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Reading or Fun, Reading for a Cause, Envisioning a Biocentric Future in University Settings: Fostering Positive Attitudes Toward Reading for Social and Environmental Change

Abstract: As environmental crises intensify, the need for innovative educational approaches that inspire young adults to engage with sustainability and environmental justice becomes increasingly urgent. This paper examines the role of literature – specifically ecofiction – as a transformative tool for fostering ecological awareness and promoting a biocentric worldview among university students. By emphasizing the importance of reading for enjoyment, reading with purpose, and cultivating positive attitudes toward literature, we explore how storytelling can serve as a catalyst for social and environmental change. Through a university-based project focused on integrating ecofiction into discussions of sustainability, we assess the potential of literary engagement to shape students' perceptions, ethical considerations, and actions toward a more just and sustainable future. The findings highlight the capacity of literature to not only enhance environmental literacy but also to empower young adults to envision and advocate for systemic transformation.

Keywords: Ecofiction, environmental literacy, sustainability education, biocentrism, transformative learning, literature and sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the need for a profound societal shift toward sustainability and environmental justice has become increasingly apparent. With climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation rapidly altering the world as we know it, it is essential to engage individuals in both understanding and acting upon these pressing issues. The role of education in fostering this engagement is critical, especially at the university level, where young adults are

at a crossroads between personal growth and broader societal responsibility. A key aspect of this educational process involves cultivating positive attitudes toward reading and integrating literature into the broader narrative of social and environmental change. The aim of this paper is to explore how literature, specifically ecofiction, can serve as a transformative tool in encouraging young adults to envision a biocentric future. This will be accomplished by highlighting the role of reading for fun, reading for a cause, and fostering positive attitudes toward reading through a university-based project centered on social and environmental transformation.

BIOCENTRISM: AN ETHICAL PARADIGM CENTERED ON LIFE

Biocentrism, as an ethical framework, assigns intrinsic value to all living entities, advocating for the reverence and preservation of life in its myriad forms. This perspective stands in contrast to anthropocentrism, which prioritizes human interests, yet it does so without adopting a misanthropic stance.

Undeniably, we live in the age of the Anthropocene. This is what life looks like in this era. Humans have altered the anaglyph of Earth in myriad ways and now we have reached a point when people need to find ways to address the magnitude of the environmental problems without feeling weak or disheartened (Kalogirou, 2025, Reno, 2022). Instead, biocentrism seeks to bridge the perceived chasm between humanity and the natural world, promoting a harmonious coexistence. Central to biocentrism is the assertion that all living beings possess inherent worth, irrespective of their utility to human endeavors. This philosophy underscores the moral obligation to consider the rights and welfare of non-human animals, acknowledging their inability to advocate for themselves. Recent discussions in moral psychology have delved into the evolutionary underpinnings of moral behavior, suggesting that human morality, while often appearing altruistic, may be deeply rooted in self-interest and social utility (Sauer, 2024). Such insights compel a reevaluation of our ethical responsibilities towards other sentient beings.

The moral orientation of biocentrism can be dissected into two primary concerns: the imperative to avoid inflicting harm on sentient creatures and the commitment to preserving the purity and integrity of natural entities. These dual facets engage distinct cognitive and emotional processes within the human psyche. Neuroscientific investigations have begun to unravel the neural substrates associated with moral cognition, highlighting the complex interplay between brain regions in ethical decision-making (Fumagalli & Priori, 2012). Understanding these mechanisms offers profound implications for how individuals and societies might cultivate a biocentric ethos. Embracing a biocentric perspective necessitates a paradigm shift in environmental ethics, urging

humanity to recognize its integral role within the biosphere rather than as a dominator over it. This shift has practical ramifications, influencing policy decisions, conservation efforts, and our daily interactions with the environment. Furthermore, exploring the neural correlates of moral reasoning related to biocentrism can inform strategies for moral enhancement, potentially guiding interventions aimed at fostering more empathetic and ecologically conscious behaviors (Persson & Savulescu, 2017).

ECOCRITICISM AND ECOPEDAGOGY WITHIN A BIOCENTRIC FRAMEWORK

In the context of biocentrism, which emphasizes the intrinsic value of all living beings, ecocriticism and ecopedagogy emerge as pivotal frameworks that explore and enhance the relationship between humans and the natural world.

