

Environmental Attitudes among Undergraduate Students in Manipur

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Abstract: Environmental education is essential at every phase of human life, as it reminds us of the importance of a positive relationship between human beings and the natural world. The objectives of the study include examining the level of environmental attitudes, based on gender and locality of the undergraduate students. The researchers employed a descriptive research design with a sample of 200 students selected randomly using the standardised Environmental Attitude Scale developed by Haseen Taj (2001). The percentage analysis and independent t-test were used to analyse the collected data. The findings revealed that 58.50% of the undergraduate students possess an above-average level of environmental attitude. The study showed that the male students were more favourable towards environmental attitudes than female students. The study also revealed a significant difference between urban and rural students, with urban students were more favourable in attitude towards the environment than their rural student. These studies strongly suggest the need for a comprehensive understanding of environmental consciousness in our day-to-day life. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 laid the foundation for integrating environmental education into higher education. This will reinforce the knowledge and develop a positive attitude towards the environment.

Keywords: Environmental Attitude, Undergraduate Student, Environmental Education, Gender, Residence.

Introduction

Human activities such as industrialisation, urbanisation and over resource utilisation keep changing the world rapidly for the past centuries. These activities for development directly or indirectly affected the environment which leads to pollution and rise in temperature. The change in environment has significantly affect the health and well being of the people. Every individual must work collectively to curb these challenges and at the same time, uses of renewable resources also need to be increased. It is important for people to understand their relationship with the surrounding environment. There arises need for the people to educate and train to develop a positive attitude towards the environment and also enhances proper awareness about the environment. It is the right time for the children to teach and educate about the importance of environment in survival of mankind.

The present scenario of changing environment which includes flash floods, mass deforestation for urbanisation or infrastructural project and toxic waste pollution is damaging the environment. Most of the environment issues must be give aware to the people from time to time in order to keep updated the real problems through different medium of mass media. The stakeholders initiate the need of environment education in mainstream education and for that in National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 focused on integration of environment education in the existing education system. The policy also implements the inclusion of environment education in higher education from the 2023-2024 session. The policy also aims at real life situations rather than theoretical knowledge. This knowledge and understanding will help individuals to develop a positive attitude towards environment and also in sustainable development goals.

Environmental education is essential at every phase of human life, as it reminds us of the importance of a positive relationship between human beings and the natural world. Its objective is to foster knowledge and understanding that encourage the cultivation of responsible attitudes toward the environment. A positive attitude is a foundational prerequisite for nurturing a value-based approach and achieving the ultimate goal of environmental education: responsible and sustainable engagement with the environment. Environmental attitude refers to the degree of positive or negative feelings, beliefs and intentions towards the environment. It is the right time for people to feel that it's their responsibility to conserve and preserve the environment.

Environment education is a dynamic process. It can be given to every people in different form of education such as formal, informal and non-formal educations. It will help in developing a positive relationship between man and the surrounding environment. Environment cannot damage itself unless disturb by human beings, preserving and conserving of environment can only be achieve when educating people. It helps the people to develop a positive attitude and responsibility for conserving the environment at any cost. Only than our environment will become friendly for everyone to live in it.

Objectives Of The Study

1. To find out the level of Environmental Attitude of undergraduate students.
2. To find out the significant difference in the Environmental Attitude of male and female undergraduate students.
3. To examine whether there is a significant difference in environmental attitude between rural and urban undergraduate students.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female undergraduate students towards their environmental attitude.
2. There is no significant difference between rural and urban undergraduate students towards their environmental attitude.

Method Of The Study

The present study employs a descriptive research method.

Population Of The Study

The study population comprises all government colleges affiliated with Manipur University located in the Imphal East and Imphal West districts of Manipur. In the present study, the researcher selected four government colleges and collected 200 samples from undergraduate students using a simple random sampling technique.

Tools Used

In the present study, the researcher used a standardised "Environment Attitude Scale" developed by Haseen Taj (2001) to measure the environmental attitude of undergraduate students. The Environment Attitude Scale (EAS) has been designed to measure the environmental attitudes of undergraduate students. It consists of 61 items, each with a 4-point scale, ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree."

