



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

A STUDY ON ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENVIRONMENT AMONG SCHOOL CHILDREN

Dr.D.Ponmozhi¹, G.Ranjitha.².

1.Principal, O.P.R. Memorial College of Education, Vadalur, Tamilnadu, India.8903236409.

2.M.Ed Student, O.P.R.Memorial College of Education, Vadalur, Tamilnadu, India.

ABSTRACT

The goal of the current analysis is to examine how children in the Cuddalore District of Tamil Nadu perceive about the environment. 286 samples from the research area were taken using the random sampling technique. Use of the normative survey method was made. The goal of this study is to ascertain the levels of environment attitudes among school pupils and determine whether there are any notable differences between the sub-samples and predictors that have been chosen. This study makes use of the Environmental Attitude Scale that researchers Dr. D. Ponmozhi and G. Ranjitha developed and validated in 2023. The five dimensions of environmental attitude are covered by the 40 statements that make up this scale: Garden Management, Air & Soil Pollution, Water Recycling, Environmental Awareness, and Sources of Energy & Ecofriendly Products. With the aid of cronph alpha, the scale's reliability and validity were determined. The reliability of the scale was 0.876, and the validity of the scale was 0.93. With the use of SPSSIBM23, descriptive, inferential, correlational, and regression analysis were performed. Students at the school show poor attitudes towards the environment. Two steps and the removal of 10 variables later, the prediction model was established, which comprised two of the twelve predictors. The model explained almost 7% of the variance in environmental attitude ($R^2=0.075$ Adjusted $R^2=0.068$) and was statistically significant ($F(2, 283) = 11.397, p .001$). Gender and age are the main predictors of environmental attitude. Therefore, the gender and age of schoolchildren were rather reliable indicators of their environmental attitudes.

Index Terms: Environmental attitudes, School children.

INTRODUCTION

Many environmental problems are mostly caused by society's irresponsible environmental behavior. Unquestionably, one of the most important aspects affecting these behaviours is the thinking. Many different things can affect how attitudes are formed. An individual is affected by both official educational institutions and informal societal education. Our surroundings have an impact on our way of life. However, due to people's lack of the correct attitude towards their environment, the modern world is currently witnessing a number of environmental catastrophes. A favorable attitude towards the environment must be instilled in everyone immediately. As a result, environmental attitudes are a key area of research in crucial environmental education. As a result, environmental attitudes are a key subject of crucial environmental education research. Since young people would be impacted by environmental problems as a result of contemporary behaviors and would need to provide solutions, several research focused specifically on young people's environmental attitudes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Nowadays, many people have an environmental mindset. An approach to educating about environmental attitudes is environmental education. It ties environmental awareness and pollution hazards to the students' academic difficulties. It is crucial for us to comprehend how uncontrolled, out-of-control development threatens our ability to survive and contaminates the air, water, and land. A good understanding and the support of the populace would go a long way in helping to execute antipollution measures because the problem is one of the people, for the people. Many environmental problems relating to how people utilize energy, water, detergents, chemicals, plastic, wood, and sanitation only have a local scope for both rural and urban populations. It might teach the students how to protect the environment.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Our actions, perspectives, attitudes, and beliefs must all be profoundly altered if we are to create a place worth living in. History demonstrates that education alone is capable of achieving this objective. Environmental education can help schools foster positive environmental attitudes and knowledge. Thus, the researcher intends to look into how students feel about the setting.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The research problem is stated as **a study on attitude towards environment among School children.**

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Environment Attitude: Environmental attitude is to a score obtained in Environmental attitude scale.

School children: The children those who are studying IX to XII standard in Government, Aided and Self-financing schools.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess Environment attitude of school children is high.
2. To identify the relationship between subsamples and Environment attitude of school children and subsamples.
3. To find predictor of Environment attitude of school children.

HYPOTHESIS

1. The Environment attitude of school children is high.
2. There is no significant relationship between subsamples and Environment attitude of school children.
3. There is no predictor of Environment attitude of school children.

METHODOLOGY

The normative survey method will be used in this research. The researcher planned to collect 1% of the population as sample through random sampling technique.

