

## Demographic correlates of Pro-environmental behaviour among secondary school teachers

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### Abstract

Pro-environmental behaviour is behaviour that actively aims to reduce the negative impact of one's actions on the built environment and the natural world. It is the capacity of a person to participate actively in environmental issues. It largely shows how well-versed in and how one feels about environmental issue a person is. To produce students who are ecologically literate, it is vital to have teachers who are concerned about the environment and have scientific knowledge of environmental issues, appropriate instructional methodology, and other elements. It is impossible to visualise the complexity of the question of what influences pro-environmental behaviour using a single framework. The study investigates how the demographic correlates, such as gender and location, affect secondary school teachers' pro-environmental behaviours. The survey results for 150 secondary school teachers showed that, while pro-environmental behaviour is independent of the demographic correlation gender, there is a substantial difference in conservation behaviour between urban and rural teachers. This situation emphasises the need for quick action to promote environmentally friendly behaviour in the teaching-learning community by exposing to various information sources and environmental protection, promotion, and preservation scenarios.

**Key words:** *Pro-environmental behaviour, Demographic correlates, Environmental issues*

### 1. Introduction

Human behaviour is highly influenced by the environment. 'Change champions' can be people. Not only on an individual level, but also within organisations and networks as "agents of change," people are essential for bringing about pro-environmental change. Basically, teachers need to be sufficiently aware of the environment to encourage it in their students. Teachers should set good examples for their children to follow, as this will encourage an interest in the local, regional, and national environments. Instead of becoming an environmentalist in the classroom, the teacher should be an environmental educator. In their research on the influence of environmental knowledge and attitude on pro-environmental activity, Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) and Blake (1999) were successful in developing a number of models of pro-environmental behaviour. The efficacy of these linear models for altering conduct is not supported by research on environmental behaviour. The response to this question refers to the most eminent and respectable social classes, specifically professors or social scientists. If instructors are charged with educating the next generation of citizens in environmental values, it is important to thoroughly examine their own environmental behaviour before entrusting it to future generations. It is inevitable that teachers will have an impact on students' environmental awareness and behaviour. However, in order for teachers to be successful in their mission to promote responsible environmental behaviour among students, it is crucial that teachers exhibit pro-environmental behaviour and receive the proper training in environmental concepts and skills, encouraging students to act in an environmentally friendly way and fostering desirable environmental principles.

### 2. Rationale of the study

The largest formalised base for environmental education and action is the educational system. The school provides a useful tool for instilling the desired environmental principles in youngsters who live in this "fiercely scary plastic age." One of the crucial elements that will inevitably have an impact on pupils' ability to develop this desired environmental ethics and encourage pro-environmental behaviour is their teacher. The complexity of the phrase "Pro-environmental behaviour" used for the study forces the investigator to thoroughly investigate both the primary elements of Pro-environmental behaviour and their corresponding correlates. The human race only recently appears to have come to the realisation that the environment has a significant impact on human existence and endeavours and cannot be disregarded, especially in light of the way that humans have started to exploit and abuse the environment. Ecological consciousness, which is characterised by a sense of self as a part of a large holistic system and awareness of the sociological processes within these systems, would be greatly enhanced and promoted by awareness

and knowledge of the environmental problems, a positive attitude, emotional and behavioural inclination. The analysis of the literature reveals a scarcity of environmental psychology research conducted in India, particularly in the area of teachers' environmental responsibility. The following research questions are posed in this context as the current study explores the connection between the demographic variations - gender and locality) and pro-environmental behaviour.

1. What effect does gender have on the pro-environmental behaviour of secondary school teachers?
2. What effect does gender have on the components of pro-environmental behaviour (viz, travel behaviour, consumer behaviour, conservation behaviour, activist behaviour and vicarious behaviour) among secondary school teachers?
3. How does the demographic correlate locale influence the pattern of pro-environmental behaviour (and its components) among secondary school teachers?

### 3. Objectives of the study

1. To study whether there is a significant variation in pro-environmental behaviour among male and female teachers.
2. To determine whether there are any significant variations between male and female teachers in terms of their travel, consumer, conservation, activist, and vicarious behaviour.
3. To study whether there is a significant difference in pro-environmental behaviour among teachers belonging to rural and urban locale.
4. To find out whether there is a significant difference between teachers of rural and urban origin with respect to their travel, consumer, conservation, activist and vicarious behaviour.

### Methodology

The study's primary focal areas were to assess secondary school teachers' pro-environmental behaviour and some of its selected correlates, as well as determining a relationship between these variables. In order to identify solutions to the proposed focal areas, the most appropriate approach was chosen. The researcher found that the "Survey Method" was a suitable approach for this kind of research. The 150 secondary school teachers in the Thiruvananthapuram district were selected as a sample using the "stratified random sampling technique". The sample had 64 male teachers and 86 female teachers, with 80 and 70, respectively, representing the rural and urban areas. A Pro-environmental Behavioural Scale (PEB Scale) prepared by the investigator was used for the study. This is a standardized Likert type (5-point) scale which consists of 52 items and covers five major types of pro-environmental behaviours namely, travel behaviour, consumer behaviour, conservation behaviour, activist behaviours and vicarious behaviours. The scale has an external validity of 0.57 and a reliability score of 0.86.

