



## Cognitive Shift in Attitude towards Nature: In reference to COVID-19 Pandemic

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Mother Nature cares for every creature on this earth but in return we failed to show gratitude and care for our beloved Mother Nature.

**The Phenomenon:** As a consequence our Mother Earth strikes back in the form of pandemic like COVID-19. Review of literature indicated that there is a significant change in the all over state of environment during this lockdown period.

**Origin of the Problem:** This is a time for cognitive shift in our attitudes towards nature. We have to leave the former way of treating ourselves as the highest creature of God and the only eligible one to deserve the benefits of nature but we have to follow the rule of coexistences. We have to reconnect with our environment and protect the Mother Nature.

**Purpose:** Present paper aims to critically evaluate the issues related to the shift in attitude towards nature during COVID-19 and suggesting psychological strategies for maintaining this changed attitude. **Methodology:** An online survey using Google form was done to record the change in attitude towards nature in COVID-19 pandemic.

**Results:** Findings revealed that CORONA is challenging in many ways but it provides some positive lessons like Connect reconnect with nature, Own to our approach, Respect Mother Nature, Organized planning for nature concerns, New opportunity to revive nature, Assured healthy environment for future.

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## 1. Introduction

During childhood days we have often listened and learnt a concept called “Mother Nature”. All of us are aware of the fact that earth provides us everything required for our existence just like a mother. It cares, nurtures, secures, and provides us food, shelter, good environment and many more. But during past few decades this respectful picture of Mother Nature has been forgotten by most of us. We started assuming that earth is only for the highest creation of GOD that is for HUMAN BEINGS. But in reality earth is the home of many other creatures; they also have an equal right to live freely on it. Man started exploiting the nature in order to fulfil his greed. Due to the process of technology advancement and urbanization, we destroyed the natural homes of many creatures. Mittal & Gupta (2017) stated that economic growth is a major cause of natural resource depletion. Development is being promoted by disregarding the environmental concerns.

During the outbreak of COVID-19 we experienced lockdown all over the world for the very first time for the highest creature of GOD that is HUMAN. Yes this time was like the icebreaking that we have forgotten the Mother Nature and the right of other creatures to coexist. James J.

(2020) stated that the outbreak of COVID-19 is an example of nature strike back for humans. Raman (2020) stated that its time to take environment issues with paramount importance.

The pandemic like COVID-19 provided us a great opportunity to stop and look back what we have done so far with our environment. Time has come to reconnect with nature and maintain the balance by following the rule of coexistence. The present paper is a sincere effort to understand the COVID-19 as a cause of positive shift in our attitude towards nature.

## 2. Objective

To critically evaluate the issues related to the shift in attitude towards nature in COVID-19 pandemic and suggesting psychological strategies for maintaining this changed attitude.

## 3. Methodology

**Sample-** An online survey using Google form was done to record the change in attitude towards nature in COVID-19 pandemic. Total 50 responses were recorded from the respondents who willing took part in the survey.

**Sample distribution-** The age range of the sample was from 14 years to 53 years with an average age of 37 years. The respondents were from different states of India including Assam, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, and Manipur.

### State of Attitude Change Created by COVID-19: A Brighter Side

According to Mc Leod (2018) Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory of attitude change suggests that we have a inner drive to hold all our attitudes, but when any inconsistencies occur in our beliefs then dissonance occurs and we tend to shift or jump to the new idea or

belief in order to maintain the mental harmony. In case of COVID-19 outbreak we experienced a dissonance in our old beliefs related to nature as we **human** are the highest creature of GOD, nature is only for our comfort, economic growth can be done at the cost of environment depletion and many more. Now we are shocked by the strike of nature in the form of COVID-19 outbreak.

Goswami (2020) stated that during lockdown in India some unbelievable improvements in environment were seen including low levels of air pollution (Figure 1), dolphins spotted near Kolkata ghats (Figure 2), number of flamingos increased in Mumbai (Figure 3) and water of river Ganga fit for drinking in Hardwar (Figure 4).



**Figure 1:** Noida air pollution reduced picture pre lockdown and post lockdown. (Source: www.indiatoday.com)



**Figure 2:** Representational Image (Source: www.indiatoday.com).



**Figure 3:** Representational Image (Source: www.indiatoday.com).

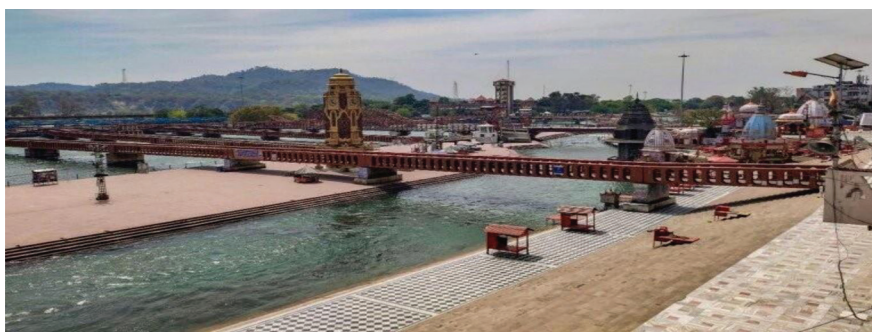


Figure 4: Representational Image (Source: www.indiatoday.com).

