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Environmental Consciousness of Higher Education Students During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has left a permanent mark on all aspects of life and society in this century. It affected everyone in various ways and has also affected different organizations and institutions such as schools and government agencies. This study aimed to assess the environmental consciousness of higher education students in a local college in Olongapo City during the pandemic, specifically in the second semester of the academic year 2020-2021. The researcher adopted a descriptive research design with an online survey as this study's primary data-gathering tool. A total of 192 conveniently chosen students participated in the online survey with the help of a modified survey questionnaire. With the assistance of SPSS 22, the study used frequency, percentage, weighted mean, t-test, and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to analyze the gathered data. The study generally found that the respondents "often" do conscious consumption, waste, and recycling activities. The study also revealed that the respondents do energy-saving "every time." In addition, the statistical inferences revealed a significant difference in respondents' conscious consumption when grouped according to GPA. Also, energy-saving awareness is significantly different when grouped according to age and civil status. In conclusion, the respondents are generally conscious of their environment despite an ongoing pandemic. The researchers provided some study implications for future consideration based on the results.

Keywords: *Conscious Consumptions, COVID-19 pandemic, Energy Saving, Environmental Consciousness, Higher Education Students, Waste and Recycling*

Introduction

This COVID-19 pandemic devastated many lives. The pandemic caused significant effects that put everyone's life in danger. Moreover, the impact of the pandemic that we are currently experiencing is tantamount to both human and environmental conditions. Of course, one considers the advantages that COVID-19 brought upon us, like practicing proper hand hygiene, avoiding exposure to a possible infected individual (social distancing), keeping the immune system strong and many more. On the other hand, the disadvantages include being quarantined at home, limited outside activities, hampered economic activities, unemployment, and temporary closure of establishments like markets, churches, and even schools are only a few to mention. The world became a mess, and people panicked. The world governments and other responsible agencies scampered to relieve and alleviate the sudden impact of the pandemic. Regardless of the status, COVID-19 affected education (Schleicher, 2020), stock markets (Topcu & Gulal, 2020), psychosocial (Dubey et al., 2020), environmental (Bashir et al., 2020; Lokhandwala & Gautam, 2020; Wang & Su, 2020), travel and tourism (Skare et al., 2021), and socioeconomic (Bashir et al., 2020). These impacts were just a few among the many effects of the

COVID-19 pandemic, individually and globally. It made a significant dent in the lives of many and caused misery and suffering in one way or another. Since this COVID-19 is a new strain of viral infection, antiviral treatment is yet available. Scientists race against time to find the cure for it, and even with the advancement of technology and medicine, it is still difficult to concoct a solution to battle the infection. It is a great nightmare for everyone, especially those on the frontline. Other impacts dwell into the personal concept like psychological (Alkhamees et al., 2020; Tee et al., 2020) or mental (Xiong et al., 2020; Yeasmin et al., 2020), physical (Mehrsafar et al., 2020), spiritual (del Castillo, 2021; Sheldrake, 2021), lifestyle behavior (Xiang et al., 2020) among others. One should also look into the social perspective since people used to mingle so much for the past decades, then suddenly, it will be halted due to this unknown element of nature. Social gatherings were stopped to avoid mass infection. A social gathering which used to be an "extracurricular activity" for everyone, becomes a "family activity" wherein more time is spent with the family members rather than other people outside the home. They considered this as an advantage to some. Although some say it is artificial and designed to cripple the whole population due to scarcity of resources or other purposes, scientists still are looking for more answers.

This study concentrates on the environmental perspective, detracting from the usual research and studies regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers, environmentalists, scientists, and other interested individuals somehow agree that the pandemic significantly affected our environment due to the temporary closure of establishments and factories that emit carbon dioxide shut off for the moment. Vehicles roaming the metro also decreased, and the toxic gas emission shrunk. This event gave time for the ozone layer to heal. At the same time, people also appreciated the scenery of having a clear blue sky over the city because the smoke vanished. Everyone agrees that a favorable environment promotes the propagation and survival of different species. Different studies showed varying findings, such as the study of Verma and Prakash (2020), which revealed successful recovery of the environment.

