

Beyond good intentions: building passport for sustainable conservation of built heritage

Summary

Sustainable Conservation are the processes of change through which the components of the inherited ecosystem from the past retain their value for present and future generations. As such, the value assessment is critical to recognise the values of heritage, not only by its aesthetical and historical values, but also by its contribution to a more sustainable future.

Recent norms, policies, and standards highlight the role of heritage for sustainability and encourage urban conservation, however, sustainable conservation is not yet the most common practice. The behavioural dimension is intrinsic to the decision-making process; however, the literature review shows that no studies were conducted to analyse designers' decision behaviours regarding sustainable conservation of built heritage.

This research aims to grow understanding on the gap in the implementation of best practices of sustainable conservation of built heritage, and to achieve solutions for behavioural change. It applies an innovative approach drawn from methods common in psychology to analyse designers' decisions behaviours, by eliciting common beliefs, challenges, and opportunities in the implementation of conservation intentions towards heritage buildings.

The results demonstrate that design decisions result from conscious and unconscious processes, some of them socially driven, while others result of individual attitudes. Contrary to practitioners, that tend to attribute the responsibility of the lack of implementation to other stakeholders in the process, design students often assume an internal locus of control, attributing the gap in implementation to autonomous decisions, derived from personal beliefs and design concepts. Moreover, sustainability is often believed as opposite or incompatible to heritage conservation. Targeting this primary belief, a building passport for sustainable conservation was developed aiming at raising awareness of the value of built heritage to sustainability. This building passport was used in several case studies of heritage buildings, to verify its contribution to support designers achieving consensual sustainability assessments and inform redesign decisions.

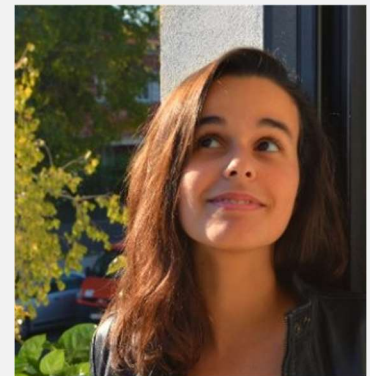
The results of this research can support the redesign of heritage buildings, and the development of sustainable conservation policies, and that of future research focusing on the behavioural change in sustainable conservation.

Keywords

Heritage, sustainability, sustainable conservation, behaviour, Theory of Planned Behaviour.



Methodological steps to test an intervention to reduce the intention-behaviour gap.



PhD student

Joana Maria dos Santos Gonçalves

PhD program

Civil Engineering (EUM, University of Minho)

Supervisor

Ricardo Mateus (EE-UM, University of Minho)

Co-supervisors

José Dinis Silvestre (CERIS, IST, University of Lisbon) and Ana Roders (TUD, Technical University of Delft)

Period

2016-2022

Funding

FCT scholarship EcoCoRe PhD program (PD/BD/127853/2016)