would accept to pay a higher price for a lodging that adopts sustainability practices. | 2,89 | 1,155 | 37,29 | 31,12 | 31,59 |
| 31. When I choose the accommodation at the travel destination, I prioritize my comfort over any other issue. | 2,85 | 1,101 | 27,55 | 33,02 | 39,43 |
| 32. When it is possible to travel by car or motorcycle, I prefer the means of transport even if there is public transport to the destination I chose to travel to. | 2,81 | 1,317 | 30,64 | 24,47 | 44,89 |
| 33. I plan my tourism trips also thinking about environmental impact. | 2,69 | 1,083 | 41,33 | 38,95 | 19,72 |
| 34. When I choose the place where I will be staying, I check if the hotel / inn adopts sustainability practices (selective garbage collection, rainwater reuse, solar water heating, projects with the local community, among others). | 2,57 | 1,124 | 45,60 | 36,82 | 17,58 |
| 35. I choose to purchase an airline ticket that allows me to get to my destination faster, no matter the price. | 2,35 | 1,125 | 61,28 | 21,14 | 17,58 |
| 36. I prefer to save money and buy the cheapest airline ticket available, even if it implies the inclusion of stopovers or connections. | 2,29 | 1,214 | 18,76 | 19,24 | 62,00 |
| GENERAL | 3,63 | 1,08 | | | |

Source: survey data.

Note: "M" – Means. "SD" – Standard Deviation. "D" – Disagreement. "I" – Indifference. "A" – Agreement.

For the purposes of analysis, the higher the average, the greater the achievement of sustainable practices. The agreement frequencies also helped in the process of understanding the results.

In general, the answers were shown positively in relation to the choices and attitudes of the tourists participating in the survey. It is clear that, as long as it is safe, respondents prefer to go hiking or cycling to see the places they visit. They also choose accommodation facilities close to the places they wish to visit, thus saving on transport and contributing to the reduction of pollutant emissions.



More than half of the participants indicated that they would buy a package from an agency that offered the option of carbon neutralization. This is an example of a differential that travel agencies can appropriate to create a competitive advantage over the competition (Porter, 2004).

About helping to educate other visitors, 51.3% of respondents try to convey the principles of minimum impact whenever there is an opportunity. This can be considered an experiential learning process (Kolb, 1984) facilitated through the interactions that tourism offers.

Excess baggage implies extra costs for passengers, an increase in the weight of the aircraft and a consequent increase in fuel costs, that is, pollution. Therefore, the survey showed that many people are concerned about the baggage limit, impacting in a favorable way to the environment.

In addition, there is an appreciation of traditional foods, culture, natural beauty and local commerce. People like to experience what is different, and local characteristics are exactly what the tourist seeks most of the time (Goodey, 2002).

Most of the surveyed tourists take simple measures, but they can make all the difference to the environment, such as: turning off the lights and equipment when leaving; turning off the tap while brushing their teeth; turning on the air conditioning with closed doors and windows; avoiding the daily change of bed / bath linen during the stay; wearing water-resistant sunscreen to avoid polluting the sea and harming marine fauna; carrying a plastic bag for eventual waste disposal; collecting the waste produced and separating recyclable materials from organic waste; and using reusable bottles. These are practices that possibly apply to people's routine, happening not only on the trip, but also in their own homes.

It is known that the use of public transport facilitates urban mobility and reduces the emission of polluting gases. For 72.69% of the participants, there is a preference to use plane, train or bus to travel for tourism and if, in the city they are visiting, there is safe and available public transportation, 69.83% of people prefer to travel that way instead of renting a car or riding a taxi. However, when possible, 44.89% of respondents prefer to use a car or motorcycle to get to their destination. Other criteria can be considered when choosing the means of transport, such as: time available to travel, distance to be covered, comfort, accessibility, number of people traveling together; in short, attributes that have escaped the reach of this research, but that can be explored in new studies.

Generally, more direct flights imply a higher price for airfare, however, the more direct it is, the lower the fuel consumption and, consequently, the less air contamination. However, the environmental impact is not usually considered in the travel planning by 338 participants who did not agree or were indifferent to the issue. The results of the research showed that most prefer to save money and buy the cheapest airline ticket available, even if this implies the inclusion of stopovers or connections.

