Structural Equation Modelling on the Drivers of Environmental Engagement of Secondary Students in Caraga Region, Philippines: Implications for Policy, Planning and Action

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Abstract:

This study aimed to identify the key factors influencing Grade 10 secondary students' awareness, attitudes and practices towards climate change and biodiversity conservation in Caraga Region, Philippines. Given the region's vulnerability to climatological hazards, understanding students environmentalism is essential. By purposive sampling, a cross-sectional survey of 1478 students from 26 flood- prone public national high schools was obtained. Structural equation modelling showed that biodiversity conservation awareness(BCA) positively influenced climate change awareness (CCA). BCA was positively linked to education, personal experiences/observation (PEO) and religious/ cultural beliefs (RC), but not media/technology access (MAT). RC, PEO, and MAT. CCA negatively influenced CCA, and not by education. Government policies/regulations had no significant influenced on BCA or CCA. Environmental attitude (EA) was positively correlated with environmental practice (EP), influenced by BCA but negatively influenced by CCA, with sex playing a moderating role. The study found that tangible, local, and culturally embedded factors are more effective in raising awareness of biodiversity issues, while abstract, global and less culturally integrated factors may weaken their influence. This findings underscore the need for comprehensive, contextualized, community-centered environmental literacy programs to increasingly foster awareness and pro-environmental behavior. Future research may use longitudinal approach to analyze causality and conduct objective assessment using actual pro- environmental behavior.

Keywords:

Climate change awareness, Biodiversity Conservation Awareness, Structural Equation Modeling, Environmental Practice, Environmental Attitude.