



Research Paper

“A Study on Environmental Awareness of Secondary level Students with Special reference to Kathalguri (Central) Development Block of Golaghat District, Assam”.

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I. INTRODUCTION:

Human beings are very fortunate that mother earth is the only planet in the universe gifted with elements like water, land, air, flora and fauna, etc that are of vital importance for living. The possibility of life and its development depends entirely on maintaining the balance of the environment and wise utilization of natural resources. Human dependence on environmental resources is so great that man cannot continue to live on earth without protecting the Earth's environmental resources. But the ignorance and indifference of people about the environment and over exploitation of resources has led to degeneration and degradation of the environment.

The degradation of the environment is mainly linked with the development process. Advancement of scientific technology has made human life on earth comfortable and convenient but a very high cost has been paid for the same in terms of environmental degradation. Therefore it is very important that we think actively for the conservation and protection of environmental resources for our own benefit. No one on earth can afford to remain ignorant and indifferent about environmental issues and problems. The fast deteriorating environment and frequent episodes of environmental backlashes have caused concern for environmental protection and preservation.

NEED OF THE STUDY: Healthy clean and pure environment is a precious gift of nature to the humanity. The environment which is made up of the layer of air above the surface of the earth and water and soil on the surface of the earth is habitual of man as it is for all other living things. Like many other living things and living organisms man has to depend on environment. He received his basic necessities of life water, air, food and shelter from it. So neither the present generation nor the prosperity has any right obliterate its wholesomeness as polluted it. Every one of us has an equal right to live in a healthy and clean environment. The environmental health of a country is in fact, an indication of the quality of life of people. It is an established fact that physical division of the environment on boundary basis is impossible. Therefore to protect the environment everybody should aware by environment education and they should be done collectively.

Man's demands are unlimited and ever increasing which results in thoughtless degradation of the natural environment with the development of science and technology and the growth of population and industrialization came a thereby posing danger to the physical, mental and social health of man. Deforestation has lead to destruction of wild life, soil erosion, loss of soil fertility, recurring floods and formation of deserts, unplanned industrialization and urbanization have accentuated the problem of waste disposal, sanitation and provision of pure water and clean air, similarly increasing use of nitrogenous fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture have also aggravated the problem of water pollution and land pollution. Now we are facing dangers level of pollution in water, air and earth causing undesirable disturbances to the ecological balance of the bio-sphere. We must recognize that increase attention to the problem of the human environment is essential for social as well as economic development of humanity.

It is to be kept in mind that research and awareness are the broad approaches to understand the nature or environment scientific approach towards understanding and dealing with nature is must, and at the same time generating awareness amongst the students should also be of prime concern. The educational institution should play an important role in arousing civic consciousness for abatement of environmental pollution by ensuring that every citizen is knowledgeable enough about the environment to take an intelligent interest in pollution problems. This is because without all the students' proper understanding and participation nothing can be done.

There is immense necessity to generate the ability of visualization in students the lack of which has created the turmoil. For this environmental education should be an essential part of the curriculum in educational system. Researches should be encouraged and sponsored by the educational institutions and the government. There are needed immediate steps to save the environment. The most important step in achieving the goal of environment friendliness is arousing the concern and awareness among the general public regarding the maintenance of ecological balance.

Students in developing and poor countries have lack of awareness about environment and at the same time developed countries have also been not found to be honest in their dealing with the developing countries.

The need of students' awareness and education are of extreme importance as any environmental setting is very complex and too many factors are integrated with it. Thus we want to be safe and secure for the future, and the students must be environmentally aware and educate them.

Kathalguri (Central) Block is the backward block of Golaghat district. There are few number of educational institutions, where we find maximum number of students belongs to OBC, MOBC, Tea-tribe, ST, and very few number of general caste students. The living standard and life style of the students are not so satisfactory in comparison to other people. It can be assumed that the awareness and impact of environmental education is still far away from the people. Hence, the researcher took the present study to find out about the Environmental awareness among the students of Kathalguri (Central) Block of Golaghat District of Assam.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

For the present study the problem was formally stated as given below-

“A Study on Environmental Awareness of Secondary level Students with Special reference to Kathalguri (Central) Development Block of Golaghat District, Assam”.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

In order to make our study fruitful certain objectives are framed considering the statement of the problem. They are-

- (a) To find out the awareness and impact of environmental education among the students.
- (b) To find out the attitude of students towards environment.
- (c) To find out the factors which have acted as the resistant factors in spread of environmental education.

