

Waste Management Among the Residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo, Philippines

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Abstract - This study determined the level of knowledge in waste management among residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo. The participants were 30 purposively selected residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo. The quantitative-qualitative method of analysis was utilized in this study. The data were gathered through the use of questionnaire developed by the researchers. Interview was also employed to gather the qualitative data. As an entire group, the level of knowledge in waste management among residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo was "high level of knowledge" as an entire group and when classified according to different categories.

Keywords - waste management, environment, community service

INTRODUCTION

The environment is once again in the news and in the limelight. It is because the recent occurrence of major environmental events, such as the reported ozone hole, the extinction of species, the flash floods and the rapid destruction of the natural resources have made people aware that indeed the environment needs care and attention. It is not so in the past, when few people had ever heard of the words ecology or ecosystems, or when the term environment meant very little as a political or social concern. In fact, despite the fact that ecological principles and concepts were already proposed for the last two hundred years ago (Schraer and Stolze, 1995) and the German biologist Ernst Haeckel had suggested the term ecology as early as 1869, a lot of countries, including the Philippines, do not have adequate knowledge about the environment and its conservation. It is because, aside from not having a solid integration of environmental topics in the general education courses, there is also no system of monitoring the implementation of environmental laws and policies in the country (Basug, 1997). It is believed therefore, that schools can be a potential source of ethical and social standards, providing directions for developing programs, and organizing classrooms to take part in environmental programs (Orstein and Levine, 1989).

It is a sad observation that the educators are not even fully involved in environmental education and training (Saleh, 1997). More so, there is a lack of interest in environmental education in the primary years and underestimation of the importance of these crucial years as reasons for pronounced inadequacies within the course which trains teachers for this level (Fien and Tilbury, 1996).

It is therefore, absolutely important to assess the village systems priority at the present time, that is, to achieve global competence without jeopardizing the environmental conservation aspects of education, and schools have been moving upward into setting higher standards for what the students should know and be able to do (Vaugh, 1996). With this, it is not far from being expected that students should be the targets of environmental education for the present and the coming educational era. For with them, there is hope for the future, hope for the environment, and hope for the more suitable Earth.

But first and foremost, there is a need to assess the level of awareness among the students as regards the environment, in order for the educational institutions to start from where they are, and work out their way to creating a more solid and conscientious personal awareness and concern over the environment.

The study conducted by Fong (1994) serves as the conceptual basis of this study, for while investigating the environmental awareness and practices of elementary school students and their parents, it was found out that those students and parents who scored high in many environmental awareness tests items also took more action for the environment.

It is in this premise that this study was conducted, which primarily aims to measure the level of awareness about the environment and its conservation among the residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo. In this study, the independent variable was the resident grouping according to type of residence and category of the residence, while the dependent variable was the level of knowledge on environmental conservation of the residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo.

FRAMEWORK

Education is believed to be a key to changing long-established patterns of social behaviors (Atchia and Tropp, 1995). It can help combat the unsustainable production and consumption patterns that are responsible for environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, population growth beyond the capacity of ecological systems and unplanned urbanization.

Through education individuals are able to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in the society (Futrell, 1986). Thus, educating them about the ecological issues and concerns can be of great help to the environment.

Naranchuluun (1997) believes that many people do not understand the close ties between human activities and the environment because they have inaccurate or insufficient information. It is therefore very important that education paves way to massive awareness of the plight of the environment through the direct contact with it (Fien and Tilbury, 1996).

Man's relationship with his environment has been laid down through the declarations of principles in the 1972 Stockholm Conference, the 1975 Belgrade Workshop, and the 1977 Tbilisi Conference (in Joaquin, 1990). These three conferences stressed the need for the establishment of the so-called environmental education for the purpose of getting everyone involved in saving the environment, and saving mankind. And because mankind is now on the era of industrialization and globalization, it is important that mankind realizes the production and consumption of sound development principles to ensure sustainability (Putwaran, 1997).

