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Exploring the Environmentally Responsible Behavior of Generations Y and Z from a Cross-Cultural Perspective in the Context of Nature-Based Tourism

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Abstract: There are increasing numbers of studies involving Generation Y and Generation Z, as these generations represent the present and future generations and drive the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development of the natural environment. Environmentally responsible behavior is the key feature for diagnosing how people think and react to the environment where they are situated. This study investigates and analyzes the relevant influencing factors of nature tourists from Generation Y and Generation Z in Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam regarding their performance of environmentally responsible behaviors and compares the differences of these factors among the three groups. The study analysis methods were regression analysis and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Based on the research results, we verified three factors related to environmentally responsible behavior, pro-ecological worldview, environmental attitude and situational factors. A pro-ecological worldview will indirectly affect environmentally responsible behavior within the three groups. Situational factors directly and indirectly significantly affect environmental attitudes and environmentally responsible behavior in the three groups. In addition, these three groups have significant differences in the average recognition of pro-ecological worldview, environmental attitude, and situational factors and thus environmentally responsible behavior. The overall result reveals that the Thai group tended to have better recognition than that of the Taiwanese and Vietnamese groups. However, all the participants among the groups agreed on the importance of nature preservation and would like to support environmental protection.

Keywords: nature-based tourism; environmentally responsible behavior; pro-ecological worldview; environmental attitude; situational factor; sustainable development

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1. Introduction

1.1. Research Problem Statement

Currently, the demand for ecotourism and the attributes of ecotourists have received more attention [1,2] than the environmentally responsible behavior (ERB) of nature tourists and its related influencing factors. There are relatively few studies focused on this aspect and less is known about the environmentally responsible behavior of Generation Y and Generation Z in cross-cultural nature tourism. Generations Y and Z generally refer to the generations born between the early 1980s and 2010, whose life is centered on the Internet [3]. The reason why Generation Y and Generation Z are important is that they have been or will become an important generation to solve the current environmental problems, they have a very pragmatic attitude towards how to solve environmental issues such as climate change [4] and will stand up for themselves and challenge traditions, institutions and values [5]. Therefore, their every move will have profound impact on the sustainable development of the natural environment in the future.

At present, there are still few studies exploring cross-cultural ethnic groups in nature tourism, and the existing research also supports the argument that there will be differences in the attitudes and environmentally responsible behaviors of different cultures on environmental issues. Moscardo [6] found that there are differences in the age, travel group and previous travel experience of tourists from different cultural groups in different countries, and the research conclusion also confirmed the important influence of national culture. Hansmann et al. [7] conducted a study on students from six different countries and pointed out that national cultural groups attach different importance to different values. The key reason was related to environmental attitude, whereas Kang and Moscardo [8] believed that within different nationalities different cultural backgrounds form the understanding of environmentally responsible behavior.

Based on the above-mentioned studies on environmental attitude and the environmentally responsible behavior of different cultures in nature tourism and that there are still a few related studies, Hofstede [9] also called for more discussions on a wider range of cultures and samples. Therefore, this study first explores the influence of factors such as pro-ecological worldview, environmental attitude and situation on ERB and then explores the differences in the environmentally responsible behavior of Generation Y and Generation Z nature tourists among Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups. These three areas are focused on the tourism industry, and nature-based tourism has always been popular. Ultimately, it is hoped that the results from this study can provide references for relevant government management agencies to formulate policies to enhance the ERB of Generation Y and Generation Z in tourism and implement the effects of ecological conservation and sustainable development of the natural environment.

1.2. Nature Tourists' Environmentally Responsible Behavior

Environmentally responsible behavior reflects the behavior of individuals or groups concerned about the natural ecological environment [10]. Furthermore, it is the efforts of tourists to reduce the impact on the environment and protect the environment during leisure or tourism activities, contribute to conservation, and not disturb the ecosystem and biosphere of natural destinations [11]. The environmentally responsible behavior of nature tourists is also considered to be an important indicator in nature tourism for promoting appropriate environmental development and sustainability.

As far as nature tourism is concerned, tourists' identification with natural ecological areas comes from their experience of the natural environment. If the visiting experience can satisfy tourists, it can affect their environmental attitude and behavior changes [12]. Lee and Moscardo [13] also pointed out that there are indeed differences in the attitudes and behaviors of tourists before and after participating in nature tourism activities. Some researchers [14–16] even point out that the important factors affecting whether tourists are willing to engage in ERB are determined by the type of tourism they choose, especially when tourists choose to visit natural ecological areas in the form of nature tourism, which can stimulate their ERB. In addition, some studies have suggested that in addition to the type of trip, different additional factors such as age also affect tourists' decisions to participate in any particular ecotourism activity [1]. Some research [17–19] has suggested that people with ERB traits will automatically minimize the impact on the natural environment and even take actions that are beneficial to the environment.

2. Methodology

2.1. Hypothesis Development

2.1.1. Pro-Ecological Worldview and Environmentally Responsible Behavior (H1)

From the perspective of the natural environment, worldview is the overall concept formed by the thoughts, thinking, values and interpretation of nature formed in the interaction between individuals and the natural environment [20]. In environmental psychology, environmental values are a prerequisite for environmental attitude and an individual's pro-ecological worldview reflects their environmental values [21]. These will be further

manifested in an individual's environmentally responsible behavior [22]. Based on the above literature, the following hypothesis (H1) is developed.