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The students studying in schools situated in Cuddalore District are considered as population of the study. 286 school children studying in four schools are selected through random sampling technique.

TOOLS USED

Environment Attitude Scale constructed and validated by Ponmozhi, D. & Ranjitha, G. (2023) was used in this study. The scale contains 40 statements in five dimensions as follows Garden Management, Air & Soil Pollution Water Recycling, Environmental awareness and Sources of Energy & Ecofriendly Products. In the Environmental Attitude Scale used, each statement is followed by five alternatives viz., strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD). In case of favorable statements, the scores given to different responses are as follows; Positive Statement SA-5, A-4, N-3, D-2, SD-1. Negative Statement SA-1, A-2, N-3, D-4, SD-5. The following Statistical techniques were used with the help of IBMSPPS23 for analysis and interpretation of data Descriptive analysis, inferential analysis, multiple correlation and regression analysis.

ANALYSIS OF THE LEVEL OF ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDE OF THE SCHOOL

One of the important objectives of the study is to assess the level of Environmental Attitude of the school children not only for the entire sample but also subsamples wise. For that the mean standard deviation values have been calculated for entire and subsamples which include Type of school, Age Gender, Locality, Medium, Mother Qualification, Father Qualification, Parental occupation, Parental income, Family members, Family Type and house type.

Table 1. MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDE SCORE FOR TOTAL SAMPLE			
Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Environmental Attitude	286	78.82	18.09

The above table shows the mean score and standard deviation of environmental Attitude of students, which are found to be 78.82 and 18.09 respectively. **It is concluded that the Environment Attitude of the school children is low (41-80).**

TABLE.2 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDE OF SCHOOL CHILDREN							
S.No	Variable	Sub sample	N	Mean	STD	t/f	Result
1	Type Of School	Self-Financing	97	78.66	17.43	1.050	NS
		Government	93	76.97	15.18		
		Aided	96	80.77	21.07		
2	Age	13-15	171	76.52	16.44	-2.647	NS
		16-18	115	82.23	19.87		
3	Gender	Female	156	75.03	16.93	-3.977	S
		Male	130	83.36	18.45		
4	Locality	Urban	95	75.75	15.28	-2.036	S
		Rural	191	80.35	19.19		
5	Medium	English	147	76.24	16.26	-2.497	S
		Tamil	139	81.54	19.54		
6	Mother Qualification	School	258	79.24	18.27	2.694	S
		Diploma	11	78.18	18.07		
		College	17	72.76	14.81		
7	Father Qualification	School	240	79.44	18.04	1.031	NS
		Diploma	16	78.56	19.13		
		College	30	73.97	17.76		
8	Parental Occupation	Daily wages	158	80.75	18.88	1.225	NS
		Self-employment	66	77.36	17.21		
		Business	28	73.82	13.04		
		Government	34	76.79	18.98		
9	Parental Income	0-1L	155	80.25	18.66	1.605	NS
		1.1L-2L	36	79.97	15.44		
		2.1L-3L	52	76.52	18.53		
		3.1L-4L	43	75.44	17.32		
10	Family Members	1-5	228	78.64	17.89	-.329	NS
		6-10	58	79.51	18.96		
11	Family Type	Joint	92	76.76	16.80	1.409	NS
		Nuclear	165	79.59	17.75		
		Single parent	29	80.97	23.36		
12	House Type	Own House	215	79.31	18.42	.795	NS
		Rental	71	77.34	17.08		

Type of School: It is inferred from the obtained f-value that there is no significant difference in Different type of school student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated f-value (1.050) is not significant at 5% level. So the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the Different type of school students are not significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

Age: It is inferred from the obtained t-value that there is no significant difference in 13-15 and 16-18 age student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated t-value (-2.647) is not significant at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the 13-15 and 16-18 age students are not significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

Gender: It is inferred from the obtained t-value that there is a significant difference in male and female student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated t-value (-3.977) is significant at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the male and female students are significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

Locality: It is inferred from the obtained t-value that there is a significant difference in Urban and Rural student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated t-value (-2.036) is significant at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the Urban and Rural students are significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

Medium: It is inferred from the obtained t-value that there is a significant difference in English and Tamil student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated t-value (-2.497) is significant at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is rejected and

alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the English and Tamil students are significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

