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Environmental Ethics in Relation to Pro-Environmental Behaviour among Higher Secondary School Students

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Abstract

Social policies attempting to preserve the environment and combat environmental degradation have a moral basis for Environmental Ethics. Pro-environmental Behaviour is a person's protective way of environmental behaviour or a tribute to a healthy environment. Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour are basic for a human being to live in harmony with the environment and are indispensable for safe future life. Studies on Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour deliver information that can help reduce the harmful environmental impact of human activities. The present study set out to determine whether there were any notable differences in the levels of Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour among Higher Secondary School Student's, as well as how these two categories related to one another. The current study used the Normative Survey method, and 80 Higher Secondary School Students from Kerala, districts of Palakkad served as the sample. The tools used for the study were the Environmental Ethics Scale and the Pro-environmental Behaviour Scale. The investigators came to the conclusion that there is a notable variation in the level of the mean scores of Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour among the students of Higher Secondary School based on their data. As a result, it can be understood that there is a vast scope for providing orientation and training programs to Higher Secondary School Students for the development of the concept of Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour to a greater extent.

Keywords: environmental ethics, pro-environmental behaviour

Since environmental protection and sustainability are essential to human life, it will benefit both the environment and students to understand the significance of Environmental Ethics.

Environmental Ethics is the philosophical study of the moral relationships that exist between

people and their surroundings. Environmental Ethics is one of the moral frameworks that guides us in making choices that benefit the environment. According to Taj (2001), Environmental Ethics is the ability to understand the consequences of our consumption and actions on the environment and to realize our responsibility to preserve and conserve the environment for future generations. Environmental Ethics is a critical concept to comprehend and eventually incorporate into our daily lives and also clarifies our responsibility to preserve the ecosystem and helps us comprehend its extent. Libertarian extension, Ecological extension, and Conservation ethics are the main subcategories of Environmental Ethics. Ecological extension maintains that nature has value apart from human use or usefulness, while conservation ethics stresses striking a balance between human use and the preservation of nature. Libertarian extension is predicated on the notion that people have the freedom to use nature for their purposes.

All the environmental problems that are happening in the world right now are due to human selfishness. Future generations should grow up with the understanding that every living thing in nature should live with freedom and equality in their living environment. Pro-environmental Behaviour refers to the conscious application of an environmentally friendly and socially responsible ethic, as each individual grows up. Pro-environmental Behaviour is a special type of Pro-social behaviour (Ramus, 2007), The primary determinants of an individual's Pro-environmental Behaviour include environmental knowledge, environmental values, institutional factors, and strategies to escalate Pro-environmental Behaviour such as educational strategies and community-based social marketing (Akpan. 2003). Understanding the value of teaching Environmental Ethics in educational settings and how to foster Pro-environmental Behaviour in Higher Secondary School Students is the primary objective of the current study. The present study aims to create an understanding of the problems posed to the environment by massive pollution and climate change as side effects of urbanization and industrialization. And also aids in our

realization of our obligation to protect the environment and the scope of our responsibility for it. Environmental Ethics enable us to bring about a change in our environment and inculcate Pro-environmental Behaviour in students.

Need and significance of the study

A fundamental method for raising environmental awareness in individuals is education. For their basic needs of clean water, fresh air, and food, all humans are dependent on their surroundings. The environment will be observed to transform into defective components if it is not adequately managed. In a similar vein, the climate is shifting from its average state. As a result, there is an increase in new diseases, unpredictable rainfall, and low agricultural output. Future generations should be aware to maintain a healthy environment. Upcoming generations need basic ecological functions to ensure food availability, find water, and protect themselves from the weather. Knowledge of science and technology is still needed to shape and perpetuate the modern world.

Marie (2017) conducted a study titled "A Study on Environmental Ethics among Higher Secondary Students". A random sample of 300 Higher Secondary School Students from Chennai was gathered for the study. The investigator prepared the Personal Data Sheet, and a survey method was used in the investigation. The Environmental Ethics Scale, created and validated by Haseen Taj (2001), is used as the tool. The conclusions showed that Higher Secondary Student's Environmental Ethics were on the average side. Regarding gender, there is no discernible variation in the Environmental Ethics of Higher Secondary Students. There was a notable variation in the Environmental Ethics of Higher Secondary Students based on the subject group, with government school students achieving higher mean scores than aided and unaided school students. These findings are related to the type of management of the school. In this instance, it was discovered

that the students in the vocational subject group had higher mean scores than the students in the scientific and arts groups.

Behra and Samal (2015) conducted a study on 'Pro-environmental Behaviour of Secondary School Students: A Topographical Analysis'. The goal is to assess Secondary School Students' Pro-environmental Behaviour among gender and location, identify patterns in the Pro-environmental behaviour of students from various geographic regions, and make recommendations for improving the Pro-environmental Behaviour of students. The primary conclusions showed that there was no discernible difference in Pro-environmental Behaviour between boys and girls. Students in rural and urban secondary schools differ significantly in their Pro-environmental Behaviour. According to the survey, secondary school students in rural areas are more environmentally conscious than those in urban areas

In the current educational system, Higher Secondary School is a crucial educational level. It is the final year of education before going on to a university. It represents the total of all the knowledge acquired over a student's twelve years of education. It is also a platform for students to enter the adult world, contribute to society, and perhaps protect the environment. Therefore, this is a range that provides a unique opportunity to find out and analyse effective environmental education as part of the school curriculum in changing the attitude of those who are more aware of environmental issues and the importance of environmental law and ethics. Students need to be able to live in harmony with the environment and not use it for selfish interests only. Students need to develop a view that all living things in the environment are important. As a solution to all this, this kind of study is necessary for the well-being of our future generation. The current study is trying to measure the relationship between Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students.

