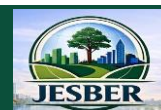


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Research article

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined environmental policy and educational development in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study was guided by three objectives, which focused on environmental policy implementation and teaching and learning effectiveness, environmental education awareness and students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices, and environmental monitoring and enforcement and the provision of a safe and sustainable educational environment. A descriptive research design was adopted, relying exclusively on secondary sources of data. Relevant information was obtained from scholarly journal articles, books, government publications, policy documents, institutional reports, and other credible sources relating to environmental policy and educational development. Data were analyzed through thematic review and content analysis, with evidence organized according to the study objectives. The findings revealed that effective environmental policy implementation can strengthen teaching and learning by improving policy awareness, teacher capacity, curriculum integration, institutional support, and practical environmental activities. The study also found that environmental education awareness contributes to improved students' environmental knowledge and encourages sustainable practices, particularly when learning is supported by practical activities such as waste management, conservation, recycling, and tree planting. In addition, environmental monitoring and enforcement were found to be important for identifying environmental hazards, improving sanitation and waste management, ensuring compliance with environmental standards, and creating safer and more sustainable learning environments. The study concludes that environmental policy is an important instrument for educational development in Cross River State. It recommends stronger policy implementation, continuous teacher training, practical environmental education, regular monitoring, effective enforcement, and greater community participation in school-based environmental sustainability programmes.

KEYWORDS

environmental policy, educational development, environmental education, policy implementation, Cross River State

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INTRODUCTION

Environmental policy refers to the principles, laws, regulations, and actions adopted by governments and institutions to protect the environment, control pollution, conserve natural resources, and promote sustainable development. Globally, environmental policy has become increasingly important because environmental conditions directly influence human wellbeing, economic activities, and the development of educational systems (Ekpo, 2026). Countries such as Sweden, Germany, Japan, and Canada have developed policies that promote environmental sustainability through climate action, waste management, biodiversity conservation, renewable energy, and environmental education. These policies provide frameworks for integrating environmental issues into school curricula and encouraging students to develop knowledge, skills, and responsible attitudes towards environmental protection. Fiorino (2023) explains that effective environmental policy requires coordinated institutional actions and public participation, while Adanma and Ogunbiyi (2024) note that global environmental policies increasingly focus on linking environmental protection with sustainable development and economic growth. Environmental education is particularly important because it equips learners with the knowledge and skills needed to understand and respond to environmental challenges (Uralovich et al., 2023). The growing application of digital tools has also expanded opportunities for environmental learning and sustainability awareness among students and communities (Hajj-Hassan et al., 2024; Eneyo, 2025).

Environmental policy and educational development are increasingly connected to the continent's challenges of deforestation, pollution, climate change, poor waste management, land degradation, and declining biodiversity. Countries such as Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, and Rwanda have introduced environmental education initiatives and policies that encourage schools and communities to participate in conservation and sustainable resource management. In Ghana, for example, environmental education has been linked to community awareness and sustainable management of natural resources, while Rwanda has promoted environmental protection through strong public awareness and community-based environmental programmes. These approaches demonstrate that environmental policies can influence educational development by creating opportunities for schools to participate in environmental management and by integrating sustainability into teaching and learning (Ekpo, 2026; Eneyo & Eneyo, 2025). The connection between education, rural development, and environmental management is particularly important in African communities where livelihoods depend heavily on agriculture and natural

resources (Yu et al., 2024). Similarly, environmental education contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by improving knowledge, attitudes, and practical actions among young people and communities (Velepini, 2025; Eneyo, 2026).

In Nigeria, environmental policy has become increasingly important because the country faces serious environmental problems, including oil pollution in the Niger Delta, flooding in several states, erosion in southeastern Nigeria, deforestation, poor waste disposal, and air pollution in major cities such as Lagos, Kano, Port Harcourt, and Abuja. These challenges have implications for educational development because environmental degradation can damage school facilities, disrupt academic activities, expose students and teachers to health risks, and reduce the quality of the learning environment. Nigerian environmental policies therefore provide an important basis for promoting environmental awareness, sustainable resource use, waste management, and environmental protection within educational institutions. Ibimilua and Ayiti (2024) observe that Nigeria's environmental problems are closely associated with weak environmental management and unsustainable human activities, making stronger environmental policies necessary for sustainable development. Environmental control techniques, preventive management, public awareness, and effective monitoring are also important for reducing pollution and protecting communities (Awewomom et al., 2024). Consequently, the integration of environmental education into Nigerian schools can help learners understand environmental challenges and develop practical skills for addressing them, while effective environmental policies can create safer and more sustainable conditions for educational development.

