

A study of Rewa district responsible habitual activities for environmental sustainability among undergraduate students

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Abstract

Responsible environmental behaviour through habitual activities among undergraduate students, a total of 200 students selected randomly from provincialised colleges of Rewa district among which 100 girls and 100 boys. Primary data were collected from sampled students by administering Environmental Behaviour Study Scale (EBSS), a self-designed research tool. From the collected data favourable environmental behaviour and non-significant difference in habitual activities among undergraduate students irrespective of their sex and locality has been observed. The study concludes that habitual activities related to environment are not dependent on sex and locality of students.

Keywords: Rewa district, Responsible, Habitual activities, Environmental sustainability, Undergraduate, Students

1. Introduction

One of the most debatable topics for discussion today is the environment and its related issues. People around the globe agonize about the changing environment and its harsh affect on the lives of the Earth. People of the present world are experiencing assortment of experiences from the environment which are previously even not known and of course they are not at all gratifying. The present world is gradually becoming more degenerating and if, the same continues, it will not be healthy for livelihood of any kind of flora and fauna. It is none other than the human beings who are accountable for creating such a dreadful condition in the planet Earth and for exploiting our beautiful nature.

The environmental threats in India ranges from the degradation of rural land to the pollution, rapid urbanization with encroachment of forests, the accommodating fast growing population and congested cities (Lahiri, 2011) [1]. Realizing this threat of nature, it becomes utmost necessity for the world community to develop responsible behaviour about the balance of nature and its protection from further relapse. The concern of saving our nature leads to emergence of environmental studies as an indispensable part of every human being. In spite of the deteriorating status of the environment, study of environment has given least attention in the academic programmes of our country. Keeping this view in mind the honourable Supreme Court of India has endorsed a model syllabus (2004) prepared by the NCERT for introducing environmental studies as a compulsory school subject and directed other agencies like University Grants Commission (UGC) to introduce a basic course on environment at every level in higher education. Accordingly, the matter was considered by UGC and the expert committee appointed looked all the pertinent questions, issues and other relevant matters of environment. As a result at least a semester compulsory core module course for environmental studies was prepared for undergraduate courses and compulsorily implemented in all the branches of Higher Education. Thus, environmental studies now become a compulsory subject in formal education right from elementary level to higher education in India.

The ancient scriptures of human civilization have emphasized about the practices and values of environmental conservation. It is now even more critical than ever before for mankind as a whole to have a clear understanding of environmental concerns and to follow sustainable development practices (Bharucha, 2004) [2]. Sustainability means meeting the present needs without compromising the future. We must develop wisdom in every citizen to utilize our environment judiciously so that we can leave something to the coming generation. Sustainable development is the 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromise the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland, 1987) [3]. It is a way how differently we do our activities in order to preserve our abundant nature for future use.

Students with environmental education background had better environmental attitude and found no significant difference between male and female students in their attitude towards environmental pollution and related issues (Kumar & Patil, 2007) [4]. Human behaviour have to be responsible towards environment for sustainable development and it is more prominent in case of coming generation, because they will be the future policy makers, executors and sufferers. Complete and clear understanding about environment, environmental problems and their root causes, effect of human acts on the nature, judicious use of natural resources, sympathetic attitude and sense of responsibility towards solution of environmental problems and its protection and preservation are the main components of responsible environmental behaviour. Such kind of behaviour is desired from all human beings including student community irrespective of their gender, locality and subject stream. Boys of science and non-science stream and locality (urban and rural) have more environmental awareness and environmental attitude than that of boys, but as a whole urban students have better environmental awareness and environmental attitude than that of their rural counterparts (Rout & Agarwal, 2006) [5].

Similar results have been observed on environmental awareness among school students in relation to their standard and sex. In another study significant difference have been found between males and females students of each class and

males have scored higher mean values than the females in each class (Mahajan & Darbari, 2014) ^[6]. Comparing urban and rural perspective teachers on environmental responsibility it was found that 'the rural perspective teachers have scored higher mean values than urban perspective teachers on prevention of pollution, participation in activities to save the environment, be aware of environmental issues to save green trees and vegetation dimensions of Environmental Responsibility Assessment Inventory. It is natural that the rural perspective teachers have a closer relationship with their natural environment'. Comparing gender wise environmental responsibility in the same study, it was found that 'female perspective teachers have scored significantly higher mean values on all the dimensions of Environmental Responsibility Assessment Inventory (ERAI). It may be possible because male perspective teachers actively participate in activities that are related to environmental protection' (Hassan & Das, 2012) ^[7]. Contrasting these findings some other results have also been available on the level of environmental responsibility where it was found no significant difference between different groups of students formed on the basis of their sex, locality and subject stream (Gihar, 2006) ^[8]. Apart from environmental responsibility the attitude towards environment is also very essential aspect to develop apposite environmental behaviour among people in general and students in particular. In a comparative study on environmental attitude of secondary school boys, it was found that 'the students belonging to urban school had higher environmental attitude as compared to their counterparts studying and residing in rural locality' (Sarmah & Mohanty, 2012) ^[9] Habitual environmental activities have to be responsible towards environment protection. If we want to develop sustainable behaviour we have to be conscious about our daily activities which are very small indeed, but have great impact for sustaining our natural resources. Our habitual daily activities of all kinds must also be responsible towards the protection of our environment. If we regulate such activities from unsustainable to sustainable area, it will have a great contribution for controlling and protecting our environment from further degeneration. Rationale of the present study we frequently talk about developing responsible environmental behaviour for sustainable development. But how much responsible our day to day behaviour towards environment is? Theoretically it is very easy to talk about developing such kind of environmental behaviour through habitual activities and it is even easier to advice others to do so. But in reality, it is not so. We people are least responsible in our acts which have adverse effects on our environment.

