

# Perceived Quality of Environment: A Survey of Public Opinion

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**Abstract:** The central goal of this study was to better understand and quantify how residents of villages around Patancheru a massive industrial belt of Secunderabad city held attitude towards and perceive the quality of environment that constitute their neighbourhood. In addition, the research explored how occupation influences this perception. About 652 heads of the households from surrounding villages responded to a questionnaire/interview schedule. Results indicate that occupation was found to be influencing their attitude towards environment. Occupation was also found to be influencing their concern for quality environment. Lastly, the correlational analysis reveals that increase in the attitude towards the environment positively and significantly increased the concern for quality environment. Thus, the implications were drawn intended to help the pollution control and environmental councils involved in education, outreach and planning.

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## Introduction

Environmental problems have been noticed only in the nineteenth century. Public opinion polls have recorded a variable public interest in environmental problems, reaching a peak during the period 1970-72. Though there has been an increase in the number of polls on a periodic basis, one can only conclude that these polls largely reflect socially acceptable opinions that are influenced by media coverage and social communication about environmental problems. Furthermore, these findings cannot be compared methodologically since the objectives of the various surveys and the nature of the questions have differed according to the context in which they were carried out.

Many of the early studies were intended to be informational; the concept of 'pollution' was undifferentiated and only vaguely related to other social problems. Later studies were more systematic in their research objectives, correlating opinion on various facets of environmentalism with socio-economic variables, other attitude and value indices and personal experience. Studies in environmental perception were recognized as an important concept in the explanation of man environment relationship in the 1960's. Since 1960 onwards, the concept has been taken up in various research projects, theoretically and empirically, at various levels of man-environment relationship (Rathakrishna, 2003).

The study on environmental hazard conditions surely have given a different turn on man-environment relation from environmental determinism to environmental experience of subjective awareness of the real world and man's behaviour in that environment (Agarwal, 1996). The study of subjective image of environmental resources and management of resources has made it realistic and significant in explaining man's response to environment at different cultural situations.

The majority of the studies is concerned with human behaviour and has given a new dimension to the theme of man-environment relationship. Studies relating the impact of environmental pollution hazards on to the people are very limited in number. However, various studies conducted in the field of sociology on environment in the past show that physical and cultural environment is an important aspect for studying relationship between man and his environment in various fields of sociology. Very limited work has been conducted on environmental pollution in sociology (Fisher, 1995).

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The concept of unity of nature presumed a causal inter-relation of all individual features in nature. They said that unity of nature included organic as well as inorganic, human as well as nonhuman, immaterial as well as material. The problem of pollution came up after the era of industrial development, which started, from the 19th century. But at that time it was not a serious problem. It became an important aspect of study for geographers, sociologists as well as other scientists only recently. Norman Lee in his study 'pollution as function of affluence and population increase; discussed the relationship between national increase in population and level of pollution (Dixon, 1972). He has also analyzed that disposal of waste in the environment, increases with increase in population.

Later many scientists from different countries were attracted to study the problem of pollution, and its effects on the human environment. The scientists, engineers and anthropologists on environmental pollution in developed countries have done a good deal of work but in the field of sociology very limited work has been done (Sheth, 1995).

In the work of Karan (1977) pollution has been considered as problems for the population living in any part of the world. He has also analyzed causes of pollution and given proper suggestions to solve this problem. Karan has given proper attention towards the sources of pollution, their spatial variation and measures to control it. He has concluded that our cities are going to be polluted day-by-day unhealthy human practices.

Environmental problems are also a serious problem in socialist system. Coppock and Wilson (1974) considered in their pollution studies, the quality of environment and its impact on human health. Emphasis has recently shifted to the city environment, where certain manifestations of pathological behaviour and special malaise appear as increasingly serious side-effects of city life and the side-effects of land pollution on human-mental health (Michelson, 1970).

First of all studies of pollution and its spatial variation were conducted by Wood et al. (1974), and they have also suggested that for planning purposes, it is an essential aspect to study cities. In his study, he has identified various pollutants emanating from burning of fuel to generate heat and power, including vehicular sources as well as industry. He mapped level of air pollution, which comprise important source of emissions of sulphur dioxide and particulate matter.

