



## **A STUDY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

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### **ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT**

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Environment and its related issues have become a subject of global concern over the years. It becomes a serious concern for the scientists, the ecologists, the planners, the politicians, the educated intelligentsia, voluntary organizations and even common man. The unprecedented changes and losses occurred to the nature have made a painful appeal that unless each and every human being is aware of the severe destructions happened to our mother earth and develop right kind of attitudes towards the protection of it, the very existence of human being will be jeopardized very soon. As man is the integral part of both physical and biological world playing the key role in using the environment, he must possess and develop the proper environmental attitudes in his day to day life. Teachers have an impactful role in developing the proper attitudes among the students right from the primary level to the tertiary stage. They are expected to possess positive and satisfactory level of attitudes towards the environmental issues. The present paper is an attempt to measure the environmental attitudes of the secondary school teachers with the help of a standardized tool.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

There is no denying the fact that the present world is witnessing a wide range of serious environmental challenges right from the unplanned urbanization to the global warming. The world has undergone great upheaval during the past decades due to technological advancements, ever increasing industrialization and the rapidly growing tendency of the masses to settle down in urban areas. The developmental activities of the nations have led the world to loss the green areas and priceless resources of the nature at an alarming rate. All have resulted in environmental degradation. The deteriorating environmental conditions have broadly impacted all aspects of human race on the earth. The question of existence of man arises with the increase of environmental problems. At present we inhale the toxic air, we drink the polluted water, we eat the polluted vegetables and the list goes on. Environmental problems have reached up to a level where almost every one needs to be conscious of them, should possess right kinds of attitudes and do judicious acts towards environment. Man is the center of environment and he can make or mar it according to his own needs and wishes. Environmental sensitivity with pro-environmental attitudes should be cultivated among all sections of people of the society. The world community has recognized the environmental education as the most powerful medium for changing our behavior and attitudes.

Environmental attitudes is a learned disposition to respond towards a consistently given object negatively or positively. It

is a crucial construct in environmental psychology, a psychological tendency expressed by evaluating the natural environment with some degree of favour or disfavor. Attitudes determine the responsive behavior of the people while interacting with the environment. The attitudinal changes of people towards nature and environmental components, relationship between man and environment etc, will bring positive effect in regard to environmental conservation and protection. One of the major objectives of Environmental education formulated by the Belgrade Workshop, 1975 is to develop proper attitude to help individuals and social values, strong feelings of concern for the environment and the motivation for actively participating in its protection and improvement.

Teachers are the right persons to impart environmental education in the true sense. Environmental education has been recognized as one of the most effective tools to provide learning experiences in obtaining knowledge, understanding, skills, awareness and attitudes by the students for the preservation and protection of our environment. The pro-environmental attitudes of the teachers throw a direct impact on the students while they interact with the environment. In other words the environmental attitudes of the teachers determine the sustainability of the environment.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

- To study the environmental attitudes of the secondary school teachers.

- To make a comparative study between the urban secondary school teachers and rural secondary school teachers in environmental attitudes.

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample

The present study has been conducted on a sample of 200 secondary school teachers of Assam. Stratified random sampling technique was used for selecting the sample giving due representation to sex, locality background, management (Private Vs Govt.) and stream (Arts, Science and Commerce)

### Tools used

For carrying out the present study the investigator used the standardized tool, "Taj Environmental Attitude Scale" developed by Prof. Haseen Taj. The scale consists of 61 statements aimed to identify the attitudes of people in six areas. It is a four-point attitude scale indicating "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" against each statement.

The investigator also used a General Data Sheet for the present study.

### Statistical Techniques used

Mean score and percentage have been used through proper tabulation of the data.

### Procedure for Data Collection

Survey method was used for data collection. The samples were collected from three districts namely Kamrup, Nalbari and Baksa from the state of Assam. After the selecting the schools, the investigator approached the teachers and requested them to fill up data sheet and read every statement of TEAS. They were also instructed to express their view in any of the four alternatives provided against each statement by making tick mark in the box shown at the end of the statement. Of the total samples there were 100 teachers from rural background and another 100 teachers were selected from the urban background.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The investigation have been analyzed and presented under the following subheads:

- Environmental Attitudes of the secondary school teachers in Population Explosion
- Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary school teachers in Health and Hygiene
- Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary school teachers in Polluters
- Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary school teachers in Wild life
- Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary school teachers in Forests
- Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary school teachers in Environmental Concerns
- Comparison between Urban and Rural Secondary School Teachers in environmental attitudes.

### *Environmental Attitudes of the secondary school teachers in Population Explosion*

The number of items relating to this area is five (5). Out of these items, two (02) are indicative as favourable and three

(03) statements are unfavourable. The total maximum positive score in this area is  $20(4 \times 5 = 20)$ . Therefore the total maximum obtainable positive score by the respondents ( $N=200$ ) is 4000. The frequency and responses of the secondary school teachers in Population Explosion are presented in Table -1

**Table 1** Summary of Environmental Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers in Population Explosion

N	Total Obtainable Positive Score	Scores Obtained	Percentage	Mean
200	4000	3800	95%	19

From Table 1 it is revealed that the total score obtained from the respondents of the present study is 3800 with a percentage of 95% and a mean score 19 indicate the higher and satisfactory attitudes of the secondary school teachers in the area of Population Explosion.

### *Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary School Teachers in Health and Hygiene*

There are five (5) items in this area and out of these three (3) are favourable and two (2) are unfavourable. The maximum positive score obtainable by the sampled teachers in this area is 4000 ( $200 \times 20 = 4000$ ). The responses of the teachers in these items are shown in Table-2.

