

A Study of Environmental Awareness and Attitude among College Students of Delhi.

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Abstract

This study focuses on environmental awareness and attitude among college students in Delhi. It evaluates the awareness and attitude of a group of 200 from 5 colleges. The figure to 200 is considered the representative of these students and the selection was based on Stratified Random sampling method Environment Awareness Ability Measure was applied as instrument for data collection. The results revealed that environmental awareness was overall moderate while environmental attitude was high. The study also found that there was no significant difference observed between sex groups while environmental awareness results indicated that there were significant differences among different levels of education. This trend was in contrast with observation for environmental attitude status. The age groups analysis results revealed significant difference in environmental awareness and attitude. It was also found that the media positively affected the level of environmental awareness and attitude among students. The study concluded that increase on age and level of education would improve the level of awareness and attitude regarding to environmental issues.

Keywords: environmental awareness; environmental attitude; environmental education; college student.

Introduction:

It is our foremost duty to conserve our environmental resources. The ultimate goal of environmental education whether it is formal or non-formal is to create awareness among the citizens of a country. This can be understood by the quotation mentioned in the Belgrade Charter.

It emphasizes the basic aim of environmental education as, "To develop a world population that is aware of and concerned about the environment, its associated problems, so that the population will have the knowledge, skill, attitudes, motivation and commitment to work individually and collectively towards the solutions of current problems and prevention of new ones" (UNESCO IEEP Environmental Education Series 6, 1990).

In the world of increasing population coupled with the increase in human activities which is carried out using modern technology, resources, and energy for development result in environmental quality deterioration. Especially now at global level degradation of natural resources and environment has been a serious threats to the survival of human being. This has happened due to accelerated rate of deforestation with rapid industrialization and urbanization, intensive agriculture, over exploitation, overgrazing, mining and other human activities which result in the degradation of land and other natural resources.

Today the problems of environmental degradation become worst than ever before posing serious threat on the sustainable existence of life on the surface of the earth. This result in rising environmental concerns among people for the last few years, especially, now environmental degradation becomes matter of concern for many people and most of them have an immediate and intuitive sense of urgent need to built sustainable future. This urgent need for finding a solution to the pressing environmental problems leads to the recognition of the importance of education as one of the solution to the problem in the world. Because education is very important in shaping the ethical values and consciousness within the human self towards their surroundings, as education includes knowledge and awareness of individual towards the significance of environment. Thus the awareness towards the protection and conservation should be developed with in each human self, so that they can prevent themselves from ruin the chain of ecology.

Besides, people will make an effort to protect and conserve this nature once they realize their responsibility towards their environment. Within the perspective of students, their awareness about the importance of environment enables them to protect this earth from the entire degradation. Not only this, the management of environment can only possible through having a right type of attitude and awareness towards such issues and related matter. Accordingly development of such awareness and attitude can be possible through environmental education. Because education is a very important social instrument and means that serves as a catalyst in changing all aspects of life. Mostly education provides knowledge, awareness, skills, attitude and values that are helpful to have a quality of life. Environmental education seeks to make pupils fully aware of the problems connected with the environment and motivate them to tackle those problems with a sense of responsibility and with technical skills that will enable them to contribute to the solution for those problems.

The present government designed a policy on environmental education and awareness to create a society that has knowledge, attitude, skill, motivation and commitment to enable them to work individually and collectively towards the solution of the current and future environmental problems. In this case one of the policy issues shows the initiation to inclusion of EE in the formal education that “to promote the teaching of environmental education on a multi disciplinary basis and to integrate into the ongoing curricula of schools and colleges and not treat it as a separate or additional subject, though this should also be done at tertiary level”.

Here, the researcher is convinced that, it is important to study students' awareness Attitude among College Students because they the future and protector of the environment. Logically the then college students are tomorrow's leaders and decision makers in every development sector. Thus it is reasonable that behavioural change towards the environment will not be difficult and more effective if students are environmentally well informed, aware, initiated and had attitudinal change. Beside, it is often ascertain that awareness and attitude towards environment.

General Objective:

The general objective of the study is to assess students' awareness and attitude about environment.

Specific Objectives:

The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the level of students' awareness about environment.
2. Examine the relationship between students' environmental awareness and attitude.
3. Examine the difference in students' awareness and attitude about environment based on: gender, level and academic stream.

Hypothesis:

To achieve the intended general and specific objectives of this study the following basic hypothesis are raised:

1. To find out the level of students' awareness about environment.
2. There is no relationship between students' environmental awareness, and attitude.
3. There is no difference in students' awareness and attitude towards environment according to: A. Gender, B. Academic stream C. Level.

Significance of the Study:

Whole world is now affected by serious environmental degradation. Therefore, to have successful conservation and rehabilitation of the environment, there is a need of having the right type of awareness and attitude about the environment by the citizens. Thus, this study provides information about students' awareness and attitude about environment whether environmental education should be incorporated in the curriculum or not. In addition it gives information that may initiate other researchers to investigate deeply on the problem.

Method of the Study

To fulfil the objectives Normative Survey Method of research was used.

Population of Study

Population for the purpose of this study has been defined as all the boys and girls studying in 5 colleges of Delhi.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A representative sample was taken by using simple random sampling technique. In the sample there were 100 college students' i.e.50 boys and 50 girls.

Tools used in the study

In the present study the following tools were used to collect the data:

- Environmental Awareness Ability Measure test developed by Dr. Praveen Kumar Jha.(Reliability-.84 and Validity-.83)
- Environmental Attitude tool developed by Dr. N.N Shrivastva and Shashiprabha Dubey. (Reliability-.78 and Validity-.75)

Statistical Technique

The following Statistical techniques were used for the calculation and interpretation of data: Percentile, Mean, SD, Z-test, and Correlation.

