**PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN 21ST CENTURY**

**(Incorporation of Environmental Education in a Better Way for Sustainable Development)**

**BY:**

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**Abstract:**

Sustainable living means living with an increasing awareness of how ones daily choices effect the natural environment: Air, Water, Land, Sea, Plants and Animals and taking action to reduce impact. Our daily life style choices cycle back to affect ones own body through the water we drink, food we eat, air we breathe the way we connect our self to our surroundings.

Education for sustainable development has its special role to motivate people for conservation of resources, protection of environment and avoidance of wastage of resources and thus to make population addressable to deal the future problems of environmental degradation. This can be best achieved by making environmental education as a part of basic education.

Environmental education is a continuous life long process where individuals and society become aware of their environment by gaining knowledge, values, skills, necessary experiences and by knowing wise actions.

To make a good blend of environmental and economical imperatives, we need to use environmental education as a tool at school and college level to help individuals to be able to achieve sustainable future.

The main aim of the following study is to highlights the perspective of Education for sustainable development at school and higher educational level and for the population as awhole

The said study has discussed and stressed upon the importance of the correction of drawbacks of the present scenario of Environmental Education in Schools and higher Education.

To pinpoint at the innovative and effective methods of education, the following points are discussed in detail.

1. **Effective ways to incorporate Environmental Education in formal Education**
2. **Informal Education for sustainable development**
3. **Innovations in formal and informal Education**

**Introduction:**

Sustainable development emphasizes to achieve qualitative growth within the limits of carrying capacities of ecosystems. United Nations vision of sustainable development is build upon various global issues assessments including climate change, water, energy and ecosystems.

Education for sustainable development is a “Dynamic concept that encompasses a new vision of education that seeks to empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future.

From the time sustainable development was first endorsed at UN general assembly in 1987, the concept of education for sustainable development has also been explored.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the 17 goals of sustainable development to end poverty fight inequality & injustice and tackle climate change set in the UN summit on 25 sep. 2015 by world leaders can be best achieved by education for sustainable development.

Education for Sustainable Development allows every human being to acquire the

Knowledge, skills, attitudes and values necessary to shape a sustainable future. It makes them realize that, action of every individual makes a difference for the environment.

Our education for sustainable development requires far reaching changes.

One of the most important concerns is the quality of environmental education in schools colleges and among general population.

**Studies have made it clear that the roots of Education for sustainable living are firmly planted in Environmental Education. While Environmental Education is not the only discipline with a strong role to play in the reorienting process, it is an important ally. The motto of Environmental Education moment has been: “Think globally, act locally”**

Effective education for sustainable development can help government to deal with major issues, like reduction of climate change disaster risk reduction, biodiversity conservation and management of natural and manmade resources.

Now it is high time to take strict measures to implement effective ways to create awareness on the various issues and problems for sustainability at global level.

This study aims to highlight the obvious measures necessary to blend Environmental Education in our formal education system for better understanding of concepts related to environmental protection and thus to achieve goals of sustainable development to great extent. It also points out certain innovative approaches and creative ways to impart education for achieving goals of sustainable development.

**Objective of Study:**

To share innovative approaches, methodologies of education for sustainable development in schools and higher education for creating sustainable society.

**Method:**

The said study is thematic analysis to present observations in education to pinpoint the aspects of education for sustainable development.

**Dimensions of** **Education for Sustainable Development**

* **Promotion and Improvement of Basic Education:** Access to basic education remains a problem for many - especially girl children and illiterate adults. Simply increasing basic literacy and numeracy, as currently taught, will not significantly advance sustainable societies. Instead, basic education must focus on imparting knowledge, skills, values, and perspectives that encourage and support citizens to lead sustainable lives.
* **Reorienting Existing Education at all Levels to Address Sustainable Development:** Rethinking and revising education from nursery school through university to include more principles, skills, perspectives, and values related to sustainability in each of the three realms - social, environmental, and economic - is important to our current and future societies.
* **Developing Public Understanding and Awareness of Sustainability:** Making progress toward more sustainable societies requires a population that is aware of the goals of sustainable societies and has the knowledge and skills to contribute toward those objectives. Informed voting citizenry and knowledgeable consumers can help communities and governments enact sustainability measures and move toward more sustainable societies.
* **Training:** All sectors of the workforce can contribute to local, regional, and national, sustainability. The development of specialized training programmes to ensure that all sectors of the workforce have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their work in a sustainable manner has been identified as a critical component of ESD.

As the present study is highlighting upon the improvement of Basic Education by way Environmental Education the following observations are given importance. They are based on the analysis by the researcher during her teaching tenure The discussion in the study is also based on the researchers knowledge of student fraternity’s attitudes towards Environmental Education at school and college level..

**Effective ways to incorporate Environmental Education in formal Education:**

1. Fast actions to improve basic / compulsory education in all rural areas to-

Gain basic knowledge to understand social economical and ecological aspects for sustainable future.

1. Synchronization of curriculum of Environmental Education for all students of primary and preprimary level in all the states.

