

Correlation Analysis of Social Status on Conservation Awareness in Sekaran, Semarang City

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ABSTRACT

This study, situated within the realm of humanities, education, law, and social sciences (HESS), explores the connection between social status and conservation awareness. It stems from the growing concern over global warming, as evidenced by the Earth's 0.89-degree Celsius temperature increase in 2022 compared to the 1951–1980 period. While global environmental challenges are well-documented, this study narrows its focus to explore the dynamics of conservation awareness within a specific community. The chosen locale for this research is Sekaran, a community within Gunungpati, Semarang City, closely connected with the University of Semarang (UNNES). The research combines qualitative methods with basic statistical analysis, employing questionnaires and interviews to collect data. Preliminary findings reveal that social status influences conservation awareness but in a nuanced manner. Contrary to expectations, high social status individuals don't consistently exhibit high conservation awareness, and conversely, those with lower social status aren't necessarily less conservation-conscious. These distinctions are observable in their daily behaviors. This study's novelty lies in its approach, delving into environmental issues from a social standpoint within a specific community. By concentrating on UNNES and the surrounding Sekaran community, it bridges the gap between global concerns and local perceptions and actions regarding environmental conservation. The results provide valuable insights into the intricate interplay between social status and conservation awareness, offering a deeper understanding of this vital topic.

Keywords: conservation, environment, social status, questionnaire, interview.

INTRODUCTION

The natural environment is an essential part of the life of living things. The natural environment consists of various interrelated elements, such as plants, animals, air, water, soil, and solar energy. The interactions between these elements form a complex ecosystem, that enables living things to survive and thrive. Each living thing has its own role in an ecosystem relationship. This applies to humans who are involved directly or indirectly in this interaction. (Nathaniel et al, 2021).

Human involvement in the interaction of the natural environment has become increasingly complex with the creation of technology from reason and knowledge to make their lives easier. It has yielded both positive and negative consequences. Industrialization, fueled by fossil fuel usage in industry, transportation, and development, has resulted in significant waste and pollution (Khan et al., 2020; Sarkodie, 2020). Additionally, activities like deforestation, excavation, and poaching have led to habitat loss and ecosystem degradation. In the last few decades, the issue of environmental sustainability has become a pressing concern, exacerbated by climate change and global warming. The NOAA study forecasted a 0.89-degree Celsius increase in Earth's average temperature in 2022 compared to 1951-1980, with visible effects such as rising sea levels and extreme weather patterns. To address

this crisis, conservation efforts have emerged, seeking to repair the damage inflicted on the natural environment through human activities (Sulkan, 2020; Wardhana et al., 2022; Lestari & Pradana, 2022).

Conservation is a rational response and act that humanity has created aiming to safeguard and restore the environment. It focuses on preserving natural resources and ecosystems, ensuring their sustainability for future generations (Yudiyanto et al., 2020). It also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) established by the United Nations in 2015, which seek to achieve prosperity for both humans and the environment without compromising future needs (Lamba et al, 2019). This helps prevent climate change and reduce poverty and hunger through sustainable economic development (Menton et al, 2020).

Achieving conservation goals necessitates collective action, involving governments, organizations, and individuals (Ardoin, 2020). In an individual context, small initiatives carried out by humans in everyday life can influence conservation efforts. Therefore, awareness of the importance of self-conservation is something that every human being must have. This awareness is influenced by the human condition itself where humans are involved in the social life they have (Kim et al., 2023).

As social beings, humans have interrelated relationships with other humans. This link can be in the

form of social status or condition that is owned by every human being in their environment. The social status of each human being can be in the form of work, education, income, living environment, and so on. This social status can affect one's views and behavior towards the surrounding natural environment. This is what makes conservation awareness influenced by social status owned by humans (Vesely et al, 2020).

The social status of the people in the research area also varies so that there are differences in the conservation efforts of each human being in it. Sekaran is one of the areas in the city of Semarang which is one of the goals in education. Having a university in it makes Sekaran a settlement that has a fairly dense population and is dominated by immigrants from various regions with various characters and habits. This gradually creates social status in a social system. The social status in this society is divided into several groups according to the criteria formed in the community.

