

# ***Chapter – I***

## ***INTRODUCTION***

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- Introduction
- Tribal Life
- Need and Importance of the Study
- Research Title
- Operational Definition of Term
- Environmental Attitude
- Tribe
- Objective of the Study
- Hypothesis
- Scope of the Study
- Limitation

## CHAPTER - I INTRODUCTION

The study of the Environment has become a necessity in the present time. The gradual pollution of the environment on the earth and its vast effects have put a question mark on our very existence. The over hectic and busy life in the race of modern era and sense of indifference towards nature have compelled us to think about environmental issues. A need was thus felt that the new generation should be made aware of the environment so that they can be conscious about environmental activities.

In recent years ecologists and environmentalists have sounded an alarm of an environmental crisis. If man's craze and race for material progress which is resulting in an indiscriminate and savage assault of the environment continues, the planet earth may be ruined as a home for mankind. There is clear evidence today that the environment is suffering irreparable damage and that our present way of life is not sustainable.

There is a need for public understanding of the issues and alternative course of action so as to be able to move from crisis - oriented remedial efforts to positive directions that support quality of life (UNESCO. 1977).

In the last 10 years the view of our planet as a spaceship has become established, Fuller (1969) first used the terms spaceship earth. The essence of this view is the realisation that, the earth, for all practical purposes is a closed system and both its resources and its capacity to absorb waste product are finite. The relationship of human beings to the environment is complex and the fact that human welfare hinges on all

other things in the environment has necessitated a formal and systematic global Environmental Education to try to seek solutions and provide answers to the environmental problem.

The kind of questions that arise in the minds of educators are :-

- \* What kind of programmes would be effective?
- \* What should these programmes aim at?
- \* What should be the basis for their formulation and how should they be executed?

These and many similar questions make it apparent that in the face of environmental challenge education must embrace new perceptions and practices with respect to Environmental Education. This challenge received in the light of tribal population of India is further aggravated by their unique culture and life style different from that of other people.

### **Tribal Life**

There are more than 212 Tribes in India with a total population of 7.5 crores, 24 percent of these are found in the state of Madhya Pradesh. All tribes though different in many aspects, share the following salient features: -

- \* Each tribal community lies in a specific geographical territory. They are seldom found living in a scattered way and mostly live in compact areas.
- \* Each tribe speaks a common language or dialect, which differs phonetically from that of others.

The tribal family is a small social unit, which works together as both a productive and consumptive unit. From childhood both boys and

girls engage in family chores like cultivating land, harvesting seasonal produce, tending animals in forests and collecting wood and fruits from forests. Thus, we see a very intimate relationship of the tribals with their biophysical environment. Incidentally they never hoard or exploit for the sake of accumulating wealth. They get just sufficient amounts to sustain their lives.

A lot of attention is now being paid to the tribal education both formal and non-formal. The tribals suffer from both physical and mental isolation as a result of which they do not get access to much of the modern knowledge and their world view is severely restricted within a narrow ethnic boundary. This limitation no doubt also extends to Environmental Education. The New Education Policy (N.E.P.) 1986 reaffirmed the government's commitment to tribal education programme to bring the tribes at par with the non-tribal students.

### **Need and Importance of the Study**

Many people have expressed themselves differently regarding what the objective of Environmental Education should be. The international Belgrade Charter (1975) summed it up as "Development of Awareness, Knowledge, Positive Attitude, Skills, Evaluation and Participation". Jacobson and Beaver (1984) also expressed a similar view when they defined Environmental Education as, a process at producing citizenry that is: -

- \* Knowledgeable about Biophysical and Sociocultural environment of which man is a part.
- \* Aware of environmental problems and management alternatives of use in solving those problems and motivated to act

responsibly in diverse environments that are optimal for living a quality life.

- \* The main objective of the management of waste materials is to minimize the man made wastes and make them useful, so that our environment may not get polluted and we can have clean environment.

From the above objectives and those that have been expressed by others like Bennett (1974), Childress (1978), Saxena (1986), it is clear that Environmental Education is directed towards the cognitive, affective and psychomotor growth of children. The assessment of such is necessary in order to predict the effects of the prevailing Environmental Education programmes and consequently the effects of learning on environmental quality.

There is a large amount of cognitive information related to Environmental Education today. This includes concrete facts as well as more abstract concepts. Doran (1977) observed that very little effort has been made to measure this outcome. The present study is an attempt to fill this gap. Regarding the effective outcome a number of research have been conducted to assess and evaluate attitudes. However many of these have produced divergent conclusions about attitude development and the relationship between cognitive and affective domains. Knapp (1981) after doing a lot of research in this area concludes that there is a need for more attitude measurement at the elementary and secondary schools.

Research on attitude suggest that four cluster of variables can be identified as correlates of attitudes. These are :-

- Demographic factors such as age gender, socioeconomic status, race.

- Individual's value orientation.
- Contact with the attitude object (Jacobson and Beaver 1984).

Another correlate cited above is the gender. Lot of ecofeminist literature has appeared where the reason for environmental degradation has been put squarely on men, Webber, (1986). It is a common notion now that the male folks are responsible for our environment problems. The present study is an effort to empirically establish whether or not significant differences exist in regards environmental awareness and attitude between male and female students of the tribal areas. This too would have implications for curriculum planners and offer basis for suggestion for required pedagogy.

Socio-economic status is another correlate of attitude cited above. Our ecological problems stem from traditional values, attitudes and beliefs prevalent in our society (Bisch, 1970). The tribal population has a unique culture and traditional values different from those of the urban society. A thorough investigation is needed on the tribals in their own community and within their own socio-economic environment in order to stipulate meaningful programmes for them. Such research, at the moment, are very few indeed.

