

EFFECT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES ON HUMAN SOCIETY

Dr. Suman Tiwari

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Arya Mahila PG College, Varanasi
E-mail: drsuman71@gmail.com

Abstract:

Human society is always influenced by the biotic and abiotic components of our environment. Water is one of the important components of our environment and without water life cannot exist on earth. All over the world human civilizations have been developed mostly on the river banks. In India the water of river Ganga is regarded as the most purifier of human body and soul. In Ganga basin about 4.5 billion people are dependent on river Ganga for their drinking, bathing irrigational and industrial purposes. Ganga basin is one of the highly productive and fertile region in which millions of people are also dependent on Ganga for their livelihood. However, in a past few decades it has been reported by a number of environmental scientists that the water quality of river Ganga is deteriorating due to discharge of untreated sewage and industrial effluents. This change in the physico-chemical and biological properties of river Ganga has threatened to our belief that a drop of Ganga water is sufficient to send our soul to the heaven. The knowledge of Ganga water pollution among the people has not only adversely affected the quality of river water but has changed our cultural, social and religious activities. Due to awareness among the people pertaining to the pollution of river Ganga thousands of priests, *sadhus* and religious leaders, have decided not to take bath in river Ganga and raised their voice to increase the flow of river Ganga so that dilution of water may be enhanced and intensity of pollution be minimized.

Keyword: Environment, Ganga, Pollution, Industrial, Biotic and Abiotic.

1. Introduction:

The biotic and abiotic components of our environment influence human society. Water is one of the important abiotic components of our environment and without water life cannot exist on earth. All over the world human civilizations have been developed mostly on the river banks. In India the water of river Ganga is regarded as the most purifier of human body and soul. In Ganga basin about 4.5 billion people are dependent on river Ganga for their drinking, bathing irrigational and industrial purposes. Ganga basin is one of the highly productive and fertile region in which millions of people are also dependent on Ganga for their livelihood. However, a number of previous researchers have reported that the water quality of river Ganga is deteriorating due to discharge of untreated sewage and industrial effluents (Ganpati and Alikunhi 1950; Shukla and Tripathi 1989; Tripathi et al. 1991). This change in the physico-chemical and biological properties of river Ganga has threatened our belief that a drop of Ganga water is sufficient to send our soul to the heaven. The knowledge of Ganga water pollution among the people has not only adversely affected the quality of river water but has changed our cultural, social and religious activities. Due to awareness among the people pertaining to the pollution of

river Ganga thousands of priests, *sadhus* and religious leaders, have decided not to take bath in river Ganga and raised their voice to increase the flow of river Ganga so that dilution of water may be enhanced and intensity of pollution be minimized. Henceforth, it was imperative to evaluate the effect of environmental changes on the human society. The aim of present study was to evaluate the effect of environmental changes on human society.

2. Materials and Methods:

During present investigation Questioner and Random selection of respondent methodology was used for the data collection. Six hundred people belonging to different age, sex, caste, religion, marital status, educational and family structure have been selected. Out of 600 people selected for interview, only 400 people have responded properly. Henceforth, finally 400 people were selected for the data collection. A questioner of 100 questions was circulated among the respondent. Required statistical analysis was done to check the significance and correlation of data.

3. Results and Discussion:

Observations made during present investigation are cited in the Fig.1-6 and Table 1. From the interview of 400 people selected from different age, sex, caste, religion, marital status, educational, family structure etc., it is revealed that more than 85% people were of the opinion that the knowledge of Ganga water pollution has adversely affected our rituals related to birth, marriage and death etc., which was performed on the bank of river Ganga since time immemorial. It was observed that Brahman community (36%) was highly affected, followed by Kshatriya (26%), Vaishya (18%), SC (10%) and other communities (10%). It is also revealed that Hindu community (80%) was highly affected followed by Muslim (7%), Sikh (2%) and other communities (11%). Among different age groups, people of 31-40 years were most affected followed by 20-30 years, 51-60 years. Majority of people having opinion that there is adverse effect of Ganga water pollution on our social, cultural and religious activities belong to the educated group. However, 15% people having opinion that there is no effect belong to illiterate group. Opinion of the 15% people that there is no effect of Ganga water pollution on our cultural and religious activities indicates their strong belief and faith towards mother Ganga.