Universitas Negeri Semarang (UNNES) is a state university located in Sekaran, Gunungpati, Semarang. This university has a pillar of conservation as one of the efforts to increase awareness of conservation and environmental preservation for its territory. With the existence of a conservation policy implemented by this agency, it is certainly a very interesting thing to study. Does the conservation policy that is present and used as a foothold in the life of the campus community also affect the environment around it? The existing environmental condition is a question mark whether conservation awareness emerges and is the influence of the existing pillars applied to one of the universities in Indonesia.

Sekaran itself is an area with beautiful natural conditions. However, is this an impact of the existence of conservation efforts owned by UNNES or is it a personal awareness of each community? This is a very interesting matter to discuss with the many differences in society with many. In addition to the various social statuses in it, this is also supported by the presence of immigrants such as students and workers who also add to the diversity of social status in the region. In addition, the assumption related to the higher social status, the higher public awareness of the environment becomes a big question in this research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The attitudes of individuals and society always have a significant influence on every aspect of life, as exemplified by research conducted by Nirwana Br. in 2022. In their study titled "The Effect of Concern on Environmental Attitudes and Willingness to Pay," Bangun and Jenda Ingan Mahuli investigate whether people consider the consequences of their actions before deciding to engage in certain behaviors. The theory of planned behavior explains that attitudes toward behavior are a crucial factor in predicting actions. However, a person's attitude must be considered in testing subjective standards and measuring their ability to control their perceived behavior.

Since environmental issues have become a hot topic in recent times, various environmental problems have

arisen within society, indicating an imbalance in the relationship between humans and the environment. Environmental crises serve as a warning about the importance of maintaining and preserving the environment. In the research titled "Human Activity and Conservation Awareness between Community Use Zone (CUZ) Areas of Kinabalu Park and Crocker Range Park, Sabah," conducted by Andy R. Mojiol, Maureen J. Tapuang, and Razak Wahab, it is explained that the local community's perception of awareness demonstrates their agreement on the importance of environmental conservation. However, they also express disagreement with National Park regulations that prohibit them from occupying forests for cultivation and settlement (Mojiol et al., 2021). The research focuses on Kinabalu Park and Crocker Range Park (CRP), both of which are surrounded by human settlements in all directions.

Awareness of the environment may not be inherent in all societies. Nowadays, it often appears as though humans are seen as enemies and threats to the environment. This aligns with the findings of Qian et al. (2022) in their research titled "Assessing the Effectiveness of Initiatives to Increase Public Awareness of the Hainan gibbon *Nomascus hainanus*," which explains that many people still lack awareness about conservation, despite efforts to raise awareness. However, there are other activities that can promote conservation awareness and concern for the environment, such as within the school environment. Although the similar positive correlation observed with education levels may indirectly suggest effective targeted awareness campaigns in schools, these results overall underscore the importance of raising awareness. The lack of public awareness about the environment can lead to significant damage and destruction in the environment where humans live.

In addressing this issue, it is crucial to foster awareness and encourage involvement from all segments of the public to protect and preserve nature. This necessity is highlighted in the research conducted by Theresa Chinyere Ogbuanya and Nuhu Iliya Nungse at the University of Nigeria, titled "Effectiveness of Energy Conservation Awareness Packages on the Energy Conservation Behavior of Off-Campus Students at Nigerian Universities," which was conducted in 2021. The findings of this study suggest that the Energy Conservation Awareness Packages (ECAP) increase the likelihood of off-campus students engaging in energy conservation behaviors in the future. The average difference for off-campus students exposed to ECAP is 27.97, significantly greater than the 0.54 average difference observed for those who were not exposed to the therapy (Ogbuanya & Nungse, 2021).