This will enable to create awareness amongst students of all the schools regarding the basic facts of relationships between man and environment. This will create sensitivity among all the students of this age group for supporting natural environment.

1. To incorporate project and activity method for teaching Environmental education at Secondary level so as to develop their thinking ability on effects of development.

Projects can be given on the topics of, management of waste, control of pollution, measures to combat energy crises and some specific to their geographical areas.

1. **Education for sustainable development should have grades for all classes of Secondary schools in all regional Boards. As it is seen that willingness for the achievement of good grades motivates students to take the subject seriously.**
2. **Increasing the seats of undergraduate courses in the universities of all the states so as to fulfill the requirement of trained teachers teaching Environmental education**. or giving special training to all teachers during D.Ed and B.Ed.

It has been seen that because of lack of special teachers for Environmental Education, the learning outcomes are below expectable level in most of the institutions.

**It is general practice to allot Environmental Education subject to any subject teacher which results in injustice for the subject.**

Because of time constraint and teachers inability to talk and deal with students so as to solve difficulties about concepts of Environmental Education, there is no interest amongst students to understand it.

1. Provision of better infrastructure facility and opportunities to promote research for in-situ and ex situ conservation of biodiversity in India for controlling resource depletion.
2. Schools and other higher education institutions should encourage the use of global internet based programs to exchange the ideas on various sustainable projects.

Formal implementation of such studies can facilitate project based methods of Environmental Education teaching together to gather knowledge.

1. Schools must bring festive mood on days that are marked to celebrate the awareness regarding issues of earth and environment. This will help them understand their responsibility towards mother earth.

**E.g**. **World Environment day (5th Jun), Earth day and water resource day (22nd Apr), , World Health day (7th Apr), World Habitat Day(4th Oct), World Biodiversity conservation day(24th Nov), International day Biological Diversity (29th Dec)** etc.

**Informal Education for sustainable development:**

Every human action has its impact on environment thus following measures are useful if consistently implemented for the society.

1. Use of NGOs, eco-clubs, and Paryawaran Mitra to conduct awareness programs like street plays, theme based rallies & slogan competitions on special occasions to mark importance of natural resources.
2. Rotary Interact Club or Rotaract club can prove to be helpful to inculcate interest amongst youths to deal with issues of environment.
3. Proper use of media and social networking sites are the best means to change attitudes by imparting knowledge and stressing importance of values for sustainable future. Use of Radio, TV and various magazines for talks, discussions & debate and articles respectively would help to continuously update people regarding the issues of Environment, shortage of resources, management of waste, importance of non conventional energy sources etc.

**Innovations in formal and informal Education**

1. Incorporating lessons to relevant to education for sustainable development in GK books to include basic concepts of ecosystems, natural resources, and biodiversity and energy conservation.
2. Better use of documentary, animation CDs, PPTs, some outdoor activities like nature walk and model presentation on the topics of Environmental Education during oral assignments to inculcate interest amongst students.
3. Creative use of environmental protection agency for educating people for sustainable development by means of social media.

Above mentioned ways take care to achieve social, economic and ecological segments of sustainable development..

The following goals of sustainable development came into effect in January 16th 2016 and they will continue to guide UNDP policy and funding for next 15 years ----

Ending poverty.

Zero hunger.

Good health and well being.

Quality education.

Gender equality

Clean water and sanitation.

Affordable and clean energy.

Decent work and economic growth.

Industry innovation and infrastructure.

Reduced inequalities.

Sustainable cities and communities.

Responsible consumption and production.

Climate action.

Life below water.

Life on land.

Peace, justice and strong institutions.

Partnership for the goals.

It is imperative that we must progress in our innovations and try our level based to empower our population with necessary knowledge so as to use eco friendly life style to contribute sustainable development.

Understanding the critical nature of Sustainable Devolvement and to fulfill it we can study the following UNICCO’s contribution.

* Organizes capacity development workshops for policymakers on how to integrate Education for Sustainable Development into education plans and curricula.
* Provides teachers with tools on Education for Sustainable Development, such as the UNESCO Education for Sustainable Development Sourcebook.
* Establishes Education for Sustainable Development partnerships and networks to promote exchange between practitioners and experts from all world regions.
* Provides easy access to hundreds of resources on Climate Change Education through a web clearinghouse.
* Shares with policy-makers, educators and civil society good examples of Education for Sustainable Development practice.
* Monitors progress on Education for Sustainable Development in countries around the world.
* Advocates for the relevance of Education for Sustainable Development at the international level, such as at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development

and in its follow-up.

* Coordinates the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, which will culminate in the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development in 2014 in Japan.

**Conclusion:**

The success of implementation of Environmental Education directs every individual to reduce their carbon foot print of individuals and thus would help in achieving goals of sustainable development. In short it helps us to take healthy path of development and also help us to unite, to act for sustainable future by implementing positive attitude towards environment by way of green jobs and go green attitude. Lastly but not the list is the positive impact of Education for Sustainable Development is helpful to prevent Environmental disasters and health related issues. One can definitely agree that, **Education is the best solution, as it can helps in achieving most of the goals of Sustainable development to great extent.**

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