

Environmental Activism: Analyzing the Attitudes of Eco-Friendly Consumers

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of environmental knowledge and environmental concern on environmental attitude and environmental activism. Environmental degradation, caused by various factors, is a critical issue that necessitates investigation. Knowledge is an essential aspect, while environmental concern represents the willingness to take action. This research employs a quantitative approach to test these variables with a sample size of 259 individuals who are environmentally conscious and engage in eco-friendly activities, both personally and through campaigns. Data were collected using a questionnaire administered to the Indonesian public, who generally require greater literacy on environmental sustainability. The results indicate that environmental knowledge significantly impacts environmental attitude and environmental activism. These findings underscore the importance of education and campaigns in providing understanding and achieving widespread impact. The study also reveals that environmental concern contributes to fostering care and environmental activism. The implications of this research highlight the need to enhance conservation campaigns and education to increase public awareness of environmental issues and encourage the application of this understanding in everyday practices.

Keywords: *Environmental Activism, Eco-Friendly Consumers, Environmental Degradation.*

Introduction

Environmental activism plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable and green behavior of consumption. As the world faces pressing environmental challenges such as climate change, resource depletion, and pollution, the need for individuals and communities to adopt eco-friendly practices has become increasingly urgent. Environmental activists work tirelessly to raise awareness, advocate for policy changes, and inspire people to make conscious choices that minimize their ecological footprint (Droz, 2021). One of the primary goals of environmental activism is to encourage sustainable consumption patterns. This involves educating the public about the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions and empowering them to make more informed choices (Noor et al., 2022). Environmental activists often highlight the benefits of choosing eco-friendly products, reducing waste, and adopting a circular economy approach (Hassaniyan, 2021). Environmental activism promotes the adoption of green behavior, which encompasses a wide range of environmentally conscious actions, such as recycling, energy conservation, and sustainable transportation. Through campaigns, workshops, and community initiatives, environmental activists inspire individuals to adopt these green behaviors, leading to a positive impact on the environment (Mackay et al., 2021).

Environmental activism also plays a crucial role in holding corporations and policymakers accountable for their environmental practices. By organizing protests, lobbying, and engaging in legal action, activists pressure businesses and governments to implement policies and regulations that promote sustainability and environmental protection (Droz, 2021). This pressure can lead to the development of more eco-friendly products, the adoption of renewable energy sources, and the implementation of stricter environmental regulations. Furthermore, environmental activism fosters a sense of community and collective responsibility

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for the planet. By bringing people together around a common cause, environmental activists create a platform for individuals to connect, share ideas, and collaborate on solutions (Carvalho Veras et al., 2023).

Environmental attitude, defined as an individual's beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions towards the natural environment, has been widely recognized as a key factor influencing environmental activism (Kountouris & Williams, 2023). Numerous studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between pro-environmental attitudes and engagement in various forms of environmental activism, such as participating in protests, signing petitions, or volunteering for environmental organizations (Cayolla et al., 2023; Martinho et al., 2015). Research has shown that individuals with stronger environmental concerns, beliefs, and values are more likely to take action to protect the environment (Pongpunpurt et al., 2021). Environmental knowledge is a crucial factor that influences an individual's behavior and, consequently, their engagement in environmental activism. Research has shown that individuals with a deeper understanding of environmental issues, such as the causes and consequences of climate change, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss, are more likely to adopt sustainable practices and participate in environmental activism (Ermolaeva et al., 2020). Studies have found that environmental knowledge is positively correlated with pro-environmental behavior (Barbarossa & De Pelsmacker, 2016). Individuals who are well-informed about environmental problems and the impact of their actions are more likely to recognize the importance of adopting eco-friendly behaviors and to take concrete steps to reduce their environmental footprint.

Environmental concern is another key factor that is closely linked to environmental activism. Individuals who express a high level of concern for the environment and its well-being are more likely to engage in various forms of environmental activism, such as participating in protests, supporting environmental organizations, or advocating for policy changes (Li-ming & Wai, 2013). Environmental concern can be understood as an individual's emotional and cognitive response to environmental issues, such as climate change, pollution, or biodiversity loss. Individuals with a strong environmental concern are more likely to perceive these issues as personally relevant and to feel a sense of responsibility towards addressing them (Peisker, 2023). This emotional investment in the environment can then motivate them to take action and become involved in environmental activism. Research has shown that environmental concern is a significant predictor of pro-environmental behavior, including participation in environmental activism (Vicente et al., 2021)

