
Studies on Intensity of Environmental Awareness among Assistant Professors of Senior College and Universities

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ABSTRACT:

To recognize the growing awareness about Environmental degradation, pollution and self responsibility of its protection it becomes necessary to study the extent of awareness among the intellectual class of society. In the past two decades, environment has attracted the attention of decision makers, scientists and even laymen in many parts of the world. They are becoming increasingly conscious of issues such as famines, droughts, floods, scarcity of fuel, firewood and fodder. Environmental awareness is important to understand the fragility of our environment along with its protection. Promoting environmental awareness is an easy way to become an environmental steward and participate in creating a brighter future for our children. Awareness shapes a hierarchy of values, and at the same time has an influence on the sense of responsibility for inappropriate choice of values and indifference towards wrongdoing. In the present research work the effort is made to study the awareness intensity among the assistant professors through a designing of questionnaire.

Key words – awareness, environment, percentage, question, respondents,

INTRODUCTION

Environment includes all living and non-living objects. We live in the environment and use the environmental resources like air, land and water to meet our needs. Development of nation also means meeting the needs of the people. While meeting the ever-growing needs, we put continuous pressure on the environment through growing population and fulfilment of their demands. When the pressure exceeds the carrying capacity of the environment to repair or replace itself, it creates a serious problem of environmental degradation. If we use any environmental resource such as ground water beyond its limit of replacement, we may lose it

forever. Therefore, there is a need to create ‘awareness’ about Environmental protection. While efforts are being made at the national and international level to protect our environment, it is also the responsibility of every citizen to use each environmental resource with care and protect them from degradation.

To recognize the growing awareness about Environmental degradation, pollution and self responsibility of its protection it becomes necessary to study the extent of awareness among the intellectual class of society.

In the past two decades, environment has attracted the attention of decision makers, scientists and even laymen in many parts of the world. They are becoming increasingly conscious of other issues such as famines, droughts, floods, scarcity of fuel, firewood and fodder, pollution of air and water, problems of hazardous chemicals and radiation, depletion of natural resources, extinction of wildlife and dangers to flora and fauna. People are now aware of the need to protect the natural environmental resources of air, water, soil and plant life that constitute the natural capital on which man depends.

The environmental issues are important because the absence of their solutions is more horrible. Unless environmental issues are not solved or not taken care of the coming generations may find earth worth not living. The need of the planet and the needs of the person have become one.

There is no denying the fact that environment has to be protected and conserved so to make future life possible. Indeed, man's needs are increasing and accordingly the environment is also being altered, indeed, nature's capacity is too accommodating and too regenerative yet there is a limit to nature's capacity, especially when pressure of exploding population and technology keep mounting. What is required is the sustenance, conservation and improvement of the changing and fragile environment.

Environmental awareness is important to understand the fragility of our environment along with its protection. Promoting environmental awareness is an easy way to become an environmental steward and participate in creating a brighter future for our children.

Awareness shapes a hierarchy of values, and at the same time has an influence on the sense of responsibility for inappropriate choice of values and indifference towards wrongdoing¹.

Public awareness of the environment means the intensity of ability to emotionally understand the surrounding world, including the laws of the natural environment, sensitivity to all the changes occurring in the environment, understanding of cause and effect relationships between the quality of the environment and human behaviour, an understanding of how the environment works as a system, and a sense of responsibility for the common heritage of the Earth, such as natural resources with the aim of preserving them for future generations.

To know and understand what is good and what is better, and at the same time commit a wrongdoing, is socially more injurious than committing a wrongdoing in ignorance. Therefore, building, in a society, a new system of values with the aim of creating environmental public awareness, should include systematic training activities aimed at increasing the basic knowledge of ecology and environmental protection, and, at the same time, heightening the sensitivity of individuals to nature.

Environmental public awareness comes from a result of general knowledge, specialist knowledge of a particular problem and also sensitivity to, and a sense of, responsibility for the environment. Environmental public awareness is shaped throughout the whole life of particular people living in a given local community, performing specific work and having definite personal characteristics which have a deciding effect on their sense of responsibility and ability to emotionally perceive the environment as having value in itself.

The knowledge acquired during school education and then systematically improved in adulthood, is an essential factor in heightening the environmental awareness of an individual and, at the same time, an indispensable condition for the development of a pro-ecological lifestyle.

To undertake actions aimed at increasing environmental public awareness answers should be known to the following questions:

Who shapes the attitude and awareness of members of the community?

