

# Why Moral Education Matters for Science Museums: An Environmental Ethical Perspective

Chih-Cheng LIN

Junior Technician, National Science & Technology Museum

## Abstract

Museums in Taiwan have made great efforts on environmental education over the last decade, conspicuously science museums. Given the relationship among science progress, technology usage, and environmental issues, e.g., energy usage, water resources, and climate change; science museums are suitable for promoting environmental education. A large extent of environmental education programs offered in science museums focus on the environmental knowledge, thereby expecting the participants to take actions on environmental crisis. However, previous studies indicate that knowledge does not guarantee eco-friendly attitudes or environmentally responsible behaviors. Therefore, this article, takes an environmental ethical perspective, attempts to provide insight for science museums engaging in environmental education by elucidating the importance and possibility of moral education fusing into environmental education.

In this article three parts are discussed. First, I draw on critiques and reflections to the technology from the philosopher Heidegger and Marcuse, particularly the concept of technological rationality, to reveal the potential problems of knowledge-based environmental education. Second, I explain that the contemporary environmental crisis is value-based and the role of environmental education is to deliver eco-friendly values. Third, I argue that instilling moral values for environmental education could facilitate pro-environmental behavior.

In conclusion, this article asserts that moral education deserves attention and has implications in science museums' environmental education practice.

Keywords: Science Museum, Environmental Ethics, Environmental Education, Moral Education