Statistical Technique Used

The investigator used percentage analysis and independent t-tests to analyse the collected data.

Result And Discussion

Table 1: Environmental Attitude Levels of Undergraduate Students

Environmental Attitude Level	Frequency	Percent
Average	53	26.50%
Above Average	107	53.50%
High	38	19%
Extremely High	2	1%
Total	200	100%

Table 1 presents the distribution of environmental attitude levels among the 200 undergraduate students included in the study. Of these, 107 students (53.50%) demonstrated above-average environmental attitudes, followed by 53 students (26.50%) with average levels. Additionally, 38 students (19.00%) exhibited high environmental attitudes, while only 2 students (1.00%) displayed extremely high levels. These findings indicate that the majority of undergraduate students possess an above-average attitude and concern for environmental issues.

Table 2: Difference Between Mean Scores on Environmental Attitude of Male and Female

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	Sig.
Male	76	172.25	10.80	198.00	0.87	0.02
Female	124	170.53	14.93			

Table 2 presents the comparative analysis of environmental attitude levels between male and female undergraduate students, based on the application of an independent samples t-test. The mean score for male students was 172.25 (SD = 10.80), while the mean score for female students was 170.53 (SD = 14.93). The calculated t-value of 0.87 indicates a statistically significant difference in environmental attitudes between the two groups, leading to the rejection of Hypothesis 1. These findings suggest that male and female students differ in their understanding and concern for various environmental issues, including population explosion, Health and hygiene, Pollution, wildlife, forests, and environmental concerns.

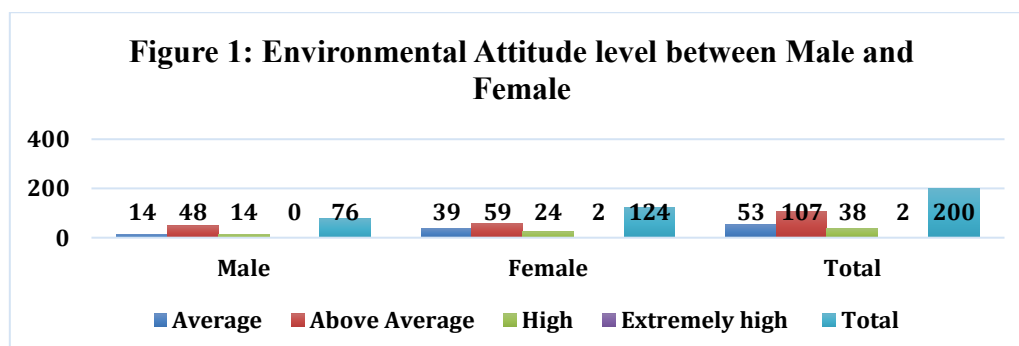


Figure 1 depicts the distribution of environmental attitudes among male and female undergraduate students. Among the 76 male students, 48 (63.16%) demonstrated above-average attitudes, 14 (18.42%) were categorised as average, 14 (18.42%) exhibited high attitudes, and none fell into the extremely high category. In contrast, of the 124 female students, 57 (45.97%) exhibited above-average attitudes, 39 (31.45%) were average, 24 (19.35%) had high attitudes, and 2 (1.61%) demonstrated extremely high attitudes. Overall, across the sample of 200 undergraduate students, 107 (53.50%) were above average, 53 (26.50%) were average, 38 (19.00%) were high, and 2 (1.00%) exhibited extremely high environmental attitudes.

Table 3: Difference Between Mean Scores on Environmental Attitude of Rural and Urban Residence

Residence	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	Sig.
Rural	107	168.91	14.96	198.00	2.59	0.01
Urban	93	173.81	11.13			

As presented in Table 3, a statistically significant difference was found in the environmental attitudes of rural and urban undergraduate students. The mean score for rural students was 168.91 (SD = 14.96), while urban students had a higher mean score of 173.81 (SD = 11.13). The computed t-value of 2.59 was significant at the 0.01 level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. These results indicate that urban undergraduate students possess significantly more favourable environmental attitudes compared to their rural counterparts.