Therefore, education plays a vital role in the sustainable development of the country by serving to supply manpower needs of the industry and provides leaders and a mass base for an ecologically literate, committed and responsive citizenry (Joaquin, 1990).

Yang Berhormat Dr. Hiimi bin Haji Yahaya (in SEAMEO RECSAM convenes- 1993) believes that there could be no sustainable living without education, stressing the ideal of sustainable living as demanding from those who live today to forego unsustainable activities and aspirations for the sake of the future generation. And since the human capacity to understand about the environmental problems can be achieved mainly through education, it is believed to be the most important function of environmental education. And environmental education for the 21st century is becoming distinctly more scientific and technical (Atchia, Ponniah, Brevik and Hare, 1995), with the strongest accent on daily application.

Public awareness and appreciation of the essential linkage between the environment and development are important in achieving successful implementation of ecologically oriented programmes (K'Omudho, 1995). Around the world, the awareness has become so potent that individual countries are beginning to appreciate the environment, or what actually is left for the people. India, for example, adopts the village-level management of its natural resources (Desiraju, 1995), and in 1987, Ghana combats land degradation through its National Plan of Action to Combat Drought and Desertification (Iddrisu, 1995). Pakistan, generating help from the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, adopts the National Conservation Strategy (Malik, 1995) in 1988 to ensure the

sustainable use of its natural resources, preserve the environment and genetic diversity, and maintain essential ecological balance in the country. Kenya's policy on environment and development focuses on forestation (K'Omudho, 1995).

The 1972 Stockholm Conference recommended the establishment of an international programme in environmental education, interdisciplinary in approach, in school and out of school, encompassing all levels of education and directed toward the general public (Atchia and Tropp, 1995). It further pointed out the need to reach out to the ordinary citizens living in rural or urban areas, young and adults alike, with a view to educating them as to the simple steps they might undertake within their means to manage and control the environment.

Measuring the level of knowledge and corresponding attitudes toward environmental issues of high school teachers in Jakarta, Indonesia, Hadisuwarno (1997) found out that the general environmental knowledge of these teachers was quite high and their attitudes toward environmental issues presented in the study was generally positive, establishing a strong and significant relationship between teachers' environmental knowledge and attitudes.

Morano (1995), on the other hand, found out in her study that an improved cognitive learning from low to high upon values integration in college level Ecology course. She further established a positive pre- and post-integration attitudes towards the environment upon integration.

Measuring the relationship among knowledge, attitudes, and practices related to environmental conservation, Cadornigara (1999) found out that despite the low knowledge level of the students, they have highly desirable attitudes and moderately desirable practices about environmental conservation. Furthermore, it was found out the no significant relationship existed between the students' knowledge and attitudes, and the students' knowledge and practices of environmental conservation. A significant relationship, however, existed between the students' environment-related attitudes and practices.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study primarily aimed to determine the level of knowledge on waste management among the residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo this 2007. Specifically, it pursued the following objectives:

1. to determine the level of knowledge on waste management among the residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo
2. to measure the level of knowledge on waste management among residents when they were classified according to different categories such as: (a) type of residence, and (b) category of the residence, b) socio-economic status, and d) number of household members.

METHODOLOGY

This study was a descriptive study that used to gather data on the level of knowledge on waste management among the purposively selected residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo. The survey used the Questionnaire of Knowledge on Waste Management as the data-gathering instrument. The questionnaire was administered to the selected residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo and the data were processed and analyzed using the frequency and mean as descriptive statistical tools. Using the processed data, the level of knowledge on waste management of the residents was established. Interview was utilized to establish qualitative inquiry. The participants were the purposively selected residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo.

The Questionnaire on level of knowledge on Waste Management from the study of Escobar (2006) was used in this study. The questionnaire includes the profile of the respondents and the fourteen items to describe the level of the waste management at Village Tagunbahan, Ajuy, Iloilo.

