

AN ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCE IN FEMALES AND MALES ATTITUDE TOWARDS ECO-FRIENDLY PRACTICES AT HOME

*Vaibhav Kumar Vishwakarma¹, Prabhakar Pandey² and Sujeet Kapur³

¹Assistant Lecturer, Institute of Hotel Management Bhopal, M.P., ²Assistant Lecturer, State Institute of Hotel Management, Dimapur, Nagaland and ³Senior Lecturer, Institute of Hotel Management Bhopal, M.P.

*kumar.vaibhav66@gmail.com, prabhakar7341@gmail.com, sujeetkapoor@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Background: Eco-friendly behavior, sometimes referred to as green behavior or eco-behavior, is the idea that people, groups, and communities should make decisions and take activities to reduce their environmental effect and advance ecological sustainability. Ecological behavior is essential for maintaining biodiversity, protecting ecosystems, and conserving natural resources. The current study focuses on the environmentally conscious actions that Bhopal city's men and women take at home. **Objective:** The objective of the study was to examine the attitude of men and women towards eco friendly habits at home. **Methodology:** The present research is quantitative, in nature. The study was conducted in the Bhopal city. Convenience sampling was used for the collection of the data. Respondents were asked closed-ended questions on 5-point Likert scale related to their demographic profile and their attitude towards eco-friendly practices at home. 270 responses from 162 male and 108 were female respondents aged more than 18 years was collected. Descriptive statistics was adopted to get the results of present research. **Results:** In order of importance male showcased importance for saving water (84%), switch the light off when leaving a room (76.5%), use of energy efficient light bulbs (76.5%) and turn AC off in unoccupied rooms (75.3%) are the top four eco-friendly practices. For female switching the light off when leaving a room (90.7%), saving water (83.3%), turning AC off in unoccupied rooms (81.5%) and turning heat off in unoccupied rooms (79.6%) were the top four eco-friendly practices followed at their homes. **Conclusion:** Saving water; switching the light off when leaving a room, using of energy efficient light bulbs and turning AC off in unoccupied rooms were the top four eco-friendly practices which are mostly practiced by males at their homes. For female switching the light off when leaving a room, saving water, Turning AC off in unoccupied rooms and Turning heat off in unoccupied rooms were the top four eco-friendly practices.

Key Words: Eco-friendly Practices, Males Eco-friendly Behavior, Females Eco-friendly Behavior, Home.

INTRODUCTION

Eco-friendly behavior is defined as adopting behaviors and making decisions that have the least number of adverse effects on the environment (Cherian & Jacob, 2012). It seeks to advance harmony between human activity and the natural environment and is based on the ideas of sustainability. A variety of facets of daily life are included in eco-friendly behavior, such as consumption habits, waste disposal, energy use, transportation, and more (Chen et al., 2021).

Understanding how human activity affects the environment is the first step towards adopting eco-friendly behavior (Gill et al., 2021). Understanding the importance of biodiversity, the consequences of climate change, and the interdependence of ecosystems are necessary for it. Using natural resources wisely is a sign of environmental consciousness (Khurshid & Darzi, 2016). Reducing the number of raw materials, energy, and water used is necessary for this, as is actively

participating in resource conservation-related activities. Composting, recycling, and reusing items are some of the methods used by environmentally concerned people to cut back on the garbage they produce (Mbasera et al., 2016). This helps keep things out of landfills, conserves resources, and decreases the environmental effect of disposing of waste. Using energy-efficient appliances, turning off lights and devices when not in use, and investigating renewable energy sources are examples of eco-friendly conduct (Harun et al., 2022). Being environmentally conscious means choosing the goods and services one uses with awareness. This entails choosing sustainable and environmentally friendly products, endorsing businesses that practice environmental responsibility, and staying away from products that worsen the environment (Barbarossa & De Pelsmacker, 2016).

Making eco-friendly decisions at home is crucial for a number of reasons, including the fact that it improves both human health and the state of the planet as a whole (Leelakulthanit, 2019). Eco-friendly actions taken at home can minimize the overall impact on the environment, reduce pollution, and help conserve natural resources (Pirani & Secondi, 2011). Households can help to preserve ecosystems and biodiversity by adopting sustainable practices like recycling, cutting back on water use, and using energy-efficient appliances (Akadiri et al., 2012). Household energy use and waste production have a substantial impact on the carbon footprint of households, which contributes to climate change (Verma et al., 2021). Using renewable energy sources, cutting energy use, and supporting carbon offset programs are examples of eco-friendly behaviors that help lessen the effects of climate change (Raihan & Tuspekova, 2022).