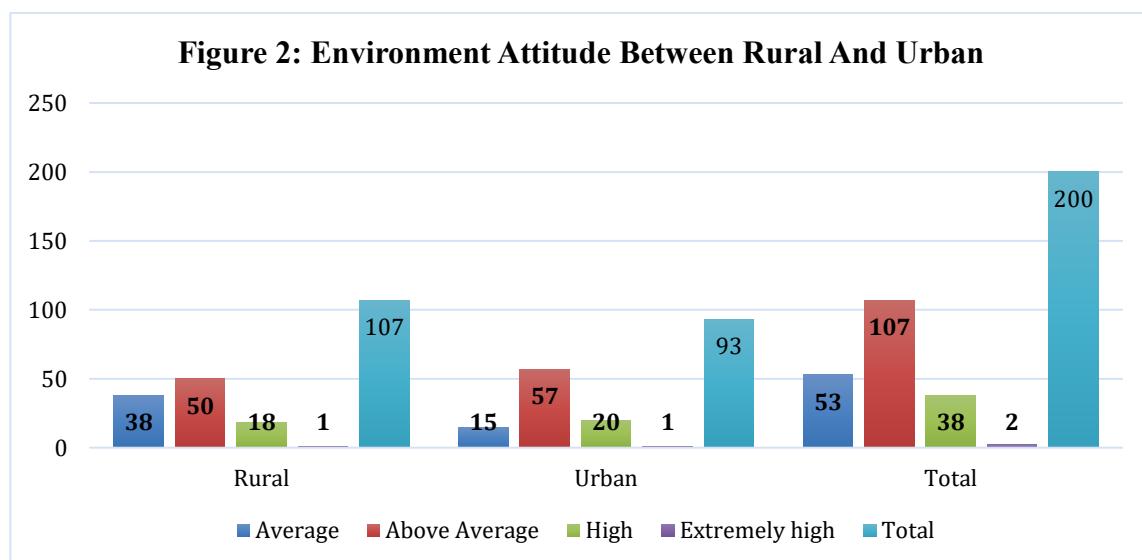


Figure 2 presents a comparative analysis of environmental attitudes among rural and urban undergraduate students. Among the 107 rural students, 50 (46.73%) exhibited above-average attitudes, 38 (35.51%) demonstrated average attitudes, 18 (16.82%) showed high attitudes, and 1 (0.93%) displayed an extremely high attitude. In contrast, of the 93 urban students, 57 (61.29%) possessed above-average attitudes, 15 (16.13%) were average, 20 (21.51%) had high attitudes, and 1 (1.07%) exhibited an extremely high attitude. Overall, out of the total 200 undergraduate students, 107 (53.50%) were above average, 53 (26.50%) were average, 38 (19.00%) were high, and 2 (1.00%) demonstrated extremely high environmental attitudes.

Major Findings

1. The study showed that out of 200 undergraduate students – 107 students possess above average, 53 students possess average, 38 students possess high and 2 students possess extremely high levels of attitude towards environment.
2. The study also revealed that male undergraduate students are more favourable than female undergraduate students towards environmental education.
3. The findings showed that urban undergraduate students possess more positive attitudes towards environment than the female undergraduate students.

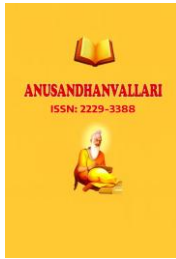
Conclusion

The present study was conducted on the undergraduate students at colleges in Imphal east and west area to find out the level of attitudes towards their surrounding environment. The study concluded that most of the students possess above average levels of attitude towards environment. At the same time, it is also revealed that male undergraduate students are more favourable in attitude towards environment than female undergraduate students. Also, the study revealed the urban students are more sensitive towards environment than the rural students.

The findings suggest a strong shift of curriculum in existing education system and it aims is to develop a positive attitude towards environment for every student. The education for environment must be fulfilled if is implemented in different levels of education. The study also put up the need for proper understanding and knowledge to ensure positive feedback in future environment education system. The need of developing a positive mindset is the main solution for future development of a sound environment and sustainable lifestyle. Only then people will develop a rigid concept that the sole responsibility for us is to safeguard and conserve our environment.

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