The relationship between environmental policy and educational development is particularly significant because the state possesses extensive forests, wildlife resources, coastal ecosystems, agricultural land, and ecotourism attractions. Places such as Cross River National Park, Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary, the Great Kwa River, and the coastal communities of Bakassi and Akpabuyo illustrate the environmental resources that require effective protection and responsible use. Environmental degradation, poor waste disposal, forest exploitation, flooding, and other environmental pressures can affect schools and communities and limit sustainable educational development. Studies in the state have shown the importance of environmental education awareness for sustainable farming practices and wildlife conservation, particularly in the Calabar Education Zone (Imoke et al., 2025; Unimtiang et al., 2025). In Calabar, environmental awareness, waste management, public participation, and environmental monitoring have also been identified as important approaches for controlling environmental hazards within the education sector (Edward, 2026). Similarly, research in Ikom Education Zone highlights the importance of environmental leadership and community advocacy in promoting sustainable development goals (Onnoghen, 2026), while studies in central Cross River State emphasize community participation in forest policy governance (Osogi et al., 2026). The management of biodiversity and environmental resources also has implications for community development and ecotourism in the state (Obibessong, 2024; Oyen-Etta et al., 2026). Against this background, examining environmental policy and educational development in Cross River State is necessary for understanding how environmental regulations, awareness programmes, institutional practices, and community participation can contribute to a safer, more sustainable, and more effective educational system.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the growing recognition of environmental policy as an important instrument for sustainable development, the implementation of environmental policies within the education sector remains inadequate. Educational institutions are expected to serve as centres for developing environmental awareness, responsible behaviour, and sustainable practices, yet weak policy implementation and limited institutional enforcement continue to undermine this role. In Cross River State, this problem is evident in concerns about environmental awareness, waste management, environmental monitoring, and sustainability practices within the education sector. Edward (2026) identified the need for stronger public awareness, effective waste management, and environmental monitoring in the Calabar Education Zone, while Egbonyi, Enu, and Omoogun found that green policy awareness among secondary school teachers remains an important issue in the teaching of environmental education.

A further problem is the inadequate knowledge and capacity of teachers and students to understand and apply environmental policies in their daily educational activities. Environmental education is expected to equip learners with the knowledge and skills required to respond to climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, and other environmental challenges. Yet evidence from Cross River State indicates that primary school teachers possess low levels of knowledge of climate change and mitigation strategies, with inadequate training, teaching materials, and clear policy guidelines identified as major constraints. Similarly, research on rural farmers in Northern Cross River State shows that environmental education is needed to improve awareness, attitudes, and participation in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The problem is also reflected in the poor translation of environmental policies and knowledge into practical environmental behaviour within schools and communities. The existence of environmental policies does not automatically guarantee proper waste disposal, conservation, tree planting, pollution prevention, or sustainable use of natural resources. In Akpabuyo, for example, inadequate funding, poor institutional support, and limited

educational outreach have been reported as constraints to effective community environmental education, despite evidence that community environmental services can improve environmental awareness.

Most importantly, the weak connection between environmental policy and educational development creates a serious challenge to sustainable development in Cross River State. The state possesses important environmental resources, including forests, wildlife, coastal ecosystems, and ecotourism sites, yet inadequate environmental awareness, weak institutional support, and limited community participation can threaten these resources and, at the same time, reduce the capacity of educational institutions to prepare learners for environmental challenges. Studies in Cross River State have linked environmental education with sustainable farming, environmental stewardship, and conservation, but gaps remain in translating these initiatives into coordinated policy implementation and educational outcomes. Therefore, there is a clear need to examine how environmental policy influences educational development in Cross River State, particularly in terms of policy awareness, implementation, institutional support, environmental practices, and the capacity of the education system to promote sustainable development.

