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## An analysis of environmental attitude among campus students of Panjab University

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### Abstract

Environmental Degradation is rising at an alarming stage. Countries from all around the world gathered and signed Sustainable Development Goals pact which is to be achieved by 2030. But, action at root level in every country is also required to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030. For this, every individual should responsibly participate in environment friendly practices. This is possible only if individuals possess positive attitude towards environment protection and preservation. In this study, environmental attitude of students studying in Panjab University campus, belonging to different streams, is studied.

**Keywords:** Environmental degradation, environmental attitude, Panjab University, students

### Introduction

The word Environment is derived from French word 'Environ' which means 'to surround'. One's Environment composes of his/her physical features that surrounds him/her (natural resources, mountains, rivers, lakes, buildings etc.) and social world (ethics, norms, culture, media etc). "Environment is composed of all the physical features and natural resources of earth's surface subsuming both abiotic (physical or non-living) and biotic (living) elements" (Sharma and Sharma, 2021) [13]. All that builds up designed ecosystem can be called as Environment.

In the period we are living in, named as Anthropological Era, various environmental problems like pollution, depletion of water resources, biodiversity loss and most important, climate change have occurred (Gautier, 2014; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [IPCC], 2013; Sonnenfeld and Mol, 2002; World Wide Fund for Nature, 2018) [5]. Environmental problems started with the establishment of agricultural societies by human beings, reached at a new levels in the industrial era due to deforestation and urbanization being its main causes and are continuously rising. Environment, if would have got polluted, without existence of human (Akyuz, 2020) [1] was having self-renewal capacity. Effects of human are beyond pollution and environment disasters. Humans' industrial era lead to environment damage at such an extent that in today's world he himself is facing consequences in form of various viruses/bacteria, air pollution leading to permanent damage to lungs/bronchitis induced disasters due to deforestation and greenhouse effect which has caused melting of our ice-caps leading to climate change.

Single-use plastic products' usage increased after emergence of the global COVID-19 pandemic (Silva *et al.*, 2020) [14]; however, air pollution decreased ever after short period of inactivity due to lockdown series (National Aeronautics and Space Administration, 2020; European Space Agency, 2020). Major part of Environment problems and degradation is human-induced (Coban, 2014) [2], solution is based on people's behavior towards environment protection and preservice. This is possible only if they have positive attitude towards environment. Individual with positive environment attitude towards environment exhibit positive behaviors towards the environment. Individual with negative environment attitudes do not reach to environment problems and even can become part of it. "Environmental Attitude can be defined as individual's emotions such as fear, anxiety, anger caused by environmental problems, their value judgment about the environment, and their behavior and thoughts that can be positive or negative, such as taking part in solving environmental problems (Erten, 2005) [3].

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In layman terms, environmental attitude can be defined as one's pre-disposed state of mind towards the environment. If one's attitude towards the environment is positive, he is likely to participate in environment friendly practices also.

### Review of the study

Ponmozhi (2017) <sup>[11]</sup> conducted study on Environmental Attitudes of school students of Cuddalore District in Tamil Nadu. 200 samples were collected from Random Sampling technique. This study is proposed to find out the levels of Environmental Attitudes of students and if there is any significant difference between selected pairs of sub-samples. It was observed that majority of students' Environmental attitudes were high. There exists no significant difference between sub-samples. High school students' Environmental Attitude scale developed by Ugulu I., Sachin M. and Baslar, S. (2013) was used by the researcher.

Panth (2015) <sup>[10]</sup> conducted study to explore the Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude among under-graduate students in relation to their gender. The data were collected from 100 students in N.M.V, Lalitpur. The data were divided into two groups on the basis of Environmental Awareness and Environmental Attitude. Each of the two groups consisted of an equal number of boys and girls respondents. Standardized scale by Dr. Jha and Dr. N.S. Chauhan were used to collect data. The main conclusion was that, boys have more attitude than girls but there are significant difference found in boys and girls environmental awareness.

### Objectives

- To compare Environmental Attitude among graduate and under-graduate students of Panjab University.
- To compare Environmental Attitude among arts and science stream students of Panjab University Campus.