Materials must be reduced, reused, and recycled in order to practice eco-friendly behavior (Nameghi & Shadi, 2013). This lessens the impact of extraction and manufacturing processes on the environment, reduces the need for raw materials, and conserves valuable resources. Long-term financial savings can result from a number of eco-friendly household habits, including water and energy conservation (Loux, 2008). For instance, conserving water can save costs (Bourg, 2004) and using energy-efficient appliances can lower electricity bills (Davis, 2011). Sustainable practices frequently save money and improve the environment at the same time (Peeters, 2005). Reducing the amount of chemicals and toxins in the home is a common aspect of eco-friendly behavior (Loux, 2008). Residents may benefit from better indoor air quality

and a healthier living environment as a result. Furthermore, organic and sustainable food choices have a positive effect on an individual's health (Lazaroiu et al., 2019). Educating and raising awareness can be achieved by implementing eco-friendly practices at home. Families can educate themselves about how their decisions affect the environment, fostering in them a sense of accountability and a dedication to sustainable living.

Eco-friendly households serve as role models for the neighborhood. According to McKenzie-Mohr (2011), sustainable practices have the potential to spread beyond individual households when neighbors and friends observe them being practiced. Reducing the quantity of waste dumped in landfills is possible with proper waste management, which includes recycling and composting (Singh et al., 2011). Thus, land and natural ecosystems are maintained, and the detrimental impacts of trash disposal on the environment are lessened. Water quality can be maintained by conserving water and avoiding the use of dangerous chemicals in cleaning supplies (Schwarzenbach et al., 2010). Ecosystems, aquatic life, and the general wellbeing of the environment all depend on this. Adopting eco-friendly practices at home is essential to the planet's and communities' long-term sustainability (Chen et al., 2008). It guarantees that the environment will be healthier and more resilient for coming generations. To summarize, adopting eco-friendly practices at home is crucial for preserving the environment, mitigating the effects of climate change, conserving resources, saving money, improving health, educating the public, and leading by example (Begum et al., 2021). The combined contribution of every household can make a big difference in the planet's overall health.

Concept of Eco-Friendly Behavior

Eco-friendly behavior, sometimes referred to as green behavior or eco-behavior, is the idea that people, groups, and communities should make decisions and take actions to reduce their environmental impact and advance ecological sustainability (Kurz, 2002; Paswan et al., 2017). This idea is based on the knowledge that actions taken by humans have a substantial influence on the atmosphere and that acting sustainably is essential to the planet's long-term health (Jain & D'lima, 2018). According to Agrawal and Gupta (2018), environmentally friendly behavior entails the responsible and efficient use of natural resources. This entails cutting back on overall resource usage, choosing sustainable substitutes, and

getting involved in conservation initiatives. By implementing strategies like recycling, composting, and cutting back on single-use items, people who follow environmentally friendly behavior aim to reduce the amount of waste they produce (Săplăcan & Márton, 2019). Redirecting materials from landfills and advancing the circular economy are the objectives. Making a deliberate effort to lower energy consumption and increase energy efficiency is a key element of environmentally friendly behavior (Watson et al., 2010). This can involve utilizing energy-saving appliances, making the most of the energy used at home and at work, and reassuring the usage of renewable energy sources.

Need of Eco-Friendly Behavior

Because of the numerous environmental, social, and economic issues, it is imperative that people adopt eco-friendly behaviors (Usman et al., 2023). According to Sharmin et al. (2020), eco-friendly behavior is essential for maintaining biodiversity, protecting ecosystems, and conserving natural resources. Adopting sustainable practices helps mitigate the impacts of human activity-induced degradation of many ecosystems (Ren et al., 2007). Human activity is primarily to blame for climate change, particularly the combustion of fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial processes (Driga & Drigas, 2019). To lessen the negative effects of climate change, eco-friendly behavior is crucial. Examples of this include cutting carbon emissions, utilizing renewable energy sources, and endorsing policies that promote climate change (Thøgersen, 2021). The resources of the earth are limited, and these include forests, minerals, and water. Practicing eco-friendly behavior promotes responsible consumption, lowers the overall demand for resources, and stops the depletion of vital natural resources (Quoquab & Mohammad, 2017). Overproduction of single-use plastics and improper waste disposal are two factors that contribute to pollution and environmental damage. Recycling, using less plastic, and encouraging circular economy methods are examples of eco-friendly behavior that helps reduce waste and its negative effects on ecosystems (Zhang et al., 2022). Eco-friendly behavior is consistent with the concepts of sustainable development, which seek to meet current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Pazowski, 2015). Long-term well-being is ensured by sustainable practices, which balance social, economic, and environmental factors (Sopiana & Harahap, 2023). Conventional energy sources, particularly fossil fuels, are limited resources and cause air pollution (Arutyunov

& Lisichkin, 2017). By promoting energy efficiency and the utilization of renewable energy sources, eco-friendly behavior helps to lessen reliance on non-renewable and environmentally damaging energy sources (Omer, 2013). The imperative to address environmental challenges, promote sustainable development, safeguard human health, and guarantee the welfare of current and future generations raise awareness of the requirement of eco-friendly conduct. It entails a team effort to change to a more responsible and sustainable way of life (Usman et al., 2023).