On the other hand, Shakil et al. (2020) also stated that environmental factors affect COVID-19 transmission and vice-versa. Another one from Zambrano-Monserrate et al. (2020) presented the positive and negative indirect effects of COVID-19 on the environment. COVID-19 transmission and air pollution reduction are the central themes of the study by San Juan-Reyes et al. (2020). Furthermore, Sarkodie and Owusu (2020) revealed that the quantity of waste increased due to home quarantine and other factors. The cited articles were some of the hundreds and thousands that attempted to explore and explain the significant influence of the pandemic. Since each piece of literature is unique, different perspectives, opinions, ideas, and theories emerged and were promoted by researchers. However, one thing is for sure, nature benefitted. How substantial? We cannot say so, but observations say that something made a difference during the onslaught of the pandemic.

In the context of the current study, since the recent pandemic ravages the world today, it is equally important to assess the environmental consciousness of individuals. It is a concept that people disregard after benefiting so much from the environment. Why? Because after we consume, the by-

products (trash, litter, garbage, or whatever term they used about it) it left to waste and not properly disposed. Who will suffer later on? Of course, the people for their irresponsible behavior and attitude. With this behavior, people began to contemplate what they had done. From the global perspective, environmental consciousness relates to various studies. For example, Urbanski and ul Haque (2020) explored the effects of greenwashing on consumer behavior. Another study concluded that environmental awareness influences green purchase intention (Li et al., 2020). In the concept of Tursynbayeva et al. (2020), they showed that the formation of environmental awareness is dependent on the role of media and public policy. In addition, Guller et al. (2020) indicated in their study that their student respondents were aware of different environmental problems (like pollution).

On the other hand, environmental consciousness moderates Schwartz's bipolar dimensions and attitude (Ahmad et al., 2020). Furthermore, a research article found that university students who participated in the self-administered questionnaire have a high environmental awareness, concern, and behavior (Arshad et al., 2021). Lalhmangaihzuali and Zohmingliani (2021) also observed the same result: they found a high environmental awareness among their student respondents. From a different perspective, Bakan et al. (2020) concluded in their study that university students had positive attitudes toward environmental problems.

In the region of Southeast Asia, some studies focus on environmental consciousness as well. A study from Thailand by Janmaimool and Chudech (2020) showed the effect of domestic and global ecological events on university students' environmental concerns and responsibilities. In Indonesia, Mkumbachi et al. (2020) showed that most respondents possessed high environmental awareness and environment-friendly behavior in their study. In the article of Nurwido et al. (2020), they showed that Indonesian students' grades and type of school significantly affect their level of environmental literacy. Other research by Nilan (2020) explored the different perspectives of Muslim youth environmentalists in Indonesia. A Malaysian university promotes student empowerment through student organizations, which is crucial for environmental awareness and safety (Hishan et al., 2020). From Vietnam and the Philippines, Nam-Nguyen et al. (2021) documented those online platforms helped students raise their environmental knowledge consciousness. Based on these different findings, environmental consciousness is prevalent in this literature, which helps to promote sustenance and continuity for the next generation.

From the national and local perspectives, studies that pertain to and focus on students' environmental consciousness include a study by Marpa (2020), where the author corroborated the integration of environmental education into some subjects like sciences, social studies, and values education. On the other hand, Hornejas (2021) revealed that student-respondents in his study have a high degree of environmental attitude toward environmental awareness, recovery, recycling, and environmental behavior. Instilling environmental consciousness in students through an outdoor activity like an environmental jamboree helps, as reflected in the study of Tulin et al. (2020). In the study of Altarez et al. (2020), students' knowledge and attitudes toward the environment were outstanding and robust. In a study at a state university in the Philippines, the author revealed that students' awareness of

climate change and environmental attitudes was high (Magulod, 2018). Furthermore, Panganiban-Lualhati (2017) discussed that students from a teacher education institution were least competent in the ecological foundation. However, respondents were competent in conceptual awareness, investigation, and evaluation of environmental action skills.