Previous research has shown that the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental activism is not straightforward. Studies have found that while increased environmental knowledge can lead to greater environmental concern and positive attitudes, it does not necessarily translate into increased environmental activism (Gifford & Nilsson, 2014; Marquart-Pyatt, 2018). This phenomenon is known as the "value-action gap," where individuals may possess the necessary knowledge and concern but fail to engage in pro-environmental behaviors. Factors such as social norms, perceived behavioral control, and situational constraints can influence the translation of environmental knowledge into actual environmental activism. Research has shown that while environmental concern is positively associated with environmental activism, the strength of this relationship can vary depending on various factors (Li-ming & Wai, 2013). Individuals with higher levels of environmental concern were more likely to engage in environmental activism, such as participating in protests or joining environmental organizations (Santoso et al., 2022). However, the researchers also found that the strength of this relationship was influenced by factors such as personal norms, perceived behavioral control, and the availability of opportunities for environmental activism (Tam, 2020). The urgency of this research is based on the inconsistencies in previous studies and the various factors influencing environmental knowledge and environmental concern in relation to environmental activism. Further research is needed to understand the role of environmental attitude in influencing environmental activism.

Literature Review

The Framework of Environmental Knowledge, Environmental Attitude, and Environmental Activism

Environmental knowledge refers to an individual's understanding and awareness of environmental issues, such as climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion (Ermolaeva et al., 2020). Studies have shown that increased environmental knowledge can lead to more positive environmental attitudes, which are an individual's beliefs, feelings, and behavioral intentions towards the environment (Kurokawa et al., 2023). This relationship between environmental knowledge and attitude is crucial, as it forms the foundation for pro-environmental behaviors and environmental activism. Research has consistently demonstrated that individuals with higher levels of environmental knowledge tend to have more positive environmental attitudes (Yusuf & Fajri, 2022). For example, a study indicated individuals with a better understanding of climate change science were more likely to believe in the reality of climate change and support policies to address it (Yoon & Joung, 2019). Similarly, research found greater knowledge about environmental issues had more favorable attitudes towards environmental protection (Knupfer et al., 2023).

The relationship between environmental knowledge, environmental attitude and environmental activism is well-established in the literature. Individuals with more positive environmental attitudes, such as a stronger belief in the importance of environmental protection and a greater sense of personal responsibility for environmental issues, are more likely to engage in environmental activism (Campos et al., 2023). Research has also highlighted the role of emotional factors in motivating environmental activism. Individuals who experience stronger emotional responses, such as feelings of concern, fear, or hope, towards environmental issues are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviors and environmental activism (Knupfer et al., 2023). Young people who felt hopeful about addressing climate change were more likely to participate in climate change protests (Liu & Lo, 2022).

H1: environmental knowledge have positive effect on environmental attitude

H2: environmental knowledge have positive effect on environmental activism

H3: environmental knowledge have positive effect on environmental activism through environmental attitude

The Framework of Environmental Concern, Environmental Attitude, and Environmental Activism

Environmental concern has been recognized as a crucial factor in shaping individuals' attitudes and behaviors towards environmental protection and sustainability. Research has shown that individuals with a higher level of environmental concern are more likely to develop positive environmental attitudes, which can subsequently lead to increased engagement in environmental activism (Chi, 2022). Environmental concern can be defined as an individual's awareness and worry about environmental issues, such as climate change, pollution, and resource depletion. Studies have found that environmental concern is influenced by various factors, including personal values, social norms, and demographic characteristics (Sisaye, 2011). For instance, individuals with biocentric or ecocentric values, which prioritize the intrinsic value of nature and the environment, tend to have higher levels of environmental concern compared to those with anthropocentric values, which focus on the utilitarian benefits of the environment for human well-being (Moshood et al., 2023). Furthermore, social norms and peer influence can also shape environmental concern. Individuals who are surrounded by others who care about the environment and engage in pro-environmental behaviors are more likely to develop similar attitudes and concerns (Yue et al., 2020).

The rise of environmental activism can be attributed to increasing public awareness and concern about environmental issues, such as climate change, deforestation, and pollution. As individuals become more informed about the severity and urgency of these problems, they are more likely to engage in various forms of environmental activism to address them (Tam, 2020). One of the key drivers of environmental activism is the belief that individual and collective actions can make a difference in addressing environmental challenges (Vo et al., 2019). Individuals who believe that their actions can have a tangible impact on the

environment are more likely to engage in environmental activism, such as participating in protests, signing petitions, or supporting environmental organizations (Dumortier et al., 2017). The effectiveness of environmental activism has been the subject of much debate and research. While some studies have shown that environmental activism can lead to positive policy changes and environmental outcomes, others have highlighted the challenges and limitations of such efforts (Paul et al., 2016). Factors such as the scale and persistence of the activism, the political and economic context, and the specific strategies employed can all influence the success of environmental activism.

