



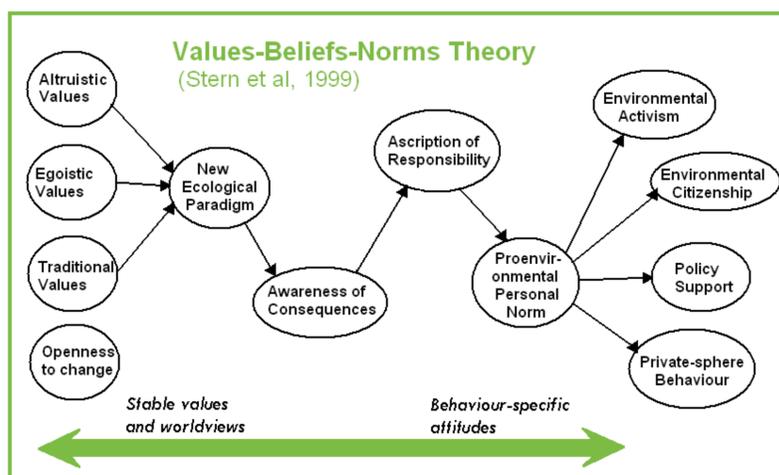
Energy consumption behaviour by individuals in office settings

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Background

Local authorities are looking to reduce energy consumption within their buildings to save money and to meet obligations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from their own operations. The UK Climate Change Strategy calls on local authorities to be an example to communities and the private sector on issues around climate change. Office buildings are one area where progress by local authorities can be a useful example to other sectors.

The conservation psychology approach



A combination of **environmental psychology**, looking at the relationship between an individual's environment and their behaviour, and **social psychology**, looking at the impact of situational context on behaviour. It applies attitude-behaviour theories like Values-Beliefs-Norms, allowing the comparison of a variety of behaviours and contexts.

Research problem

For maximum reductions in energy consumption in office buildings, we need to change behaviour as well as undertake efficiency actions.

Previous attitude-behaviour research has examined energy consumption behaviour in settings such as households, but little research has examined such behaviour in organisational settings.

How the organisational context of offices affects energy consumption behaviour is not yet fully understood.

Aim of the research

To examine the factors influencing the energy consumption behaviour of individuals in office settings.

Objectives of the research

1. To identify the effect that an office setting has on the attitudinal and contextual factors that influence energy consumption behaviour.
2. To examine the relationships between individuals and their group and organisational motivations, and how these influence individual energy consumption behaviour in office settings.
3. To investigate whether energy consumption behaviour in an office location predicts energy consumption behaviour at home.
4. To establish the potential for a reduction in energy consumption in office settings through changes in individual behaviour.

The proposed study

A study of office-based workers in a large local authority (e.g. a County or City Council). The study will include employees based in several different office buildings, with a variety of layouts and building types

Components of the proposed study

A questionnaire providing quantitative data about attitudes and self-reported behaviour. Analysis will test two attitude-behaviour theories, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1977) and Values-Beliefs-Norms Theory (Stern et al, 1999).

Interviews providing in-depth qualitative data about attitudes and behaviour. Interviews will include managers, employees with specific responsibilities (e.g. energy or building managers) or specific knowledge of office routines (e.g. administrative officers) plus a sample of more general employees.

Measurements of actual energy consumption or behaviour, either by monitoring energy consumption or by observing behaviour (to be finalised).

