Research Article

Pro Environmental behavior of Secondary and Higher Secondary Students from Urban and Rural Areas.

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Abstract

Many necessary individuals and institutions today are of the opinion that education is the key to increase awareness, knowledge and concern for environment among students and as a result promote pro-environmental behavior. Pro-environmental behaviour can be defined as actions of an individual or group that advocate and/or result in the sustainable use of natural resources (Sivek and Hungerford, 1989/90). This paper is based on an empirical research work done to assess Pro environmental behavior of secondary and Higher Secondary students from urban and rural areas.

Keywords: Pro-Environmental Behavior, Secondary Students, Higher Secondary Students, Urban and Rural Areas, Environmental Awareness, Sustainable Development, Environmental Education

INTRODUCTION

World educators and environment specialists have repeatedly pointed out that a solution to environmental crisis will require an environmental awareness and its proper understanding which should be deeply rooted in the education system at all levels of school education (Shukla, 2001).

The existing curricula at primary, secondary and college levels provide a lot of opportunities to make the students aware of the environment. The integration of environmental education is possible if teachers have a will to introduce it in a quite natural way while teaching different curricular areas at primary, secondary and higher education level. In this present context the need for studying the environmental awareness, knowledge attitude, concern and

ethics of school students is a must. It is very much an essential need for each individual to develop an awareness of protection and preservation towards environment.

Further the review of related literature also reflects on the fact that very few studies have been carried out in India investigating the pro-environmental behaviour of students and the factors contributing to it. Thus the need is felt to assess the pro- environmental behaviour of our students and the present investigation is carried out.

Background of the Study

According to Marquit (2008) threat perception related to environmental issues such as air pollution may be a determinant of pro environmental behaviours.. A secondary data analysis was conducted using data from the Air Quality Perception Survey conducted in Cache County, Utah. The survey focused on the public perception of air pollution in Cache County and perceived impact on personal and community life. From a sample of 289 returned surveys, the data were examined to determine the possible link between threat perception and the decision to engage in specific pro- environmental and avoidance behaviours. The analysis found that threat perception predicted some pro-environmental and avoidance behaviours.

Operational Definition

According to Kollumuss and Agyeman (2002), pro-environmental behavior is the behavior that consciously seeks to minimize the negative impact of one's actions on the natural and built world (e.g. minimize resource and energy consumption, use of non-toxic substances, reduce waste production).

MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

- To develop appropriate scales to· assess the Pro-environmental behavior of the students
- To compare students' pro-environmental behavior of the students based on location of the schools, level of education and gender.

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

Population and Sample Characteristics

The study has been aimed at the population of students at the secondary and higher secondary levels, belonging to different locations, namely, rural and urban. Random sampling method has been intended for obtaining the sample. The sample size is 731. It includes 360

students from rural areas and 371 students from urban areas. About 182 students from secondary level and 194 students from higher secondary level were taken as sample from rural areas.

About 178 students from secondary level and 177 students from higher secondary level were taken as sample from urban areas .The sample includes boys and girls.

1.18.3 Tools

Pro-environmental Behaviour Scale

In the present investigation an appropriate tool was designed to assess the pro-environmental behavior of students in our Indian context. It had content validity It consists of 40 items (18 statements pertaining to direct pro-environmental behaviour and 22 statements pertaining to indirect pro-environmental behaviour) on a Likert Scale with five alternatives, namely, Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Analyses:

The data was subjected to statistical analysis. Critical ratio was found out to find out the significant difference between the variables.

Table-I

Showing Significance of Mean Difference between Students in Rural and Urban Area Schools

Group	**N**	Mean	**SD**	SED	SEM	CR	Level of Significance
Rural	360	90.35	16.30	0.86	1.28	46.02	0.01
Urban	371	149.18	18.07	0.94			

The obtained value is higher than the table value at 0.01 level. From the table above, it could be interpreted that students in urban area schools differ significantly in their pro-environmental behavior from the students from rural areas.

