



ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR OF COMMON PEOPLE AT BAISHNABNGAR IN MALDA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT:

In this study of environmental behavior, focusing on the background, significance, literature review, objectives, research methodology, and data analysis. Environmental issues, encompassing various domains such as transportation and resource management, present significant challenges to environmental protection. Understanding human behavior in environmental contexts is crucial for addressing these challenges. The study explores the socio-economic status, environmental awareness, knowledge of environmental pollution, and resource utilization among residents of Baishnabnagar, within the Bedrabad Gram Panchayat area of Kaliachak-III block in the district of Malda. Data were collected through a descriptive survey method, and analysis revealed a mix of awareness and apathy towards environmental issues among respondents. Additionally, gender-based analysis showed no significant difference in environmental behavior between males and females. The study underscores the importance of promoting environmentally responsible behavior and highlights the need for targeted interventions to address environmental challenges effectively.

KEYWORDS:

ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR, COMMON PEOPLE, ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS, MALDA DISTRICT.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

Nowadays, environmental issues encompass a wide range of phenomena typically considered detrimental to environmental protection. Various environmental issues manifest in different domains. As Bell (2001) highlights, the current volume of motor vehicle traffic poses significant challenges concerning health, environmental aesthetics, and natural resource conservation. Moreover, the proliferation of busy roads often intersects habitat corridors and results in a distressing number of animal fatalities, further complicating efforts to safeguard life and its dignity.

This classification of environmental issues proves valuable in studying human behavior in environmental contexts. By examining behavioral patterns associated with different environmental issues, we can delineate areas of environmental behavior correlated with health, aesthetics, natural resources, and life preservation. Environmental behavior encompasses actions perceived, either generally or in accordance with environmental science, as contributing to environmental protection or promoting a healthy environment.

Many instances of environmental behavior can be evaluated based on environmental science or ecological principles to determine their impact on the environment, categorizing them as environmentally friendly or

unfriendly. Some cases are straightforward; for example, cycling is typically viewed as more environmentally positive than driving a car, and choosing a local vacation spot over one on another continent is generally preferable. These examples illustrate how human behavior can have varying degrees of positive or negative environmental impact.

However, since individuals are continually interacting with their environment, nearly all human activities could be construed as environmental behavior. This includes seemingly trivial actions such as walking or even breathing. While this broad interpretation of environmental behavior may hold logical validity, it proves largely impractical for disciplinary communication purposes.

1.2 BASIC STATUS OF ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR:

Nowadays, men's behavior towards the environment tends to be more negative than positive. Men often misuse water, wasting it beyond their needs, and indiscriminately cut down trees. These actions contribute to the imbalance of ecosystems, resulting in the destruction of biodiversity. Additionally, misinformation about lifestyle choices further exacerbates environmental issues. The use of chemical fertilizers in agriculture is detrimental to soil

fertility. To mitigate these environmental challenges, raising awareness about environmentally responsible behavior among the public is imperative.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

The researcher has chosen this topic to explore the environment and understand the environmental behavior of the general populace. The aim is to observe the environmental behavior of people within their current surroundings. Key questions include assessing their awareness of environmental issues, understanding their socio-economic status, and evaluating the proper utilization and preservation of natural resources for future generations. Additionally, the survey seeks to gauge the level of pollution awareness among the population.

This survey serves as a tool to gauge the environmental awareness within a community. Environmental consciousness is intricately linked to knowledge about the environment, allowing for comparisons between genders and identification of area-specific issues. By involving the local population, the survey aims to uncover and address environmental challenges. Furthermore, insights into the educational and socio-economic status of the area will aid in compiling a comprehensive report for governmental authorities.

In addition to human involvement, various creatures play significant roles in the environment. Hence, environmental studies hold paramount importance in understanding and preserving ecosystems.