**5. Procedure:** Under controlled conditions, the Pro-environmental Behavioural measure was given to the sample. Scoring of the completed response sheets was done by following the arbitrary weighing method conventionally followed in scoring 5-point Likert type scales. The total scores as well as the scores for each type of behaviour was analysed separately and subsample comparisons too was performed. The data was then further processed statistically. The data was coded, tabulated and Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values were calculated.

### 6. Findings and Discussion

**Table6.1: Statistical indices pertaining to pro-environmental behavioural score of secondary school teachers (based on subsample gender)**

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value
Travel behaviour	Male	64	24.3438	3.86773	.48347	1.41
	Female	86	25.2442	3.84382	.41449	
Consumer behaviour	Male	64	27.5156	5.11143	.63893	0.82
	Female	86	28.1977	4.97244	.53619	
Conservation behaviour	Male	64	28.9219	5.27439	.65930	1.59
	Female	86	30.3023	5.27161	.56845	
Activist behaviours	Male	64	46.0312	5.93876	.74234	1.94
	Female	86	48.0465	6.72993	.72571	
Vicarious behaviours	Male	64	50.0625	7.39128	.92391	1.11
	Female	86	48.6279	8.41434	.90734	

PEB total	Male	64	176.8750	19.09084	2.38636	1.09
	Female	86	180.4186	20.50507	2.21112	

The data and results presented in Table 6.1 proves that there is no noteworthy distinction between male and female teachers with respect to their travel behaviour, consumer behaviour, conservation behaviour, activist behaviour, vicarious behaviour and pro-environmental behaviour (total) as all the t-values obtained for the comparison were not significant even at 0.05 level. This shows that the male and female teachers exhibit a more or less similar pro-environmental behaviour. This further proves that pro-environmental behaviour is independent of the demographic correlate gender.

**Table 6.2: Statistical indices pertaining to pro-environmental behavioural score of secondary school teachers (based on subsample locale)**

	Locale	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value
Travel behaviour	Urban	70	24.9571	4.09820	.48983	0.28
	Rural	80	24.7750	3.67673	.41107	
Consumer behaviour	Urban	70	28.0143	5.18776	.62006	0.24
	Rural	80	27.8125	4.91212	.54919	
Conservation behaviour	Urban	70	30.7143	5.05662	.60438	2.20*
	Rural	80	28.8375	5.38268	.60180	
Activist behaviours	Urban	70	46.7857	6.13116	.73281	0.71
	Rural	80	47.5375	6.75605	.75535	
Vicarious behaviours	Urban	70	48.8429	7.18419	.85868	0.56
	Rural	80	49.5875	8.68098	.97056	
PEB total	Urban	70	179.3143	18.68856	2.23371	0.24
	Rural	80	178.5500	21.06043	2.35463	

There is no significant divergence between urban and rural teachers with respect to their travel behaviour, consumer behaviour, activist behaviour, vicarious behaviour and pro-environmental behaviour (total) as all the t-values obtained for the comparison were not significant even at 0.05 level. But there is significant difference between urban and rural teachers in conservation behaviour ( $t = 2.20$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). The higher mean score of urban teachers indicate that they have better conservation behaviour than rural teachers. This may be because of the fact that urban teachers are better exposed to need for environmental conservation and protection by means of media, campaigns or other publicity means than teachers from rural areas. This influence might reflect in the pro-environmental behaviour of urban teachers too. This is in stark contrast to the findings of Hasan and Das (2012) which states that teachers from rural locale has a high level of environmental responsibility compared to teachers from urban locale.

##### 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The results of the study revealed that there is no noteworthy distinction in pro-environmental behaviour among male and female teachers. ( $t = 1.09$ ). Regarding their travel, consumer, conservation, activist, and other sorts of vicarious pro-environmental behaviour, male and female teachers do not significantly differ from one another. The pro-environmental behaviour of teachers from rural and urban backgrounds is also similar. ( $t = 0.24$ ). Regarding their travel, shopping, activist, and vicarious behaviours, teachers with rural and urban background show no discernible differences. Regarding their conservation behaviour, teachers from rural and urban backgrounds differ significantly. ( $t=2.20$ ,  $p< 0.05$ ). The higher mean score of urban teachers indicate that they have better conservation behaviour than rural teachers. The investigation thus convinced that the seeds for a strong Eco literate society should be sowed right from the primary stage. However the secondary level should definitely serve as a platform for the creation of an Eco literate society because the students at the secondary level are full of creative ideas and are also mature enough to understand the basics of Environmental Education. Hence secondary school teachers should be the leaders in inculcating Pro-environmental behaviour in the future citizenry of our country. Educational packages for

promoting Pro-environmental behaviour and awareness about environmental issues should be included both in pre-service and in-service sectors of education. More emphasis should be given to Environmental Education in the school and college level curriculums.

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