However, the study of pollution in India triggered off with the study of conservation of resources, disturbance in the delicate balance of nature and advancing risk zones of hazards. Kayastha (1966) has related soil erosion with excessive deforestation, overgrazing and faulty agricultural practices. In other places, he has pleaded for conservation of natural resources in a major region like the Himalayas. Further, he has attempted to relate the water pollution in different cities like Varanasi, with the proposed national water policy of India (Kayastha, 1966; Mazureck, 1996).

Some major environmental issues identified by Rathakrishnan (2003) are i) population explosion and its increasing demand for physical availability of natural resources. li) urbanization and health as another issue has implication on disposal dumping and its impact on health; how to prevent fast spreading of urbanization. liii) pollution is addition 0.2% of Co<sub>2</sub> every year and USA, European union and Japan contribute to more than 40% of global co<sub>2</sub> (anon, 1998). lvi) land degradation due to the conversion of cultivable land to non-farm activities and real estates. V) reduction of food production and increasing malnourishment around the world and deforestation, biodiversity and species extinction besides global warming, greenhouse effects and ozone layer depletion.

As it appears, limited work has been conducted by social scientists in this branch of applied science in India but the works of other scientists are quite satisfactory. Sociologists' contribution in the field of environmental pollution in India is considerably limited. Hence this study attempts to fill such gap while assessing the peoples' attitude towards environmental situation and concern for quality environment.

### **The Present Study**

Research shows that thoughtless and haphazard industrialization causes environmental degradation that brings changes in material conditions and has very serious implications for physical, mental (health), economic and social well being of the people which in turn leads to changes in their behaviour pattern, social structure and culture.

Globally, the argument between northern nations with that of southern nations is quite perplexing. It is with regard to the ozone layer depletion as a major environmental problem today. The northern nations blame the southern nations that it is due to their extensive usage of fertilizers and pesticides, the ozone layer is affected. The southern nations posed a counter argument stating that it is due to the heavy industrialization in the northern nations culminating in the release of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that have affected the ozone layer.

This debate is never-ending. But who will shoulder the responsibility for protecting the environment? This is possible only when both the northern and southern nations come to grips with the understanding of the unified responsibility to share the damages and start building constructive strategies to repair the depleted layer of the ozone.

With this premise, this study adopts an approach "think locally and act globally". In other words, we cannot shoulder the responsibility for such gigantic task of protecting the environment unless, we do something locally by understanding the problem of environment from micro-perspective before we think of any action from macro-perspective. Thus, there is need to carry out sociological and anthropological studies to understand the impact of environment on people. Environmental problems are more sociological rather than technological since people are affected. As a matter of fact, there is a need to understand the totality of effects that environment influences the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of individuals, groups and the communities.

Any particular environmental issue will impinge upon the public in several different ways. There will always be some who will not be aware of the problem either because it does not appear to concern them nor impress them. How does one see the environment in the immediate future, not changed materially, but a profound shift in human attitudes right from the villagers to policy makers and everyone in between. A year or two is too short a time to see major environmental change, but the steps we initiate or the systems that are building today will save tomorrow, once science based environment and development take roots in the country and gather momentum.

Each individual has a role to play in protecting the environment. Environmental concerns are no longer the exclusive domain of a few cities and activists, but have to become the continuing concerns of the people at large. With the awareness already created, it should be possible for this to become people's movement with strong public support.

In view of the issues discussed so far, this study incorporates the findings of the study carried on a cross-section of people who have divergent views with personal interest and lack of interest in environmental issues, their approach to and reaction on what ought to be done, by whom and in what manner and also the role they feel they have in the whole gamut.

Thus keeping the approach of thinking locally for an action globally, this study addresses the issue of environmental problems from sociological standpoints. Firstly, this study intends to elicit the ranking preferences of the ecological issues from the respondents. This is done to know how the respondents have perceived the aspects of environment in general. Secondly, it intends to study the attitude towards environmental situation of the cross-sectionally selected respondents namely : business people, professionals (managers, doctors, advocates, engineers/scientists, welfare officers), working class and the non-working class. This is also done from the point of view that assessment of environmental problems needs cross-sectional focus from the society so that more dependable results could be expected. Thirdly, this study assesses the concern of the cross-sectionally chosen participants for the quality of environment in their surroundings. This is done to understand to what extent these people are environmentally responsive and conscious. Further, it is understood that such concern may enable people to take small initiatives to conserve the nature and prevent many problems in advance. Fourthly, it intends to assess the relationship between participant's attitudes towards environmental situation and the concern for environmental quality. This is address with an understanding that attitudes determine the concern. Cognitively, the attitudes are formed on the basis of perceptions/ranking of the aspects related to the environment, which are addressed first in this study. Further, the repetitive perceptions form values, opinions, beliefs and attitudes. Attitudes determine the respondents concern and their concern determines the behaviour or actions. Thus the relationship between the attitude towards environmental situation and the concern for environmental quality is assessed. Lastly, implications are drawn for future research and practice issues for environmental sociologists, thus, suggesting environmental sociology as a distinct specialization of the broader sociology.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To study the ranking of environmental issues in the order of preference by villagers in and around an industrial belt.
2. To assess the attitude towards environmental situation according to the socio- economic variables.
3. To understand the concern for environmental quality according to the socio- economic variables.
4. To find out the relationship between attitude towards environment situation and concern for environmental quality.

