



ATTITUDE OF PG STUDENTS TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: A PILOT STUDY

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to determine the awareness and attitude of Post Graduate students towards environmental issues. The present study is based on primary data and the required sample of 75 respondents for pilot study has been selected through convenience sampling technique. The PG student of MSRIT has been selected as a sample for the study. The study found that majority of the students are interested to know about the significance of environmental sustainability and are also willing help the society to acquire basic understanding of environmental protection. The results of the correlation analysis show a significant relationship between the students' concern towards the environmental issues and their willingness to work towards environmental protection.

Keywords: Environment, Issues, Protection, Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

The educational institutions are following the mandate of supreme court ruling and UGC and have accordingly made environmental education as a mandatory subject in the curriculum(The Hindu,June10,2004).However ,the amount of awareness among the individuals about the environmental protection needs to be studied. Due to industrialization, rapid urbanization and excess growth in population accompanied with poverty, it is need of the hour to study about the attitude of individuals towards environmental protection. As it is a known fact that today's youth is the future of the nation and the majority of today's youth are students, the role of students in creating a sustainable environment is very significant. Before studying the role of students in building sustainable environment, the level of understanding towards the students' attitude on environmental awareness is very essential. In this context, the present study is an effort to understand the attitude of students towards the environmental protection.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Due to the poor environmental management practices, the environment problems are becoming serious in our country (Bowonder,1986) . The present environment scenario of Karnataka is changing due to rapid urbanization, industrialization, migration, population growth, poverty etc . The present environmental status is affecting the quality of available natural resources and hinders the quality of living. (State of Environment reports (2012)) Environmental dispossessions affects the living condition of the individual and results in many problems. Therefore, there is a great need to protect and preserve our environment. At present as per 2011 census our country has the maximum number of students in the world (The times of India, July 3, 2014) .In this context; the present study is an effort to understand the attitude of PG students towards the environmental protection.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study about the attitude of students with reference to environmental protection helps to create awareness among the students about the significance of creating a sustainable environment for the present and future generation. The significance of environmental awareness also makes the students to realize their role in maintaining a healthy living environment. The study also makes an attempt to determine the levels of concern the students show towards the environmental issues. Accordingly, the study determines the level of students' interest in conserving the environment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Though some researchers have taken an attempt to study the role of school students in environmental participation, the study concerning the attitude of PG graduate students regarding the environmental issue is very meagre. The summary of existing literature about the participation of students in environmental awareness is as follows.

Mathivanan & Pazhanivelu(2013) conducted a study find out the correlation between environmental ethics and participation in environmental activities among higher secondary students. To achieve the objective of the study, 1000 higher secondary students studying in Virudhachalam Educational District were selected as a sample through random sampling technique. The study found that the higher secondary students possess high environmental ethics and extends higher level of participation in



environmental activities and there is significant relationship between environmental ethics and participation in environmental activities of higher secondary students.

Thote (2013) conducted a case study to determine the attitude of students towards environmental awareness and also to study the role of students in supporting environmental education. The study was conducted with the students of classes IX and X of a private co-educational school Narsingarh. The study found that the role performed by the students in strengthening environmental education is not up to the mark. The study also found that students are not having adequate awareness and talent for identifying and solving the potential problems.

Khan (2013) made an effort to understand the attitude of Senior Secondary school students towards environmental awareness. The main objective of the study was to determine the level of environmental awareness of Senior Secondary School students of Aligarh city. The required data has been collected from the sample of 200 students. The study found that there is no significant difference between the gender of the respondents and their level of environmental awareness. The study also found that there is a significant difference in the environmental awareness of the students studying in private and government senior secondary schools of the same city.

Choudary (2010) made an attempt to study Attitude towards awareness of Environmental Education among B.Ed. College Students in Chennai City. The main focus of the study was to investigate the association of Awareness and Attitude of Environmental Education among B.Ed. college students. The required data has been randomly collected from the sample of 404 teacher trainees from 6 B.Ed. colleges from Chennai city. The findings of the study reveals that girl students and Tamil medium students have more level of environmental awareness than the boys and English medium students. The study also found that the students' who belongs to high economic class has more concern on the environment.