Objectives of the study

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of environmental policy on educational development in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study seeks to achieve the following specific objectives which include to:

1. Examine the influence of environmental policy implementation on teaching and learning effectiveness in Cross River State.
2. Determine the influence of environmental education awareness on students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices in Cross River State.
3. Assess the influence of environmental monitoring and enforcement on the provision of a safe and sustainable educational environment in Cross River State.

Research questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study in examining the relationship between environmental policy and educational development in Cross River State:

1. To what extent does environmental policy implementation influence teaching and learning effectiveness in Cross River State?
2. To what extent does environmental education awareness influence students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices in Cross River State?
3. To what extent does environmental monitoring and enforcement influence the provision of a safe and sustainable educational environment in Cross River State?

Significance of the study

This study is significant because it provides empirical information on how environmental policy contributes to educational development in Cross River State, Nigeria. The findings will be useful to the Cross River State Government, particularly the Ministry of Education and relevant environmental agencies, by providing evidence on the extent to which environmental policy implementation, environmental education awareness, and environmental monitoring and enforcement affect teaching and learning effectiveness, students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices, and the provision of safe and sustainable educational environments. The study will also help school administrators and teachers understand the importance of integrating environmental issues into teaching, school management, sanitation, waste management, conservation activities, and other educational practices. For students, the study may promote greater awareness of environmental responsibilities and encourage practical behaviours that support environmental sustainability. Community leaders and environmental organizations may also benefit from the findings by identifying areas where stronger collaboration with schools is required to address local environmental challenges. Finally, the study will contribute to existing academic literature on environmental policy and educational development and provide a useful reference for researchers, policymakers, and students conducting related studies in Cross River State and other parts of Nigeria.

Scope and limitations

This study focuses on environmental policy and educational development in Cross River State, Nigeria. It specifically examines environmental policy implementation, environmental education awareness, and environmental monitoring and enforcement as the independent variables, while educational development is assessed in terms of teaching and learning effectiveness, students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices, and the provision of a safe and sustainable educational environment. The study is limited by possible respondents' reluctance to provide accurate information, time and financial constraints, and differences in environmental policy implementation across educational institutions and locations within the state.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Literature review

Environmental Policy Implementation, Teaching and Learning Effectiveness

Environmental policy implementation refers to the translation of environmental laws, guidelines, programmes, and institutional decisions into practical actions within educational institutions. Effective implementation can influence teaching and learning by ensuring that schools have appropriate environmental standards, learning resources, trained teachers, and supportive institutional practices. Damoah and Omodan (2022) observed that effective environmental education policy in South African schools depends on factors such as teacher competence, institutional support, policy awareness, and adequate resources. This suggests that simply developing environmental policies is insufficient if schools lack the capacity and commitment to implement them. Similarly, Izuchukwu and Zino (2025) argue that global education policies can promote environmental sustainability when environmental concerns are incorporated into educational planning and school practices. Therefore, in Cross River State, effective implementation of environmental policies may create a learning environment where environmental issues are integrated into classroom instruction, school activities, and practical learning experiences.

Teaching methods and curriculum practices also determine whether environmental policies produce meaningful educational outcomes. Agbor, Etan, and Akuji (2025) emphasize the importance of practical, participatory, and learner-centred methods in teaching environmental education because they enable students to connect classroom knowledge with real environmental problems. Djirong et al. (2024) similarly found that the implementation of eco-friendly curricula and technologies in Indonesian higher education can strengthen environmental awareness and support the Sustainable Development Goals (Ekpo, 2026). These findings imply that environmental policy implementation can improve teaching and learning effectiveness when policies are supported by appropriate curricula, teaching methods, technology, teacher training, and practical environmental activities. In Cross River State, this may be particularly relevant because schools can use local environmental issues such as deforestation, flooding, waste disposal, biodiversity loss, and coastal degradation as practical learning resources. Thus, the effectiveness of environmental policy implementation is likely to depend not only on the existence of policies but also on how effectively schools translate them into classroom and institutional practices.

