

UGC/FDS11/H07/24

Title of Project:

(English)

Motives for constructing a pro-environmental identity: a mixed methods sequential exploratory investigation

(Chinese)

建構環保身份之動機：一項混合方法的序貫探索性研究

Abstract of Research Comprehensible to a Non-specialist

Pro-environmental identity plays a pivotal role in influencing pro-environmental behaviour (PEB). Understanding motives for constructing a pro-environmental identity could help understand PEB. Previous research has identified motives, including self-esteem, efficacy, continuity, distinctiveness, meaning, belonging, morality and frugality, influencing cognitive evaluation of centrality within identity and enactment of identity. However, the underlying motives driving the pro-environmental aspect of identity construction remain under-explored.

This research proposal aims to investigate the eight identity motives driving pro-environmental identity construction and its impact on PEB. A mixed methods sequential exploratory design will be employed, integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches to answer four research questions (RQs) in two major phases. In Study 1, in-depth interviews with 20 environmentalists from environmental organizations will be conducted, with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore how identity motives might influence the construction of pro-environmental identity (RQ1) and whether additional identity motives contribute to this process (RQ2).

The findings from Study 1 will inform the subsequent cross-sectional studies, Studies 2a, 2b, and 2c, in which will recruit 200 participants each from environmental organisations, university students, and community samples, respectively. Online surveys will be employed to measure the extent that identity motives influence individuals' perceptions of the centrality of pro-environmental aspect with identity and intention to enact this aspect. Correlation and regression analysis will be used to examine the relationships between these identity motives and to perceived centrality of their pro-environmental identity and PEB among environmentalists (RQ3) and across different samples (RQ4)

This research project will contribute to the literature on environmental psychology by elucidating the linkage between identity motives PEB, thereby promoting the understanding of the motivational forces underlying pro-environmental identity across worldwide researchers. Moreover, the insights gained from this research project hold implications for educational initiatives for fostering sustainable behaviours and informing environmental policies and interventions.