

A Study on the Environmental Awareness of Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to investigate the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school students. A total of one hundred forty (140) secondary school students consisting of 65 male and 75 female were selected from 7(seven) secondary schools using simple random sampling technique. For this investigation, the descriptive survey method was employed. The study made use of the Environmental Awareness Scale developed by Dr. (Mrs.) Haseen Taj. The findings indicated that both the male and female students based on the type of management and the locality had High level of Environmental Awareness.

Keywords: Environmental Awareness, Secondary school, Gender, Management, Locality.

Introduction

Environmental Awareness is the awareness of the natural environment and the understanding of environmental issues, the recognition of the connections among human actions, development, sustainability and human responsibility in these processes and the realization that humans and ecosystems co-exist in a shared environment, which is ultimately the biosphere. It involves awareness of the state of the environment, interest in and concern towards the environmental degradation, conservation efforts, and involvement in a range of social activities aimed at preventing environmental degradation. It also entails realizing how critical it is to preserve the environment and the natural resources and helps individuals to think critically and creatively about environmental issues, make responsible decisions, and acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to take actions and have positive impact. It also helps in comprehending and addressing environmental challenges, gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the natural world and the role that they play. A growing human population and developments in every industry have led to an increase in environmental issues in recent years. The ecology may suffer as a result of human activities including pollution, deforestation and over consumption. These activities have the potential to degrade the ecosystem which could have a detrimental effect on both humans and the environment, including resource depletion, habitat loss, and climate change. Environmental awareness is important because it helps individuals understand how their actions impact the environment and how to reduce the impact. Through environmental education, which imparts knowledge, awareness, skills, values and attitudes, helps one to become environmentally concerned. Since human decisions are the main factor contributing to the planet's degradation, it is crucial that we are environmentally conscious in order to do our part to protect and preserve our planet.

Literature review

Several studies have been conducted to study the level of Environmental Awareness of the secondary school students.

The study of Environmental Awareness of students at higher secondary level by R. Danielraja (2019) founded that there existed no significant difference in the Environmental Awareness between the students in terms of gender and in terms of types of institution. The findings of Dr. Sudhakar G, Dr. P.Brahmaji Rao, & G. Swarnalatha (2020), indicated that the Environmental Awareness of the secondary school students was found to be average, and that there was no significant difference between boys & girls. The findings of the study on Environmental Awareness of secondary Grade students by Dr. Muttu Vemula, & Dr. Bhukya Devendar (2021) revealed that there was a significant difference between private school and government school students with regard to the environmental awareness. The private school students had better environmental awareness. However it was found that there was no significant difference between girls and boys with regard to the environmental awareness. The findings of Parul, Vikas, Ritu Bala (2022), concluded that the higher secondary school students had a high level of awareness about environment. It also revealed that male and female students did not differ significantly on the environmental awareness. The study of environmental awareness in secondary school students by T.D. Bhandarkar (2022) founded that there was no significant difference in environmental awareness of urban boys and girls. However, there was a significant difference in environmental awareness of rural boys and girls. It revealed that rural boys had high environmental awareness than rural girls. The study on Environmental Awareness and Attitude among secondary school students by R. Sreedevi Reddy (2022) revealed that there was no significant difference between boys and girls in their level of Environmental awareness. The study of environmental awareness among secondary school students in relation to gender and locale by Dr. Monika Sood (2023) indicated that male students had a higher level of environmental awareness as compared to female students.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine the level of Environmental Awareness of male and female secondary school students.
2. To examine the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school male students based on the type of management
3. To examine the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school female students based on the type of management
4. To examine the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school male students based on the locality of school
5. To examine the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school female students based on the locality of school

Hypotheses of the study

1. **H₀₁**: There is no significant difference between the Male and Female secondary school students in their level of Environmental Awareness
2. **H₀₂**: There is no significant difference between the male students of Private and Government Secondary school in their level of Environmental Awareness
3. **H₀₃**: There is no significant difference between the female students of Private and Government Secondary school in their level of Environmental Awareness

4. **H04:** There is no significant difference between the male students of Urban and Rural Secondary school in their level of Environmental Awareness
5. **H05:** There is no significant difference between the female students of Urban and Rural Secondary school in their level of Environmental Awareness

Delimitations of the study

The study was delimited to secondary school students of Mokokchung district. The schools selected for the study were affiliated to Nagaland Board of School Education (NBSE), Nagaland

Methodology of the study

The Descriptive survey method was employed in this study.

Population and sample

The population consisted of all the secondary school students in Grade 9 and 10 of Mokokchung district, Nagaland in the academic year 2023-2024. The sample consisted of 140 (65 male and 75 female) Secondary school students of Mokokchung, Nagaland from 7 Secondary schools (3 Government and 4 Private) which was selected using simple random sampling techniques.

Tools and techniques

In this study, Environmental Awareness Scale developed by Dr. (Mrs.) Haseen Taj, was used to measure the level of Environmental Awareness of the secondary school students. The analysis of the data was done with the help of appropriate statistical techniques such as Percentage, Mean, Standard Deviation (SD) and t-test.

Data collection

The data for the study was collected from the secondary school students of Mokokchung using the standardized Environmental Awareness Scale tool. The investigators personally visited the selected secondary schools in Mokokchung to collect the data. The tool was administered by the investigators under the close supervision of the class teacher.