(a) To suggest guidelines for the awareness knowledge attitudes skills and the better improvement of environment education.

POPULATION:

The population of the present study includes secondary students reading in between class VIII to X in different secondary schools under the Kathalguri (Central) Development Block, Golaghat District., Assam.

SAMPLE:

Kathalguri (Central) Development Block consists of 14 secondary schools, out of which 4 school are considered for study i.e. is 25% of 14 secondary schools. From these 4 schools 100 numbers of students were selected, by taking 25 nos of students from each school for study. The selection of these 4 schools and students were based on random experiment.

TOOLS:

In the present research activity as per need o the study a set of questionnaires consisting of 20 nos of question were prepared, and supplied to the selected representative sample taken for study and get with their views. The questions are mainly based on students awareness about environment, attitude, living style and activities towards environment, and its problems. After compiling their answers the investigator analysis each question answers one by one and find out a conclusion and express the views for better environment. In addition to this observation was also used at the time of data collection.

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION:

In the present study, after preparing the tool, the researcher decided to collect data and was followed a systematic procedure. The researcher made his best effort to gather most reliable and valid data. The researcher personally visited 4 numbers of selected Secondary schools and met the students of Kothalguri (Central) Development Block of Golaghat District with the prepared questionnaires. Altogether the researcher met 100 numbers of students. He personally met the respondents and had some informal talks with them to build a good rapport. Then the researcher disclosed the purpose of his visit. Then the researcher according to the items of the questionnaires took responses of the students. The responses were recorded properly, and at the same time the

researcher made an observation on the attitude and awareness on environment of the students. Observations were recorded by the researcher separately in the diary carried by him. It took one week to collect the data. Thus the researcher collected the data from the students with co-operation.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED:

In the present study simple techniques were used to analyze the data gathered from the respondents, they were frequency and percentage.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA:

The present interpretations of data were made out of the collected data from the sample selected for study. A set of questionnaires were prepared for the Secondary level students, and on the basis of questionnaire the analysis were done.

The following table no.1 reveals the data of environmental awareness among the students who are the sample for our survey.

Sl.no	ITEMS	Frequency		Percentage of frequency	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Do you keep your environment neat and clean?	94	6	94%	6%
2	Do you think a pollution free environment is needed to live peacefully?	87	13	87%	13%
3	Do you think that our environment is pollution free?	65	35	65%	35%
4	Do you know about the factors of environmental pollution	20	80	20%	80%
5	Have you adopt any means to keep your environment pollution free?	19	81	19%	81%
6	Do you think that the rapid growth of science and technology is a another cause of environmental pollution?	12	88	12%	88%
7	Are you aware about the plan/policies taken by the govt to control the environment pollution?	7	93	7%	93%
8	Do you know that environmental pollution is dangerous for the next generation?	10	90	10%	90%
9	Do you think that the polythene bags, artificial chemicals or manure etc creates environmental pollution?	15	85	15%	85%
10	Do you think that environmental education should be included in the curriculum of all stages?	84	16	84%	16%

Sl.no	ITEMS	Frequency		Percentage of frequency	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
11	Do you know that the pollution of environment is the source of all kinds of diseases?	10	90	10%	90%
12	Do you know that environment can be protected from pollution?	14	86	14%	86%
13	Is there any meeting and held environmental awareness in your area?	2	98	2%	98%
14	Do you participate in any environmental awareness programme?	1	99	1%	99%
15	Is the unnecessary cutting of trees the main cause of natural calamity?	20	80	20%	80%
16	Do you plant trees at your home and school?	47	53	47%	53%
17	(a) Do you face any natural calamity? And	100	0	100%	0
	(a) Is environmental degradation is responsible for it?	9	91	9%	91%
18	What is used for cooking at your family? (wood fire/natural gas/coal)	28 (used LPG)	72 (used wood fire)	28%	72%
19	From which source do you use your drinking water? (river/spring/tubewell/filtered water)	15 (used filtered water)	85 (used tube well water)	15%	85%
20	How is your privy system? (open/permanent/temporary)	43 (temporary, &25 (open)	32 (used permanent)	43%,&25%	32%

The above study shows that 94% of students try to keep their surroundings clean and 87% were of the opinion that a pollution free environment is required to live peacefully. On the contrary 65% of students have no idea on pollution free environment. It is surprising to know that 80% of students were lacking knowledge of the factors that causes environmental pollution.

Only 7% were aware about the plan and policies framed and taken by the Govt. to control the pollution.