H1. *Pro-ecological worldview has a positive influence on environmentally responsible behavior.*

2.1.2. Environmental Attitude and Environmentally Responsible Behavior (H2)

Some studies on ERB have found that there is a positive correlation between knowledge and environmental attitude and responsible environmental behavior and that environmental attitude is considered to be a key determinant of ERB [23,24]. Masud et al. [25] believed that the understanding and knowledge of the environment can produce the perception and care of the environment, that is, environmental attitude, and then promote pro-environmental behavior through attitude transformation. Markowitz et al. [26] also mentioned that personal environmental attitude will significantly affect experiential pro-environmental behavior and be closely connected with the natural environment. In addition, if tourists have more knowledge about environmental issues or have a positive environmental attitude, they will be motivated to treat the environment in a more responsible way [27] and be more willing to use environmentally friendly methods of travel [13]. Based on the above literature, the following hypothesis (H2) is developed.

H2. *Environmental attitude has a positive influence on environmentally responsible behavior.*

2.1.3. Situational Factors and Environmentally Responsible Behavior (H3)

There are two main versions of the definition of situation, Belk's [28] "objective existence theory" and Lutz and KaKKar's [29] "subjective cognition theory". Both arguments also emphasize that the situation must exist at a specific time and place and must have an effect on the behavior to be observed or explained. The difference between the two is that the "theory of objective existence" emphasizes that the situation is defined by external stimuli and thus can be observed in an objective way [28]. The "subjective existence theory" believes that the change in personal mental state caused by external stimuli can be called "situation", that is, the meaning of the existence of a situation must be recognized and interpreted by the individual's psychology [29]. Combining the two points of view, the situational factors defined in this study are all the factors that obviously affect the individual's current attitude and behavior in a certain time or space. Based on the above literature, the following hypothesis (H3) is developed.

H3. *Situational factors have a positive influence on environmentally responsible behavior.*

2.1.4. Pro-Ecological Worldview and Environmental Attitude (H4)

As mentioned in the development of H1, a pro-ecological worldview will specifically affect people's attitudes towards environmental issues, which will be further manifested in individuals' environmentally responsible behavior [22]. Some scholars have studied and compared the environmental worldviews of transnational students and found that culture has a significant and far-reaching influence on the shaping of schoolchildren's environmental worldviews [30]. However, Hansmann et al. [7] compared students from six different countries and pointed out that national cultural groups attach different importance to different values and that these differences in values are related to differences in environmental attitude. Based on the above literature, the following hypothesis (H4) is developed.

H4. *Pro-ecological worldview has a positive influence on environmental attitude.*

2.1.5. Situational Factors and Environmental Attitude (H5)

In past research results on the recreational behavior of people and their attitudes to the environment, some believe that situational factors will affect the relationship between attitudes and behaviors [17,31,32]. The situation can also provide an intermediary expla-

nation for understanding the relationship between behavior and attitude in the context of the interactions between people or between people and space [33]. People who are highly concerned about their environment in specific situations or places will also naturally express concern for other environmental issues or support specific responsible environmental attitudes [34]. Based on the above literature, the following hypothesis (H5) is developed.

H5. *Situational factors have a positive influence on environmental attitude.*

2.2. Research Model

The four aspects of the research framework are pro-ecological worldview, environmental attitude, situational factors and environmentally responsible behavior, and a total of five research hypotheses (including H1 to H5) are deduced. In order to make the research context clearer and understand the cause–effect relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable, the conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.