### **Hypothesis**

While keeping the above objectives the following null hypothesis are formulated.

- H<sub>1</sub>. Attitude towards environmental situation do not differ according to the socio- economic variable  
 H<sub>2</sub>. Concern for environmental quality does not differ according to the socio- economic variables.  
 H<sub>3</sub>. There exists no positive correlation between attitude towards environmental situation and concern for environmental quality.

### **Methodology**

Patancheru is located about 25Kms West of Hyderabad on Bombay Highway. Preliminary estimates suggest that Patancheru and surrounding villages are seriously affected by pollution. It is due to this reason the general environmental concern of the people is studied in this particular area.

For collection of data, a structured questionnaire is applied to gather information from the respondents. The questionnaire consists of three parts. Part A elicits information regarding demographic profile of the respondents. Part B includes a scale to elicit respondents ranking preferences of the ecological issues and standardized scale to measure participants' attitude towards environmental situation. While part C includes a standardized scale to assess the participants concern for environmental quality. The 5-point Likert's response pattern is used for all the scales (where, 5=strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3=Undecided, 4=Disagree, 1=Strongly disagree).

As regards sampling, in this study a multistage stratified disproportionate random sampling technique is adopted. Out of 900, 652 respondents reported to the study. A response rate of 72.44 percent. Data collected from the field were entered and processed with the help of computer and statistical software.

### **Profile of Respondents**

An overview of the socio-economic background of the respondents reveals that the majority of the respondents are from 36-45 age group. Study sample comprised of more males than females. A little above half of the sample respondents studied upto Intermediate and S.S.C, while the rest of the respondents studied upto graduation and post graduation. There is a balanced representation from all four categories of occupation under study. A majority of the respondents' monthly income falls between 3000 to 6000 rupees. Nearly equal number of respondents lives in extended and Nuclear families. There is a greater representation of respondents with rural origin than urban origin. Hindus constitute a higher number. Forward caste respondents' representation is high. Thus, it could be said that the sample represents a cross-section of the Patancheru area.

### **Results**

Firstly, the villagers ranking preferences for ecological aspects in and around their villages has been analyzed with the help of weighted mean and presented. Secondly, the attitude towards environmental situation is analyzed in relating to the socio-economic variables. Thirdly, the villagers concern for quality environment is analyzed in relation to their socioeconomic variables. Lastly, correlation coefficient has been computed between the actual scores of attitude and concern variables.

#### **Weighted Average Mean Scores Of Aspects Ecological**

Thirteen aspects related to environmental aspects have been included in this study. The respondents were asked to rate them according to their concern. Ratings are converted into ranks with the help of the formula. The data according to the ranks computed with the help of the formula are presented in table 1.

$$\text{Weighted mean (WM)} = \frac{(R1 \times F1) + (R1 \times F2) + (R3 \times F3) \dots (R13 \times F13)}{n}$$

TABLE 1 : WEIGHTED AVERAGE MEANS OF ECOLOGICAL ASPECTS

S.No	Ecological Aspects	WAM score	Rank
1	Contaminated drinking water	2.073	1
2	Air Pollution with gas	2.291	2
3	Noxious chemicals substances in fruits and vegetables	4.699	3
4	Dirty streets, deteriorating buildings	4.773	4
5	Anti-sanitary conditions of urban territories	4.815	5
6	Damaging public parks, recreation places	5.766	6
7	Polluted rivers, lakes and seas	5.846	7
8	Excessive level of noise	6.098	8
9	Deterioration of soil and its natural fertility	8.576	9
10	Absence of parks, gardens and green grounds	9.294	10
11	Shallowing of lakes and rivers and other changes in the landscape	9.650	11
12	Excessive level of radiation	9.736	12
13	Vanishing of certain species of birds just and animals plants	11.012	13

