

A study of Environmental Awareness among University Students with regards to their Gender, place of Living and Stream of Study

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ABSTRACT: *Environmental awareness refers to the consciousness about physical, social and aesthetic aspects of environment. Environmental awareness should be the integral part of any environmental curriculum encouraging students to take an active role in the protection to their environment so that critical balance between man and environment may be preserved. The present paper aimed at assessing the environmental awareness among the students of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh in relation to their gender, place of living and stream of study. The sample of the study comprised of 598 students. For the assessment of environmental awareness of the students, investigator has constructed an environmental awareness questionnaire. Results of the study indicate that majority of the students are highly aware about the environment. Female students are found to be high in environmental awareness than their male counterparts. The students from urban areas are also found to be high in Environmental awareness than the students from rural areas. It is also found that students from science stream are highly aware about the environment in comparisons to the students of social science and arts streams. Based on these findings, some suggestion has been put forward.*

Keywords: Environmental education, Environmental awareness, Active participation.

Introduction: Environmental issue is one of the major concern of the present day world. Natural resources are declining continuously at an alarming rate. Climate has undergone drastic changes. Global warming is on the rise, due to the emission of greenhouse gasses. Habitations of many species had changed. Many species of plant and animals had become endangered. Numerous efforts have been made and still continue across the world to protect the environment. World Leaders are of great concern to the changing environmental threats. The rising world population has also caused numerous Environmental problem e.g. Deforestation for agriculture, Establishment Industries and Factories, constructions of Dams, Automobiles, Nuclear Explosions etc. All these human activities are degrading our environment continuously at a fast rate. In spite of various efforts around the world Environmental Issues are at rise. No policy can work for the protection of environment unless we cannot educate our general masses regarding the environmental hazards. We need to make them aware about the natural resources and their benefits for the present and future generation. Numerous Studies (Sharma, 2006; Mishra, 2012; Arumugam and Mahendraprabu, 2014; Ghosh, 2014; Gopinath, 2014; Barman, 2015;

Nagra, 2015; Sandhu, 2015; Singh and Aziz, 2015; Bala, 2015; Asthana & Divedi, 2015; Barman, 2015; Sundar, 2015; Asthana and Divedi, 2015; Mandal and Mandal, 2016; Singh, 2016; Bagna, 2016; Ali, 2016; Larijani, 2017; Poonam, 2017; Kaur and Kaur, 2017; Gupta, 2017; Rather and Thakran, 2017; Kaur, 2017; Dutta, 2017) have been conducted for estimating the awareness regarding Environment at various level of Education and found that the level of awareness regarding Environment and its associated issues of students do not stand equal and need to make the masses aware about the threats to our Environment. Keeping in view the theoretical and conceptual background of the problem, the present researcher has decided to conduct an additional research on the Students of A.M.U. The study entitled as: *A study of Environmental awareness among University Students in relation to their Gender, Place of Living and Stream of Study.*

Briefly the Research Questions for the present study are as under:

1. What is the Level of Environmental Awareness of University Students?
2. Is there any difference in Environmental Awareness among University Students with regards to their gender?
3. Is there any difference in Environmental Awareness among University Students with regards to their Place of Living?
4. Is there any difference in Environmental Awareness among University Students with regards to their Stream of Study?

Methodology:

In the Present study the researcher has used Quantitative Research Approach and Descriptive survey Design. All the Students of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh have comprised the population of the study and the researchers have taken a sample of 598 students through simple random sampling technique. A self-made Questionnaire of Environmental Awareness has been administered on the selected sample for estimating the environmental awareness level among students. The data has been analyzed through SPSS.

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

Q.1. What is the Level of Environmental Awareness of University Students?

To answer this question, percentage has been calculated from the obtained data as shown in the table below.

