

A Study on Eco-friendly Habits among the Post Graduate Students of Gauhati University

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Abstract

Environment is a prime element for existence of life in the world. All living creatures are interrelated and interdependent on environment for their healthy living. But, now-a-days strive for superiority and luxury creates an environmental imbalance and this high rate of environmental degradation is becoming a major issue which creates complexity in the survival of the living organism. Therefore, in order to smooth the way of survival it is the high time to follow some major steps which are environment friendly to keep our globe clean and green. By maintaining these eco-friendly or environment friendly habits people can conserve the natural resources and maintain green living and a better quality of life too. In this background, this paper intends to study the eco-friendly habits carried out by the Post Graduate Students of Gauhati University to protect our mother earth by using the principle of 4R's i.e., Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repurposing.

Key Words: Eco-friendly habits, Environment, Gauhati University, Postgraduate students.

Introduction

A new life begins when a baby comes to the world. It opens his/ her eyes, listens to the words around it, and breathes from the atmosphere. Gradually he/ she experiences the beautiful human emotions like love, care and affection, keeps first step on the ground and tries to adjust with this world. In such a way, a new life always directly or indirectly connected to our mother earth. After sometimes, when the new life grew up he/she carries out some activities without concerning the environment which obliged him/ her to be a mechanical person. Due to this mechanical growth, in sake of a luxurious life the whole world is directly or indirectly affected from various major problems like deforestation, global

warming, ozone layer depletion, melting of glaciers, climate change, unavailability of fresh water etc. These activities lead the entire nature into the world of darkness.

Therefore, there is the urgency to modify the human behavior towards environment to get rid of such kinds of hazardous situations. So, here is the need to follow eco- friendly habits or environment –friendly habits in order to maintain the quality of earth’s environment by keeping it clean and green.

The term eco-friendly literally means nature friendly and refers to some activities, goods and services, guidelines, laws, policies considered to be less or not harmful to the environment. The term eco- friendly habit refers to those habits and practices that lead to green living and conservation of resources. Eco- friendly habit proves to be boon for environment as well as for the human health. By continuing eco-friendly habits people can contribute in the conservation of the natural resources and significantly reduce the environmental degradation issue which helps in maintaining a better quality of life. Awareness for practicing eco- friendly habits should be created in school environment. Similarly, at home parents should encourage harmless environmental work and make proper arrangement for it. Major changes will occur towards environment when society looks forward for practicing nature friendly work.

Eco- friendly habits can be carried out by an individual or by a group of individuals in local, regional or in across the globe. But it has a great influence on the environment as a whole. In this era, it has been seen that destruction of the natural resources is a major cause of severe environmental degradation. So, following 4R’s i.e. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Repurposing are the ways to maintain the ecological balance which comes into our mind while practicing eco-friendly habits. The sustainability can be attained by reducing consumption of natural resources, reuse and recycle the degradable and non-degradable products as well as repurposing any useless material for the future use.

In this regard, environmental knowledge is very important because this knowledge motivates an individual to work in a sustainable way for bringing the entire planet to a healthy state. Education and training always helps in managing and conserving the natural resources effectively and also encourage working in environment friendly way.

Review of Related Literature

Review of related literature plays a vital role in research. It helps the researcher to widen his/her area of knowledge which leads to find out an effective solution for a problem. This paper attempts to examine the eco-friendly habits among the post graduate students of Gauhati University. So, the researcher goes through different books, journals, and theses and other sources of information related with the problem to be investigated.

As already mentioned the knowledge of environment is always influencing the eco-friendly habits of people. In the year 1968, the concept of environmental education is emerged for the first time in the Stockholm Conference where it was emphasized to give environmental education in formal and non-formal modes. After that most of the teacher training institutions are proving environmental education by using different approaches and still environmental education is included in the curriculum. In 2012, Jena, A. K. conducted a study to observe the attitude of pre-service teacher's towards environmental education and practice. In his study he found that pre-service teachers in general are aware of environmental education. Both teacher educators and pre-service teachers have openness to learn environmental education and eco-friendly practices.

Knowledge on environment directly influences the student's behavior as it modifies student's perspective and attitude towards environment, make students aware of different environmental issues. In 2015 Srivastava, P. found that environmental attitude, environmental awareness and eco-friendly habits of the students play a vital role in modifying their environment friendly behavior.

In 2016 Selva Joy, S.R. found that students of higher secondary school have high level eco-friendly practices in school, home as well as in the greater society. It has also found that students who are having high level of awareness for different environmental issue are better in practicing different eco-friendly practices rather than who are not conscious towards environment.

After reviewing the related literature on this area the researcher has found that there is no study conducted on eco-friendly habits among the P.G. students. Therefore, researcher has planned to conduct the research study on the eco-friendly habits among the P.G students of Gauhati University. This study will definitely help in uplifting the parent's consciousness;

create awareness among teachers, communities, NGO's and the govt. officials who are engaged in different activities for the betterment of the environment.

Objective of the Study: This paper attempts to study the eco-friendly habits among the P.G students of Gauhati University.