Awareness does not naturally exist in human life; it is influenced by various motivating factors within society towards the environment. One aspect influencing public awareness of the environment is social status. This correlation was also emphasized in previous research conducted by Ayu Rahmadani Utama and Dewi Zaini Putri in 2020, titled "The Influence of Socio-Economic Factors on Community Behavior in Rural Waste Management in

West Sumatra Province” (Economic and Development Studies et al., 2020). The findings of this research reveal several significant factors: First, gender plays a role in household waste processing in rural West Sumatra, where men are more dominant in waste management compared to women. Second, higher education influences a person's environmental concerns, particularly in waste management. Third, as individuals grow older, their awareness of waste management tends to increase. Fourth, income has an insignificant negative effect on waste management opportunities in rural West Sumatra Province, suggesting that higher income does not necessarily affect waste management opportunities. These findings illustrate how various factors in life can influence human awareness of the environment.

In the research conducted by Sarimah Suriانشah in 2021, titled “Environmental Awareness and Green Product Consumption Behavior: A Case Study of Sabah State, Malaysia,” the concern over severe weather changes has become a separate worry. This research demonstrates that the people of Sabah exhibit a high level of environmental awareness and, in particular, tend to consume environmentally friendly products. This research highlights that the public, when consuming environmentally friendly products, possesses a high level of environmental awareness.

Based on previous research, it can be asserted that social status can influence the level of conservation awareness. People often believe that an individual's social status within society determines their behavior in various aspects. This notion is reinforced by research conducted by Novi Nurjanah, Sulidar Fitri, and Karien Febriana in their study titled “The Relationship of Social Economic Status and Motivation for Healthy Living with Environmental Cleaning Behavior (A Study of Housewives in RW 05, Setiaratu Village, Cibeureum District, Tasikmalaya City).” This quantitative research yielded three key findings regarding the relationship between social status and various factors: First, there is a strong correlation between a family's socio-economic status and environmental cleanliness. Second, a strong correlation exists between motivation to lead a healthy life and the behavior of maintaining environmental cleanliness. Third, there is a strong relationship between socio-economic status and motivation for healthy living combined with environmentally conscious behavior. The study also highlights that higher family socio-economic status, influenced by factors such as education, employment, and economic conditions, tends to result in better behavior related to healthy and clean living (Sastrawati, 2020).

Several previous studies can serve as references for selecting the right research location and for analyzing the influence of social status on conservation awareness within society. The choice of location should align with several supporting factors mentioned in the research above. For instance, the location of Sekaran in Semarang City proves to be strategically situated and boasts a diverse range of social statuses in its surrounding area. Additionally, this location houses a state educational institution, Semarang State University, which should play a pioneering role in

understanding and promoting conservation awareness in the vicinity.

METHOD

This research employs a quantitative descriptive approach with simple statistical analysis. According to Listiani, N. M. (2017), quantitative descriptive research involves describing, researching, and explaining something being studied as it is and drawing conclusions from phenomena that can be observed using numbers (Wiwik et al, 2022). By utilizing this approach, we hope to establish a relationship between social status and conservation awareness in the UNNES environment.

The research method applied here is the descriptive method. According to Nazir (2014), descriptive research examines the status of human groups, objects, conditions, thought systems, or current events to create systematic, factual, and accurate descriptions of the studied facts (Utami et al, 2021). This method aims to explain and describe the relationship between social status and conservation awareness. In this study, data is presented using tables and graphs, which facilitates systematic data analysis using percentages presented in these tables and graphs.

The independent variable in this research is the social status of the community, while the dependent variable is conservation awareness. This study was conducted at Semarang State University and in the surrounding area of Mount Pati, Semarang City, in April 2023.

According to Sugiyono (2014:215), a population is a generalized area consisting of objects or subjects with specific qualities and characteristics determined by researchers for study and subsequent conclusions. The target population for this research includes the entire UNNES community and its surroundings. Sugiyono (2014:215) defines a sample as a subset of the population with similar characteristics. The sampling method in this research employs non-probabilistic sampling, specifically utilizing purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2014:218), non-probability sampling does not provide an equal chance for each element or member of the population to be selected as a sample.