Table: 1. showing percentage of students possess different levels of Environmental Awareness

Levels of Environmental Awareness	No. of students	Percentage
Very high	504	84.28
High	69	11.53
Average	25	4.18
Total	598	100.0

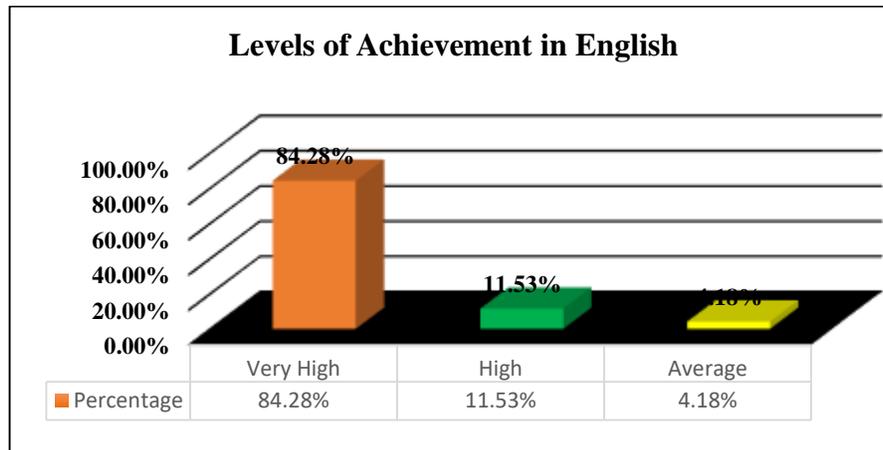


Figure.1. Graphical representation of students having different levels of Environmental Awareness

The table and figure (1) have shown that majority of the students are well aware about the environment and its associated issues. Out of 598 students 504 students possess very high level of environmental awareness. The Possible reason behind such results may be that all the students in the sample belong to University and have studied environmental education as a subject, that make them aware about the various hazards of Environment.

Q.2. Is there any difference in Environmental Awareness among University Students with regards to their gender?

For estimating the difference t-test has been used as shown in the table 2.

Table 2: Representing difference in Environmental Awareness with regards to gender

Gender	N	Mean	t- value	df	Level of Significance
Male	302	12.63	-2.08	596	.002 (Significant)
Female	296	14.71			

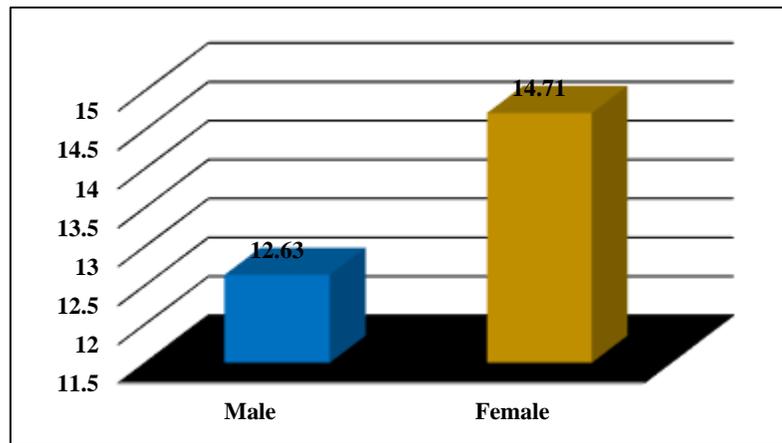


Figure 2: Graphical Representation of differences in Environmental Awareness among students with regards to their gender

As shown in the table 2, the mean value of male students regarding environmental awareness is 12.63, whereas the mean value for female students is 14.71, which shows that female students are well aware about environment in comparison to their counterparts. The figure 2 also shows that the mean difference in environmental awareness with regards to gender. The reason behind such results may be that the female students are more sensitive and more prone to cleanliness than the male students.

Q. 3. Is there any difference in Environmental Awareness among University Students with regards to their Place of Living?

To answer this question t-test has been calculated as shown in the table 3 below.