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE:

Jena, L.K., & Behera, B., (2017). Environmentalism in the context of psychological science is a behavioral toned proclivity to take actions with pre-environmental intent. The preliminary footstep towards understanding the intricacies between human psyche and environmental consequence is to examine on the axiom that behavior is predominantly a function of the organism and its environment. Change of psyche which is in the form of actionable behavior often entails breaking old habits and becomes established by creating new ones. This emerging field of interface between psychology and environmental science is presently looking for robust models that can integrate variables from more than one of the above broad domains. They should be able to propose interactions from both the disciplines, and channelize its scope for explaining one or more types of environmentally significant behavior so as to foster sustainability and social wellness. This scholastic work has visited the psychological aspect focusing on individual's belief, drives, and so forth in order to understand and change the target behavior that stands detrimental to the living environment. The conceptual review has also tried to state a broad frame-work that can increase theoretical rationale of both psychology and environmental economics domain in humanities and social science.

Zeisel, J., (2016). Observing behavior means systematically watching people use their environments:

individuals, pairs of people, small groups, and large groups. What **do they do?** How do activities relate to one another spatially? And how do spatial relations affect participants? At the same time, observers of environmental behavior look at how a physical environment supports or interferes with behaviors taking place within it, especially the side effects the setting has on relationships between individuals or groups. In a park, for example, an observer sees a child playing, watched over by her father, who anxiously jumps up every time the child moves out of his sight

Klockner, C.A. (2013). To address global environmental challenges, it is crucial to understand how humans make decisions about environmentally relevant behaviour, since a shift to alternative behaviors can make a relevant difference. This paper proposes a comprehensive model of determinants of individual environmentally relevant behaviour based on a combination of the most common theories in environmental psychology. The model is tested using a meta-analytical structural equation modeling approach based on a pool of 56 different data sets with a variety of target behaviors. The model is supported by the data. Intentions to act, perceived behavioral control and habits were identified as direct predictors of behaviour. Intentions are predicted by attitudes, personal and social norms, and perceived behavioral control. Personal norms are predicted by social norms, perceived behavioral control, awareness of consequences, ascription of responsibility, an ecological world view and self-transcendence values. Self-enhancement values have a negative impact on personal norms. Based on the model, interventions to change behaviour need not only to include attitude campaigns but also a focus on de-habitualizing behaviour, strengthening the social support and increasing self-efficacy by concrete information about how to act. Value based interventions have only an indirect effect.

Syamwil, I.B. 2012). This keynote speech argued the importance of inserting social development context to the environment behaviour studies in Asia, as culture, belief and social circumstances would contribute to the understanding of Asian in its global and local dynamics. In this regard despite the importance of the general narratives in EB studies for the behavioural knowledge development, it has been challenged to be more contextual and communicate better to community of praxis. It is further argued that Asian EB studies should contribute to widen the understanding of the social construction view in Asian context to explain the richness of social realm of Asians.

Krajhanzl, J. (2010). One of important areas of interest in psychology is the so-called environmental or pro-environmental behaviour. The author offers a concept that may facilitate orientation in the many factors that affect our environmental behaviour. He presents a methodological procedure that support environmentally friendly behaviour in practice. He lists five characteristics of personal relationship with nature and explains how important it is to clearly distinguish between them in both

professional theory and practice. The author also emphasizes the importance of people forming a personal relationship with nature. In this respect, study of individual personal understanding of general terms of environmental education and the building of a common understanding seems of paramount importance. Keywords: environmental behavior, pro-environmental behavior, environmentally friendly behavior, areas of environmental behavior, characteristics of the relationship to nature, the need for contact with nature, abilities for contact with nature, environmental sensitivity, general attitude to nature, environmental concern.

Klaine, J. S., Alvarez, P.J., & Batley, G. E., (2008). The recent advances in nanotechnology and the corresponding increase in the use of nonmaterial in products in every sector of society have resulted in uncertainties regarding environmental impacts. The objectives of this review are to introduce the key aspects pertaining to nonmaterial in the environment and to discuss what is known concerning their fate, behavior, disposition, and toxicity, with a particular focus on those that make up manufactured nonmaterial. This review critiques existing nonmaterial research.

