

Environmental Ethics: An Empirical Study on Secondary School Students

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ABSTRACT

Environmental ethics is the code of behavior for guiding and controlling human actions towards environment. This code of behavior does not depend on the presence or absence of environmental laws for the understanding, protection and improvement of the environment. Keeping the environmental concerns in view, the investigator undertook the study on a sample of 179 Boys and 123 Girls Secondary School Students from District Anantnag in Jammu and Kashmir. The data collected by administering the Environmental Ethics Scale (EES-TH) and was analyzed through SPSS-21 in accordance with the manual of the Scale. The findings of the present study reveal that Secondary School Girl Students have more Environmental Ethics than their male counterparts. The mean scores of Boys and Girls are found to be 68.00 and 72.83 with Standard Deviations 15.94 and 22.16 respectively. The obtained 't' value between the two groups comes out to be -2.07 which is more than the table value i.e. 1.646 at 0.05 level and less than 2.581 at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis of the present study "There is no significant difference between Secondary School Boys and Girls Students with respect to Environmental Ethics" is rejected. It means that there is significant difference in both groups. It reveals that the Girls at Secondary School level have more Environmental ethics than the Boys.

1. Introduction

Nowadays human beings are well aware and well informed regarding the need for protecting and the ethical responsibility related with the environment. Without any proper act and effort of preservation, environmental conservation is impossible. For this reason a code of environmental protection and conservation on the basis of the attitude of respect for nature may be seen as an instrument for protecting nature. An environmental code of conduct can be adopted by each individual. A code is always universal. However, we can draw many guidelines from the code with which we can deal with specific situations, such as protection of endangered species, removal of rain forests, acid rains etc. This would tell us what is to be done and what action should be taken. These guiding principles are alike to the government regulations for the protection and conservation of environment. The code is to give inner incentives such as the attitude of respect for nature. Having such a code means an individual acts in such a way so that he not only thinks about his welfare but also he thinks about the well being of the natural environment. This kind of attitude is necessary because in India environmental laws and regulations cannot be forced due to its democratic political set up. Consequently, a code becomes an adoptive instrument that can be cultivated. It encourages our responsibility towards nature by considering it as the basis of sustainer of all life support system.

The first draft of the report on World Conservation Strategy for the 1990s states:

- I. People should respect nature, like all creatures. we are an integral part of nature as well as users and consumers of nature;

- II. Every life form is unique and warrens respect regardless of its worth to people;
- III. All persons should take responsibility for their impacts on nature;
- IV. People should ensure the means of survival of all other life forms; and should not knowingly cause the extinction of another species;
- V. People should treat all creatures humanely, and protect them from cruelty and avoidable suffering. (IUCN, UNEP and WWF, Second World Conservation Strategy for the 1990's (first draft), Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, September 1989, pp. 3-4)

2. Objectives

- I. To study Environmental Ethics among Secondary School Students.
- II. To find the significant difference between Boys and Girls Secondary School Students with respect to Environmental Ethics.

3. Hypothesis

There will be no significant difference between Secondary School Boys and Girls Students with respect to Environmental Ethics.

4. Sample

179 Boys and 123 Girls Secondary School Students from District Anantnag in Jammu and Kashmir have been randomly selected for the study.

5. Procedure for data collection

The tools were administered to the sample participants after the due consent from the concerned principals of the sample senior secondary schools.

per the manual of the scale. The results of the study are mentioned in detail below the table 1:

6. Results

To determine the level of Environmental Ethics of the sampled participants, the investigator made use of stanine as

Environmental Ethics among Boys and Girls Secondary Students:

Table 1: level of Environmental Ethics among Secondary School Students (Gender-wise)

| Stanine | Level | Range of scores | Frequency (Boys) | Frequency (Girls) |
|-------------|---------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 9. | High | 106 above | 01 | 02 |
| 8. | | 102-106 | 23 | 19 |
| 7. | | 93-102 | 28 | 16 |
| | | Total | 52 | 37 |
| 6. | Average | 83-93 | 27 | 23 |
| 5. | | 74-83 | 17 | 14 |
| 4. | | 64-74 | 29 | 13 |
| | | Total | 73 | 50 |
| 3. | Low | 56-64 | 25 | 20 |
| 2. | | 46-56 | 21 | 12 |
| 1. | | 46 below | 08 | 04 |
| | | Total | 54 | 36 |
| Mean | | 68.00 | | 72.83 |
| SD | | 15.94 | | 22.16 |
| N | | 179 | | 123 |

As is reflected from table 1, out of 179 Boys Secondary School Students 29.05% have high level of Environmental Ethics among them 01, 23 and; 28 fall in 9th, 8th and 7th stanine respectively. 40.78% have average level of Environmental Ethics among them 27, 17 and 29 fall in the 6th, 5th and 4th stanine respectively. 30.17% have low level of Environmental Ethics among them 25, 21 and 08 fall in 3rd, 2nd and 1st stanine respectively. In case of 123 Girls Secondary School Students the levels of Environmental Ethics is 30.08% have high level of environmental ethics among them 02, 19 and 16 fall in 9th, 8th and 7th stanine respectively. 40.65% have

average level of environmental ethics among them 23, 14, 13 falls in 6th, 5th and 4th stanine respectively. 29.27% Low Levels of Environmental Ethics among them 20, 12 and 04 fall in 3rd, 2nd and 1st stanine respectively.

The mean of Girl Secondary School students is 72.83 which are higher than the mean Boy Secondary Students i.e. 68.00 revealing that both the genders have Average level of Environmental Ethics but the Girls have slightly higher than the Boys.