Eco-Friendly Practices at Home

A thoughtful and significant approach to support environmental sustainability at home is to adopt eco-friendly habits (Baker et al., 2014). There are several steps one can take to make their living environment greener and more sustainable, from waste reduction to energy conservation (Alshuwaikhat & Abubakar, 2008). Lower energy consumption and utility bills can be achieved by taking simple actions including turning off lights when not in use, utilizing energy-efficient products, and promptly repairing leaks (Amann et al., 2012). Reducing waste entails using reusable products to cut down on single-use plastics, composting kitchen scraps, and recycling paper, glass, plastic, and metal (Ramirez & George, 2019). A more environmentally conscious lifestyle can also be attained through sustainable shopping decisions, such as choosing products with minimal packaging or supporting small, eco-friendly businesses (Ketelsen et al., 2020). A healthier and more sustainable outdoor environment is ensured by green landscaping, water conservation, and thoughtful water usage practices (Liu & Jensen, 2018). People who adopt these environmentally friendly habits together have a beneficial knock-on effect that goes beyond their own homes and fosters a more sustainable and peaceful coexistence with the environment.

The present study explores the gender disparities in attitudes towards environmentally friendly behaviors, an issue that is frequently disregarded. Understanding the perspectives and interactions that men and women have with environmental concerns in the home domain enhances the understanding of the gendered aspects of environmentalism. It clarifies how men and women feel about eco-friendly behaviors at home and offers insightful information about the behavioral patterns that affect sustainable living. Finding disparities in attitudes can help focus efforts that encourage eco-friendly behavior in both genders. The study clarifies how family

dynamics contribute to the development of environmental responsibility. Analyzing the perceptions and implementation of environmentally friendly behaviors by men and women in the home provides information about the allocation of roles and sustainability-related decision-making processes in households.

Objectives of the study

- To analyze males attitude towards eco-friendly practices at home.
- To analyze females attitude towards eco-friendly practices at home.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: A quantitative design was chosen to assess the attitude of male and female towards eco-friendly household practices.

Locale: Respondents from Bhopal district provided the data for this study.

Sampling Design: Convenience sampling was employed in the study to obtain data. 270 respondents of which 162 men and 108 women participated. Age of the respondents ranged from 18 years and above.

Tools and Technique: The structured questionnaire was divided into two portions. The respondents' demographic profile was questioned in the first section like educational qualification, occupation, annual income etc. The questions in the second portion focused on respondents' attitudes towards eco-friendly behaviors at home. On a rating scale of 1 to 5, with 1 denoting strong disagreement, 2 disagreement, 3 neutrality, 4 agreement, and 5 strong agreement, attitude was assessed. The Google form web platform was used to create the questionnaires, which was then sent to respondents via social media and email addresses. A total of 300 responses from the city of Bhopal were received; 280 of them were complete, and 270 of those responses were deemed legitimate.

Data Analysis and Statistical Analysis: Gender-based data analysis was done using descriptive analysis. Frequency and percentage for attitude of respondents was calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic profile of the respondents: The respondents'

demographic profile is displayed in Table 1. Data was collected from respondents of Bhopal city. Out of 270 responses 60% were men and 40% were women. According to age distribution, 51.1% of respondents are between the ages of 18 and 25, 30.1% are between the ages of 26 and 35, 11.3% are between the ages of 36 and 45, and 7.5% are between the ages of 46 and 55. The breakdown of respondents' marital statuses reveals that 63.9% of them are single, 34.6% are married, and 1.5% would want to remain anonymous. The breakdown of respondents' areas of residence reveals that 80.5% are from urban areas and 19.5% are from rural ones. Educational qualification distribution shows that 16.5% of the respondents are undergraduate, 43.6% are graduates, 33.8% are postgraduates and 6 % of the respondents are doctorate. Occupation distribution shows that 14.3% of the respondents are students, 26.3% are having government job, 39.8% are having private job and 18.8% of the respondents are businessmen and 0.8% of the respondents are working in other professions. Annual income distribution shows that 12% of the respondents are not earning any annual income, 7.5% are earning up to 3 lakhs, 45.9% are earning between 3-6 lakhs per year, 22.6% are earning 6-10 lakhs per year and 12% of the respondents are earning more than 10 lakhs per year.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	162	60
	Female	108	40
Age	18-25 Years	138	51.1
	26-35 Years	81	30.1
	36-45 Years	31	11.3
	46-55 Years	20	7.5
	More Than 55 Years	----	----
Marital Status	Single	173	63.9
	Married	93	34.6
	Prefer not to say	04	1.5
Area of Residence	Urban	217	80.5
	Rural	53	19.5
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate	45	16.5
	Graduate	118	43.6
	Postgraduate	91	33.8
	Doctorate	16	6
	Others	----	----

