



G- Journal of Environmental Science and Technology

(An International Peer Reviewed Research Journal)

Available online at <http://www.gjestenv.com>

A Study of Environmental Awareness among Muslim Girls Pursuing Graduation Course in Bareilly Region

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: 29 Mar 2014

Revised : 20 Apr 2014

Accepted: 26 Apr 2014

Key words:

Environmental education,
Environmental awareness,
Residential background,
streams

ABSTRACT

The present study is focused on the assessment on environmental awareness among Muslim girls pursuing graduation course in Bareilly Region. The investigators used normative survey method for the study. The sample consists of 500 Muslim girls from five degree colleges in Bareilly Region. Simple random sampling technique has been used for the selection of sample. Environmental Awareness Test was used to assess environmental awareness among Muslim girls. The major finding of study reveals that rural Muslim girls are less aware of their environment as compared to urban Muslim girls. Similarly, girls belonging to arts stream have less environmental awareness as compared to their counterparts belonging to science stream. Further, it is also found that Muslim girls, whose parents are graduate, have high level of environmental awareness that that of those girls whose parents are non –graduate.

1) INTRODUCTION

Environment has become the concern of all; the academicians, intellectuals, scientists, policymakers and government across the continents. Widespread and systematic concern for environmental issues has grown all over the world, particularly after the 1960s. The UN World conference on the environment in Stockholm in 1972, the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the Global Forum, 1992 and the activities organized by the International NGO Forum show that environment is on the agenda of the international community. Now, people have also become more concerned about the environment. The environmental movement has focused attention on the quality of the air that we breathe and the water we drink, harmful effects on wildlife due to encroachment in forest area and frequent natural hazard due to various man made activities like mining, deforestation etc. We are beginning to realize that all aspects of the world around us can have profound and potentially negative effects on health and well being. We must aware about all the activities going on in our environment and concern to protect it for sustainable development [1]. Environment is defined as our surrounding that consists of all the conditions influencing development or growth. It can be understood as a system which includes all living and non-living things i.e., air, water, soil, vegetation, flora and fauna. Man is a slave of environment. The child may have all kinds of abilities but they cannot be developed fully without a proper environment.

Environmental education means the educational process dealing with man's relationship with his natural and man-made surroundings and includes the relations of population, pollution resource allocation and depletion, conservation, transportation, technology, energy, urban and rural planning to total biosphere etc. On the other hand, environmental awareness means to help social groups and individuals to acquire an awareness of and sensitivity to the total environment and its allied problems. The importance of environmental awareness cannot be over emphasized. We must understand that to improve the environment is to improve the quality of life. It is not only a question of air and water pollution. It includes elimination of disease, hunger, malnutrition, and poverty, destruction of forest, extermination of wildlife, erosion of soil and accumulation of waste. Hence, there is an urgent need for proper management of the environment.

Mahatma Gandhi said, "The earth provides enough to satisfy everyman's needs, but not everyman's greed". The relationship between environment and humankind is indeed deep and has recognized from the Vedic period. Furthermore, non-violence towards both animate and inanimate components of biosphere has been ingrained as a guiding principle in the Indian psyche [2]. Therefore, awareness and education of

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environment is the paramount concern of all the citizens of society. Environment protection starts by creating awareness among the people so that it becomes part of their lifestyle. The key to achieving this goal lies in environmental education and its related program. The objective of environmental education includes awareness, knowledge, attitudes, skills and participation of people in protecting the environment. There is still a considerable lack of awareness of the interrelated nature of all human activities and the environment, due to inaccurate or insufficient information. Developing countries in particular lack relevant technologies and expertise. There is a need to increase public sensitivity to environment and development problems and involvement in their solutions and foster a sense of personal environmental responsibility and greater motivation and commitment towards sustainable development. Youth form the most vibrant and dynamic segment of a country's population. They are a key segment of the society and are an important source of creativity, enthusiasm, and drive for any action to address such issues. In today's world environmental degradation and pollution have become an important issue, and it is a problem that needs to be addressed immediately. Future generations will inherit a world faced with the problems of changing climate, polluted, and degraded ecosystems. Youth are the citizens of tomorrow and the group that will be most impacted by the problems of climate change. In this scenario it has become imperative and a critical element of any nation's strategy to engage this next generation of decision makers, the youth, in actions to address environmental issues. It is important to ensure that they play a proactive role in addressing key environmental issues that will affect the world in the coming years; therefore it becomes very important to find out the level of environment awareness among younger generation. Keeping this thing in mind, the present study is so designed as to find out the level of environment awareness among Muslim girls pursuing graduation course in Bareilly Region. Further the impact of their nature of courses (arts/science), residential background, and the impact of educational status of their parents on their level of environment awareness was also explored. The present study was undertaken with the following objectives in mind:

