

# Attitude of Urban Women towards Environment Related Policies of India

## OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 6

Special Issue: 1

Month: March

Year: 2019

ISSN: 2321-788X

Impact Factor: 3.025

Citation:

Mohamed Nisha, P.

“Attitude of Urban

Women towards

Environment Related  
Policies of India.”

*Shanlax Internatioal*

*Journal of Arts, Science  
and Humanities*, vol. 6,  
no. S1, 2019, pp. 30–33.

DOI:

[https://doi.org/10.5281/  
zenodo.2586372](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2586372)

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## Abstract

*Sustainability of the environment is one of the major problems of India. Women, by the nature of their daily activities of managing the homes and families, play a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation and co-operation in various governmental policies with regard conservation of environmental issues is therefore essential in achieving sustainable development. This paper analyses the attitude of urban women towards the various recently implemented policies of Indian Government to address the problems of environmental degradation. The results indicate that employed women and women with more education tend to exhibit positive attitude about the environment policies.*

**Keywords:** Urban women, environment policies, attitude, education, employment.

## Introduction

India is the world’s second most populous country with a population growth rate of 1.3%, and economic growth rate of 9.2%. India’s present development path is not sustainable. Population growth coupled with rapid economic growth is exerting enormous pressure on India’s limited natural resources (Sharma, 2009). Today, India is facing severe environmental problems like climate change, greenhouse effect, energy crisis, depletion of natural resources, biodiversity loss, pollution of air, water, soil, etc. The time has come to protect the natural environment through precise efforts such as conservation and maintenance of the life supporting systems such as land, water, air, and biological diversity (Kates, & Parris, 2003).

Women always have an integral relation with the environment. They have a vital role in meeting household and community energy needs. They are also mainly responsible for the cleanliness of their household. Since they interact more intensively with the natural environment and build the environment more than men, they are more likely to suffer from a degraded home, neighborhood, and immediate environment (Tiondi, 2000).

Women in India plays a crucial role in protection and conservation of environment. A lot of studies on women and environment have shown that women are significant actors in natural resource management and they are the major contributors to environmental

rehabilitation and conservation (Aditya, 2016). Women have recorded successes in solving environmental problems all over the world and have contributed greatly to the conservation movements in the past. Therefore, women are essential for any measure aimed at environmental protection and sustainable development.

Environmental laws play a vital role in the control of environmental pollution and conservation. Environmental laws with its claws, paws and jaws, are formulated to preserve and protect our environment. India has an elaborate legal framework with over two hundred laws relating to environmental protection. Though the Government of India is working towards an environmentally sound and sustainable quality of life, the problems, challenges and issues are multi-faceted (Prasad, 2006).

For better implementation of these legislations, there is a need for awareness and proper understanding of the Constitutional provisions, environmental laws and related procedures. This would help a community to respond to the changing need of societies and make its citizens responsible to conserve the environment.

Practically being close to nature, women are always able to realize environmental issues better. Since women are the prospective users of the facilities, their full participation is therefore essential to achieving sustainable development. So, it is necessary to consider their views in planning to save the environment and implementing projects for the same.

With this back drop, this study intends to analyse urban women's attitude towards various environmental policies and to study the factors contributing to the differences in their attitude towards the environmental policies.

## **Methodology**

The present study was a descriptive cross-sectional study addresses urban women's attitude towards various environment related policies of government of India. Primary data were collected through a household survey of 1215 women from the city of Chennai. Self-administered questionnaire was the tool for data collection and convenience sampling method was employed in this study. Attitude of women towards environment policies was the independent variable and the various socio demographic factors such as age, education and income were the dependent variables for the study. The data obtained was subjected to statistical interpretation using SPSS (Version 20.0). Descriptive statistical analysis was used to understand the socio-demographic details and the attitude of the selected sample towards environment related policies of government of India. Independent 't'- test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to compare the urban women's level of attitude towards environment policies based on the selected socio-demographic factors.

## **Results and Discussion**

The findings of the study are presented in the following heads

- Urban women's attitude towards various environmental policies.
- Factors influencing the attitude towards environmental policies among urban women.

