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Attitude of Community Members Towards Environmental Education at Primary Stage

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Abstract

This present study attempts to explicate the attitude of community members towards environmental education at primary schools who are closely related to all environmental education programmes of the institution carried on by the school authorities from time to time as they are the members of school Education Committee. Hence, it is needed to find out the extent to which the community members show favorable attitude towards environmental education and to find out the difference between male and female members, urban and rural community members with a view to assessing their attitudes towards environment education at primary level.

Keywords: Environmental education, attitude of community members, Primary School stage

1. Introduction

Environmental Education has emerged recently as a new dimension in the educational sphere only recently. Now much stress is given on environmental education in all aspects of life due to the survival of human being in this earth. Before 25 years ago the term environmental education was relatively unknown and poorly understood. But now it has grown in a worldwide movement. While the emergence of a formal and structured system of education, the focus became limited to imparting knowledge concerning nature rather than on developing appropriate behavior towards its protection. Presently Environmental Education is not viewed as a separate discipline or specific subject but an integral part of the total curricula. Thus Environmental Education emerges as the outcome of a re-orientation of the various disciplines and of different educational experiences (natural science, social sciences, arts, etc). This enable learners to achieve an integrated perception of the environment and to act towards it in a way that is role rational and attitude to social realities, now and in the future. However, in this context the present study reveals the attitude of community members towards Environmental education who are closely connected to primary school as members of Village Education Committee.

Review of Literature:

Kappana (1966) Children's (1978), Singh (1981), Rasem Menla(1984), Meghenda (1985), Tanti (2000), Pata (2005), Shawawaj (1990), Sen (1999), Kidwai (1999), Hanumanthian (2002), Indubala (1999) had made their attempts to sort out the environmental issues and ways and methods of developing environmental awareness and attitudes of primary school students and community members. Some other investigators Gogoi (1998), Singh (1998), Deb (1999) studied about the environment problems personality and environment, cognitive development respectively. Kuhelemeir (1991) Pande (2007) made a study on Environmental Awareness among Rural and Urban Upper Primary school children. Choudhury (2008) made a study of the complementary role of Formal and Non-Formal Educational Agencies in Environmental Awareness and Protection made an attempt to study the environmental behavior in Dutch secondary schools. Researchers found that the environmental behavior of the student were inadequate. He suggested that formal instruction in investigation, evaluation, and skill training could increase in over environmental behavior; Devi (1999) conducted a study of the 'Knowledge of Environmental Education and Awareness among Secondary Students of Greater Guwahati with special reference to the role of Television and Radio'. The researcher found no adequate provisions of environmental education in secondary schools. Pradhan, (2001) made a study on 'Environmental Awareness among Secondary School Teachers'. There was significant difference between mean Environmental scores of the teachers of rural and urban schools. Sharma (2002) had also conducted a study

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on 'Environmental Education and Awareness among the Secondary Schools students with special reference to Nagoan Town'. The research found that the activities of the schools regarding Environmental Education and Environmental awareness are not adequate. Bhattacharjee, (2003) carried out a study on 'Environmental Education and Awareness in the Secondary Schools of Silchar, Assam. She found that more than 83 percent schools involve themselves in plantation of trees, generating quiz and debate competition etc. Lalchharliari (2004) did a study on 'Environmental Pollution Awareness and attitude towards Environmental Education among college students in Aizawl Districts of Mizoram'.

Objectives:

- i. To find out the extent to which the community members of primary of schools show favorable attitude towards Environmental Education,
- ii. To find out the difference between male and female community member of primary school in respect of their attitude towards environmental education.
- iii. To find out difference between rural and urban community members of primary schools with regards to their attitude towards environment education.

Hypothesis:

HO1. There is no significance difference between male & female community members of primary school in respect of their attitude towards environment education.

HO2. There is significance difference between rural and urban community members of primary schools with regard to their attitude towards environment education.

Methodology:

In this study normative survey method is being applied for collecting pertinent data for the purpose of the study. Normative survey method is that method of investigation which attempts to describe and interpret what exists at present in the form of conditions, practices, trends, effects, attitudes, beliefs etc. Since the investigator in the present study attempted to measure the attitude of community members towards, environment education, it was deemed that the 'normative survey method' would be very much pertinent for the collection of data in this study.