Environmental Education Awareness, Students' Environmental Knowledge and Sustainable Practices

Environmental education awareness involves the extent to which students, teachers, and members of the school community understand environmental problems, their causes, consequences, and possible solutions. It is an important foundation for developing environmental knowledge and responsible behaviour among learners. Uralovich, Toshmamatovich, and Nishanbaevna (2023) identify environmental education as a major factor in achieving environmental sustainability because it develops the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to address environmental challenges. Cvetković et al. (2024), in a comparative study of students in Montenegro and North Macedonia, also examined the connection between environmental awareness, knowledge, and safety, demonstrating the importance of students' understanding of environmental issues in promoting responsible environmental behaviour. These findings suggest that higher environmental education awareness can strengthen students' ability to understand environmental problems and make informed decisions about their surroundings.

Environmental education awareness is most valuable when environmental knowledge is converted into practical sustainable practices. Velepini (2025) links environmental education practices with the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, while Saihan and Usriyah (2025) found that green school initiatives can cultivate environmental awareness among elementary school learners by exposing them to practical sustainability activities. In Cross River State, Unimtiang, Onnoghen, and Efut (2025) similarly emphasize environmental education strategies as an important means of promoting wildlife resource conservation in the Calabar Education Zone. These studies suggest that environmental awareness should extend beyond theoretical knowledge to activities such as proper waste disposal, recycling, tree planting, wildlife protection, energy conservation, and responsible use of natural resources. Consequently, effective environmental education awareness in Cross River State schools may improve students' environmental knowledge and encourage sustainable practices that extend from the school environment to their homes and communities.

Environmental Monitoring, Enforcement and the Provision of a Safe and Sustainable Educational Environment

Environmental monitoring involves the continuous observation and assessment of environmental conditions to identify hazards, pollution, poor sanitation, waste management problems, and other risks that may affect schools and their surrounding communities. Enforcement ensures that established environmental rules and standards are followed by educational institutions and other relevant actors. Singh et al. (2026) explain that green policies in education can foster environmental stewardship when institutions establish systems that support compliance and sustainable practices. Similarly, Duran and Saqib (2024) demonstrate the importance of

environmental policies, green innovation, and effective environmental governance in improving environmental quality. These perspectives indicate that environmental policies require continuous monitoring and enforcement to produce meaningful outcomes. Where schools are not regularly monitored or environmental standards are poorly enforced, problems such as indiscriminate waste disposal, unsafe sanitation, pollution, and environmental degradation may persist and negatively affect teaching and learning.

The provision of a safe and sustainable educational environment requires schools to maintain acceptable standards of sanitation, waste management, environmental safety, and resource conservation in the communities (Ekpo, Bissong, Eteng and Eyo, 2024). Abuokwen et al. (2025) describe community environmental education as an important instrument for environmental protection, suggesting that awareness and participation can strengthen environmental management. Prayogo and Ratnaningsih (2024), in their review of environmental education practices in Indonesia, similarly show the importance of school-based environmental practices in promoting sustainability. In Cross River State, these concerns are particularly important because schools operate within communities affected by issues such as flooding, poor waste disposal, forest degradation, and biodiversity loss. Effective monitoring and enforcement can therefore help schools identify environmental risks, ensure compliance with environmental standards, and maintain healthier learning spaces (Monity, Ekpo and Uwe, 2025). The implication is that environmental monitoring and enforcement should be viewed not merely as regulatory activities but as important mechanisms for protecting students and teachers while creating an educational environment that supports sustainable development.

Theoretical Framework

Environmental Education Theory

Environmental Education Theory is associated with the work of William B. Stapp and colleagues (1969), who conceptualized environmental education as a process aimed at developing a population that is aware of and concerned about the environment and its associated problems, with the knowledge, attitudes, skills, motivation, and commitment to work toward solutions. The theory assumes that environmental knowledge can influence awareness, awareness can shape attitudes, and appropriate education can encourage individuals to participate in environmental problem-solving. It also assumes that environmental learning should connect classroom knowledge with real-life environmental conditions and practical action. The theory is relevant to this study because it provides a basis for examining how environmental education awareness influences students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices. It also supports the argument that schools can contribute to environmental sustainability by exposing students to environmental issues and encouraging responsible practices such as waste management, conservation, and protection of natural resources.