### **Urban Women's Attitude towards Various Environmental Policies**

In order to understand the attitude of urban women towards the environmental related policies of India, a list of various recently implemented environment related policies were given to the sample and they were asked to record their acceptance. The percentage distribution of the positive response of Urban women's attitude towards various environmental policies is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1 - Urban women's attitude towards various environmental policies  
(In percentage)**

<b>Environmental policies</b>	<b>N=1215</b>	<b>%</b>
Clean India Mission (Swatch Bharat Abhiyan)	1019	83.9
Ban of single use plastic	1000	82.3
Solar subsidy plan	718	59.1
Rain water harvesting scheme	902	74.2
Ban on fire crackers	658	54.2
LED project (replace the incandescent and CFL bulbs to use LED lights)	700	57.6
Clean river project	715	58.8
“Odd-Even” driving restriction program	214	17.6
Introduction of cleaner/alternate fuel like CNG, LPG etc.	423	34.8
Compensatory Afforestation Fund Act	532	43.8

% exceeds 100 due to multiple responses.

From the result, it is inferred that majority of the urban women showed a positive attitude towards Clean India Mission (83.9%) and Ban of single use plastic (82.3%). It is identified from the table, about 74.2 per cent and 59.1 per cent of the sample accepted Rain water harvesting scheme and Solar subsidy plan respectively. Less percentage (17.6%) of acceptance was recorded for ‘Odd-Even’ driving restriction program.

### **Factors Influencing the Attitude Towards Environmental Policies among Urban Women**

One-way ANOVA was carried out to analyse the difference in attitude towards environmental policies among urban women based on the selected socio-demographic variables such as educational qualification and income category. Independent ‘t’ test was employed to find the influence of employment status on the attitude towards environmental policies among urban women. Table 2 shows comparison of attitude towards environmental policies among urban women based on the selected socio-demographic variables.

**Table 2 - Comparison of attitude towards environmental policies among urban women based on the selected socio-demographic variables**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N (1215)</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F/‘t’ value</b>	<b>p value</b>
Educational Qualification	Middle school (a)	366	5.31bcd	53.90	0.000***
	Higher secondary (b)	256	5.83acd		
	Graduation (c)	477	7.05ab		
	PostGraduation (d)	116	7.43ab		
Employment Status#	Full-time homemaking women	662	5.82	7.91	0.000***
	Employed women	553	6.89		

Income	EW(a)	486	6.15	2.27	2.24	0.082NS
	LIG(b)	286	6.28	2.43		
	MIG(c)	304	6.40	2.47		
	HIG(d)	139	6.72	2.71		

# independent 't' test.

NS-Not Significant; \*\*\*-Significant at 0.001 level.

The superscript denotes the significant difference between attributes (represented by alphabets) of a particular variable based on Tukey's Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test for multiple comparison.

From the table, it is observed that there was a highly significant influence of the educational qualification on the attitude towards environmental policies at  $p < 0.001$  level among urban women [ $F(3,1211)=53.90$ ;  $p=0.000$ ]. Tukey's Honest Significant Difference test revealed that the mean attitude score ( $\bar{x}= 7.43$ ) was higher for women possessing postgraduation compared to women having lesser educational qualifications.

The result of independent 't' test showed a significant difference in the attitude towards environmental policies at  $p < 0.001$  level between employed women and full-time homemaking women. The employed women had a mean attitude score of 6.89 compared to full-time homemaking women whose mean value was 5.82. This showed that the employed women had better attitude towards environmental policies than the full-time homemaking women.

It is also found from the results of one-way ANOVA that the income category ( $F(3,1211)=2.24$ ;  $p=0.082$ ) of the urban women does not have any impact in their attitude towards environmental policies.

### Summary and Conclusion

It is apparent from the results that the women of Chennai attach great value to the environment and are possessing positive attitude and responses towards various environment related policies implemented by the Government of India. It is understood that the level of education and employability status increases the positive attitude towards environmental policies among urban women whereas income level does not indicate any differences in their attitude about environment policies.

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