Ecocriticism examines how literature portrays the relationship between humans and nature, offering insights into cultural attitudes and experiences. By analyzing literary texts, ecocriticism seeks to uncover and challenge anthropocentric narratives, advocating for a more inclusive understanding that recognizes the intrinsic value of all life forms. This approach aligns with biocentric principles by emphasizing the need to respect and value the natural world beyond its utility to humans. Recent studies have highlighted the effectiveness of pedagogical ecocriticism in enhancing environmental awareness, particularly in the post-pandemic era (Research Gate, 2022).

On the other hand, ecopedagogy emerges as an educational movement that integrates ecological awareness into the learning process, aiming to foster a transformative consciousness among learners. Grounded in critical pedagogy, ecopedagogy encourages individuals to question dominant societal structures and values that contribute to environmental degradation. By promoting an understanding of the interconnectedness of social and ecological systems, ecopedagogy seeks to empower learners to engage in actions that support environmental sustainability and social equity. Recent research underscores the urgency of adopting an ecocentric ethic within educational frameworks. For instance, studies advocate for integrating ecological and human well-being into management curricula, proposing arts-based ecopedagogy as a means to challenge prevailing neoliberal ideologies and foster transformative learning experiences (Northumbria University, 2023).

Therefore, incorporating biocentric principles into ecocriticism and ecopedagogy involves recognizing the intrinsic value of all living beings and the interconnectedness of life systems. This integration challenges anthropocentric perspectives and promotes a holistic understanding of environmental issues. By embedding biocentric values into literary analysis and educational practices, these frameworks can more effectively contribute to the development of

a society that values and preserves the natural world. An intercultural dialogue on ecopedagogy between Daoism and Naess's ecosophy highlights the potential of integrating diverse philosophical perspectives to enrich ecopedagogical practices (Taylor & Francis, 2024).

THE IMPACT OF LITERATURE ON HUMAN UNDERSTANDING AND SOCIAL CHANGE: A FOCUS ON ECOFICTION

Literature has long been a powerful tool for shaping human consciousness, offering not only a window into the past but also a lens through which individuals can interpret their present and imagine their future. It provides an avenue for individuals, particularly students and children, to gain insights into human experiences across time and cultures, allowing them to learn more about themselves and the world around them (Langer, 1995). Beyond simply entertaining or informing, literature offers an invaluable resource for emotional growth and social awareness. From exploring how to manage feelings and cope with anxiety to learning how to empathize with others, literature has a unique role in developing emotional intelligence and social empathy in young readers (Nussbaum, 1997).

In the case of non-fiction books, young readers also gain substantial knowledge across various subjects while maintaining an element of enjoyment. Whether through historical accounts, scientific discoveries, or cultural explorations, non-fiction literature broadens the mind and encourages curiosity (Briggs, 2009). However, fiction – particularly that which blends elements of fantasy with reality – has a unique way of enhancing aesthetic development, fostering empathy, and sparking the imagination (Beaumont, 2015).

One of the key aspects of literature is its ability to serve as a bridge between the realm of fantasy and reality. This dynamic interplay between fantasy and reality plays a crucial role in developing young readers' aesthetic sensibilities, which is essential for both emotional and intellectual growth (Hirsch, 2016). Through literature, children encounter moral dilemmas, social challenges, and interpersonal conflicts that reflect real-world issues, allowing them to develop critical thinking skills and navigate their feelings and anxieties in constructive ways (Wolfe, 2002). While literature can certainly serve as a form of enjoyment and leisure, it also carries the potential for greater societal impact. The capacity of books to inspire thought and action is profound, especially when combined with a sense of purpose (Goldstein, 2017). When young readers engage with literature that promotes social change – whether related to environmental sustainability, social justice, or human rights – they are not only entertained but also motivated to reflect on their role in society and their impact on the world.

One significant genre that has emerged in recent years is ecofiction – a form of fiction that intertwines environmental concerns with storytelling. These

novels, particularly within the young adult (YA) category, strive to promote a sustainable ethic of care, fostering an understanding of the intricate relationship between humans, nonhumans, and the environment. Ecofiction can be a powerful tool for encouraging young readers to become environmentally conscious, instilling values of sustainability, and promoting an active stance against environmental degradation (Humes, 2017). Ecofiction offers readers an opportunity to grapple with the ethical and moral challenges of a rapidly changing world and to consider the roles they might play in creating a sustainable future (Morrison & Robbins, 2019).