1.1 Problem Statement

The present study is stated as 'A study of Rewa district Responsible habitual activities for environmental sustainability among undergraduate students'. In this problem daily habitual activities that are related to environmental matters are considered and the study was confined to those students who pursuing their degrees from different colleges of Rewa district.

1.2 Study Area

Rewa is located at 24°32' N 81°18' E. It has an average elevation of 275 meters (902 feet). It is connected by all-weather roads to Allahabad, Mirzapur, Sidhi, Shahdol, Satna,

Katni and Sirmour. Rewa town has its own importance on account of its location, where rich mineral deposits are found out of these three main rock formations; mirror sand, iron ore and Limestone are prominent.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study were.

1. To study the dimension of responsible environmental behaviour among undergraduate students.
2. To study the responsible environmental behaviour among undergraduate boys and girls.
3. To study the responsible environmental behaviour among undergraduate students of urban and rural locality.

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

Hypotheses set for the present study were as follows -

1. The responsible environmental behaviour among undergraduate students irrespective of their gender and locality is favourable.
2. There is no significant difference in responsible environmental behaviour among undergraduate students of boys and girls.
3. There is no significant difference in responsible environmental behaviour among undergraduate students of urban and rural locality.

2. Methodology

Methodology adopted for this study is stated as follows –

2.1 Sampling procedure

The study was restricted to Rewa district with a group of 200 undergraduate students selected randomly from different provincialised colleges located in Rewa district. Among them 104 were girls and remaining 96 were boys.

2.2 Research Tools used

A self designed research tool Environmental Behaviour Study Scale (EBSS) was administered to collect primary relevant information about daily habitual activities of the students in order to learn responsible environmental behaviour. The scoring procedure of each item is different in the scale. One can attain a Maximum score of 54 and a minimum of 21. The ranges of score 21-30 imply as Unfavourable, 31-44 as Favourable and 45-54 as Highly Favourable behaviour towards environment.

2.3 Data Collection

Descriptive survey method was applied to collect data for this study. The investigator visited all selected provincialised colleges of Rewa district and approached the sampled students personally and asked them to fill up the scale as per the guidelines given with.

2.4 Statistical techniques used

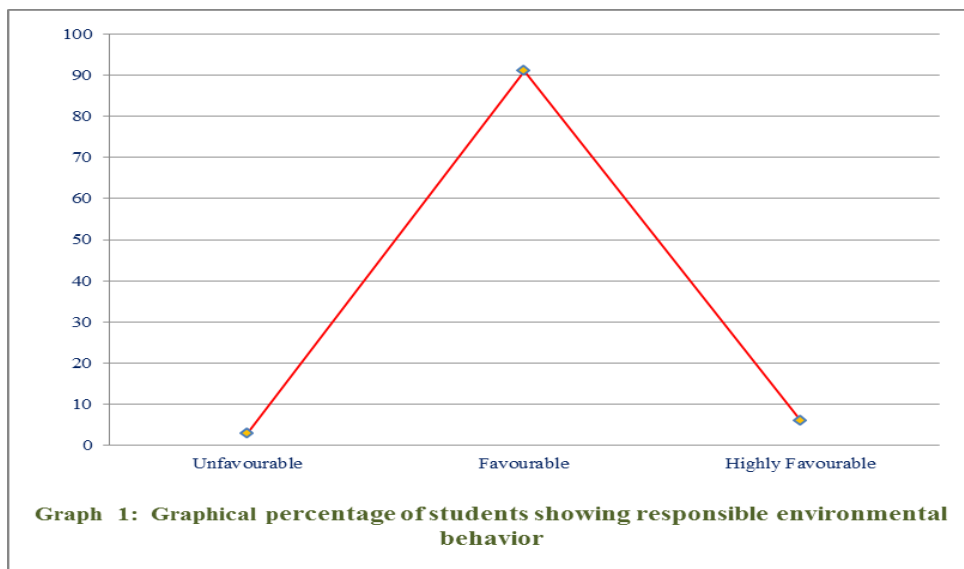
Collected data were analyzed by applying descriptive as-well-as inferential statistics. Statistical techniques like- Percentage, M, SD and 't' tests were applied to test the hypotheses.

