

A Study of Environmental Ethics of Prospective Teachers

Dr. Sangeeta Gupta [1]

Abstract:

"Environment"- our surroundings, conditions and influences that shape our life on this earth- could be considered as a resource that affects human beings directly or indirectly. Environmental issues became international priorities though they were seen as local or regional concerns because they have become extraneous to economic growth, health, nature and aesthetics. We need to defuse the environmental problem, but such needed action will come only if we reorient the citizenry's values, i.e. imbibe prospective teachers with proper attitudes and values(ethics), especially those who will lead to a greater concern for preserving balance in the ecosystem. Environmental ethics refers to the responsibility to understand the environmental consequences of our consumption, and need to recognize our individual and social responsibility to conserve natural resources and protect the earth for future generations. This study tries to investigate the environmental ethics of prospective teachers by using Normative Survey Method. The Study was carried out through Cluster Random Sampling. This study found no significant difference in the level of environmental ethics of male and female, rural and urban prospective teachers. But a significant difference was found in the level of environmental ethics of married and unmarried prospective teachers because a sense of responsibility developed among married prospective teachers and they found themselves more concerned towards environment after marriage.

Keywords: Environment, Environmental Ethics, Environmental Problems, Prospective Teachers etc.

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"Environment"- our surroundings, conditions and influences that shape our life on this earth- could be considered as a resource that affects human beings directly or indirectly. As such, the evolution of an environment depends on its service to humanity and should be viewed as an asset or a kind of new reproducible capital good that produces a stream of various services of environment so that the flow of its services might not be impeded or obstructed mankind and a vital consciousness is necessary towards the maintenance of the quality by any activity of the human beings. Douglas Daigle, J. (1993)

Environmental issues became international priorities though they were seen as local or regional concerns because they have become extraneous to economic growth, health, nature and aesthetics. Consumption of resources for products produced for world market (dominated by the North) causes primarily local environmental degradation-not global. Every human being has the right to decent life, but today there are elements in our environment that tend to militate against the attainment and enjoyment of such a life. The exacerbation of the pollution of environment can cause untold misery. Unhappiness and suffering to human beings crop up simply because of our lack of concern for the common good and the absence of a sense of responsibility and ethics for sustaining a balanced ecosystem. If we are to aspire to a better quality of life – one which will ensure freedom from want, from disease and from fear itself, then we want all join hands to stem the increasing toxification of the earth. We need to defuse the environmental problem, but such needed action will come only if we reorient the citizenry's values, i.e. imbibe prospective teachers with proper attitudes and values(ethics), especially those who will lead to a greater concern for

preserving balance in the ecosystem. Besides we should teach them how to save the environment from further degradation, and help make it a healthier and progressive place to live in; this springs from a strong sense of social responsibility. Hence it becomes social obligatory on the part of each individual citizen to develop environmental ethics that, while we aspire for the good life, should not sacrifice the future of the generations to come.

I. ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

Environmental ethics is the scientific study of various issues related to the rights of the individual with regard to the environment. It is the moral relationship of human beings with the environment. It is concerned with the do's and don'ts of the human being to the environment. It deals with ecological rights of all creatures present today as well as those that will follow on the earth. Ethical standards are necessary for long term conservation and maintenance of nature and its resources.

Environmental ethics teach us how to treat nature. They put moral questions before men. They seek a balance between human activities and natural processes. They consider not only philosophy but natural history, human ecology, cultural anthropology, psychology, animal rights theory, political ecology, science, technology and law. Environmental ethics are both theoretical and applied. The subject matter includes culture and traditions that have influenced human relationship with nature, the place of man in nature, rights and duties of individuals, the moral standings of non humans and duties of future generations. The concept of environmental ethics leads us to broader concept of environmentalism.

^[1]H.O.D., Ram-Eesh Institute of Education, Greater NOIDA Email: Sangeetagupta2006@rediffmail.com

Environmental ethics refers to the responsibility to understand the environmental consequences of our consumption, and need to recognize our individual and social responsibility to conserve natural resources and protect the earth for future generations.

Environmental Ethics is the discipline that studies the moral relationship of the human beings to, and also the value and moral status of, the environment and its nonhuman contents.

II. NEED FOR THE PRESENT INVESTIGATION

Education and awareness are the most effective forces that can save our besieged environment. The basis of a healthy environment is good air, water and soil. These basic building blocks of life are obviously essential for life to continue and must be cared for, preserved and enhanced. No programme can be a success without education as education is what makes people aware of the need for any activity and can generate the much needed support for that activity. Environmental education has been in vogue since human beings having been interacting with the world around them and teaching their children to do the same. Rural people everywhere have a good perception of their surrounding natural system and a deep reverence for the systems. Chawala, L. (2009)

They have passed down both their understanding and reverence carefully from generation to generation through oral communication.

People acquire basic environmental functions in order to grow food, find water and protect themselves from the climate. We still need knowledge of science and technology to shape and perpetuate the modern world. However, a more complete and constructive reason for Environmental Education has emerged out of the combination of the other reasons. Srivastava, K.K. (2008)

This study tries to investigate the environmental ethics of prospective teachers. It aims at offering meaningful suggestions for improving the environmental ethics among the prospective teachers.