From the study it was surprising to know that 90% of students were unaware that polluted environment can causes diseases.

It is assumed from the study the students no provision of any meeting, discussion on environment.

The study also reveals that 100% students faced natural calamities but 91% of students were unaware about environmental degradation that causes natural calamities.

The above study reveals that a very few students possesses knowledge on environmental education. People awareness and attitude reflected negatively in the study. The percentage shows that majority of the families of the students did not use LPG, sanitary latrines, filtered water. Instead of all these they use fire wood, non sanitary latrine or open place, drink impure water from tube well without boiling. They are also involved in deforestation and many other unplanned activities done by the families of the students. It also revealed that they were more dependent on their surrounding environment. They try to fulfill most of their necessities from environment. The data gathered from them shows, that were not aware about the healthy and pollution free environment.

Above all these it has been found positive attitude, towards environmental education. A higher percentage of students thought that the environmental education should find place in the curriculum of all stages.

It can be safely concluded that the people were not aware and conscious about environment. But it does not mean that it is difficult to make them aware. It requires planned effort at school level to educate the students, and provision should also be made to make the guardians aware and concern on environmental issue by arranging meeting, different programmes on environment by the Govt. and private sector.

II. FINDINGS:

The above study reveals that a very few students possesses a fair knowledge on environmental education. Majority of them posses' poor knowledge on environment regarding the factors that causes environmental pollution, plan and policies taken by the govt. to control pollution, and the concept that pollution of today might cause problem for the future generation.

The percentage shows that majority of the families of the students did not use LPG, sanitary latrines, filtered water. Instead of all these they use fire wood, non sanitary latrine or open place, drink impure water from tube well without boiling as the families were poor. They involved in deforestation and many other unplanned activities due to the need of the families. They try to fulfill most of their necessities from environment. The data gathered from them shows, that were not aware about the healthy and pollution free environment.

Poor awareness created a negative attitude towards environment proved that they were not conscious and has no knowledge in the context of environmental pollution and degradation and about the disease that occurred due to environmental pollution. But in this respect few students has a good knowledge.

Above all these it was revealed that though the students were unaware of some environmental issues, but the posses a positive attitude towards environmental education. A higher percentage of students thought that the environmental education should find place in the curriculum of all stages.

Here the researcher tries to find out the factors that have acted as resistance to make the students environmentally aware and to provide solution to the problem.

a) Most of the environmental education programmes in India focuses only on the awareness level, but merely raising awareness cannot help to promote responsible environmental behaviour. Environmental Education must go beyond the level of awareness building and able to involve learners actively in activities relating to conservation and protection of the environment. Therefore, only a value based and action oriented system of environmental Education can lead students from awareness and knowledge to concern and feeling and ultimately to proper action for preservation and protection of environment.

(b) The Govt and Non Govt organization must give importance in organizing meeting, Seminar, discussion, symposium, debate etc on environmental issue to make the people aware and make concern about it. Emphasis should also be given in observing World Environment Day and try to involve the students and local people to carry out the programme fruitfully.

(c) The teacher should make compulsory for the students to plant trees or flower or fruit plant in the school, and the responsibility of taking care of the plants should be bestowed upon the students.

(d) The authorities of the schools should recruit special teacher for Environmental Education and create in them for knowing environmental education. For such purpose syllabus should be framed effectively.

III. CONCLUSION:

From the above study it is very clear to us that majority of the secondary level students of Kathalguri (Central) Development Block of Golaghat District, Assam possessed very poor knowledge on environmental education. It can be assumed that these students are not concerned and least bothered about environmental education. The data also reveals that their parents were also not so concerned about environment. But they would like to use environmental gifts for their own benefit. It is because the life standards of the families of the students are not satisfactory. But on the other hand they showed their keen interest to know about the environment and they are in favour of introducing environmental education in the curriculum of all stages of education.

The present syllabus of the environmental studies in the school may be reviewed in the light of recent needs and prospects. The schools must be encouraged in setting up appropriate environment condition in them. Govt should provide incentives to the school for maintaining a good environment. Provision should be there for arranging meeting and organizing programme like debate, discussion, seminar on environmental issue, and observing World Environment Day.

The teacher should be highly specialized to provide better learning environment and also provide knowledge on environment to the pupils to get fair knowledge on it, and could become more environmentally conscious. The Govt, Non-govt. organization, local bodies, and self-help groups should facilitate the people to enrich the knowledge of environment.

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