H4: environmental concern have positive effect on environmental attitude

H5: environmental concern have positive effect on environmental activism

H6: environmental concern have positive effect on environmental activism through environmental attitude

Framework Environmental Attitude and Environmental Activism

Studies have shown that individuals with stronger pro-environmental attitudes are more likely to engage in various forms of environmental activism, such as participating in protests, supporting environmental organizations, and adopting sustainable behaviors (Pop et al., 2020). This relationship between environmental attitudes and activism is underpinned by the notion that individuals who are more concerned about environmental issues are more motivated to take action and contribute to environmental protection and conservation efforts. One key aspect of environmental attitudes that influences activism is the level of environmental concern. Individuals who perceive environmental problems as more severe and urgent are more likely to engage in environmental activism (Swaim et al., 2014). This is because a heightened sense of environmental concern can lead to a stronger personal investment in addressing environmental issues and a greater willingness to take action. Individuals who were more concerned about the state of the environment were more likely to participate in recycling programs, energy conservation initiatives, and environmental protests (Jia et al., 2023). Another important factor is the degree of environmental awareness and knowledge. Individuals who are more informed about environmental issues, their causes, and potential solutions are more likely to become involved in environmental activism (Piligrimiene et al., 2020). This is because a better understanding of environmental problems can foster a sense of responsibility and empower individuals to take concrete steps to address these issues.

H7: environmental attitude have positive effect on environmental activism

Method

This study adopts a quantitative research approach, aimed at examining the causal relationships between environmental knowledge, environmental concern, environmental attitude, and environmental activism. By employing a structured methodology, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence on how these variables interact and influence one another within the context of environmental behavior. The research is designed as a causal study, which seeks to determine the cause-and-effect relationships among the variables of interest. The focus is on understanding how environmental knowledge and environmental concern contribute to shaping environmental attitudes and subsequently driving environmental activism. A non-probability sampling method, specifically purposive sampling, was utilized to select respondents for this study. The sample comprises 259 individuals who meet the criteria of being environmentally conscious and using eco-friendly products. This targeted approach ensures that the sample is relevant to the research objectives, as it includes individuals who are likely to have developed environmental attitudes and engage in environmental activism. The criteria for selecting respondents included individuals who actively use environmentally friendly products. This criterion was chosen to ensure that the sample consists of people who are already engaged in environmentally sustainable practices, thus providing a meaningful context for examining the impact of environmental knowledge and concern on their attitudes and activism. Data were collected using a questionnaire based on a Likert scale, which allows respondents to express their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements related to the study variables. The questionnaire was distributed to the Indonesian public, targeting individuals who are inclined to need greater literacy on

environmental sustainability. The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). SEM is a comprehensive statistical technique that enables the testing of complex relationships among multiple variables. It allows for the assessment of both direct and indirect effects, providing a robust analysis of the causal relationships hypothesized in this study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research results test the path coefficients, validity test, reliability test, direct effect test, and indirect effect test.