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- Parents, teachers, colleagues, acquaintances, fellow-workers, leaders, media, moral authorities, scientists, and, politicians.

Where is public awareness of the environment formed and shaped?

- Family home, family, nurseries, schools, schools of higher education, churches and religious organizations, professional environment, workplace, and, associations.

What shapes and increases the environmental public awareness?

- Schools and academic manuals, messages transmitted through mass media, children, youth, daily, popular and specialist press, television and radio programmes, films, including documentary films, Internet, own experience and observations, work for organizations, and, social status of the family and affluence.

Basic and specialist knowledge of an environmentally aware individual should include, among others:

- basic notions in the field of environmental protection,
- knowledge of inter-relationships of particular elements of the environment, including the relationship between air pollution, soil contamination, and the quality of surface and underground water,
- understanding of relationships between people and their environment,
- risk of pollution,
- how the improper management of waste disposal sites affects the quality of the environment,
- The environmentally-aware individual should be conscious about the needs and demands posed by different sectors of society and the government so that he/she can make a better judgment before and during his/her participation in a given programme or activity^{2,3}.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

In order to understand the level of awareness among the assistant and associate professors a questionnaire is prepared. Questionnaire comprises of 15 main questions. First part of questionnaire consists of general information in the form of age, sex, designation, address, subject to which respondent belongs etc. From the intellectual and matured responsible group of society like assistant and associate professors it is expected that they must aware of the basic environmental problems. Some of the questions are designed with options. Most of the times these options may single or in multiple are selected as answers. This results in getting variety of combinations in different forms as result. It is also a need of this research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Respondents are belonging to different faculties. Their percentage is as below. Science-33.5%, commerce-6.5%, arts-42%, physical education-5%, music-4%, education-2%, law-3%, etc. Male respondents were more (79.5%) in comparison with female (20.5%).

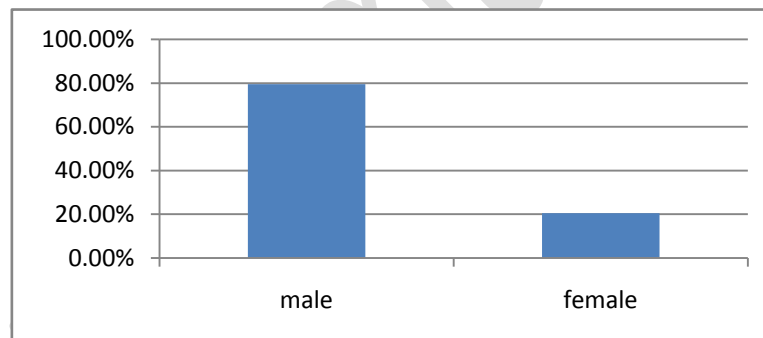


Fig-1 Percentage of male and female respondents

As per the expectation 99.5% respondents replied that they are aware of the present environmental status. 0.5% respondents surprisingly said that they are not aware. According to 92.5% respondent's means majority of the group accepted that the environment is polluted. but still 7.5% respondents are saying that our surrounding environment is not polluted. While filling the questionnaires researcher asked them to think mainly their surrounding environment of the residential area. We may therefore interpret that these 7.5% respondents perhaps are staying in non polluted area. Out of 92.5% respondents saying environment is

polluted 3% respondents are experiencing noise pollution, 18.5% air, 2.5% water, 0.5% solid waste pollution.

As four options are asked to the respondents, result in the form of different combinations are obtained. It is very useful to conclude firm conclusions. Few (only 4.5) respondents said that they experience noise, air, and solid waste pollution daily. 0.5 % said combination of noise , water ,solid waste. 2.5% air, water, solid waste, and finally 6% noises, air, water. While a large group 37% says that they have experience of all these four types of pollutions daily.

