

The relationship between moral competences and sustainable consumption among higher education students

C. Valor Martínez; P. Antonetti; A. Merino de Diego

Abstract-

Despite claims of the importance of students developing moral competences in the context of Education for Sustainable Consumption, the literature lacks a systematic perspective that empirically assesses the association between moral competences and sustainable consumption. To address this research gap, the relationship between moral competences, which is operationalized through the Values in Action Inventory of Strengths, and students' adoption of sustainable consumption is examined. This paper contributes to the literature concerning sustainable consumption by enhancing our knowledge of its correlates. This study identifies seven moral competences directly associated with sustainable consumption that, thus, could be included as learning objectives in Education for Sustainable Consumption curricula. Moreover, this study shows that the other moral competences are indirectly associated with sustainable consumption, suggesting that nurturing these competences may also facilitate the adoption of sustainable consumption. Additionally, this study contributes to the development of Education for Sustainable Consumption curricula by (1) providing a comprehensive, theory-based and empirically tested operationalization of moral competences and (2) validating the Values In Action Inventory of Strengths framework as a tool for the operationalization and assessment of students' development of moral competences.

Index Terms- Education for sustainability; Character education; Character strengths; Moral competences; Sustainable consumption

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