

A Study on Awareness of Ecopedagogy Among Higher Secondary Students

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Abstract:

In India today, there has been a growing realization of the impact of the increasing population and accelerated development strategies of the quality of the environment. The increasing human demand has been exerting a great pressure on the natural resource base, agricultural land, energy source, vital watersheds, forests, etc. resulting in environmental degradation. The rapid growth of big towns and cities situated on the banks of most of the rivers has led on their over exploitations, leading to rapid degradation of the river water quality. In Bombay, Delhi and Calcutta, about 30-40 percent of the population resides in slums. In this context, now the harsh reality of the environmental crisis- shrinking of forests, increasing desertification, degradation of critical resources, loss of agricultural land, alkalization and water logging acidification of the environment and release of hazardous waste has created an urge for environment awareness among people, planners and policy makers all over the world and specially in India. In such a situation it is relevant to analyze the level of knowledge of younger generation in environmental conservation. This paper try to know the depth of knowledge of new generation in ECOPELAGOGY.

Keywords: Ecopedagogy, Environmental Awareness, Adolescents, Degradation.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The global ecosystem and subsystems are functioning in a balanced way on the basis of minute principle. When these principles are violated due to interference of external agencies, the ecological balance is disturbed or broken down. This interference comes mostly from rapacious human beings who pollute air, water and earth. The results are disastrous. Therefore, all economic and other activities should be done with a keen eye on maintaining ecological balance. A huge number of life and plant species have become extinct from the earth due to ecological imbalance.

Man and environment are inseparable. Environment is all that surrounds man. Environment not only surrounds man but it also affects him and influences him. Good environment has positive and healthy influence while bad environment has negative and unhealthy influence. In this way, environment forms the ecosystem which has, quite recently become one of the most important concerns of man

‘Ecology’ in its broadest sense is the study of the relationship among organisms within an environment. It is the study not of the creatures and objects themselves, but rather of the relationship among them. Environmental education should equip decision makers to face such a situation. The goal of sustainable development is not likely to be achieved unless the importance of interrelationships between the population, environment, resources and development are adequately understood and appreciated, not only by the present nature population of India, but also by the coming generation – the students studying in different institutions of the country. This is possible when a proper understanding of the environmental problems and their proper solution are developed by the younger generation of the country.

Environmental Education and its Importance

The international Union for the conservation of Nature and Natural Resources has evolved the following definition of environmental education as an out come of a conference called by it in Nevada in 1970.

“Environmental education is the process of recognizing values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the inter-relatedness among man, his culture and his biophysical surroundings. Environmental education also entails practice in decision – making and self – formulation of a code of behavior about issues concerning environmental quality.”

Environmental issues such as air or water pollution, the health hazards posed by the diffusion of a toxic chemical, encroachment of cultivable by desert etc. being as scientific problems but eventually demand political or ethical decision. Environmental education should equip decision makers to face such a situation. The goal of sustainable development is not likely to be achieved unless the importance of interrelationships between the population, environment, resources and development are adequately understood and appreciated, not only by the present nature population of India, but also by the coming generation – the students studying in different institutions of the country.

Need & Significance of the study:

Increase in population and the accelerated development have caused great danger to the world around us. The younger generation is not at all aware of this danger. They are addicted to social media and other related matters. The nuclear

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families are not at all concerned with the development happening outside. Awareness should be created in the younger minds. No studies have been conducted with regard to awareness towards eco pedagogy among the higher secondary school students of Kerala. There is a great need to make students aware of the serious problems of environment like deforestation, pollution, soil degradation, excessive ground water exploitation, acid rain, threat to wild life, etc.

The study has a wide range of significance to the current issues of the Environmental education and Eco pedagogy. It wants to find out the awareness among male and female; science and arts students at higher secondary level, why they are not taking positive interest towards Eco pedagogy. This study aims to highlights some facts which can be supportive to upgrade the standard of students of higher secondary level towards Eco pedagogy. Unless the students have appropriate awareness on eco pedagogy, they will be apathetic to the destruction of environment and sustainable life in the world. This necessitates the attempts to amend their present conditions.

This study may bring positive awareness towards Environmental education and Eco pedagogy. The variables of the study may be helpful to give a comparative outlook of male and female; science and arts stream; higher secondary students in general towards Eco pedagogy.

II. THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

Eco pedagogy is most often defined as a project and a model for a new sustainable civilization from the ecological point of view. Eco pedagogy can also be viewed as a new kind of science for how to create a more Just, more Ecological and more Peaceful sustainable civilization. It is a project that strives to transcend the educational, institutional and organizational limitations of the concept of Sustainable Development and to realize in practice a more sustainable, beautiful and humane vision of future.

Eco pedagogy represents a participatory and creative education that is centered on life and on love to life and Nature! It does not separate artificially students from the real world and its problems but rather poses these problems and teaches students how to cope with them through action, creativeness and dialogue, how to create a more just, sane and sustainable civilization instead just to adapt to the world.