Policy Implementation Theory

Policy Implementation Theory is strongly associated with Pressman and Wildavsky (1973), particularly their work on the challenges involved in translating public policies into practical outcomes. The theory assumes that the success of a policy depends on effective coordination, adequate resources, clear objectives, institutional capacity, communication, and commitment among implementing actors. A policy may therefore fail to achieve its intended objectives when there are gaps between policy formulation and actual implementation. This theory is relevant to the present study because environmental policies require effective implementation, monitoring, and enforcement within educational institutions before they can contribute meaningfully to educational development. It provides a useful framework for examining whether environmental policies in Cross River State are adequately implemented and whether such implementation improves teaching and learning effectiveness and contributes to the provision of safe and sustainable educational environments.

METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive research design based entirely on secondary sources of data. The design was appropriate because the study sought to examine environmental policy and educational development in Cross River State through existing information rather than collecting primary data from respondents. The study focused on environmental policy implementation, environmental education awareness, environmental monitoring and enforcement, and their implications for teaching and learning effectiveness, students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices, and the provision of a safe and sustainable educational environment.

Data were obtained from relevant secondary sources, including published journal articles, books, government policy documents, official reports, educational and environmental publications, and credible institutional databases. Particular attention was given to materials relating to Nigeria and Cross River State, while relevant international and African studies were used to provide broader perspectives. The sources were selected based on their relevance, credibility, recency, and direct connection to the study variables. Information from these

sources was systematically reviewed, compared, and synthesized to identify major patterns, findings, gaps, and implications concerning environmental policy and educational development.

Data analysis involved thematic review and content analysis of the selected literature and documentary sources. Information was organized according to the three major areas of the study, namely environmental policy implementation and teaching and learning effectiveness, environmental education awareness and students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices, and environmental monitoring and enforcement and the provision of a safe and sustainable educational environment. Findings from different sources were compared to establish areas of agreement, differences, and gaps in existing knowledge.