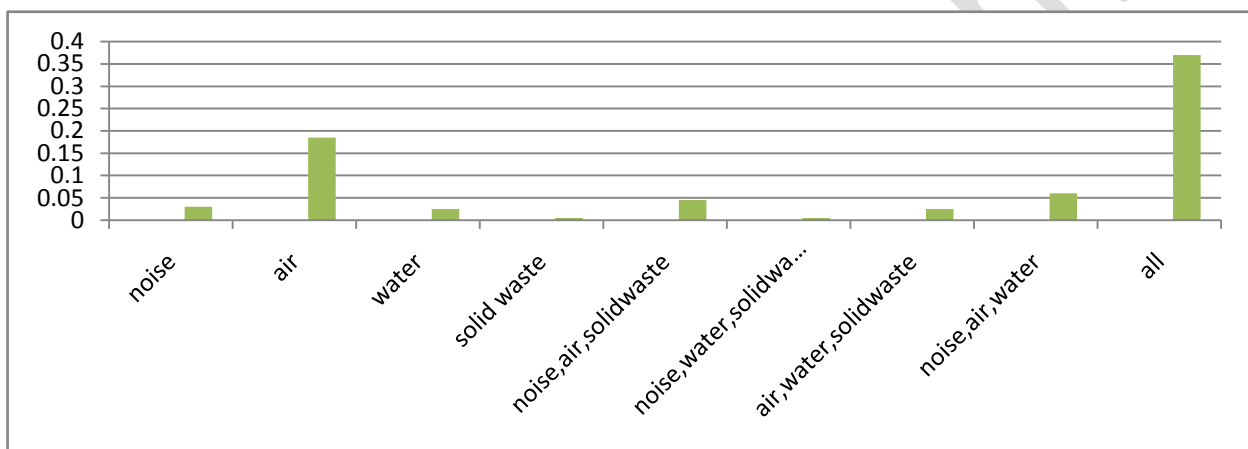


Fig 2 percentage of respondents experiencing different kinds of pollutions

Question 4 of the questionnaire is very important and forces respondents to introspect. It is about our contribution to certain kind of pollution. **98.5 % respondents** agreed that we are also responsible for certain kind of pollution. 1.5% are not agree with this. 26.5% are accepting that they are responsible for air pollution.

9 % are creating noise pollution. Only 3.5 % are accepting that they are involved in solid waste pollution. But researcher fills that every person is responsible for solid waste pollution. As we generate solid waste daily in our house, office etc.

Again as options were given answers in combination are obtained .Results in combination air and noise 15%, air and water 1%, noise and solid waste 4%, air and solid waste 3%, noise and water 1.5% , water and solid waste 0.5%.

Combinations including three types at a time also obtained. It indicates about awareness of respondents about types of which pollution caused by them. 15.5% respondents supportively said that they are responsible for all types of pollutions. Air, noise, water pollution is experienced by 8.5%, - while air, noise solid waste is experienced by 5.5%, and only few (0.5%) experience air water, solid waste pollution.

In the next question they have asked about effects of noise pollution. With a good signal of awareness 95% professors knows effects of noise pollution. Only 5% are not aware of the effects of noise pollution.

Question 7 is important in indicating legal awareness about environment. In order to prevent pollution government had made many laws for all environmental problems. As an educated citizen we must know at least few laws. 68 % respondents only said that they know laws rest means 32% do not know laws. But from 68% all were not able to entitle laws. In question no. 8 they are asked to write laws named if they know any.

In the next question they have been asked about biomedical waste generation and disposal. We are visiting all types of hospitals many times but never think about waste generated in these hospitals. Surprisingly 83.5% respondents know about biomedical waste generation and disposal also however 16.5% are not aware of these things.

Biodiversity plays very important role in the total health and maintenance of environment and ecology. We are also responsible for the loss of biodiversity and we can conserve it. By keeping this view in mind they have asked about biodiversity. 89.5% , major group of respondents said they knows about biodiversity. Only 10.5% do not know about biodiversity.

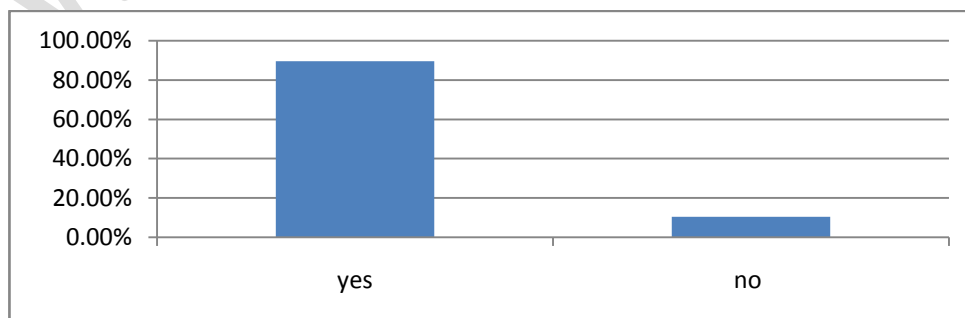


Fig 3 –Showing percentage of respondents having awareness of biodiversity conservation

Questions 11 to 15 were designed specifically for this target group (Assistant professors). Environmental study is compulsory in colleges and universities as part of syllabus .it is expected that these professors can educate students about environment, as intellectual class can also contribute significantly to prevent pollution. As expected 95.5% majority of group says yes they can prevent pollution. 4.5% very less percent respondents says no.

