

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ERODE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Environmental awareness is to understand the fragility of our environment and the importance of its protection. Promoting environmental awareness is an easy way to become an environmental steward and participate in creating a brighter future for our children. The study aimed to examine environmental awareness among high school students. From the Erode district, ten schools were selected by stratified random sampling technique. The sample of the study is the students who were studying in ninth standard of high schools 300 IX standard students were taken in this study. The study found that there is a significant difference between Tamil and English medium students in their mean score of environmental awareness.

KEYWORDS: Environmental Awareness, High School Student's.

Introduction

A healthy, clean and pure environment is a precious gift of nature to humanity. Like many other organisms, man has to depend, for his life in this environment. He receives his basic necessities like water, air food and shelter. So, neither the present generation nor the posterity has any right to obliterate its wholesome or pollute it. The environmental health of a country is in fact, an indication of the quality of life of the people.

The multidisciplinary nature of environmental studies, natural resources and associated problems, ecosystems, biodiversity and its conservation, environmental pollution, social issues and the environment.

Environmental refers to the surrounding areas of any form of life and is more permanent regarding human beings. Environmental education is connected with nature and it consists of both organic and inorganic substances. The environmental degradation which has culminated in the mindless usage of natural resources, population, and uninhabited urbanization and putting science and technology to bad use has resulted in the looming environmental crisis. In order to protect the environment from further damage it is highly essential that awareness must be imparted to the people with the help of education.

Need and Significance of the Study

The present study aimed to determine the environmental awareness among high school students with respect to their demographic variables like gender, type of school, medium of instruction, father's educational qualification, father's occupation and family income. To protect our environment and for sustainable development, environmental awareness of students' environmental hazards is very significant. The Kothari Commission rightly mentioned that the destiny of a nation is shaped in the classroom. There is a growing recognition that sustainable development policies, plans and actions have a better chance of being implemented when they are supported by an educated, informed public. This study mainly focused on environmental awareness related to various factors like causes of pollution, conservation of soil, forest, air, etc., energy conservation, conservation of human health, conservation of wildlife and animal husbandry. It also discusses environmental awareness among high school students with regard to the usage of plastic and its disposal, alternatives for plastic, toilet usage, its use in the

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cultivation of saplings, rainwater harvesting and their participation in environment-related programmes. The target was high school students because environmental education is part of their curriculum; they can implement what they learn. This study will support those who are working with the environmental cases. The study is quantitative in nature. This study also proposes some recommendations to safeguard the environment in India. Hence, environmental awareness became a priority for everyone. The goal of Environmental awareness can only be achieved if nations, governments, schools and teachers make it a precedence to create an environmental ethos within our educational institutions and community.

Statement of the Problem

The present study is entitled “Environmental Awareness among High School Students in Erode District.”

Objective of the Study

- To find out the significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to gender.
- To find out the significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the type of school.
- To find out the significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the medium of instruction.
- To find out the significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the father’s occupation.
- To find out the significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to family income.

Hypothesis of the Study

- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to gender.
- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the type of school.
- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the medium of instruction.
- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the father’s occupation.
- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to family income.

Limitations of the Study

- The present study has the following limitations,
- The investigator selected 300 samples from IX standard students in Erode district in Tamil Nadu, India, for the present study.

Method of the Study

- The investigators adopted the Descriptive survey method of research for the present study.

Sample of the Study

- The sample consisted of 300 IX standard students of government schools and aided schools in Erode district, Tamil Nadu, India.

Statistical Techniques Used in the Study

‘t’-test and F-test were used for analysing the data using the SPSS 27.0 version.

Testing of the Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to gender.

This hypothesis is tested using the ‘t’-test.

