

## Climate Change and Perceived Socialization: The Role of Parents' Climate Change Coping Style and Household Communication

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**Abstract :** Working together to reduce the anthropogenic impact should be a collective action, including effort within the household. In the matter, children are considered to have an important role in influencing the household to reduce the environmental impact through reversed socialization where children motivate and increase the concern of the parents towards environmental protection. Previous studies reveal that communication between parents and kids is key for effective reversed socialization. However, multiple barriers have been identified in the literature, such as the acceptance of the influence from the kids, the properties of the communication, among other factors. Based on the previous evidence, the present study aims to assess barriers and facilitators of communication at the household level that have an impact on reversed socialization. More precisely, the study examines how parents' climate change coping strategy (problem-focused, meaning-focused, disregarding) influences the valence and the type of the communication related to climate change, and eventually the extent to which they report their beliefs and behaviours to be influenced by the pro-environmental perspectives of their children; i.e. reversed socialization. Via an online survey, 723 Belgian parents self-reported on communication about environmental protection and risk within their household (such as the frequency of exchange about topics related to climate change sourced from school, the household rules, imparting knowledge to the children, and outer factors like media or peer pressure, the emotional valence of the communication), their perceived socialization, and personal factors (coping mechanisms towards climate change). The results, using structural equation modelling, revealed that parents applying a problem-solving coping strategy related to climate change, appear to communicate more often in a positive than in a negative manner. Parents with a disregarding coping style towards climate change appear to communicate less often in a positive way within the household. Parents that cope via meaning-making of climate change showed to communicate less often in either a positive or negative way. Moreover, the perceived valence of the communication (positive or negative) influenced the frequency and type of household communication. Positive emotions increased the frequency of the communication overall. However, the direct effect of neither of the coping mechanisms on the reversed socialization was significant. High frequency of communication about the media, environmental views of the household members among other external topics had a positive impact on the perceived socialization, followed by discussions school-related; while parental instructing had a negative impact on the perceived socialization. Moreover, the frequency of communication was strongly affected by the perceived valence of the communication (positive or negative). The results go in line with previous evidence that a higher frequency of communication facilitates reversed socialization. Hence the results outstand how the coping mechanisms of the parents can be either a facilitator when they cope via problem-solving, while parents that disregard might avert frequent communication about climate change at the household.

**Keywords :** communication, parents' coping mechanisms, environmental protection, household, perceived socialization

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