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# **ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG THE JUNIOR COLLEGE STUDENTS**

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## **ABSTRACT:**

This study investigates environmental awareness among junior college students in India. The findings suggest a generally high level of awareness, likely due to mandatory environmental education coursework. However, the study reveals some interesting nuances. Socioeconomic factors appear to influence awareness, with private college students demonstrating a higher level compared to their government college counterparts. There were no significant differences based on nativity (rural vs urban), medium of instruction (English vs Telugu), or gender. Similarly, science and arts students exhibited comparable awareness levels. The research highlights the potential impact of environmental education and underscores the importance of considering socioeconomic background when designing environmental initiatives. The study recommends further research at different educational levels and exploring factors influencing students' application of environmental knowledge in practice.

**Keywords:** Awareness, Environment, Gender, Locality

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## **Introduction:**

We live on the earth, which is a unique planet in the solar system. Its uniqueness lies in that, its environment is favorable for all forms of life including humans. Our environment thus consists of both physical environment and the biological environment known as Biotic and a Biotic. Our environment is dynamic in nature. Earth is the habitat of man. Man does not live in isolation from other life forms on the earth, as he depends on them for his food and other necessities. That is why it is our duty to study the environment and all forms of life on the earth as a whole. Man is a part of the biosphere. In the early periods of human history, human beings were just like any other animal being entirely dependent on the environment, for living, shelter and also protect himself from the predators. With the development of agriculture food was available in abundance and permanent settlements came into existence. Mining of coal, iron and other minerals heralded the industrial revolution. These led to the increased production from fields and factories and the colonization of new landmasses like America and Australia. With his inquisitive brain, ability to use hands language and the tools made by him and self shows placed his as the master of the environment. Man's activities were aimed at satisfying his increasing needs from the environment. In human population during the last 100 years, his needs have increased enormously leading to an adverse impact on the physical and biological environment. Environmental pollution has taken place on a large scale in industrial and urban areas. These environmental changes pose a threat to survival of man on the earth. There is an urgent need for protecting the environment from which man derives his food and other resources. An understanding of the man's development on the mother earth is necessary. Thomson says "By education I mean the influence of the environment upon the individual to produce a permanent change in his habit of behavior of thought and of his attitude environment is various aspects physical, social and cultural education should facilitate the task of adaptation of the child to his environment.

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## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

"Environmental awareness among Junior College Students".

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## **Need of the study:**

National policy on education of 1986 stresses the importance of environmental education and lays down that it is very important to create environmental awareness in all persons right from a child to an old persons. And Environmental awareness should spread in all sections of the society in the current context it is very essential for each individual to develop an awareness about protection and preservation of environment.

Our Environment is threatened due to many hazards; Air, Water and Soil pollution are on increasing causing degradation of environment which in turn results in many problems. Therefore there is great need to protect and preserve our environment the role of students would go a long way in achieving such desired goals hence, including an awareness of environment among students is the responsibility of teachers and to carry out this noble task education is the perfect instrument. If right attitudes are included in students, these attitudes will be transmitted to later generations. Not only

the teachers and parents should make students feel and realize that every creature, whether a tiny micro organism or a gaint elephant has a purpose and work to perform on this earth and they have equal right to share and enjoy the life with others for this it is necessary to understand their level of environmental awareness. Considering the needs as explained, the environmental awareness of junior college students was taken in to consideration for a detailed study. The result of this present study will help in bringing out the remedial measures to the problems concerned to the preservation protection and conservation of environment.

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### Review of related literature:

Kerlinger (1973) gives two main reasons for discussing the general and research literature related to the research problem. The first; of this is to clarity of theoretical rationale of the proper is to locate the present research in the existing body of research on the subject and to point out what it contributes of the subject. The major purpose of this review of the available literature is to determine the significant facts, which are essentially method to the problem under investigation. For the knowledge emerging from the investigations would enable the investigator to avoid unintentional duplication, as well as it would also provide the understanding and insight for development of a logical frame work for the present problem under investigation. Moreover, studies that have been done would provide for formulating research hypotheses and indicating what needs to be done will form the basis for the justification of the study under investigation.

Karuna Gupta, 2007: Conducted "A Study of the Perception of Secondary School Teachers towards Environmental Education". Environment awareness among teachers. Basic environmental awareness is very high among secondary school teachers. Most of the teachers were aware of basic environmental facts and concepts as indicated by their high scores in this area. Teachers from both the Arts and Science streams were able to accurately identify the correct alternatives relating to basic concepts. Advanced environmental awareness is rather poor among secondary school teachers. The scores for the advanced level of awareness were very low indicating that most teachers are not familiar with these facts and concepts. The reasons for such low scores have not been investigated, but it certainly points to a need for more training in this area.

Raju .G, 2007: studied the impact of an Environmental Ethics of Higher Secondary Students. Environmental ethics of higher secondary students is high. Girl students have more environmental ethics than the boy students. Rural higher secondary students have more environmental ethics than the urban higher secondary students. There is a significant difference between the environmental ethics of male and female higher secondary students. Higher secondary students, belonging to different communities don't significantly differ in their environmental ethics. Higher secondary students belonging to different types of schools don't significantly differ in their environmental ethics. There is a significant difference between the environmental ethics of rural and urban school students.

