

## Women Participation in Environmental Management

**Priyanka Jain\*, Purvi Namdeo\*\*, Shweta Rathod\*\*\***

Research Scholar Department of Management Studies,  
Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam University, Indore (M.P.) India,

*Priyankaji12@gmail.com\*, purvi.a.namdeo@gmail.com\*\*, shwetarathod9@gmail.com\*\*\**

### INTRODUCTION

Environmentalism in recent years has become a dominant discourse. The various fields of this discipline collectively promote a number of issues regarding environment and development. Development requires an understanding and control over human relationship with nature, other wisely known as environmental management. Such management becomes meaningful only when women contribute and are allowed to contribute their full participation in the field. Development has fortunately given way to sustainable development, and growth has given way to 'green growth'. Now-a-days, the concern for maintaining ecological balance emerged in the form of vocal and expressive social movement. Governments the world over are now speculating the global dimension of a number of environmental problems, such as climate change, ozone depletion, dumping of hazardous wastes, destruction of biological resources and of forests' environmental management programmers. The situation has become bad to worse. Now it is high time for taking appropriate measures to solve environmental problems. A lot of studies on women and environment have shown that women are significant actors in natural resource management and they are also major contributors to environment rehabilitation and conservation. Women's direct contact with the environment has produced their deep knowledge about the

environment. Women through their roles as farmers and as collectors of water and firewood have a close connection with their local environment. They often suffer most directly from environmental problems. Thus women have served as agriculturists, water-resource-managers, responsible domestic and household managers, health planners, forest managers etc. So, involving women in protecting the environment would help societies to develop a sense of responsibility. And it is needed to maintain a good balance between human and nature and natural resources. Women view environment as the life support systems of humanity. It is the source of all life, that people are dependent on the environment. Without good environment, our life would not be peaceful and healthy. Women's commitment and dedication to work is a manifestation of their selfless love and concern for the environment; for their children and for the future generation. The past few decades' women have contributed significantly to life and society by interrogating and exploring their own lives and that of other women. Today's Indian women deal with multiple issues concerning self and society. Women had for long been denied access to education, equal rights, right to work and the freedom to choose. But in our societies, the role of women outside the family has never been accepted in the same manner as it is in case of male. Before two decades, barring a

handful of exceptions the Indian women were not ready to penetrate and participate meaningfully in any socio-political decision making mechanism. Moreover, the rigorous traditional values also confine women within the frontiers of family. Consequently, women are constrained to take the task of their distinctiveness in Society. Development Decade' and adopted some resolutions for it.

**Keywords: Women and environmental management**

### **Related Terms Defined**

#### **Environmental Management**

According to Leopold Aldo (1949) "Environmental Management is the practice of creating the harmony between the living and non-living components – all the components of nature".

Karloff, Jonathan M. (1993) has defined "Environmental Management is as a strategy to balance growth with environmental protection, reducing pollution, waste, and consumption of natural resources".

#### **Environmental Awareness**

The word awareness acquires different meanings in different sociocultural and political contexts. The concept of self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, life of dignity in accordance with one's values, independence, own decision making, awakening, capability are embedded in the generalized idea of awareness. Awareness is of intrinsic value but it also has instrumental value. In the broadest sense awareness is the expansion of freedom of choice and action.

#### **Eco-Friendliness**

Eco-friendly literally means earth-friendly or not harmful to the environment. This term most commonly refers to products that contribute to green living or practices that help conserve resources like water and

energy. The term is used only to highlight the fact that women should be involved and their perspectives must be reflected in the policies and programmers for environment, conservation, and restoration. Considering the impact of environmental factors on their livelihood, women's participation must be ensured in the conservation of the environment and control of environmental degradation.

#### **Sanitation Practices**

The World Health Organization (2009) states that: "Sanitation generally refers to the provision of facilities and services for the safe disposal of human urine and feces. Inadequate sanitation is a major cause of disease world-wide and improving sanitation is known to have a significant beneficial impact on health both in households and across communities. The word 'sanitation' also refers to the maintenance of hygienic conditions, through services such as garbage collection and wastewater disposal." Special attention are to be given to the needs of women in the provision of safe drinking water, sewage disposal, toilet facilities and sanitation within accessible reach of households, especially in rural areas and urban slums.

#### **Health Consciousness**

Health consciousness is describing an attitude in which one has an awareness of the healthiness of one's diet and life-style. The term lays stress on the high risk of malnutrition and disease that women face at all three critical stages viz. infancy and childhood, adolescent and reproductive phase. Intra-household discrimination in nutritional matters vis-a-vis girls and women are to be sought to be ended through appropriate strategies.