### Hypotheses

- There exists no significant difference between graduate students studying in Panjab University Campus and under-graduate students studying in the same campus.
- There exists no significant difference between environmental attitude of students studying in arts block of Panjab University Campus and students studying in science block of Panjab University Campus.

### Delimitations

- Students studying in Campus of Panjab University, Chandigarh are population of this study.
- Students selected for this study belong to graduate (who have done graduation and who are pursuing post-graduation) and under-graduate category (pursuing graduation) only.
- Students selected for this study belong to arts block (English, education and public administration departments) and science block (environment science, biology, zoology departments).

### Method of the study

Descriptive survey method was used to do research for this study. Convenient random method of sampling was used to collect data online via google forms sent through mail or whatsapp as per student's choice COVID-19 lockdown.

### Tool used

Taj Environmental Attitude Scale (TEAS) developed in 2001 by Dr. Haseen Taj was used to assess attitude of both graduate and under-graduate students of Panjab University, Chandigarh studying in arts and science streams belonging to different departments. This tool focuses on six environmental areas. The dimensions of this tool are:

- Population explosion
- Health and hygiene
- Polluters
- Wildlife
- Forests
- Environment Concerns.

Tool was distributed among sample students online via google forms. Instructions were mentioned clearly. Scoring was done according to the procedure laid down.

### Sample

Method of sampling used for this study was convenient as per the availability or response of students belonging to arts and science blocks of Panjab University campus. Students belonging to graduate and undergraduate category were selected randomly from English, education and public administration departments in case of arts block students' category and from environmental science, zoology, biology departments in case of science block students' category.

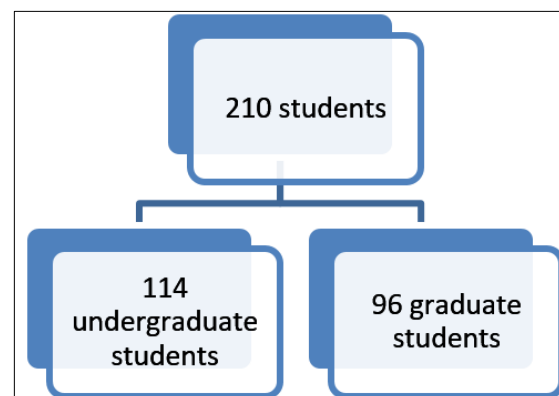


Fig 1: Sample of graduate and undergraduate students selected randomly from P.U.

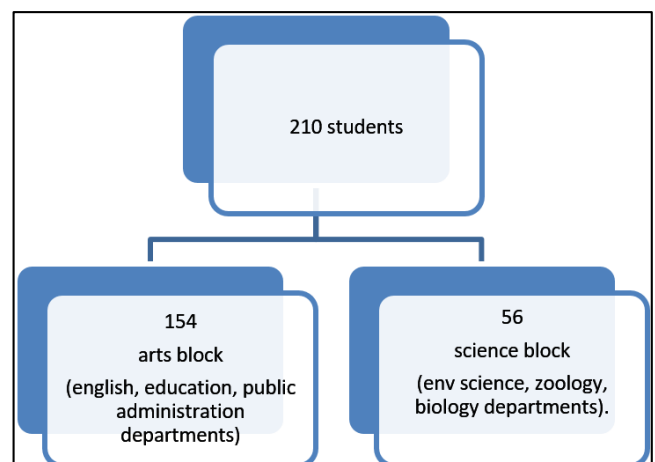


Fig 2: Redistribution of sample from arts and science block of P.U.

### Procedure

Population of this study included all graduate and post-graduate students studying in arts and science block of

Panjab University located in Chandigarh. To collect data, 210 students (96 who have completed their graduation and 114 who are still pursuing graduation) were selected randomly from Panjab University Campus. English, education and public administration departments of arts block of Panjab University. Among these, 154 were from arts block (English, Education and Public Administration departments) and remaining 96 were from science block (env. science, zoology and botany department). Data was collected online via google forms sent to them through mail/watsapp. The data was collected using standardized Taj Environmental Attitude Scale (TEAS). After data collection, appropriate statistical tools were applied for the purpose of data analysis for the purpose of testing null hypotheses.