Operational definition of the term

Eco-friendly habits: Eco- friendly habits refer to those habits and practices which is less or not harmful for the environment and leads to green living and conservation of resources.

Delimitation of the study: The present study only limited to 3rd semester Post Graduate students of session 2019-20.

Methodology

Method: This paper study about the eco-friendly habits carried out by the Post Graduate students of Gauhati University. Therefore, descriptive survey method is the most appropriate method for the present study.

Population: The population of this study comprises of Post Graduate students of faculty of Arts of Gauhati University. The size of the population is 1028.

Sample: Sample of the study is 206, which is 20% of the total population.

Sampling technique: Purposive Sampling technique

Tools of data collection: Questionnaire is used in this study for collecting data. Total numbers of 30 items are used there.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Analysis and Interpretation of data is very important in any kind of research. It helps in summarizing the whole observation. In this study analysis and interpretation has been done according to the objective and on the basis of the relevant data collected for fulfilling the purpose.

The objective of the present study is to study the eco-friendly habits among the P.G students of Gauhati University. For fulfilling this purpose, the investigator has collected data from total 206 Post Graduate students who are studying in 3rd semester of faculty of Arts of Gauhati University of session 2019-20. The collected data are analyzed on the basis of:-

Nurturing Nature

Table-1: Nurturing Nature related Items

Items	Responds (in percentage)		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Plantation	55.83%	16.99%	27.18%
2. Watering plants	60.68%	16.99%	22.33%
3. Like to hear sound of animals	47.57%	21.85%	30.58%
4. Like to hear chirping of birds	58.74%	13.59%	27.67%
5. Like to enjoy sunrise and sunset	70.39%	-	29.61%

Source: Field survey

From table-1, it is found that, 55.83% students always and 27.18% students sometimes use seeds for plantation after using vegetables. 16.99% students never watered plants. 47.57% students always, 30.58% students sometimes like to hear sound of animals and 58.74% students always and 27.67% students sometimes like to hear chirping of birds. 70.39% students always like to enjoy sunrise and sunset.

Energy Management

Table-2: Energy Management related Items

Items	Responds (in percentage)		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Using solar gadget	29.12%	53.40%	17.48%
2. Switching of lights and fans while leaving a room	56.80%	16.02%	27.18%
3. Preferring high rated electrical gadget for pursuing	51.94%	27.19%	20.87%

Source: Field survey

From the table-2, we have found that only 29.12% student always using solar lights at night while studying. 16.02% students not switch off the lights and fans when leaving any

room. On the other hand, 51.94% students always prefer pursuing high rated electrical gadget.

Water Management

Table-3: Water Management related Items

Items	Responds (in percentage)		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Fixing water level indicator	4.85%	85.44%	9.71%
2. Leaving tap open while brushing	3.88%	90.78%	5.34%
3. Closing water tap when kept opened unnecessarily	71.36%	8.25%	20.39%
4. Reusing water after washing clothes	72.33%	12.14%	15.53%
5. Taking any initiatives to collect the water used in bathing		100%	

Source: Field survey

From the table-3, it is found that only 4.85% of students always put an alarm for 15 to 20 minutes when they switch on to fill up their water tank. 90.78% students are not leaving water tap open while brushing. 71.36% students always close water tap if it is unnecessarily kept open. 72.33% students always reuse the water after washing clothes. Here, it is noticeable that 100% students did not even think about to take any initiatives to collect the water after bathing for reusing it.

Waste Management

Table-4: Waste Management related Items

Items	Responds (in percentage)		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Availability of proper drainage system.	100%		
2. Using dustbin.	100%		
3. Using natural wastes as an organic fertilizer.	51.46%	42.23%	6.31%
4. Carrying a bag from home for shopping.	12.14%	45.63%	42.23%

Source: Field survey

From table-4, we have found that 100% students replied that they have proper drainage system in their home and they also throw wrappers of any packaged food into the

dustbin. Only 12.14% students always carry bag while they are going for daily shopping. Only 51.46% students replied that they always use the natural wastes produced from their kitchen as an organic fertilizer.

Transportation Related

Table-5: Transportation related items

Items	Responds (in percentage)		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Using bicycle to go to the nearest destination	47.09%	31.55%	21.36%
2. Travelling by public transportation	61.65%	18.45%	19.90%
3. Fuel should be used in automobiles. (CNG/Petrol/Diesel)	CNG-23.30%, Petrol- 42.23%, Diesel- 34.47%		

Source: Field survey

From the table-5, it is found that 47.09% students always, 21.36% students sometimes, 31.55% students never use bicycle to go the nearest destination. Again, 61.65% students always and 18.45% students never travel by public transportation. 23.30%, students choose that CNG should be used in automobiles as a fuel though no automobile running in CNG is available in Assam. On the other hand, 42.23% students choose petrol and 34.47% students choose diesel as a fuel should be used in automobiles.