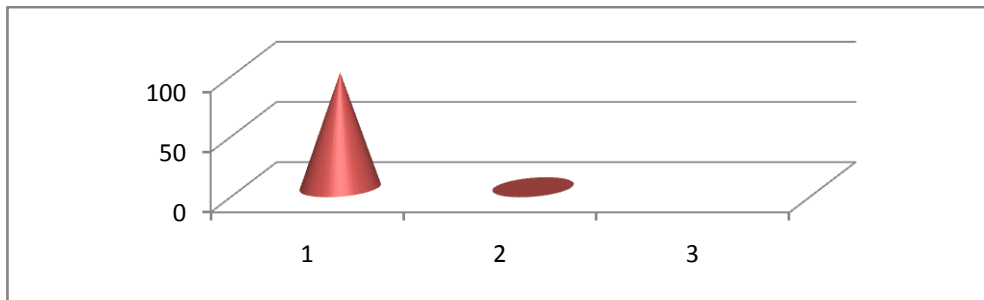


Fig 4 Showing percentage of respondents agree that they can prevent pollution

Further it is important to know which type of the pollution can be prevented. So the options are asked in the next question. Air pollution can be prevented as per 14% respondents, noise pollution can be prevented as per 8% respondents, 4.5% respondents are agree that water pollution can be prevented, only smallest (0.5%.) are accepting that land pollution can be prevented. 12 % says we can prevent all types of pollution. Following table shows percentage of respondents agree that pollution can be prevented.

Sr . no.	Type of pollution in the form of combination)that can be prevented	Percentage of respondents
1	Air, noise	4.5%,
2	Air ,land	1%
3	Noise, landl	1%
4	Air, water	8%
5	Noise, water	4%
6	Air, noise, land	2.5%
7	Air, noise, water	11%
8	Air, water, land	2%

Table 1 Percentage of respondents accepting that pollution can be prevented

Question 13 is regarding creating awareness in the society through the media of students. The main reason of filling questionnaires by professors is the same. As per the expectation of researchers, 99% respondents says that professors can create environment awareness in society through students. But still 1% respondents do not agree with this.

Conservation of natural resources is another important issue related to the environment. In the same reference question number 14 is asked and 98.5% respondents says yes, they can save or conserve natural resources. only 1.5% respondents are not responding positively. Out of 98.5% positive respondents 21.5% says they can save water, but this figure is very less than expectation.

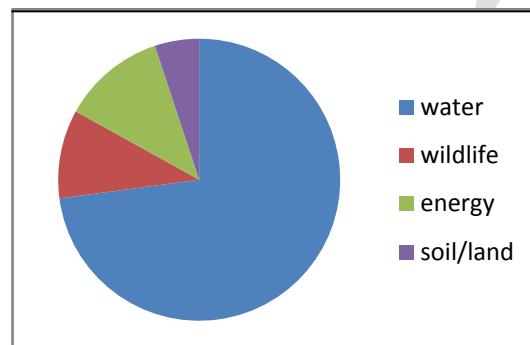


Fig 5 Pie chart showing percentage of respondents accepting to save natural resources respectively

Every person can save at least water. 3.5% respondents said that they can save energy. 3% says that they can save wildlife. 1.5% is ready to save land resource. 34% respondents are ready to contribute to saving of water, land/soil, energy, wildlife again as four options were given some combinations are obtained. The proportions of these combinations are as below.

Water and energy-12%, water and wildlife 5%, water and soil /land 6.5%, water, energy, wildlife 5%, water, energy, soil/land 4%, water, wildlife, water, soil/land -3.5%. results in combinations indicates that majority of the respondents are accepting that saving water as natural resource is easy as well as also essential.

CONCLUSIONS

- Respondents belonging to science faculty were dominant.

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- As far as gender is concern male respondents were dominant.
 - Majority respondents (99.5%) are aware of the today's status of environment.
 - Water pollution is experienced means they are not getting pure water supply
 - 1.5% are assuming that they perhaps are not responsible for any kind of pollution
 - As we are using vehicles daily, if vehicle is not in condition it causes air pollution
 - Noise pollution is the only type of pollution that can easily control through environmental education.
 - Professors are intellectual people in the society even though accepts that they also causes noise pollution and also knowingly or unknowingly responsible for every kind of pollution.
 - Majority of the participants are positive for pollution prevention and conservation of natural resources.

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