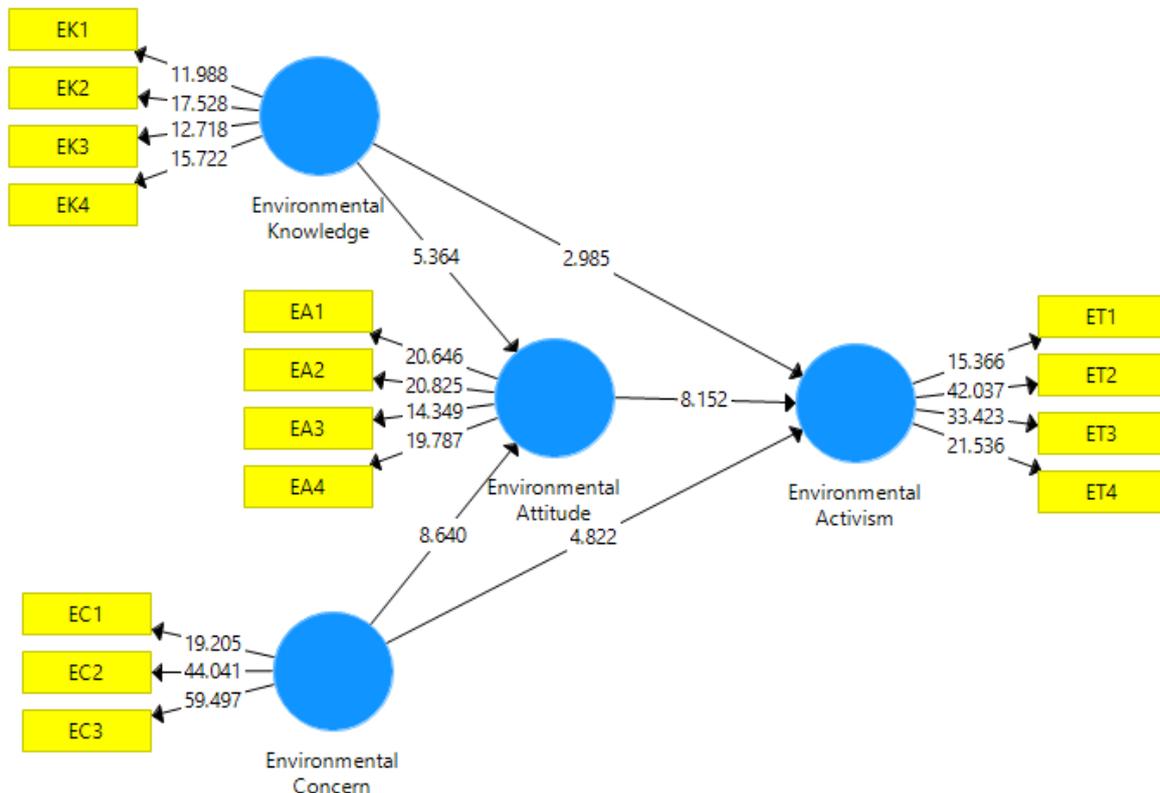


Figure 1. Research Framework

Table 1. Path Coefficient Result

Variable	Environmental Activism	Environmental Attitude
Environmental Attitude	0.527	
Environmental Concern	0.267	0.507
Environmental Knowledge	0.17	0.331

The path coefficient results indicate that environmental attitude (0.527) is the most significant predictor of environmental activism, suggesting that individuals with a strong environmental attitude are more likely to engage in activism. Environmental concern (0.267) also positively influences activism showing that concern about environmental issues somewhat encourages activism. Environmental knowledge (0.17) has the weakest influence on activism, indicating that mere knowledge about environmental issues is less impactful on activism behavior. Additionally, environmental concern (0.507) strongly influences environmental

attitude, while environmental knowledge (0.331) moderately influences it. These findings highlight that while attitudes and concerns significantly drive environmental activism, knowledge alone is less effective.

Table 2. Validity and Reliability Test

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Environmental Attitude	EA1	0.775	0.756	0.845	0.577
	EA2	0.775			
	EA3	0.733			
	EA4	0.754			
Environmental Concern	EC1	0.795	0.828	0.897	0.745
	EC2	0.885			
	EC3	0.906			
Environmental Knowledge	EK1	0.714	0.72	0.82	0.533
	EK2	0.759			
	EK3	0.715			
	EK4	0.732			
Environmental Activism	ET1	0.712	0.817	0.88	0.649
	ET2	0.876			
	ET3	0.853			
	ET4	0.784			

Based on Table 2, all indicators for Environmental Attitude, Environmental Concern, Environmental Knowledge, and Environmental Activism are valid as they meet the following criteria: factor loadings exceed 0.70, Cronbach's Alpha is greater than 0.70, Composite Reliability surpasses 0.70, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is above 0.50.

Table 3. Fornell-Larcker Result

	Environmental Activism	Environmental Attitude	Environmental Concern	Environmental Knowledge
Environmental Activism	0.806			
Environmental Attitude	0.781	0.76		
Environmental Concern	0.657	0.625	0.863	
Environmental Knowledge	0.535	0.512	0.357	0.73

The Fornell-Larcker criterion in Table 3 is met for Environmental Attitude, Environmental Concern, Environmental Knowledge, and Environmental Activism, indicating discriminant validity. This is confirmed as the square root of the AVE for each construct is greater than the correlation between the constructs.