Analysis and Interpretation of data

Table 1: Comparison between the Male and Female students of secondary schools in relation to their level of Environmental Awareness

Gender	No. of Respondents	Mean	SD	Level of Environmental Awareness	t test	Significance
Male	65	84.86	14.79	High	0.4985	*Not Significant
Female	75	86.17	16.1	High		

***.05 Level of Significance**

From Table 1, it can be concluded that both Male and Female secondary school students possess High level of Environmental Awareness. When the differences in means were tested for significance, the

calculated t-value of 0.4985 is found to be less than the tabulated values for .05 levels of significance. Hence, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between Male and Female Secondary school students in their level of Environmental Awareness.

Table 2: Comparison of the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school male students based on type of management

Type of Management	Gender	No. of Respondents	Mean	SD	Level of Environmental Awareness	t test	Significance
Government	Male	32	76.56	13.27	Above Average	5.3196	*Significant
Private	Male	33	92.91	11.47	Extremely High		

***.05 Level of Significance**

From Table 2, it can be concluded that the Male students of Private school have Extremely High level of Environmental Awareness, whereas, the Male students of Government school have Above Average level. When the differences in means were tested for significance, the calculated t-value of 5.3196 is found to be greater than the tabulated value for .05 levels of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is inferred that there is statistically significant difference between the Male students of Private and Government secondary school in their level of Environmental Awareness.

Table 3: Comparison of the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school female students based on type of management

Type of Management	Gender	No. of Respondents	Mean	SD	Level of Environmental Awareness	t test	Significance
Government	Female	42	78.12	16.46	High	5.8983	*Significant
Private	Female	33	96.42	7.66	Extremely High		

***.05 Level of Significance**

From Table 3, it can be concluded that the Female students of Private schools have Extremely High level of Environmental Awareness, whereas the Female students of Government school have High level. When the differences in means were tested for significance, the calculated t-value of 5.8983 is found to be greater than the tabulated value for .05 levels of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is inferred that there is statistically significant difference between the female students of Private and Government secondary school in their level of Environmental Awareness.

Table 4: Comparison of the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school male students based on the locality of the school

Locality	Gender	No. of Respondents	Mean	SD	Level of Environmental Awareness	t-test	Significance
Urban	Male	42	84.83	14.26	High	0.0207	*Not Significant
Rural	Male	23	84.91	16.05	High		

***.05 Level of Significance**

From Table 4, it can be concluded that the Male students of both Urban and Rural secondary schools possess High level of Environmental Awareness. When the differences in means were tested for significance, the calculated t-value of 0.0207 is found to be less than the tabulated value for .05 levels of significance. Hence, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between Urban and Rural secondary school male students in their level of Environmental Awareness.

Table 5: Comparison of the level of Environmental Awareness of secondary school female students based on the locality of the school

Locality	Gender	No. of Respondents	Mean	SD	Level of Environmental Awareness	t-test	Significance
Urban	Female	49	87.59	14.93	Extremely High	1.0479	*Not Significant
Rural	Female	26	83.50	18.10	High		

***.05 Level of Significance**

From Table 5, it can be concluded that the Female students of Urban secondary schools possess Extremely High level of Environmental Awareness, whereas, the Female students of Rural secondary schools possess High level of Environmental Awareness. When the differences in means were tested for significance, the calculated t-value of 1.0479 is found to be less than the tabulated value for .05 levels of significance. Hence, it is inferred that there is no significant difference between Urban and Rural secondary school female students in their level of Environmental Awareness.

Major findings

1. There exists no significant difference between the male and female secondary school students in their level of Environmental Awareness. Both male and female students have High level of Environmental Awareness.
2. There exists statistically significant difference between the male students of Private and Government secondary schools in their level of Environmental Awareness. The male students of Private secondary school have Extremely High level, whereas, that of Government secondary school have Above Average level.
3. There exists statistically significant difference between the female students of Private and Government secondary schools in their level of Environmental Awareness. The female students of Private secondary school have Extremely High level, whereas, that of Government secondary school have High level.

4. There exists no significant difference between the male students of Urban and Rural secondary schools in their level of Environmental Awareness. The male students of both the Urban and Rural secondary school have High level.
5. There exists no significant difference between the female students of Urban and Rural secondary schools in their level of Environmental Awareness. The female students of the Urban school have Extremely High level, whereas, the Rural students have High level.

Conclusion

The findings showed that overall both the male and female secondary school students have High level of Environmental Awareness. The male and female students of Private secondary school and female students of urban secondary school possess Extremely High level of Environmental Awareness. The male students of urban and rural secondary schools and the female students of Government and rural schools possess High level of Environmental Awareness, whereas, the male students of Government schools possess Above Average level of Environmental Awareness. The schools irrespective of the type of management and the locality show that students possess good environmental awareness. The reasons may be that, the schools gives exposure to the students and opportunities to enhance their environmental awareness. Environmental awareness in schools is essential because it fosters a healthy mindset, motivates future leaders and enriches the learning environment, in addition to enhancing students' appreciation for our earth. Through curricular integration, outdoor learning opportunities, programs, collaborations with the local organisations for relevant events and activities, schools can raise awareness of environmental issues. This will result in a more environmentally conscious and responsible society, which is important for the long-term welfare of both humanity and the earth.

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