Based on the following reviewed research, studies, and articles, shows varying ideas and perspectives. Thus, this implored the researcher to do this research. This article benefits everyone, like students, teachers, the institution, the community, policy-makers, and other stakeholders interested in environmental concepts and topics.

This study's initial objective is to analyze students' environmental consciousness during the COVID-19 pandemic from a local tertiary educational institution in Central Luzon, Philippines. It also assessed the statistical differences in the students' responses when grouped according to their demographic profiles. This study is another essential reference for future studies and researches in this field, especially in environmental science education.

Methods

Research Design

This research used a descriptive design study. It used an online survey (through Google form) as the primary data gathering tool for the analysis. A descriptive design intends to explain or depict specific characteristics or phenomena of a given group or sample in a population. This study intends to describe a population's particular feature (s) regarding environmental consciousness among students; therefore, a descriptive study suits this current endeavor.

Respondents

The study's respondents include 192 students from a local city college who voluntarily participated in the online survey the researcher gave (see Table 1 for the frequency and percentage distribution). The data gathering commenced during the first semester of the academic year 2020-2021. The inclusion criteria for the respondents include a bona fide student enrolled in the institution during the COVID-19 pandemic, who has internet and gadgets available for learning, and who can answer the online survey. The exclusion criteria include the unavailable internet in their home and devices for answering the online survey and, at the same time, other students from other schools. The study garnered the available samples using a convenience sampling technique. Gathering the necessary number was difficult due to the restrictions and localized lockdowns mandated by the government.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
College		
College of Allied Health Studies (CAHS)	65	34
College of Business and Accountancy (CBA)	15	8
College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS)	112	58
Course		
Bachelor of Science in Midwifery (BSM)	22	12
Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)	43	22
Bachelor in Secondary Education (BSEd)	112	58
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA)	15	8
Year		
Second Year	60	31
Third Year	92	48
Fourth Year	40	21
Age		
18-21 years old	134	70
22-25 years old	28	15
26-29 years old	8	4
30 years old above	22	11
Sex		
Male	41	21
Female	151	79
Civil Status		
Single	168	87
In a Relationship	7	4
Married	13	7
Prefer not to say	4	2
Grade Point Average		
90-94%	52	27
85-89%	67	35
80-84%	26	14
Prefer not to say	47	24
Total	**192**	**100**

As seen from table 1, more student-respondents belong to the College of Education, Arts, and Sciences (CEAS) followed by the College of Allied Health Studies (CAHS) and the College of Business and Accountancy (CBA). The study observed the same in the course where the Bachelor in Secondary Education (BSEd) garnered the highest number of respondents followed by the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Bachelor of Science in Midwifery (BSM) and lastly, the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA). In terms of years in college, the 3rd year students garnered the most number followed by the 2nd year and lastly the 4th year students. Seven out of ten respondents were at least between 18-21 years old followed by age 22-25, and 30 years old and above and finally 26-29 years old came with the least number of respondents. Almost eight out of ten were female and the

remaining were males. Most of the respondents were single, followed by married students, then those in a relationship status and finally, those that prefer not to state their civility. Finally, there were more students with a grade point average (GPA) between 85-89% as compared to 90-94%, 80-84% and those who prefer not to say.

Instrument

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher adopted and modified the instrument from the survey of Eren and Yakub (2015). The research instrument has the following parts/ contents: demographic profile of the students (7 items), conscious consumption (5 items), waste and recycling (9 items), and energy-saving (3 items). The instrument underwent a validity test from a panel of experts, and the researcher considered their suggestions and comments. It also experienced a Cronbach alpha reliability test to assess its credibility further. It yielded an overall coefficient of .83, which is better than the benchmark score of .70. This result means that the instrument is highly reliable. After obtaining a good result from the reliability test, the researcher immediately commenced data gathering for the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before the data gathering, the researcher sought permission to conduct a study from the institution's Research Development and Community Extension Services office. After the approval, the researcher sought permission from the different colleges' deans to distribute or send the online survey to the students to finally gather the data needed for the study. The researcher provided a statement of consent and data privacy rule in the online survey. If they understood the statements in the consent and data privacy policy/ statement, they must check the "yes" option, and the respondent accesses the whole survey. Of course, if the respondents feel they want to withdraw, they can do so without being harmed since answering the survey is voluntary. It took the researcher four weeks to gather the needed data for the study and immediately began tabulating, encoding, and finally subjecting the gathered data to descriptive and inferential statistics.