Table 1

| Gender | N | Mean | S.D | df | t-Value | Results |
|--------|-----|---------|------|-----|---------|---------|
| Male | 150 | 115.27 | 6.75 | 298 | 0.2594 | NS |
| Female | 150 | 115.087 | 5.67 | | | |

The above table shows that the computed 't' (0.2594) value is less than the critical value of 1.97 at the 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is not rejected. It can be said that there is no significant difference in the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to gender.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the type of school.

This hypothesis is tested using the 't'-test.

Table 2

| Type of School | N | Mean | S.D | df | t-Value | Results |
|----------------|-----|--------|------|-----|---------|---------|
| Govt. | 150 | 114.61 | 6.35 | 298 | 1.5627 | NS |
| Private | 150 | 115.73 | 6.06 | | | |

The above table shows that the computed 't' (1.5627) value is less than the critical value of 1.97 at the 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is not rejected. It can be said that there is no significant difference in the environmental awareness of the high school students with respect to the type of school.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of the high school students with respect to the medium of instruction.

This hypothesis is tested using the 't'-test.

Table 3

| Medium of Instruction | N | Mean | S.D | df | t-Value | Results |
|-----------------------|-----|--------|------|-----|---------|-------------|
| Tamil | 140 | 114.32 | 6.09 | 298 | 2.2331 | Significant |
| English | 160 | 115.92 | 6.26 | | | |

The above table shows that the computed 't' (2.2331) value is greater than the critical value of 1.97 at the 0.05 level and hence it is significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be said that there is a significant difference in the environmental awareness of the high school students with respect to the medium of instruction.

Hypothesis 4

There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the father's occupation.

This hypothesis is tested using the F-test.

Table 4

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Squares | F-Value | Results |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|--------------|---------|---------|
| Between Group | 27.4759 | 2 | 13.7379 | 0.35334 | NS |
| Within group | 11547.108 | 297 | 38.8805 | | |

The above table shows that the computer 'F' (0.35334) value is less than the critical value of 3.03 at the 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is not rejected. It can be said that there is no significant difference in the environment of the high school students with respect to their father's occupation.

Hypothesis 5

There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to family income.

This hypothesis is tested using the F-test.

Table 5

| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Squares | F-Value | Results |
|---------------------|----------------|-----|--------------|---------|---------|
| Between Group | 28.3682 | 2 | 14.1841 | 0.36484 | NS |
| Within group | 11546.6185 | 297 | 38.8775 | | |

The above table shows that the computed 'F' (0.36484) value is less than the critical value of 3.03 at the 0.05 level and hence it is not significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis is not rejected and it can be said that there is no significant difference in the environment of the high school students with respect to family income.

Finding of the Study

- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to gender.
- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the type of school.
- There is a significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the medium of instruction.
- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the father's occupation.
- There is no significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with respect to the father's income.

Conclusion

The present study is to determine the environmental awareness among high school students in Erode district. The study reveals that there is a significant difference between the environmental awareness of high school students with reference to the medium of instruction. Hence, the environmental awareness programmes should be taught in Tamil medium. It is easy to understand the 9th standard students. The result of this study is very useful to students, educators, media experts, policymakers and the people concerned with the consideration of the environment. Utilizing the programmes of environment and encouraging the students to watch them will definitely help in conserving the environment and make the world a better place to live.

Recommendation of the Study

The researcher recommends that environmental concepts should be included in the school education curriculum and should be taught to all students irrespective of their gender, locality, type of school, medium of instruction, nature of the school, etc.,. It can be included by adding more practical oriented programs. They can be sensitized by celebrating special days like World Environmental Day, Wildlife Day, World Water Day, Forest Conservation Day etc., and knowledge about alternatives for plastic should be imparted and promoted among the student population. It should not be mere a study, rather it should become part of their life. It can be achieved through the help of NGOs who are working on environmental issues, social activists, and government and Social Work professionals. That is to say students from various disciplines have to work together to create better environment. Social Workers in collaboration with other disciplines can undertake scientific researches to explore unexplored aspects of environments. These are all the recommendations given by the researcher.

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