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Environment Education for Sustainable Development

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Abstract:

In the modern age of development with the progress of industrialization, urbanization and adoption of modern technologies in various sectors; emergence of environmental problems has become a major concern to the human society. At global level it has been widely accepted that to aware the human society about the environmental issues and to make perspective plans for mitigation of environmental problems the introduction of environmental education is an important tool through which the goals of sustainable development can be achieved easily. The present paper is an attempt to take a critical review on background and importance of environmental education in context of sustainable development.

Key words: Environment Education; Sustainability, Supreme Court, Goal.

Introduction

Environmental education is aimed at producing a citizenry that is knowledge able concerning the biophysical environment and its associated problems, to aware of how to help solve these problems, and motivate to work towards their solution (Stappet.al.1969). The subject of environmental education has been discussed at several national and international seminars, workshops and conferences (Sharma, 1996).

Environmental education acts as an indispensable tool in the battle against the degradation of the living environment. It has an appeal to launch an international environmental education Program (United Nations, 1972).

Along with the adoption of modern eco-friendly technologies to minimize the stress of human activities on environment, for the protection and conservation of the environment of the globe, environmental education plays an important role. However, it plays a crucial role in the process of sustainable development also. (Tbilisi Declaration, 1977, RIO, 1992, Montreal,1997).

Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987). There is a paramount need to create a consciousness of the environment. It must permeate all ages and all sections of society, beginning with the child. Environmental consciousness should be inculcated into teaching in schools and colleges (NPE, 1986).

Environmental education is a key to the success of any overall environmental strategy, determined to help in the setting up of a Center of Excellence in Environmental Education, to play the vital role of setting the pace and agenda for Environmental Education in the country (Kartikeya, 2000).

In India, the Supreme Court in their judgments of writ petitions (M.C. Mehta Vs Union of India, 1991; M.C. Mehta Vs Union of India, 2003) has directed for the urgent need for environmental education. The Supreme Court Bench had issued an order on November 22, 1991 to all state governments, and to the State Education Boards, to make environmental education, a compulsory subject (*India times*, 2003).

The Supreme Court issued notice to some of the country's key educational bodies and State Governments for negligence in the implementation process of environment, as compulsory subject. The Court fined Rs.15,000/- to ten States, including the Maharashtra State for such a failure. The government



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of Maharashtra directed the Secondary and Higher Education Board to adopt environmental education as a compulsory subject for school students(GOM, 2003).

The Supreme Court *inter alia*, directed the NCERT and University Grants Commission and to take appropriate steps to prescribe a course on environment and to consider the feasibility of making environment a compulsory subject at the school and graduation level respectively.

In pursuance of this, the concerned institutions has framed the syllabus and incorporated environment education as compulsory subject from IXth to XIIth standards to the all faculties of graduate level.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 global goals designed to be a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The SDGs, set in 2015 by the United Nations General Assembly and intended to be achieved by the year 2030, are part of UN Resolution 70/1, the 2030 Agenda.

Goals of Environmental Education

Goals of EE are to develop a world population that is aware of and concerned about, total environment and its associated problems, and commitment to work individual and collectively towards solution of current problems and the prevention of new ones (UNESCO, 1975). A number of new objectives and guiding principles for developing environmental education at all levels in both formal and non-formal level were formulated at the Tbilisi Conference (UNESCO, 1977).

Objectives of Environmental Education

To understand the aim and importance of the environment education the some objectives were decided (Trivedy 2004).

- **Participation** - to provide individuals, groups and societies with opportunities to be actively involved in exercising their skills of environmental citizenship and be actively involved at all levels in working towards sustainable development.
- **Knowledge** - to help individuals, groups and societies gain a variety of experiences in, and a basic understanding of, the knowledge and action competencies required for sustainable development
- **Values** - to help individuals, groups and societies acquire feelings of concern for issues of sustainability as well as a set of values upon which they can make judgments about appropriate ways of acting individually and with others to promote sustainable development
- **Skills** - to help individuals, groups and societies acquire the action competence or skills of environmental citizenship - in order to be able to identify and anticipate environmental problems and work with others to resolve, minimize and prevent them
- **Awareness** - to create an overall understanding of the impacts and effects of behaviors and lifestyles - on both the local and global environments, and on the short-term and long-term.

Conclusion: In order to achieve the goals of sustainable development set by United Nations General Assembly there is need to implement the environmental education in academic framework with proper policy and financial assistance.

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