Statistical Analysis

Based on the study's objectives, the data analyst subjected the data to the following statistical treatments: frequency and percentage for the demographic characteristics, weighted mean for the responses, t-test, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the conflicts in the reactions of the students. All of the reactions of the students are according to a 5-point Likert scale (1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5 Every time).

Results

The objective of this study is to determine the environmental consciousness of students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation consists of four tables, the first three present descriptive statistics using the weighted mean. Then the *last* table involves the summary of inferential statistics, which comprise the results of computations from the t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The

researcher interpreted each table and provided a comprehensive discussion based on the results. The following tables present the results of this study.

Table 2. Conscious Consumption Responses of the Students

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
During the COVID-19 pandemic…		
1)I reuse the paper of lecture notes.	3.99	Often
2) I take print on both sides of a paper.	3.51	Often
3) I did check the preview of the document on the computer before printing.	4.43	Often
4) I often sent e-mail instead of hard copy output	3.73	Often
5) I prefer to read the document on the computer instead of taking its print on paper.	3.14	Sometimes
Average Weighted Mean	**3.76**	**Often**

Legend: 1.00-1.49= Never; 1.50-2.49= Rarely; 2.50-3.49= Sometimes; 3.50-4.49= Often; 4.50-5.00= Every time

Table 2 shows the weighted mean on the responses of the students in terms of conscious consumption. As seen, statement 3, "I did check the preview of the document on the computer before printing" got the highest weighted mean score of 4.43. This result corresponds to a Likert scale interpretation of "often." For statement 1, "I reuse the paper of lecture notes," it obtained the second highest weighted mean score of 3.99 which translates to "often" in the Likert scale. Coming in at third place is statement 4, "I often sent e-mail instead of hard copy output" yield a weighted mean of 3.73 which is good enough for an interpretation of "often" as well. Then coming in at fourth place, is statement 2, "I take print on both sides of a paper" which generated a weighted mean score of 3.51 interpreted as "often" in the Likert scale also. On the other hand, statement 5 produced the lowest mean score with 3.14, which equates to "sometimes" in the Likert interpretation. The average weighted mean was 3.76 that matches "often" in the Likert scale interpretation as well. This result shows that students observe and practice specific conservation measures before their school activities or class requirements. It is also important to note however that not all student-respondents were capable of going to internet shops or own gadgets like a smartphone or laptops to help them aid in their study. Therefore, they innovate and find ways to keep track of their online requirements and lessons.

Table 3. Waste and Recycling Responses of the Students

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
During the COVID-19 pandemic…		
1) I throw the used batteries in waste collection boxes.	3.44	Often
2) I use rechargeable batteries instead of disposable batteries.	3.86	Often
3) I prefer to use long-lasting products for a sustainable environment instead of disposable ones.	4.38	Often
4) I avoid using plastic bags or packages.	3.50	Often
5) I use quickly soluble bags rather than plastic bags.	3.61	Often
6) I pay attention to water consumption when using the sink and toilet.	4.39	Often
7) I try to protect the environment by using the least number of paper towels.	3.99	Often
8) I throw the garbage into dustbins before leaving the place and not leaving any trash around.	4.54	Every time
9) I throw the plastic, metal, and paper to separate recycling boxes or bins.	4.18	Often
Average Weighted Mean	**3.99**	**Often**

Legend: 1.00-1.49= Never; 1.50-2.49= Rarely; 2.50-3.49= Sometimes; 3.50-4.49= Often; 4.50-5.00= Every time