#### **Solid Waste Management**

Solid-waste management is the collecting, treating, and disposing of solid material that is discarded because it has served its

purpose or is no longer useful. Improper disposal of municipal solid waste can create unsanitary conditions, and these conditions, in turn, can lead to pollution of the environment and to outbreaks of vector-borne disease that is, diseases spread by rodents and insects. The tasks of solid-waste management present complex technical challenges. They also pose a wide variety of administrative, economic, and social problems that must be managed and solved. Solid waste management is a well-mannered term for garbage management.

### **Pollution**

According to The American Heritage Science Dictionary (2002) "Pollution is the contamination of air, water or soil by substances that are harmful to living organisms. "Pollution is the action of polluting especially by environmental contamination with man-made waste. Pollution is the introduction of contaminants into the natural environment that cause adverse change.

### **Household Management Capacity**

The term 'household management capacity' here needs attention to the quality of a woman to provide adequate capacity to make control and manage over the family and family-related issues and matters.

### **Education**

Dr. Radhakrishnan says, "Education, to be complete must be kind, it must include not only the training of the intellect but the refinement of the heart and the discipline of the spirit." (Mukherjee, K. K., 1972). Tagore thinks, "Education means enabling the mind to find out the ultimate truth which emancipates us from the bondage of the dust." (Mukherjee, K.K., 1972). Aristotle speaks of Education as, "the certain of a sound mind in a sound body." (Chaube, S. P., 2009).

### **Empowerment**

According to Indiresan, Jaya (2002) "Empowerment is a process which helps people to gain control of their lives through raising their awareness and helping them to take action and work. In other words, empowerment facilitates change and enables a person to do what he or she wants. Empowerment is the feeling that activates one's psychological energy to accomplish one's goals. The word empowerment acquires different meanings in different sociocultural and political contexts. The concept of self-strength, control, self-power, self-reliance, own choice, life of dignity in accordance with one's values, independence, own decision making, awakening, capability are embedded in the generalized idea of empowerment.

### **Review of Literature**

i) Mahajan, Poonam (2014) in Indora, Himachal Pradesh had made thorough research work on –**"A Comparative Study of Environmental Awareness of School Students in Relation to Standard and Gender."** The level of class or standard and gender has an impact on the environmental awareness of school students. There was a significant difference between male and female students of each class and males had scored higher mean than the female in each class.

ii) Gupta, Banda and Sharma, Sanjoy (2014) had carried out a research work on **"Awareness, Attitude, and Practices toward Environment among Women in Rural Areas of Jammu and Kashmir."** There would be a wide scope for women to realize their potential and strength in the field of environment protection so that they can transform themselves from effective home managers to effective environmental managers.

### **Objectives of the Study**

(i) To study the environmental awareness of women to manage the environment.

- (ii) To find out the participation of women in various environment-related activities to manage and protect the environment.
- (iii) To study the participation of women in policy framing and decision making related to environmental issues for maintaining the environmental balance.
- (iv) To find out the scope of common women participation in different day to day. Activities related to environmental protection on various fields, like health and nutrition, child care and nurture, a forestation etc.
- (v) To find out women participation in proper and effective use of nature and natural resources to reduce environmental pollution.
- (vi) To explore whether women having better skills in environmental management can reach empowerment.

#### **Scope**

The study has been conducted to estimate the participation of women in the district of Indore in Madhya Pradesh with special reference to education, socio-economic condition, and awareness, participation in social and environmental management. Considering those points in the study.

#### **Methodology and Design of the study**

The study has been conducted with a view to women and their participation in environmental management in the District of Indore in Madhya Pradesh.

#### **Method**

The present study has been carried out through descriptive survey method. The details regarding sample, tools, procedure of data collection.

#### **Type of Research**

The type of research is Descriptive Survey type. "A descriptive study", according to Best and Khan (2011, tenth ed.) "describes and interprets what it is." It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist. Descriptive research deals with the

relationships between variables, the testing of hypothesis and the development of generalizations, principles or theories that have universal validity. In analyzing political, social or economic conditions, one of the first steps is to get the facts about the situation or a picture of conditions that prevail or that are developing. So, descriptive survey research studies are designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status

#### **Dimension**

The study has been based upon five dimensions. These five dimensions covered the major aspects of participation in Environmental Management. The dimensions are as follows: -

##### **Awareness**

Environmental awareness is to understand the brittleness of our environment and the importance of its protection. Relationship between human beings especially the women and the environment must be developed to improve and protect the environment. Environmental awareness of women is essential: to promote environmental awareness among all sections of the society to mobilize people's participation for preservation and conservation of environment. To promote environment education, especially in the non-formal system among different sections of the society.

