

HUMAN CIVILIZATION SUSTAINABILITY: A CASE STUDY OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG KUALA TERENGGANU RESIDENTS

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Article history

Received date : 12-5-2025
Revised date : 12-5-2025
Accepted date : 18-6-2025
Published date : 30-6-2025

To cite this document:

Rubiah, A. B., Najdah, A. A., Azarudin, A., Hamizah, M. & Syahrul Hezrin, M. (2025). Human civilization sustainability: A case study of environmental consciousness among Kuala Terengganu Residents. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development (JISED)*, 10 (73), 392 - 400.

Abstract: *Everybody knows that the care for and conservation of the environment is very important in the development of a nation's civilization. In Islam, environmental protection is one of the ummah's most demanding responsibilities. Thus, various acts have been introduced and applied for this purpose. It highlights that while many initiatives and laws have been implemented by both government bodies and NGOs, there are still significant gaps in proper environmental practices among the public. Despite the awareness, there are inconsistencies in translating this knowledge into daily behaviors. Issues like open burning, indiscriminate waste disposal, and improper recycling continue to be common. Therefore, the study focuses on assessing the level of environmental consciousness in Malaysia, particularly in Kuala Terengganu. Understanding the current level of consciousness is crucial, as today's actions determine future sustainability and conservation efforts. The lack of consistent practices could hinder overall environmental preservation efforts, making it harder to achieve broader goals despite existing awareness. The research involves 212 respondents, collected through convenience sampling, with data analyzed using SPSS software. The findings indicated that while there is high consciousness among the people of Kuala Terengganu, their daily practices do not fully align with environmentally friendly behaviors, which could hinder broader conservation goals. This study benefits marketer, businesses and policy makers, which help in improving the strategies, better information dissemination and activities on proper environmental practices.*

Keywords: *Environmental, Consciousness, Human Civilization, Sustainability*

Introduction

Human and nature are two creatures created by Allah SWT that have a very close relationship in building the civilization of a nation. Humans are required to maintain the sustainability of the environment, however, unfortunately today these humans who hold the title of God's caliph have violated trusts by exploiting nature to pursue worldliness alone. Humans now also arbitrarily process industrial materials without thinking about the future impact on the environment which is part of the sustainability of their lives.

Environmental issues are not new to Malaysian. It has been around for years but still has no end despite the various ways and approaches used by the authorities. Referring to The Environmental Quality Act 1974 (Act 127), a law formed by the Malaysian Government to ensure the conservation and management of the environment as well as the quality of air, water, and land. This law has been amended several times to meet current needs in protecting the environment.

Increasing environmental consciousness is a key element in building the country's capacity towards sustainable development. Previous studies have shown that the level of environmental consciousness among Malaysians has not yet reached a commendable level compared to developed countries like Japan, Denmark, and Germany (Department of Environment Malaysia 1997). Generally, people are more sensitive to environmental issues, especially those close to them, but their awareness to actively address these problems is minimal (Tan & Norzaini, 2011). A survey by Mohd Yusof et al. (2020) indicated that most residents are conscious of the importance of a clean environment, but they believe that local authorities should be responsible for maintaining environmental cleanliness. This is evidenced by the 9,681 reports of environmental pollution involving water, air, soil, scheduled waste, noise pollution, oil spills, and others (Department of Environment, January - October 2019). This shows that the community is still concerned about the environment, but actions to mitigate these problems are weak.

To increase environmental consciousness, relevant parties must play their roles. NGOs like the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Malaysian Nature Society, commercial banks, and several large companies should fund environmental awareness activities for the community.

There are many environmental consciousness programs, especially through electronic and print media, but the messages do not seem to reach a large part of the community. Therefore, environmental consciousness spaces in mainstream media need to be expanded with more interesting delivery tailored to different community groups (Jamilah et al., 2011).

This study aims to provide an initial survey of the public in the Kuala Terengganu district. The focus of the study is to understand the level of knowledge, attitudes, and practices of the public towards environmental issues and conservation methods. Additionally, this study aims to identify the channels of information and respondents' preferences in obtaining environmental information.

Methodology Of Research

Population

The main goal of this study is to raise consciousness and understanding among the local community about the importance of environmental care. Therefore, the population of this study was the residents of Kuala Terengganu to determine the level of consciousness regarding this matter.

