Attitudes and Perspectives Towards Composting, Recycling, and Environmental Education of NNMC Students Spring 2019

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Abstract
Climate change is an issue we need to address not only for the survival of human-kind but for the prosperity of all life. I chose to research attitudes towards recycling and composting as well as the effects of environmental education and having curbside pickup programs in our communities in relation to increased participation with recycling and composting. The literature shows this cause-and-effect relationship: people are more likely to participate in recycling and composting if eco-friendly programs and facilities are more easily accessible and if people are more educated about the effects of climate change, and how recycling and composting makes a difference in combating it.

Introduction
Climate change is a world-wide problem that affects each-and-every one-of-us and is why we should all participate to address and fix these issues before it is too late. It is our responsibility to find solutions to these issues within our communities and part of this is making composting and recycling a solid foundation within our communities.

Theory
Increased recycling, regenerative farming, and environmental education through support of community will help reverse the effects of climate change.

Hypothesis
Increasing accessibility to recycling in curbside pickup programs as well as greater education about climate change will increase the participation in recycling and composting. The null hypothesis would be there is no relation to increased participation and education of climate change and curbside pickup programs.

Data Collection and Methods
Out of the entire population of students at Northern New Mexico College (NNMC), I obtained data from 18 students from a psychology 101 class to give a general look into the attitudes and perspectives of NNMC students towards recycling, composting, farming, and environmental education. I wished to conduct random sampling because it is the most ethical and unbiased form of research data collection, however, because I was running out of time and there were not enough students in the class I chose through random sampling I chose the psychology 101 class through convenience sampling. I gave each student in this Psychology 101 class completed a 16 question survey with approval from their teacher.

Data Analysis and Findings
The dependent variable in this research data collection was the survey taken by the 18 students selected. I asked them how well they feel they are educated about environmental issues. I also asked them how often do they recycle and what are the reasons if they do not and how great the importance of recycling, composting, organic farming, and renewable energy in their community.

The independent variables were the student's age and different perspectives and attitudes towards the questions being asked in the survey. The data I collected from the survey is both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative data that I collected were the number of students and their ages and how often or how much they recycled, composted, or were educated about environmental issues. 55.56% of students were between the ages of 13-21. The qualitative data were the comments students left about why they do or do not recycle or compost and what would help them recycle or compost more.

Discussion
My interpretation of the data I collected from these surveys is that the majority of students feel like education on composting, recycling, local organic farming, environmental issues, and renewable energy is very important and that they also feel like they do not have the enough resources from their community in education and support to incorporate recycling and composting into their lives in an easy and practical way. I believe this is because we need more hands-on environmental education and community support. Renewable energy, organic farming, education on climate change, and recycling and composting pickup programs are crucial parts of the solutions we need to combat the effects of climate change in order to direct a more conscious awareness to the impact we have on our environment and our ability to live healthy and sustainable lives.

Conclusions
The implications of my findings were limitation in my data from needing more students in my sample so that I could collect more accurate data and form a better analysis of the generalized whole population of students at NNMC. I do not believe I have enough data to support or reject the null hypothesis in this research experiment. Continuing in future research, I would simplify and shorten the survey and collect data from a larger sample and conduct pretest-posttest to view a change in attitudes and perspectives from students.

References

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