In the context of environmental education, literature like ecofiction plays a crucial role in shaping the way young people understand their responsibility toward the planet. These books are often used in educational settings to spark discussions on climate change, conservation, and the moral implications of ecological choices.

Furthermore, literature can foster a sense of collective responsibility. By engaging with narratives that highlight social and environmental issues, young readers are encouraged to reflect on the broader societal implications of personal actions. Through the empathy and understanding gained in reading ecofiction, students may develop a sense of shared responsibility for the earth and its ecosystems. Literature is a space where readers can develop an ethical consciousness (Kidd, 2018, Jameson, 2019) that transcends the individual, promoting both a sense of personal and collective agency.

ADOLESCENT IDENTITY AND LITERATURE: CONFRONTING INJUSTICE, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND CRISIS

To design and implement this project, we considered the multifaceted and complex nature of adolescence, acknowledging that our participants were still within this developmental stage. Given that adolescence is characterized by significant psychological, emotional, and social transformations, it was crucial to account for the unique developmental needs and experiences of the students, who themselves were navigating this period of transition from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence, characterized by a time of significant transition, represents a unique period in the human lifecycle. It is a time when young individuals are increasingly aware of their social identities and are in the process of negotiating and consolidating their sense of self. In literature, this developmental stage is explored and represented in various ways, offering young readers insights into the complexities of identity formation and the challenges that accompany this phase of life (McLeod, 2011).

Literature, especially works aimed at young adults (YA), serves as a mirror to the adolescent experience, engaging with themes that are relevant to contemporary societal issues. These works often present identity as a dynamic,

evolving process that is deeply influenced by social, political, and environmental factors. In particular, contemporary literature challenges traditional notions of identity and opens up space for exploring broader issues such as social justice, climate change, and personal responsibility (Wells, 2013).

The transition from childhood to adulthood is marked by a search for autonomy, the establishment of personal beliefs, and the negotiation of social norms and expectations. As adolescents engage with their identities, they must navigate a range of emotional, social, and cognitive challenges, making identity a fluid and continuously evolving concept.

Literary works aimed at adolescents often reflect this complexity, portraying characters who struggle with self-perception, societal expectations, and the pressures of fitting in. These narratives allow young readers to see themselves represented and to explore their own questions of identity. In doing so, literature provides a space for adolescents to understand that identity is not fixed but rather shaped by personal experiences, relationships, and broader cultural and societal influences (Kroger, 2007).

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL): A PATHWAY TO HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT IN YOUNG ADULTS

To implement our project effectively, we selected the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) approach as the most appropriate framework for our group. This decision was based on SEL's evidence-based efficacy in fostering key competencies which will be analyzed in this chapter, all of which are critical for the personal and academic development of adolescents. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) has gained significant attention in educational, psychological, and developmental fields as an essential framework for fostering positive outcomes in young people and adults. According to the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL, 2020), SEL is defined as "the process through which all young adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions." SEL supports the development of competencies that help individuals respond effectively to life's challenges, build resilience, and engage in positive social interactions.

The five core competencies that are central to Social and Emotional Learning are:

Self-awareness: This competency involves recognizing and understanding one's emotions, thoughts, and values, and how they influence behavior. It allows individuals to develop a realistic sense of their strengths and limitations and fosters a healthy self-concept (Elias et al., 1997). Self-awareness is linked

to improved mental health, as individuals with higher emotional awareness are better able to cope with stress and regulate their emotions (Gross, 2002).

Self-management: This refers to the ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations, including stress, frustration, and conflict. Individuals who excel in self-management are better at setting and achieving goals, managing their time, and responding to challenges in adaptive ways (Zins & Elias, 2006). Research has shown that effective self-regulation leads to improved academic achievement and interpersonal relationships (Duckworth et al., 2007).

Social awareness: This competency involves the ability to take the perspective of others, show empathy, and understand social and ethical norms for behavior. Social awareness is vital for fostering healthy relationships and resolving conflicts in constructive ways (Payton et al., 2000). Research supports the idea that social awareness is linked to pro-social behaviors and is essential for community cohesion (Greenberg et al., 2003).