**Effective Lessons for Change in Attitude towards Nature from COVID-19 Pandemic**

**Connect Reconnect with Nature-** Time has reached to reconnect with our nature so that we can conserve and maintain our nature safe and secured for coming generations. Nature provide us a sense of wellbeing and happiness, we should respect our nature and show our gratitude towards her. 86% of the total sample agreed that now the time has reached to reconnect with nature (Figure 5).

**Own to our Approach** - Self centred approach won't work any longer. We have to rethink and revive the coexistence approach. God create this beautiful nature not only for the human beings but for all the creatures on this earth (Figure 6).

**Respect Mother Nature-** Start respecting the nature again. Time has reached to restart respecting our nature. If we want to ensure our existence then we have to ensure the existence of respectful dealing with our nature (Figure 7).

**Organised Planning for Nature Concerns-** There is a need to revise and reorganised planning of development with more nature concerns. As according to WHO (2020) the pandemic is a reminder of intimate and delicate relationship between people and planet.

**New Opportunity to Revive Nature-** Need of the hour is find more innovative ways to find out new opportunities to revive nature. We should consider COVID-19 as new opportunity provided by almighty God to protect our planet. Lee (2020) stated that to prevent pandemic like COVID we should take care of our nature first (Figure 8).

**Assured Healthy Environment for Future-** By following all the above discussed measures we can definitely have a healthy environment for future times. Paital (2020) stated that COVID-19 seems to be a natural selection by nature to self nurture.

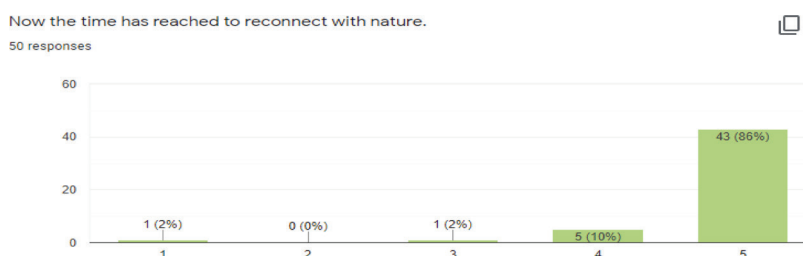


Figure 5

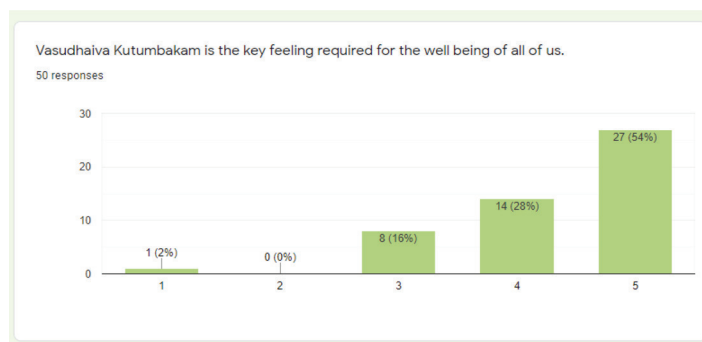


Figure 6

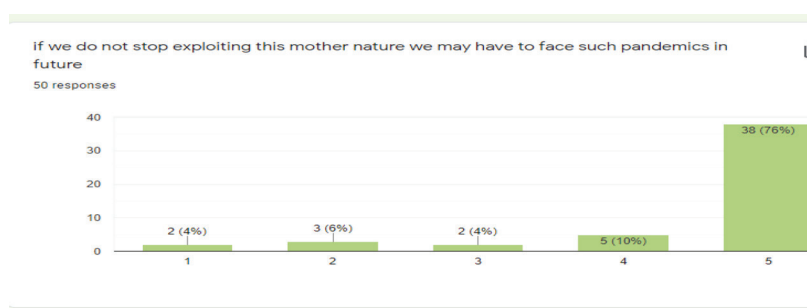


Figure 7

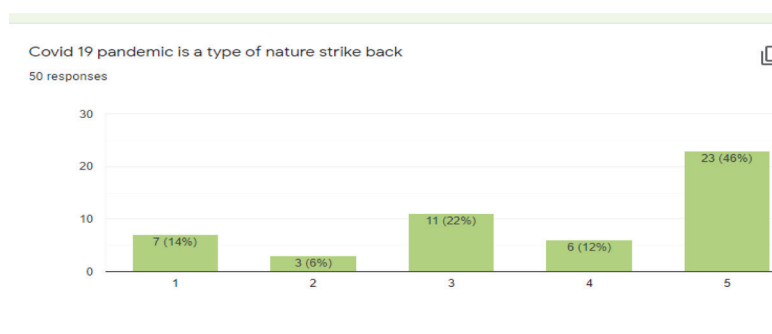


Figure 8

## Conclusion

There is great need of cognitive shift in our attitudes and these newly learnt attitudes should be maintained so as to enhance and protect the quality of our Mother Nature. With a positive change in our attitudes we will be able to protect our nature for our coming future generations.

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