Progression towards Greener World through Various Strategies

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Abstract

The United Nations has designated the period 2005 to 2014 as the decade of "Education for Sustainable Development". The objective is to integrate the concept of sustainable development in education processes around the World. It is an undeniable fact that human beings are having a significant impact on the natural environment. As the global population continues to rise, humans place more and more pressure on a finite number of resources. The culture of environmental valuing has not been taken seriously in India at present. This has resulted into the deteriorating state of the environment. It is an undeniable fact that human beings are having a significant impact on the natural environment. As the global population continues to rise, humans place more and more pressure on a finite number of resources. We should create widespread environmental and civic awareness by promoting community based environmental improvement efforts. The aim of the Environmental Education is to reach out to general masses with the messages and services, build-up grass-root movement, and influence need based policy formulation. Public education and awareness are the key factors in any attempt to maintain a proper balance and ensure sustainable development. Recognizing the potential of Environmental Education as an effective instrument in preventing environmental crises and as an essential element of sustainable development, we have to engage in spearheading environmental education and awareness from the very beginning. It has been found that to make development sustainable, it is better to mobilize the society rather than leading it; because once the self-confidence in the people germinates it will not take a long time for the flowers of development to blossom. And for community participation and mobilization, training and demonstration are the key factors. On the above-said lines, some projects should be run based on training and demonstration to enhance the community participation in some sectors of the Society. For establishing a sustainable society that realizes sound economic development with reduced the environmental loads while maintaining a healthy and productive environment, providing a basic principle on environmental conservation activities, encouragement of willingness for environmental conservation and environmental education , clarifying the responsibilities of citizens and private bodies etc., use of various media and technology, promote research activities, maintain eco-clubs, and organize co-curricular activities. There is a need to develop sensitivity in population. Because, most of us have knowledge and awareness but, we are not sensitive. So finally it can be said that we all (NGOs, schools, and other community groups) must all work together to ensure the future success of environmental education campaigns ranging from the global to the grass root level.

Keywords: Environment Education; Sustainable Development; Media and Technology; Community Participation.

Environmental education (EE) is a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges, and fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action. We consider that environmental education should urgently bring about change in the quality of life and a greater consciousness of personal conduct, as well as harmony among human beings. We consider that inherent in the crisis are an erosion of basic values and the alienation and non-participation of almost all individuals in the

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building of their own future. It is of fundamental importance that the world's communities design and work out their own alternatives to existing policies. Such alternatives include the abolition of those programs of development, adjustment and economic reform which maintain the existing growth model with its devastating effects on the environment and its diverse species, including the human one.

The environmental damage already inflicted due to alarming on-going population explosion, rapid movement towards urbanization and industrialization, increasing needs of energy and fast scientific and technological advancement cannot be reversed unless there is collective thinking, will and effort. These call for public awareness and participation for bringing about an attitudinal change and finally restricting further damage to the environment (National Portal Content Management Team, 2010). There is a need to develop sensitivity in population. Because, most of us have knowledge and awareness but, we are not sensitive. And sensitivity can be developed by using following measures:

Use of Various Media and Technology

EE's programs aim to use appropriate technology and media to meet the objectives of EE in any particular situation. The importance of using latest technological developments to leapfrog and achieve a wide reach is recognized. Various media and technology comprises of:

Puppet Shows

These puppets, which can be made from all kinds of materials, to convey simple messages. Puppet shows combine sound, color and human figures. They provide entertainment and so attract large crowds, especially in rural areas.

Magazines

Environmental /comic magazines can present various environmental topics through a variety of methods, e.g. games, cross-word puzzles, activities, stories, cartoons, and so are very effective teaching tools. In addition, these magazines supplement the limited reading materials for children in places, such as schools, rural libraries and literacy centers.

Newsletters

This technique has the advantage of being able to provide information about current events that have environmental implications. They can be used to inform readers about ongoing studies and projects.

Bulletin boards

A bulletin board that is regularly updated with newsletters, posters and leaflets and placed in a strategic area in school, village, training college, and the like, is a good source of information for the general population. The bulletin board is cost effective in the sense that it provides access to information for a large audience from a single copy.

Posters

Posters can convey messages with only drawings and a few words, but the product should be pre-tested before large-scale production and distribution.

Flannel board

The flannel board helps the participants to build the statement of their environment (past and present). By having it visually in front of them, they are able to discover the inter-relationships among the problems and to find solutions by themselves. It has the advantage of being easy to replicate and update, and it is relatively inexpensive as it can be constructed with local materials.