Population and sample:

In the present study, the population comprises of all the community members of primary schools of Cuttack district. The representative proportion of population is called sample. The sample community members for the present study were selected by adopting disproportionate stratified random sampling techniques. Total numbers of 13 schools were taken. The schools were then stratified into two strata on the basis of area of location that is (rural and urban). Fifteen were then selected randomly out of thirteen schools. One hundred fifty community members are selected from fifteen primary schools constituted the desired sample for the present study.

Tools Used For Data Collection

A questionnaire is used as data gathering tool. The major steps were taken in constructing the questionnaire under the following principles:-

- i. Different types of books, magazines, journals containing environment education were studied.
- ii. Different significance dimensions of attitude towards environment, population education were identified from the related literature.
- iii. Both favorable and unfavorable items were written from the related literature.
- iv. The items were checked, edited properly and subjected to expert's criticism by giving to some experienced persons in the field.
- v. A trial test was administered on few teachers and after the feedback was received the final list of items was submitted to several experts for their judgment.

On the basis of expert's comments, some items were modified, four items were dropped. The selected 60 items were then arranged in a systematic order.

- i. The scoring key for the favour able items were decided to be 5-4-3-2-1 for the responses strongly agree, Agree, undecided Disagree and Strongly Disagree respectively and the reverses i.e. 1-2-3-4-5 scoring method was used for unfavorable items.
- ii. Necessary instructions were prepared and given in the beginning of the answer sheets.
- iii. No rigid time limit was fixed for answering the items.
- iv. The questionnaire consisted of 60 items. In case of positive items the maximum score for strongly agree was $60 \times 5 = 300$, for agree it was $60 \times 4 = 240$, and likewise for 'Undecided', Disagree and 'Strongly Disagree' the score were $60 \times 3 = 180$, $60 \times 2 = 120$ and $60 \times 1 = 60$ respectably.

In case of negative items, the scoring system was reversed. The maximum score for strongly agree was $60 \times 1 = 60$, and likewise for Agree undecided Disagree and 'strongly disagree' the score were $60 \times 2 = 120$, $60 \times 3 = 180$, $60 \times 4 = 240$ and $60 \times 5 = 300$ respectively. Thus with regard to undecided, the maximum score was $60 \times 3 = 180$. In the present study, it was considered as the neutral point.

Statistical Technique

The data collected were analyzed by commuting mean and standard deviation. The significance of difference between the mean attitude scores of male and female, rural and urban of community members related to primary schools were found by employing critical ratio method.

Analysis and interpretation of Data: Analysis of data refers to breaking up of the entire collected data into its constituent parts to perceive the inherent fact. It calls for a careful logical and critical examination of results obtained after analysis, keeping in view the limitation of the sample chosen, the tools selected and used in the study. The analysis carries table as per the requirement. It was followed by interpretation.

Objective 1

Attitude of community members towards environmental education in Cuttack District.

To find out the extend to which community members are favorable or otherwise disposed towards environment education, the investigator calculated the percentage of the total scores, showing favorable and unfavorable attitude towards environmental education.

Table No.1 Showing the percentage (%) of favorable and unfavorable attitude of community members towards environmental education

No. of total community members	No. of community members scored above neutral	No. of community members scored below neutral	Percentage of favorable response	Percentage of unfavorable response
150	132	18	88%	12%

From the score of different community members of primary school, it was found that among the total community member 150, 132 community member scored above 180 and 18 community members scored below 180. By calculating the percentage of the total cases, it was found that 88% of community members showed favorable attitude and 12% community members showed unfavorable attitude towards environmental education.

Objective: 2

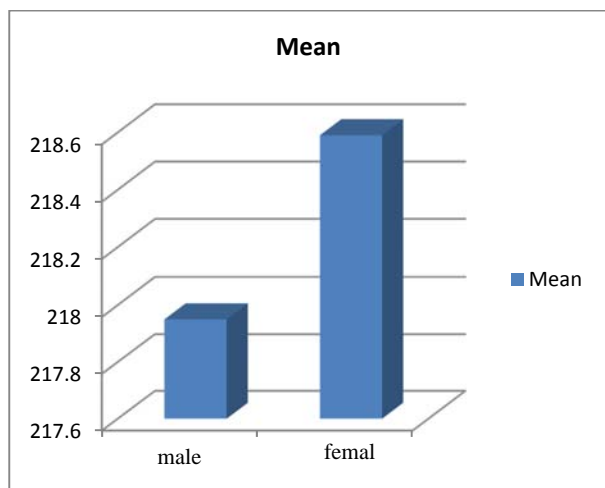
Attitude of male and female community members towards environment education.

