

# **Volition to behave sustainably: an examination of the role of self-control**

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## **Abstract-**

**To address the current socioenvironmental crisis, the individual adoption of pro-environmental lifestyles has been recognized as being of paramount importance. Past research has largely assumed that motivation will drive pro-environmental behaviour. In contrast, this study argues that, in addition to motivation, volitional abilities are fundamental since these abilities facilitate circumventing internal and external barriers, disrupting unsustainable habits and foregoing short-term personal gratification for long-term societal benefits. More specifically, this study examines the direct influence of self-control (SC) on the adoption of pro-environmental behaviour (PEB). We theorize that SC is more predictive of behaviour than perceived behavioural control (PBC), and we suggest a direct association between SC and the adoption of PEB. Moreover, we hypothesize that the magnitude of the effect is even greater for actions with fewer external barriers, which require more volitional control. These hypotheses are supported by a study of 412 individuals. Our study contributes to the literature on environmental behaviour by showing the importance of volitional skills in explaining PEB. Furthermore, given the malleability of SC, this study proposes strategies for its development to promote pro-environmental lifestyles as mainstream.**

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