

## **A Comparative Study on Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude among Secondary School Students of Pathanamthitta District in Kerala**

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### **Abstract**

The present world is witnessing a number of environmental crises, which are result of unmindful and thoughtless exploitation of resources by human beings. There is an urgent need to create an Environmental Awareness among all human beings to conserve and protect the nature. The study was conducted on a random sample of 600 Secondary School Students of Pathanamthitta District in Kerala. The Environmental Awareness ability measured by P.K Jha and Environmental Attitude measured by Environmental Attitude scale prepared by the investigator was used to collect data. The findings of the study indicated that Environmental Awareness has positive with Environmental Attitude among students. The result clearly indicate that a strong relationship between the Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude. Female students have high Environmental Attitude compared to male Secondary School Students.

**KEYWORDS:** Environmental Attitude, Environmental Awareness, Environmental Education

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Environmental Awareness is necessary to know the importance of keeping the environment clean and protecting the earth. Environment includes not only physical or material aspect but psychological, social and cultural aspect as well. Thus environment consist of material and non material surrounding of human beings. Man is a part of nature and hence cannot exert control over nature on the basis of his face-well. When he tries to break the natural laws of nature he is bound to face the serious consequences. Environmental crisis or maladies are the foremost and the most persistently challenging problems which are ready to devour the glories of human existence and are ready to wipe out the human civilization from earth. The present century is witnessing such problems of environment crisis which are nothing but creation of a greedy human society which wants to exploit nature beyond any reasonable limit. Dominantly operative environmental maladies today always active in informing man to think seriously and choose a way between creative and progressive existence or be ready for annihilation.

Environmental problems are one emerging problems for all over the world. Development is natural process but it creates a lot of other difficulties related to environment. The country has to develop in every field of life such as economical development, science and agriculture. Urbanization increased day by day very rapidly.

Environmentalists have taken up an environmental protection aspects in a serious way. It has taken a very strong position after the United Nations Conference on Human

Environment at Stockholm in 1972, which was major event for those concerned with the quality of the world's environment.

In School curriculum, the main aim of science education is the conservation of nature and it is the part of civic responsibility. At the school level, several activities like seminars, symposium etc are being organized as part of science club, Eco club, etc under the supervision of the teacher for the inculcation of basic idea of environmental conservation among children. This inturn aims at the development of environmental values, knowledge, attitude and awareness. Various environmental organizations also support this.

Education is an important tool for the development of individual society as well as nation. Environmental education is very important to all people. Educational institutions may organize different programme for awareness from time to time. We can make our future prosperous and happy by controlling the pollutants. We must use our natural resources properly and live a peaceful life. Different other agencies may organize programme for awareness for giving Environmental Education. It is necessary to develop right attitude among people. Not only lecture on specific topic but it is the time to change the mentality of youths.

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

“A Comparative Study on Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude among Secondary School Students of Pathanamthitta District in Kerala”

#### **NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Today Environment Awareness is very important topic for discussion and lots of conferences and seminars are being held at various levels. The environment and energy related problems cannot be solved unless students are aware of them, because the students are the future citizens of our country. It is an essential need for each individual to develop an awareness of protection and preservation of the environment.

Environment Education is an important tool though which the goals for awareness can be achieved easily. Environmental Education is aimed at producing a citizenry that is knowledgeable concerning the biophysical environment and its associated problems, to aware of how to help solve these problems, and to motivate to work towards their solution (Stapp et al,1969). Environmental education acts as an indispensable tool in the battle against the degradation of living environment. It has an appeal; to launch an International Environmental Education Programme (United Nations, 1972).

A strong Environmental Education system which has its footing on strong environmental pedagogy is what it is required at present at all levels of education. Teachers with the right attitude and a will to equip the future generations to enable them imbibe the virtues of Sustainable Development are to take lead.

Hence by considering the vision of Honorable Supreme Court to make Environmental Education as a compulsory subject, and the lacunae in policy decision

during the implementation phase of this subject, the present study has been undertaken to study the Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude level among secondary school students of Pathanamthitta district in Kerala

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the relationship between Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude among Secondary School Students.
2. To compare the Environment Attitude of male and female Secondary School Students.

### METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

**Population:** Population for this study is 9<sup>th</sup> standard secondary school students.

**Sample:** The investigator selected a simple random sample from the population. The sample of the study is 600 9<sup>th</sup> standard Secondary School Students.

**Tool:** The following tools were used for the collection of required data.

- (i) **Environmental Awareness Ability Measure (EAAM):** In the present study 'EAAM' by Dr. Praveen Kumar Jha used. The present tool purports to measure the extent and degree of awareness of people about environmental pollution and its protection. Reliability of the tool was determined by test re-test method. To determine the validity the coefficient of correlation was found to be 0.83. The tool also possesses content and face validity since each item was judged by experts.
- (ii) **Environmental Attitude Scale (EAS):** In the present study the Environmental Attitude Scale was prepared and standardized by the investigator. The reliability of the tool was estimated by split half (0.84) and test re-test (0.76), which was quite satisfactory. The EAS appears to have content validity and the method supports his supposition.

**Statistical techniques used:** In addition to the general descriptive statistical analysis, other treatment such as t-test and correlation used to achieve the objectives of the study.

### ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

**Table1. Relationship of Environmental Awareness and Attitude towards Environment**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Coefficient of Correlation(r)
Environmental Attitude	300	49.33	9.902	0.527*
Environmental Awareness	300	37.22	6.919	

0.01level\*

The table shows that there total sample was 600 secondary school students (300 boys and 300 girls). The mean score of Environmental Attitude and Environmental Awareness is 49.33 and 37.22 respectively, where as the standard deviation (SD) 9.902 and 6.916 respectively. The estimated coefficient of correlation is 0.527, which is significant at 0.01 levels.

Hence the results clearly indicate that a strong relationship between the Environmental Awareness and Attitude towards Environment.

**Table 2. Compare the Environmental Attitude of Male and Female Secondary School Students**

	Gender	Number	Mean	SD	't' value	Significant
Environmental Attitude	Male	300	49.33	9.902	3.408	significant
	Female	300	52.14	10.291		

0.01level\*

Table 2 shows that the mean of 300 female and male secondary school students are 52.14 and 49.33, the SD is 10.292 and 9.902, the mean of female secondary school students (52.14) is higher than the male students which indicates that the environmental attitude was found better in female than male.

## RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

- The result clearly indicate that a strong relationship between the Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude.
- Female students have higher Environmental Attitude compared to male secondary school students

On the basis of the findings of this study, it could be seen that there is strong relationship between Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude. Results of the findings also revealed that there is significant difference on the Environmental Awareness between boys and girls. Girls have higher Environmental Attitude than that of boys. This findings supported with the previous findings of Shahnawaj(1990), Patel(1995), Szagun and Pavlov(1995) and Tripathi (2000) who reported that gender has an effect on the level of students Environmental Awareness.

## EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATION

On the basis of single study, it will be add to suggest some educational implications of the present study.

- Value oriented education in the light of Environmental Awareness should be provided and thereby create Environmental Attitude in students.
- In addition to formal system of education some elements of Environmental Awareness programme should also incorporate in school curriculum.

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