Table: 3: Representing differences in Environmental Awareness with regards to their Place of Living

Place of living	N	Mean	t- value	df	Level of Significance
Rural	312	12.50	-2.27	596	.003 (significant)
Urban	286	14.77			

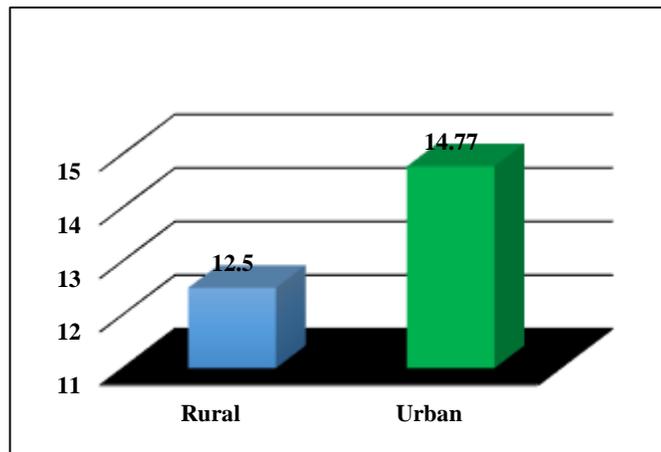


Figure 3: Graphical Representation of differences in Environmental Awareness of Students with regards to their place of living

As shown in the table 3, the mean value of the students belonging to rural area regarding environmental awareness is 12.50, whereas the mean value for female students is 14.77, which shows that students from urban areas are well aware about environment in comparison to their counterparts residing in rural areas. The figure 3 also shows that the mean differences in rural and urban students regarding environmental awareness. The Reason behind such results may be that the urban students have access to the school where better quality education avail, various environmental awareness programmes are organized in urban schools and locality. Furthermore urban areas are more polluted then rural areas, so students have more knowledge about environmental hazards.

Q. 4. Is there any differences in Environmental Awareness among University Students with regards to their Stream of Study?

Again t-test has been used for estimating the difference

Table: 4: Representing differences in Environmental Awareness with regards to their stream of Study.

Stream of Study	N	Mean	t -value	df	Level of Significance
Science Stream	260	15.33	4.19	596	.000 (Significant)
Others	338	11.14			

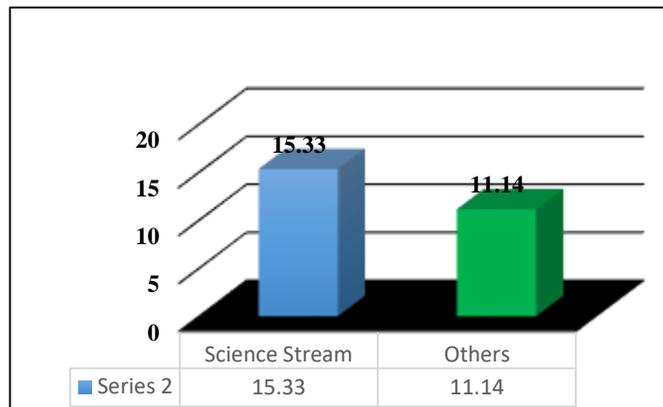


Figure 4: Graphical Representation of differences in Environmental Awareness among students with regards to their Stream of Study

As shown in the table 4, the mean value of the students of science stream regarding environmental awareness is 15.33, whereas the mean value for the students studying in others stream (Arts, Social science, languages) is 11.14, which shows that students from Science Stream are well aware about environment in comparison to the students studying in others streams. The figure 4 also shows that the mean differences in Science stream and others stream students regarding their awareness about environmental. The possible reason behind such results may be that the students from science stream have better knowledge about environment and its associated issues. Students form Science Stream studied Environmental hazards, Natural recourses, Threat to environment and the like in their curriculum. So they have better understanding about the nature of environment.

Findings of the Study:

Results of the study indicate that majority of the students in the sample are well aware about the Environment. Female students are found to be high in environmental awareness than their male counterparts. The students from urban areas are also found to be high in Environmental awareness than the students from rural areas. It is also found that students from science stream are highly aware about the environment in comparison to the students of social science and arts streams.

Suggestions

Based on the findings of the study, it is suggested that Environmental Education should be introduce as a compulsory subject in all programmes. Awareness, Knowledge, Skill, attitude, evaluation ability and participation should be foster among students for the protection and better understanding of environment. Also the awareness programmes related to environment should be organized for the students studying in arts, languages, humanities and social sciences for the development of scientific attitude among them. Same treatment should be made available for students residing in rural areas.

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