Pollution Issues

Table-6: Pollution related issues

Items	Responds (in percentage)		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Like to enjoy with crackers	54.37%	35.92%	9.71%
2. Burning plastic and other daily waste	61.65%	25.24%	13.11%
3. Using fertilizer in the paddy field	80.10%		19.90%
4. Drainage system connected to any nearest paddy field, pond or river	83.50%	16.50%	

Source: Field survey

From the table-6, we have found that 54.37% students always and 10.19% students sometimes said that they like to enjoy with crackers especially during the festive sessions.

25.24% students replied that they are not burning plastic and any other daily wastes. 80.10% students said that they always use fertilizers in their paddy field. Only 16.50% students said that the waste water produced from their home further not discarded in any paddy field.

Social Issues

Table-7: Different social issues

Items	Responds (in percentage)		
	Yes	No	Sometimes
1. Like to watch environment related TV programs	57.28%	25.24%	17.48%
2. Aware of the campaign 'Save Rhino'.	100%		
3. Participated in 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' program	52.43%	47.57%	
4. Aware of the affect of polluted river Bharalu on Brahmaputra	100%		

Source: Field survey

From the table-7, we have found that 57.28% students always and 17.48% students sometimes like to enjoy environment related TV programs. 52.43% students have regularly participated in 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' program. 100% students said that they know about the 'Save Rhino' campaign.

Major findings and discussion of the study

Regarding Nurturing Nature

- 16.99% students never use seeds for plantation after using vegetables.
- 60.68% students always and 22.33% students sometimes watered plants.
- 70.39% students always and 27.67% students sometimes like to enjoy sunrise and sunset.

Regarding Energy Management

- 53.40% students never use solar gadget basically the solar light at night.
- Only 16.02% students are never switch off the lights and fans when leaving any room.
- 51.94% students always prefer pursuing high rated electrical gadget.

Regarding Water Management

- Only 4.85% of students always and 9.71% students sometimes put an alarm for 15 to 20 minutes when they switch on to fill up their water tank.
- 90.78% students are not leaving water tap open while brushing.
- 71.36% students always and 20.39% students sometimes close water tap if it is unnecessarily kept open.
- 72.33% students always reuse the water after washing clothes.
- 100% students did not even think about for taking any initiatives to collect the water after bathing for reusing it.

Regarding Waste management

- 100% students have proper drainage system in their home and are throwing wrappers of any packaged food into the dustbin.
- 42.23% students never use the daily wastes produced from their kitchen as an organic fertilizer.
- Only 12.14% students always carry a bag while they are going for daily shopping.

Regarding Transportation Issues

- Only 31.55% students never use bicycle to go the nearest destination.
- 61.65% students always and 18.45% students never prefer public transportation for travelling.
- 23.30% students choose CNG: while 42.23% students choose petrol and 34.47% students choose diesel should be used as fuel in automobiles.

Regarding Pollution Issues

- 54.37% students always like to enjoy with crackers especially in the festival times.
- Only 25.24% students never burn plastic and any other daily wastes.
- 80.10% students always and 19.90% students sometimes use fertilizers in their paddy field.
- Only 16.50% students said that the waste water produced from their home further not discarded in any paddy field.

Regarding Social Issues

- 25.24% students don't like to enjoy environment related TV programs.
- 52.43% students have regularly participated in 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' program.
- 100% students reported that they were aware of the 'Save Rhino' campaign and the adverse affect of polluted river Bharalu on Brahmaputra.

Discussion of the study:

On the basis of the responses from P.G students of Gauhati University we found that they undertook different activities for conserving and managing the resources which keep our surrounding healthy. But, they also put less effort for using solar gadgets, fixing water level indicator, using natural waste as organic fertilizer, carrying bags for shopping etc. The investigator emphasized to find out why less effort is given for above mentioned areas. They informed that they were not aware of the harmful impact on environment for such behaviors. It clearly indicates their lack of awareness regarding different environmental issues and eco friendly habits which can be carried out by them. Therefore, it is needed to organize different environmental awareness programs for boosting up their thinking capacity and modify their behavior towards environment.

Policy Implication

This paper has these following implications which can be put forwarded as a policy implication:-

1. This Paper will help policy makers to know concerning different eco –friendly practices and take necessary steps while formulating any policy and scheme on environment.
2. This paper will definitely encourage the policy makers, administrators and officials to formulate such schemes or policies for conservation of energy, natural resources and its sources.
3. This paper will be helpful for the policy makers in observing different environment related issues and practices while implementing any scheme or policy throughout the country.
4. It will help the administrators in undertaking different programs for encouraging the people to bring up our environment healthy and green.

Conclusion

All the living creatures are interrelated and interdependent on environment for their healthy living. In this contemporary world, strive for superiority and luxury creates high rate of environmental degradation which leads complexity in the survival of life. So, it is the high time to undertake such activities which are not or less harmful for the earth's environment in order to keep it healthy. Today, practicing of eco-friendly habits is very essential to hand over the globe to the hands of the future generation for their survival. Government should formulate such policies and schemes as well as to make people aware of the principle of 4R's i.e., Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repurposing. Society should also take every possible step to encourage environment friendly habits amongst people which will further improve their quality of life. It will definitely help in clean and green living as well as conservation of resources.

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