

Attitude of Under Graduate Students towards Environmental Studies as an Ability Enhancement Compulsory Course

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ABSTRACT

Environmental Studies is a compulsory paper at UG level students as an Ability Enhancement Compulsory Course in West Bengal. The purpose of the study was to find out the nature of attitude of under graduate students towards environmental studies according to the strata. The present study was considered quantitative in nature. Researcher framed three null hypotheses according to the objectives of the present study. Purposive sampling was used for sample selection and 332 undergraduate students were selected as sample from different Colleges from the districts of North 24 Parganas and Nadia of West Bengal. Researcher developed a tool to measure the attitude of students towards environmental studies. After collection of data, 't' test was used for testing hypotheses. Out of three hypotheses, two hypotheses were accepted and one was rejected. It was found that there existed locality and stream wise significant difference and there existed no gender wise significant difference among the students with respect to their attitude towards environmental studies. Majority of undergraduate students had positive attitude towards environmental studies. The rural students, girls students and arts students had shown better positive attitude towards environmental studies compared to the urban students, boys students and commerce students.

Keywords: Attitude, UG, Students, Environmental Studies.

INTRODUCTION

Due to the terrible environmental damage, the beauty of nature will be gone. The future environment of humanity must be protected through sustainable development. Environmental challenges have been more widely recognized as a result of various forms of pollution, forest loss, solid waste disposal, environmental degradation, problems with economic productivity and national security, global warming, ozone layer depletion, and damage to biodiversity. People from all over the world have become more aware of the environment's deteriorating state as a result of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which was held in Johannesburg in 2002. No human being on the planet can, it is obvious, afford to remain uninformed about environmental challenges (Bharucha, 2004). Environmental studies help us understand the significance of protecting and conserving our environment and the dangers of the careless discharge of pollutants into it. Many environmental challenges are currently posing a threat to human life on earth as they multiply and become more complicated. In the Environmental Studies, we research these problems in addition to practical solutions (Singh, 2006).

Now that we must preserve nature for our own benefit, raising public awareness of environmental issues is crucial. One of the most effective methods for raising environmental awareness in general, developing skills for addressing environmental issues, and enhancing quality of life via environmentally sustainable development is environmental education. The UGC was ordered by the Hon. Supreme Court of India to add a fundamental course on environmental challenges to all levels of college education. As a result, the UGC gave the issue some thought, and the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India declared that a six-month mandatory core module course in environmental studies may be created and implemented throughout all of West Bengal's colleges as well as the rest of India. Since more than 40 years ago, environmental studies have been a crucial part of higher education. Today, the idea, challenges, and issues linked to the environment are either offered as a topic or combined with other academic fields.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Satyanarayana (2021) investigated on "A Study on Environmental Awareness and Attitude of College Students". Survey methodology has been used to explore this phenomenon. 160 students, including 80 females and 80 boys, participated in the study. The kids were chosen at random from a variety of Telangana institutions in the Karimnagar area. Environmental

attitude scale and environmental awareness tests were given to them in order to collect data. The information was individually gathered from the colleges. Simple statistical methods are used to tabulate and calculate the acquired data. There is a genuine need to standardize and improve the educational system as a whole since the position of EE in higher education is not at all adequate. The findings showed that male and female students had similar levels of environmental knowledge and that female students have a more favorable attitude toward the environment than male students.

Senapati & Barua (2021) studied “Environmental Attitude of the Under Graduate Students of Dibrugarh District”. The goal of the current study was to examine the environmental attitudes of Dibrugarh District undergrad students. 468 Undergraduate students from the Dibrugarh District were the sample for the study that the researcher did. The Taj Environmental Attitude Scale (TEAS) was translated into Assamese by the investigator, and its reliability coefficient was determined to be 0.78. The data have been analyzed using mean, SD, 'r', and t tests. According to the study's findings, there are no appreciable gender differences in the environmental attitudes among Dibrugarh District undergraduate students. However, there was a noticeable variation in the case of locale.

