24th FERCAP International CONFERENCE

The trend of ethics on the research of pro-environmental behavior: A systematic literature review using PRISMA.

Richan Shrestha

PhD Scholar, Kathmandu University

Date 26/11/2024

Short Bio

I am PhD Scholar in School of Education, Kathmandu University working on the research issue of pro-environment behaviour among adolescents and their well-being. I am selected there as research fellow. I am also visiting faculty in Kathmandu University. in I am passionate academician and teach subjects like economics of sustainability and enterprise and research methods especially quantitative research methods in various academic institutions in Kathmandu Valley. I am continuously involve in research and have some publications.

Introduction

- The climate crisis is a pressing global issue with negative consequences for the environment and human society [1].

- Pro-environmental behavior (PEB) intended to mitigate the climate problem is one of the 2030 SDGs' agenda [4].

- Among many other issues, ethical or moral values regarding the environment influence PEB [6–8].

- PEB has been discussed from multiple dispersed perspectives.

Objectives of the Study

- There are limited studies that have consolidated the ethical discourse on PEB.

- The main objective of this study is to conduct a systematic literature review to consolidate the dispersed discourse on the influence of ethics on PEB.
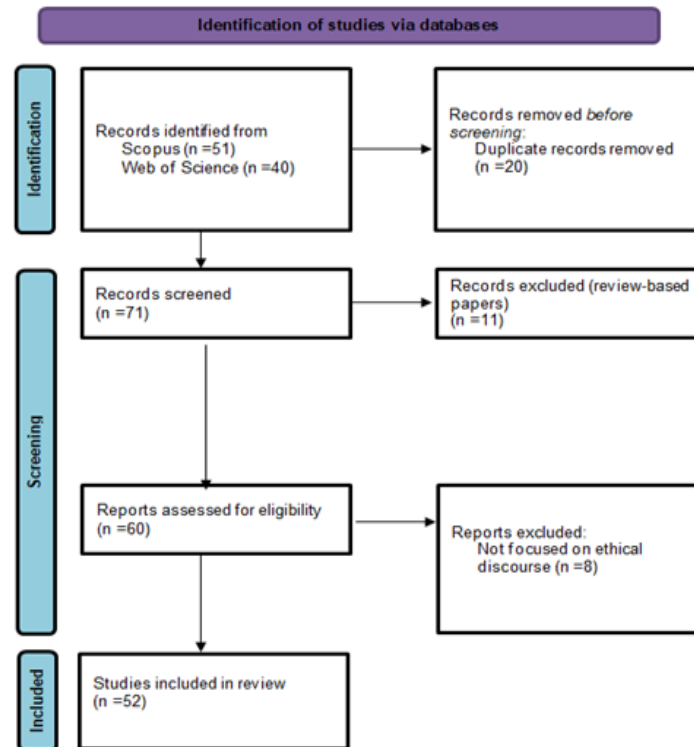
Methodology

- This study employed a systematic literature review.

- This study used the reporting checklist of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis (PRISMA), as suggested by Page et al. [21].

- Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) published between January 1, 2010 and April 20, 2024

- English Language, Open access

Methodology

- ((ethic* OR morality OR moral* OR integrity) AND ("pro*environment* behavio*" OR "environment* friendly behavio*" OR "green behavio*" OR "ecological behavio*" OR "environment* responsible behavio*" OR "environment* significant behavio*" OR "environment* sustainable behavio*" OR "volunteer environment* behavio*")) AND PUBYEAR > 2009 AND PUBYEAR < 2025 AND (LIMIT-TO (OA , "all")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "SOCI") OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "PSYC"))

- ((Ethic* OR Morality OR Moral* OR integrity) AND ("pro*environment* behavio*" OR "environment* friendly behavio*" OR "green behavio*" OR "ecological behavio*" OR "environment* responsible behavio*" OR "environment* significant behavio*" OR "environment* sustainable behavio*" OR "volunteer environment* behavio*")) and Open Access and Article (Document Types) and English (Languages) and Psychology or Social Sciences Other Topics (Research Areas) 2010-1-1 till 2024-04-20.

Methodology

Figure 1
PRISMA Flowchart

Identification of studies via databases

Identification

Records identified from
  Scopus (n =51)
  Web of Science (n =40)

Records removed *before screening*:
  Duplicate records removed
  (n =20)

Screening

Records screened
(n =71)

Records excluded (review-based papers)
(n =11)

Reports assessed for eligibility
(n =60)

Reports excluded:
  Not focused on ethical discourse (n =8)

Included

Studies included in review
(n =52)

