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A STUDY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG B.Ed. STUDENTS OF DEHRADUN DISTRICT, UTTARAKHAND

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ABSTRACT

Today the environmental degradation is a matter of great concern before human society. Both developing as well as developed countries are facing severe environmental problems. In the developmental process man has been ruthlessly exploiting natural resources and polluting natural environment. The major problem of our present world is environmental degradation. To combat this problem, we need environmentally sensitive and aware people. The present investigation was conducted to find information about the level of environmental awareness of B.Ed students in Dehradun district of Uttarakhand (India). It was found that their level of environmental awareness was remarkable high.

Keywords: Environmental Awareness, Degradation, Pollution, Uttarakhand

INTRODUCTION

According to the Universal encyclopedia, the sum total of all conditions, agencies and influences, which affect the development, growth, life and death of an organism, species or race is called environment. Duglass and Roman Holland opined that environment is a word which describe, in the aggregate, all of the external forces, influences and conditions which affect the life, nature, behavior and the growth, development and maturation of living organism. Indeed environment covers all the outside factors that have acted have been acting on the living being in general and humans in particular since they began life.

The environment for man is its surroundings on the earth. In the known universe, the earth is only planet that is gifted with life by the Absolute. It is man's supreme duty and responsibility to protect the environment. Man cannot afford to ignore environmental degradation. It is a matter of survival or suicide. The United Nations conference on environment and development held in Rio De Janerio in 1992, known as 'Earth Summit' brought the issue of rapid environmental degradation and climate change to the center stage and highlighted the reasons for this and called upon the world community to take immediate suitable steps. Same warnings were given by Johannesburg Summit in 2002.

Earth is the only planet in this universe which has been gifted with life supporting vital elements; water, food, land and air and a rich bio-diversity of flora and fauna bestowed with aesthetic, commercial and medicinal values that are of the utmost significance to human beings.

Life on this planet- earth has been possible only because of its environment and it is depends on natural resources; forest, water, minerals, foods, energy and land. Forests, one of the most important natural resources cover the earth like a green blanket. Water, is indispensable natural resource on this earth for the survival of living beings. Minerals which form a very important part of any nation's economy occur naturally in inorganic and crystalline solids. Land is a finite and valuable resource upon which we depend for our food, fiber and fuel wood- the basic amenities of life. But, unfortunately this planet i.e. the Earth which used to be reservoir of nature's wealth is loosening its resources because of lack of for sightedness on the part of human beings in the name of development, industrialization, greater production, agricultural extension etc. Development has become

synonymous with growth. Greater production has become the key to prosperity and peace. The ill effects of industrialization and deforestation for agricultural extension are now apparent. Only recently human beings realized the extent of damage done to the earth and the environment.

Since the evolution of man on the earth, he had been dependent on the environment. Initially, the human population was small and its need limited. Therefore his activities did not affect the environment. Much slowly, he settled down, became civilized and learnt how to cultivate. As time passed, the development, of science and technology made the life more and more comfortable and man also became more and more ambitious. With such development, human dependence on environment increased, he consumed more resources and the effect of his activities on the environment became more and more visible. With the industrial revolution the consumption of raw material such as wood, minerals, coal and fossil fuels increased tremendously and with the passage of time the pollution of air, water and soil became visible. This made the man more conscious of his actions and their consequences. Slowly, it was realized that the existence of human race itself was in danger and to survive as a race it was necessary to educate the people about the environmental pollution. This led to the development of concept of environmental education.

Environmental education is a process of providing learning experiences to obtain knowledge, understanding, skills and awareness with desirable attitudinal changes about man's relationship with his natural and manmade surroundings [8]. This includes over population, pollution, resource allocation, transportations, technology and urban and rural planning. Environmental education must utilize diverse learning environment and a broad array of educational approaches to teaching learning process. It should help learners to discover the symptoms and real causes of environmental problems and thus to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. Environmental education should be a continuous life long process, beginning at the pre-school level and continuing through all formal and non-formal stages of getting education and should be interdisciplinary in its nature.