Table 3 presents the weighted mean on the responses of the students in terms of waste and recycling. As observed, it was statement 8, "I throw the garbage into dustbins before leaving the place and not leaving any trash around" that recorded the highest weighted mean of 4.54, which translates to "every time in the Likert interpretation. Then, statement 6, "I pay attention to water consumption when using the sink and toilet" yielded a weighted mean score of 4.39 which translates to "often". This result came before statement 3, "I prefer to use long-lasting products for a sustainable environment instead of disposable ones" obtained a weighted mean score of 4.38 which corresponds to a Likert interpretation of "often" as well. Statement 9, "I throw the plastic, metal, and paper to separate recycling boxes or bins produced a weighted score of 4.18 which resembles an interpretation of "often". In the meantime, statement 7, "I try to protect the environment by using the least number of paper towels" garnered a weighted mean of 3.99 which translates to "often" as well. Closely following is statement 2, "I use rechargeable batteries instead of disposable batteries yielded a weighted mean of 3.86 which is equivalent to "often in the Likert scale. Then, statement 5, "I use quickly soluble bags rather than plastic bags" obtained a weighted mean score of 3.61 which equates to "often" in the Likert scale. Statement 4, "I avoid using plastic bags or packages" obtained a weighted mean of 3.50 which corresponds to "often" as well in the interpretation. Moreover, statement 1 yielded the lowest weighted mean score of 3.44. This score corresponds to "often" in the Likert scale interpretation. Overall, the average weighted mean was 3.99. This is result equates to "often" in the Likert scale as well. This result only shows that the student-respondents are so familiar and very much into waste and recycling that they habitually practice such acts. From the very beginning, in their homes, students practice waste and recycling from their parents or guardians. If the household is full of clutter, the student is the same. It has a psychological impact since the student observes this trend every day.

However, this study showed a different perspective thus it is safe to say that the homes of these students are neat and tidy to some extent.

Table 4. Energy Saving Responses of the Students

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
During the COVID-19 pandemic…		
1) I use light and electric Devices only when it needs to prevent unnecessary use of energy.	4.32	Often
2) I keep my computer and printer off when I am not using them to save energy.	4.63	Every time
3) When I am leaving a room/place, I check if there is anyone to close the lights.	4.80	Every time
Average Weighted Mean	**4.58**	**Every time**

Legend: 1.00-1.49= Never; 1.50-2.49= Rarely; 2.50-3.49= Sometimes; 3.50-4.49= Often; 4.50-5.00= Every time

Table 4 depicts the students' weighted mean responses regarding energy saving. As gleaned from the table, statement 3, "When I am leaving a room/place, I check if there is anyone to close the lights," garnered the highest weighted mean score of 4.80, corresponding to "every time" in the Likert scale. Next is statement 2, "I keep my computer and printer off when I am not using them to save energy," which yielded a weighted mean of 4.63, equating to "every time" in the Likert scale interpretation. However, statement 1, "I use light and electric devices only when it needs to prevent unnecessary use of energy," yielded a weighted mean score of 4.32, the lowest. To sum up, the average weighted mean was 4.58. This result also agrees with "every time" in the Likert scale interpretation. This result shows that students are familiar with and practice energy-saving ideas at school or home. Saving energy as much as possible is important in schools and at home. The cost is unbearable and costly. Therefore, appropriate actions mandate saving energy to lessen the burden and maximize its use. In the study, students are cautious and employ necessary actions to comply with these energy-saving regulations at home and school.

Table 5. Variances in the Students' Environmental Consciousness Responses

Variables	Conscious Consumption	Waste and Recycling	Energy Saving
College	$F(2, 189) = 2.147$	$F(2, 189) = .346$	$F(2,189) = .317$
Course	$F(3, 188) = 1.517$	$F(3, 188) = .310$	$F(3,188) = 2.028$
Year in College	$F(2, 189) = .100$	$F(2, 189) = .143$	$F(2, 189) = 1.000$
Age	$F(3, 188) = .439$	$F(3, 188) = .008$	$F(3, 188) = 2.666^*$
Sex	$t(190) = .427$	$t(190) = -1.294$	$t(190) = -1.530$
Civil Status	$F(3, 188) = 1.308$	$F(3, 188) = .365$	$F(3, 188) = 2.663^*$
GPA	$F(3, 188) = 4.362^*$	$F(3, 188) = 1.185$	$F(3, 188) = 1.857$

