

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The term environment is well-read and understood by every man on the planet. As a man being an integral part of environment, has always relied for food, shelter, and security purposes on the environment. This dependence is seen from the primitive stages of human existence with early men feeding and living in the hands of the environment. The ancient human with his primitive sense of knowledge has made the best use of nature and has transferred the knowledge to coming generations. Depending on nature has thus created a sense of respect, care, love and most important attachment for the environment. This is observant in the personification of many natural objects like sun, moon, earth, trees and rivers as deities. Traditional worships and long kept traditions are a mark of moral values that human have passed to younger generation all along many years. This phenomenon of worshipping natural objects is not limited to ancient Indian civilization, but could be found in ancient Greek civilizations. Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism have also imparted religious teachings in form of hymns that hold environmental values as their core beliefs. All these religious sects' stresses on the importance of environment conservation and ways to live harmoniously with abiotic and biotic components oof environment.

With less demand and increased respect towards environment, resource consumption took in a sustainable manner, but industrial revolution in 19th century demanded more raw materials, goods and resources that put pressure on environment for all the needs of industries. Capitalist economy and industrial growth went hand in hand with complete alienation of man from nature. Exploratory work in science and philosophy during this same period presented many works that talked about origin oof world and discoveries. One such discovery was by Charles Darwin, in his book 'Origin of Species' (1859) talked about how environment through process of natural selection gave rise to living creatures. Another work by Ernst Haeckel (1893), coined the term 'ecology' in 'History of creation'. This term established the relation between living things and physical environment around them. These initial works, provided a space too correlate education with our environment backed by scientific facts and this paved a way for environment education.

1.1 Concept of Environment

French word '**Environment**' means to encircle or surround. Thus, environment can be understood as:

1. Everything from living (biotic) or non-living (abiotic) that surrounds us is called environment. It includes physical, chemical and biological components, or
2. The place where biotic and abiotic components co-exist with each other and establish different interrelationships to support and develop.

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary(2021) defines Environment as 'the natural world in which people, animal and plants live' or 'the conditions in which a person, animal or plant lives or operates or in which activity takes place.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (2021) refers Environment as all living and non-living components and all the factors, like the climate, that surrounds an organism.

'Environment' is all the physical and biological components that surrounds us. It affects directly and indirectly to the growth, existence and sustenance of organism. It establishes an interdependent relation of living components (biotic components) on non-living things (abiotic components). We can easily say that for an individual sum total of social, physical and biological surroundings including psychological and cultural surroundings is what influences its very development. This influence and adaptability towards various facets of environment guides our attitudes towards environment. The interaction of humans with environment is comes as a part and parcel of our behavior and attitude towards environment.

Within the framework of environment, we have, two types of environments namely:

1. **Man-made Environment:** The environment which is created by man, an important constituent of society.
2. **Natural Environment:** The environment which is created by nature. It is not influenced by man's power or intelligence. It is that environment that is not managed by human beings.

1.1.1 Attitude towards environment

Attitude is a powerful outcome of an emotional belief system capable of arousing an action or inaction towards any aspect of life. This is responsible for creating a driving force towards an intended action. An individual with a positive attitude will try to discover things and foster ahead to learn and grow as an individual. Positive attitude is key to uncover the wider possibilities and opportunities in life. It is rightly said that a positive attitude person succeeds more in life than a negative attitude person.

(Álvarez-García et al., 2015) defined attitude as "a mental and neutral state of readiness, organized through experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related". This indicates that attitude is a mental state of readiness. It influences and changes the reaction of an individual.

Attitude are acquired traits that is developed under influence of cultural beliefs, habits, social outlook and economic conditions. Thus, it can be said that attitudes are a result of social interaction and possess degree of variability under different context. Attitude develops from habitual thinking or from direct experiences of an individual. It can also be seen as some of the attitudes are born of prejudice and merely reflect attitude of parents, family and society at large (Kalinski, 2014). Thus, it is crucial to understand that individual attitudes are developing day by day. Thus, attitudes are an individual's outlook to vision outside world through his/her emotions, feelings, biases, beliefs, threats and many other expressions.

Of many characteristics (Milfont & Duckitt, 2010) mentioned six important features of attitude mentioned below:

- Attitude of an individual are a result of social interaction.
- Attitudes of an individual play their influence under a social context or concrete and abstract referents.
- Attitudes tries to establish inter-relatedness among many aspects of life.
- Attitudes are born out of evaluation on an object.
- Attitude varies in quality and intensity on continuum from positive through neutral to negative.

1.1.2 Role of Environment Education

Rise of industrial movement and aggravated disturbance caused to the environment is a result of human's ignorance and indifference towards environment. Negative attitude towards environment alters the stability of nature and results in bringing many environmental concerns like deforestation, climate change, forest fires, mass extinction, man-made disaster and many others in this list. Improvement in environment cannot be brought by destructive attitude of the individuals but could only be worked upon by bringing attitudinal change in humans. The citizens of Earth should be made dutiful to bear their responsibilities towards conservation and promotion of environmental values.

Improvement in environment can only be brought when the attitude of people changes and various dimensions and processes of environment are appreciated altogether. Such behavioral changes can be introduced by working on the budding population that will be potential citizens of future. This is only possible through education. Education is the medium to bring social change. Building knowledgeable citizens that are aware of the changes occurring in their surroundings and know the consequences of such changes is what is required by the world in contemporary times.

