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Student's Role In Protecting The Environment: A Case Study Of Haryana

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ABSTRACT

Environment is the only place where we all have to live. Without healthy environment no one can survive and for sustainable development of any nation healthy environment is the utmost requirement. That's why it is our duty to protect the environment. If we would fail to do so we are putting many lives in danger including animals, plants, crops and even our own. In this research paper, the effort has been made to know the role of students in protecting the environment. The data is primarily collected through online survey which is conducted among the college students of 13 districts of Haryana. Data has been analyzed with descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, rank and mean using SPSS 20. The findings revealed that students are having good knowledge of Environment Protection Act, 1986 but they should get more aware of all other legislations related to Environment also. According to students' perception, factories and industries are the most vulnerable factor which is contributing to air pollution, industrial waste is the top most factor which is responsible for water pollution and soil pollution and traffic noise is the major factor which is responsible for noise pollution. Students play significant role in protecting the environment by the way of saving the water, saving energy and doing plantation.

Key Words: Environment Protection, Students, Pollution

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Environment includes everything which surrounds us. For natural environment, it is referred to as the combination of air, water, soil, plants, animals and other living & non-living things. Environment is the only place where we all have to live. Without healthy environment no one can survive and for sustainable development of any nation healthy environment is the utmost requirement. That's why it is our duty to protect the environment. If we would fail to do so we are putting many lives in danger including animals, plants, crops and even our own. We can also help our future generation by providing them healthy environment. It is our moral obligation to protect the environment from different types of pollutions i.e., air, water, soil and noise; global warming; smog; acid rain; deforestation and wildfires etc.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In last few decades global environment has gone through significant challenges and transitions (Birdar, 2006). Environment pollution has adverse effect from early life to prenatal disorders, infant mortality, respiratory disorders, allergy, cardiovascular disorders and mental disorders (Kelishadi, 202). All types of pollution air, water, and soil/land are not only adversely affecting human life but also have greater harmful effect on animals', trees/plants (Khan and Ghouri, 2011). There are some obvious reasons of environment degradation are growing population, economic growth and technological advancements (Appannagari, 2017). Deforestation without proper replanting will also lead to food problem, soil erosion and landslides etc. Without proper and adequate pollution control measures urbanization and industrial development will also create huge disaster. There are various legislations related to environment including Water Prevention and Control Act 1974, Water Prevention and Control Amendment Act 1977, Air Prevention and Control of Pollution Act 1981, Wildlife Protection Act 1972, Forest Conservation Act 1980, Environment Protection Act 1986 etc., but how much extent all these have been implemented is a matter of concern. There is a need to integrate all the environment concerns at all stages of policy, planning and decision-making process (Ambore et al., 2013). It is not too late for global institution, governments and local bodies to use advanced resources to make a balance in environment (Khan and Ghouri, 2011). As an individual our contribution in this regard also matters a lot.

On the basis of literature studied, there is a need to study the role of individual especially of the students towards protecting the environment.

1.3 METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The data is primarily collected through online survey which is conducted among the college students of 13 districts of Haryana including: Ambala, Kurukshetra, Karnal, Kaithal, Jind, Hisar, Panchkula, Panipat, Gurugram, Fatehabad, Jhajjar, Sirsa and Yamuna Nagar in the month of September, 2022. Total 355 responses have been collected. 85.4 % students belong to under graduate courses and 14.6% students belong to post graduate courses (Table1.1).

Table-1.1 Course Wise distribution of Sample

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Under Graduate | 303 | 85.4 | 85.4 | 85.4 |
| Valid Post Graduate | 52 | 14.6 | 14.6 | 100.0 |
| Total | 355 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

Source: SPSS output

1.3.1 Objective of the study

- To know the awareness level of students towards different Acts related to Environment Protection.
- To know the students' perception regarding different factors responsible for air, water, soil and noise pollution.
- To know the contribution of students in protecting the environment.

1.4 FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

1.4.1 Findings

To achieve the set objectives, data has been analyzed with descriptive statistics technique including frequency, percentage, rank and mean using SPSS 20 software.