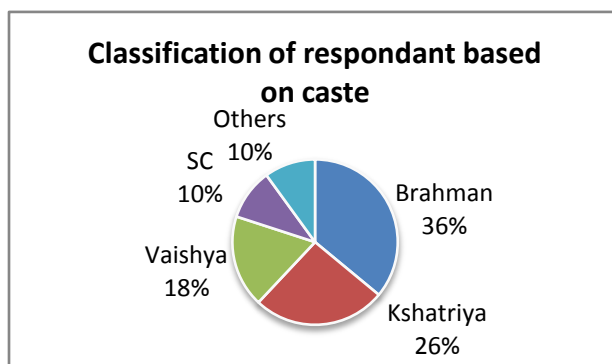


Fig.1 Classification of respondent on the basis of caste (Total No.= 400)

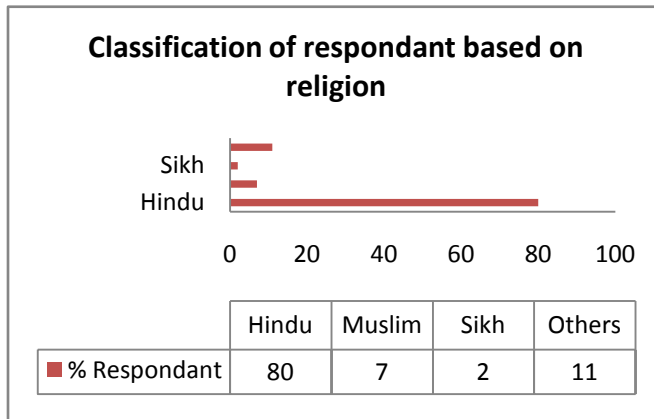


Fig. 2 Classification of respondent on the basis of religion (Total No = 400)

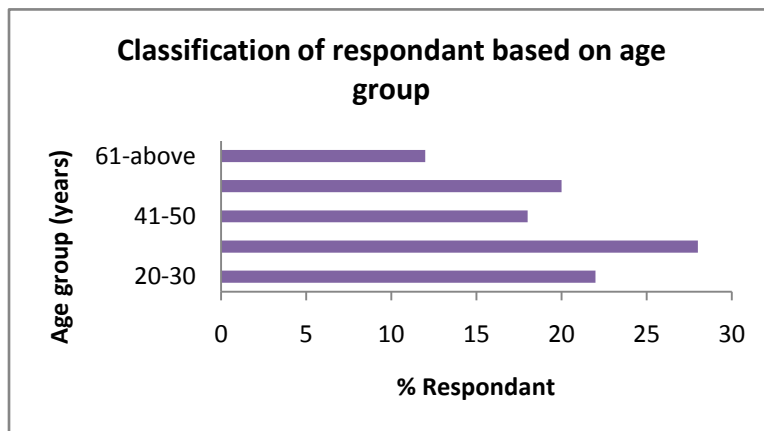


Fig. 3 Classification of respondent on the basis of age (Total No.= 400)

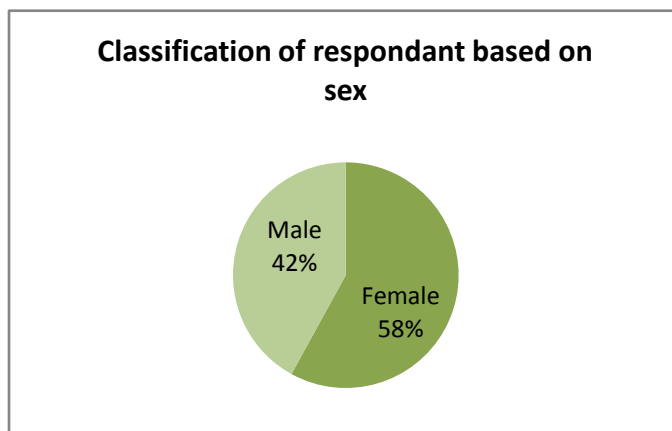


Fig.4 Classification of respondent on the basis of sex (Total No. = 400)

