

Behaviour Change and Environmental Citizenship: A case for spiritual development?

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In spite of the efforts that have been made to increase awareness and understanding of environmental issues, there is little evidence of a general adoption of pro-environmental behaviours that might characterize environmental citizenship. This paper argues that awareness and understanding are necessary but not sufficient, and reports research which suggests that sufficiency might need to be understood in spiritual terms. An argument is developed in favour of a citizenship founded upon transformative spiritual values in preference to a morality founded upon imposed notions of duty or obligation to support a value system which is itself arguably part of the problem. The primary objection to such an approach is that it would seem to rely upon the preservation of childhood spirituality through the teenage years into adulthood, and this is seen to present many difficulties for researchers, policy-makers and practitioners.

✦ AI Overview



Martin Ashley's paper "Behaviour Change and Environmental Citizenship: A case for spiritual development?" published in the International Journal of Children's Spirituality (Vol. 5, No. 2, 2000) argues that standard environmental education relies too much on moral duty and obligation, which fails to drive actual pro-environmental behaviour. Taylor & Francis Online +1

Core Arguments of the Paper

- **The Limit of Awareness:** Knowing about environmental issues does not mean people will change their daily habits or adopt true environmental citizenship. Taylor & Francis Online +1
- **The Problem with Morality:** Imposed rules, duties, and obligations often support the exact societal value systems causing ecological crises. Taylor & Francis Online +1
- **The Spiritual Solution:** True sufficiency in behaviour change requires grounding citizenship in transformative spiritual values rather than external enforcement. Taylor & Francis Online +1
- **The Main Obstacle:** This framework depends heavily on carrying childhood spirituality safely through the teenage years and into adulthood, posing major challenges for policy-makers and educators. Taylor & Francis Online +1