Sharma(2006) studied the level of Environmental Awareness of College Students in relation to Sex, region and academic streams. The study was carried out in with the students of Government degree college Dharamsala, Kangra district, Himachal Pradesh. The required data has been collected from the sample of 180 students through convenient random sampling. The study found that all the selected students have some amount of involvement in environmental awareness.

Ghosh (2014) made an attempt to study the level of environmental awareness and attitudes towards environmental education among Secondary School students of Golaghat district in the state of Assam. Survey has been conducted from the sample of 200 students. The collected data has been analyzed using Z test and Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation. The study found the existence of strong positive correlation between environmental awareness and attitude towards environmental education as a result of introducing Environmental education as a compulsory subject in the curriculum.

Ibrahim and Asmawi (2012) made an attempt to understand the level of Awareness towards Environmental Issues and Concern among Students in Tertiary Level in Kualalumpur. The study has been conducted with 451 students from various universities in Malaysia. The study found that majority of the students of tertiary level opined that the environmental issues are very significant because the environment is in a appalling condition and it can be saved through individual contribution.

Summary : From the above reviews ,it is concluded that majority of the researchers have taken an attempt to do the study with the school students and only limited number of studies were conducted with the college students particularly PG students.Hence the present study is an effort to analyze the awareness and attitude of PG students at MSRIT towards environmental protection .

OBJECTIVES

- To determine the level of interest of the students to know about the significance of environmental sustainability.
- To determine the level of interest of the students to help the society to acquire basic understanding of environmental protection.
- To determine the level of concern of the students towards the environmental issues.
- To determine the level of interest of the students to work towards environmental protection.
- To identify the relationship between the students' concern towards the environmental issues and their willingness to work towards environmental protection.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on primary data. The required primary data on the subject of the respondents' level of interest in environmental protection, respondents' level of concern about environmental issues and respondents' level of interest in contribution in environmental protection has been collected using structured questionnaire method. A sample of 75 Post Graduate students has been selected using convenience sampling.

Hypothesis framed

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between the respondents concern towards the environmental issues and their willingness to work towards environmental protection.

LIMITATIONS

Being a pilot study and due to time constraints ,only 75 responses were collected and hence deeper insights about the respondents' opinion towards other environmental issues were not studied.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table - 1, Demographic Profile of the respondents

Age of the respondents		
Age	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	51	68%
26-30	17	23%
>30	7	9%
UG degree of the respondents		
Degree	Frequency	Percentage
BE	18	24%
Arts	9	12%
Science	10	13%
Commerce & Management	38	51%
Gender of the respondents		
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	46	61%
Female	29	39%

From the above Table 1, it is interpreted that majority of the students (68%) fall under the age group 26-30. Majority of the students (51%) belongs to commerce and management back ground and only 12 % belongs to arts background. Majority (61 %) of the students are male and only 39 % are female.

Table – 2, Commutation Mode

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Walk	24	32%
Bike	33	44%
Car	5	7%
Public Transport	13	17%
Total	75	100%

From the above Table 2, it is interpreted that majority (44 %) of the students commute to college by bike followed by walk (32%) and only 7 % of the respondents comes to college by car.

Table - 3 , Percentage of respondents educated about environmental protection

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	57	76%
No	18	24%
Total	75	100%

From the above Table 3, it is interpreted that majority (76%) of respondents are educated about environmental protection.



Table - 4 , Predominant Source responsible for educating about environmental protection

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Home	16	28%
school	19	33%
NGO	4	7%
College	18	32%
Total	57	100%

From the above Table 4, it is interpreted that schools (33%) and colleges (32%) are a predominant source responsible for educating about environmental protection.

Table – 5, Percentage of respondents participated in environmental awareness campaign

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	45	60%
No	30	40%
Total	75	100%

From the above Table 5, it is interpreted that majority (60%) of respondents have participated in environmental awareness campaign

Table 6: Level of interest of the respondents to know about the significance of environmental sustainability

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Highly interested	24	32%
interested	48	64%
neutral	2	3%
Not interested	1	1%
Highly not interested	0	0
Total	75	100%

From the above Table 6, it is interpreted that 64% of the respondents are interested to know about the significance of environmental sustainability and only 1 % of the respondents are not interested.

