



Inika 2021 - behavioural impacts of environmental films

Goals for the year

Inika used her school research project to investigate whether environmental films impact people's behaviour and to what extent. She surveyed teachers, students, friends and YEC members and found David Attenborough documentaries had impacted people the most. This was not unexpected, as there are so many.

She divided all the films people named into genres and found documentaries had the most impact, while fictional movies like Wall-E or The Lorax had less impact. The feature of these films that impacted people's behaviours the most was involving them emotionally, like having scenes that made people upset or really angry, which was linked to powerful imagery, the second most common factor. Other factors were: fact-based, showing consequences, strong narrative, solution based.

In the initial survey - broad, multiple-choice questions with quick answers to make it easy for lots of people to respond - the last question asked if people were willing to watch a film and respond to questions afterwards. Inika then asked this group to fill in a pre-survey then watch one of three films - 2040 (documentary movie), Fight for planet A (3-part ABC documentary series) and Avatar (feature film movie) - then fill out a post-survey about their emotions after watching the films.

People said they were often motivated and hopeful after watching, but also frustrated or depressed. A month after watching, Inika sent out a follow-up survey to see if any of the behaviour changes people reported after watching the films were long-term or just immediate. She also asked people how they thought environmental films could be improved in order to make them more influential on people's sustainability behaviours. People mainly wanted films to be more relevant to them personally, because they felt many films didn't address the things they wanted to be addressed.

Next steps

As head of her school media team, Inika has started planning and filming her own environmental movie, based on her 2020 project working on a critically endangered plant called *Spyridium fontis-woodii*. So far the team have interviewed some people who helped in that project including someone from the Botanic Gardens. We look forward to viewing the final product.