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Attitudinal and Dispositional Predictors of Environmentally-Responsible Behavior

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Measures of locus of control, optimism, consideration of future consequences of behavior, environmental concern, belief in global warming, biospheric altruism, corporate skepticism, economic motivation, recycling attitudes and motivation, and political ideology were used to predict environmentally-responsible behaviors. Regression analyses revealed that the best predictors were perceived importance of recycling, economic motivation, recycling motivation, and corporate skepticism. These results suggest that global dispositional variables, such as optimism and locus of control, are not particularly useful predictors of environmentally-responsible behaviors. Instead, environmentally-specific dispositions, such as economic motivation and recycling motivation are much better predictors, as well as attitudinal dimensions such as perceived importance of recycling, environmental concern, belief in global warming, corporate skepticism, and political ideology. This suggests that efforts to increase environmentally-responsible behaviors are best directed at impacting environmentally-relevant dispositions and attitudes.

Information about the Authors:

Anna Isaacson is a senior psychology and sociology double major and is in Christ College. She will pursue a Ph.D. in developmental psychology, focusing on adolescent social development, beginning this fall at the University of Missouri. Ken Knuppel is a senior psychology and theology double major. This summer, he will begin the international master's program at VU, which combines M.S. coursework in international commerce and policy with a 27-month commitment to serving in the Peace Corps in business development. Ashley Lawrence is a senior psychology and humanities double major. Next year, she will be pursuing a Ph.D. in quantitative psychology at the University of Oklahoma.

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