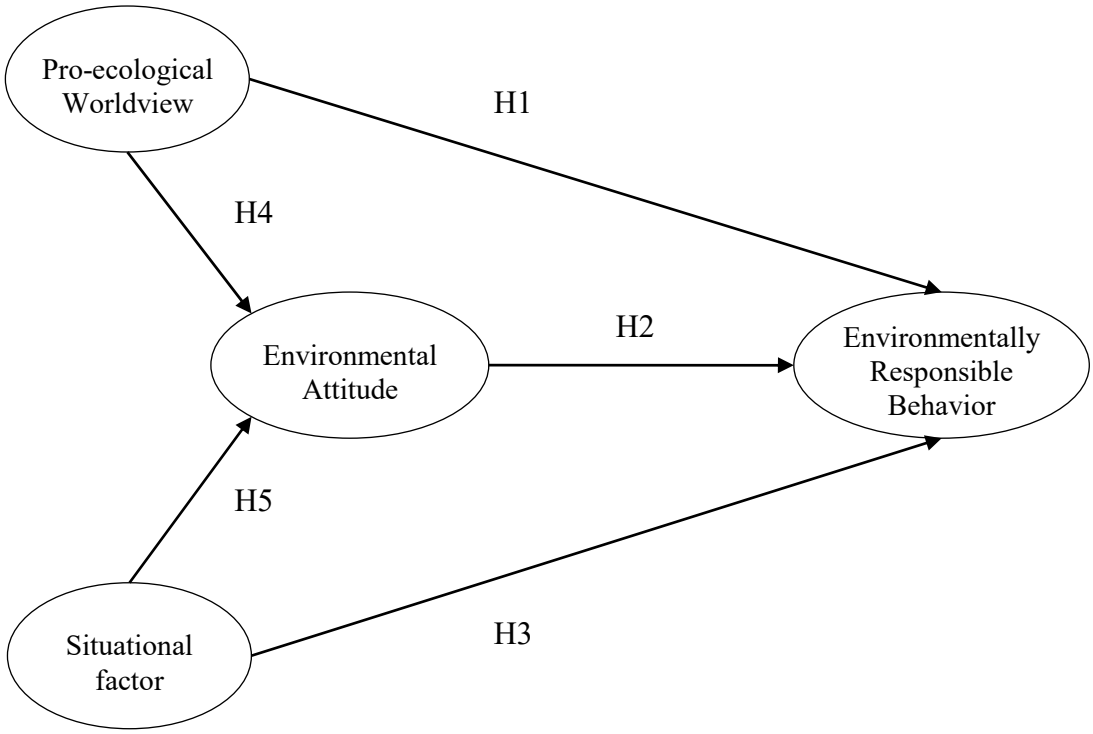

Figure 1. Research model of the study.

2.3. Sample Selection and Data Collection

The subjects of this study are nature tourists that are part of Generation Y and older members of Generation Z, i.e., individuals between the ages of 18 and 39. This study conducted surveys in Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. The data collection period was from May 2020 to July 2021, i.e., during the global COVID-19 pandemic. All research questionnaires were collected online. There were 426 valid questionnaires from Taiwan, with a valid recovery rate of 93%, 380 valid questionnaires from Thailand, with a valid recovery rate of 95%, and 349 valid questionnaires from Vietnam, with a valid recovery rate of 96%. The sample sizes for the three areas are close to the absolute minimum sample size requirement of 250 respondents [35].

2.4. Questionnaire Design and Measurement

The questionnaire design included five parts. The first part, environmental attitude, has 12 items referring to the scales of Kim and Weile [34] and Weaver and Lawton [36]. The four dimensions are: importance of environmental protection, support for environmental protection, recognition of ecotourism and recognition of the natural environment.

The second part, pro-ecological worldview, adopts 15 items from the New Ecological Paradigm Scale (NEP) [22]. The five dimensions are: believe that growth has certain limits, oppose anthropocentrism, the balance of nature is fragile, oppose human exemption and the possibility of ecological crisis.

The third part, the situational factor, has 18 items based on the five dimensions proposed by Belk [37] on the situation and definition and referring to the scales of Chiu et al. [38], Anić and Radas [39] and Sirakaya et al. [40]. The five dimensions are: antecedent state, time perspective, physical environment, task definition and social environment.

The fourth part, environmentally responsible behavior, has a total of 14 items. It refers to the scales of Chiu et al. [38] and Lee et al. [11]. The three dimensions are: sustainable behavior, pro-environmental behavior and environmentally friendly behavior.

The above scales of the questionnaire in this study all adopt a 5-point Likert scale, including "strongly agree (5)", "agree (4)", "no opinion (3)", "disagree (2)" and "strongly disagree (1)". In addition, Sin et al. [41] noticed the differences in many cross-cultural studies. Therefore, this study modified the contents of the scale items to conform to the research area. All items are shown in Table 1.

The last part of the questionnaire contains the background information of the respondents, including gender, age, education level, occupation, the number of days spent in the ecological area and frequency of visits to the ecological area, any courses related to environmental issues or participation in any environment-related educational activities.

Table 1. Measurement scale.

Construct/Item
Construct 1: Specific environmental attitudes
1. I worry that natural resources will be destroyed by tourists.
2. I consider myself an environmentally conscious person.
3. Visitors should not be allowed to collect flora, fauna, insects or stones in natural ecological areas.
4. Ecotourism helps tourists understand the natural environment and related knowledge.
5. Nature has intrinsic value that goes beyond its usefulness to humans.
6. I worry about people taking home special plants, rocks, stones, insects, small animals, etc.
7. Visitors who find special species need to report to the on-site management unit.
8. I am worried that ecotourism activities will affect the local natural environment.
9. I like to be close to nature.
10. Ecotourism activities of tourists are helpful to local environmental protection.
11. It is important to protect the environment for future generations.
12. Tourist ecotourism activities contribute positively to local economic development.
Construct 2: World ecological outlook
13. The population of the earth has reached the limit it can support.
14. It is the right of human beings to improve the natural environment to meet the needs of human life.
15. Interfering with nature by human behavior usually brings huge disasters.
16. Human ingenuity will ensure that the Earth is not uninhabitable.
17. Humans have seriously damaged the natural environment.
18. If human beings know how to develop resources, then the earth will have sufficient resources.
19. Animals and plants have the same right to exist as humans.
20. The natural environment is strong enough to withstand the shocks caused by industrialized countries.
21. Human beings, despite their special abilities, are subject to the laws of nature.
22. The so-called "ecological crisis" that mankind is facing has been overly exaggerated.
23. The earth is like a spaceship, its space and resources are limited.
24. Man is the master of all things.
25. The balance mechanism of the natural environment is very fragile and easily disturbed.
26. Humans will eventually learn how the natural environment works, and then be able to further control it.
27. If the current development trend continues, we will soon face a huge ecological catastrophe.

