

A Comparative Study of Attitude of High School Students towards Environmental Education In Relation to their Gender and Type of School

Geeta Rani

Assistant Professor Gaur Brahman College of Education, Rohtak, India

Abstract

The present investigation was focussed on to find out the difference in the attitude towards environmental education among male and female students of government and public schools. A sample of 100 students (50 male + 50 female) studying in government and public schools of Hansi city was taken as a sample on the basis of random sampling method. Environmental Attitude Scale by Prigya Aggarwal and Kumari Anita was used to collect the data. 't' test was used to analyse the difference statistically. The findings of the investigation reveals : (i) There is no significant difference between the attitude of high school male and female students towards environmental education; (ii) There is no significant difference between the attitude of Govt. School boys and girls students towards environmental education; and (iii) There is no significant difference between the attitude of public school boys and girls students towards environmental education.

KEYWORDS: Environmental Education, Male, Female, Government and Public School.

Introduction

The man has a long – standing relationship with the universe. He is born in the Universe. He lives and dies in it. It is not only difficult rather impossible to separate him from the universe and its influences. In order to save himself from the cruelties of weather, at first, he learnt to live in caves and then raise houses for him self to live in. Similarly, in order to protect his body from snow and heat, he learnt to dress up, at first with the leaves of trees, skin of animals and then with clothes. This quite well indicates that he adopted himself and his behaviour to harmonise with the environment. However, with the passing of time, with the development of intellect, with experimentation and new modes of living, he learnt to modify the environment for his comfort as well as pleasure. The uncontrolled increase in population and the ambition to raise the standard of living have taken a heavy toll on our natural resources; be they forests, rivers, fertile soils or marine wealth. This constant depletion of natural wealth is the cause of disturbance in the delicate ecological balance. Many steps are taken to improve the state of environment. But environmental education is one important and essential step to inculcate a positive and caring attitude in the present and next generation regarding their environment.

Environmental Education

Environmental Education is the process of recognizing values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the inter relatedness among man, his culture and his biophysical surroundings. It is a way of implementing the goals of environment protection.

In real sense it takes into account the three inter-linked components, which comprise the theme:

- *Education about environment,*
- *Education for the environment,*
- *Education in or through environment*

According to Sharma (2004), the EE at the level of Higher secondary school stage shall be effective teaching, practical field oriented for assimilation of knowledge, identification of the problem leads to action oriented skills. Environmental awareness implies knowledge about environment and inculcates values and required skills to solve environmental issues and it is a initial step leading to carry responsible citizenship behavior (Sengupta, Das and Maji, 2010).

Aim of Environmental Education

Polluted environment is posing a major threat to human race and planet earth. No one nation can be blamed for the rising cases of environmental pollution as its impact is global one. This increasing deterioration of the environment has caused a global concern about conservation and protection of the earth. Hence, efforts are being made continuously to spread environmental awareness. The main aim of environmental education is to develop a human race that is aware of and concerned about the environment and the problems the world is facing. To promote knowledge, skill, attitude and motivation to work collectively to procure solutions to the ongoing problems of environment, it is education that can make human being conscious and knowledgeable about environment and related problems. The students must have awareness about environmental problems and their ideas to improve the present scenario of environment should be promoted by providing environmental education.

Review of Related Literature

Bhalla (2008) found that concept attainment model has affected student the most. After that Inquiry training model of teaching was found helpful in increasing the environmental awareness while the traditional modal was at the last place. **Chaudary (2010)** indicated that girls have high level of Awareness and Attitude towards environmental Education than the boys. Tamil Medium students have high level of Awareness and Attitude towards environmental education than the English Medium students. Students those who were economically categorized in high level, their attitude of environmental education is better than the other categorized students etc. **Aminrad et al. (2013)** concluded that a high level of awareness and knowledge plus positive attitude of students may come have been achieved from the families of respondents, teachers, media, private reading and school curriculums regarding the environment that increases the environmental view among students as well as overall in the society. **Mutisya et al. (2013)** found that most pupils had positive attitude regarding environmental education, environmental conservation, interdependence between man and other organisms, conservation of natural resources, management of solid wastes and protection of forest lands. **Ghosh (2014)** observed no significant difference in environmental awareness and attitude towards environmental education among the secondary school male and female students; but in case of rural and urban student the attitude towards environmental education was found significant. The relationship between environmental awareness and attitudes towards environmental education among the students was found strong and positive. **Panth, Verma, & Gupta (2015)** found no significant difference in attitude towards environmental awareness among boy and girl undergraduate students. **Dhanya and Pankkajam (2015)** concluded that there is a significant difference in environmental awareness among secondary school student between the groups based on eco club. **Kaur, Kang,**

and Sharma (2016) revealed that girls possessed more environmental ethics as compared to boys. In locale differences urban adolescents were found to be more environment sensitive as compared to rural adolescents. **Patra and Panda (2017)** revealed that awareness about sustainable development was differed in respect of gender and location of students. **Kaur and Kaur (2017)** revealed that there was no significant mean difference in environmental awareness in relation to gender and caste but location had significant effect on environmental awareness among adolescents.