Table 1 shows the distribution of the ranks assigned by the respondents to the ecological aspects of their region. It is evident from the rankings that hapless residents feel the existence of government and civic bodies by their apathy and inaction rather than efficacy and efficiency. The meager resources at their command and the ineffective manner these are put to use and translate into devices to find shortcuts for basic civic amenities. Untreated drinking water supply through pipelines leading to spread of deadly diseases. the greatest worry of the respondents is the contaminated drinking water and so it has been ranked highest. Rapid industrialization and economic growth is leading into miserable existence with the deteriorating conditions in the atmosphere.

Air pollution with gas is thus identified as the second major worry of the respondents. Ecological balance has been disturbed beyond measure. Industries release effluents into the air resulting into pollution of the environment. Because of pollution the good substances are contaminated which are resulting to health problems. Respondent identified this particular aspect as the third major worry. mountains of garbage pervade the urban scene. Pigs and other stray animals roam unhindered digging into the mounds and spreading the rubbish into adjoining areas. Diseases, death and destruction obviously follow with the outbreak of epidemics. Dirty streets and deteriorating buildings is another greatest concern of the respondents. Mindless disposal of refuse into the open drains clog the flow and stagnating dirty water becomes the ideal breeding ground for mosquitoes. Epidemics soon follow and the residents are exposed to innumerable health hazards. respondents henceforth ranked this particular ecological aspect as the fifth major concern.

A peculiar phenomenon is that garbage dumps are seen in public parks. Ever accumulating garbage dumps at recreation places have come to characterize the life of the residents. Urban settlements

consequently present an unseen sight, provide breeding grounds for harmful insects giving rise to periodic epidemics and dangerous diseases. The residents have some to resignedly accept the situation as it unfolds. The whole picture is one of unmitigated hardship, which is avoidable and unaffordable. this is another major worry of the respondents. Respondents ranked polluted rivers and lakes as the seventh major concern. According to them human beings increasing interference with nature beyond a certain limit causes environmental damage, which is harmful for all the organisms. Due to human induced environmental changes, harmful products originate which cause unwanted contamination through toxic substances in the natural environment, which give rise to polluted rivers, lakes and seas. Phenomenal increase of vehicles on the road is leading to noise pollution, traffic jams and congestion. Smoke emitted by these vehicles is causing a number of respiratory tract infections. This situation is resulting into environmental degradation. Excessive level of noise is thus ranked as the eighth major concern of the respondents. The respondents identified deterioration of soil and its natural fertility as the next major concern of the ecological situation respondents ranked swallowing of lakes, rivers and other changes in the landscape as the eleventh major worry of the ecological situation.

Many people have a sense of how much temperature fluctuates and what effects hot weather has upon humans. Respondents consider hotter weather to be a major problem of global warming. According to them changes in average temperature can have huge effects on nature. The primary concerns are the indirect effects of temperatures, shifted biological range, changes in agriculture, increased frequency and severity of tropical storms, higher sea level and so on. Respondents thus ranked excessive level of radiation as their another major worry of ecological situation.

Vanishing of certain species of birds, fish and animal plants are ranked the last major concern of the respondents. According to them the destruction of species results into a great loss. There are a lot of species, which are used for different chemicals and drugs, the extinction of which leads to greater loss to humanity. Respondents also volunteered that they have a personal interest or empathy with animals or described themselves as "animal lovers". Respondents are more concerned about species loss by justifying species protection in terms of the value for descendants.

#### Attitude Towards Environment Situation.

the results regarding respondents' attitude towards environmental situation in Patancheru. This is done in order to test the hypothesis that " respondents attitude towards environmental situation may differ according to their socio-economic background variables". The attitude for towards environmental situation has been assessed with the help of eight items, which were found highly reliable. These items were computed to obtain the actual scores. The mean attitudinal scores obtained are 33.129 with standard deviation of 3.350. The actual attitudinal scores are reclassified into three groups on the basis of quartile values. Values that are lesser than 1st quartile value (30.0) are grouped as "poor attitude", value that are above 3rd quartile (35.0) are grouped as "good attitude". The values that fall between 1st and 3rd quartile are termed as "moderate attitude". Reclassified data is presented in table 2.