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Occupation	Student	39	14.3
	Government Job	71	26.3
	Private Job	107	39.8
	Businessman	51	18.8
	Others	2	0.8
	Annual Income	Not Earning	32
Upto 3 Lakhs		21	7.5
3-6 Lakhs		124	45.9
6-10 Lakhs		61	22.6
More Than 10 Lakhs		32	12

Attitude of male towards eco-friendly practices at home:

Table 2 presents the attitudes of men regarding eco-friendly practices that they do at home. This segment's questions were based on fifteen parameters. On a 5-point Likert scale, 1 denotes strong disagreement, 2 disagreement, 3 neutrality, 4 agreement, and 5 strong agreement. The agreement percentage for various segments denotes that majority of the respondents (76.5%) agreed that they switch lights off at home when leaving a room. Only 39.5% of the male respondents mentioned that they use fresh bed sheets daily. 43.2% of the male respondents agreed that they use fresh towels daily whereas majority mentioned that they don't use fresh towels daily. Majority of the respondents (61.7%) mentioned that they recycle cans and bottles after use. 54.3% of the male respondents mentioned that they recycle used paper at home. Majority of the respondents (67.9%) mentioned that they use refillable products at home. Majority of respondents (84%) mentioned that they follow practices which are related to saving water at home. 64.8% of the male respondents mentioned that they use environmentally friendly products at home. Majority of the male respondents (69.1%) mentioned that they use reusable bags at home. 53.1% of the male respondents mentioned that they use biodegradable products at home. 54.3% of the male respondents mentioned that they pick-up litter at home. Majority of the male respondents (66.7%) mentioned that they turn heat off in unoccupied rooms. Majority of the male respondents (75.3%) mentioned that they turn AC off in unoccupied rooms. 64.2% of the male respondents mentioned that they use bucket while taking bath. Majority of the male respondents (76.5%) mentioned that they use of energy efficient light bulbs at home.

Table 2: Males attitude towards eco-friendly practices at home (percentage)

Parameter	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	4+5
Switch the light off when leaving a room	8.6	1.2	13.6	13.6	63.0	76.5%
Fresh sheets daily*	14.8	14.8	30.9	24.7	14.8	39.5%
Fresh towels daily *	16.0	9.9	30.9	23.5	19.8	43.2%
Recycle cans and bottles	6.2	18.5	13.6	27.2	34.6	61.7%
Recycle paper	8.6	21.0	16.0	17.3	37.0	54.3%
Use refillable products	4.9	9.9	17.3	34.6	33.3	67.9%
Save water	6.2	1.2	8.6	19.8	64.2	84.0%
Use environmentally friendly products	4.2	7.0	23.9	39.4	25.4	64.8%
Use reusable bags	7.4	11.1	12.3	32.1	37.0	69.1%
Use biodegradable products	6.2	14.8	25.9	23.5	29.6	53.1%
Pick up litter (segregation? *)	11.1	3.7	30.9	21.0	33.3	54.3%
Turn heat off in unoccupied rooms	9.9	7.4	16.0	18.5	48.1	66.7%
Turn AC off in unoccupied rooms	12.3	3.7	8.6	22.2	53.1	75.3%
Use of bucket while taking bath	7.4	7.4	21.0	25.9	38.3	64.2%
Use of energy efficient light bulbs	9.9	3.7	9.9	27.2	49.4	76.5%

Note: All data presented in the table is in percentage

Females attitude towards eco-friendly practices at home:

Table 3 is indicates female attitude towards eco-friendly practices at home. In terms of agreement majority of the female respondents (90.7%) agreed that they switch lights off at home when leaving a room. Only 38.9% of the female respondents mentioned that they use fresh bed sheets daily. 38.9% of the female respondents agree that they use fresh towels daily whereas majority mentioned that they don't use fresh towels daily. Majority of the female respondents (70.4%) mentioned that they recycle cans and bottles after use.