Sugiyono (2014:85) defines the purposive sampling technique as a method for selecting samples with specific considerations. This research considers the social status of the UNNES community and its surroundings, with occupational categories such as lecturers, employees, students, traders, and others. The sample size in this research comprises 32 individuals (respondents).

In this study, data collection methods are based on the source and type of data gathered, using both primary and secondary data. According to Sugiyono (2014:137), data collection can be categorized into two types: primary data and secondary data. Primary data refers to information obtained directly from data sources by providing data to data collectors. In this research, primary data was collected by distributing questionnaires to the UNNES community and its surroundings based on predetermined social status criteria.

Meanwhile, secondary data is a source of information that does not directly provide data to data collectors, such as through documents or from other sources. In this research, the necessary data and information were collected from sources like journals, articles, internet resources, theses, and research papers that were previously available or published. Generally, primary data in this research was obtained through methods such as observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation.

a) Questionnaire

According to Sugiyono (2014:142), a questionnaire is a data collection method involving the presentation of several questions or written statements to respondents for their answers (Prawiyogi, 2021). Questionnaires were distributed in two ways: in-person and online, using the Google Forms tool. While the Google Form was distributed to both students and lecturers, not all respondents chose to fill it out online.

b) Interview

Sugiyono (2014:137) describes interviews as a data collection technique useful for preliminary studies to identify research problems and for obtaining in-depth information when the number of respondents is small. In this research, interviews were conducted directly with various respondents, including traders, employees, students, community members, and others, to complete the required data collection.

c) Observation

Sugiyono (2014:145) explains that observation is a distinct data collection technique compared to interviews and questionnaires. In this research, the behavior of the UNNES community related to conservation was observed.

d) Documentation

According to Fuad & Sapto (2014:61), documentation serves as one of the secondary data sources essential in research (Yusra, et al., 2021). In this research, documentation was sourced from journals and other articles. This documentation facilitated the research process, making it easier for researchers to substantiate findings during interviews in the form of documented evidence.



Figure 1. Documentation of interviews with respondents

In this study, researchers concluded from data obtained through observation, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation. Then these conclusions are verified during the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The correlation between social status and conservation awareness is an intriguing and significant topic to explore in both the environmental and social fields. Social status can be measured through various factors such as income, education, and employment (Wanberg et al., 2020). Meanwhile, conservation awareness encompasses an individual's comprehension and actions in endeavors to protect the environment and sustain its well-being. This research was conducted to investigate the relationship between social status and conservation awareness in Sekaran, Gunungpati, Semarang City.

The discussion regarding the correlation between social status and conservation awareness in Sekaran, Gunungpati, Semarang City, holds great importance in helping us comprehend and develop effective strategies to enhance conservation awareness. Based on the collected data, numerous factors can influence conservation awareness, including gender, age, education, occupation, spending habits, authority, and working hours.

However, in this discussion, we will solely consider social status factors. Social status is often assessed by examining an individual's level of education, occupation, and income. Concerning conservation awareness, social status can impact a person's conservation behavior. In this context, conservation awareness signifies an individual's recognition of the significance of environmental protection and the reduction of negative impacts stemming from human activities on the environment. The higher a person's social status, the more likely they are to have access to the resources required to promote conservation awareness.

Respondent's Social Status

Of the 32 respondents who were the research subjects, consisted of 17 men and 15 women, with various age ranges from <17 years to 46-60 years. There was variation in the age of the respondents, with the majority of respondents aged 17-25 years at 34.4%, followed by the age group 31-45 years at 31.3%. In terms of education, the majority of respondents had a high school education level of 56.3%, and the majority of respondents' jobs were students of 25%. In terms of expenditure, the majority of respondents have a monthly expenditure of less than IDR 1,500,000 by 37.5%. While the work carried out by the

respondents varied from lecturers, employees, students, students/students, to traders. In terms of authority, there were only two respondents who had authority at their place of residence, such as the head of the organization and the administrator of the mosque.