TABLE 2 : GROUPED ATTITUDINAL SCORES

S.No.	Score Group	Attitude	Frequency	percent
1	22-31	Poor	208	31.9
2	32-34	moderate	288	44.2
3	35-40	Good	156	23.9
	Total		652	100.0

Table shows that nearly one third of the respondents (31.9 percent) scored between 22 and 31 scores are characterized by poor attitude, followed by 44 percent of them who scored between 32 and 34 scores are characterized by moderate attitude. the remaining of them (23.9 percent) scored between 35 and 40 scores is characterized by good attitude.

#### Occupation and Attitude Towards Environment Situation

People's awareness concerning environmental problems is increasing as a result of environmentally induced health problems. Assuming that responses vary in relation to occupation data is cross tabulated and presented in table 3

TABLE 3 : OCCUPATION AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENVIRONMENT SITUATION

S.No	Occupation	Attitude			Total
		Poor	Moderate	Good	
1	Professionals	40 (32.3)	44 (35.5)	40 (32.3)	124 (19.0)
2	Businessmen	56 (35.0)	76 (47.5)	28 (17.5)	160 (24.5)
3	Working class	68 (33.3)	72 (35.3)	64 (31.4)	204 (31.3)
4	Non-working class	44 (26.8)	96 (58.5)	24 (14.6)	164 (25.2)
	Total	208 (31.9)	288 (44.2)	156 (23.9)	652 (100.0)

$$X^2 = 32.76 \quad D.F. = 6 \quad P = .0000$$

Among professionals nearly one third of them have poor attitude than those who have moderate (35.5 percent) and good (32.3 percent) attitude. Among business group a little over one third (35 percent) have poor attitude than those who have moderate (47.5 percent) and good attitude (17.5 percent). Among working class a little over one third (35.3 percent) have moderate attitude while one third (33.3 percent) have poor attitude and nearly one third (31.4 percent) have good attitude. Among non-working group a little over one fourth (26.8 percent) of them have poor attitude than those who have moderate (58.5 percent) and good (14.6 percent) attitude. As expected the Chi-Square test value shows that differences in attitude in relation to occupation are statistically significant at .0000 level of significance. Thus it could be said that attitude towards environment situation depends on occupation.

Among professionals poor attitude is expressed because the deterioration of environment situation is involving psycho, social health as well as physical health. According to them then the "greenery" in the environment makes them pleasant and this is lacking. However those who expressed good attitude towards environment are concerned about environment not so much for its deteriorating situation but because it is an indicator of how quickly humanity is destroying the environment. Among business group good attitude may be because the, changing environment situation is not a major problem while those who expressed poor attitude is due to the fact they are not environmentally concerned but are more keen in displaying wealth.



Among the working class poor attitude towards environment is because they perceive it as pollution problem and awareness of pollution problem has been mainly derived from direct exposure to pollutants. Among those who have good attitude is due to the aesthetic appreciation for nature without being environmentally conscious. Good attitude among non-working is expressed in relation to the sacredness of nature while those who have poor attitude may be because the deteriorating environment situation is dangerous and harmful for human health.

### **Concern For Environmental Quality**

An explosive increase in the exponential form of population growth and industrialization has jointly caused a havoc in the human adjustment in city-environment. This has been reflected in two forms; in social context, more people are ill housed, malnourished and under-privileged than even before; while on the other hand a continuous degradation of environment has been noticed. The city dwellers, especially the middle and lower class, are increasingly found in wretchedly over-crowded and polluted cities.

The matter of public concern for environmental quality is to have a decent life. This is still an under researched topic, though there is reason to believe that people generally prefer not to think about "distasteful" subjects that are not regarded as personally relevant or about which they feel they can do little. However an unique attempt is made to understand the public concern for environmental quality among different age groups, sex, levels of education, different occupations, income groups types of family, family modernity, family origin, religious and caste groups.

### Concern for Environmental Quality

It was hypothesis that "respondents concern for environmental quality do not differ according to their socio-economic background variables" is tested. The concern towards environmental quality has been assessed with the help of nine items, which were found highly relievable in pilot study and the present study. Scores of the respondents for these items were computed to arrive at actual scores. The actual scores are reclassified into three groups on the basis of their quartile values. Values that are lesser than 1st quartile value (33.0) are grouped as "less concern", values that are above third quartile (39.0) are grouped as "more concern". The values that fall between 1st and 3rd quartile are termed as "moderate concern for environmental quality".