As an educational interactive programme, Eco pedagogy:

- Cultivates in students critical thinking, consciousness raising (conscientization), culture of dialogue and active democratic participation in society;
- Promotes new crucial eco literacy's and socially responsible lifestyles, new sustainable policies;
- Educates critically students for taking action for sustainability and social justice in local and global society.

Action-Based Eco pedagogy

“Prevent – Preserve - Build“

Prevent:

- Pollution of Air, Water, Soil;
- Resource depletion;

- Unsustainable (over) Consumption;
- Drugs and alcohol dependency;
- Technology dependency and PC addiction;
- Violence and Crime;
- Fast food and chemical-based food;
- Noise pollution.

Preserve:

- Natural parks, Nature & Biodiversity;
- Cultural heritage;
- Traditional ecological knowledge;
- Human communication and values.

Build: Sustainable relations and structures of:

- Eco Agriculture;
- Eco Energy;

As a form of critical theory of education, eco pedagogy works at a meta-level to offer dialectical critiques of environmental education and education for sustainable development as hegemonic forms of educational discourse that have been created by state agencies that seek to appear to be developing pedagogy relevant to alleviating our mounting global ecological crisis. While environmental education strategies undoubtedly accomplish much that is welcome and good from an eco pedagogical perspective, eco pedagogy questions (especially within the context of the United States) the ways in which environmental education is often reduced to forms of experiential pedagogy and outdoor education that may deal uncritically with the experience of “nature” proffered therein –

III. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

Objectives

1. To find out the awareness towards eco pedagogy among higher secondary students on the total sample and relevant subsample based on Gender.
2. To find the awareness towards eco pedagogy among science and art stream higher secondary students.

IV. HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among higher secondary students on the total sample relevant sub sample based on Gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among science and art stream higher secondary students.

Methodology

The investigator has selected descriptive survey method. This method has been chosen by the investigator depending on the objectives of the study.

V. SAMPLE

100 students from higher secondary schools of Trichur district, collected through stratified random sampling.

VI. TOOL

Test on Ecopedagogy literacy". It was in the form of *test paper*. A person obtaining higher score in the test was considered to have a higher awareness towards eco pedagogy . The tool comprises of 25 items. There are four alternatives as answers. The respondents have to mark the correct answer from the four alternatives. A score of 1 is given for correct answer and 0 for incorrect one.

VII. ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Extent of Awareness towards eco pedagogy among the total sample and relevant sub sample based on Gender.

To find out the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the male and female higher secondary students and to know the extent of eco pedagogy among the gender is found with the help of the t- test. The data is given below in table 1.

Table 1: Table showing significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the male and female higher secondary students

S.No.	Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of significance
1	Male	50	21.1	4.2	2.02	Not Significant
2	Female	50	21.0	4.1		

* Not Significant at .05 and .01 level

Table 1 show that calculated value was 2.02 which is less than table value (2.750) at .01 level of significance and at .05 levels (2.042). Therefore, it is not significant at .01 level.

It indicates that there exists no significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the male and female higher secondary students

The mean score of male group (21.1) is almost equal to the mean score of female group (21.0).

Extent of Awareness towards eco pedagogy among the science and arts stream Higher secondary students

To find out the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the science and arts stream higher secondary students and to know the extent of eco pedagogy among the subject is found with the help of the test. The data is given below in table 2.

Table 2: Table showing significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the science and art stream higher secondary students

No.	Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of significance
1	Science stream students	50	27.31	2.81	7.32	Significant
2	Arts stream students	50	20.14	2.51		

* Significant at .05 and .01 level

The t-ratio calculated in Table.2 was found to be 7.32 and the needed values to be significant at .01 level is (2.750) and at .05 level (2.042). So, the calculated t-ratio value is greater than the table value at .01 level of significance. Therefore, it is significant at .01 levels.

It indicates that there exists significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the science and art

stream higher secondary students. The mean score of Science stream students (27.31) is greater than the mean score of Arts stream students (20.14).

Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the science and art stream higher secondary students.

VIII. CONCLUSION

From the study it is found that there is no significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the higher secondary students on the total sample relevant subsample based on Gender.

From the study it is found that there is significant difference in the awareness towards eco pedagogy among the science and art stream higher secondary students.

IX. IMPLICATIONS

It is clearly evident from the conclusion of the study that higher secondary students possess low level of awareness towards eco pedagogy. It is necessary to find out the causes of existing low level awareness of eco pedagogy among Higher secondary school students. The Science and Arts streams also influence the level of Awareness of eco pedagogy. So there is need to elevate the level of awareness of eco pedagogy among Higher secondary students. Unless the students have appropriate awareness on eco pedagogy, they will be apathetic to the destruction of environment and sustainable life in the world will different. This necessitates the attempts to amend their present conditions.

X. REFERENCES

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