Zeisel, J. (2006). This update of a classic text folds the new field of neuroscience for design into well-established environment-behavior (EB) methods and approaches. Illustrated evidence-based building and open space case studies demonstrate EB's continuing design impact. Fundamental theory and practical research methods are presented for planning, programming, designing, and evaluating the effects of physical environments in use. Part I describes how designers and researchers employ a similar creative process that promotes collaboration and yields greater design creativity and research effectiveness.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

Objectives of this study are as follow;

1. To find out socio-economic status of people living in this area.
2. To measure environmental awareness.
3. To identify their knowledge about environmental pollution.
4. To measure the misuse resources in this area.

4. HYPOTHESIS:

There is no significance difference between male and female people regarding environmental awareness, environmental pollution, socio-economic status at Baishnabnagar in Malda.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The researcher employed a descriptive survey method to conduct this study. Data were gathered through the researcher's personal visits and observations, directly from primary sources. The collected data pertaining to the study's variables were analyzed both descriptively and inferentially.

5. 1 AREA SPECIFICATION:

The researcher chose Baishnabnagar for the survey within the Bedrabad Gram Panchayat area of Kaliachak-III block in the district of Malda. This selection was made due to the researcher's familiarity with the area, having lived there for many years. The aim was to assess the level of environmental awareness among the local residents and understand their perception of their living environment. Specifically, the researcher surveyed villages such as Lalapara, Satangapara, Dariapur, and others within the vicinity.

5.2 SPECIFICATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL CRITERIA:

The geographic features of this area are as follows: it is situated beside the Ganges river. The coordinates are approximately 47° 43.9" N latitude and 87° 59' 35.4" E longitude. The highest temperature recorded here is 41°C, while the minimum temperature is 22°C. The region experiences a moderate level of rainfall. Additionally, a significant amount of agricultural work is carried out in this area.

5.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE:

During this process, the researcher prepared questions categorized according to different dimensions. A total of 30 questions were formulated, and respondents were provided with options such as 'yes,' 'no,' or 'no comment' to answer. The questioning commenced with the researcher posing the questions while being recorded by cameras. Additionally, any additional comments provided by the respondents were noted down on paper.

5.4 DESCRIPTION OF TOOL FOR COLLECTING DATA:

The researcher prepared a questionnaire based on the research title, focusing on three dimensions:

1. Action to appropriate use of natural resources.
2. Action to resist the rapid growth of environmental crisis.
3. Action to protect and preserve natural and environmental ecosystems.

From each dimension, the researcher selected ten questions, resulting in a total of thirty questions. The questionnaire included a mix of negative and positive questions to gather comprehensive information on respondents' actions and attitudes towards environmental issues. This approach facilitated the collection of diverse perspectives and insights.

6. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA:

In the sample population that the researcher worked with, there was a mix of both males and females. Some individuals had achieved high levels of educational qualifications, while others were illiterate. It was observed that there were more illiterate women compared to men. Educational attainment varied, with some individuals having completed secondary or higher secondary education, while others had attained bachelor's degrees

such as B.A. or B.Sc. Additionally, many had pursued their education through distance learning programs.

While the respondents demonstrated awareness of environmental issues, their efforts towards environmental maintenance were not significant. Some individuals ignored certain questions, and there was hesitancy among some to participate in video recording. However, many people cooperated in providing data and recording videos.

Economically, the sample population varied, with some individuals being financially well-off and others economically disadvantaged. The majority of respondents were adults from whom the researcher collected data.

The collected data regarding the variables of the study were analyzed both descriptively and inferentially. The corresponding analysis and related interpretations are presented below.

6.1 ANALYSIS OF MEAN DEVIATION OF TOTAL SAMPLE

TABLE -1

Total	Mean	Median	Mode	S. D
100	50.23	51	56	5.86

Here, the computed value of mode is greater than mean and median value on the basis of the total sample of the study of Environment behaviour.

