

Intra-generational Transmission of Pro-environmental Behaviours and Attitudes

This study examines how environmental education influences household behavior through intra-family transmission of environmental attitudes and actions. Using a randomized field experiment with 1,545 child-parent pairs in Bihar, India, we analyze both direct effects on participants and spillover effects on non-participating family members. Our experimental design creates four distinct groups: a control group, child-only treatment, parent-only treatment, and joint child-parent treatment. This allows us to systematically evaluate the effectiveness of targeting different household members with environmental education. Our findings reveal nuanced patterns of influence within families. We observe spillover effects on non-participating family members, but these effects vary by both the type of behavior measured and the direction of influence. While both parents and children can influence each other's pro-environmental behaviors, we find that children uniquely shape their parents' attitudes toward climate change and perceptions of environmental risks. Interestingly, joint participation by both parent and child does not lead to stronger results than targeting either member individually, suggesting that selective targeting may be more cost-effective for environmental education programs.