Mother's qualifications: It is inferred from the obtained f-value that there is a significant difference in Different mothers qualifications of student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated f-value (2.694) is significant at 5% level. So the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the Students with Different mothers qualifications are significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

Father's qualifications: It is inferred from the obtained f-value that there is no significant difference in Different fathers qualifications student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated f-value (1.031) is not significant at 5% level. So the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the Students with Different fathers qualifications are not significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

Parental occupation: It is inferred from the obtained f-value that there is no significant difference in Parental occupation on student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated f-value (1.225) is not significant at 5% level. So the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the Students parental occupation are not significantly differ in their children's Total Environmental Attitude.

Parental income: It is inferred from the obtained f-value that there is no significant difference in Parental income on student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated f-value (1.605) is not significant at 5% level. So the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the Students parental income are not significantly differ in their children's Total Environmental Attitude.

Family Member: It is inferred from the obtained t-value that there is no significant difference in 1-5 and 6-10 family member student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated t-value (-.329) is not significant at 5% level. So the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the 1-5 and 6-10 family member students are not significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

Family Type: It is inferred from the obtained f-value that there is no significant difference in Family type on student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated f-value (1.409) is not significant at 5% level. So the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the Students family type are not significantly differ in their children's Total Environmental Attitude.

Own House: It is inferred from the obtained t-value that there is no significant difference in Own house and rental house student's Total Environmental Attitude. Since the calculated t-value (.795) is not significant at 5% level. So the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore it is concluded that the Own house and rental house students are not significantly differ in their Total Environmental Attitude.

TABLE- 3. STEPWISE REGRESSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDE AND ITS PERSONAL VARIABLES

	Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	Pearson r	Sr ²	Structure Coefficient
2	(Constant)	31.597	13.971				
	Gender	6.766	2.160	0.187	0.230	0.033	0.44
	Age	2.484	0.962	0.154	0.206	0.023	0.31

Note. The dependent variable **Environmental Attitude**. $R^2 = .075$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.068$, Sr^2 is squared semi-partial correlation. $F(2, 283) = 11.397$.

Table 3 shows Type of school, Age, Gender, Locality, Medium, Mother Qualification, Father Qualification, Parental occupation, Parental income, Family members, Family Type and house type and Environmental Attitude were used in a stepwise multiple regression analysis to predict Environmental Attitude of the School students.

The prediction model contained two of the twelve predictors and was reached in two steps with **10** variables removed. The model was statistically significant, $F(2, 283) = 11.397$, $p < .001$, and accounted for approximately **7 %** of the variance of Environmental Attitude ($R^2 = 0.075$ Adjusted $R^2 = 0.068$). Environmental Attitude is primarily predicted by gender and age. The raw and standardized regression coefficient of predictors together with their correlation with Environmental Attitude, their squared semi-partial correlations, and their structure coefficients are shown in table-4.17. The gender and age received the strongest weight in model. With the sizeable correlations between the predictors, the unique variance explained by each of the variables indexed by the squared semi-partial correlation was relatively low: The Gender and age uniquely accounted for approximately 4% and 3% of the Environmental Attitude. Inspection of the structure coefficient suggests that, **the gender and age were relatively strong indicators of Environmental Attitude of school children.**

CONCLUSION

The school pupil has a poor attitude towards the environment. Male students from rural areas who are 16 to 18 years old, enrolled in an aided school using Tamil as their primary language, low-income, single parents, with 6 to 10 family members, and living in permanent house are more environmentally conscious than other students. The gender and age of school children were fairly good predictors of their environmental attitudes, i.e., male students between the ages of 16 and 18 have higher levels of environmental attitudes than other students. The school pupil has a poor attitude towards the environment. Through environmental awareness programmes and a supportive environmental culture, the environment attitude should be cultivated among the school children. The school students may be educated in some other important areas like, Global issues on environmental problems, Effects of Pollution, Benefits of sustainable development, Reusable and renewable energy, Developing positive attitude towards plants and animals, Implementing one student one tree programme in schools and Implementing Pet rearing scheme for students.

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