Table 1. *Cont.*

Construct/Item
Construct 3: Situational factors
28. When I planned this trip, I wasn't pressed for time.
29. The ecotourism sites I visited were not crowded so I had a good time.
30. I will share my ecotourism experience with others.
31. I do ecotourism to promote good health.
32. When I arrange this trip, I was satisfied.
33. The ecotourism places I visited had a pleasant atmosphere.
34. I visit ecotourism places to get close to nature.
35. When I arrange this trip, my body is in a good state of health.
36. I visit ecological regions with seasonal characteristics.
37. I arrange ecotours because it's fun.
38. I choose destinations based on ecotourism destinations that my relatives and friends have visited.
39. When I was planning this travel itinerary, I was excited.
40. The locations of the ecotourism sites I visited were easily accessible.
41. I will visit ecotourism destinations recommended by media advertisements, tourism bureaus or travel agencies.
42. I visit ecotourism places to relax.
43. When I planned this trip, I had plenty of cash on hand.
44. The signs used in the ecotourism sites I visited were clear and unambiguous.
45. I visit ecotourism sites when the season and weather conditions are good.
Construct 4: Environmentally responsible behavior
46. I will abide by the on-site control policy and will not enter closed areas.
47. I will sort the garbage on the spot.
48. I will help maintain the quality of the local environment.
49. I would tell my companions or others not to feed the animals.
50. To protect the environment and the tourism ecology, I will stop visiting destinations when necessary.
51. I (encourage others) to pick up other people's trash.
52. I don't turn over rocks and dry logs.
53. I respect local cultural heritage and history.
54. I help other travelers learn about the ecotourism destination or eco-related activities.
55. I will not intentionally disturb any flora or fauna.
56. I will report any environmental pollution or damage to management.
57. I choose to purchase eco-labelled products or services on this trip.
58. After a picnic, when I leave the place it will be as clean as it was.
59. I observe nature and wildlife closely.

2.5. Statistical Analysis Method

After collecting and coding the questionnaire, this study used IBM SPSS version 21.0 to analyze the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, multiple regression to test the five research hypotheses and one-way ANOVA to test the differences in the environmentally responsible behavior of the respondents from Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam.

2.6. Construct Validity and Reliability

For the pro-ecological worldview, the specific environmental attitudes, situations and specific responsible environmental behaviors of the research objects in the three areas from the questionnaire items were checked by factor analysis to observe whether they conformed to the construct validity, so as to further screen the questionnaire items and extract their factor loadings. Items whose absolute values were greater than 0.5 were used as verification of factors. This study tested the factor loadings of each item. The research results show that the factor loadings of the items constructed by the scale are almost all greater than 0.5, indicating good convergent validity.

Due to the large number of factor analysis tables for the sum of the three groups, only the factor analysis of the Taiwanese group's specific environmental attitude is taken as an example. The factor analysis was carried out by principal component analysis. The analysis results show that the Bartlett sphericity test reached a significant level ($p < 0.001$) and that

the KMO value was 0.746; therefore, the items included in each factor were consistent and reliable. After factor analysis, four constructs are obtained, and the items of these four constructs are completely consistent with the constructs designed by the connotation of the construction. According to the content of the items, the four constructs verified by the analysis results were "identify with ecotourism", "identify with nature", "worried about destroying the environment", and "support environmental protection". The explained variation was 75.389% (Table 2).

Table 2. Results of the factor analysis of attitudes for the Taiwanese group.

Items of Environmental Attitude	Factor Loading
Factor 1: Identify ecotourism	
Tourism makes an economic contribution	0.933
Tourism helps protect the environment	0.911
Tourism helps to understand the environment	0.881
Factor 2: Identify with nature	
I like to be in touch with nature	0.912
Nature beyond intrinsic value	0.868
Confessed to be environmentally conscious	0.855
Factor 3: Worried about damaging the environment	
Worried about resources being destroyed	0.874
Worried about the impact of tourism on the environment	0.815
Worry about resources being taken home	0.688
Factor 4: Support environmental protection	
It is important to protect the environment	0.857
Collection should not be allowed	0.834
Special species need to be registered	0.625
Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Sampling Suitability Analysis	0.746
Bartlett sphericity test approximate chi-square distribution	2643.222
Degrees of freedom	66
Significance level	0.000

Questionnaire items for formal analysis were screened out through factor analysis. In the four constructs of environmental attitude, there were no deleted items in the three groups from Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam; in the five constructs of the pro-ecological worldview, the inconsistent items 18, 19 and 20 were deleted for the Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups; in the five constructs of the situational factor, the inconsistent item 33 was deleted for the Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups; in the three constructs of environmental behavior, the inconsistent items 50, 51 and 55 for the Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups were deleted. The final formal analysis questionnaire items are as shown in Table 3. Therefore, the questionnaire design had a high degree of construct validity, as verified by factor analysis.