Analysis and interpretation of the Result:

1. Objective: To find out the level of students' awareness about environment.

Procedure: The awareness level of college students was calculated in terms of percentile. The observed percentiles of students were as follows:

Table-1 Percentiles of Awareness

Range of percentile of students on awareness level	No. of Student
89.5-99.5	45
79.5-89.5	35
69.5-79.5	11
59.5-69.5	9
Total	100

2. Objective: To Study the relationship between students' environmental awareness and attitude

Procedure: For testing this hypothesis coefficient of correlation was calculated. Results shown below in the table:

Table-2 Relationship between students' environmental awareness and attitude.

No of Students	Degree of freedom (N-2)	Coefficient of correlation between Environmental Awareness And Attitude.	Critical Value at 0.01
100	99	0.27	0.228

Interpretation: The magnitude of 'r' indicates there is positive correlation between Environmental Awareness and Attitude. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant and positive relationship in Environmental Awareness and Attitude of College Student.

3. (i) Objective: To find out whether there is any difference in Environmental Attitude of boys and girls College students.

Procedure: Z –test was calculated for this. Results shown below in the table:

Table-2 Comparisons of Environmental Attitude of boys and girls College students.

Students	N	Mean	SD	Z-Value	Critical Value at 0.01 level
Boys	50	68.04	5.26	.004	2.58
Girls	50	67.98	8.40		

Interpretation: The critical value of Z-test is 2.58 at 0.01 levels. The observed value is .004, which is less than critical value and therefore null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is a no significant difference in Environmental Attitude of boys and girls College students.

3. (ii) Objective: To find out whether there is any difference in Environmental Awareness of boys and girls College students.

Procedure: Z –test was calculated for this. Results shown below in the table:

Table-2 Comparisons of Environmental Awareness of boys and girls College students.

Students	N	Mean	SD	Z-Value	Critical Value at 0.01 level
Boys	50	42.8	5.98	1.11	2.58
Girls	50	42.84	5.19		

Interpretation: The critical value of Z-test is 2.58 at 0.01 levels. The observed value is 1.11, which is less than critical value and therefore null hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is a no significant difference in Environmental Awareness of boys and girls College students.

3. (iii) Objective: To find out whether there is any difference in Environmental Attitude of Science and Non- Science College students.

Procedure: Z –test was calculated for this. Results shown below in the table:

Table-2 Comparisons of Environmental Attitude of Science and Non Science College students.

Students	N	Mean	SD	Z-Value	Critical Value at 0.01 level
Non Science	50	55.29	5.75	4.93	2.58
Science	50	62.14	5.9		

Interpretation: The critical value of Z-test is 2.58 at 0.01 levels. The observed value is 4.93, which is more than critical value and therefore null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference in Environmental Attitude of Science and Non- Science College students.

3. (iv) Objective: To find out whether there is any difference in Environmental Awareness of Science and Non- Science College students.

Procedure: Z –test was calculated for this. Results shown below in the table:

Table-2 Comparisons of Environmental Awareness of Science and Non-Science College students.

Students	N	Mean	SD	Z-Value	Critical Value at 0.01 level
Non-Science	50	42.29	5.98	5.93	2.58
Science	50	42.84	5.19		

Interpretation: The critical value of Z-test is 2.58 at 0.01 levels. The observed value is 5.93, which is more than critical value and therefore null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference in Environmental Awareness of Science and Non- Science College students.

3. (v) Objective: To find out whether there is any difference in Environmental Attitude of Undergraduate and Postgraduate level of students.

Procedure: Z –test was calculated for this. Results shown below in the table:

Table-2 Comparisons of Environmental Attitude of Undergraduate and Postgraduate level of students.

Students	N	Mean	SD	Z-Value	Critical Value at 0.01 level
Undergraduate	50	55.29	5.75	4.27	2.58
Postgraduate	50	62.14	5.9		

Interpretation: The critical value of Z-test is 2.58 at 0.01 levels. The observed value is 4.27, which is more than critical value and therefore null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference in Environmental Attitude of Undergraduate and Postgraduate level of students .

3. (vi) Objective: To find out whether there is any difference in Environmental Awareness of Undergraduate and Postgraduate level of students.

Procedure: Z –test was calculated for this. Results shown below in the table:

Table-2 Comparisons of Environmental Awareness of Undergraduate and Postgraduate level of students

Students	N	Mean	SD	Z-Value	Critical Value at 0.01 level
Undergraduate	50	42.29	5.98	5.91	2.58
Postgraduate	50	42.84	5.19		

Interpretation: The critical value of Z-test is 2.58 at 0.01 levels. The observed value is 5.91, which is more than critical value and therefore null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is a significant difference in Environmental Awareness of Undergraduate and Postgraduate level of students.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the study show that

- There was no significant difference observed between sex groups towards Environmental Awareness & Environmental Attitude.
- The significant positive correlation between Environmental Awareness & Environmental Attitude shows that it is quite often that students having more Awareness towards Environment are having proper Attitude towards Environment. Therefore the media positively affected the level of environmental awareness and attitude among students.
- There was significant difference observed between different academic group students as well as level of education towards Environmental Awareness & Environmental Attitude. Science students are more aware as well has positive attitude towards Environment. There were significant differences among different levels of education. The level of education improves the level of awareness and attitude regarding to environmental issues.

On the basis of the study we get information about students' awareness and attitude about environment and decide that environmental education should be incorporated in the curriculum for proper attitude development and awareness .

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