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### Method of Research:

Planning is a necessary step for a good research. It is the heart of any research in this chapter the following aspects have been discussed in detail which are concerned with the design of the present study. Research procedures followed includes the operational definitions of the different terms used, the various hypotheses that were framed for verification and the rationale of these hypotheses. Selection of the sample includes the sampling techniques used. The reasons for selection of a particular sampling technique, and the selection of sample according to different variables. Selection of tool includes the selection of suitable tool for collection of data, description of tool selected, testing its suitability for the present study, and the procedure followed in administering the tool to collect the data required for this study.

"The survey method is used to gather data from a relatively large number of cases in a particular time. It is not concerned with the generalised statistics that results when data are abstracted from a number of individually cases. It is essentially cross sectional it is a little but easier method and also time saving".

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### OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS:

The key terms that have been used in this study are defined in order to understand them properly in the present context.

**Environment:** In this study environment is considered to be the system which includes all living organism and all aspects related to their living i.e. air, water, soil, weather flora and fauna.

**Awareness:** It is considered to be the knowledge and understanding a phenomenon.

**Environmental Awareness:** It is considered as a means to help the social groups and individuals to gain a verity of experiences in and to acquire basic understanding of environment and its associated aspects like.

**Junior Colleges:** The colleges that impart intermediate education the students age of intermediate level is 14 – 18 years.

### Variables of the study:

Variables are a necessary requisite for any worthwhile research for the purpose of comparison. A variable as the name implies, is something which varies. The following variables were considered for the present study. They are,

- a) Students Nativity: Rural versus Urban.
- b) Management of the College: Government and Private Colleges.
- c) Medium of Instruction: English Medium versus Telugu Medium College students
- d) Group of Student: Science versus arts.
- e) Gender: Boys versus Girls

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### Hypotheses of the study:

A Hypothesis is a statement temporarily accepted as true in the light of what is at the time known about a phenomenon and it is employed as a basis for action in the search for new truth. The following hypotheses are formulated taking the objectives into consideration as stated earlier, the variables, viz., rural versus urban students, government versus private college students and gender were considered. To study each of these variables in detail, the following hypotheses were formulated in the null form.

**Hypothesis-1** There is no high level of environmental awareness among junior college students.

**Hypothesis-2** There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among Government and Private Junior College students.

**Hypothesis-3** There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among rural and urban Junior College students.

**Hypothesis-4** There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among English and Telugu medium Junior Colleges students.

**Hypothesis-5** There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among Boys and Girls students of Junior Colleges.

**Hypothesis-6** There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among Science and Arts students of Junior Colleges.

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### Tool of the study:

A research tool plays a major role in any worthwhile research as it is the sole factor in determining the sound data and in arriving at perfect conclusions about the problem or study in hand, which, ultimately helps in providing suitable remedial measures to the problem concerned.

The selection and use of research tools can be done in two ways. The first one is to construct a tool independently by the investigator for his own study. The second way of selection and use of a tool is the right selection of a tool from already standardized ones available in the field of study. The researcher selected standard tool Environmental awareness ability measure which was developed by Dr. Praveen Kumar, Jha National Psychological Corporation Professor, P.G. Department of Psychology, J.P. College, Madhipura, Bihar.

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### Findings and discussions:

#### **There is high level of environmental awareness among junior college students.**

The researcher found high level of Environment awareness among Junior college students because junior college students have a subject by name Environmental Education. The subject is a compulsory subject. Hence they were taught by their teachers well.

#### **There is significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among Government and Private Junior College students.**

When compared the government and private college for environmental awareness private college students have more awareness than their counterparts. It is expected that private college managements took more responsibility in bringing the awareness among their students. Similarly the students studying in private colleges belong to high socio-academical group. This results in higher awareness. Government college students belong to low income groups and also their parents' educational level is low resulting in low awareness.

#### **There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among rural and urban Junior College students.**

It is found that all the students irrespective of their nativity Rural and urban have the same level of environmental awareness because pollution is everywhere and everyone is well aware of its impact on nature. All of them are receiving the same education about environmental education through their course of the study.

#### **There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among English and Telugu medium Junior Colleges students.**

The researcher found same level of Environmental awareness among English medium and Telugu medium students of junior colleges. It is due that both are receiving the same kind of education and also affected with the ill effects of pollution.

#### **There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among Boys and Girls students of Junior Colleges.**

The researcher found that there is no gender difference regarding Environmental awareness among the junior college students because both are receiving the same education facing the same problems posed by the pollution.

#### **There is no significant difference in the level of environmental awareness among Science and Arts students of Junior Colleges.**

Through the study the researcher found that science students and arts students have the same awareness towards Environment. It is usually believed that science students would get more education about environment but it is not so. Till this stage all the students will get the same kind of education that is why it was found that there is no difference between science and arts students regarding environmental awareness.

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### Suggestions for further research:

The present study brings to light some new areas to study by the further research. The areas and variables which are not covered by this study may be put to test among analyse the factors associated with cultivation and promotion. They are,

- The present study is limited to Junior College students. It can be further extended to Graduate and post graduate level.
- A study on Environmental knowledge among secondary school students and teachers.
- A study on Environmental values among secondary school students and teachers.
- A study on Environmental awareness of prospective teachers.
- A comparative study on environmental awareness of primary and secondary school teachers.
- A study on Environmental pollution at district level and its influence on public.

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