The data from this study was statistically analyzed using the frequency and mean as descriptive tools. To determine the level of knowledge on waste management among the residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo the following descriptive levels, based on the arbitrary scaling were employed.

In this study, the highest equivalent grade scale was 5.00 and the lowest is 1.00.

Table 1. Distribution of the participants

| Category | | f |
|--------------------------------|----|-----|
| % | | |
| A. Entire Group | 30 | 100 |
| B. Type of Residence | | |
| Concrete house | 6 | 20 |
| Light Materials | 24 | 80 |
| C. Category | | |
| Living near the sea | 28 | 93 |
| Living far from the sea | 2 | 7 |
| D. Socio-economic status | | |
| Low | 14 | 47 |
| Middle | 15 | 50 |
| High | 1 | 3 |
| E. Number of household members | | |
| Big | 25 | 83 |
| Small | 5 | 17 |

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study revealed that the residents in Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo had “moderate level of knowledge” as an entire group and when classified according to different categories except for high socio-economic status, which had “high level of knowledge.”

Table 2. Level of Knowledge on Waste Management level among the residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo as An entire group and when grouped according to certain categories

| Category | M | Description |
|--------------------------------|------|-------------|
| A. Entire Group | 3.26 | moderate |
| B. Type of Residence | | |
| Concrete house | 3.26 | moderate |
| Light Materials | 3.24 | moderate |
| C. Category | | |
| Living near the sea | 3.22 | moderate |
| Living far from the sea | 3.28 | moderate |
| D. Socio-economic status | | |
| Low | 3.24 | moderate |
| Middle | 3.25 | moderate |
| High | 3.65 | high |
| E. Number of household members | | |
| Big | 3.27 | moderate |
| Small | 3.19 | moderate |

Qualitative Data-Analysis. The qualitative-data analysis made use of the interview. The respondents were the selected residents of the village. The data gathered through this method were used to reinforce the quantitative results of the present study. The first question in the interview was “how do you dispose the wastes in your village?” The following were the responses of the participants in the interviews:

“We separate the biodegradable from the non-biodegradable materials. Then, make a compost pit for biodegradable materials.”

“Most of the people in our village dispose their waste in the hole so that the waste will be made into compost.”

“I dispose our waste by putting it to the trash/garbage can beside the street of our village.”

The second question in the interview was “Does your village have waste management system? Explain.” Most of the respondents during the interview said that they have waste management system. One respondent said “Yes, our village has waste management system because if the village does not have then most of the residents here will have diseases.”

The third question during the interview was “What are your comments or observations regarding the waste management program of your village?” Most of the respondents during the interviews responded that “we have a good and effective waste management program.”

The fourth question used in the interview was “Do you have educational programs on waste management conducted by your village? Give your comments. Few of the respondents mentioned that they had waste management program. They said “Yes, we have but the person in-charge should use Hiligaynon words, the residents could not understand if they speak English all throughout.”

The fifth question used in the interview was “What are your comments/suggestions about the drainage system of the village?” The respondents of the interviews commented that “the official or the designated persons should always check the drainage system.”

Utilizing the qualitative inputs from the respondents during the interviews, the comments, suggestions, and reactions of the respondents of this study affirmed the quantitative data analysis.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the preceding findings, the following conclusions were advanced:

The residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo had “moderate level of knowledge” when taken as an entire group and when grouped according to different categories except for the high socio-economic status, which had “high level of knowledge.” This can be inferred that the respondents are conscious in the managing their waste and possibly the impact of these wastes in the environment.

Qualitative data taken from the interviews affirmed the quantitative results as shown in the comments, reactions, answers, and suggestions of the respondents of this study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers arrived at the following recommendations:

1. The strict compliance in waste management will be fully observed by the residents.

2. Seminars, training, and education regarding the environmental awareness and recycling will be conducted.

3. Further studies should be conducted by another group of concerned individuals to ascertain the waste management among the residents of Village Tagunbanhan, Ajuy, Iloilo.

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