$^*p < .05$

Table 5 displays the significant differences in the students' responses for environmental consciousness as to their demographic profiles. As perceived from the table, in terms of college, there were no significant differences in the responses of the students for the conscious consumption, since $F(2,$

189)= 2.147, $p > .05$; waste and recycling since $F(2, 189)= .346$, $p > .05$; and energy-saving, since $F(2,189)= .317$, $p > .05$. All of their probability values are greater than the .05 alpha significance level, thus the study accepts the null hypothesis of the study. For the course, there were also no significant differences observed for conscious consumption since the $F(3, 188)= 1.517$, $p > .05$; the same result for waste and recycling since the $F(3, 188)= .310$, $p > .05$; and for energy saving as well since the $F(3,188)= 2.028$, $p > .05$. For the years in college, the study also observed no significant differences in the conscious consumption since the $F(2, 189)= .100$, $p > 05$; as well as for waste and recycling since the $F(2, 189)= .143$, $p > .05$; and for energy saving since $F(2, 189)= 1.000$, $p > .05$. It is therefore safe to assume that the null hypothesis of the study is hereby accepted. In the case of age of the respondents, the study obtained a significant difference in the responses of the students for energy saving since the $F(3, 188)= 2.666$, $p < .05$. This result means that age brackets have different perspectives in terms of energy saving ideas. Thus, the null hypothesis of this study is rejected since the probability value of the said variable is lower than the alpha significance level of .05. However, there were no significant differences observed in the conscious consumption since the $F(3, 188)= .439$, $p > .05$; and waste and recycling since the $F(3, 188)= .008$, $p > .05$. The null hypothesis is hereby accepted for the study. For the case of sex of the respondents, there were also no significant variations among the students' responses for conscious consumption since the $t(190)= .427$, $p > .05$; for waste and recycling since $t(190)= -1.294$, $p > .05$; and energy-saving since $t(190)= -1.530$, $p > .05$. In civil status of the students, there was a significant difference in the respondents' responses in energy-saving since the $F(3, 188)= 2.663$, $p < .05$. The probability value obtained is lower than the alpha significance level of .05. This result means that the civil status of students has substantial differences in the energy-saving ideas. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. On the other hand, for conscious consumption and waste and recycling did not yield significant differences since the study obtained $F(3, 188)= 1.308$, $p >. 05$ and $F(3, 188)= .365$, $p > .05$, respectively. Finally, for the grade point average (GPA) of the students, conscious consumption produced $F(3, 188)= 4.362$, $p < .05$. The obtained probability value is again lower than the .05 alpha significance level. This result means that there is a significant difference in the responses of the students and hereby rejects the null hypothesis of this study. This value also means that academic performance affects students' ideas for their educational consumption in school and at home. But waste and recycling garnered $F(3, 188)= 1.185$, $p > .05$ and energy-saving, $F(3, 188)= 1.857$, $p > .05$, where both probability values were higher than the alpha significance level of .05. Thus, the null hypothesis of the study is hereby accepted.

Discussion

The initial objective of this study is to analyze students' environmental consciousness during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study found some interesting results that may contribute to the growing references regarding COVID-19 and its impact on students, the institution, and, more importantly, the environment. Based on the results of this study, researchers, academicians, school administrators, policy-makers, environmentalists, and other stakeholders can use it for any reason that can contribute to the environmental consciousness of everyone.

For a more comprehensive argument, in students' conscious consumption, one can deduce that students are very particular in handling their school requirements. If one has a PDF file available, it is much more practical than printing it. This idea will, of course, incur some expenses, and printing is never free. It is equally necessary to note that some students prefer reading their school materials on the computer rather than printing it out. This practice is, again, a waste of money and resources. Students must maximize their resources due to the scarcity of supplies like printing papers, ink, electricity, and, more importantly, money. The results of the study by Naz et al. (2020) concluded that students have sufficient knowledge of environmental problems and are willing to contribute to environmentally friendly products. The literature cited compliments the result of the current study somehow. Another article from Pujiati et al. (2020) stated that students in their study have very good environmental literacy and show good green consumption behavior at the same time. In addition, Saari et al. (2021) highlighted that sustainable consumption behavior is associated with environmental concerns.

