



PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR AND CONSPICUOUSNESS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND EMPIRICAL STUDY

A THESIS DOCUMENT

**SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE EXECUTIVE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME IN MANAGEMENT
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT INDORE**

BY

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EDPM 2017 - 05

Submitted on

04.11.2023

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ABSTRACT

Literature mentions that pro-environmental behavior is associated with conspicuousness (Agerup & Nilsson, 2016). Conspicuousness is the attribute of distinctly showing consumption behavior to others (Kumar et al., 2021). Such consumption-displaying behaviors manifest in conspicuous consumption orientation and conspicuous virtue signaling, which may be directed at others and toward the self.

This study explores pro-environmental behavior from the perspective of conspicuousness. It uses conspicuous consumption orientation and conspicuous virtue signaling (CVS) to understand conspicuousness, specifically from the perspective of offline and online conspicuousness. Online platforms provide individuals with opportunities for conspicuous virtue signaling, where they can publicly display their pro-environmental behavior. On the other hand, individuals may display consumption behavior offline, too. Accordingly, this study considers both facets of behaviors to understand conspicuousness in the context of pro-environmental behavior.

Further, the study explores the antecedents and consequences of conspicuous consumption orientation and conspicuous virtue signaling to develop a framework and tests it empirically. The antecedents identified for conspicuous consumption orientation in the context of pro-environmental behavior are materialism, the need for uniqueness, and narcissistic exhibitionism. The antecedents for self-oriented CVS are the need for uniqueness and self-enhancement, and the same for the other-oriented CVS are the need for uniqueness, social enhancement, and narcissistic exhibitionism. The consequences of conspicuous consumption orientation are perceived social status, competitive altruism, and perception of self-esteem. In contrast, the consequences of other-oriented CVS are perceived social status and competitive

altruism. The consequence of self-oriented CVS identified in this study is perceived self-esteem.

While previous research has explored the antecedents or consequences of conspicuous consumption orientation and conspicuous virtue signaling individually, this study examines both sides comprehensively. The findings indicate a positive relationship between conspicuous consumption orientation and conspicuous virtue signaling with the perception of social status, self-esteem, and competitive altruism. Moreover, variables such as materialism, narcissistic exhibitionism, the need for uniqueness, social enhancement, and self-enhancement demonstrate positive relationships with the focal constructs.

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by examining the antecedents and consequences of conspicuous consumption orientation and conspicuous virtue signaling. The findings provide insights for practitioners and policymakers to develop strategies for pro-environmental behavior and foster sustainable practices.

Keywords: Conspicuous Virtue Signaling, Conspicuous Consumption Orientation, Pro-environmental behavior, Competitive altruism

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