Reliability tests were conducted on the items of the formal analysis questionnaire for the three areas. The four facets were: pro-ecological worldview, specific environmental attitude, situational factors and specific responsible environmental behavior. Internal consistency reliability was used to test the reliability. Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient was used to verify the reliability of the questionnaire. Roberts and Wortzel [42] believe that a reliability of 0.7 to 0.98 is reasonable, and when the questionnaire contains multiple scales used at the same time, even a reliability value above 0.35 is still acceptable. Nunnally and Bernstein [43] suggested that the α value should be higher than 0.35, and if it is higher than 0.7, this indicates high reliability. The results of the reliability analysis show that the Cronbach's α value of the questionnaire in this research was 0.603~0.933, the total correlation of the corrected items of all items was higher than 0.35 and the α values when deleting items were all less than 0.6; therefore, there is no need to delete items. This shows that the questionnaire has good internal consistency. The results are shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Factor analysis screening items for the Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups.

Construct/Item	Filter Items		
	Taiwan	**Thailand**	**Vietnam**
Specific environmental attitudes			
Support environmental protection	3.7.11.	3.7.11.	3.7.11.
Identify ecotourism	4.10.12.	4.10.12.	4.10.12.
Worry about the natural environment	1.6.8	1.6.8	1.6.8
Identify with the natural environment	2.5.9	2.5.9	2.5.9
World ecological outlook			
Believe in the limit of growth	13.23.	13.23.	13.23.
Anti-anthropocentric	14.24.	14.24.	14.24.
Fragile natural balance	15.25.	15.25.	15.25.
Objection to human immunity	16.21.26.	16.21.26.	16.21.26.
Ecological crisis possibility	17.22.27.	17.22.27.	17.22.27.
Situational factors			
Advance state	32.35.39.43.	32.35.39.43.	32.35.39.43.
Time perspective	28.36.45.	28.36.45.	28.36.45.
Physical environment	29.40.44	29.40.44	29.40.44
Task definition	31.34.37.42	31.34.37.42	31.34.37.42
Social environment	30.38.41	30.38.41	30.38.41
Specific environmentally responsible behavior			
Sustainable behavior	48.54.56.59	48.54.56.59	48.54.56.59
Behavior close to the environment	46.53.57	46.53.57	46.53.57
Environmentally friendly behavior	47.49.52.58	47.49.52.58	47.49.52.58

Table 4. Reliability analysis.

Construct/Item	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient		
	Taiwan	**Thailand**	**Vietnam**
Environmental attitudes			
Support environmental protection	0.903	0.888	0.603
Identify ecotourism	0.854	0.693	0.772
Worry about the natural environment	0.866	0.878	0.629
Identify with the natural environment	0.692	0.627	0.733
World ecological outlook			
Believe in the limit of growth	0.702	0.873	0.892
Anti-anthropocentric	0.738	0.778	0.856
Fragile natural balance	0.903	0.843	0.795
Objection to human immunity	0.718	0.703	0.867
Ecological crisis possibility	0.893	0.856	0.701
Situational factors			
Advance state	0.916	0.809	0.937
Time perspective	0.918	0.802	0.917
Physical environment	0.824	0.812	0.871
Task definition	0.753	0.813	0.933
Social environment	0.858	0.909	0.873
Environmental responsibility behavior			
Sustainable behavior	0.904	0.900	0.932
Behavior close to the environment	0.740	0.623	0.866
Environmentally friendly behavior	0.788	0.761	0.731

3. Results

3.1. Respondent Profiles

The basic information of the research subjects is divided into seven variables, including gender, age, education level, occupation, the number of days of stay in the ecological site and the frequency of visits and any courses related to environmental issues or education related to environmental activity. According to the analysis of the research results, in terms of the frequency distribution of tourists in the three areas, the research objects of the three areas show that the 18–29-year-old Generation Z group is larger than the 30–39-year-old Generation Y group. Since this study uses online questionnaires to target Generations Y and Z as the research sample, according to the definition of the Generations Y and Z in the study of Katz et al. [4], it is speculated that the individuals from Generation Z are more accustomed to using digital tools to communicate. There is a certain degree of correlation with this in that the number of samples collected from Generation Z was greater than that from Generation Y. The frequency distribution of each variable is shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Basic background of the research samples in the Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups.

Demographic Variable	Taiwan		Thailand		Vietnam	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Gender						
Male	141	33.1	61	16.1	221	63.3
Female	285	66.9	319	83.9	128	36.7
Age						
18~29	266	62.4	284	74.7	206	59.0
30~39	160	37.6	96	25.3	143	41.0
Education						
Lower than high school	2	0.5	1	0.3	15	4.3
High school	35	8.2	2	0.5	35	10.0
College or junior college	347	81.5	321	84.5	242	69.3
Graduate school	42	9.9	56	14.7	57	16.3
Occupation						
Civil servant	76	17.8	33	8.7	28	8.0
Industry/Manufacturing	60	14.1	10	2.6	58	16.6
Services/Business	57	13.4	30	7.9	32	9.2
Student	119	27.9	250	65.8	133	38.1
Freelance	25	5.9	16	4.2	43	12.3
Housekeeping/Unemployed	20	4.7	33	8.7	17	4.9
Other	69	16.2	8	2.1	38	10.9
Days in an ecotourism destination?						
1 day (no overnight)	289	67.8	144	37.9	109	31.2
2 days and 1 night	98	23.0	121	31.8	149	42.7
3 days and 2 nights	31	7.3	91	23.9	53	15.2
4 days and 3 nights or more	8	1.9	24	6.3	38	10.9
Number of ecotourism trips						
One or two times	128	30.0	187	49.2	224	64.2
Three to four times	109	25.6	127	33.4	72	20.6
Five to six times	12	2.8	11	2.9	13	3.7
More than six times	177	41.5	55	14.5	40	11.5
Have taken environmental courses?						
Yes	176	41.3	121	31.8	208	59.6
Never	250	58.7	259	68.2	141	40.4
Have participated in environmental education activities?						
Yes	212	49.8	93	24.5	232	66.5
Never	214	50.2	287	77.5	117	33.5