It is crucial to understand that all adult initiatives go in vain if the attitudinal changes are not brought in younger generation through education (Ashmann & Franzen, 2017). Sound environment management programs and conservation initiatives completely

depend on education. This includes training and awareness raising programs. These initiatives and programs work to motivate individuals and people altogether to be conscious of environmental damage caused by us and what could be best done to rectify it. Thus, education can be considered as the sole institution that can cater to the learning needs of every conscious participant irrespective of gender, age, place etc.,

Environment education fosters skills of responsibility towards environment in children. It even inspires them to explore environmental changes happening around and find the possible reasons behind these changes. It builds on their existing knowledge and makes them sensitive and empathetic about the damage caused to environment because of human greed. Environment education is important for children, adults for self-development and social development. Thus, it is crucial to maintain life of environment and mother Earth. It guides individuals to work for changing environment.

1.2 Need of study

Environment sustains life and in present is facing deep state of deterioration due to anthropogenic reasons. Rapid industrialization, advancement in science and technology and mistreatment of scientific technologies is posing a threat to human civilization and to globe altogether. It is high time that we as citizens of globe should understand the damage that we have caused to planet in fulfillment of our needs and unsustainable consumption patterns. In order to bring any social changes, one always looks up to education as a potential tool to bring the transformation. Bringing behavioral change and building positive and responsible attitude towards environment is the need of contemporary education. As teachers are the warriors of any educational system and facilitators of learning experiences of a child, it becomes the responsibility of the learning system and in particular of the teachers to be hold accountable of the same environmental change that we want to bring in society. Inculcating environment attitudes among students is the duty of every teacher. If right attitudes are promoted in children at a very early stage of education, they will transmit these attitudes to later generations in a more natural and responsible way.

Environment education is the need of the decade and is seen as a response to aggravated conditions of environment. In addition to promote this, universities and colleges are already running courses in environment sciences at undergraduate and master's level (Misiaszek, 2020). However, the convergent response to restrict it to level of universities is restricting the overall goal of education altogether. Teacher education institution should play a proactive role in learning, understanding and dissemination of learned values to schools, and other learning institutions to sensitize the learning masses of environmental values necessary for a sustainable future and a green planet.

No sense of motivation can promote teacher to come forward other than the intrinsic motivation among teachers themselves (Saribas et al., 2017). Thus, altogether it can be well concluded that to solve the various environmental issues, we should be particular in choosing our tool. None could be proved to be a best tool other than teacher who spends considerable amount of her time with children and thus is a best resource person to induce and inculcate a sense of responsibility among children. Children can be made aware about pollution, global warming, climate change, wildlife destruction, ecological damage, sustainable development and many other topics. In order to brush the environmental awareness among the students it is crucial to take help of instructional programmes as the effective tools to encourage and motivate them to take exploration projects at individual levels.

Environment education in schools is the need of the hour to sensitize youth about the same and thus it is crucial to understand the environment and concerns related to it effectively. The most common points one must not forget before initiating environment education is to have a close understanding of attitude and awareness of environment among prospective teachers. Attitude towards environment suggest itself for studies on environmental awareness. Environment education target group includes children, youth, women groups, community leaders and politicians.

For a successful environment education program to be efficient it is crucial to focus on skill building of teachers. This could be done in teacher training institutes. Skilled and environmentally sound teacher is a crucial tool to produce environmentally sensitive children (Aarnio-Linnanvuori, 2019). Therefore, sustainable incorporation of environmental studies could only take place when teacher education curriculum is given

supreme importance in the educational setup. Knowledge dissemination and creating widespread understanding about the natural resources usage and ensuring sustainable actions is the key to an effective environment learning and thus, this study is an intervention make to understand the behavior and attitude of teachers and future teachers.

1.3 Statement of the problem

“Attitude towards environment among pre-service teachers.”

1.4 Definitions of the operational term

1.4.1 Environmental attitude

Individual or group attitude toward the environment is called an Environmental attitude. This includes attitude of pre-service teachers towards various areas of environmental problems ranging from ‘Health and Hygiene’, ‘Wildlife’, ‘Forests’, ‘Polluters’, ‘Population explosion’, to ‘Environment concern’.

1.4.2 Attitude toward Environment

This refers to the understanding of attitude of pre-service teachers towards environment.

1.4.3 Academic qualification

This refers to the academic qualification of pre-service teachers studying in Regional Institute of Education, NCERT, Bhopal. This includes B. Ed and B. Ed-M.Ed (Integrated) and M.Ed. students of RIE.

1.5 Objectives

The present research study was undertaken to realize following objectives:

- a) Study of attitude of pre-service teachers towards environment.
- b) Compare the attitude of pre-service teachers on basis of gender.
- c) Compare the attitude of pre-service teachers on basis of educational course.

1.6 Research Questions

1. Is the attitude of male and female pre-service teachers towards the environment is same?
2. Is the attitude of pre-service teachers towards the environment is same or changes across the educational courses?

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The present research study is delimited in following ways:

1. The present study was delimited only to the pre-service teachers of Regional Institute of Education, Bhopal.
2. Attitude towards environment is the only parameter studied as a part of this research.