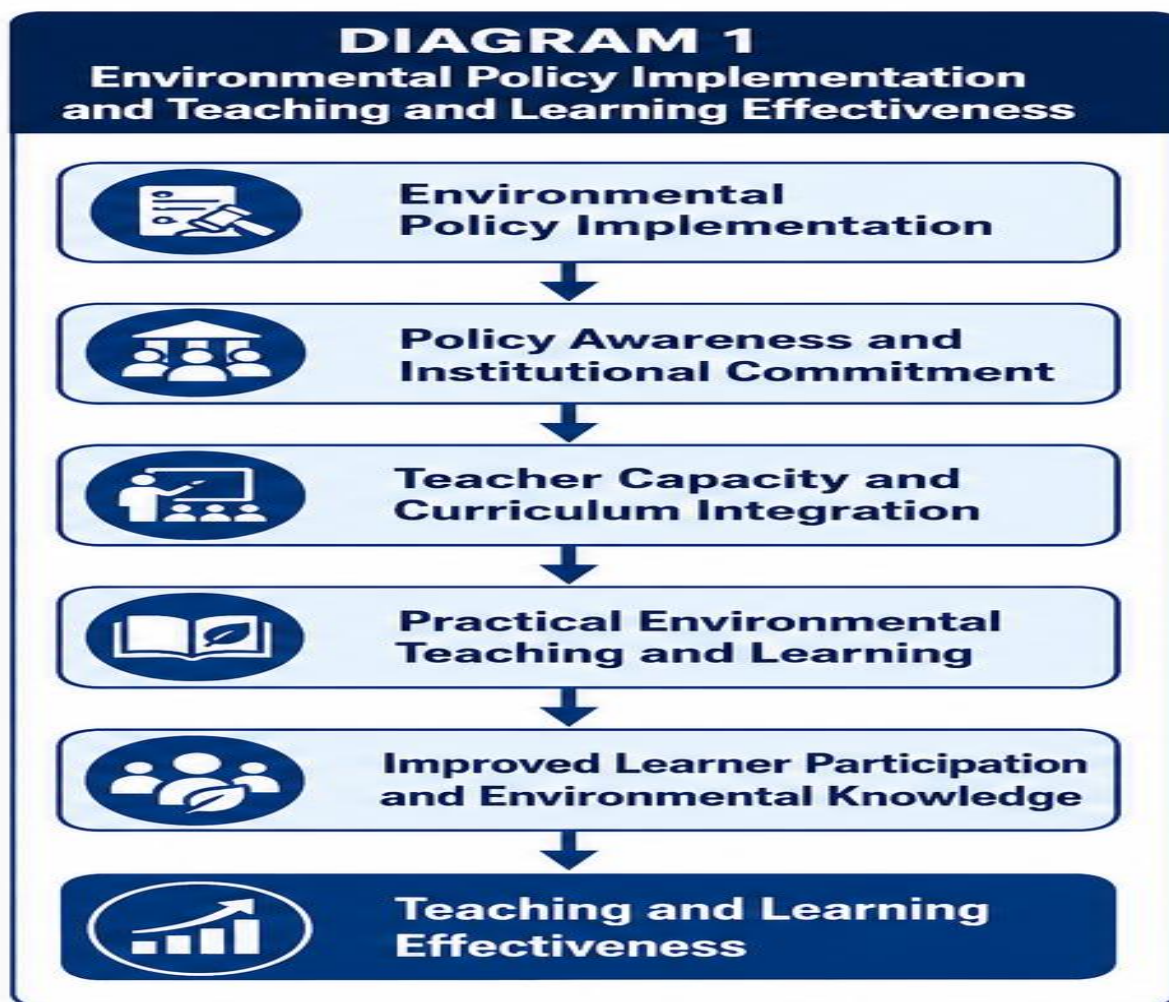
DISCUSSION

Influence of environmental policy implementation on teaching and learning effectiveness in Cross River State

Table 1: Thematic findings on environmental policy implementation and teaching and learning effectiveness

Theme	Evidence from reviewed literature	Implication for teaching and learning
Policy awareness	Environmental policies are more effective where teachers and school administrators understand their objectives and requirements (Damoah & Omodan, 2022; Izuchukwu & Zino, 2025).	Improves teachers' ability to integrate environmental issues into classroom activities.
Teacher capacity	Effective environmental education requires trained teachers with appropriate teaching methods and resources (Agbor et al., 2025; Damoah & Omodan, 2022).	Strengthens quality of environmental instruction and learner participation.
Curriculum integration	Eco-friendly curricula help incorporate sustainability into formal teaching and learning (Djirong et al., 2024; Prayogo & Ratnaningsih, 2024).	Makes environmental issues part of regular learning rather than occasional activities.
Institutional support	Successful implementation depends on institutional commitment, resources, technologies, and administrative support (Djirong et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2026).	Creates conditions that support effective teaching and practical learning.
Practical application	Environmental policies are more meaningful when learners participate in practical environmental activities (Agbor et al., 2025; Unimtiang et al., 2025).	Connects classroom knowledge with real environmental problems.

The reviewed literature indicates that environmental policy implementation has a positive influence on teaching and learning effectiveness when policies are translated into practical activities within schools. The evidence shows that the existence of an environmental policy alone does not guarantee improved educational outcomes. Effective implementation requires teachers who understand environmental issues, appropriate teaching methods, curriculum integration, institutional support, and access to relevant learning resources. Damoah and Omodan (2022) identified teacher competence, policy awareness, and institutional conditions as important determinants of effective environmental education policy, while Agbor et al. (2025) emphasized practical and participatory methods for teaching environmental education. Evidence from Indonesia also demonstrates that eco-friendly curricula and technologies can strengthen environmental awareness within educational institutions (Djirong et al., 2024). For Cross River State, the implication is that stronger implementation of environmental policies could improve teaching and learning by making environmental issues part of regular classroom instruction and practical school activities.