TABLE 4: GROUPED SCORES ON CONCERN FOR ENVIRONMENT QUALITY

Sno.	Score	Group	Frequency	Percentage
1.	25-34	Less	220	32.8
2.	35-38	Moderate	236	36.2
3.	39-45	More	196	30.0
	Total		652	100.0

Table 4 shows that one third of the respondents (33.8 percent) percent scored between 25 and 34 are characterized by less concern for environmental quality, followed by 36.2 percent who scored between 35

and 38 scores are characterized by moderate concern for environmental quality. The remaining of them scored between 39 and 45 are characterized by more concern for environmental quality.

#### Occupation and Concern for Environmental Quality

Another important dimension to be instrumental in influencing the respondents concern for environmental quality is the occupations. A table showing the relationship between the different occupations and concern for environmental quality drawn below.

TABLE 5 : OCCUPATION AND CONCERN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

S.No	Occupation	Concern			Total
		Less	Moderate	More	
1	Professionals	44 (35.5)	56 (45.2)	24 (19.4)	124 (19.0)
2	Businessmen	60 (37.5)	76 (47.5)	24 (15.0)	160 (24.5)
3	Working class	68 (33.3)	88 (43.1)	48 (23.5)	204 (31.3)
4	Non-working class	48 (29.3)	72 (43.9)	44 (26.8)	164 (25.2)
	Total	220 (33.7)	292 (44.8)	140 (21.5)	652 (100.0)

$$X^2 = 8.15770$$

$$D.F. = 6$$

$$P = .2268$$

From the above table it is found that among professionals a little over one third of the respondents (35.5 percent) have less concern for environmental quality than others who have moderate (45.2 percent) and more (19.4 percent) concern for environmental quality. Among the business class a little above one third (37.5 percent) have less concern for environmental quality than others who have (47.5 percent) moderate and more (15 percent) concern for environmental quality. Among working class one third (33.3 percent) of the respondents have less concern for environmental quality than those who have moderate (43.1 percent) and more (23.5 percent) concern for environmental quality. Among non working class slightly over one fourth (29.3) have less concern for environmental quality than others who have (43.9 percent) moderate and (26.8 percent) more concern for environmental quality. The Chi-Square test value shows that such difference in concern for environmental quality according to occupation are statistically insignificant. Hence both the variable is independent.

The concern for environmental quality does not have a relationship with the occupation of the respondents. This may be because of the different degrees of awareness. The concern for environmental quality gets filtered through individual value, judgment, mood and expectations. It includes many facts of peoples mind. Less concern among the respondents is due to pollution, which is becoming a serious threat to human health and those respondents who feel god created the natural world and so it is wrong to abuse it express comfort and good concern.

#### Correlation Between Attitude Towards Environment Situation and Concern for Environment Quality

An attempt has been made to present the testing of third hypothesis that is "there exists no positive correlation between attitude towards environmental situation and concern for environmental quality". This

is tested with the help of Pearson's correlation coefficient between attitude scores and the scores on concern for environmental quality. The most specific hypothesis of all is the one that is tested in this part. This is based on the contention that the respondents concern for environmental quality is determined by their attitude towards the existing environmental situation.

TABLE 6: COEFFICIENT OF CORRELATIONS BETWEEN ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENVIRONMENT SITUATION AND CONCERN FOR ENVIRONMENT QUALITY

S.No	Attitude	r
1	Costs of damages to the environment should be covered by those who cause them, whenever possible	.2479*
2	The import of Industrial/Residential waste polluting the environment should be prohibited as soon as possible.	.3865*
3	Entrepreneurs with an ecology-oriented behaviour will have competitive advantages in the future .	.3149*
4	We shall strive for growth and discover other qualitative values but not at the expense of our environment .	.1701*
5	The lack of ozone (A layer present in the troposphere which is at a distance of 10-15 kms from earth) responsible for the warming of atmosphere, catastrophes will threaten mankind so heavily that we shall be urged to main renunciations (giving up of things)	.4350*
6	The environmental impact statement is a meaningful and effective legal action for the protection of the environment	.4497*
7	Mankind will solve the environmental problems just like it has solved other difficult problems in the past .	.1532*
8	We must be concerned about the environment even though many other nations stand aside .	.3930*
9	Overall attitude towards environmental situation .	.5974*

**N=652. p = \* .001**

It is evident from table that all the items have yielded a positive correlation with attitude and concern for environmental quality as reported by the respondents. Further all these correlations have been statistically significant at .001 level of significance.