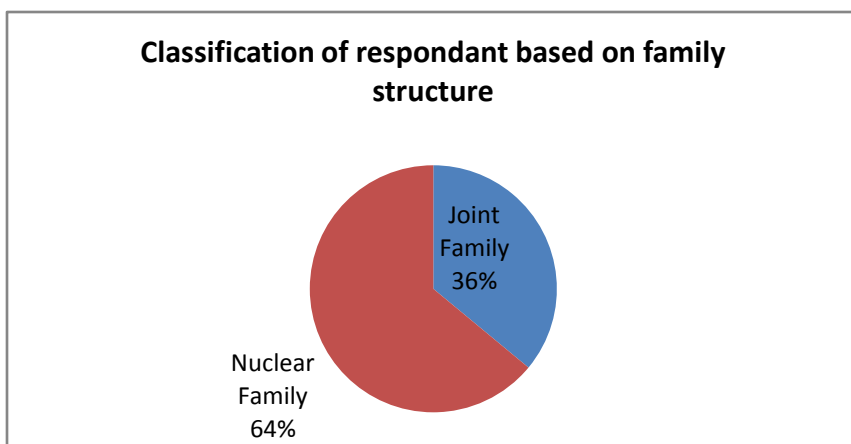


Fig.5 Classification of respondent on the basis of family structure (Total No. = 400)

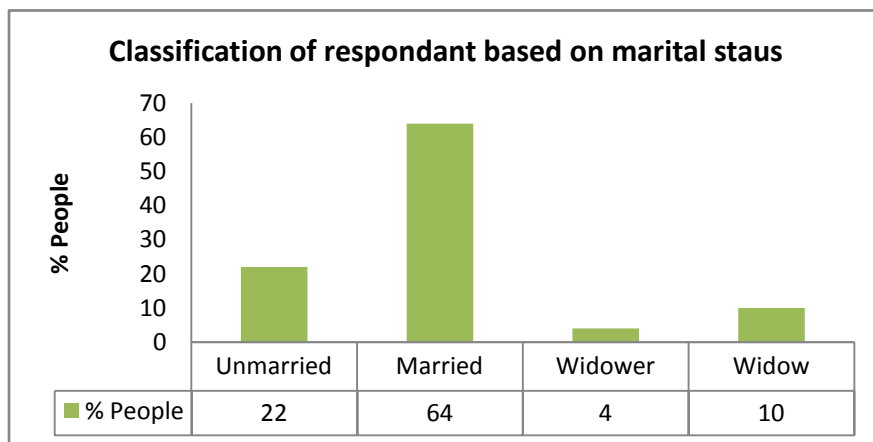


Fig.6 Classification of respondent on the basis of marital status (Total No. = 400)

Table 1. Classification of respondent on the basis of educational status (Total number = 400)

S.No.	Educational status	% of people
1.	Illiterate	18
2.	Primary	16
3.	High school	12
4.	Intermediate	22
5.	Graduate	18
6.	P.G.	14

4. Conclusions:

Present study revealed that the majority of educated people (85 %) have clear knowledge about the Ganga water pollution. Henceforth, either they have left using Ganga water for various purposes or stopped religious and cultural activities, which was to be performed on the bank of mother Ganga. However, 15 % people have shown their least awareness about the Ganga water pollution. These people have also shown their strong faith towards the capability of Ganga water, which can never be polluted. Henceforth, strong religious faith and unawareness about the adverse effects of Ganga water pollution on human health were found major factors by which about 15% people of the society did not stop their Ganga water uses.

Acknowledgements:

The author is thankful to the Head, Department of Sociology, Arya Mahila PG College, Varanasi for multi-fold support.

References:

Ganpati S.V., Alikunhi K.H (1950). Factory effluent from the Mettur Chemical and Industrial Corporation Ltd. Mettur Dam, Madras and their pollution effects on the fishes of the River Cauvery. *Proc. Nat. Inst. Sci. India* 16:104-124.

Shukla S.C., Tripathi B.D., Kant R., Kumari D.V, Pandey V.S (1989). Physico-chemical and biological characteristics of River Ganga from Mirzapur to Bullis. *Indian J. Environ. Health*, 31:218-227.

Tripathi B.D., Sikandar M., Shukla S.C (1991). Physicochemical characterization of city sewage discharged into river Ganga at Varanasi, India. *Environment International* 17:476-478.