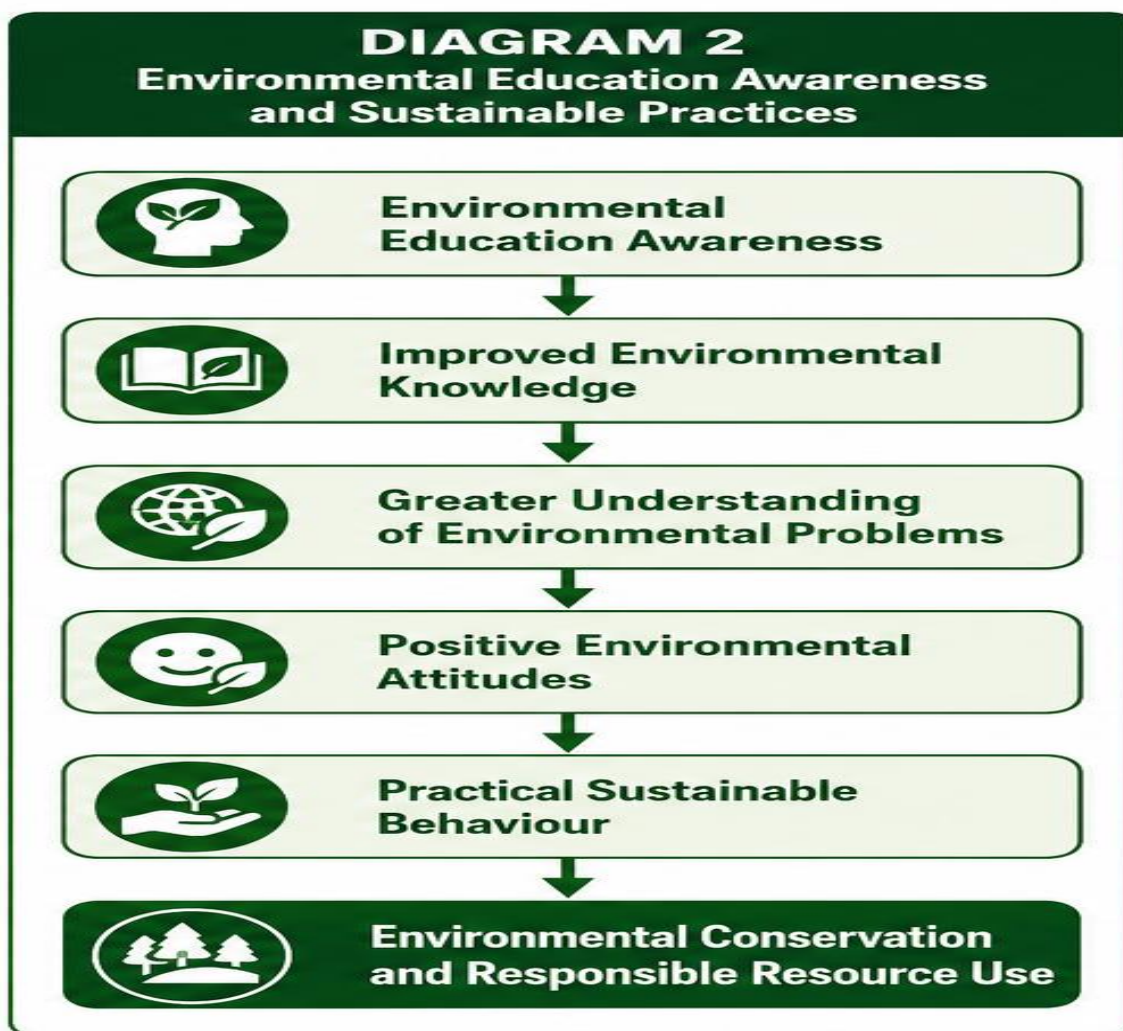


Influence of environmental education awareness on students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices

Table 2: Thematic findings on environmental education awareness, environmental knowledge and sustainable practices

Theme	Evidence from reviewed literature	Implication for students
Environmental awareness	Environmental education increases awareness of environmental problems and their consequences (Uralovich et al., 2023; Cvetković et al., 2024).	Enables students to recognise environmental problems within their communities.
Environmental knowledge	Environmental education develops knowledge about conservation, pollution, climate change, and environmental safety (Cvetković et al., 2024; Velepini, 2025).	Improves students' understanding of environmental issues and possible solutions.
Behavioural change	Awareness is more effective when accompanied by opportunities for practical environmental action (Saihan & Usriyah, 2025; Agbor et al., 2025).	Encourages responsible environmental behaviour.
Conservation practices	School-based environmental education can promote conservation of wildlife and natural resources (Unimtiang et al., 2025; Velepini, 2025).	Supports biodiversity protection and sustainable resource use.
Community extension	Environmental knowledge acquired in school can influence practices beyond the school environment (Abuokwen et al., 2025; Yu et al., 2024).	Encourages students to transfer sustainable practices to homes and communities.