For the context of waste and recycling consciousness of students, the study obtained a pretty remarkable result. All students were practicing waste and recycling in varied aspects of their daily routines. Although this should be different since they are already old enough, proper values and education are essential for such outstanding conduct. Laws, ordinances, and other policies in organizations and institutions govern the behavior of students and other individuals. The young and the old comply with the mandates. In a related study by Zambrano-Monserrate et al. (2020), increased waste and reduced recycling are adverse side effects of COVID-19. Changes in the composition of waste generated during the pandemic posed challenges (Sharma et al., 2020). In the survey of Efremenko et al. (2020), the researchers stated that environmental education helps form human attitudes, a system of environmental knowledge, and ideas towards nature. In a local study, Lalmonan and Comighud (2020) reported that students know solid waste management practices.

Regarding energy saving, the student-respondents again displayed unusual behavior in observing energy-saving ideas. In the country, it is normal to experience occasional blackouts or power interruptions from time to time. This occurrence hampers the consumers as well as their bills. These inconveniences brought about by scarcity of energy probably are the reason behind such behavior of the respondents. Thus, students have this notion already to, as much as possible, conserve as much energy as they can. Regardless of whether they are in school or at home, they have to be practical and economical. A related study by Guller et al. (2020) mentioned that energy management among their respondents needed to be more detailed and understood. A study found that renewable energy consumption stimulates environmental quality (Zafar et al., 2020). In addition, Jiang et al. (2021) divulged that energy demand and consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic were substantial. However, Strielkowski et al. (2021) detailed that electrical consumption and prices declined and will likely continue for the next year.

Finally, for the statistical inferences on the different environmental variables, one can observe that there were almost no differences in the students' responses regardless of their groupings. To support

this notion, a study by Lalhmangaihzuali and Zohmingliani (2021) also revealed no significant differences in the reactions of their student respondents concerning their environmental awareness. A different idea from the article of Rousseau and Deschacht (2020) exposed that awareness of environmental topics remains unaffected. From local research, Altarez et al. (2020) demonstrated that environmental knowledge is not influenced by gender. However, there were still some ideas and notions that yielded varied answers. For example, in energy-saving, one cannot help but think about why age and civil status generated such differences in the responses. As we age, energy use should be efficient and economical. The same is true for civil status; energy consumption is affected if one has a life partner. For conscious consumption, students' grade point average (GPA) also affects their opinion. Those with higher GPAs have a better understanding of consumption than those with lower ones. Yusliza et al. (2020) showed that consumer respondents' environmental consciousness influences pro-environmental behavior in a related study.

Conclusion

Based on this study's investigation, the researcher concludes that, in general, students are still environmentally conscious even though the COVID-19 pandemic is ravaging the whole town. Descriptive analysis showed that students practice high conduct in conscious consumption, waste and recycling, and, more importantly, energy saving. The COVID-19 pandemic might have triggered such consciousness. Since movement restrictions, local and national governments implemented safety measures, precautions, and appropriate protocols for the student respondents and worldwide. The impact of COVID-19 is immense, especially in education. However, it was worth noting that students still remembered their fundamental values.

However, this study also has its limitations:

1. The sample, since the study did not meet the necessary number due to difficulty in data gathering. A more realistic strategy or technique in sampling, like probability sampling, the researcher suggests adhering to this technique for a more reliable number of samples.
2. Since the researcher only did this study in one institution, future researchers can do this study in several other institutions in the metro or from neighboring colleges and universities outside the city.
3. The statistical analyst can use a higher form of statistical analysis in the future since data-gathering techniques will improve.
4. Future researchers can also improve the study design since this study used a non-experimental.

Future studies can also use other forms of research like experimental type. Lastly, regarding the variables involved, future researchers can add more variables to study other pertinent and related aspects about environmental consciousness. For example, researchers can add the degree of compliance and implementation, efficacy, and self-involvement.

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