Need of the Study

Today man is living in a world of crises. The social, economical, political and value crises are some of the threats which are quite alarming. Added to this, in the recent decades, the environmental crisis has become another important factor, which has made everyone in the world to think of its gravity. Through the environmental dimension has its own history, it has gained prominence in the recent past due to several reasons such as : urbanization, industrialization, automation and population explosion, along with population and many other factors which have made man a helpless victim. Many steps are taken to improve the state of environment. But environment education is one important and essential step to inculcate a positive and caring attitude in the present and next generation regarding their environment. The immediate environments of a child both at home, school and play a crucial role in the formulation of their attitudes towards their natural, cultural, political and psychological surroundings. For the school going children environmental education is more important therefore scientific attitude and clean habits can be developed in them through environmental education. Hence, it is necessary to know how for the school students are aware and concern about environment and its problem. So the investigator felt the need to compare the attitudes of high school students of two types of schools i.e. Government and Public.

Statement of the Problem

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ATTITUDE OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN RELATION TO THEIR GENDER AND TYPE OF SCHOOL

Objectives

- To compare the attitude of high school male and female students towards environmental education.
- To compare the attitude of Govt. school boys and girls students towards environmental education.
- To compare the attitude of Public school boys and girls students towards environmental education.

Hypotheses

- There is no significant difference between the attitude of high school male and female students towards environmental education.
- There is no significant difference between the attitude of govt. school boys and girls students towards environmental education.
- There is no significant difference between the attitude of public school boys and girls students towards environmental education.

Research Methodology

- A) **Sample:** Using random selection, 100 high school students from government and public schools were selected for the present work.
- B) **Tools:** Attitude Scale by Dr. Pragya Aggarwal and Kumari Anita was used to collect the data.
- C) **Method:** Detailed survey method was used to collect the data.
- D) **Statistical techniques:** Mean, S.D. and 't' test was employed to study the attitude of High School students of different schools.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Table 1
Comparison of attitude scores of High School Male and Female students towards Environmental Education

Group	N	M	SD	SED	't' value	Levels of Significance
Male	50	178.14	16.29	3.247	0.07	N.S.
Female	50	178.37	16.19			

N.S. = Not significant

A perusal of Table 1 shows that the calculated 't' value is 0.07, which is not significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance this means that these two groups do not differ significantly regarding their attitude towards environmental education. Therefore the null hypothesis No. 1 stating that there is no significant difference between the attitude of male and female students towards environmental education is retained.

Table 2
Comparison of attitude scores of Govt. School Boys and Girls students towards Environmental Education

Group	N	M	SD	SED	't' value	Levels of Significance
Boys	25	175.48	18.67	4.532	0.83	N.S.
Girls	25	171.68	12.85			

N.S. = Not significant

A perusal of Table 2 shows that the calculated 't' value is 0.83, which is not significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance. This means that these two groups do not differ significantly regarding their attitude towards environmental education. Therefore the null hypothesis No.2 stating that there is no significant difference between the attitude of Govt. school boys and girls students towards environmental education is retained.

Table 3
Comparison of attitude scores of Public School Boys and Girls students towards Environmental Education

Group	N	M	SD	SED	't' value	Levels of Significance
Boys	25	181.4	12.32	3.97	1.14	N.S.
Girls	25	185.96	15.57			

N.S. = Not significant

A perusal of Table 3 shows that the calculated 't' value is 1.14, which is not significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance. This means that these two groups do not differ significantly regarding their attitude towards environmental education. Therefore the null hypothesis No. 3 stating that there is no significant difference between the attitude of Public school boys and girls students towards environmental education is retained.

MAIN FINDINGS

- There is no significant difference between the attitude of high school male and female students towards environmental education.
- There is no significant difference between the attitude of Govt. School boys and girls students towards environmental education.
- There is no significant difference between the attitude of public school boys and girls students towards environmental education.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The results of the present investigation indicate that there is no significant difference in the attitude of male and female students towards environmental education. These results also support the findings of other studies like Ghosh (2014) on secondary school male and female students, Panth et al (2015) on undergraduate students and Kaur and Kaur (2017) on adolescents. The probable reason may be that these days' boys and girls are brought up with equal care, love and attention. Girls are also becoming aware of the world around them. They can understand and explain the current issues equally well. They are equally aware of the threat posed by environment pollution. They know that if it is not checked well in time the results may be disastrous. They know if they have to stay healthy and live happily they must know their environment, causes of environment pollution and the remedial majors which can be taken to check the environment pollution.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The present investigation has its educational implications for the teachers, educational planners, administrators and research workers. Teachers and parents should try to make the students aware of the environment. They should be encouraged to read good books on environment. The causes of environment pollution should be brought to the notice of the children so that remedial measures can be taken. Children can contribute significantly in conserving the environment. They should be guided as to how they can conserve it. i.e. students should be made aware of the threat posed by polythene bags, plastic objects and waste material which lead to the soil pollution and become the root cause of several problems. This is the important message of environment conservation, which the investigator wants to give through this humble piece of research.

The investigator recommended that environmental education implementations in primary/secondary education to be contextualized so as to inculcate environmental attitudes and values that provoke learners to think about local environmental issues and make decisions regarding protecting their local environment. Special awareness programme in the form of seminar, symposium, camps and field visits should be arranged for the students, parents and also masses. Apart from these, environmental education should be included in the curriculum of every stream, so that after receiving this type of education the students will be able to expand the environmental education in society. There is a dire need of practical oriented education to the students to

develop sustainable practices like tree plantation, reuse of rain water, alternative for the use of plastics, need of safe and clean drinking water and also promotion of environmental awareness among the people by participation in rallies, celebrating world environment day, water day, etc. The efforts can be better achieved by taking cooperation of local bodies, clubs, NGO and young generation. In nut shell, the investigation elaborates there is a better scope for environmental protection activities among school students.

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