##### **Eco-Friendliness**

Eco-friendliness is nature friendliness. It is associated with environmental conservation and sustainable practices. Women should be becoming more aware to protect the environment. Eco-friendliness advocates, the protection (and restoration, when necessary) of the natural environment through the recognition of humanity as a participant in ecosystems.

### **Solid Waste Management**

Solid waste management is the generation, prevention, characterization, monitoring, treatment, handling, reuse and residual of the disposition from population density and low societal levels of the exploitation of natural resources, the amount of waste generated by human. But in modern society, reset of industrialization, the sustained urban growth, the large population, solid waste must be managed to develop the sanitation level and quality of life.

### **Effective Use of Natural Resources.**

Natural resource refers to land, water, soil, plants, animals etc. These natural resources must be managed with a particular focus on how management affects the quality of life both for present and future generations. A woman can do it better, as a mother is the center of a family.

### **Policy Framing and Decision Making.**

Policy Framing comprises of a set of concepts and theoretical perspectives on how individuals, groups, and societies organize perceive and communicate about reality. Framing involves society. As women are the primal user of environment and as a mother woman can influence her own children through communication, mental representations, interpretations, and simplifications of reality, women can be involved in policy framing and decision making in regard to participation in Environmental Management.

### **Research Instruments**

#### **Comprehensive Questionnaire.**

A questionnaire is a device consisting of a series of questions dealing with some topics given to a individual or group, with the objective of obtaining data with regard to some problems under investigation. Questionnaire is a popular means of collecting all kinds of data in research. It is widely used in educational research to obtain information about certain conditions

and practices and to inquire into options and attitudes of an individual or a group. The questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher, and often being comparatively straightforward to analyses.

### **Geographical Area**

This type of study would be conducted in the whole district of Indore. But considering the feasibility of the study, it has been enclosed to four Gram Panchayats and four Municipalities of the district.

### **Women**

This type of study would be conducted with all categories of women in the district of Indore. But it is quite impossible to carry out the study with this huge population. So, the study has been restricted on about 300 female belonging to both rural and urban areas of the district.

### **Population, Sampling and Representative Sample**

Women both in rural and urban areas in the District of Indore are the population of the study. But to conduct the study more effectively, about 300 women from four Grampanchayets and four Municipalities of the District of Indore have been chosen randomly as samples.

### **Source**

Rural and Urban areas in the District of Indore.

### **Sample Size**

More than 300 women have been participated in this study.

### **Sampling Technique:**

Multi-Phasic Stratified Random Sampling Technique is adopted. This is a method of sampling that has involved the division of a population into smaller groups known as 'Strata'.

### **Limitations of the Study**



- a) The study has been restricted only four Gram-Panchayats and four Municipalities in the District of Indore.
- b) A large number of village women working in the field of agriculture and women in service have been taken for the study.
- c) The link has been made with the samples but tribal women have some conservation, which may have some reflections on the responses.
- d) In some situations, electronic gadget has been used at the time of collection of data which may have some impact on the responses.

#### Distribution of samples in different categories according to geographical location

Geographical location	Gender (Only female)
Rural	150
Urban	150
Total	300

#### Area-wise Sample Distribution

Rural					Urban				
Dha	Pa	Si	D	total	sawer	simrol	ha	Te	and
habli	nod	indoda	udhi				to	jaj	total
40	35	35	40	150	40	35	35	40	150

#### Area-wise stratification

Area	Rural			Urban			
Socioeconomic status	Students	Housewives	Police Makers & Serv	Students	Housewives	Police Makers & Serv	Total

			ice Holders			ice Holders	
Age upto 25	25	25	25	25	25	25	150
Age above 25	25	25	25	25			150
Total	50	50	50	50	50	50	300

#### Standardized Form of the Test

The final form of the test contains 50 items from item analysis. Each item has to be endorsed in a 5-point scale from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree" with the neutral point of "Undecided". The individual statement is either positive or negative. To score the scale, the alternative responses are credited as 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively from the positive to the negative end and 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively from the negative to the positive end. The Scoring Key has been developed by the responses of the items are categorized as **strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).**

#### Scoring Key

For positive statements					For Negative Statements				
S	A	U	D	S	S	A	U	D	S
A				D	A				D
5	4	3	2	1	1	2	3	4	5

#### Item Analysis

The major objectives of Item Analysis are the improvement of total score reliability or total score validity or both, the achievement of better item sequences and types of score distributions. For the present study, at first, the scores have been arranged in a descending order. Next, the scores have

been segregate as high group and low group. After that, we have been arranged in tabulated form. From this tabulation 't' test analysis for each item has been done.

