

Environmental Literacy and Practice of Environmental Sustainability among Secondary School
Students in Busia District, Uganda

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Declaration

I, Eustance Wandera, hereby certify that this dissertation is a result of my original research work and has not, to the best of my knowledge, been presented for an award of a Master's degree in any other university. I submit it without any reservations.

Signature..... Date.....

Approval

The research work culminating into this dissertation was conducted under our guidance and supervision.

First Supervisor

Signature..... Date.....

Dr. Edward Andama

Second Supervisor

Signature..... Date.....

Dr. Dennis Zami Atibuni

Dedication

I dedicate this research dissertation to my parents: Mr. Godfrey Owori and Ms. Gertrude Anyango, to my wife: Ms. Jackline Esther Nekesa and my children: Desire Tumwebaze and Einstein Wandera. I am greatly indebted to them for the immense psycho-social, moral, spiritual and financial support during my academic endeavors. May the Almighty God reward them abundantly.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of environmental literacy (EL) on the practice of environmental sustainability (ES) among secondary school students in Busia District. Using a parallel convergent mixed methods and cross-sectional survey design, 452 students in 12 secondary schools were selected using proportionate stratified random sampling to collect quantitative data while simple random sampling and purposive sampling were used to select student and teacher participants respectively to engage in Focus Group discussions (FGD) to collect qualitative data. Of the 452 student participants, 409 submitted completed the EL survey and questionnaire on practice of ES (*validity = .900, reliability = .788*). The EL survey considered the dimensions of environmental knowledge, attitude towards the environment and the behavior in the environment. The results revealed a functional level of EL and a moderate level of practice of ES. Environmental knowledge had weak positive relationship with the practice of ES ($r = .219, p < .01$), attitudes towards the environment also had a weak positive relationship with the practice of ES ($r = .345, p < .01$) but the behavior in the environment had a moderate positive relationship with the practice of ES ($r = .423, p < .01$). There was a moderate positive relationship between EL and ES ($r = .446, p < .01$). These results show that the secondary school curriculum is making the learners to achieve more in environmental knowledge dimension of EL than in the development of positive attitudes towards the environment and pro-environmental behavior leading to a moderate level of practice of ES. I recommend that balanced learning experiences in the school curriculum on the environmental knowledge, attitudes towards the environment as well as the behavior in the environment be given attention by the school management and curriculum planners so as to improve the practice of ES as opposed to emphasizing environmental knowledge for the purpose of students passing examinations.