III. OBJECTIVES

Though the present study in general aims at an analysis of environmental ethics among prospective teachers, it specifically aims at following objectives-

- to analyze the level of ethics about environment among male and female prospective teachers.
- Whether there is any significant difference in the environmental ethics of rural and urban prospective teachers.
- to evaluate the impact of marital status of the prospective teachers on the level of environmental ethics.

Hypotheses-

In the present study the following hypotheses were tested.

- All male and female prospective teachers have same level of environmental ethics.
- Rural and urban area has no significant impact on the level of Environmental ethics of prospective teachers.

- Marital status exert no significant impact on the level of Environmental Ethics of prospective teachers.

IV. RESEARCH METHOD

To achieve the objectives Normative Survey Method was used for data collection.

V. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The Study was carried out through Cluster Random Sampling. Prospective Teachers were taken as sample.

VI. TOOL

The Study was conducted through a questionnaire, namely, Environmental Ethics Scale constructed by Dr. (Mrs.) Haseen Taj, Lecturer, Department of Education, Bangalore University, and Bangalore.

VII. STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

The researchers used Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-test statistical techniques for verification of hypotheses.

Table-1: Level of Environmental Ethics of Male and Female Prospective Teachers

Group	N	M	SD	t-Value	Significance Level	Result
Male Prospective Teachers	60	91.27	24.76	0.40	1.96 at 0.05	There is no significant difference
Female Prospective Teachers	60	92.93	22.71			

A comparative study of the level of environmental ethics of male and female prospective teachers was carried out. Mean of environmental ethics score of male pupil teachers is 91.216 and that of female pupil teachers is 92.93. Standard deviation (SD) score for male pupil teachers is 24.76 and that for female pupil teachers is 22.71. t-value computed on the basis of Mean and Standard Deviation is found 0.40. t-value at df 118 in t-table at 0.05 is found 1.96. Therefore, the hypothesis H₀, There is no significant difference in the level of environmental ethics of male and female pupil teachers is accepted.

Table-2: Level of Environmental Ethics of Rural and Urban area Prospective Teachers

Group Class IX	N	M	SD	t-value	Significance level	Result
Rural area Pupil Teachers	20	87.5	23.44	0.38	2.02 at 0.50	There is no significant difference
Urban area Pupil Teachers	20	83.75	25.98			

A comparative study of the level of environmental ethics of Rural Area and Urban Area prospective teachers is carried out. Mean of environmental ethics score of Rural Area pupil teachers is 87.5 and that of Urban Area pupil teachers is 83.75. Standard deviation (SD) score for Rural Area pupil teachers is 23.44 and that for Urban area pupil teachers is 25.98. t-value is 0.38. t-value at df 38 in t-table at level 0.05 is found 2.02 and that of at 0.01 level is found 2.71. Therefore, the hypothesis H₀₂, There is no significant difference in the level of environmental ethics of rural and urban area prospective Teachers is accepted.

Table - 3: Level of Environmental Ethics of Married and Unmarried Prospective Teachers

Group Class X	N	M	SD	t-value	Significance level	Result
Married Prospective Teachers	20	101.9	25.33	1.97	2.02 at 0.50	There is significant difference
Unmarried Prospective Teachers	20	88.15	18.65			

Mean of environmental ethics score of Married Prospective Teachers is 101.9 and that of Un married Prospective Teachers is 88.15. Standard deviation (SD) score for Married Prospective Teachers is 25.33 and that for Unmarried Prospective Teachers is 18.65. t-value as 1.97 it is lower than required value. Therefore, the hypothesis H03, There is no significant difference in the level of environmental ethics of Married Prospective Teachers and Unmarried prospective teachers is rejected.

VIII. RESULT AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

From the analysis of data it is found that there is-

- 1) No significant difference in the level of environmental ethics of male and female prospective teachers. The main reason for almost equal environmental ethics of male and female prospective teachers that they were studying together in the same teaching-learning environment.
- 2) No significant difference in the level of environmental ethics of rural and urban area prospective teachers is found. The main reason for almost equal environmental ethics of rural and urban area prospective teachers that they were studying together in the same teaching-learning environment.
- 3) In the level of environmental ethics a significant difference of married and unmarried prospective teachers was found. The main reason for a significant difference towards environment of married and unmarried prospective teachers that a sense of responsibility developed among married prospective teachers and they found themselves more concerned towards environment after marriage.

It is observed through the test that those prospective teachers who did not score high on Environmental Ethics Scale were self-centred for their comfort and luxury.

IX. CONCLUSION

Every individual has his/her own significance and function in nature. Environment is the habitat for all living-things; it includes humans, animals, plants as well as non-living things. It is important to know and appreciate of nature, and realize its close relation with human life. Kaushik, Anubha & Kaushik, C.P. (2010) Within the context of prospective teachers' environmental awareness, findings from previously done researches indicate that they are able to protect this earth from the entire pollution. However, based on the results of present study it is advisable to educate them that the anthropocentric approach towards the environment is not appreciable, it will lead to disharmony in the environment and ultimately affect human life. Besides, make them realize

that the appreciation of nature needs a responsibility and realization from every human being.

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