

Environmental Awareness and Pro-Environmental Behaviour of Secondary School Students: A Study

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Introduction

In the past few decades, the nature is under pressure due to our demands not only for basic needs of food, shelter and clothing but also our demand for more and more energy. Human life is threatened by pollution, climate change, global warming, loss of biodiversity, heavy rains and floods, acidification, eutrophication etc. In recent years there are possible health hazards from nuclear power generation and waste disposal, radiation from cell towers, the hazards of 4G and 5G technologies etc. The pandemic made us realize the need to address the environmental issues and adapt to environmentally responsible behaviour and live close to nature. Pro-environmental behaviour includes responsibly engaging with outdoor or indoor recycling of waste and also adaptive responses to climate change, conservation of energy, sustainable life style, inter relationship of various components in the environment. Knowledge to safeguard and protect the environment and diversity of life on Earth are essential for the well-being of human beings.

The Pandemic has taught us how important it is to protect our environment and lead a responsible life in the society. It changed the complete life style of the people from food habits to living conditions and also the social life of people all over the world. All living beings are part of Environment and thus Environment is important for all. Everybody on this universe is affected by environmental issues like global warming, ozone layer depletion, scanty energy resources, loss of global biodiversity etc., irrespective of his profession or nature of work. Covid -19 pandemic has made us realize the need for standard, safe, hygienic and natural ecosystem.

Rural areas usually with low population density and agricultural areas are considered to be natural environments with sustainable life style. Domestic waste, desertification, lack of awareness of sanitation, health and hygiene etc., affect the sustainable life style of rural environment. Pro-environmental behaviour helps to develop a sustainable society. Pro-environmental behaviour should be inculcated in children from childhood. Environmental awareness and pro-environmental behaviour are the key to address these environmental threats.

The present study aims to find out the Environmental Awareness and Pro-Environmental behaviour of rural secondary school students.

Review of Related Literature

Hoerisch, H. (2002) in his article "A Comparative Study on Preventing Health Risks, Environmental Awareness and Environmentally Beneficial Behaviour in India" opined that environmental education fosters social, economic, political and ecological interdependence to gain knowledge, inculcate values, develop attitude and equip with skills required to protect and improve the environment.

Kollmuss, A., & Agyeman, J. (2002) in their article "Mind the Gap: Why do People Act Environmentally and What are the Barriers to Pro-Environmental Behaviour?" opined that it is not just the pro-environmental behaviour but the development of pro-environmental consciousness with emotional involvement and environmental knowledge.

Tilbury, D., Keogh, A., Leighton, A., & Kent, J. (2005) in their article "A National Review of Environmental Education and its Contribution to Sustainability" found that awareness of surroundings is necessary to acquire knowledge, develop attitude and to gain skills to solve environmental problems and to think and act aptly in their day to day living.

Varicak, Ivana; Petracic, Mateja; & Wasserbauer, Branko. (2012) in their article, "The Role of Education and Environmental Awareness on Socially Responsible Strategies in Karlovac City

Leading Companies” revealed that there is still a deficit of educational programs in Croatia. Shortage is at Higher Education Institutions as well as inlifelong learning programs.

Aydin,R. (2013) in his article “Environmental Awareness and attitude towards Environment of secondary school students” found that environmental awareness is related to the attitude environment and the higher the environmental awareness the higher the favourable attitude towards environment.

Aminard, S. (2013) in his article, “Knowledge of Environmental Issues where Pupil Acquire Information and how it affects their Attitude, Opinion and Laboratory Behaviour” found that gender does not influence the knowledge of environmental issues while levels of education impact knowledge awareness. Media impacts levels of environmental awareness and attitude of students.

Kaur,D. (2016) in his article, “Study of Environment Awareness Education and Legislation Progress of Education” opined that environmental awareness of B.Ed. students is good but still curriculum should be modified to meet challenges and favourable attitude should be developed to gain more knowledge.

Katoch, Kuldeep Singh (2017) in his article, “Awareness and Attitude of School Students towards Environment” found that gender does not influence environmental awareness and attitude towards environment.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are

1. To study theEnvironmental Awareness of secondary school students
2. To study the Pro-Environmental Behaviour of secondary school students
3. To study the relationship between Environmental Awareness and Pro-Environmental Behaviour of secondary school students

Research Methodology

Descriptive survey method was used for this study.

Population and Sample

Secondary school students ofLucknow district constitute the population of the study.Schools are selected randomly from 2 tehsils of Lucknow district Malihabad, and Lucknow. A sample of 200 students were selected using simple random sampling technique from these schools

Research Tools

- Environmental Awareness Test prepared by the Researcher himself is used in the present study. The test consists of four areas: a) Pollution and Climate Change b) Sustainable development and living c) Sanitation and waste management d) Management of Biological Resources and Biodiversity
- Pro-Environmental Behavior Scale (2019) prepared and standardized by Dr. Anjali Suhaneis used in the present study

Findings of the Study

Table 1: Environmental Awareness of Secondary School Students

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	942.92	3	314.3067	72.54437*	1.75E-41	2.616089
Within Groups	3448.76	796	4.332613			
Total	4391.68	799				

* Significant at 0.05 level

The findings of the study revealed that there is significant difference in Environmental Awareness of secondary school students of Lucknow District.Environmental Awareness of secondary school students is the outcome of their exposure to their surroundings, their family’s educational and social awareness, the atmosphere in the school and their own knowledge of health and hygiene, nutritious food, habits etc. The rural and urban background live in different environmental surroundings and also the atmosphere and standard of school brings difference in their knowledge levels and awareness. Thus, there is significant difference in environmental awareness of secondary school students

Pro-Environmental Behaviour

Table 2: Pro- Environmental Behaviour of Secondary School Students

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	1778.504167	5	355.7008333	122.2362501*	1.5E-104	2.221595
Within Groups	3474.475	1194	2.909945561			
Total	5252.979167	1199				

*Significant at 0.05 level of Significance

The findings of the study revealed that there is significant difference in Pro-Environmental Behaviour of secondary school students of Lucknow District. Pro- Environmental behaviour depends highly on the habits and also on the life style of the students. Family, surroundings, society etc., influence once life style and the way of doing things. Secondary school students from different areas and different social and family backgrounds adapt different life styles and standards of doing things which bring a difference in their Pro-Environmental Behaviour. In a country like India lack of proper facilities like toilets etc in some remote areas may also result in variation in Pro-Environmental behaviour. Thus, there is significant difference in Pro-Environmental Behaviour of secondary school students

Relationship between Environmental Awareness and Pro Environmental Behaviour of Secondary School Students

Table 3: Relationship between Environmental Awareness and Pro-Environmental Behaviour of Secondary School Students

Variables	Pollution & Climate Change	Sustainable Development and Living	Sanitation & Waste Management	Management of Biological Resources & Biodiversity
Pro-Environmental Behaviour	0.307113*	0.1980374*	0.177789*	0.220169*
Sig. (2- tailed)	0.000	0.004	0.001	0.001

*Significant at 0.05 level of Significance

The above findings reveal that there is significant relationship between Environmental Awareness and Pro-Environmental Behaviour of secondary school students of Lucknow District. Awareness is instrumental in the behaviour of the individual and also in developing good habits and proper life style in an individual. Lack of awareness may result in poor understanding and thus influence his adaptation and inculcation to healthy and good habits for a strong and sound personality. Hence there is a significant relationship between environmental awareness and pro-environmental behaviour.

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