Table-1.2 Awareness level regarding Different Acts related to Environment

| Different Acts related to Environment | Frequency | Not at all Aware | Slightly Aware | Moderately Aware | Very Much Aware | Extremely Aware | Mean | Rank |
|---|-----------|------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------|------|
| Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 | F | 26 | 27 | 68 | 111 | 123 | 3.78 | I |
| | % | 7.3 | 7.6 | 19.2 | 31.3 | 34.6 | | |
| Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 | F | 29 | 41 | 78 | 122 | 85 | 3.54 | V |
| | % | 8.2 | 11.5 | 22.0 | 34.4 | 23.9 | | |
| The Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 | F | 32 | 40 | 80 | 106 | 97 | 3.55 | IV |
| | % | 9.0 | 11.3 | 22.5 | 29.9 | 27.3 | | |
| Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 | F | 33 | 38 | 68 | 115 | 101 | 3.60 | II |
| | % | 9.3 | 10.7 | 19.2 | 32.4 | 28.5 | | |
| Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 | F | 34 | 35 | 75 | 113 | 98 | 3.58 | III |
| | % | 9.6 | 9.9 | 21.1 | 31.8 | 27.6 | | |

It is analyzed that students are having more knowledge of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 as it is on the 1st rank on the basis mean value which is 3.78. They are having knowledge regarding Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 with the mean value 3.60 and it is at 2nd place and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981 with mean value 3.58 at 3rd place. They are also aware of Other Acts including Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 with mean value 3.55(4th rank), Forest (Conservation) Act 1980 with mean value 3.54 (5th rank).

Table- 1.3 Students' Perception regarding Factors Affecting Air Pollution

| Factors Affecting Air Pollution | Frequency | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Mean | Rank |
|---|-----------|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|-------|----------------|------|------|
| Insecticides and pesticides used in agriculture | F | 7 | 18 | 78 | 140 | 112 | 3.94 | VI |
| | % | 2.0 | 5.1 | 22.0 | 39.4 | 31.5 | | |
| Packing material of Products | F | 4 | 23 | 65 | 164 | 99 | 3.93 | VII |
| | % | 1.1 | 6.5 | 18.3 | 46.2 | 27.9 | | |
| Plastic Products | F | 10 | 16 | 39 | 105 | 185 | 4.24 | III |
| | % | 2.8 | 4.5 | 11.0 | 29.6 | 52.1 | | |
| Burning of Fossil Fuel | F | 6 | 19 | 34 | 113 | 183 | 4.26 | II |
| | % | 1.7 | 5.4 | 9.6 | 31.8 | 51.5 | | |
| Waste in land fills | F | 10 | 19 | 66 | 144 | 116 | 3.95 | V |
| | % | 2.8 | 5.4 | 18.6 | 40.6 | 32.7 | | |
| Exhaust from factories and industries | F | 4 | 10 | 35 | 108 | 198 | 4.37 | I |
| | % | 1.1 | 2.8 | 9.9 | 30.4 | 55.8 | | |
| Mining operation | F | 7 | 15 | 61 | 150 | 122 | 4.03 | IV |
| | % | 2.0 | 4.2 | 17.2 | 42.3 | 34.4 | | |

While analyzing the perception of the students, it is observed that exhaust from factories and industries are the most vulnerable factor (1st rank) which is contributing to air pollution with mean value 4.37, burning of fossil fuel is at the 2nd place in polluting the air with mean value 4.26, plastic products are at 3rd place within the mean value 4.24, mining operations are at 4th place with mean value 4.03, waste in landfills are at 5th place with mean value 3.95, insecticides and pesticides used in agriculture is at 6th place with mean value 3.94 and packing material of products is at 7th place with mean value 3.93.