Relationship skills: These are the abilities needed to establish and maintain healthy, supportive relationships with others. Effective communication, teamwork, conflict resolution, and active listening are essential components of this competency. Studies have demonstrated that individuals with strong relationship skills tend to have better social outcomes, including higher levels of social support and positive interpersonal interactions (Zins et al., 2007).

Responsible decision-making: This competency focuses on making constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on ethical standards, safety concerns, and social norms. Responsible decision-making involves considering the well-being of oneself and others in decision-making processes. Research suggests that individuals who exhibit responsible decision-making skills are more likely to engage in behaviors that promote long-term well-being and avoid risky or harmful behaviors (Jones et al., 2017).

SEL is integral to fostering emotional intelligence and social competence, which are foundational for healthy psychological development. A growing body of research highlights the significance of SEL in promoting positive mental health and preventing mental health issues (Durlak et al., 2011). Programs that incorporate SEL competencies have been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression in children and adolescents and improve emotional well-being (Weare & Nind, 2011). Furthermore, individuals who engage in SEL programs demonstrate improved social behaviors, such as empathy, cooperation, and conflict resolution, which contribute to stronger, more supportive relationships (Zins et al., 2007). The development of SEL competencies has also been linked to better academic performance and long-term success. Studies indicate that students who develop strong emotional and social skills are more

likely to perform well academically and are less likely to engage in disruptive behaviors (Durlak et al., 2011).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Reading, especially in the context of Young Adult (YA) literature, is a powerful tool for personal growth and social engagement. As future educators, pre-service teachers hold a pivotal role in influencing young minds and cultivating an interest in literature that fosters not only academic skills but also emotional and social intelligence. The objective of this project was to explore whether and how a university-level workshop on YA literature could contribute to developing positive attitudes toward reading while simultaneously fostering a mindset for social and environmental change.

The workshop targeted 18/19-year-old pre-service teachers who were provided with a broad range of reading materials, including traditional fairytales, contemporary picture books, poems, and graphic novels. These texts were chosen for their capacity to evoke deep engagement, encourage reflection on personal and societal values, and stimulate an understanding of the pressing social and environmental issues of our time.

The main objectives of this project were:

1. To assess how engagement with a variety of YA texts could foster a positive attitude towards reading among pre-service teachers.
2. To evaluate how YA literature can cultivate a mindset focused on social and environmental change, particularly through the lens of the characters, themes, and narratives presented in the readings.
3. To explore the ways in which reading promotes personal connection – both with oneself, one's peers, society, and the natural world.

Methodology

The participants in this project were 18/19-year-old pre-service teachers. Students read a variety of YA texts, carefully selected for their thematic diversity. The readings¹ spanned different genres and forms, including traditional fairytales, contemporary picture books, poems, and graphic novels, each chosen for their potential to engage students in deep reading and reflection.

The selected readings were integrated with carefully designed activities to promote self-expression, emotional awareness, and creativity among university students through both classroom and outdoor experiences. These books,

¹ The chosen readings were: Loring-Fisher, J. (2020). *Taking time*. Lantana Publishing; Lunde, M. (2022). *The guardian of the sun*. Vydavnystvo Staroho Leva; Poetry School. (2022). *Ecopoetry anthology* (Ginkgo Prize). Poetry School. https://ginkgoprize.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Ginkgo-Prize_Ecopoetry-Anthology-2021-1.pdf; Tokarczuk, O. (2021). *The lost soul*. Seven Stories Press.

all significant works within the realm of ecofiction, align with the principles of ecopedagogy, fostering critical thinking about human-nature relationships and inspiring a deeper ecological consciousness.

Taking Time by Jo Loring-Fisher is a beautifully illustrated picture book that invites readers to slow down and appreciate the small wonders of nature. Through poetic language and evocative imagery, the book encourages mindfulness and environmental awareness, making it an ideal choice for reflective journaling and mindfulness exercises in natural settings. By engaging with this text, students cultivated a heightened sense of presence and appreciation for their surroundings, reinforcing the idea that sustainability begins with attentiveness to the world.

The Guardian of the Sun by Maja Lunde is a particularly powerful addition to the reading list, as Lunde is renowned for her climate fiction that intertwines human stories with environmental crises. This novel explores themes of ecological collapse, climate resilience, and intergenerational responsibility, making it a vital resource for ecopedagogical discussions. The narrative, which imagines a future affected by environmental degradation, urges readers to consider their role in shaping a more sustainable world. Students engaged with this text through group discussions and creative storytelling workshops, using Lunde's themes to craft their own speculative narratives about climate futures. This process not only strengthened their creative abilities but also deepened their understanding of ecological interconnectedness, reinforcing the power of literature in shaping environmental ethics.