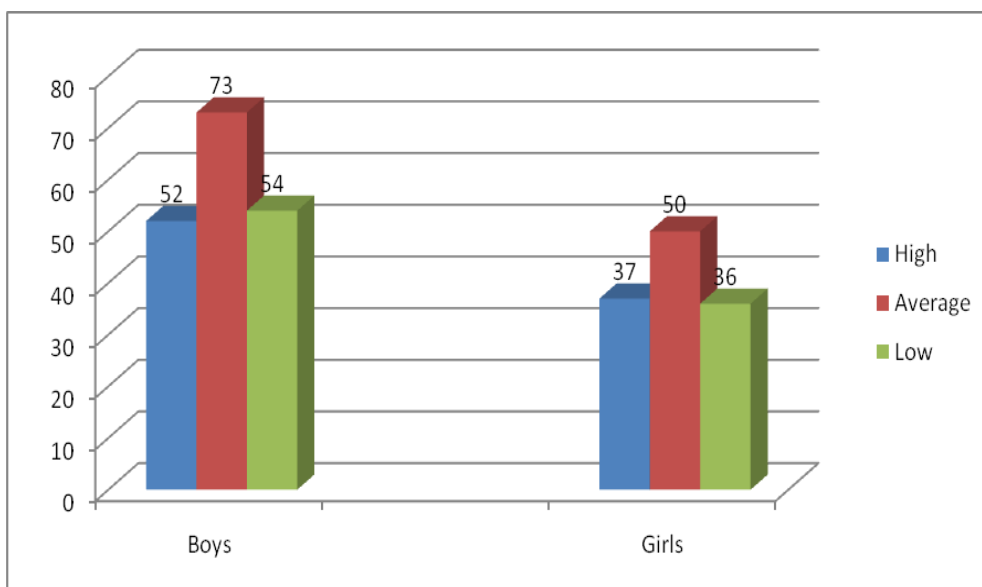


Fig. 1: Level of Environmental Ethics among Boys and Girls Secondary School Students

Significant difference between Secondary School Boys and Girls Secondary Students with respect to Environmental Ethics:

Table 2: Mean score comparison between Secondary School Boys and Girls with respect to Environmental Ethics

| Variable | Group | N | Mean | Std. D | df | t | Sig. |
|----------------------|-------|-----|-------|--------|-----|-------|--------|
| Environmental Ethics | Boys | 179 | 68.00 | 15.94 | 300 | -2.07 | 0.039* |
| | Girls | 123 | 72.83 | 22.16 | | | |

*Significant at 0.05 level

From the table 2, it is evident that the mean scores of Boys and Girls are found to be 68.00 and 72.83 with Standard Deviations 15.94 and 22.16 respectively. The obtained 't' value between the two groups comes out to be -2.07 which is more than the table value i.e. 1.646 at 0.05 level and less than 2.581 at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis of the

present study "There will be no significant difference between Secondary School Boys and Girls Students with respect to Environmental Ethics" is rejected. It means that there is significant difference in both the groups. It also revealed that the Girls at Secondary School level have more Ethics about the environment than the Boys.

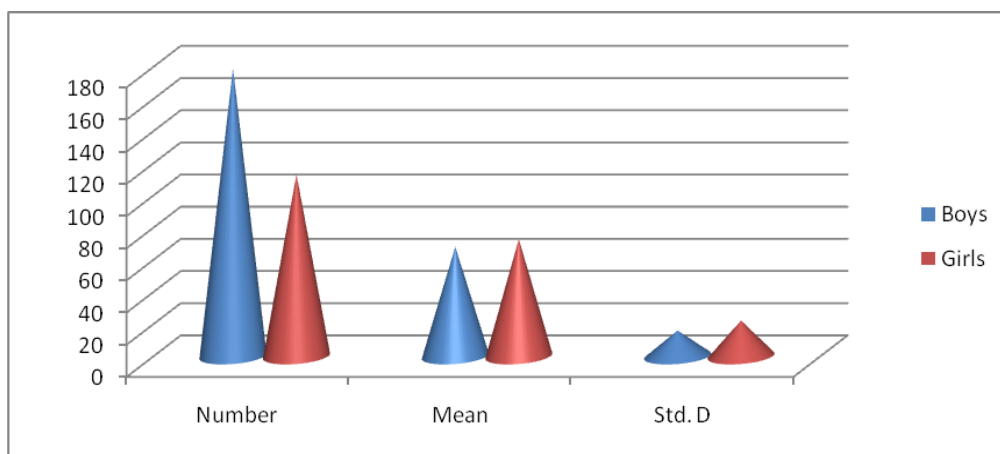


Fig. 2: Mean score comparison between Secondary School Boys and Girls

7. Conclusion

From the study it can be concluded that the level of Environmental Ethics with regard to the physical environment vary to some extent across gender. It has been found that the Girl Secondary School Students have more Environmental Ethics than their counterparts. Moreover, it has been revealed from the study that the sampled participants from Girls scored higher on the items related social responsibility and Aesthetic sense as compared to the boys. Both of these are significant components for Environmental Ethics.

The finding of the present study is supported by Raju (2007), who concludes that the girls and the rural secondary

school students have more environmental ethics than their counterparts.

In the present study, it is revealed that only 29.05% and 30.08% of the Boys and Girls respectively have high environmental ethics. Nearly 70% of the sample participants come under average and low levels of environmental ethics which indicates that not only the formal agencies of education but also the non-formal and informal agencies have to perform their roles in enabling the individuals to imbibe the values. In short, it can be proclaimed that a lot needs to be done in this regard.

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