The research realized by Silva and Monticelli (2016) also showed a low average (2.18 with 1.06 standard deviation) in the answers to the question: I plan my tourism trips also thinking about the environmental impact. It is known that the price is often essential to make the decision to travel or not, so sustainability may not be such a relevant factor in this process. Of the 421 participants, 122 prefer to stay on the borders of rivers, lakes, beaches and mountains to fully enjoy what nature has to offer, even if the place is of environmental preservation, 133 would accept to pay a higher price to stay in a more sustainable location and 166 prioritize comfort over any other issue.

In relation to the levels of indifference or lower average rates, it was found that the respondents do not intend to spend more due to the fact that this financial effort reflects sustainability (they do not accept paying more for accommodation with sustainable practices; they do not plan the trip thinking about the environmental impact; they do not check if the accommodation adopts sustainable practices; they do not choose more expensive airfare to reach their destination faster). The financial issue is still a decisive factor, according to this research, when compared to the need to consider sustainability. In this sense, it is still necessary to raise the awareness of both customers /



tourists and tourist companies: customers / tourists must encourage a financial effort to guarantee sustainability on the trip, and tourist companies must offer prices - as far as possible - more compelling to sustainable products and services.

As much as some are concerned with saving water and light, prefer reusable bags, use biodegradable products and pay attention to the impacts caused to the local community, the results showed that sustainability can be even more valued. Perhaps the greatest interest of tourists, during their holidays, is the search for pleasure, without there being a greater concern for the collective (Swarbrooke, 2000).

Most of the participants do not usually check if the accommodation adopts sustainability practices and were quite indifferent about buying in stores and restaurants with sustainable practices. 71 people agreed with the question: I take home plants, stones or shells as reminders of the natural environment I visited. It is understood that, even though it is a minority, the number of tourists who practice this action against the environment is significant.

5 CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify the sustainable practices of tourists. The ones that stood out the most were: turning off the lights and equipment when leaving; turning off the tap while brushing their teeth; choosing itineraries that allow to know the culture and the natural beauty of the place; turning on the air conditioning with closed doors and windows; choosing hiking or cycling to get to know the destination; concerning about excess baggage; preference for typical local meals, products made by local residents and accommodation close to the places of visit; using public transportation; avoiding the daily change of bed / bath linen during the stay; wearing water-resistant sunscreen; carrying a bag for eventual disposal of garbage; collecting and separating the waste.

It is understood that some choices may be affected due to the financial costs involved than by the interest in sustainability. Even so, when using public transportation, or choosing to walk, or avoid excess baggage, tourists are also collaborating to reduce pollution.

In addition to the practices shown, most tourists also try to help educate other visitors by transmitting the principles of minimum impact whenever there is an opportunity. This type of attitude is fundamental, because if there is no concern and care for social, cultural, environmental, political and economic aspects, the destination reduces its competitiveness, and the tendency is to stop having tourist attractions.

The results indicated that 58.67% of the participants would buy a package from an agency that offered the option of carbon neutralization. Initiatives like this appear as an opportunity, since sustainability, when recognized by tourists and considered as a differential in relation to other destinations or companies, is capable of creating a competitive advantage.

As much as some participants are concerned with saving water and light, prefer reusable bags, use biodegradable products and pay attention to the impacts caused to the local community, the results showed that sustainability can be even more valued. Only 19.72% of the respondents plan their trips thinking about the environmental impact and only 17.58% check if the lodging method adopts sustainability practices. In addition, 46.56% were indifferent about buying in stores and restaurants with sustainable practices.

Proposed as suggestions for future studies: the development of a specific scale for sustainable tourist practices; the use of a more representative and broad sample; the use of other techniques of statistical analysis; and the introduction of a qualitative phase capable of better understanding, through methods such as focus groups and semi-structured interviews, the perceptions of tourists, managers of tourist organizations and the local community about the topic addressed.



Thus, the aim of this work was not to exhaust all possibilities of approaching the topic in question, but to stimulate reflection and further studies concerned with the development of tourism in a sustainable character. The results presented are expected to be a contribution not only to the academic scope, but also to the managers of tourist organizations.

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