The Ecopoetry Anthology from the Ginkgo Prize provided a rich selection of contemporary eco-poetry, demonstrating how language and artistic expression can serve as powerful tools for environmental advocacy. The anthology showcases diverse poetic voices that explore themes of ecological grief, resilience, and reverence for nature. Students engaged with this text through poetry-writing sessions, composing their own ecopoems to express personal connections to environmental themes. This creative process allowed them to articulate their emotions about ecological issues, bridging personal reflection with broader environmental concerns.

The Lost Soul by Olga Tokarczuk is a meditative fable that explores the themes of disconnection, burnout, and the importance of slowing down. The book, with its minimalist text and evocative illustrations, serves as an allegory for the modern condition of being constantly on the move while losing touch with oneself and the natural world. This text was accompanied by artistic projects, such as visual storytelling and personal artifact sharing, prompting students to reflect on their own relationships with time, nature, and personal well-being. Through these activities, the book facilitated meaningful discussions about the necessity of balance and mindfulness in both personal life and environmental engagement.

Collectively, these readings and activities not only strengthened students' social bonds but also aligned with the principles of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) by promoting self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship skills. By integrating ecofiction with ecopedagogical practices, the project successfully fostered a deeper engagement with both environmental and personal transformation, demonstrating the vital role of literature in shaping a more sustainable and empathetic future.

Throughout the workshop, students were encouraged to engage in reflective exercises, group discussions, and written responses that allowed them to connect personally with the texts. They were asked to consider how the stories related to their own feelings, experiences, and beliefs, as well as to think critically about the ways in which these narratives intersected with broader social and environmental issues.

The project focused on four key areas of connection:

1. **Connection with Self:** The readings were designed to provoke personal reflection, enabling students to connect with their own emotions, needs, and experiences.
2. **Connection with Peers:** Group discussions and collaborative activities encouraged students to engage with their classmates' perspectives, fostering a sense of community and shared learning. This collaborative environment allowed students to challenge and refine their ideas while building empathy and understanding among their peers.
3. **Connection with Society:** The readings selected for the workshop often addressed social issues such as inequality, injustice, and the need for societal change.
4. **Connection with Nature:** Several of the texts explored environmental themes, encouraging students to think critically about humanity's relationship with nature and the impact of environmental degradation. These readings provided a platform for discussing sustainable practices and the importance of protecting the environment for future generations.

CLASSROOM AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED

The selected readings were integrated with carefully designed activities to promote self-expression, emotional awareness, and creativity among university students through both classroom and outdoor experiences. *Taking Time* by Loring-Fisher was paired with reflective journaling and mindfulness exercises in natural settings, encouraging students to slow down and cultivate a deeper appreciation for their surroundings. *The Guardian of the Sun* by Lunde inspired group discussions and creative storytelling workshops, allowing students to explore ecological responsibility through imaginative narratives. *The*

Ecopoetry Anthology from the Ginkgo Prize served as a foundation for poetry-writing sessions, where students composed their own ecopoems to express personal connections to environmental themes. The *Lost Soul* by Tokarczuk was accompanied by artistic projects, such as visual storytelling and personal artifact sharing, fostering discussions on disconnection and the importance of mindful living. The activities, which are described in more detail later not only strengthened students' social bonds but also aligned with the principles of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) by promoting self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship skills, ultimately deepening their engagement with environmental and personal transformation.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Personal Object Sharing and Reflection: Students are encouraged to bring an object that holds personal significance to them. This could be an item that brings them joy or comfort, or a photo of something meaningful (e.g., a beloved pet). Students are asked to share the object with the class, explaining why it is significant to them, its origin, and any emotional attachment they have to it. This exercise fosters self-awareness and communication skills, as it provides an opportunity for students to articulate their personal connections to objects and share their stories with others. It also emphasizes the value of simple, non-technological objects, promoting mindfulness and reflection.

Creative Writing and Expression: After sharing their objects, students are tasked with writing a short story centered around their chosen item, expressing their feelings and thoughts about it. This writing activity promotes emotional expression and creative thinking. By reflecting on their favorite items, students engage in a process of self-discovery, connecting their emotions with tangible objects.