## Results and Discussions

Before doing any data analysis, it is very important to check the normal distribution of data to be computed. Table 1

**Table 1:** Mean, median, mode, SD, SK and KU for Environmental Attitude

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	SK	KU
Environmental Attitude	109.10	110.4	111	12.478	0.0426	0.056

Mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis for Environmental Attitude among students of Panjab University Campus.

### Hypothesis 1

The first objective of the study was to find out significant difference in the environmental attitude among graduate and under-graduate students of Panjab University Campus. Table 2 shows there exists no significant difference as the t-value is 1.21 which is lower than the table value of t at 0.01 (2.601) and at 0.05 (1.972) levels. Thus, the first null

presents the value of mean, median, mode, skewness and kurtosis of total sample for the variable, Attitude towards Environment Protection among students. From this table, it can be seen that value of mean, median and mode for the attitude are approximately same. The value of skewness is found to be 0.0426 which means distribution is slightly skewed negatively. Since the value of skewness lies between -0.5 and 0.5, it means the data are fairly symmetrical. The value of kurtosis came out to be 0.056 which is less than .263. Hence the distribution curve is leptokurtic that can be taken approximately 0.263. The values of mean, mode and median of secondary school students for this variable is approximately same as shown in Table 1 so it shows distribution is normal. From the above table, we can also infer that the attitude of students towards environment protection is average and can be enhanced with the help of certain measures.

hypothesis stating no difference exists between graduate and under-graduate students for environmental attitude is accepted. Thus, we may infer that educational degree at some point plays no significant role when it comes to one's attitude towards environment protection. The mean value obtained for both graduate and under-graduate students is nearly average that means measures are required to improve attitude and behavior of students towards environment protection. In short, it can be concluded that both graduate and under-graduate students of Panjab University Campus have average Environmental attitude.

**Table 2:** Mean, SD and T-value showing difference in Environmental Attitude among graduate and undergraduate students

Edu. Qual.	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Under-Graduate	114	182.5	16.82	1.21
Grad.	96	179.6	17.7	

Mean, SD and t-value showing difference in environmental attitude among graduate and under-graduate students of Panjab University Campus.

### Hypothesis 2

The third objective of this study was to compare the environmental attitude among students belonging to arts block (English, education and public administration departments) and students belonging to science block (environmental science, zoology, biology departments) studying in Panjab University campus. This table depicts

that the calculated value of t is 0.87 which is lower than the table value of t at 0.01 (2.601) and 0.05 (1.972) levels which means that hypothesis is accepted. Thus, there exists no significant difference in attitude towards environment protection among arts-block and science block students of Panjab university.

**Table 3:** Mean, SD and T-value showing difference among students of arts and science block

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio
Arts-students	154	180.6	17.48	0.87
Science-students	56	182.9	16.63	

Mean, SD and t-value showing difference in Environmental Attitude between arts block and science block students of Panjab University Campus.

## Conclusion

Findings of present study shows that attitude of post-graduate and graduate students of both arts and science block is nearly average. The impact of Covid-19 has already delayed attainment of sustainable development goals agenda -2030. At individual level, both teachers and students should help government by spreading awareness and encouraging

environment friendly practices among people around them. But, this is possible only if their own attitudes and behaviors is positive towards environmental protection and preservation. At this stage, Education can prove to be a great boon in shaping attitudes of students. Thus, Environmental Education should be infused even at this level as protecting environment and preserving whatever is left behind, should

be our first priority, looking into the results how environmental degradation is paying us back.

### Suggestions

1. It is suggested that environmental education should be made compulsory at all levels of education.
2. Environmental Education should be developed as a separate discipline for betterment of the environment of the world this will help in easy and quick achievement of policies and agendas planned by governments of different countries.
3. The curricular and co-curricular techniques should be further enhanced and modified in order to induce high level of awareness and attitude among students regarding environment protection irrespective of all background variables. This can be done through organizing trips, encouraging gardening, arranging lectures and visits of environmentalists.
4. Such teaching-learning procedures and techniques can be used by teachers which involves nature. It can be in form of co-curricular activities enhancing one's participation in environment friendly practices or can be in form of organizing seminars. This might prove conducive in developing positive set of values and attitude irrespective of background variables of students.

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