Table- 1.4 Students' Perception regarding Factors Affecting Water Pollution

| Factors Affecting Water Pollution | Frequency | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Mean | Rank |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|-------|----------------|------|------|
| Industrial Waste | F | 4 | 5 | 22 | 103 | 221 | 4.50 | I |
| | % | 1.1 | 1.4 | 6.2 | 29.0 | 62.3 | | |
| Marine Dumping | F | 3 | 10 | 44 | 159 | 139 | 4.19 | III |
| | % | .8 | 2.8 | 12.4 | 44.8 | 39.2 | | |
| Sewage and Water waste | F | 3 | 7 | 28 | 131 | 186 | 4.38 | II |
| | % | .8 | 2.0 | 7.9 | 36.9 | 52.4 | | |
| Oil Leaks and Spills | F | 3 | 10 | 46 | 153 | 143 | 4.19 | III |
| | % | .8 | 2.8 | 13.0 | 43.1 | 40.3 | | |
| Agriculture | F | 12 | 31 | 120 | 118 | 74 | 3.59 | VI |
| | % | 3.4 | 8.7 | 33.8 | 33.2 | 20.8 | | |
| Global Warming | F | 4 | 16 | 68 | 127 | 140 | 4.08 | IV |
| | % | 1.1 | 4.5 | 19.2 | 35.8 | 39.4 | | |
| Radioactive Waste | F | 4 | 17 | 68 | 141 | 125 | 4.03 | V |
| | % | 1.1 | 4.8 | 19.2 | 39.7 | 35.2 | | |

According to students' opinion, industrial waste is the top most (1st rank) factor which is responsible for water pollution with mean value 4.50, sewage and water waste is the factor which is at 2nd place with mean value 4.38, marine dumping; and oil leaks and spills both are at 3rd place with mean value 4.19 each, global warming is also contributing to water pollution and it is at 4th place with mean value 4.08, radioactive waste is at 5th place with mean value 4.03 and agriculture operations are at the last place which is responsible for water pollution with mean value 3.59.

Table- 1.5 Students' Perception regarding Factors Affecting Soil Pollution

| Factors Affecting Soil Pollution | Frequency | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Mean | Rank |
|---|-----------|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|-------|----------------|------|------|
| Industrial Waste | F | 3 | 7 | 29 | 117 | 199 | 4.41 | I |
| | % | .8 | 2.0 | 8.2 | 33.0 | 56.1 | | |
| Deforestation | F | 5 | 11 | 40 | 131 | 168 | 4.26 | IV |
| | % | 1.4 | 3.1 | 11.3 | 36.9 | 47.3 | | |
| Excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides | F | 5 | 6 | 43 | 117 | 184 | 4.32 | III |
| | % | 1.4 | 1.7 | 12.1 | 33.0 | 51.8 | | |
| Garbage Pollution | F | 5 | 7 | 26 | 123 | 194 | 4.39 | II |
| | % | 1.4 | 2.0 | 7.3 | 34.6 | 54.6 | | |

It has been observed that industrial waste is also considered as major (1st rank) factor which is contribution to soil pollution with mean value 4.41 and garbage pollution is at 2nd place with mean value 4.39. Excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture operations is at 3rd place with mean value 4.32 and deforestation is also responsible for soil pollution with mean value 4.26 (4th rank).

Table- 1.6 Students' Perception regarding Factors Affecting Noise Pollution

| Factors Affecting Noise Pollution | Frequency | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Mean | Rank |
|--|-----------|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|-------|----------------|------|------|
| Industrialization | F | 4 | 4 | 29 | 131 | 187 | 4.39 | II |
| | % | 1.1 | 1.1 | 8.2 | 36.9 | 52.7 | | |
| Social Events like marriages, worships places etc. | F | 4 | 6 | 46 | 156 | 143 | 4.21 | IV |
| | % | 1.1 | 1.7 | 13.0 | 43.9 | 40.3 | | |
| Construction Activities | F | 3 | 8 | 37 | 148 | 159 | 4.27 | III |
| | % | .8 | 2.3 | 10.4 | 41.7 | 44.8 | | |
| Noise From Traffic | F | 4 | 6 | 23 | 121 | 201 | 4.43 | I |
| | % | 1.1 | 1.7 | 6.5 | 34.1 | 56.6 | | |

It is evident from the above table that traffic noise is the 1st factor which is responsible for noise pollution with mean value 4.43, industrialization is at 2nd place with mean value 4.39, construction activities are also responsible for noise pollution with mean value 4.27 (3rd rank) and social events are also contributor to the noise pollution with mean value 4.21(4th rank).