Objectives

1. To study the Environmental Ethics of Higher Secondary School Students.
2. To study the Pro-environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students
3. To find out the relationship between Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in the level of Environmental Ethics of the Higher Secondary School Students.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of Pro-environmental Behaviour of the Higher Secondary School Students
3. There exists a significant relationship between Environmental Ethics and the Pro-environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students.

Procedure

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between Pro-environmental Behaviour and Environmental Ethics in Higher Secondary School Students. As a result, the descriptive quantitative approach's normative survey method was used for the study allowing the researcher to draw generalizations. Students from the Higher Secondary Schools in the district of Palakkad in Kerala, constitute the population of the study. A sample of eighty students from GVHSS Vattenad and HSS Peringode in Palakkad, Kerala, were chosen for the study.

Tools Used

1. Environmental Ethics Scale (EES) constructed by Dr. Haseen Taj (2001).
2. Pro-environmental Behaviour Scale (PERS-SA) constructed by Dr Prof Mercy Abraham & Arjunan N K

Statistical Techniques Used for the Study

The data collected from the students was examined to meet the objectives of the study. A quantitative analysis of the data was performed. Detailed information on each objective is given below.

1. To study the Environmental Ethics level of Higher Secondary School Students.

The data and the results of the first objective are given below.

Table 1

Details of Level of Environmental Ethics

EE Group	Range Score	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High	(98-124)	72	90.0
Average	(74-98)	6	7.5
Low	(50-740)	2	2.5

Note: 90% of a sample of 80 Higher Secondary School Students exhibit high Environmental Ethics, 7.5% exhibit average Environmental Ethics, and 2.5% exhibit low Environmental Ethics. As a result, the first null hypothesis is rejected, and students at Higher Secondary Schools have varying levels of Environmental Ethics

2. To study the Pro-environmental Behaviour level of Higher Secondary School Students

The data and the results of the second objective are given below.

Table 2

Details of Level of Pro-environmental Behaviour

PEB Group	Range	Frequency	Percent (%)
High	(72-83)	21	26.3
Average	(60-72)	34	42.5
Low	(49-60)	25	31.3

Note: Among a sample of 80 Higher Secondary School Students, 21% exhibit high levels of Pro-environmental Behaviour, 42% exhibit average levels, and 31% exhibit low levels. As a result, the second null hypothesis is rejected, and students at Higher Secondary Schools have varying levels of Pro-environmental Behaviour.

3. To find out the relationship between Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students.

The third objective of the study was to find out the relationship between Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour. The data was analyzed and interpreted using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r) to test the hypothesis: there exists a significant relationship between Environmental Ethics and the Pro-environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students.

Table 3

Correlational Analysis between Environmental Ethics and Pro- Environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students

Pearson Correlations

		EE	PEB
EE	Pearson Correlation	1	0.298**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.007
	N	80	80
PEB	Pearson Correlation	0.298**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007	
	N	80	80

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: Pearson's correlation coefficient 'r' for the correlation between Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour is 0.298. This indicates that there exists a relationship between Environmental Ethics and the Pro-environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students. Hence the third hypothesis is accepted and there exists a significant relationship between Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour among Higher Secondary School Students

Discussion

In the present study, the high level of Environmental Ethics among Higher Secondary School Students indicates that students have a better conscience about the welfare of the environment. This background information will help provide necessary feedback to Higher Secondary Teachers, Students, and their parents to further develop a positive level of Environmental Ethics among the student body.

The findings of the study revealed that while the majority of Higher Secondary School Students had average Pro-environmental Behaviour, the least number of students scored extremely negative in their Pro-environmental Behaviour. This indicates the need to encourage and motivate students to change their proactive Behaviour in a manner consistent with their ethics towards the environment. Policymakers, teachers, school administrators, and parents need to examine ways in which students' positive Environmental Ethics can lead to equally positive and highly Pro-environmental Behaviour.

The findings of the present study related to Higher Secondary School Students Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour are positively correlated. It is hoped that it will be useful to policymakers and school administrators who are forced to make important considerations, decisions, and changes related to general education and environmental education-related curricula and exercises to make them more effective, relevant, and applicable in our day, into everyday life

Conclusion

This research has attempted to study the relationship between Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour of Higher Secondary School Students. The present study found that the majority of Higher Secondary School Students exhibited high Environmental Ethics and average Pro-environmental Behaviour. The findings suggest that educational administrators and curriculum reformers should revise the environmental education syllabus so that the current curriculum can successfully incorporate higher levels of Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour suitable for future generations. The study also reveals that there is a positive relationship between Environmental Ethics and Pro-environmental Behaviour. These results highlight the fact that they are all interrelated. These results emphasize the need to adopt

innovative methods for teaching environmental education. Perhaps the traditional lecture method should be supplemented or replaced by new and improved teaching methods. Teachers should use appropriate teaching aids to capture students' attention and impress the necessary knowledge and values on their minds. Every member of society must join hands to restore what we have lost, to nourish and care for the earth. Students who are the future leaders of the world should be encouraged and motivated to become active stewards of the environment. The environment needs immediate solutions only through environmental awareness, Environmental Ethics, and environmental protection Behaviour of its citizens.

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