**Table 2** Summary of Environmental Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers in Health and Hygiene

N	Total Obtainable Positive Score	Scores Obtained	Percentage	Mean
200	4000	3900	97.5%	19.5

Table-2 shows that the respondents obtained 3900 out of 4000 and the percentage of their responses is 97.5% with a mean score of 19.5. It is revealed from the above table that the respondents possess the highly satisfactory attitudes towards Health and Hygiene.

### *Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary School Teachers in Polluters*

Under this area there are all together twenty-six (26) items out of which twelve (12) are favourable and fourteen (14) are unfavourable. The maximum obtainable positive score from the respondent teachers is  $104 \times 200 = 20800$ . The findings are presented in the following table.

**Table 3** Summary of Environmental Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers in Polluters

N	Total Obtainable Positive Score	Scores Obtained	Percentage	Mean
200	20800	20200	97.12%	101

### *Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary School Teachers in Wild life*

In this area six (06) items are included and out of these, five (5) items are favourable and one (01) is unfavourable. The highest positive score obtainable in this area from the respondents is  $24 \times 200 = 4800$ . Responses of the teachers have been shown through Table –

**Table 4** Summary of Environmental Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers in Wildlife

N	Total Obtainable Positive Score	Scores Obtained	Percentage	Mean
200	4800	3500	72.91%	17.5

From the above table it is found that out of the total obtainable positive score (4800) the respondents obtained 3500 and the percentage of it is 72.91% and mean score being the 17.5. It shows the satisfactory environmental attitudes of the secondary school teachers towards Wildlife.

**Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary School Teachers in Forests**

There are altogether five (5) unfavourable items in this area. The maximum positive score obtainable from the respondents is 20X 200=4000. The responses of the teachers are placed in the following table.

**Table 5** Summary of Environmental Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers in Forests

N	Total Obtainable Positive Score	Scores Obtained	Percentage	Mean
200	4000	3800	95%	19

Table 5 reveals that 95% attitude of the secondary school teachers is related to Forests area and the Mean score is 19. The findings of the respondents show to be very high and satisfactory.

**Environmental Attitudes of the Secondary School teachers in Environmental Concerns**

Fourteen (14) items are included in the area of Environmental Concern and out of this the numbers of favourable and unfavourable items are ten (10) and four (4) respectively. The highest positive score obtainable from the respondents is 56X200=11200. The responses of the teachers have been placed in Table -6

**Table 6** Summary of Environmental Attitudes of Secondary School Teachers in Environmental Concerns

N	Total Obtainable Positive Score	Scores Obtained	Percentage	Mean
200	11200	10800	96.42%	54

**Table 7** Summary of the scores of the Rural and Urban Respondents in Environmental Attitudes

Back ground of the teacher	Scores & PC obtained in Population Explosion	Scores & PC obtained in Health and Hygiene	Scores & PC obtained in Polluters	Scores & PC obtained in Wildlife	Scores & PC obtained in Forests	Scores & PC obtained in Environmental Concerns
Urban(N=100)	1950 (51.31%)	1970 (50.51%)	10000 (49.50%)	1670 (47.71%)	1910 (50.26%)	5500 (50.92%)
Rural (N=100)	1850(48.68%)	1930 (49.48%)	10200 (50.49%)	1830 (52.28%)	1890 (49.7%)	5300 (49.07%)

**Table 8** Summary of Favourable and Unfavourable Attitudes of the Respondents

Type of item	Urban (N=100)			Rural(N=100)			Total			N
	Total Score	M	%	Total Score	M	%	Total Score	M	%	
Favourable(31 No.)	12200	122	98.4%	12130	121.3	97.82%	24330	243.3	98.10%	200
Unfavourable(30No.)	11700	117	97.5%	11640	116.4	97%	23340	116.7	97.25%	200

Table-6 shows that the respondents have scored 10800 out of 11200 in the area of Environmental Concerns with a high percentage of 96.42%. These findings are also very satisfactory as far as the attitudes of the secondary school teachers towards Environmental Concerns are concerned.

**Comparison between Urban and Rural Secondary School Teachers in Environmental Attitudes**

The findings of the urban and rural secondary school teachers in regard to environmental attitudes on different areas are placed in Table No-7

The table reveals that the respondents of both urban and rural backgrounds have obtained high positive scores and the percentages of their scores show that there exists little differences as far as environmental attitudes are concerned in six different areas of environmental issues.

**Attitudes of the Secondary School Teachers towards Favourable and Unfavourable Items.**

The responses of both rural and urban secondary school teachers towards favourable and unfavourable items are shown by computing Mean and percentage in Table No.8

Table -8 has clearly shown that the Scores, Mean and Percentage of both the urban and rural secondary school teachers are very high towards the favourable items of the TEAS. Likewise their reverse responses towards the unfavourable items have also shown to be highly satisfactory.

**CONCLUSION**

In this age of environmental crises it is an essential need on the part of every human being to possess high level of environmental awareness and attitude towards the environmental issues. It leads people to develop proper sensitivity and responsibility for the cause of protection and conservation of the environment. Schools are regarded as the most effective agencies of formal environmental education and teachers are the living examples for the students affecting their cognitive, affective and conative domains. Pro-environmental attitudes of the teachers can broadly influence the attitudes and mould the responsible behaviour of the students to reduce environmental risks in the coming days. From the present study it can be concluded that teachers of the secondary schools from both the urban and rural backgrounds have possessed highly satisfactory pro-environmental attitudes.

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