Table -7 Level of interest of the respondents to help the society to acquire basic understanding of environmental protection

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Highly interested	26	35%
interested	34	45%
neutral	9	12%
Not interested	6	8%
Highly not interested	0	0%
Total	75	100%

From the above Table 7, it is interpreted that 45% of the respondents are interested to help the society to acquire basic understanding of environmental protection and only 8 % of the respondents are not interested.

Table 8: Respondents perception regarding most accountable entity for ensuring a healthy environment

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Industry	9	12 %
Public	25	33 %
Government	8	11 %
Individuals	26	35 %
NGO	7	9 %
Total	75	100%

From the above Table 8, it is interpreted that 35% of the respondents perceives “individuals “as the most accountable entity for ensuring a healthy environment, followed by public at large.



Table -9 , Respondents concern/worry towards the environmental issues

Particulars	Very High	High	neutral	low	Very low
Polluted drinking water	40	28	6	1	0
	53%	37%	8%	2%	0%
Emission from automobiles	39	33	2	1	0
	52%	44%	3%	1%	0%
Sanitation/sewage issues	42	29	4	0	0
	56%	38%	6%	0%	0%
Food contaminants	34	34	5	2	0
	45%	45%	7%	3%	0%
Industrial emission & effluents	32	26	11	6	0
	43%	35%	14%	8%	0%
Electromagnetic waves from cell phone towers	29	22	20	4	0
	39%	29%	27%	5%	0%
Garbage and dump yards	40	20	15	0	0
	53%	27%	20%	0%	0%
Noise from vehicles	29	32	10	4	0
	39%	42%	13%	6%	0%
Usage of plastic	39	24	6	4	2
	52%	32%	8%	6%	2%
Street dogs	24	36	9	4	2
	32%	48%	12%	6%	2%
Littering/spitting on road	37	23	13	2	0
	49%	31%	17%	3%	0%

From Table 9, it is interpreted that 96 % respondents are concerned about emission from automobiles, 90 % respondents are concerned about polluted drinking water, 94 % of respondents are concerned about sanitation and sewage issues, 90% of the respondents are concerned about food contaminants, 84 % of the respondents are concerned about the usage of plastic. From the above table it is inferred that the respondents are concerned about all the environmental issues.

Table -10, Respondents interest to work towards environmental protection

Particulars	SA	A	neutral	D	SDA
Willingness to serve voluntary for environmental protection	20	47	8	0	0
	27%	62%	11%	0%	0%
Educating the surrounding society about the proper disposal of garbage and sewage effluents	24	48	3	0	0
	32%	64%	4%	0%	0%
Avoid doing things that causes damage to the environment.	26	40	6	3	0
	35%	53%	8%	4%	0%
Not permitting others to litter/cause harm to the environment	14	36	22	3	0
	19%	48%	29%	4%	0%
Avoid using public/any other transport when have an option to walk or cycle.	21	35	14	4	1
	28%	47%	19%	5%	1%
Donate a portion of my salary as a fund for the sustainable environment	2	15	20	34	4
	3	20%	26	45%	6%

From Table 10, it is interpreted that 96 % of the respondents are interested to educate the surroundings and friends about the proper disposal of garbage and sewage effluents followed by 89 % of the respondents are willing to contribute their voluntary service for the environmental protection. Only 23 % of the respondents are willing to contribute a portion of their salary as a fund for the sustainable environment.



Table- 11, Correlation between the respondents concern towards the environmental issues and their willingness to work towards environmental protection.

Particulars	Value
Pearson correlation of v1 and v2	0.292
P-Value	0.011

Where, V1: Respondents concern towards the environmental issues
V2: Willingness to work towards environmental protection

From the Table - 11, it is inferred that the calculated P value (0.011) is less than the alpha value (0.05) and hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION

The study found that the students are having a high level of concern towards the environmental issues and their level of interest in helping the society to acquire basic understanding about the environmental protection is also high. With this high level of interest, the educators should encourage and put collaborative efforts with the students to participate in environmental awareness campaign for achieving a sustainable environment for the present generation and also for the future generation. The study can also be extended to measure the attitude of school dropouts about environmental protection, as they would not have received any formal education about environmental issues.

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