The findings from the reviewed literature show that environmental education awareness is strongly associated with improved environmental knowledge and the development of sustainable practices among students. Environmental education provides learners with knowledge about environmental problems while helping them understand their personal and collective responsibilities towards environmental protection. Uralovich et al. (2023) identify environmental education as a major foundation for environmental sustainability, while Cvetković et al. (2024) demonstrate the importance of environmental awareness and knowledge in shaping students' understanding of environmental safety. The evidence further suggests that awareness produces stronger outcomes when students are given opportunities to apply what they learn through activities such as waste management, tree planting, wildlife conservation, recycling, and energy conservation. In Cross River State, Unimtiang et al. (2025) specifically linked environmental education strategies with wildlife resource conservation in the Calabar Education Zone. The overall finding is that environmental education awareness can improve students' environmental knowledge and encourage sustainable practices, particularly when classroom learning is combined with practical environmental activities.



Influence of environmental monitoring and enforcement on the provision of a safe and sustainable educational environment

Table 3: Thematic findings on environmental monitoring, enforcement and a safe educational environment

Theme	Evidence from reviewed literature	Implication for educational institutions
Environmental monitoring	Continuous monitoring helps identify pollution, sanitation problems, waste management deficiencies, and other environmental hazards (Singh et al., 2026; Duran & Saqib, 2024).	Allows schools to identify and address environmental risks early.
Policy enforcement	Environmental standards require enforcement to ensure compliance by institutions and relevant stakeholders (Damoah & Omodan, 2022; Singh et al., 2026).	Promotes adherence to environmental rules and standards.
Waste management	Effective environmental management requires proper waste handling and environmental awareness (Abuokwen et al., 2025; Prayogo & Ratnaningsih, 2024).	Reduces pollution and creates cleaner school surroundings.
Environmental safety	Environmental education and safety awareness contribute to healthier learning environments (Cvetković et al., 2024; Abuokwen et al., 2025).	Protects students and teachers from avoidable environmental hazards.
Sustainability	Green school policies and institutional environmental practices support long-term sustainability (Saihan & Usriyah, 2025; Singh et al., 2026).	Promotes environmentally responsible school management.

The reviewed evidence indicates that environmental monitoring and enforcement are important for creating safe and sustainable educational environments. Monitoring enables educational institutions and relevant authorities to identify environmental hazards, assess compliance with established standards, and take corrective measures where necessary. Enforcement is particularly important because environmental policies may have limited impact when schools and other stakeholders are not required to comply with established standards. Duran and Saqib (2024) demonstrate the importance of effective environmental policies and governance in improving environmental quality, while Singh et al. (2026) emphasize institutional green policies as mechanisms for promoting environmental stewardship and sustainable practices. Similarly, Abuokwen et al. (2025) highlight environmental education and community participation as important instruments for environmental protection. In the context of Cross River State,

effective monitoring and enforcement could therefore improve sanitation, waste management, environmental safety, and resource conservation within schools. The overall finding is that consistent monitoring, supported by effective enforcement and environmental awareness, is necessary for maintaining educational environments that are safe, healthy, and supportive of sustainable development.



CONCLUSION

The study concludes that environmental policy plays an important role in educational development in Cross River State. Effective policy implementation, environmental education awareness, and consistent environmental monitoring and enforcement can improve teaching and learning, strengthen students' environmental knowledge and sustainable practices, and promote safer and more sustainable educational environments. The findings also indicate that the effectiveness of environmental policies depends largely on adequate institutional support, teacher capacity, practical environmental education, and proper enforcement.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the Cross River State Government and relevant educational authorities should strengthen the implementation and enforcement of environmental policies in schools, provide regular environmental education and capacity-building programmes for teachers, and integrate practical environmental activities into school curricula. Schools should also establish effective waste management, environmental monitoring, sanitation, and conservation practices, while encouraging students and surrounding communities to participate actively in environmental protection and sustainability programmes.

DECLARATIONS

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Informed consent: Not applicable.

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