

Towards Developing a Pedagogy for Inclusive Environmental Citizenship Education

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Summary of Research

As the global environmental crisis deepens, higher educational institutions are challenged to educate and prepare graduates for uncertain futures. Although university administrators and faculty increasingly recognize the value of multi-disciplinary and integrative approaches for new curricula, the pedagogical support for these efforts remains underdeveloped in higher education. While the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have helped to focus climate action efforts globally, development and measurement of educational interventions that encourage societal changes are urgently needed. The vision that empowering people to become active environmental citizens through education is, therefore, vital for creating sustainable and equitable societies.

As part of environmental citizenship education at an international university in Japan, the authors of this research, intend to create and develop a relevant and focused pedagogical framework for catalyzing inclusive environmental citizenship in higher education. The research is aimed specifically at developing inclusive pedagogical practices. The relevant research was reviewed by the research team in the first phase of the project (Mahichi et al., 2021). The review identified common ground among the different pedagogical approaches employed in environmental citizenship education, inclusive leadership studies and sustainability research. The review highlighted gaps, that require additional theoretical and practical clarification to develop an integrated and inclusive pedagogy for environmental citizenship education to link universities with local and international stakeholders. The review also indicated a lack of relevant, English-based research literature in the Japanese context.

For the proposed study, the authors outlined the needed pedagogical development by performing a learning needs and expectations analysis. By using relevant measurement tools and conducting a semi-formal learner analysis, the new research will systematically collect insights from learner backgrounds, learning attitudes and needs, expectations regarding environmental studies, cultural intelligence (CQ) and measures for inclusivity. Specifically, the Environmental Citizenship Questionnaire (ECQ) (Hadjichambis & Hadjichambi, 2020), Cultural Intelligence (SFCQ) (Thomas et al., 2015) will be employed to assess their potential application in higher education in the diverse cultural setting of APU.

The team will develop a preliminary framework to underpin the development of an appropriate pedagogy for inclusive environmental citizenship education in our research setting. The expected results of the research will be used to educate students to become future, inclusive leaders with a global mindset which will equip them

with the knowledge and skills to address environmental issues at local, national, and global levels for building inclusive, equitable, sustainable societies.