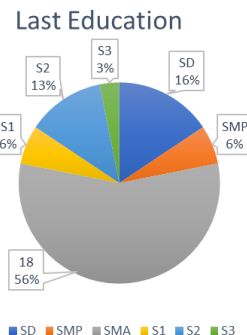


Figure 2. Respondent's Last Education

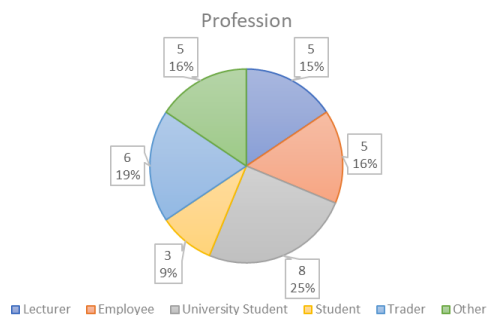


Figure 3. Respondent's Occupation

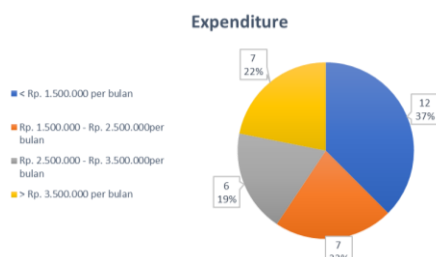


Figure 4. Respondents' Expenditures

Respondents' Conservation Awareness

The relationship between social status and conservation awareness can be seen from two perspectives, namely understanding related to conservation and attitudes towards conservation that have been carried out. Meanwhile, from the aspect of social status, the authors divide based on education, level of expenditure, occupation, and authority in the region of origin. The first discussion is social status based on education level. Social status based on education is an important factor that has an impact on conservation awareness. Social status refers to a person's position in the social hierarchy, while education refers to the level of knowledge and skills possessed by a person. This factor can affect a person's awareness of the importance of protecting the environment and nature conservation. Education plays a key role in shaping conservation awareness. Based on the analysis of the data obtained, people with higher education know more about

conservation. People with higher education tend to have a better understanding of environmental and conservation issues.

They may have learned about human impact on the environment during their studies, and also have easier access to information about environmental issues through the media and other sources. Meanwhile, people who are less educated or do not have sufficient access to education may not have the same understanding of the importance of conservation. They are less aware that their actions can impact the environment and ecosystems around them. Because of this, they may not feel compelled to take action to protect the environment and apply conservation principles. However, respondents who have a lower educational background do not mean they do not have conservation awareness, in fact they have quite good conservation awareness.

However, the implementation of conservation awareness of respondents who have lower education tends to take simple conservation attitudes such as disposing of trash in its place, while those that are quite difficult to do, such as participating in rescue, rehabilitation and release of endangered species are more likely to be respondents who have higher education. Respondents who have lower education may have limited access to information and education about conservation, so they are less motivated to take difficult conservation actions. Meanwhile, respondents who have higher education may have better access to information and education about conservation, so they are more motivated to take difficult conservation actions. Therefore, education is important in raising conservation awareness. Research conducted by Kurniawan (2021) shows that there is a significant positive relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental values and environmental behavior. This shows that the higher environmental knowledge and environmental values possessed, the higher the probability that they will show better environmental behavior.

Furthermore, regarding the correlation of social status based on the level of expenditure and employment on conservation awareness. Occupation and level of spending can also influence a person's conservation awareness. The data obtained shows that people who have jobs and higher spending levels tend to have higher conservation awareness. This may be due to the fact that those with more stable jobs and greater expenses tend to have better access to resources and information, including information about greener ways of living. However, on the other hand, people who have low-paying jobs or lower spending levels may also have high conservation awareness. This may be because they depend on natural resources to meet their daily needs, and they may have a greater awareness of the importance of conserving these resources for use by future generations. However, in general, respondents who have higher expenditure and employment have higher conservation awareness. This is in line with research conducted by Mónus (2022) which found that socio-economic background influences pro-environmental attitudes and behavior, with respondents from higher socio-economic backgrounds tending to have

