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Environmental Ethics of Prospective Elementary Teachers of Nagaland

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ABSTRACT

The world is undergoing a sea of change with globalization and technological advancements leading to global warming and environmental exploitation and depletion. In this context, it is pertinent to inculcate sensitization among the societies towards our environment in adopting responsible environment oriented actions. Realizing the importance of protecting and conserving our environment, this study was undertaken to know the environmental ethics level of elementary prospective teachers as they hold responsibility to educate the students from the grass root level. The study revealed the elementary teachers to have average Environmental Ethics level; it was also found that male teachers and first year elementary prospective teachers had higher Environmental ethics; whereas, no significant difference was found based on educational qualification and stream of study.

Keywords: Environmental Ethics, Gender, Educational Qualification, Academic level, Pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

Environment refers to the surroundings that all living organisms live to survive. It includes both physical and natural environment and their relationship. Environmental ethics deals with the attitude and behavior of people towards their environment and their relationship with nature. Environmental ethics aims to explicate how one should behave or what rules and moral obligations one should have while interacting with his environment (Taneja and Gupta, 2015). Environmental ethics refers to the responsibility to understand the environmental consequences of our consumption, and need to recognize our individual and social responsibility to conserve natural resources and protect the earth for future generations (Gupta, 2020).

With the advancement in science and technology and rapid industrialization and modernization, the world today is undergoing a sea of change in its environment. The indiscriminate continual human activities and exploitation of resources over the years have altered the environment to a drastically degraded and depleted state. This poses a problem to the existence of living organisms in their environment. It is crucial for mankind to adopt ethical principles for environmental justice and environmental preservation and

conservation. And it requires for man to educate one another in adopting sustainable practices and pro-ecological actions towards maintaining ecological balance for sustainable living. This responsibility lies with each individual and more so, on the teachers as they are the backbone of our society and they can reach out to the more people in our society, creating awareness and social responsibility among the people. Teachers are emphasized to assume the main responsibility as role models to make ecological awareness more widespread among students and to help them to convert the principles of sustainable life into behaviours (Keleşa and Özera, 2016). Therefore, it is imperative to understand the awareness level of environmental ethics of the prospective teachers since they will be impacting the lives of many in developing the right type of ethics towards their environment. This will help in shaping the future of the society where each member develops into a socially as well as environmentally responsible citizens, competent for Environment Oriented Action (Taneja and Gupta, 2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dikicigil and Gülersoy (2020) studied on Social studies pre-service teachers' awareness of environmental ethics. The study revealed female students to be more conscious of environmental ethics than male students; grade was found inversely proportional to awareness of environmental ethics; first and second grades teachers were found to have higher environmental ethic awareness than third and fourth grade students.

Gupta (2020) conducted a study on Environmental Ethics of Prospective Teachers. The study's findings revealed no significant difference in the level of environmental ethics of male and female, rural and urban prospective teachers; however, significant difference was found in the level of environmental ethics of married prospective teachers than unmarried prospective teachers.

Güriçin and Sevinç (2020) conducted a descriptive study on environmental ethics awareness of teacher candidates in Turkey. The study found no differences for maternal education, paternal education, high school graduated from, department of study, monthly income of the family, class level, or residence of the student prior to university. However, female students and students in the Departments of Science Teaching and Primary School Teaching were found to have higher levels of environmental ethics awareness than students of other departments.

Kamei and Gangmei (2019) investigated the environmental ethics of 4-year Integrated B.A./B.Sc.-B.Ed. including 120 teacher trainees. The findings of the study revealed teacher trainees to have high environmental ethics and significant difference in the ethical level between the male and female pupil-teachers. However, no significant difference was found in the environmental ethics in terms of pupil-teachers' streams and locality.

Karakaya and Yilmaz (2017) conducted a study on environmental awareness and environmental ethics among science teachers and biology teachers. The study revealed that education level, graduation achievement, tenure of office and having environment lesson did not make a difference for science teachers and biology teachers. However, gender (female science teachers) and the institution they worked impacted their environmental awareness level.

Kaur (2019) conducted a study on environmental ethics among 150 prospective teachers. The findings of the study revealed female teachers, science teachers and urban teachers to have higher environmental ethics than male teachers, humanities teachers and rural teachers.

Keleşa and Özera (2016) investigated the Pre-Service Science Teachers' Level of Awareness of Environmental Ethics and found female teachers had higher level of environmental awareness ethics level than male students; whereas, no significant

difference was found on the basis of grade level; and the location of the universities impacted the level of environmental ethic level of the students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the level of Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers of Nagaland.
2. To study the Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers of Nagaland based on – Gender, Educational Qualification, Academic level and Pedagogy.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H_{01}: There is no significant difference between the Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers with respect to Gender, educational qualification, and academic level

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in the Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers based on Pedagogy.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study was confined to the Elementary prospective teachers studying D.El.Ed. in District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs), Nagaland in the academic year 2024-2025.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Research Design

Descriptive survey method was adopted for the study.

Population and Sample

The population consisted of all the elementary prospective teachers of DIETs, Nagaland. The sample consisted of 150 elementary prospective teachers selected through simple random sampling.

Tools and techniques

The tool employed to collect the data was Environmental Ethics Scale (EES) developed and revised by Dr. Haseen Taj (2016). The statistical techniques used to analyse the data were Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation, t-test and ANOVA.

RESULT

Objective 1: To study the level of Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers of Nagaland.

Table 1: Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers of Nagaland.