66.7% of the female respondents mentioned that they recycle used paper at home. Majority of the female respondents (70.4%) mentioned that they use refillable products at home. Majority of female respondents (83.3%) mentioned that they follow practices which are related to saving water at home. 70.4% of the female respondents mentioned that they use environmentally friendly products at home. Majority of the female respondents (72.2%) mentioned that they use reusable bags at home. 75.9% of the female respondents mentioned that they use biodegradable products at home. 68.5% of the female respondents mentioned that they pick-up litter at home. Majority of the female respondents (79.6%) mentioned that they turn heat off in unoccupied rooms. Majority of the female respondents (81.5%) mentioned that they turn AC off in unoccupied rooms. 72.2% of the female respondents mentioned that they use bucket while taking bath. Majority of the female respondents (77.8%) mentioned that they use of energy efficient light bulbs at home.

Table 3: Females attitude towards eco-friendly practices at home

Parameter	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	4+5
Switch the light off when leaving a room	1.9	1.9	5.6	14.8	75.9	90.7%
Fresh sheets daily	7.4	14.8	38.9	16.7	22.2	38.9%
Fresh towels daily	7.4	14.8	38.9	22.2	16.7	38.9%
Recycle cans and bottles	7.4	7.4	14.8	22.2	48.1	70.4%
Recycle paper	11.1	13.0	9.3	24.1	42.6	66.7%
Use refillable products	11.1	3.7	14.8	25.9	44.4	70.4%
Save water	3.7	0.0	13.0	11.1	72.2	83.3%
Use environmentally friendly products	1.9	9.3	18.5	18.5	51.9	70.4%
Use reusable bags	5.6	3.7	18.5	16.7	55.6	72.2%
Use biodegradable products	3.7	3.7	16.7	20.4	55.6	75.9%
Pick up litter	5.6	5.6	20.4	18.5	50.0	68.5%
Turn heat off in unoccupied rooms	3.7	1.9	14.8	16.7	63.0	79.6%
Turn AC off in unoccupied rooms	3.7	3.7	11.1	14.8	66.7	81.5%
Use of bucket while taking bath	3.7	7.4	16.7	22.2	50.0	72.2%
Use of energy efficient light bulbs	1.9	3.7	16.7	24.1	53.7	77.8%

Note: All data presented in the table is in percentage

The findings table 1 and 2 are in line with the majority of other research on the gender differences in eco-friendly behaviors, which suggested that women are more likely to be environmentally conscious and to make environmentally friendly decisions more frequently (Laroche et al., 2001; Roberts, 1996). We cannot, however, claim that women would be different from men in terms of their concerns about the environment in all circumstances, as other scholars (Pickett et al., 1993) could not find any association between gender and environmental consciousness of individuals. The current study could only recommend that as gender is a significant factor in how people socialize, it should not be disregarded by upcoming researchers in the field as an independent variable.

CONCLUSION

The present research is focused on eco-friendly behavior of males and females of Bhopal city at their homes. The findings concluded that saving water, switching the light off when leaving a room, using of energy efficient light bulbs and turning AC off in unoccupied rooms were the top four eco-friendly practices which are mostly practiced by males at their homes. Eco-friendly practices which are least followed by males were use of biodegradable products, picking up litter and recycling of paper at their homes. For female switching the light off when leaving a room, saving water, turning AC off in unoccupied rooms and turning heat off in unoccupied rooms are the top four eco-friendly practices were mostly practiced by females at their homes. Eco-friendly practices which were least followed by them was reusing bed sheets, reusing towels and recycling of paper at their homes.

The research conclusion can guide the creation of environmental policies and programs that take gender equality into consideration. Policymakers can improve the efficacy and inclusivity of environmental programs by designing interventions that resonate with varied gender perspectives by having a better understanding of the subtle differences between male and female attitudes towards eco-friendly habits at home. The study advances gender equity in environmental discourse by recognizing and resolving gender disparities in attitudes towards eco-friendly actions. An approach to sustainability projects that is more inclusive and representative is fostered by acknowledging the different ways that men and women interact with environmental challenges. The study's insights can prove beneficial with the planning and execution of awareness and education

campaigns that encourage environmentally friendly behavior. The effectiveness of campaigns to encourage sustainable behaviors at home and abroad can be increased by developing language and tactics that speak to the unique attitudes and preferences of men and women. By examining how men and women feel differently about eco-friendly behaviors at home have important ramifications for environmental discourse, policy development, household dynamics, and sustainability initiatives. Thus, requirement to have more inclusive and successful methods of tackling environmental issues.

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