Table-II

Showing Significance of Mean Difference between Students at the Secondary and Higher Secondary Levels in Rural Area Schools

Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	SEM	CR	Level of Significance
Secondary	182	76.81	8.86	.66	.92	29.42	0.01
Higher Secondary	178	104.20	8.81	.66			

The obtained value is higher than the table value at 0.01 level In the above table, it is seen that students at the higher secondary level are significantly better in pro-environmental behaviour when compared to students at the secondary level in rural area schools.

Table-III

Showing Significance of Mean Difference between Students at the Secondary and Higher Secondary Levels in Urban Area Schools

Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	SEM	CR	Level of Significance
Secondary	194	133.86	8.58	.62	.89	36.21	0.01
Higher Secondary	177	165.96	8.47	.64			

The obtained value is higher than the table value at 0.01 level In the above table, it is evident that the students in urban area schools at the higher secondary level differ significantly and are much better with reference to pro-environmental behavior when compared to the students from secondary level.

Table-IV

Showing Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Boys and Girls at the Secondary Level in Rural Area Schools

Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	SEM	CR	Level of Significance
Boys	90	69.28	4.19	0.44	0.71	21.11	0.01

Girls	92	84.18	5.26	0.55			

From the table it is evident that there is significant difference in the pro-environmental behavior between the boys and girls at secondary level from rural areas.

Table-V

Showing Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Boys and Girls at the Higher Secondary Level in Rural Area Schools

Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	SEM	CR	Level of Significance
Boys	90	96.93	4.68	0.49	0.73	20.26	O.Ql
Girls	88	111.63	4.99	0.53			

The obtained value is higher than the table value at 0.0I level From the table it is evident that there is significant difference in the pro-environmental behavior between the boys and girls at Higher secondary level from rural areas.

Table-VI

Showing Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Boys and Girls at the Secondary Level in Urban Area Schools

Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	SEM	CR	Level of Significance
Boys	96	128.33	37.25	0.74	0.95	11.52	O.Ql
Girls	98	139.28	5.92	0.60			

The obtained value is higher than the table value at 0.01 level from the table it is evident that there is significant difference in the pro-environmental behavior between the boys and girls at secondary level from urban areas.

Table-VII

Showing Summary of Significance of Mean Difference between Boys and Girls at the Higher Secondary Level in Urban Area Schools

Group	N	Mean	SD	SED	SEM	CR	Level of significance
Boys	82	157.93	3.41	0.38	0.60	24.92	
Girls	95	172.83	4.42	0.43			

From the table it is evident that there is significant difference in the pro-environmental behavior between the boys and girls at higher secondary level from urban areas.

FINDINGS

- The students in urban area schools differ significantly in their pro-environmental behavior from the students from rural areas.
- The students at the higher secondary level are significantly better in pro-environmental behavior when compared to students at the secondary level in rural area schools.
- The students in urban area schools at the higher secondary level differ significantly and are much better in their pro-environmental behavior than students at secondary level.
- There is significant difference in the pro environmental behavior between the boys and girls at secondary level from rural areas.
- There is significant difference in the pro environmental behavior between the boys and girls at Higher secondary level from rural areas.
- There is significant difference in the pro environmental behavior between the boys and girls at secondary level from urban areas.
- There is significant difference in the pro environmental behavior between the boys and girls at higher secondary level from urban areas.

CONCLUSION

Raising the individuals' awareness of the environmental problems, improving environmental sensitivity will make great contributions to the creation of sustainable environment (Hsu, 2004). School students mostly acquire information about environmental

problems from radio and television, internet, newspapers and magazines. Since media plays an important role in daily life, television channels should reserve more place and time for environmental programs, and the results of the environmental-friendly activities and campaigns should be broadcast so that the environmental awareness and sensitivity of the public can be fostered. In line with the increasing knowledge base will help improve the environmental attitudes, teachers at every level of education should teach their students that they have to live hand in hand with the environment.

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