Sl. No	Frequency	Percentage	EE Raw Score Range	Level of Environmental Ethics
1	2	1.33%	91+	Extremely High
2	2	1.33%	83-90	High
3	9	6%	75-82	Above Average
4	121	80.67%	74-51	Average
5	13	8.67%	48-50	Below Average
6	3	2%	46-47	Low
Total	150	100%		

Table 1 shows that out of 150 respondents, only 2 respondents each i.e. 1.33% of the respondents scored in the extremely high and high range; 9 respondents i.e. 6% scored in the above average range; 121 respondents i.e. 80.67% of the respondents scored in the average level (74-51); 13 respondents (8.67%) scored below average and only 3 respondents scored in the low ethics level. This implied that the majority of the prospective elementary teachers have an Average level of Environmental Ethics.

Objective 2: To study the Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers based on gender, educational qualification, academic level and pedagogy.

H_{01}: There is no significant difference between the Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers' Environmental Ethics with respect to gender, educational qualification, and academic level.

Table 2: Results of t-test on Environmental Ethics of prospective elementary teachers with respect to gender, educational qualification and academic level

Variables		N	Mean	S.D.	df	t value	S/NS
Gender	Male	24	67.04	13.79	2.8621	148	S*
	Female	126	58.71	8.21			
Educational Qualification	Higher Secondary level	108	59.91	9.91	0.2845	148	NS*
	Bachelor level	42	60.40	9.49			
Academic Level	First Year	70	67.04	13.79	2.8621	148	S*
	Second Year	80	58.71	8.21			
Total		150					

At 0.05 level of significance

Table 2 shows the calculated t value (2.8621), for the significance of the difference between the means of male and female elementary prospective teachers on Environmental Ethics is greater than table value (1.96) for df=148 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis that "there is no significant difference in the level of Environmental Ethics among male and female elementary prospective teachers is rejected." Male elementary prospective teachers were found to have higher Environmental Ethics than female elementary prospective teachers.

Also, the calculated t value (0.2845), for the significance of the difference between the means of higher secondary and bachelor's degree level elementary prospective teachers on Environmental Ethics is less than table value (1.96) for df=148 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the level of Environmental Ethics between higher secondary level and Bachelor level elementary prospective teachers cannot be rejected.

Further, Table 2 shows the calculated t value (2.8621), for the significance of the difference between the means of first year and second year Elementary prospective teachers on Environmental Ethics is greater than table value (1.96) for df=148 at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between First year and Second year Elementary prospective teachers' Environmental Ethics is rejected. First year elementary prospective teachers have higher Environmental Ethics level than the Second year elementary prospective teachers.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in the Environmental Ethics among the prospective elementary teachers with respect to their pedagogy.

Table 3: Result of the F-test for the significant difference in the Environmental Ethics among prospective elementary teachers with respect to their Pedagogy.

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	S/NS
Between Groups	220.9904	3	73.66348	0.768442	NS*
Within Groups	13995.68	146	95.86084		
Total	14216.67	149			

At 0.05 level of significance

Table 3 showed that the calculated value of F (0.768442) for df=3 and 146 is less than the critical F value (2.68) and is therefore, statistically not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, we cannot reject the null hypothesis that, there is no significant difference among the means of different groups on the basis of their pedagogy on Environmental Ethics.

DISCUSSION

The present study showed that the majority of the prospective elementary teachers have an Average level of Environmental Ethics which is contradictory to the studies which found high level of teachers' Environmental Ethics (Kamei and Gangmei, 2019). This may be because they are not much sensitized about the ethics that they need to adopt in relation to their environment, and

they may need to be given more awareness about responsible actions and strategies that can be adopted towards their environment. The study revealed that male elementary prospective teachers had higher Environmental Ethics than female elementary prospective teachers, though male respondents are lesser in comparison to female respondents. The result is contrary to the findings where female teachers were found to have higher Environmental Ethics (Dikicigil and Gülersoy, 2020; Karakaya and Yilmaz, 2017; Kaur, 2019; Keleşa and Özera, 2016); and findings which found no significant difference based on gender (Gupta, 2020). The study also revealed no significant difference in the level of Environmental Ethics between higher secondary level and Bachelor level elementary prospective teachers which is consistent with the findings of Karakaya and Yilmaz (2017). Further, first year elementary prospective teachers were found to have higher Environmental Ethics level than the Second year elementary prospective teachers. The result is consistent with the findings of Dikicigil and Gülersoy (2020); but is contrary to the findings which found no significant difference based on class level (Güriçin and Sevinç, 2020; Keleşa and Özera, 2016). The study further found no significant difference among the means of different groups on the basis of their pedagogy on Environmental Ethics. The result is consistent with the findings of Kamei and Gangmei (2019); but is contrary to the findings which found students of science teachers to have higher Environmental Ethics than other streams (Güriçin and Sevinç, 2020; Kaur, 2019). This may be due to the impact of the kind of awareness and education that they received regarding their environment from their lower class level itself. It may be assumed that values and ethics towards one's environment are ingrained in the students from the grassroots level and not just when they reach a particular class level or age level nor because they studied in different streams.

CONCLUSION

The present study found elementary prospective teachers' Environmental Ethics to be average. The study revealed male and first year elementary prospective teachers to have higher level of Environmental Ethics level than female and second year elementary prospective teachers. Further, it also found no significant difference on the basis of academic level and stream of study among the elementary prospective teachers. Understanding the relationship man and nature/environment and adopting responsible actions towards the environment we live in is very much essential in this fast growing technological, modernized and urbanized world. In this regard, teacher education institutes should incorporate sustainable practices in the institutes. Further, effort must be made to cater to the practical real world need of the students to face the environmental challenges that are faced every day; seminars, conferences and workshops must be organized on environmental protection, conservation and preservation; and integrate indigenous knowledge and practices into the curriculum and across the curriculum. Further, community resources must be utilized to create awareness about the environment and its issues and also for sustainable practices. These responsible actions will lead to prioritizing of one's resources, health and better quality of life.

Declaration by Authors

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