3.2. Hypothesis Test Results

The first part is the impact of "pro-ecological worldview", "specific environmental attitude" and "situational factor" on environmentally responsible behavior. For the Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups, the research hypotheses H1, H2 and H3 are verified

as follows: for the Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups, the standardized regression coefficients of the three independent variables are (1) pro-ecological worldview (0.090; 0.034; 0.031), (2) environmental attitude (0.233; 0.327; 0.496) and (3) situational factor (0.384; 0.413; 0.292), and the adjusted R^2 coefficients were 0.335, 0.436 and 0.533, respectively. The F values are 72.331, 98.794 and 133.263, respectively; the significance is 0.000, indicating that both environmental attitude and situational factors have the strongest influence on environmentally responsible behavior. H2 and H3 are supported but H1 is not supported. The regression results of H1, H2 and H3 are shown in Table 6 and Figure 2.

Table 6. Regression results of environmentally responsible behavior and environmental attitude.

	Dependent Variable = DV	**Standardized Coefficient**			**Test**
	Independent Variable = IV	**Taiwan**	**Thailand**	**Vietnam**	**Result**
DV=	Environmentally responsible behavior				
IV=	Ecological worldview (H1)	0.090	0.034	0.031	X/X/X
	Environmental attitude (H2)	0.233 ***	0.327 ***	0.496 ***	○/○/○
	Situational factors (H3)	0.384 ***	0.413 ***	0.292 ***	○/○/○
	R	0.583	0.664	0.733	
	R^2	0.340	0.441	0.537	
	Adjusted R^2	0.335	0.436	0.533	
	F	72.331 ***	98.794 ***	133.263 ***	
DV=	Environmental attitude				
IV=	Ecological worldview (H4)	0.202 ***	0.339 ***	0.096 *	○/○/○
	Situational factors (H5)	0.528 ***	0.404 ***	0.653 ***	○/○/○
	R	0.604	0.611	0.678	
	R^2	0.364	0.374	0.460	
	Adjusted R^2	0.361	0.370	0.457	
	F	121.277 ***	112.484 ***	147.218 ***	

Note: * $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$; ○ = supported; X = not supported.

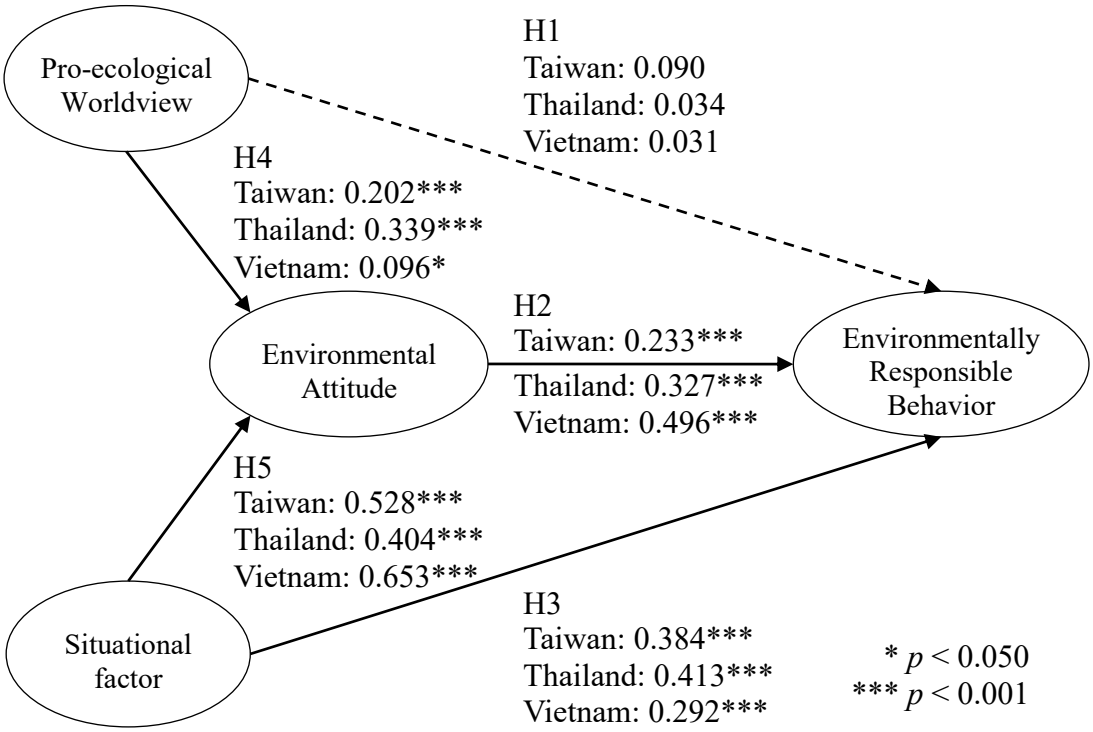

Figure 2. Hypothesis test results.