Table 4. Direct Effect Result

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Environmental Attitude → Environmental Activism	0.527	0.528	0.068	7.812	0.000
Environmental Concern → Environmental Activism	0.267	0.263	0.056	4.777	0.000
Environmental Concern → Environmental Attitude	0.507	0.51	0.057	8.899	0.000
Environmental Knowledge → Environmental Activism	0.17	0.173	0.058	2.929	0.004
Environmental Knowledge → Environmental Attitude	0.331	0.333	0.063	5.273	0.000

In Table 4 and Table 5, all hypotheses are supported, confirming the proposed positive relationships between the constructs. Specifically, environmental knowledge positively impacts environmental attitude (H1) and directly influences environmental activism (H2). Furthermore, environmental knowledge also positively affects environmental activism through the mediating role of environmental attitude (H3). Similarly, environmental concern positively impacts environmental attitude (H4) and directly influences environmental activism (H5). Additionally, environmental concern positively affects environmental activism through environmental attitude (H6). Lastly, environmental attitude itself has a positive effect on environmental activism (H7). These results demonstrate that all hypothesized relationships are statistically significant and align with the theoretical framework.

Table 5. Indirect Effect Result

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Environmental Concern → Environmental Attitude → Environmental Activism	0.267	0.269	0.042	6.391	0.000
Environmental Knowledge → Environmental Attitude → Environmental Activism	0.174	0.177	0.044	3.963	0.000

Discussion

The relationship between environmental knowledge and consumer attitudes towards environmental protection and green products is a crucial area of study. Research has consistently shown that increased environmental knowledge can positively influence consumers' attitudes and intentions towards environmentally friendly products and practices. A study found that consumers with higher levels of environmental knowledge were more likely to purchase eco-friendly products, highlighting the importance of environmental education in shaping consumer behavior (Czarnecka et al., 2022). Environmental knowledge not only affects consumer attitudes but also influences their willingness to pay a premium for green products. Global consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable brands, with millennials and Generation Z being the most receptive to this trend (Delcea et al., 2019). This suggests that as consumers become more informed about the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions, they are more inclined to support products and companies that prioritize sustainability. To effectively leverage the power of environmental knowledge in shaping consumer attitudes, it is crucial to develop comprehensive educational campaigns and initiatives (Janmaimool & Khajohnmanee, 2019). These efforts should not only raise awareness about environmental issues but also provide practical information on the benefits and availability of green products.

Environmental knowledge is a crucial factor that can drive individuals to engage in environmental activism. Studies have shown that individuals with a deeper understanding of environmental issues, such as climate change, pollution, and resource depletion, are more likely to participate in activities aimed at addressing these challenges (Zeng et al., 2023). Furthermore, research has indicated that environmental knowledge can shape individual attitudes and beliefs towards the environment, which in turn can influence their willingness to participate in environmental activism (Moshood et al., 2023). Individuals who perceive environmental problems as more severe and believe that their actions can make a difference are more likely to engage in environmental activism, such as joining environmental organizations, participating in protests, or advocating for policy changes (Han & Xu, 2020). In addition, environmental knowledge can empower individuals to become more informed consumers and make more sustainable choices. This can lead to increased demand for environmentally friendly products and services, which can drive businesses to adopt more sustainable practices and engage in environmental activism (Xie & Lu, 2022). For example, the rise in popularity of organic and fair-trade products has been linked to increased consumer awareness and concern for environmental and social issues. Through various campaigns, protests, and advocacy efforts, environmental activists have been successful in drawing attention to the environmental consequences of unsustainable consumption patterns, such as the excessive use of single-use plastics, the carbon footprint of certain industries, and the exploitation of natural resources (Zeng et al., 2023).

Environmental knowledge plays a crucial role in shaping environmental activism. Research has shown that individuals with a deeper understanding of environmental issues, such as climate change, pollution, and resource depletion, are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviors and support environmental causes (Yusuf & Fajri, 2022). This knowledge can be acquired through formal education, media exposure, and personal experiences, and it serves as a foundation for developing environmental attitudes and motivations. Studies have demonstrated that environmental knowledge is positively correlated with environmental awareness, concern, and willingness to take action (Janmaimool & Chudech, 2020). Individuals who are well-informed about the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to environmental problems are more likely to recognize the urgency of addressing these issues and feel empowered to make a difference. This knowledge can inspire individuals to participate in various forms of environmental activism, such as joining environmental organizations, attending protests, or engaging in sustainable lifestyle choices. The acquisition of environmental knowledge is particularly important in the context of modern society, where information is readily available through various media channels. Social media platforms, in particular, have become a powerful tool for disseminating environmental information and raising awareness among the public (Knupfer et al., 2023). Environmental organizations and activists can leverage these platforms to share educational content, promote campaigns, and mobilize support for their causes.