3. Result & Discussion

The result of habitual environmental behaviour among undergraduate students were analyzed and exposed in the following tables followed by discussions.

Table 1: Percentage of students showing responsible environmental behavior

	Total	Unfavourable	Favourable	Highly Favourable
N	200	6	182	12
%	100	3	91	6



From the table and Fig. above it is evident that students mostly expose their favourable behaviour towards environment. A total of 91% undergraduate students and 6%

have shown favourable and highly favourable environmental behaviour respectively. Only 3% students have exposed unfavourable behaviour towards environment in this study.

Table 2: Category wise % of Undergraduate Students showing Responsible Environmental Behaviour

Category	Sub-Category	Percentage of Students		
		Unfavourable	Favourable	Highly Favourable
Gender	Boy's	4.17	86.5	9.33
	Girl's	0	95.15	4.85
Locality	Urban	1.48	91.59	6.93
	Rural	3.08	89.77	7.15

From the above table it is observed that a total of 86.5% undergraduate boys and 95.15% girls have shown favourable environmental behaviour. On the other hand 9.33% of boys and 4.85% girls have shown highly favourable behaviour towards environment and only 4.17% of boys have shown unfavourable behaviour which is '0%' in case of girls. Having looked at the responsible environmental behaviour among the undergraduate students of urban and rural locality

it is observed that 1.48% urban and 3.08% rural students have shown unfavourable environmental behaviour respectively. On the other hand 91.59% urban and 89.77% rural students have exposed favourable behaviour towards environment. Similarly 6.93% urban and 7.15% rural students have exposed highly favourable environmental behaviour respectively.

Table 3: Testing of significant difference between different categories of undergraduate students about responsible environmental behavior.

Category	N	M	'σ'	df	't'	CR at 5%	Remarks
Boy's	100	38.85	4.88	198	1.82	1.97	Not Significant
Girl's	100	39.94	3.34				
Urban	135	39.52	3.95	198	0.51		Not Significant
Rural	65	39.22	4.65				

Significant level is at $P < 0.05$

Table 3 depicts that there is almost similar mean value between the groups of undergraduate boys and girls regarding responsible environmental behaviour. Irrespective of gender and their locality the students show almost equal type of habitual behaviour regarding environment. The 't' value obtained while comparing the responsible environmental behaviour of boys and girls is not significant at 5% level of significance ($t = 1.82, 0 < .05$). Therefore it can be

said that there is no significant difference between boys and girls about responsible habitual activities but they are indifferent. Hence there are 95% chances that no difference exists about responsible habitual activities among undergraduate students irrespective of their gender. It indicates that sex has no role to play in developing responsible environmental behaviour among the students of degree level. It may be the cause that the surroundings they

live and their attitude are responsible for developing environmental behaviour.

While comparing the obtained 't' value about responsible habitual activities of undergraduate students of urban and rural locality is not significant at 5% level of significance ($t = .51, 0 < .05$)

Therefore, it can be said that there is no significant difference among the students of urban and rural locality on responsible habitual activities but they are indifferent. Hence there are 95% chances that no difference exists among the students of urban and rural locality about responsible habitual activities. It indicates that locality has no role to play in developing responsible habitual activities among the students of undergraduate level too.

From the above result it has been observed that whatever the behaviour pattern exposed by undergraduate students about environment irrespective of their gender and locality was favourable and no significance of difference exists. It means, gender and locality has no role to play for developing responsible environmental behaviour. It might be the cause that environmental studies now become compulsory for all levels of education right from Primary to the Higher and it influences a lot for developing such kind of responsible behaviour. Thus it may be revealed that due to the influence of such study, students belong to undergraduate level exposed similar behaviour pattern regarding environment.

3.1 Major Findings of the study

The main findings of the study are as follows-

1. Responsible environmental behaviour is almost alike among undergraduate students irrespective of their sex.
2. Similar type of responsible environmental behaviour is exposed by undergraduate students of urban and rural locality.
3. Mostly favourable environmental behaviour is observed among the students irrespective of their gender and locality.
4. There is no significant mean difference among undergraduate boys and girls in their responsible environmental behaviour.
5. No significant mean difference is observed among undergraduate students of urban and rural locality regarding responsible environmental behaviour.

4. Conclusion

Damage to the environment is one of the major threats that human kind is facing today. Protection and preservation of environment for sustainable development is the prime concern ahead of the human community. Therefore, developing responsible environmental behaviour among the people in general and the youth in particular is very important to create a better living condition in the world. Every human being, irrespective of their gender and locality must show their responsibility towards environment through daily habitual activities for sustainable development to create a world having bursting of natural abundance with perfect balance for the survival of all lives on the Earth.

5. Acknowledgement

The author is greatly indebted to Principal of Govt. College of Education, Rewa (M.P.) who permitted to carryout this work.

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