better pro-environmental attitudes and behavior than respondents from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Furthermore, regarding social status based on authority in the area of residence on conservation awareness. Social status based on authority in the area of residence can also affect one's conservation awareness. People who hold positions of leadership or authority in the areas where they live tend to be more aware of environmental issues and have more influence in making decisions that affect the environment. However, this does not mean that people who do not have authority cannot have high conservation awareness. People who are not in a leadership position can contribute to environmental conservation by taking personal actions, such as disposing of trash properly, using environmentally friendly products, or participating in environmental conservation programs in their community.

In general, people who are in a higher social position in terms of education, spending, employment, or authority in the area of residence may have easier access to resources that enable them to live sustainably. They may have easier access to technology and equipment that helps them to live in a more environmentally friendly way. On the other hand, people in lower social positions may have little choice but to take less environmentally friendly actions. They may be forced to choose less environmentally friendly resources due to economic or access constraints. Therefore, social status can affect a person's ability to take action to protect the environment and apply conservation principles. However, it is important to remember that not everyone who has a higher social status, cares about the environment. Conservation awareness is the result of education and experience, not just one's social status or educational level. Therefore, it is important to provide education and experience about nature conservation to everyone, regardless of their social status or level of education.

Willing to do a small conservation action

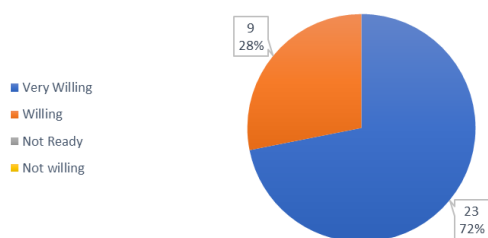


Figure 5. Respondents' willingness to carry out conservation

The data in Figure 5 shows that in general respondents who have high or low social status are very willing to do conservation. Conservation as an effort to preserve the environment has become an important concern for all people regardless of their social background. Everyone can contribute and play an active role in carrying out conservation for the sake of the balance of nature and human survival in the future.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The relationship between social status and conservation awareness is an important topic that needs to be studied further in order to increase conservation awareness in society. Social status is often measured by level of education, occupation, and income. In the context of conservation awareness, social status can affect a person's conservation behavior. Based on the study conducted in Sekaran, Gunungpati, Semarang City, education plays a key role in shaping conservation awareness. People with higher education tend to have a better understanding of environmental and conservation issues, and are more motivated to take difficult conservation actions. Meanwhile, people who are less educated or do not have sufficient access to education may not have the same understanding of the importance of conservation, and may not feel compelled to take action to protect the environment and apply conservation principles. However, respondents who have a lower educational background do not mean they do not have conservation awareness, in fact they have quite good conservation awareness.

Occupation and level of spending can also influence a person's conservation awareness. People who have jobs and higher spending levels tend to have higher conservation awareness, as they tend to have better access to resources and information, including information about greener ways of living. However, on the other hand, people who have low-paying jobs or lower spending levels may also have high conservation awareness because they depend on natural resources to meet their daily needs.

Therefore, in order to increase conservation awareness in society, it is important to focus on education and to make information about conservation easily accessible to everyone. This can be achieved through educational campaigns, seminars, workshops, and other means. Governments can also play a role in increasing conservation awareness by implementing policies and regulations that promote conservation and sustainability.

In addition, it is important to take into account the different social status factors, such as education, occupation, and income, in designing conservation awareness programs. For example, programs that target people with lower education levels may need to focus on simpler conservation attitudes, such as disposing of trash in its place, while programs that target people with higher education levels may need to focus on more difficult conservation actions, such as participating in rescue, rehabilitation and release of endangered species.

In summary, the correlation between social status and conservation awareness is an important area of study that needs to be further explored in order to promote sustainable and responsible behavior in society. By understanding the relationship between social status and conservation awareness, we can design more effective programs and policies that encourage individuals to take action to protect the environment and maintain sustainability.

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