Slide Presentations

A good series of high quality slides, arranged

in a carefully planned sequence, is an effective teaching medium. Learners' understanding is enhanced by the combination of sound and sight stimuli, and production cost is relatively low compared to films. Slide presentations afford the presenter the flexibility of adapting the presentation for different levels of audiences by varying the number of slides and the commentary. The slides can also easily be updated as needed.

Videos/Films/Television

These can be telecasted by our National Television (Door Darshan) Channels. There are slots in our National TV Channel especially for environment. These techniques can combine picture, sound, color and motion, and are thus the closest medium to reality. In a movie, a complete process can be shown in a short time. Environmental issues, development processes, technologies can be captured and shown to the learners at a convenient time and place. They also combine entertainment and education and so have wide appeal.

Projects and Assignments

This teaching technique in the formal education system is excellent for the integration of several subjects and activities around an environmental theme or issue. The best projects are those where the participants actually engage in an activity to protect the environment.

Use word pictures that describe the situation

A picture is 1000 times more effective than words. For example, use comparative ratios like 'three times around the earth' or 'no. of soccer fields'. That is, use measures that are familiar and can be easily visualized or shocked into realization.

Emphasize the additional features, effects, benefits, or advantages

What are the interlinkages with other issues or problems? How can communities benefit from the action you are taking? That should be highlighted.

Don't overdo it

Present the plain facts, in a clear and simple outline. Don't assume that journalists know a lot about the topic or issue you are dealing with. Provide a 'handle' with which the story or byline can be built.

Stress the human angle

Whatever the issue you are presenting, stress on the human angle - either as the culprits or as the victims. What have humans been doing (or not doing) to result in the situation?

Use outside expertise

Bring independent experts and distinguish personalities to highlight and substantiate your point or issue.

Be persistent

Keep the media personnel informed - of breaking issues, progress made and other pertinent details in order to maintain interest.

Therefore, the media becomes an educational instrument for the preservation and conservation of natural resources presenting a plurality of views and reliable and contextualized information; and stimulate the broadcasting of programs generated by local communities.

Research

Research data is useful in helping target groups comprehend the value of a change of practice.

Environmental Visits

Through exploration of the surrounding environment, sites of special environmental significance, e.g. market place, waste dump, eroded land, forest, pond, farm, enterprise, can be identified and used for EE.

Monitoring

Encourage individuals and groups to take positions, and institutions to make policies, that constantly review the coherence between what is said and what is done, as well as the values of our cultures, traditions and history. Monitoring at the level of activities and outputs will be critical to reach the stated outcomes. Services of Centres of Excellence of NGOs will be solicited for program support and monitoring. Creation of monitoring and coordination cell at NGOs, with engagement of Centres of excellence, will strengthen the monitoring capabilities.

EE in the Curriculum

The national system of education, as defined in the National Policy on Education, 1986, visualizes a national curricular framework which contains a common core including several elements having a direct bearing on the natural and social environment of the pupils. The National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE) states that the "protection of the environment" is a value which along with certain other values, must from an integral part of the curriculum at all stages of education. The policy states: "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 inform teaching in schools and colleges. This aspect will be integrated in the entire educational process. "There has been special emphasis on the need to give importance to environmental education, and this has been kept in view while designing curricula, framing the syllabi and developing text books. The philosophy behind the curricula is that environmental education could be infused into the curricula especially at the primary level.

Eco-clubs in Schools

A non-formal pro-active system of imparting environmental education to school children by involving them in various environmental activities through the scheme of Eco-clubs has been evolved by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. An Eco-club may be set up in a middle/high school and should consist of a minimum of 20 members and a maximum of 50 members, particularly interested in the conservation and protection of the environment, and willing to dedicate time and effort on a regular basis towards this end. The members may be drawn from students belonging to classes from VI to X. Each Eco-club will be in charge of an active teacher in the school concerned.

Enabling Tools

Any attempt at developing uniform educational programmes and materials for a country as diverse as India is bound to run into difficulties. Therefore, adaptability to different geographic, cultural, social and economic contexts built into the basic design of EE's programmes and materials.

Organize Extra- and co-curricular activities

In addition to conventional ways of conducting theoretical and practical classes, various innovative ways are undertaken to provide opportunities for students to acquire knowledge, attitudes and skills in school as well as out of school. The opportunities include Environmental debates; nutrition gardening; clean-up campaigns; tree planting/woodlot; gully reclamation projects; wetland rehabilitation projects; environmental awareness and campaigns.