The Stockholm conference in 1972 at Stockholm adopted "Declaration on the human environment" and "Declaration of principles". In short, the declaration states that the men are both creator and molder of his environment and the protection and improvement of human environment is a major issue for the survival of human race. His capability to transform his surroundings should be used wisely. In developing countries most of the environmental problems are caused by lack of proper education. At the very outset, special attention must be paid to the school going children and women. They are to be made aware of health, nutrition, sanitation, hygiene, development, water and food contamination, fodder and fuel wood etc. Non-Government Organization (NGO's) has to play a significant role in environmental awareness programmes. There are 200 NGO's which work in the area of environmental education and awareness. The chief goals of environmental education in India must be: i) To minimize the environmental pollution, ii) To improve the quality of the environment and iii) To create awareness towards environmental protection. There are several authors like [1-13] have studied and given his views about the Environmental Awareness of the students.

Sharma (1998) investigated attitudes and awareness of primary and upper primary school teachers towards problems and issues related to environmental education [14]. The sample comprised of 750 teachers of 16 primary and 16 upper primary schools from 6 districts of Rajasthan. The sample was selected with the help of stratified cluster sampling method. The researchers developed environmental awareness test and environmental awareness scale for data collection. The data were analyzed with the help of t-test. The findings of the study were:

i) The male teachers had more favorable attitude towards environmental education than their female counterparts. ii) The graduate teachers had more favorable attitude towards environmental education under graduate teachers. iii) The urban and rural teachers could not be distinguished so far as their attitude

towards environmental education was concerned. iv) The teachers with science background had more favorable attitude towards environmental education than their colleagues with non-science background. v) The male teachers had more awareness about the environment than their female counterparts. vi) The environmental awareness and environmental attitude were positively related.

Das (2002) studied the development of environmental awareness through the study of life science in the secondary schools of West Bengal, with the help of three sets of questionnaires (especially meant for students, teachers and parents).[15] A part from survey, curriculum analysis was also made. The study found heterogeneity among the groups in terms of their perceptions of environmental awareness. It was also observed that several approaches related to life science helped in enhancing environmental awareness among the students.

Agnihotri (2004) examined environmental awareness in teacher trainees.[16] The sample comprised of 700 teachers trainees from Bundelkhand University. Environmental awareness ability measure test by Dr. Praveen Kumar Jha was used for data collection. The data were analyzed by t-test, ANOVA, point bi-serial, correlation and regression analysis. The findings of the study were: i) High awareness was found in teacher trainees. ii) No significant difference in male & female teacher trainees was found in environmental awareness. iii) Urban teacher trainees were found to have more environmental awareness as compared to rural teacher trainees. iv) Post graduate teacher trainees were found to have more awareness as compared to graduate teacher trainees. v) No significant difference in environmental awareness was found between general & other backward class teacher trainees. vi) High environmental awareness was found for teacher trainees of high socio-economic status where as low environmental awareness was found for teacher trainees of low socio-economic status.

Saheb lal (2011) conducted a study on environmental awareness study habits and academic achievement of B.Ed. students.[17] The sample of the study included 214 B.Ed., Male Teacher Trainees selected randomly from Karnataka University Jurisdiction. The study revealed that i) The B.Ed., male teacher trainees with extravert personality had more environmental awareness than male teacher trainees with introvert personality.

B.Ed. students are would be teachers. They would have to sensitive the school going children regarding environmental issue. The investigator thought it useful to first find the level of awareness of prospective teachers i.e. B.Ed. students themselves.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the level of environmental awareness of B. Ed students
2. To compare the levels of awareness of B. Ed students with special reference to gender.
3. To compare the levels of awareness of B. Ed students with special reference to their locality (rural urban).

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Proposed research hypotheses are as under-

Ho_1. There is no significant difference between the levels of awareness of urban male and rural male B. Ed students.

Ho_2. There is no significant difference between the levels of awareness of urban female and rural female B. Ed students.

Ho3. There is no significant difference between the levels of awareness of urban male and urban female B. Ed students.

Ho4. There is no significant difference between the levels of awareness of rural male and rural Female B. Ed students.

Sample- A sample of 300 B.Ed. students was selected from various B.Ed. colleges of Dehradun district using random sampling techniques.

METHODOLOGY

In the present study the investigator has adopted the descriptive survey method of research. To measure the environmental

awareness a tool- Environmental Awareness Ability measure Test (EAAMT) constructed and standardized by Jha, P.K., has been used. Suitable statistical techniques have been adopted for the analysis of data.

