



NEED OF ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION IN SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

The environment is defined as “the circumstances objects or conditions by which one is surrounded “. The environment includes air, soil, climate, food supply and various others external conditions. It also includes the thing created by humans. Our environment comprises of air, water and land these are technically known as atmosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere respectively all these spheres constitute the biosphere. Environmental education is a learning process that increases people’s knowledge and awareness about the skills and expertise to address the challenges, and fosters attitude, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action (UNESCO, Tbilisi Declaration, 1977). Education plays a crucial role in our society. It is the process that



disseminates knowledge, imparts necessary skills and helps learners in forming or changing attitudes to lead a good life, for the betterment of all human beings, There are so many areas about which we get educated for the fulfilment of several drives and one of the most basic among them is an understanding of how the system of life functions and how we humans fit into them. This is what constitutes environments. The word environment is derived from a French word ‘ Environ’ meaning surrounding hence everything surrounding us is called environment.

Key Words: human beings , motivations, and commitments.

INTRODUCTION

Environment includes all the conditions, circumstances and influences surrounding and always influenced and shaped our lives from the ancient times. It is environment from where we get our food to eat, water to drink , air to breath and all the necessities of day today, therefore it is a life support system for all.

ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION

Environment Education is the process of developing a world population that is aware of and concerned about the

total environment and its associated problems and which has the knowledge, attitude commitments and skills to work individually and collectively towards the solution of current problems and the prevention of new ones (UNESCO, 1990). It helps us to know how unchecked and unplanned development threatens our survival and existence, On the other hand it helps individuals and social groups to acquire an awareness with sensitivity to the total Environment and problems associated with it. The environmental Education curriculum includes almost all the aspects of the environment such as natural and human-made, technological, social, economic, cultural and aesthetics. It must show the interconnections between the local, national and global problems, as well as the links between the actions of today with

the consequences of tomorrow. The way natural environment works and how humans should behave to manage ecosystem to sustain environment is part of the environmental education. The main focus is to impart knowledge, create awareness, inculcate an attitude of concern and provide necessary skill to handle the environment and environmental challenges. Education is a sort of investment that turns into a valuable asset over a period of time. Today every country is putting efforts to integrate environmental concerns with education.

According to these countries, environmental education should not only be a part of the education system but also the systems where actions, policies and plans can be formulated and executed at national level. Protecting environment is the responsibility of everyone; hence environmental education cannot be confined to one group or society. Every individual must be prepared for saving the environment. It must be a continuous and a lifelong process.

NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Today, it is quite self-evident that the whole humanity is facing an unprecedented situation with respect to the global conditions of environmental degradation. In fact, the concern for the environmental problems has never been as high as it is. Now major cities are facing insurmountable problems of waste disposals and misuse of resources. Thus, it is very urgent need to create awareness among people about the use of environmental resources and re-educate society to treat the environment. It is this realization that has environmental education a place of prime importance. The present situation demands a great deal of attention to be paid to check the indiscriminate exploitation of depleting natural resources. This is due to the universally accepted fact that, if this trend unchecked, it will lead to the destruction of all life forms on this planet. This calls for a concerted drive for environmental education and awareness among people to live sustainable life for a longer time. At least, Environmental Awareness is a means to end.

IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND ITS AWARENESS TO SCHOOL STUDENTS

The environment is constantly in the news and it is also becoming a hot topic in schools throughout the world. The environmental awareness of children is therefore something that is becoming increasingly – something that many people feel is a significant factor for the future of the planet. There are various different things that teachers and parents can do to help a child to understand the impact that humans have on the world.

The use of cars is one of the major causes of pollution throughout the world, with one of the biggest contributors being parents on the school run. Children can be made to understand this principle through the use of carpooling, as it will show them that reducing amount of cars on the road is good for the environment. Pointing out different sources of pollution during the journey can also help a child to understand where pollution comes from. There will undoubtedly be various different sources along the route, and this large variety will allow them to build up and understanding of how much pollution gets into the atmosphere.