Sampling techniques and sample size

Non-probability convenience sampling was used in this study. Hulland et al. (2017) state that, in marketing survey, it is common that the population is unknown to simplifies the results, thus convenience sampling is recommended. For this study, 212 of Kula Terengganu residents be respondents and answered the questionnaires.

Data Collection Method

In collecting the data, both primary and secondary sources were used. Online survey through google form was distributed to respondents in Kuala Terengganu area. A set of questionnaires were adapted from Muhd Ibrahim et al. (2016) and Hafizah et al. (2013). Self-administered 5-point Likert Scale question was developed regarding environmental consciousness, water pollution, air pollution, waste management and climate change. They ranged from strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree.

Results And Findings

Part A: Demographic Data

Table 1. Respondent Background

	Male	Female
Gender	37%	63%

Table 1 above shows the gender of the respondents. Most of the respondents involved in this study were women, 63% and the remaining 37% were men.

Table 2: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	%
12-18 Years	0	0%
19-25 Years	44	20.8%
26-32 Years	34	16%
33 - 39 Years	48	22.6%
40 Years And Above	86	40.6%
	212	

Table 2 shows the age level of the respondents in this study. Most of the respondents are aged between 40 years and above, which is a total of 86 people. Meanwhile, no respondents aged between 12 - 18 years were involved in this study.

Table 3: Occupation of Respondents

Employment	Frequency	%
Government Servant	98	46.2%
Private	15	7.1%
Housewife	16	7.5%
Students	44	20.8%
Others	39	18.4%
	212	

In terms of employment, the government servant category is the most involved in this study, which is 98 people (46.2%). They consist of various jobs such as teachers, lecturers, government officials and so on. While private employees and housewives are less involved in this study, which are only 15 and 16 people respectively. Other categories include those who are self-employed.

Table 4: Regional Area

Location	Jumlah	%
Urban	110	51.9%
Sub Urban	64	30.2%
Rural	38	17.9%
	212	

Table 4 shows the residence of the respondents in this study. Most of them live in urban areas which have 110 people. Not many respondents from rural areas were involved in this study, which is only 38 people.

Table 5: Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	%
Single	69	32.5%
Married	143	67.5%
	212	

Referring to Table 5, most respondents involved in this study consisted of those who were married. The remaining 69 people are still single.

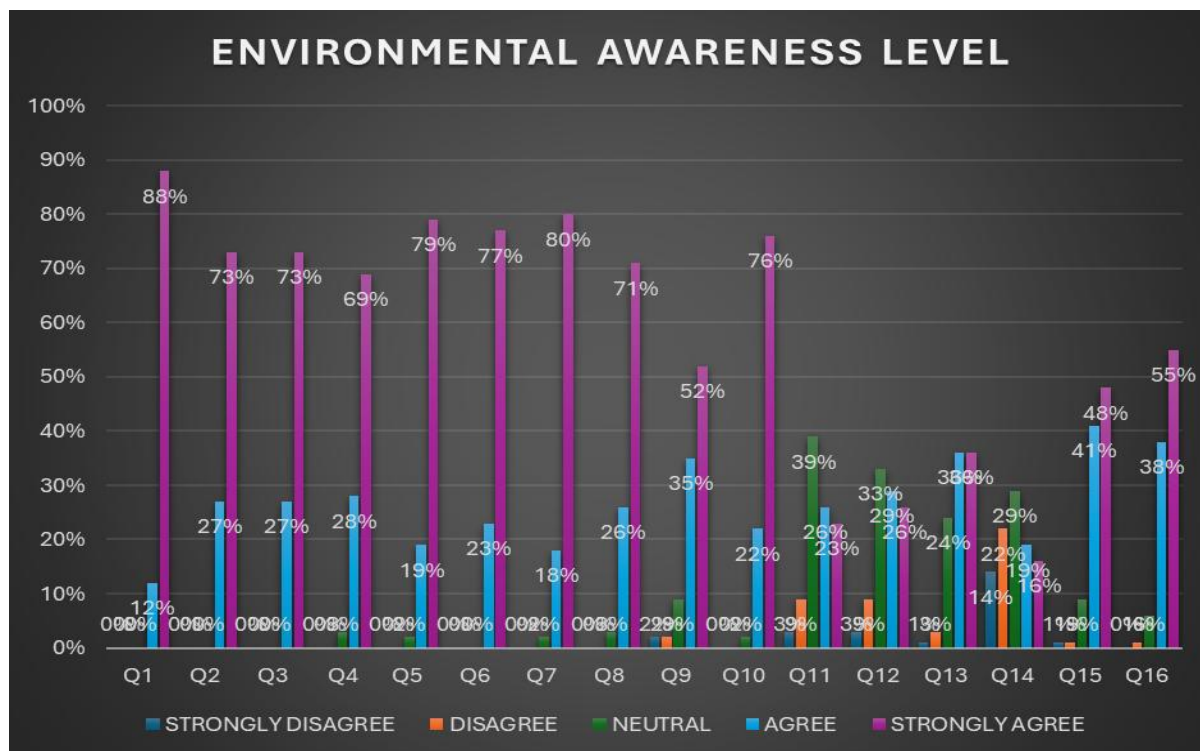
Part B: Environmental Consciousness Level

