

A Study of Environmental Literacy/Awareness among Students

^[1]Nathiya. M, ^[2]Dr. V. Rema

^[1] Assistant Professor of English & Research Scholar (Part time- Int.) Department of English and other Foreign Languages, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, BharathiSalai, Ramapuram, Chennai - 600089

^[2] Professor & Head, Department of English and other Foreign Languages, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, BharathiSalai, Ramapuram, Chennai - 600089

Abstract: Today the Environment deterioration is of great concern for all of us. We need to sensitize and aware people about environment and its problems. Environmental awareness means being aware of the natural environment and making choices that benefit the earth, rather than hurt it. The present Questionnaire is prepared to study the Environment awareness among students. The questionnaire consists of 20 test items. Environmental awareness questionnaire (EAQ) can be used to assess environmental awareness of undergraduate students, senior secondary students and adults. It is the responsibility of every individual to take care of nature and to protect nature awareness about environment should be given. Thus, this questionnaire will be helpful for creating awareness among the students.

Keywords: Environmental Awareness, Questionnaire, Nature and Students

1. Introduction

Today the delicate ecosystem of our earth is facing the danger of destruction in the hands of man due to overexploitation of natural resources and rising levels of environmental pollution. The need of the hour is creating awareness among people about environment and its associated problems. We need to work individually and collectively for conserving our environment. This is a survey about the natural environment which constitutes an ecosystem necessary to sustain organic life and human development. Among the most critical ecosystem services upon which human kind depends are the provision of food, water, air and shelter. This ecosystem is fragile and is subject to a number of threats including:

- Pollution
- Climate change
- Man-made disasters
- Natural disasters

These threats can give rise to adverse impacts on essential keystone elements, nutrients and species required for sustainable human, economic and social development – the Human Environmental Ecosystem.

To ensure our survival, societies must maintain the balance of social and economic activity to sustain the supply of these essential elements in our environmental habitats and homes. To preserve this “social good”, modern governments and democratic societies establish agencies to regulate both the supply and protection of the essential elements.

This is the basis and impetus upon which the National Environmental Literacy/Awareness Survey to evaluate the state of environmental literacy and awareness among students. The survey also presents the opportunity for the effectiveness in enhancing environmental management, education and awareness.

Purpose of the Study:

The National Environmental Literacy/Awareness Survey is important because it provides instrumentation to measure environmental literacy among the student community. The study will identify the percentage of students who are familiarized with the environment and ecology and will be helpful for them to know more about ecology.

Significance of the Study

Environmental issues became high international priorities all 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 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. Hence, it becomes 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 (Minda C &Sutaria 1990).

Objectives of Survey:

- A) To develop a national measure of environmental literacy
- B) To determine the levels of environmental literacy among students
- C) To understand the relative effectiveness of media, tools and technology in meeting the goals of environmental Education and Awareness among citizens
- D) To make recommendations concerning the EMA's Environmental Programmes specifically in relation to the National Environmental Policy (NEP)

2. Methodology

The National Environmental Literacy Survey was implemented in four (4) Phases:

1. Survey Planning and Research
2. Survey Design and Questionnaire Development
3. Survey Implementation - a. Preparation b. Training c. Team building
4. Data Analysis and conclusion

A detailed schematic of the survey process is outlined below.

Problem Stated

The problem of the study pertains to the following area. What is the extent of knowledge attained by the students of various colleges with regards to Awareness of environmental pollution, degradation etc.

Validity of EAQ

Validity means 'truthfulness'. This questionnaire possesses high validity as its content validity was found with the help of Expert's Opinion.

- **Content Validity:** Content validity (also known as logical validity) refers to the extent to which a measure represents all facets of a given social construct. Before the questionnaire was administered to actual participants, a group of ten experts reviewed the assessment and compare the questions included on the assessment against a blueprint. The experts studied different sections and questions included in the questionnaire and rated the assessment from 90 to 100% indicating the appropriateness of the assessment.
- **Face Validation:** Face validation in a sense is a form of common sense applied to a questionnaire's purpose. Researchers employing face validation on their questionnaire need only look at the questionnaire as a whole and its individual items and ask themselves, "Does this measure what it should?" For this method of validation, no quantitative methods are needed. The questionnaire used in this study serve the purpose for which this was constructed.
- **External Validity:** It refers to how well the study reflects the real world and not just an artificial situation. Although the prescribed instrument is specifically designed for students but it can be applied to teachers and students of senior secondary, college and university level.

Reliability of EAQ

Reliability refers to the precision or accuracy of the measurement or scores. It means the degree to which the test agrees its i.e. if the test is administered under similar conditions, the results should not vary much.

Description Of Environmental Awareness Questionnaire (EAQ)

Environmental Awareness Questionnaire was developed to know the environmental awareness of the students. The questionnaire measures awareness of students about the Environment, Environmental Pollution

and main environmental issues like depletion of ozone layer, acid rain and global warming. There are 20 statements in the questionnaire.

Number of items under each dimension in the EAQ

S.No.	Dimension	No. of Statements	S.No. of Items
1	Nature	4	8,17,20
2	Environment	5	1,2,5,6,11
3	Ecocriticism	4	3,4,10,13
4	Ruskin Bond	2	9,12
5	Animals	5	7,14,15,18,19

Purpose of the Tool: This questionnaire is designed to assess the environment awareness among the students at undergraduate level. The questionnaire measures the extent and degree of awareness of students about environment, environmental pollution and main environmental issues like depletion of ozone layer, acid rain and global warming.

Instructions:

1. There are total 20 questions. Please read each question carefully.
2. Put Tick mark against the correct answer.
3. Each question carries one mark. There is no negative marking.
4. Do not overwrite or cut anywhere.

QUESTIONNAIRE- Environmental Awareness

S.no	Questions	Options (Please Tick anyone)
1	Do you take some action to improve the environment in town?	Yes / No
2	Do you find the environment important?	Yes / No
3	Would you like to learn more about ecology?	Yes / No
4	How would you rate your ecological awareness?	Great / Good / Average
5	Do you know about NEP?	Yes / No
6	How much do you know about the current status of environment?	Always/ rarely
7	Do you like animal stories?	Yes / No
8	Have you read stories related to nature?	Yes / No
9	Have you read stories written by Ruskin Bond?	Yes / No
10	Are you aware of ecocriticism?	Yes / No
11	Have you heard about environmental literature?	Yes / No
12	Ruskin Bond is a supporter of Ecocriticism. Do you agree?	Yes / No
13	Ecocriticism must be taught from lower level to higher level. Do you agree?	Yes / No
14	Is there any bond between human beings, animals & birds?	Yes / No
15	Do our myths insist on the worship of animal images?	Yes / No
16	Is nature more powerful than man?	Yes / No
17	Should man keep a balance with nature always?	Yes / No
18	Do animals symbolise power & energy?	Yes / No
19	Deforestation is one of the major reasons for the loss of many animals. Do you agree?	Yes / No
20	Should man protect nature?	Strongly agree/ Agree/ No need

Use of the questionnaire

Environmental awareness questionnaire (EAQ) can be used to assess environmental awareness of undergraduate students, senior secondary students and adults.

3. Conclusion

Environmental awareness plays a vital role in preserving of nature. Through Environmental Awareness we can create relationship between man and nature is established. Environmental awareness enriches one's knowledge of balance of nature. Environmental awareness inculcates skills among students which indirectly help one to become a nature loving scientist. A higher degree of environmental awareness is essential to save the world from extinction and preserve the ecosystem.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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