Environmental Education is the process of recognizing values and clearing concepts in order to understand and appreciate the inter relations among man, his culture and his biophysical surroundings. Environmental Education also entails practice in decision making and self-formulation of a code of behavior about issues concerning environmental quality. The basic purpose of introducing environmental education in the curriculum at the school level is to enable the students to understand the nature of complexities of environment and to develop a right attitude and civic values towards it. The major goals of environmental education as discussed in the inter government conference on environmental education organized by UNESCO in 1977 are traced

below which have been taken in to consideration while integrating environmental education in curriculum of high schools.

- i) To foster clear awareness of and concern about biological, economic, social, political and ecological interdependence in urban and rural areas.
- ii) To provide every person with opportunity to acquire the knowledge, value, attitude, commitment and skills needed to protect and improve the environment.

In final report of the Tbilisi conference is stated that environmental education is an integral part of the educational process. It should be centered on practical problems and be of an interdisciplinary character. It should aim at building up a sense and concern itself with the survival of the human species.

INTRODUCING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE CURRICULUM

The ways of incorporation of environmental education in the school curriculum are as varied as the concept of environmental education itself. There are as a separate subject, infusion of environmental education into existing disciplines, occasional environmental education programs and environmental education as the 'core curriculum'

WAYS TO TEACHING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

No matter what the situation the teaching-learning experience can be enhanced by teachers. The challenge is to the imagination and innovation in selecting from the many activities and approaches that can motivate students and take them from awareness to action. A variety of teaching methodologies (Inquiry- based learning, Participatory teaching, Interactive teaching, Community service and practice, Outdoor teaching) can be used in Environmental education, however Szallassy (2008), recommended that the project method can be used efficiently in resolving environmental problems with pupils in a creative way. The project method is a target-driven activity based on challenge, fostering success and efficient cooperation, during which the students' activity gains more weight than the communication of knowledge by the teacher. By the end of the project the students can elaborate a material or intellectual product, which reveals the specific topic or thought in its most broad connections.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

School is an institutional framework through which environmental education can be introduced. The main actors interact within this framework are students, teachers and the curriculum. In this framework students are a major component as such, they have to be helped in enhancing their own responsibility and accountability to care for the environment and need to be exposed to situations so that they can develop and possess unique ethics for the environment and participation activities to conserve and protect it.

There is a need to provide them opportunities to acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills to engage effectively with environmental issues, inspire them to examine and interpret the environment from variety of perspectives and encourage student's active participation in resolving environmental problems. They also have to be taught how to manage efficiently and properly so that the desired quality of life is maintained and development is sustained.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AS A SEPARATE SUBJECT

It is very important to understand the urgent need of Environmental awareness at school level. The increasing pressure of pollution and threat to biodiversity make it essential to treat it as a

separate subject. It draws the basics principles and skills from other established disciplines. Thus, environmental education becomes another subject, on par with other subjects as mathematics, science and language.

CONCLUSION

Environmental education play a productive role in environmental awareness and skill and attitude required for environmental protection. Many of earth's habitats and even microorganisms that we know of today as rare or endangered may not be known to our next generations. So environmental education is a need for this hour and it should be for all the institutions and communities across to develop a sense of responsibility towards the environment and the rational utilization of its resources. It is even more important for students of all levels (School, college, university) who are on the threshold of becoming active participants in society as citizens, decision makers and leaders.

Environmental awareness through environmental education is a process of providing learning experience to obtain knowledge, understanding, skill and awareness with desirable attitudinal changes about men's relationship with his nature and man-made environment. The programs and activities of environmental education should be designed in such a way that kit not only help raise awareness and concern among students but strongly promote the need for personal initiatives and social participation to achieve the goal of preservation, conservation and utilization of environment in a sustainable manner for the benefit of present and future generations. A true student of environment needs to be an activist.

Our environment is degrading at a much faster speed than our imagination. Degradation of environment is more due to human activities and the damage is at both global as well as regional level. Therefore whatsoever wrong has been done by us must be rectified by us only. In this regard it is imperative to have a sound environmental education, a way to teach people and societies on how to use the present and future resources optimally.

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