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In the following table, various basic statistics of the distribution of the environmental scores are given:

Table 1.Various Basic Statistics for the Distribution of Environmental Awareness Scores

Sr. No.	Statistics	Value
1	Sample Size	300
2	Range	51
3	Mean	43.76
4	Median	43.84
5	Mode	43.23
6	Quartile Deviation	2.39
7	P_{10}	37.70
8	P_{90}	47.80
9	SD	3.74
10	Skewness	-1.08
11	Kurtosis	0.2366

Interpretation: Statistics calculated for sample are represented in the above table 1. It is apparent from the table that the mean, the median and the mode are almost same. Obviously the raw scores indicate that the distribution is approximately normal. Raw scores distribution indicates slightly negatively Skewness, (-1.08). It means the mean (43.76) of the scores is less than the median (43.48). It implies that more than 50% scores are above the mean score of the group. A kurtosis of 0.2366 suggests that the distribution is leptokurtic as the calculated value is less than the normal value i.e. (0.263).

Ho_1. There is no significant difference between the levels of awareness of urban male and rural male B. Ed students.

Table no2: Mean score of Urban male and Rural male pupil teachers on Environmental awareness scale

S.N.	Variable	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation(SD)	Degree of Freedam(df)	't' Value	Significance Level
1	Urban Male	83	43.20	3.62	148	0.093	Non-significant at 0.05 level
2	Rural Male	67	43.14	4.23			

It is apparent from table 2 that obtained difference between the means of urban male B.Ed. students and rural male B. Ed students is 0.06 (i.e. 43.20-43.14); and the standard deviations are 3.62 and 4.23 respectively. The obtained 't' value is 0.09 at 148 degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significance. This value of calculated 't' is less than the table value of 't' (i.e., 1.98). Thus the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in environmental awareness of urban-male B.Ed. students and rural male B.Ed. students is therefore accepted.

Ho_2. There is no significant difference between the levels of awareness of urban female and rural female B.Ed students.

Table no.3: Mean score of Urban female and Rural female pupil teachers on Environmental awareness scale

S.N.	Variable	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation(SD)	Degree of Freedam(df)	't' Value	Significance Level
1	Urban female	92	43.28	3.93	148	0.20	Non-significant at 0.05 level
2	Rural female	58	43.43	4.35			

From table 3, it is clear that the obtained difference between the means of urban female B.Ed. students and rural female B.Ed. students is 0.15 (i.e., 43.43-43.28); and the standard deviations are 4.35and 3.93 respectively. The calculated't' value is 0.20 which is far below that the table value of 't' (i.e., 1.98) at 0.05 level of significance and at 148 degrees of freedom.

Thus the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in environmental awareness of rural female B.Ed. students and urban female B.Ed students is therefore accepted.

It is concluded that the level of awareness of rural female B.Ed. students is more or less same as that of urban female B.Ed. students.

Ho3. There is no significant difference between the levels of awareness of urban male and urban female B.Ed students.

S.N.	Variable	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation(SD)	Degree of Freedam(df)	't' Value	Significance Level
1	Urban Male	83	43.20	3.62	173	0.137	Non significant at 0.05 level
2	Urban female	92	43.28	3.93			

Table no. 4: Mean score of Urban male and Urban female pupil teachers on Environmental awareness scale**.**

It is clear from Table no.4 that the obtained't' value 0.14 is far below than the table value of 't' at 0.05 level of significance and at 173 degree of freedom. Thus the hypothesis which states that there is no significance difference in environmental awareness of urban male B.Ed. students and urban female B. Ed. Students is therefore

This indicates that the level of awareness of urban female B. Ed. students (M=43.28) is significantly not higher than that of urban male B. Ed. students (Mean=43.20).

Ho4. There is no significant difference between the levels of awareness of rural male and rural Female B. Ed students.

S.N.	Variable	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation(SD)	Degree of Freedam(df)	't' Value	Significance Level
1	Rural male	67	43.14	4.23	123	0.276	Non-significant at 0.05 level
2	Rural female	58	43.43	4.35			

Table no.5: Mean score of rural male and rural female pupil teachers on Environmental awareness scale

Table 5 clearly reveals that the obtained't' value 0.28 is significantly not higher than the table value of 't' at 0.05 level of significance and at 120 degree of freedom. Thus the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in environmental awareness of male and female B.Ed. students is therefore accepted. This indicates that the level of awareness of rural female B.Ed. students (Mean = 43.43) is significantly not higher than that of rural male students (M=43.14).

CONCLUSIONS

The B. Ed. Students of Dehradun district of Uttarakhand have remarkably high level of environmental awareness. With regard to sex, it is revealed that the level of environmental awareness of male and female B. Ed. student is almost same. The study further reveals that the level of environmental awareness of urban students high as that of rural B. Ed. Students.

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