1. To compare environmental awareness of rural and urban Muslim girls pursuing graduation course in Bareilly Region.
2. To compare environmental awareness of Muslim girls pursuing graduation course in Bareilly region belonging to arts and science stream.
3. To compare environmental awareness of Muslim girls pursuing graduation course in Bareilly Region in relation to the educational status of their parents (graduate/non-graduate).

2) MATERIALS AND METHODS

Present study has been carried out through survey method.

Sample: A sample of 500 Muslim girls pursuing graduation course has been selected randomly from 5 degree colleges of Bareilly region.

Tool: A standardized tool 'Environmental Awareness Test' developed by Seema Dhawan has been used to measure environment awareness of Muslim girls pursuing graduation course. This test has 80 statements among which 33 statements are negative and 47 statements are positive. Each of the test items scores '1' for correct answer and '0' for incorrect one, depending on the direction. The total score varied from '0 to 80' showing highest environmental awareness.

3) RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Comparison between Rural and Urban Muslim Girls

Groups	N	M	Sd.	't'
Rural	300	69.05	8.06	2.78**
urban	200	71.29	9.24	

** Sig .at 0.01 level

The data depicted in the above table makes it clear that urban Muslim girls scored higher on their environment awareness than that of rural Muslim girls. The reason behind this might be that Muslim girls living in urban areas have more opportunity in sense of education, hygiene, internet facility to become more aware about their environment in comparison to those girls who belong to rural parts. Similar results were found in earlier studies too [3].

3.2 Comparison between Arts and Science Stream Muslim Girls

Groups	N	M	Sd.	't'
Arts	300	68.65	8.58	2.39**
Science	200	71.53	9.14	

**Significant at $p < 0.01$

The data presented in above table shows that Muslim girls belonging to science stream are more aware of their environment in comparison to their counterparts belonging to arts stream as mean score of Muslim girls (71.53) is greater than their counterparts (68.65). Since students of science stream have more scientific temper and knowledge of various concepts related to environment, probably this might be the reason for what Muslim girls of science stream are found to be more aware of their environment. Similar results were found in the study conducted by Maikuri and Uniyal [4].

3.3 Comparison between Muslim Girls regarding Educational Status of their Parents-

Groups	N	M	Sd.	't'
Graduate	100	57.08	12.58	2.79**
Non-graduate	400	61.41	7.04	

**Sig. at 0.01 levels

The above table makes it clear that educational status of parents significantly affects environment awareness status of their wards as the mean score of those Muslim girls whose parents are graduated is higher(61.41) than that of those counterparts whose parents are non graduated. This makes it clear that parents who are more educated contributing significantly in making their children more aware of their environment in comparison to those who are less educated. Similar studies results were found in several previous studies conducted by Gupta [5] and Khan [6].

On the basis of the findings of the present study a few educational implications of the study may be indicated as follows:

- (1) Educationist, educational administrators, and teachers must acquaint their pupil about pros and cons of environmental pollution.
- (2) Formal system of education including all streams should also incorporate in its curriculum, some elements of awareness programmes. This should be a compulsory part of the curriculum.
- (3) With the help of various mass media and modern means of communication the concept of environment awareness and its protection should be disseminated and popularized viz. news paper, radio, TV, film, etc.

(4) It would be more beneficial and effective if special programmes are launched to develop awareness among the students. This is possible only through inclusion of special courses on environmental education in the schools and colleges.

(5) Value-oriented education in the light of environmental pollution and environmental awareness should be provided.

4) CONCLUSION

The findings of the Present study showed that there was significant impact of streams (arts/science) and residential background (rural/urban) of Muslim girls on their environment awareness. Further, educational status of their parents has also significantly affected their level of environment awareness. It also indicates that Muslim girls of Bareilly Region have developed a considerable amount of environmental awareness among themselves. Students, belonging to science stream are more aware of their environment than arts belonging students. Similarly, girls of graduate parents are more aware than those of non –graduate parents. Further girls, belonging to rural background are less aware of their environment as compared to those who belong to urban background.

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