Of all the attitudes, the top five correlation of concern for environmental quality are, "meaningful and effective legal action for the protection of the environment" yielded a strongest correlation with concern for environmental quality ( $r=.4497$ ,  $P=.001$ ), followed by "Ozone depletion as responsible for global warming and catastrophes that threaten mankind" ( $r=.4350$ ,  $P=.001$ ), "We must be concerned about the environment even though many other nations stand aside" ( $r=.3930$ ,  $P=.001$ ), "Pollution of the environment by industrial waste should be prohibited as soon as possible" ( $r=.3865$ ,  $P=.001$ ), "Entrepreneurs with an ecology oriented behaviour will have competitive advantage in the future", ( $r=.3149$ ,  $P=.001$ )

The least of all the attitudes is "Mankind will solve the environmental problems just like it has solved other difficult problems in the past" ( $r=.1532$ ,  $P=.001$ ).

The overall attitude score is correlated positively, strongly and significantly with environmental quality concern ( $r=.5974$ ,  $P=.001$ ). It could be said that there exists a strong supportive correlation between attitude towards environment situation and concern for environment quality, advocating the contention that attitudes determine the concerns. Thus, hypothesis has been accepted. In other words as the attitude improves the concern for environmental quality also increases significantly.

## **Discussion**

Environmental problems are thus, an outcome of social processes and the only solution to environmental crisis, "Athfield (1983) believes, is the shared insight of people that they would be happier if they could work together and care for each other".

The challenge before the country is to preserve its environment keeping intact the capacity of already over-burdened land to feed its growing population and meet the basic energy needs without jeopardizing the future. It is a difficult task and the last 40 years of development planning has not been kind on the environment.

Environment is one of the basic resources for development and if it is damaged or diminished by pollution, development potential of the country suffered and suffers. While importance of environmental protection is obvious, transforming it into action depends on several factors. The entrepreneurs who set up industries, workers who operate plants. Irrigation engineers who design dams and power plants, householders who consume energy, politicians who promote projects, judge who pass sentences on environmental offenders, lawyers who argue environmental cases, doctors who treat patients affected by pollution all should be made aware of the environmental implications of their actions.

In essence, interest groups, professionals and people at local level must participate in decision-making. But mere environmental awareness is not enough, it has to be reinforced with knowledge and training to equip people to work in an environmentally beneficial manner. However, findings provide cautions optimism in that the people are already developing the values, and some conceptual tools for dealing with environmental problems. Conceptually, public understanding of these problems is still inadequate. Nevertheless, current environmental values represent a major change in how our culture conceives of the relationship between humanity and nature. Although we consider the incorporation of environmental concern into our culture a significant positive step, the task of translating this concern into effective action still lies ahead.

The study shows that concern towards environment is seen equally among people in general, Environment quality is a socially acceptable topic for conversation. People are environmentally concerned to have a decent life and avoid "distasteful" "circumstances".

## **Implications**

1. All should come together as one community to pursue the goal of protecting and sustaining the environmental development. According to the view of respondents the different sustainability criteria are:

2. Economic sustainability-Development expected should meet human needs improve for welfare of community well being.
3. Ecological sustainability-Development should aim for renewability of resources regionally and globally.
4. Social /community sustainability-A proposal should promote fair and equitable distribution of benefits and costs.
5. Policy and Institutional Integration-Sustainability criteria should also focus on proposed planning/assessment process identify the substantive issues and their policy and institutional implications, suggest alternative actions for resolving problems, elaborate decisional criteria, and establish conditions for monitoring, auditing and evaluating progress in each of these areas. A strategy for sustainable living should be adopted.

### **Conclusion**

This study addressed an important issue in the environmental sociology that the people's response to the ecological problems. In the form of a case study, this was conducted in Patancheru, a thickly industrialized belt of Hyderabad city. This region is divided into residential area, commercial area and industrial area. From each of these areas, professionals, businessmen, working population and non-working population were selected to whom a structured questionnaire was administered. They responded that large number of them have moderate attitude towards environment situation and moderate concern for the quality of environment. In other words, this means that people have a general impression about the environmental problems in Patancheru.

With regard to hypotheses, out of three hypotheses, only one has received full support that is "there exists positive correlation between attitude towards environmental situation and concern for environmental quality". The other two hypotheses have received less support in this study.

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