#### **Reliability of the Test**

A test is called reliable where there are reasons for believing the test to be able and trustworthy. The correlation of the test with itself is called the reliability coefficient of the test. The reliability coefficient has been computed between the test and retest scores and has been found to be 0.86. The reliability of the tool has been estimated by calculating Cronbach's alpha. This technique is based on item statistics and estimates internal consistency of the test as a whole when there is one common factor or of the test dimensions when items in a dimension are homogenous (Guildford, 1975). As the present tool has been assumed to hold both of these assumptions the values of Cronbach's alpha for the total inventory as well as for each dimension of the inventory are presented in the tabulated form to prove the internal consistency of each dimension of the Women Participation in Environmental Management Questionnaire.

#### **Reliability Analysis-Scale [Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ )]**

S.No.	Dimensions	Mean	Std.Dev.
1	Awareness	73.2792	8.0033
2	Eco-friendliness	69.1526	8.2450
3	Solid Waste Management	26.2857	3.2501
4	Effective Use of Natural Resources	78.8734	7.8521
5	Policy Framing and Decision Making	82.5455	14.1852

#### **Summary Item Statistics**

Statistics for	Mean	Variance	Std. Dev.	No. of Dimensions
SCALE	330.1364	1185.2843	34.4280	5

#### **Inter-Item Correlation Matrix**

Dimensions	No. 1	No. 2	No. 3	No. 4	No. 5
Awareness	1.0000				
Eco-Friendliness	0.6186	1.0000			
Solid Waste Management	0.4725	0.1591	1.0000		
Effective Use of Natural Resources	0.6361	0.5297	0.5531	1.0000	
Policy Framing and Decision Making	0.6761	0.7062	0.2999	0.6373	1.0000

#### **Analysis of the Collected & Processed Data**

Data had been processed with the help of appropriate statistical techniques and results. The analysis had also been made to find out the relationship of socio-economic attributes and variables like caste, age, mental status, nature of family, occupation, family income of women selected as sample for the study. The researcher had attempted to assess the socio-cultural and environmental awareness, participation in natural activity and type of exploratory works undertaken by the villagers as well as the policy-maker's executives and service women members.

### Findings

After successful completion of the statistical analysis of the collected data, the researcher obtained the following major findings of her study:

**Findings 1:** The researcher has discerned no significant difference of mean in Rural Students between age group up to 25 and above 25 with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 2:** The researcher has discerned significant difference of mean in Rural Housewives between age group up to 25 and above 25 with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 3:** It has been found that there is no significant difference of mean in Rural Policy Makers and Service Holders between age group up to 25 and above 25 with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 4:** It has been observed from the study that there is no significant difference of mean in Urban Students between age group up to 25 and above 25 with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 5:** The researcher has discerned no significant difference of mean in Urban Housewives between age group up to 25 and above 25 with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 6:** The researcher has found that there is no significant difference of mean in Urban Policy Makers and Service Holders between age group up to 25 and above 25 with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 7:** The researcher has discerned no significant difference of mean in age up to 25 between Rural and Urban Students with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 8:** It has been found from the study that there is significant difference of mean in age up to 25 between Rural and

Urban Housewives with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 9:** It has been observed from the study that there is significant difference of mean in age up to 25 between Rural Policy Makers and Service Holders and Urban Policy Maker and Service Holder with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 10:** The researcher has observed that there is no significant difference of mean in age above 25 between Rural Students and Urban Students with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 11:** The researcher has discerned no significant difference of mean in age above 25 between Rural Housewives and Urban Housewives with respect to participation in environmental management.

**Findings 12:** It has been observed from the study that there is no significant difference of mean in age above 25 between Rural Policy Makers and Service Holders and Urban Policy Makers and Service Holders with respect to participation in environmental management.

### Conclusion

In a rapidly changing global scenario, the importance of women participation is second to none. Women, who make up half of the world's population, have benefited more than men from the progress in economic and social development in the last three decades. Nevertheless, they continue to be over represented among the world's most helpless groups. Gender is a goal in its own right but also a key factor for sustainable economic growth, social development, and environmental sustainability. By providing the same opportunities to women and, including in decision making in all kinds of activities, a sustainable path of development can be achieved to ensure that women's and men's interests are both taken into account in the



allocation of resources. This study was conducted to get the answers of a set of objectives in relation to women and their participating in environmental management in the district of Indore in Madhya Pradesh. In this connection four Gram panchayets, the four Municipalities in the district of Indore have been surveyed.

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