In the final sample, there were 84 male and 66 female community member in order to verify the between male and female community members, the mean scores of male and female community members on the criterion variable was computed by calculated critical ratio (C.R) value. The table no.2 shows the critical value and results of the analysis done.

Table No .2

Significance of the difference between the mean scores of the male and female community members in respect of their attitude towards environment education.

Sample	Nos	Mean	S.D	OD	C.R.	Level of significance
Male	84	217.95	20.1	3.5	0.183	Not significant
Female	66	218.59	22.2			



From the table it is seen that the mean of male community members is 217.95, S.D is 20.1, the mean of the female community members is 218.59 and S.D. is 22.2. The C.R. value is 0.183 which is less than 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore investigator accepts the null hypotheses that there is no significant difference between male and female

community members in respect of their attitude towards environmental education.

Objective: 3

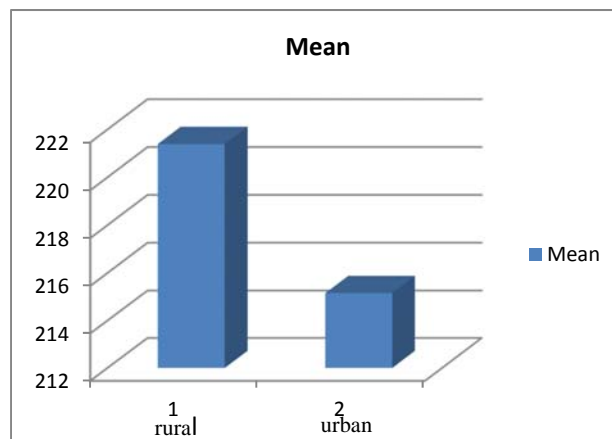
Attitude of rural and urban community members towards environment education.

In order to verify the difference between rural and urban community members in respect of their attitude towards environment education, the mean scores obtained by them were compared by calculating critical ratio (C.R) value.

Table No. 3

Significance of the difference between the scores of the rural and urban community members in respect of their attitude towards environment education.

Sample	Nos	Mean	S.D	OD	C.R.	Level of significance
Rural	74	221.39	19.51	3.39	1.84	Not significant
Urban	76	215.16	21.97			



From the above table it is evident that the mean score of rural community members are 221.39 and S.D is 19.51. Similarly, the mean scores of urban community members are 215.16 and S.D is 21.97, the C.R. value is found to be 1.84 which do not reach statistical significance since 1.84 < 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence it is accepted that there is no significant difference between rural and urban community members of primary school in respect of their attitude towards environment education.

Following are the major findings of the present study

- 88% of the community members involved in the study have shown favorable attitude towards environmental education, where as 12% of community members have shown unfavorable attitude towards environmental education.

- It is found that there is no significant difference between male and female community members in respect of their attitude towards environmental education.
- There is no significant difference between rural and urban community members with regard to their attitude towards environmental education.

Suggestion for the introduction of environmental education at school level

In the light of the findings, the following suggestions can be made for expanding environmental education at school level.

- Environmental education should be integrated with existing school subject.
- Different co-curricular activities related to environmental education, viz: debates, discussions, seminars, essay competition, poster competition should be organized in the school to create interest among the students toward environmental education.
- Trained and untrained teachers should be employed for teaching environmental education.
- Community members should organize field trip to rural and urban areas for better understanding of the students about various problems due to environmental pollution.
- Different educational trips should be organized, In order to appreciate the programs of state and central governments in protecting environment.
- Environmental education should be imparted through mother tongue.
- Some magazines, journals or book on environmental education should be kept in school library.
- Teacher should adopt project method, problem method and discussion method in teaching environmental education.
- Special training to the community members should be organized for imparting environmental education.
- Community members should use modern technology, viz, Television, Radio, films for raising awareness of environmental education.
- Success of the environmental education program mainly depends on the teachers. So teacher must be made fully conversant with techniques, tool, concepts, data and methodology to teach environmental education at school level.
- A suitable curriculum on environmental education should be prepared and introduced in the school.

Conclusion

With the broad suggestion, it is hoped that present study may be considered useful for carrying out some further investigations in the field for the advancement of environment education in the State of Odisha and open a new vista of research in the environmental education which is educationally potential and socially significant.

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