Objectives of the Study:

Objectives of the study are as following-

- To find out the attitude of Under Graduate students strata wise (Locality, Gender and Stream).
- To develop a tool for measuring attitude of Under Graduate students towards Environmental Studies.
- To measure the attitude of Under Graduate students towards Environmental Studies;

Hypotheses of the Study:

Researcher framed the following hypotheses for the present study:

- Ho₁: There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards environmental studies between Rural & Urban students.
- Ho₂: There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards environmental studies between Boys & Girls students.
- Ho₃: There exists no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards environmental studies between Arts & Commerce students.

METHODOLOGY

For the purposes of data collection and analysis, the study was deemed to be descriptive in integrity and quantitative in nature.

Variables: Researcher considered Attitude of Under Graduate students towards Environmental Studies as a variable of the study and three categorical variables were-

- Locality (Rural & Urban)
- Gender (Boys & Girls)
- Stream (Arts & Commerce)

Sample: Purposive sampling was utilized to identify the 414 undergraduate students from the WB districts of North 24 Parganas and Nadia who were deemed the sample.

Table-1: Showing distribution of the Sample

Stream		Arts		Commerce		Total
Locality		Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
Gender	Boys	47	45	41	44	177
	Girls	41	42	35	37	155
Total		88	87	76	81	332

Tool used: To assess undergraduate students' environmental attitudes, a self-developed questionnaire was employed. The standardization procedure allowed for the determination of instrument validity and reliability.

Method of Data collection: The information was gathered using a standardized questionnaire.

Analyses and Interpretation:

Following data collection, the researcher analyzed and interpreted the data using a variety of descriptive and inferential statistics. To determine if there was a notable mean difference between student groups within the variables under examination, the "t"-test was calculated.

Table-2: 't'-test: Attitude towards Environmental Studies between Rural & Urban

Group	N	Mean	SD	SEm	df	't' Value
Rural	164	141.06	14.02	1.09	330	5.24**
Urban	168	134.05	10.13	0.78		

****Significant at 0.01 level**

In the above table-2, the calculated 't' value was found to be significant, therefore the corresponding null hypothesis ($H_{0.1}$) was rejected. As such, it could be inferred that there existed significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards Environmental Studies between rural and urban students. Rural students obtained higher mean value than the urban students.

Table-3: 't'-test: Attitude towards Environmental Studies between Boys & Girls

Group	N	Mean	SD	SEm	df	't' Value
Boys	177	136.74	11.90	0.89	330	1.18
Girls	155	138.39	13.50	1.08		

No Significant

In the above table-3, the calculated 't' value was found not to be significant, therefore the corresponding null hypothesis ($H_{0.2}$) was accepted. As such, it could be inferred that there existed no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards Environmental Studies between Boys and Girls students. Girls student obtained higher mean value than the boys student.

Table-4: 't'-test: Attitude towards Environmental Studies between Arts & Science

Group	N	Mean	SD	SEm	df	't' Value
Arts	175	139.01	13.39	1.01	330	2.28*
Commerce	157	135.86	11.67	0.93		

***Significant at 0.01 level**

In the above table, the calculated 't' value was found to be significant, therefore the corresponding null hypothesis ($H_{0.3}$) was rejected. As such, it could be inferred that there existed significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards Environmental Studies between arts and commerce students. Arts students obtained higher mean value than the commerce students.

Findings of the Study:

Following of the findings of the present study:

- Found significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards Environmental Studies between rural and urban students. Rural students obtained higher mean value than the urban students.

- Found no significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards Environmental Studies between Boys and Girls students. Girls student obtained higher mean value than the boys student.
- Found significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards Environmental Studies between arts and commerce students. Arts students obtained higher mean value than the commerce students.

CONCLUSION

Majority of undergraduate students had positive attitude towards environmental studies. Rural students had shown better positive attitude towards environmental studies compared to the urban students. Girls' student had positive attitude towards environmental studies compared to boys' students. Arts students had more favorable attitude towards environmental studies than Commerce students.

From the above research findings, researcher concluded that It was found that no permanent teacher recruited at UG level so, others disciplinary teachers teach environmental studies without proper planning, guidance and there are no proper text books in library in this reasons students have low attitude towards environmental studies. So, the policy makers, educators and practitioners should emphasis on these issues and prepare a unique programme on environmental studies, which will be novel and creative.

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