A review of research literature further reveals that there has been a strong tendency to emphasise the affective component of environmental instruction and less emphasis on the cognitive one. In the studies which have attempted to measure the cognitive outcome, knowledge and awareness have been either merged together or the two terms are used interchangeably. This has led to some confusion and a failure to assess these two objectives of Environmental Education.

In the present study, the researcher has attempted to measure these two objectives separately. This need is felt especially in view of the fact that many of the suggested models and conceptual frameworks of Environmental Education propose knowledge and awareness as two separate objectives. The examples of these studies are by Womersley & Strok (1981), and UNESCO (1977). If therefore, the success of our environmental programmes is to be measured in terms of their objectives, then there is a need to measure each objective separately.

The importance of cognitive domain is further shown by William (1968) in his model in which he makes apparent the notion of "Connective Vectors", between Krathemorths affective domain and Bloom's cognitive domain shown as follows :

**William's model showing connective vectors between Krathworth's affective domain and Bloom's cognitive domain.**

<b>Cognitive</b>	<b>Connective Vectors</b>	<b>Affective</b>
Knowledge	Information which one wants to receive	Receiving
Comprehension	Willingness to understand	Responding
Comprehension	Willingness to understand	Responding
Application	Appreciates information that is relevant and useful	Valuing
Analysis and Synthesis	Forms value system by integrating bits of information in a new unique combination.	Conceptualizing



According to this model, nearly all-cognitive behaviour has an associated affective component. The structure of an attitude may change as a result of incoming information (Environmental Knowledge). There is a strong need to pay close attention to the relationship between these two domains. Hence research is called for to establish this.

**Research Title :**

Effect of the Environmental Education Curriculum on the Development of Environmental Attitude Amongst Elementary School Students from a Tribal area of M.P.

**Operational Definition of Term**

The statement of the problem introduces terms, which require definitive explanation and the context they take on for the purpose of this study.

**Environment**

The term environment has been variously defined and used in analysis ranging from individual psyche to urban structures and finally world society. The present study is however limited to the "Universe of biotic and other physical materials as organised into dynamic systems. These systems or ecosystems represent the living (biotic) and non living elements (a biotic) and their integration (Schnaiberg 1980). This includes the factors which affects the survival and reproduction of living organisms or any individual, emphasis is placed on man and his bio-physical surrounding.

## **Environmental Attitude**

All attitudes are important determinates of behaviour of an individual. They devote the inner feeling an individual holds and cherishes about objects, issues and institutions (Sherif et al, 1986).

Thurstone (1946) defined an attitude as "The degree of positive or negative affect associated with some psychological object". An individual who has associated positive affect or feeling with some object is said to like that object or to have a favorable attitude towards the object. An individual who has associated a negative affect with some psychological object is said to dislike that object or have on unfavorable attitude towards the object.

Thurstone thus defined attitude as "a generalized reaction for or against, a specific psychological object". This definition renders attitude as a predisposition to behaviour. This position is taken in this study.

The full meaning of the term attitude is however not revealed until it is attached to the entity towards which the attitude is directed.

For the purpose of this study the 'attitude' is towards the environment. The attitude test is designed to measure the direction (+ or -ve) and intensity of an expressed feeling towards the environment. The instrument to be used in this study will measures an individual's disposition which influence their reaction to objects, situations or propositions in their environment in favorable or unfavorable ways ( Singh and Rao 1980). For this purpose, Dawis (1964) definition is taken where "Environmental Attitude is an inferred factor with the individual which involves a tendency to perceive and react in a particular manner towards some aspect of his environment.

## **Tribe**

The scheduled tribes under Article 342 (1) and 366 (25) of the Constitution of India are such tribes or tribal communities declared by the President as schedule tribes in consultation with the Governor of the state concerned in relation to a particular state or Union Territory. The Constitution does not lay down any specific criteria to identify the scheduled tribe communities. Tribe in this study will refer to those community which live in geographical isolation, with distinctive culture, shyness of contact with the community at large and exhibit primitive trait and backwardness (Kao 1980).

## **Objectives of the Study:-**

- 1) To assess the Environmental Attitude of VI Standard Tribal School students.
- 2) To Compare the Environmental Attitude of VI Standard Tribal School Students, According to their gender?
- 3) To Determine Whether There is any Difference in Environmental Attitude of VI Standard Tribal School Students from two Different blocks is Chapara & Lakhandown of District Seoni.

This research study was conducted with the following hypothesis which were to be tested.

## **Hypothesis- I**

There is no significant difference in Environmental Attitude between Girls & Boys of VI standard Tribal School students.

## **Hypothesis- II**

There is no significant correlation between 'Environmental Attitude score' and the 'Teacher made school achievement test' score of the Tribal School students.

### **Scope of the Study:-**

This study is designed for tribal students of block of Lakhnadon and Chapra block, Seoni district of Madhya Pradesh. The major tribes found in Lakhnadon and Chapara block are Gonds, Mehra, Bhariya, Kerku and Katiya.

The study focuses on both male and female students in grades VI standard. This range will include approximately learners 11 to 12 year of age. The schools in two tribal areas follow the same environmental education curriculum prescribed by the state.

### **Limitation**

- 1) The study was limited to Tribal school students of grade VI. There is however only one Girls and Boys high school in Lakhnadown and Chapara block, Distt.- Seoni from which all the data is collected. Thus representation by just a single school would no doubt affect the result to some extent.
- 2) Tribal schools are characterised by a small population of female students as compared to male students. A substantial number of girls cannot be obtained for the purpose of comparison.