

Cognizance of Rural Community in Environmental Laws

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Abstract:- Illegal logging and slash and burn (*kaingin*) are two of the largest environmental problems of the modern age. It causes huge carbon emissions, a loss of biodiversity and destroys sensitive ecosystems. To raise awareness among rural communities about the detrimental effects of slash-and-burn farming and illegal logging on the environment and their well-being.

This study revealed that the residents are uninformed about the environmental laws and ordinances as well as the penalties it also acknowledges the problems of the government that it must increase its support for the local government unit by enhancing programs on how to combat illegal forest activities that will greatly help the rural community. Conduct a seminar or public orientation regarding environmental laws to elaborate on the reasons they were implemented. Install signage about laws and ordinances that prohibit illegal logging and slash and burn (*kaingin*), is most prevalent. Educating and increasing awareness of the public at large on the importance of forests and the consequences of illegal logging through a seminar and giving awareness through social media.

I. INTRODUCTION

The environment is one of the most important sources for all living things specially for us humans. It is important for a population to have a good and safe environment to live in accordance with our sustenance. Illegal logging and slash and burn (*kaingin*) one of the most significant environmental issues of our day. Significant carbon emissions are produced, biodiversity is lost, and delicate ecosystems are destroyed.

Rural communities play a crucial role in environmental conservation and sustainable development. However, these regions frequently encounter major obstacles to the efficient application and enforcement of environmental legislation. One such challenge is the limited cognizance and understanding of environmental laws among rural community members. This knowledge gap can hinder the ability of rural communities to actively participate in environmental protection efforts and address violations.

II. VALUE BELIEF NORM (VBN) THEORY

Stern, P.C.'s Value Belief Norm (VBN) Theory. (2000), which claims that personal norms—an internalized sense of obligation to perform in a particular way—can influence an individual's decision about taking pro-environmental measures. Some of the aforementioned theoretical explanations connect value theory, norm-activation theory, and the New Environmental Paradigm (NEP) perspective through a causal chain of five factors that influence behavior, particularly altruistic values, which forms the foundation of an environmental theory. This set of five factors—divided into values, beliefs, and norms categories—influences whether a person is inclined to engage in certain environmental activities. According to this theory, there are causal links between values, beliefs, norms, and behaviors.

Pro-environmental feelings become personal norms for those who possess persistent views and ideals that are crucial to protecting the environment. Feelings of moral commitment to protect the environment are referred to as personal norms.

➤ *The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).*

As a government agency charged with developing and putting into effect policies, principles, rules, and laws pertaining to environmental management, pollution prevention, and control. The study's findings would improve their ability to create environmental rules and regulations in the future.

➤ *The Local Government Units (LGUs).*

Since they have direct access to their constituents and sway over them, LGUs play a significant part in community development. So, if the LGUs would provide an information linking the awareness of rural communities on environmental laws and environmental crimes they've committed, it would be easier for them to address its community problems and concerns on environment. The result of the study would help them improve their creation of programs and local environmental policies and boost their enforcement of such policies.

III. RURAL COMMUNITY

The term "rural" is also used to describe country living, where communities rely on natural resources more heavily than people in urban communities. A collection of people who live a rural or country lifestyle make up the rural community. Rural areas are often less populated and agriculturally based, however some have forests. The benefits of the additional space found in most rural communities are much more privacy, lower noise and light pollution, and more opportunities to be in nature and explore natural resources. Rural economies largely rely on either agriculture, mining, manufacturing, recreation (tourism), or are dependent economically on the state or federal government.

According to UBC Wiki (2017), the need for agricultural lands increased as the Philippines' population grew significantly in the latter half of the 20th century. Several locals turned forests into farmland without getting permission from the authorities. In addition, the Philippines' economy expanded slowly after gaining independence. Thus, by utilizing both timber and non-timber resources, the government tried to strengthen the economy of the country at the expense of forest areas. The local government occasionally turns a blind eye to this issue, despite the government's proposal for a law to outlaw timber harvesting in the late 20th century. As a result, illegal loggers act irresponsibly. Particularly, the main cause of illicit logging in this nation is rural poverty.

According to GJ Perez (2020), the Philippines has a very diverse rainforest, but because of the reckless cutting down trees of the community it is being gradually destabilized. For a long time, Northern Luzon's Sierra Madre and Cordillera forests were among the largest rainforests in the Philippines. They support a variety of highly diverse plant and animal

species, many of which are endemic. Unfortunately, these forests served as the source of highly sought-after timber for construction and other purposes and were the scene of several negligent logging practices.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of the implementation, the barangay officials fully implemented laws on environmental protection. As to the knowledge of the residents, some of them are uninformed on the said laws and ordinances concerning the environment as well as the penalties on environmental crimes. As with regards to the problems encountered during the implementation, it is due to the lack of forest rangers and low prioritization.

Furthermore, the findings of this study concluded that researchers must develop an action plan to improve rural communities' understanding of environmental laws.

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