The second part is the impact of "pro-ecological worldview" and "situational factors" on environmental attitudes. For the Taiwanese, Thai and Vietnamese groups, the research hypotheses H4 and H5 are verified as follows: the standardized regression coefficients are (1) pro-ecological worldview (0.202, 0.339 and 0.096) and (2) situational factor (0.528, 0.404 and 0.653), and the adjusted R^2 values for the two independent variables are 0.361, 0.370 and 0.457, respectively. The F values are 121.277, 112.484 and 147.218, showing that both "pro-ecological worldview" and "situational factors" have positive and significant effects on environmental attitudes. The regression results of H4 and H5 are shown in Table 6 and Figure 2.

The third part is the comparison results of the differences in the four cognitive constructs of the research subjects in the three areas. This study uses one-way ANOVA to compare whether there is a significant difference between the mean values of the four dimensions of "pro-ecological worldview", "environmental attitude", "situational factor" and "environmental behavior" among the participants in Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. The test results are shown in Table 7. The mean values of the four constructs show significant differences among the research subjects in the three areas of Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. The post-hoc test results by Tamhane show that the mean values for the three areas in terms of pro-ecological worldview are highest in Thailand, followed by Taiwan and are the lowest in Vietnam. In terms of the mean values for environmental attitude, situational factors and environmentally responsible behavior, the results for the Thai group were also higher than those for the Taiwanese group, whereas the Vietnamese group had the lowest values.

Table 7. Mean differences of four constructs.

Construct	(I) Area (Mean)		(J) Area (Mean)		Mean Difference (I–J)	Results
Ecological worldview (F = 110.003 ***)	1. Taiwan	3.86	2. Thailand	4.10	−0.24 ***	2 > 1 > 3
			3. Vietnam	3.63	0.22 ***	
	2. Thailand	4.10	1. Taiwan	3.86	0.24 ***	
			3. Vietnam	3.63	0.46 ***	
	3. Vietnam	3.63	1. Taiwan	3.86	−0.22 ***	
			2. Thailand	4.10	−0.46 ***	
Specific environmental attitudes (F = 90.991 ***)	1. Taiwan	4.29	2. Thailand	4.35	−0.06	1,2 > 3
			3. Vietnam	3.96	0.33 ***	
	2. Thailand	4.35	1. Taiwan	4.29	0.06	
			3. Vietnam	3.96	0.39 ***	
	3. Vietnam	3.96	1. Taiwan	4.29	−0.33 ***	
			2. Thailand	4.35	−0.39 ***	
Situational factors (F = 4.361 *)	1. Taiwan	4.05	2. Thailand	4.10	−0.04	2 > 3
			3. Vietnam	3.99	0.06	
	2. Thailand	4.10	1. Taiwan	4.05	0.04	
			3. Vietnam	3.99	0.10 ***	
	3. Vietnam	3.99	1. Taiwan	4.05	−0.06	
			2. Thailand	4.10	−0.10 ***	
Environmentally responsible behavior (F = 29.393 ***)	1. Taiwan	4.23	2. Thailand	4.28	−0.06	1,2 > 3
			3. Vietnam	4.01	0.22 ***	
	2. Thailand	4.28	1. Taiwan	4.23	0.06	
			3. Vietnam	4.01	0.27 ***	
	3. Vietnam	4.01	1. Taiwan	4.23	−0.22 ***	
			2. Thailand	4.28	−0.27 ***	

Note: * $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.001$.

4. Discussion

The results of the hypothesis tests for the Taiwanese, Thai, and Vietnamese groups through regression analyses exhibited similar patterns. The findings are discussed as follows:

Firstly, the hypothesis stating that a pro-ecological worldview positively influences environmentally responsible behavior (H1) is not supported. This result contradicts previous studies that suggested that environmental worldviews, formed through interactions with nature, encompass thoughts, values and interpretations of the natural world [20]. Environmental psychology posits that environmental values underlie environmental attitudes, with pro-ecological worldviews reflecting these values [21] and consequently affecting environmentally responsible behavior [22].

Secondly, the hypothesis suggesting that environmental attitude positively influences environmentally responsible behavior (H2) is supported. This finding aligns with previous studies that have established a positive correlation between knowledge, environmental attitude and responsible environmental behavior [23,24]. Understanding and knowledge of the environment shape environmental attitudes, motivating pro-environmental behavior [25,26]. Increased environmental knowledge and positive attitudes encourage responsible environmental practices, including eco-friendly travel [27].

