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Pre-Service Teachers' Before and After Typhoon Haiyan Reflections on Sustainability

Panel: Issues in Education

A Science, Technology, and Society (STS) course discusses and attempts to formulate solutions to our sustainability problems. Putting high value on formulating solutions via case studies that must be conducted by students is one sure way in making sustainability come alive. This study aimed at comparing the reflections on sustainability of pre-service teachers before and after Typhoon Haiyan hit the Visayas Region, Philippines on November 8, 2013.

Thirty-one (n=31) pre-service teachers enrolled in STS conducted case studies on the solid waste management practices of one of their classmates' family. The case studies included three phases within six weeks: 1) observation, 2) intervention, and 3) observation. Part of their case study report was stating their reflection on how their case study changed their own practices and their take on sustainability. Four months after Typhoon Haiyan, the students were asked again to give their reflections.

Using thematic analysis, it was found out that the reflections before Typhoon Haiyan were more focused on change of practices in the self and home paradigm. But after the typhoon, the reflections became bigger in scale such that aside from changing only their practices at home (small scale), they wanted to do more activities that encourage others in school and within their communities to: 1) save resources such as paper so trees would not be cut, 2) stop throwing garbage to rivers and seas, 3) stop accumulating things (refuse or reduce), 4) plant trees, 5) stop burning garbage, and 6) stop using plastic and Styrofoam.