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Poster Title: It's My Holiday and I'll Fly if I Want To: Exploring Attitude Functions Towards Air Travel in Light of Climate Change

Abstract: With the aviation industry a significant contributor to climate change (IPCC, 2014), and projected growth in demand for air travel for the foreseeable future (IATA, 2017b), a systemic re-examination of human global transport is needed, driven by both industry and social initiatives, if aviation is to achieve industry-wide emissions reductions (Dubois, Peeters, Ceron, & Gössling, 2011). On a consumer level, flying accounts for a significant portion of a travelers' carbon footprint (Lenzen et al., 2018), yet there remains a psychological disconnect between general climate concern and attitudes towards flying (Barr & Prillwitz, 2012). This study explores the factors that shape attitudes towards air travel, and in particular, the roles of climate concern and knowledge in attitude formation. Adopting a consumer behaviour perspective, this study utilizes Katz's (1960) theory of attitude functions as a framework, which posits that individuals are motivated to hold attitudes that serve a specific purpose. Katz's (1960) theory therefore enables the exploration of the antecedents and underlying factors that shape attitudes towards air travel. Data was collected for this qualitative study through semi-structured in-person interviews, held in Brisbane, Australia in 2018. Interview questions focused on three areas "attitudes towards air travel, air travel and climate concern, and climate knowledge. The analysis was informed by the consumer behaviour literature on attitude structure as consisting of cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions (Breckler, 1984). Further, Katz's (1960) theory of attitude functions guided the analysis and categorization of emergent themes as representing the underlying drivers that shape attitudes. Five attitude functions were identified in the literature and appeared relevant to air travel. These were knowledge, utilitarian, value-expressive, ego-defensive and social adjustive. Once categorized under each of the five attitude functions, the data was further coded to identify dominant themes within each function specific to air travel. This research has both practical and theoretical contributions to the field. The results provide valuable insight for marketers into Australian's perspective on air travel. This research is also significant for the progression of the literature, for building on research that defines 'what' air travel attitudes are, to providing an explanation as to why tourists view air travel in the manner they do. Through identifying themes specifically relevant to air travel, this study provides the foundation for further research and large-scale marketing attempts that seek to change attitudes towards air travel to better reflect climate concern.