Table 6: Environmental Consciousness Level

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q1 - The environment is very important to me.	0%	0%	0%	12%	88%
Q2 - I know about the importance of taking care of the environment.	0%	0%	0%	27%	73%
Q3 - I know the actions I take will have an impact on the environment.	0%	0%	0%	27%	73%
Q4 - I know that global climate change	0%	0%	3%	28%	69%

is caused by human actions on the environment.					
Q5 - I know that declining air quality levels will have a negative impact on global human health.	0%	0%	2%	19%	79%
Q6 - I know that global warming will have a negative effect on the environment and people.	0%	0%	0%	23%	77%
Q7 - I know uncontrolled logging activities can result in less rain catchment areas.	0%	0%	2%	18%	80%
Q8 - I know that the thinning ozone layer can result in more ultra-violet rays reaching the earth.	0%	0%	3%	26%	71%
Q9 - I know the haze in big cities comes from vehicle fumes.	2%	2%	9%	35%	52%
Q10 - I get upset thinking about the way factories dispose of solid and liquid waste thus polluting our environment.	0%	0%	2%	22%	76%
Q11 - I have knowledge about electrical and electronic waste	3%	9%	39%	26%	23%
Q12 - I know electrical and electronic waste is categorized as scheduled waste @ hazardous waste in the Environmental Quality Act 1974.	3%	9%	33%	29%	26%
Q13 - I am aware of the impact of electrical and electronic waste disposal on the environment	1%	3%	24%	36%	36%
Q14 - I know the electrical and electronic waste collection premises near my residence	14%	22%	29%	19%	16%
Q15 - I know the use of pesticides affects humans	1%	1%	9%	41%	48%
Q16 - I know poisons and toxic substances seeping into the soil can affect plants and animals	0%	1%	6%	38%	55%

(Source: Hafizah et al. (2013); Muhd Ibrahim (2016))