Results and Findings

Majors Subject Area	Subtopic	Description	Related articles in this review
Morality	*Moral norms*	*Moral norms* provide the societal framework that guides individuals to distinguish between what is wrong and what is right and act appropriately, as accepted by society [22].	[23–44]
	Moral licensing and cleansing effect	When past actions influence individual behavior, this results in present moral decision-making having either a either a *moral licensing* or a *moral cleansing* effect [45]. According to the authors, a *moral cleansing* effect (positive moral behavior), and good actions in the past led to a *moral licensing* effect (negative moral behavior). Likewise, intimating others' environment-friendly behavior in the past can lead to a *moral licensing* effect, and intimating others' environment-unfriendly behavior in the past leads to a *moral cleansing* effect [46]. The authors [46] explain this 'moral paradox'. People are influenced by the environmental behavior of their close associates in the opposite way. If their close associates have behaved in environmentally friendly ways in the past, their behavior will be negative towards the environment, and vice versa.	[47–51]
	Moral disengagement	'Moral disengagement' refers to separating oneself from moral values and acting unethically without experiencing any guilt or shame for such an act [52]. Such acts negatively influence green behavior.	[53,54]
Ethics	*Ethical leadership*	'Ethical leadership' refers to leaders that uphold positive relationships with peers, model normatively acceptable behavior, and encourage it [55]. They motivate employees to behave positively towards their environment [56].	[57–68]
	Environmental ethics	'Environmental ethics' refers to the behavior of individuals that reflect positive behaviors toward the environment and toward protecting it [69]. To be environmentally ethical, one must behave positively towards the environment or be environmentally friendly or responsible [70].	[71–74]
	Ethical literacy	'Ethical literacy' refers to the knowledge of being ethical and accountable [75].	[76]
Prosocial behavior /benefitting others	*Altruistic behavior*	An individual selfless act focused on benefitting others without expecting a return is known as 'altruistic behavior' [77]. *Altruistic behavior* leads to ethical practices [78].	[79,80]
	Generativity	The future orientation or positive thinking aiming to save the environment for the future generation is known as 'generativity'. *Generativity* helps explain the future orientation of an individual [81]. The present generation is obliged to sustain the natural resources and environment for future generations. This moral obligation is also known as 'generativity' [82]. A person's ethical duty is to provide a warranty of a green future by reducing the use and manufacturing of the products and services harming the environment [83]. People with high *generativity* participate in the development and protection of the environment and are concerned about the well-being of future generations [84].	[85]
	Animal welfare	'Animal welfare' is an ethical issue that suggests minimizing the harm and suffering of animals occurring during the production process [86].	[87]
Corporate social responsibility (CSR)		'CSR' refers to the business organization's ethical, environmental, legal, and social responsibility, along with their profit-making responsibility [88]. One of the aspects of *CSR* is a moral duty towards the environment. It balances the organization's social, environmental, and economic aspects [88].	[89,90]

Discussions

- Moral Norm [99,100]
- Ethical Leadership [13,14]
- Altruistic Behavior [107,108]
- CSR [109, 16]

Limitations
- Only two databases
- Two areas (social and psychology)
- Time bound
- Limited keyword

Conclusions

- The climate crisis has negative consequences for the environment and for society.
- PEB mitigates the consequences of the climate crisis.
- One of the factors determining PEB is ethical values.
- 1) morality *(moral norms; moral licensing and cleansing effects; moral disengagement)*, 2) ethics *(ethical leadership; environmental ethics; ethical literacy),* 3) prosocial behavior/benefitting others *(altruistic behavior; generativity; animal welfare)*, and 4) *corporate social responsibility*
- Findings helpful for business organizations, educational institutions, individuals, and future researchers.

References

- Singh P, Singh S, Kumar G, Baweja P, editors. Energy: Crises, Challenges and Solutions. 1st ed. Wiley; 2021. https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119741503.
- Orellano A, Valor C, Chuvieco E. The Influence of Religion on Sustainable Consumption: A Systematic Review and Future Research Agenda. Sustainability 2020;12:7901. https://doi.org/10.3390/su12197901.
- Palupi T, Sawitri DR. The Importance of Pro-Environmental Behavior in Adolescent. E3S Web Conf 2018;31:09031. https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/20183109031.
- Han W, Wang Y, Zhang S, Jiang Y. Internalizing Social Norms to Promote Pro-environmental Behavior: Chinese Tourists on Social Media. J China Tour Res 2023;19:443–66. https://doi.org/10.1080/19388160.2022.2085835.
- Helferich M, Thøgersen J, Bergquist M. Direct and mediated impacts of social norms on pro-environmental behavior. Glob Environ Change 2023;80:102680. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2023.102680.
- Kácha O, Van Der Linden S. The moderating role of moral norms and personal cost in compliance with pro-environmental social norms. Curr Res Ecol Soc Psychol 2021;2:100020.
- Jianzhuang G. The Influence of Ethical Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior–Workplace Humanization as a Mediating Variable. Int J Sci Bus 2023;20:92–108. https://doi.org/10.58970/IJSB.2058.
- Şengüllendi MF, Bilgetürk M, Afacan Fındıklı M. Ethical leadership and green innovation: the mediating role of green organizational culture. J Environ Plan Manag 2024;67:1702–23. https://doi.org/10.1080/09640568.2023.2180347.
- Sachdeva S, Iliev R, Medin DL. Sinning Saints and Saintly Sinners: The Paradox of Moral Self-Regulation. Psychol Sci 2009;20:523–8. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9280.2009.02326.x.
- Blanken I, Van De Ven N, Zeelenberg M. A Meta-Analytic Review of Moral Licensing. Pers Soc Psychol Bull 2015;41:540–58. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215572134.

THANK YOU