Table- 1.7 Students' Contribution in Protecting the Environment

| Activities to Protect Environment | Frequency | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Agree | Strongly Agree | Mean | Rank |
|--|-----------|-------------------|----------|----------------------------|-------|----------------|------|------|
| I Try to use environment friendly product | F | 79 | 44 | 58 | 47 | 127 | 3.28 | VII |
| | % | 22.3 | 12.4 | 16.3 | 13.2 | 35.8 | | |
| I use to carry bag while go on shopping | F | 64 | 53 | 40 | 47 | 151 | 3.47 | IV |
| | % | 18.0 | 14.9 | 11.3 | 13.2 | 42.5 | | |
| I don't throw Pooja samagri etc. into water | F | 73 | 68 | 58 | 51 | 105 | 3.13 | VIII |
| | % | 20.6 | 19.2 | 16.3 | 14.4 | 29.6 | | |
| I try to use public transport | F | 58 | 54 | 65 | 61 | 117 | 3.35 | V |
| | % | 16.3 | 15.2 | 18.3 | 17.2 | 33.0 | | |
| I try to conserve energy by switching lights and fans when they are not in use | F | 60 | 41 | 36 | 45 | 173 | 3.65 | II |
| | % | 16.9 | 11.5 | 10.1 | 12.7 | 48.7 | | |
| I try to use the concept of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle | F | 57 | 54 | 52 | 50 | 142 | 3.47 | IV |
| | % | 16.1 | 15.2 | 14.6 | 14.1 | 40.0 | | |
| I try to use energy efficient devices like 5 star rating electronic products | F | 62 | 57 | 60 | 60 | 116 | 3.31 | VI |
| | % | 17.5 | 16.1 | 16.9 | 16.9 | 32.7 | | |
| I do plantation | F | 63 | 49 | 43 | 47 | 153 | 3.50 | III |
| | % | 17.7 | 13.8 | 12.1 | 13.2 | 43.1 | | |
| I don't waste water | F | 54 | 44 | 38 | 41 | 178 | 3.69 | I |
| | % | 15.2 | 12.4 | 10.7 | 11.5 | 50.1 | | |

It is analyzed from the above table that Student play significant role in protecting the environment. Student try to save the water with mean value 3.69 (1st rank). They are having a habit of switching lights and fans when these are not in use with mean value 3.65 (2nd rank). They do plantation with mean value 3.50 (3rd rank). Students are adopting the concept of reduce, reuse & recycle and also carry bags while go on shopping with mean value 3.47 (4th rank) for each. They also try to use energy efficient devices with mean value 3.35 (5th rank). They try to use public transport as and where possible with mean value 3.31 (6th rank). They also try to use environment friendly products with mean value 3.28 (7th rank). They don't throw Pooja samagri etc. into water with mean value 3.13 (8th rank).

1.4.2 Suggestions

On the basis of the analysis and suggestions given by respondents, there are some recommendations to protect the environment.

- For Government
 - Government has made policies to control the pollution but strict compliance is the need of the hour.
 - More awareness programmes should be organized by NGO and Governments.
 - For doing plantation Government should reward/motivate people to do more plantations.
- For Industry
 - From industry point view, industrialist should find the new and innovative ways to produce those articles which are eco-friendly as well as economical.
 - Industries should prefer to produce those goods which can be recycled after use and also promote people to use them.
 - Industries should develop proper waste management system.
- For Individual
 - We should adopt the concept of 3RS i.e., Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.
 - We should volunteer ourselves into Environment Protection drives.
 - Farmers should use less pesticide in agricultural operations and they should learn the crop residue management techniques.
 - Try to learn Water management techniques.
 - In case of noise pollution, as an individual we can do better.
 - We should try to limit our consumption of goods so that natural resources can be saved.
 - We should try to eliminate the plastics usage from our life completely.

1.5 CONCLUSION

At the end, it can be summarized that students are having good knowledge of Environment Protection Act, 1986 but they should get more aware of all other legislations related to Environment also. Students are the future of our nation, if they get themselves aware they can make society aware. For protecting the environment, combined efforts from all the stakeholders including households, students, industries, NGOs as well as government are required. Environment protection is the duty of everyone. No laws or regulations can do anything unless as an individual we should understand our duty.

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