Environmental concern has become a growing issue worldwide, as individuals and communities increasingly recognize the urgent need to address pressing environmental challenges. This concern is reflected in the attitudes and behaviors of consumers, who are becoming more conscious of the impact their purchasing decisions have on the environment. Research has shown that environmental concern is a key factor in shaping consumer attitudes towards green products and sustainable consumption (Dumortier et al., 2017). Studies have found that consumers with a higher level of environmental concern are more likely to have a positive attitude towards green products and be willing to pay a premium for environmentally-friendly goods (Gifford & Nilsson, 2014). This is because these consumers perceive green products as a means to reduce their environmental impact and contribute to the preservation of natural resources. The relationship between environmental concern and consumer attitude is complex and multifaceted. Factors such as demographic characteristics, personal values, and social norms can all influence the strength of this relationship (Choi & Johnson, 2019).

One of the key drivers behind the rise of environmental activism is the growing scientific consensus on the severity of environmental issues. Numerous studies and reports have provided overwhelming evidence of the human-induced causes of climate change and the dire consequences it poses for the planet and its inhabitants (Dinesh et al., 2021; Postolache & Troaca, 2018). This scientific evidence has galvanized individuals and communities to take action, demanding that governments and corporations take meaningful

steps to address these challenges. Another factor contributing to the growth of environmental activism is the increasing availability of information and communication technologies. The internet and social media platforms have enabled environmental activists to reach a wider audience, share information, organize events, and mobilize support more effectively than ever before. This has allowed for the rapid dissemination of environmental messages, the coordination of global campaigns, and the amplification of grassroots movements (Marquart-Pyatt, 2018). Furthermore, the rise of environmental activism has been fueled by a growing sense of urgency and a realization that the consequences of environmental degradation will disproportionately affect vulnerable communities and future generations. This has led to a greater emphasis on environmental justice, which seeks to address the unequal distribution of environmental burdens and the disproportionate impact on marginalized populations. Environmental activists have been at the forefront of this movement, advocating for the rights of indigenous communities, low-income neighborhoods, and developing countries that are often the most affected by environmental crises (Carvalho Veras et al., 2023).

Research has shown that individuals with stronger pro-environmental attitudes are more likely to engage in various forms of environmental activism to support eco-friendly policies. This relationship is underpinned by the notion that environmental attitudes serve as a primary motivator for individuals to take action and contribute to environmental protection and conservation efforts. The findings revealed that individuals who expressed greater concern for the environment, a stronger belief in the importance of environmental protection, and a higher level of perceived personal responsibility for environmental issues were more likely to engage in a range of environmental activism behaviors, including contacting government officials, participating in environmental organizations, and boycotting products due to environmental concerns (Carvalho Veras et al., 2023; Ermolaeva et al., 2020). The relationship between environmental attitudes and environmental activism is further reinforced by the concept of the "value-belief-norm" (VBN) theory, which posits that individuals' personal values, beliefs about the environment, and sense of personal obligation to take action shape their environmental behavior (Liu & Lo, 2022). This theory suggests that individuals who hold biocentric values (i.e., valuing the intrinsic worth of nature) and believe that environmental degradation poses a threat to the things they value are more likely to feel a personal responsibility to engage in environmental activism.

Conclusion

The study provides a detailed examination of how environmental knowledge, concern, attitude, and activism are interconnected. It reveals that individuals with a strong understanding of environmental issues tend to develop positive attitudes toward the environment, which in turn encourages them to engage in environmental activism. This highlights the crucial role of disseminating accurate environmental information to foster a more environmentally conscious society. The findings also show that positive environmental attitudes are often a precursor to active participation in environmentally friendly campaigns. This suggests that efforts to enhance environmental activism should prioritize cultivating positive environmental attitudes through education and awareness programs. The study underscores the significant impact of environmental concern in motivating individuals to take action. Those who are highly concerned about environmental issues are more likely to participate in campaigns advocating for environmental protection and sustainability. This concern not only drives personal actions but also encourages individuals to influence others to adopt similar behaviors, amplifying the impact of environmental activism. Moreover, sustainability education is highlighted as essential in shaping environmental knowledge. Such education equips individuals with a comprehensive understanding of environmental issues, forming the foundation for positive attitudes and proactive behaviors. Integrating sustainability education into various learning environments is crucial for nurturing a generation capable of addressing environmental challenges.

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