Object Exchange and Collaborative Play: All students' objects are collected and displayed in the classroom. This provides an opportunity for students to share, swap, and explore the significance of each other's belongings. Collaborative play is encouraged through the creation of new games involving these items, allowing students to engage in shared experiences and build a sense of community.

Creating a Magic Garden: Students are asked to create a collective "magic garden" using the items they brought. They are invited to name the garden, with options like "Paradise" or "Our Mother Planet," which encourages a sense of collective identity and environmental appreciation. This activity promotes creativity, collaborative thinking, and connection with nature.

Imagining and Drawing Planets: Students are then tasked with drawing two representations: one of a "planet of their favorite items," reflecting their emotional connection to these objects, and another depicting a planet without their cherished belongings. Students reflect on the color schemes, textures, and

features of these planets, which fosters imagination and deepens their emotional awareness of how personal items influence their well-being and identity.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Nature Walk and Memorabilia Collection: The teacher encourages students to take a walk outside the classroom and observe the natural environment. Students are asked to collect a piece of nature, such as a leaf or flower, to bring back to the classroom. Each student must explain why they chose their specific item and discuss the feelings or connections they have to it. This outdoor activity connects students to the environment, promotes mindfulness, and encourages students to reflect on their relationship with nature.

Feelings and Enjoyment Writing: Students are asked to write sentences or paragraphs beginning with prompts such as, “I feel happy when...” or “I enjoy...” This exercise helps students reflect on positive emotions and identify activities, environments, or relationships that contribute to their sense of well-being. It encourages students to articulate their feelings and create connections between emotions and personal experiences.

Needs and Aspirations Writing: Another writing prompt invites students to express their needs and aspirations. Examples include: “I need... because...” (e.g., “I need the seashells because they remind me of the beach”). This activity allows students to explore their desires, motivations, and the underlying reasons for their needs, fostering greater self-awareness and emotional intelligence. It also encourages empathy as students share and listen to one another’s needs.

By integrating both classroom-based and outdoor activities, this project fosters emotional intelligence, creative thinking, and social bonding among students. The activities encourage self-reflection, emotional expression, and a deeper connection to both personal belongings and the natural world. Furthermore, the collaborative elements of the activities promote empathy, social awareness, and teamwork. Through these activities, students not only develop their emotional and social competencies but also cultivate a greater appreciation for the people, objects, and environment around them.

CONCLUSION:

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF NATURE IN EDUCATION

Immersion in nature has long been recognized for its ability to foster personal growth and development. This study underscores the profound impact that nature can have on cultivating a person’s character, particularly in enhancing their natural inclinations for exploration, discovery, curiosity, and imagination. These traits, often stifled by the conventional confines of urban living and structured education, are nurtured through direct interaction with the natural

world. Students who engage with nature experience significant increases in self-confidence and self-esteem, reinforcing the notion that the natural environment serves not just as a physical space, but as a profound source of psychological and emotional development.

The multifaceted and demanding role of teachers in the modern educational landscape cannot be overstated. Teachers are tasked not only with imparting academic knowledge but also with guiding the emotional, social, and personal development of their students. The findings of this study reveal that many students, through their immersion in nature, have come to recognize the urgent need for transformative changes within society. They now understand that the lessons of nature – its resilience, interconnectedness, and cyclical wisdom – offer vital insights into how we might address the pressing challenges of our time, from environmental sustainability to social justice. These realizations point to the potential of nature as a powerful tool in fostering both personal and collective growth.

It is clear from this study that nature's transformative effects go beyond individual development. The lessons it offers have a broader social significance, encouraging young people to think critically about the future and their role in shaping it. As students reflect on nature's inherent wisdom, they acknowledge that the time for radical societal change is now, and the pathway to that change lies in a deeper connection with the environment and an understanding of the lessons it provides.

In conclusion, nature continues to perform its miraculous work, as it has done throughout human history, by nurturing the mind, body, and spirit. Its capacity to spark curiosity, foster imagination, and build self-confidence is unmatched, offering a framework for a more sustainable, compassionate, and thoughtful future. Through education that integrates nature's lessons, we are presented with a unique opportunity to shape individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also emotionally intelligent, socially responsible, and equipped to bring about the radical changes our society so desperately needs.

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