

Public Abstract

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With recent changes in the economy and a dwindling supply of natural resources, energy conservation is a very relevant and important concern among homeowners. Each homeowner has a unique perception of environmental issues, including energy conservation, and yet all are similarly influenced. These different perceptions are based, in part, on differences in preferred worldviews. It is argued here that more effective educational delivery methods could be employed if they were based on these individual worldview preferences. This study investigates both psychological and environmental worldviews in light of energy conservation education.

Using psychological worldview theory and environmental worldview theory, this research contributes to better understanding of individuals who are interested in home energy conservation. The research provides knowledge that will improve education delivery to help motivate individuals to conserve energy in the home.

An online survey was distributed to a University Extension listserv composed of individuals who were interested in receiving more information about home energy conservation. The survey consisted of a psychological paradigmatic theory inventory and the revised New Environmental Paradigm scale. This research supports the assumption that there are many different ways of understanding environmental issues; no way is more correct than any other, but some are more preferred than others. It suggests that by targeting each individual's worldview and the way she/he comes to know and approaches environmental issues, researchers and educators can begin to contribute in a more individually meaningful manner rather than continuing to treat people as an aggregate homogenous whole.