

IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Theme: Need for Environmental Education in Schools and Colleges

ABSTRACT

In the present scenario due to anthropogenic i.e. man made activities the environmental degradation is in an alarming rate and it results in various environmental issues such as Ozone layer depletion, green house effects, raise in sea water level, improper monsoon and acid rain. Science and Technology have brought immense benefits. However we are paying a high 'price' for it in terms of environmental degradation and this has serious implications for future generations. There is a wrong myth that economic development is based on only in industrialization. But in the international organizations such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund the environmental degradation is considered as the norm.

The awareness among the public and industrial generators have to be created and motivated by the updated

techniques and incorporating the innovative and implementable solutions to reform our economy which can

be achieved through environmental education. The Science and advanced Technology can however only help the process of global sustainable environment in a limited way but cannot deliver it. The success of the technology lies in its implementation part. The moral and ethical education is needed to achieve global environmental sustainability by changing people's attitude to nature and the environment. In spite of conducting more conferences, seminars and world summits towards the protection of environment for the past two decades, the present world is environmentally less sustainable than in the previous days.

The progress whatever the rich developed countries have made so far has largely been achieved through the relocation of their dirty manufacturing facilities to poor developing countries. However their location of the manufacturing facilities in this way cannot address the growing problem of anthropogenic pollution - it merely changes the jurisdiction of the pollution created from the 'rich' to the 'poor' world. Therefore in order to achieve the acceptable level of global environmental sustainability, the citizens must be empowered with essential knowledge and information especially in developing countries like India. Thus, the environmental education has two essential components:

1. Alerting the public to the need to achieve global sustainable development and the likely consequences of failing to do so.

2. Focusing the educational curricula for global sustainable development by incorporating the know-how and skills and also the moral imperatives.

Our Central Government has also made it mandatory that from elementary level to college level environmental education need to be included. Since educational institutions are the places where the contact of the society is more it is possible to bring remarkable change in the mindset of the public. To protect children living in polluted regions,

environmental education represents a relevant means of prevention because this type of education encourages learners awareness of their environment's ambient conditions, as well as their active participation in solving local problems. It is need for the hour to propose the environmental education with the essential elements of moral philosophy in Schools and Colleges. The younger generations, students are the effective media to bring the enormous change in the society and hence educating about the environment in these young minds is the right time. The resource base is not inexhaustible and there must exist some limit beyond which the rate of exploitation of natural resources will comprise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Hence the focus must be on reducing consumption with a view to achieving sustainability.

Wherever possible, strategies for reducing consumption of energy and materials, and greater use of renewable resources, should be incorporated in design and construction. Conventional educational methods is no longer adequate for the real needs of tomorrow. Future engineers and also other specialised area students must acquire knowledge and skills in their own field and keep pace with rapid advances in practically in all branches of engineering as well as other area of specialization. The communication perspective opens the door to another kind of tools that environmental educators can use in order to improve the educational practice.

To this end a generic outline syllabus, including essential elements of moral philosophy has to be proposed for the environment education in schools and also undergraduate students in college level. Key Words: Environmental Education, students, schools and colleges~sustainable development, ethics, morality.