Thirdly, the hypothesis proposing that situational factors positively influence environmentally responsible behavior (H3) is supported. This outcome is consistent with previous studies that define situational factors as elements significantly impacting an individual's attitudes and behaviors within specific timeframes or locations [28,29]. These factors are identified through external stimuli and individual psychological interpretations and play a pivotal role in shaping an individual's current behavior and attitude [29].

Fourthly, the hypothesis suggesting that a pro-ecological worldview positively influences environmental attitude (H4) is supported. This result aligns with previous research indicating that pro-ecological worldviews affect environmental attitudes [22], with culture playing a substantial role in shaping these worldviews [30]. National cultural differences are associated with variations in environmental attitudes [7].

Lastly, the hypothesis proposing that situational factors positively influence environmental attitude (H5) is supported. This finding is consistent with previous studies demonstrating that situational factors can impact the relationship between attitudes and behaviors, offering an intermediary explanation for the connection between behavior and attitude [17,31,32]. Specific situations heighten concern for the environment, particularly in certain contexts, fostering support for responsible environmental attitudes [33,34].

According to the results of the one-way ANOVA analysis, the research objects in these three groups, individuals in Generations Y and Z from either Taiwan, Thailand or Vietnam, have significant differences in the average values for the four dimensions of "pro-ecological worldview", "specific environmental attitude", "situational factor" and "environmentally responsible behavior". All of the findings indicate that individuals from Thailand have higher values than individuals from Taiwan and that individuals from Taiwan have higher values than individuals from Vietnam; the Thai group had the highest average values and the Vietnamese group had the lowest.

The research results show that the three groups (populations from Taiwan, Thailand or Vietnam) have the same relationship among the four dimensions of environmentally responsible behavior, pro-ecological worldview, environmental attitude and situational factors (please see Table 6 and Figure 2). Hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 5 are supported, whereas hypothesis 1 is not supported. After comparison, the pro-ecological worldviews of those from Taiwan, Thailand or Vietnam will not directly affect the environmentally responsible behavior. However, the pro-ecological worldview of these three areas has an indirect and significant impact on environmentally responsible behavior through environmental attitude; the degree of influence is highest in the Thai group, followed by the Taiwanese group, whereas it was lowest in the Vietnamese group.

This study was conducted to investigate the environmentally responsible behavior in nature tourists from Generation Y and Generation Z in Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam and aimed to uncover the influencing factors and potential variations among these groups. Although the researchers did not explicitly state their expectations, the results revealed significant differences in pro-ecological worldviews, environmental attitudes, situational

factors and environmentally responsible behavior among the above three areas (please see Table 7). The mean values of the four constructs showed significant differences among the groups in Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. These distinctions could likely be attributed to cultural, societal or contextual factors that merit further exploration in future research. Understanding these variations is vital for tailoring conservation and sustainable tourism efforts to each area's unique characteristics and values.

5. Conclusions

In this study, the environmental attitudes of the three groups all have a positive and significant impact on environmentally responsible behavior and the ranking of influence is in the order Thailand, Taiwan and then Vietnam, which echoes the previous research results on environmental attitude and environmentally responsible behavior. Comparing the correlations between the situational factors and environmentally responsible behaviors of the three groups, this study found that the situational factors of the three groups will directly and significantly affect environmentally responsible behavior. In addition, the pro-ecological worldview and situational factors of the three groups all have a positive and significant impact on environmental attitude.

After summarizing the analysis results of the three groups, it is found that situational factors have a positive and significant impact on environmental attitude and environmentally responsible behavior that is greater than the impact of a pro-ecological worldview on environmental attitude and environmentally responsible behavior. The results of this study also verify that situations can provide a basis for understanding the relationship between behavior and attitude.

6. Recommendations for Future Studies

The analysis of the differences in the four dimensions of the research objects from these three areas shows the participants in Thailand have the highest, followed by the participants in Taiwan, whereas the participants in Vietnam had the lowest; however, no further analysis is made. Future research could further explore the actual recognition of natural tourists in the three areas in each sub-dimension, especially in the case of the limited resources of relevant management units and how to promote environmentally responsible behavior. It is suggested to start with the tourists with the lowest recognition degree to obtain the highest management benefits.

From the analysis results of this study, it can be seen that the R^2 values for all regression analyzes are not high, so there may be other important influencing factors in addition to the factors proposed in this study. Therefore, identifying unknown factors that possibly affect the improvement of environmentally responsible behavior is suggested as a future research direction.

Additionally, a weakness of this study is the variation in the composition of the sample, which could have had an impact on the research findings. There is a noticeable connection between age and educational background when it comes to pro-environmental attitudes; this is particularly evident in Thailand, where the sample consisted mainly of younger and more educated respondents. Therefore, it is advisable for future research to conduct analyses not only based on geography but also considering socioeconomic factors.

In the future, we can conduct in-depth discussions with members of Generations Y and Z who have never been engaged in ecotourism or make further comparisons with the nature tourists from Generations Y and Z. The group of people who have not engaged in ecotourism may be potential nature tourists in the future. Education or other means can be used to guide individuals from Generations Y and Z who have not engaged in nature tourism to establish their connection with the natural ecological environment and environmentally responsible behavior. In terms of improving the awareness of environmentally responsible behavior in the overall population in various areas, it is suggested that the research group could be expanded to include other ethnic groups in a future study.

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