Schools Green Network

This is a network of teachers, parents and other educators who are interested in encouraging environmental education in our local schools. This network has to:

• Organize regular meetings

• Provide alerts on new resources and programs

• Sponsor grant applications and partnering with schools

• Encourage local businesses to provide environmental grants

Award groups and individuals for outstanding performance

Award schools, teachers, students, organizations, volunteers, model environmental communities, and environmental professionals for merits toward environmental protection.

In view of the growing importance of the role of environmental conservation activities, encouragement of willingness for environmental conservation and environmental education carried out by citizens and private bodies etc. with a view to constructing a sustainable society, the state shall strive to appropriately cooperate with citizens and private bodies etc. That will carry out environmental conservation activities, encouragement of willingness for environmental conservation and environmental education, when the state formulate and implement of the measures for environmental conservation. The state shall make efforts to formulate and implement basic and comprehensive measures for the encouragement of willingness for environmental conservation and the promotion of environmental education.

Develop environmental education lessons and materials

Award outstanding environmental education publications and select outstanding environmental education lesson plans. Research and develop the infusion of environmental education guidelines and modules into the Nine-Year Integrated Curriculum. Develop environmental and sustainable development curriculums and lesson plans for colleges. Any voluntary / professional organisation or academic / research institution or museum/ science centre or Government Department actively involved in the field of environmental education and awareness. The organisation / Department should have worked in the field of environment education/ awareness / extension for a

minimum period of three years and during this period, the organisation should have developed considerable expertise and should be excellent track record of working in this area. Under the scheme, grant is not provided for publication of newsletters, magazines, journals, periodicals etc. or to any publisher / business house including individuals.

"Pack the future" in vocational training

In addition to school education, the United Nations' Agenda 21 programme also mentions vocational training as one of the most important prerequisites for the development of human resources and the simplification of the transition in to a sustainable world. In order to promote high awareness among vocational trainees for environmental and development issues, and to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are applied in the world.

Strengthening Environment Education in School System and other courses at Graduate and Post-Graduate level including Professional Courses: Incorporation of environmental education at all levels and in all forms of education.

Formal Environmental Education Program:

The National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE) states that the "protection of the environment is a value which must form an integral part of the curriculum at all stages of education". The NPE states: "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 inform teaching in schools and colleges. This aspect will be integrated in the entire educational process". The programme obliges the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), the Ministry of Environment & Forests to ensure that environmental education is imparted adequately at the school levels. It mandates that environmental components are covered in the school curriculum at various

levels.

Environmental Appreciation Course-Distance Education:

In order to provide interested persons an opportunity to learn in detail about specific environmental issues, there should be a provision of a course. For example, a module has been developed through a Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) for 'Environmental Appreciation'. Delivery of these courses is through distance education mode. The course module developed for appreciation courses is also being used by the IGNOU as compulsory component of its undergraduate courses. This is in pursuance of the directives of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

Non-formal Environment Education and Awareness Project

The Ministry of Environment & forests, New Delhi should accord high priority for the promotion of non-formal environment education and creation of awareness among all sections of the society through diverse activities. The aim of the project should be intended to conserve, protect, manage and sustain the environment. The government should undertake various activities by using several traditional and modern media of communication, to create awareness among the people, such as seminars, workshops, training programs, rallies, public meetings, camps, exhibitions, puppet shows and street theatre.

Grants-in-Aid to Professional Societies and Institutions

The objective of this programme should be to facilitate optimum utilization of expertise available with professional societies and institutions for promotion of environment education and awareness. The programme aims at utilizing the existing capacity while simultaneously providing for enhancing the capacities of such institutions. The projects

such as development/extension of exhibition galleries, interpretation centres and education materials relating to ecology, wildlife and environment should be financially supported.

Conclusion

At present time Environmental education could be seen as just another of a number of pressures on already over-crowded teacher education programmes (Fien J. and D. Tilbury, 1996). So, there is a need to develop a more extensive and effective environmental education strategy to better prepare the public to understand and take action regarding current and future environmental issues. Education for the Environment is concerned with children persecutes like: Children should study aspects of their local environment which have been affected by human activity. These may include for example Farming, Industry, and Sewage disposal, Mining or Quarrying. Where even possible this should be by first-hand observation, but secondary school, curriculum has some of the significant activities related to it, where highlighted.

The environmental problems we currently face will not solve themselves. It is becoming increasingly important to meet the needs of individuals to understand these problems and potential solutions through the spread of environmental education. NGOs, schools, and other community groups must all work together to ensure the future success of environmental education campaigns ranging from the global to the local level.

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