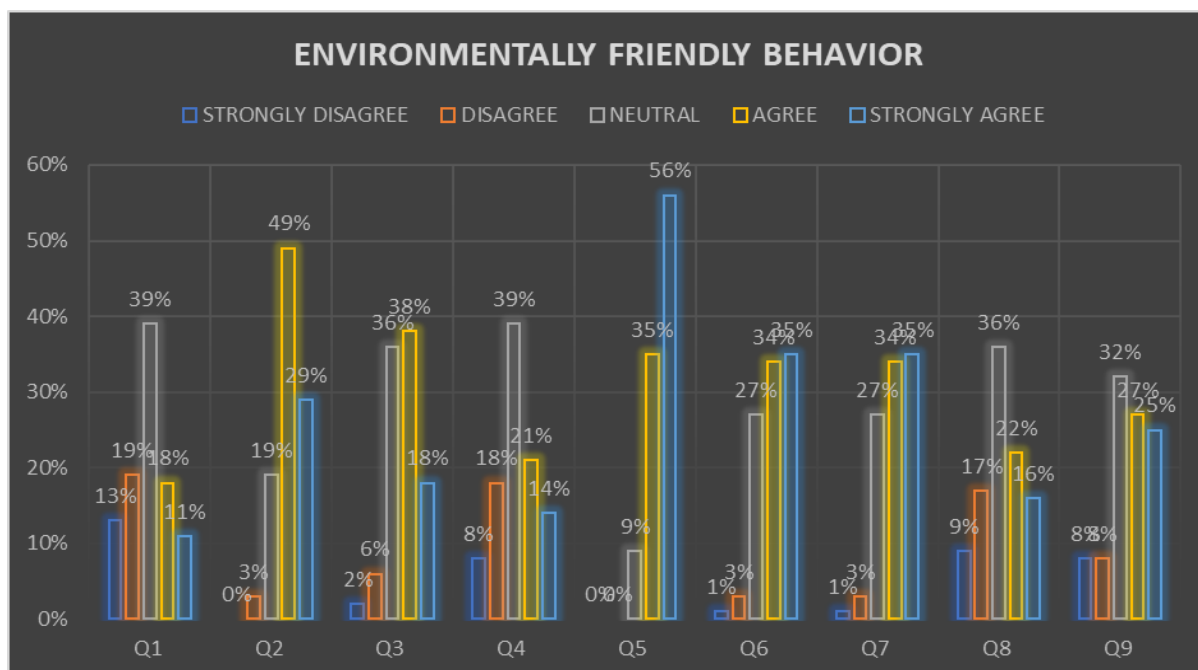
Most respondents strongly agree that the environment is important to them. They are aware of the importance of environmental care and know that their actions impact the environment and global health. However, many have limited knowledge about e-waste and its impact on the environment. They are also less aware of premises collecting e-waste near their residences.

Part C: Environmentally Friendly Behavior

Table 7: Environmentally Friendly Behavior

Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Q1 - I bring my own food container when I buy food outside.	13%	19%	39%	18%	11%
Q2 - I am not wasteful when using electricity and water.	0%	3%	19%	49%	29%
Q3 - I always practice recycling.	2%	6%	36%	38%	18%
Q4 - I always carry my own plastic bag especially when shopping.	8%	18%	39%	21%	14%
Q5 - I support the sale of environmentally friendly products.	0%	0%	9%	35%	56%
Q6 - I do not practice open burning.	1%	3%	27%	34%	35%
Q7 - I don't litter everywhere.	1%	3%	27%	34%	35%
Q8 - I use rainwater to wash the car and water the trees	9%	17%	36%	22%	16%
Q9 - I use leftover food and rice washing water as compost for plants such as vegetables and flowers	8%	8%	32%	27%	25%

(Source: Hafizah (2013))



Based on the results above, respondents support the sale of environmentally friendly products and do not litter or practice open burning. However, many do not bring their own food containers when buying food outside or bring their own plastic bags when shopping. They also rarely use rainwater to wash cars or water plants or use food waste and rice washing water as compost for plants.

Discussion

This study presents practical data of awareness on environmental issues among Kuala Terengganu citizens; therefore, it will help government or policy makers, industry, and advertisers/the media to promote environmental sustainability among them. Malaysians are well conscious of the environmental crisis that has arisen in the country. However, from the surveys conducted shows that they are unwilling to do something about it. Sometimes, they need to be pushed and motivated to act in a good manner. Therefore, this study will help the policy makers and other parties work together in identifying and monitoring the level of environmental awareness among Malaysians as a whole. It will also be beneficial to those revising and amending the related Acts so that they address current issues, if necessary.

In the future, more facets of environmental issues such as biodiversity, forestry and wildlife restoration, and soil conservation should be addressed so that environmental awareness and behavior performance among Malaysians can be measured in a more holistic course.

Conclusion

Overall, the analysis shows that the awareness of the Terengganu community towards environmental care is at a good level. They understand the negative effects of neglecting the environment, likely due to campaigns and awareness programs by the Department of Environment (DOE) and NGOs. However, knowledge about e-waste and recycling practices remains moderate. Many have not heard of e-waste and its impact on the environment, and recycling practices are not consistently implemented. Therefore, it is suggested that more programs related to e-waste and recycling be intensified, and more recycling collection centers, especially for electrical and electronic waste, be established.

Acknowledgment

The authors express gratitude to State Department of Environment (JAS), UiTM and respondent for their support and facilities in conducting this research.

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