6.2 ANALYSIS OF MEAN DEVIATION OF MALE SAMPLE

TABLE-2

Male	Mean	Median	Mode	S. D
74	50.23	50.5	56	5.89

Here, the computed value of mode is greater than mean and median value on the basis of the total sample of the study of Environment behaviour.

6.3 ANALYSIS OF MEAN DEVIATION OF FEMALE SAMPLE

TABLE-3

Female	Mean	Median	Mode	S. D
26	49.65	51	56	5.84

Here, the computed value of mode is greater than mean and median value on the basis of the total sample of the study of Environment behaviour.

6.4 ANALYSIS OF T-TEST

TABLE-4

Gender	Number	Mean	S. D	SED	t-value	df	Results
Male	74 (N1)	50.23	5.89	0.81	0.56	(100-2) =98	Not Significant
Female	26 (N2)	49.65	5.84				

Here, the computed value of 't' is 0.56, and the degrees of freedom (df) are 98. The table value at the 0.05 significance level is 1.98, and at the 0.01 significance level,

it is 2.63. The computed value is smaller than the table value at both the 0.01 and 0.05 significance levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

The provided analysis compares the environmental behavior between male and female respondents based on several statistical parameters:

NUMBER (N1, N2): The sample size for males is 74, while for females, it is 26. This indicates that there are more male respondents in the study compared to females.

MEAN: The mean environmental behavior score for male respondents is 50.23, while for female respondents, it is slightly lower at 49.65. This suggests that, on average, male respondents exhibit slightly higher environmental behavior scores compared to female respondents.

STANDARD DEVIATION (S.D): The standard deviation measures the dispersion of scores around the mean. For male respondents, the standard deviation is 5.89, and for female respondents, it is slightly lower at 5.84. This indicates that there is slightly less variability in environmental behavior scores among female respondents compared to male respondents.

STANDARD ERROR OF THE DIFFERENCE (SED): The standard error of the difference is a measure of the variability in the difference between the means of two groups. In this analysis, the SED is 0.81.

t-VALUE: The t-value is a measure of the difference between the means of two groups relative to the variability within the groups. In this case, the computed t-value is 0.56.

DEGREES OF FREEDOM (df): The degrees of freedom represent the number of values in the final calculation of a statistic that are free to vary. In this analysis, the degrees of freedom are calculated as (100-2) = 98.

RESULTS: The results indicate that the computed t-value (0.56) is smaller than the table value at both the 0.01 and 0.05 significance levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which likely states that there is no significant difference in environmental behavior between males and females, is accepted.

Overall, the analysis suggests that there is no significant difference in environmental behavior between male and female respondents in the study population of Baishnabnagar in Malda district.

7. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the study highlights the complex interplay of factors influencing environmental behavior among the common people of Baishnabnagar in Malda district. While awareness of environmental issues exists within the community, there is a need for concerted efforts to translate this awareness into meaningful action for environmental conservation and sustainability. Targeted interventions, community engagement, and evidence-based policies are essential for fostering a culture of environmental responsibility and addressing

environmental challenges effectively.

Environmental behavior varies in response to environmental or social factors, and such variations alter the way a population responds to exploitation. Additionally, considerations of environmental behavior also influence options for controlling economic growth.

The environment plays a crucial role in shaping behavior. It is the government's responsibility to safeguard the environment, just as individuals should actively contribute to its preservation. When the environment is free from pollution or issues, it should be noted that government intervention to address environmental damage will not be necessary. Preservation efforts must begin at the individual level, starting at home.

8. SUGGESTIONS:

- There should be awards and recognition for children who show good work. Making this one of the top priorities of the government is essential.
- It should be mandatory for all children, from priority to middle class, to study core subjects rigorously.
- Planting numerous trees will lead to improved weather conditions.
- For every tree cut down for a development project, at least 50-100 saplings should be planted to ensure sustainability.

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