



Environmental Education and Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT

The complete life cycle present on the earth is interdependent. All living beings are invariably dependent on other life for their nutrition. This interdependent cycle constitutes the most portion of the environment. Most of the living being follow the environment, however, the man challenged it using its intelligence. He exploited the nature for his benefit. But recent years, his exploitation has crossed all limit and put the environment at risk. His reckless exploitation of nature has put a need for Environment education, which could boost conservation of the environment.

Keywords : Gross Domestic Product, Environmental Education, UNEP

I. INTRODUCTION

In the process of evolution, humans are the last evolved being. If seen the process of evolution, human beings are found on earth since some 2 million years old. But in his attempt to control supremacy over nature and his attempts to exploit unceasingly dates some 10,000 years. During this period, man has developed his social, political and cultural existence ruthlessly exploiting the natural resources. The invention of agriculture, development in dairy and related industrial development. But during this process of development, he has fallen miserably short in the protection and the conservation of the environment of earth. As a result of the mindless exploitation, ecological imbalance and its serious implications have increasingly been felt. Thus, an increasing need for environmental education is felt to put a check on mindless exploitation and achieve development using sustainable means. More emphasis has been put on Environmental Education. Under the direction of the University Grant Commission, all the universities in India the subject of Environmental Education has been taught as a compulsory subject for undergraduate courses.

India is a developing economy and most of its population live Below Poverty Line. The old concept of

the development which states development in terms of rise in Gross Domestic Product or Per Capita Income is outdated. After the decade of 1970, there has been significant agricultural and industrial growth. It increased trade and business. Transportation, Banks, Banks, Insurances, Chemical, and other industries have shown manifold increases. Though the graph of development in the industrial and economic sector is heartening, this development is not seen translated into social development. Whether the question of child mortality, malnutrition in tribal children or dripping down employment opportunities to the deprived sections of society, are still unresolved.

A solution to these problems lies in the Sustainable Development. So, a great need is felt to think of the sustainable development and put in practice the very idea. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, 1992 gave emphasis on the sustainable development achieved by protecting and conserving the environment. Since then, the concept of Sustainable Development has become an important issue.

II. THE CONCEPT OF ENVIRONMENT

In the complete process of living, which includes birth, growth and decay, different living and non-living

elements help each other. This interdependence and their co-existence are termed in a broad term as the environment. The elements in the environment are either living or non-living. Some of the elements are natural and some of them are man-made. All these have interdependence resulting it in the environment.

The living elements of the environment include animal, plants, and microorganisms. It includes human beings are well; while the non-living elements include soil cover, water cover, and environment, etc.

Every living being feels his surrounding which often influences his life. It also adjusts to the surrounding to exist and brings the necessary changes. Since the days of inception, there has been a close relationship between man and environment. His living and development are possible in favourable conditions. But during the period of the last five centuries, human interference in the environment has greatly been increased resulting in the environmental imbalance. Unrestrained use and exploitation of the natural resources have put the environment on the threshold of decay. Man is himself responsible for the mindless exploitation and the resulting grave outcome. In view to handing over the safe plant to the forthcoming generation, it is the topmost responsibility is the environmental conservation. In view to create public awareness, the need for Environmental Education is increasingly felt. If children are made aware of the environment, they can also take measures to sustain it for them and the future.

III. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while at the same time sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend. The desired result is a state of society where living and conditions and resource use continue to meet human needs without undermining the integrity and stability of the natural systems. If the human development causes harm to the environment, then that development cannot be termed as the sustainable. It is called 'Non-Sustainable Development'. The main aim of the sustainable development is to achieve human development without disturbing the environmental balance and constantly protecting and conserving the environment.

In view to fulfilling the increasing needs of the growing population, man has been exploiting petrol, diesel, coal, water, minerals in an unrestrained manner. Again, the increased and mindless use of these natural resources has put serious challenges of pollution, thinning of the Ozone layer and consequent greenhouse effects. The increasing pollution has resulted in the rise in temperature. It has also caused in melting of the glaciers and a rise in their level. Again, human interference has crossed its limits in every sphere of his existence, one of these is water pollution. Man has to face the impact of this mindless exploitation and his future generations are also threatened by its worsening impacts. So, the need for the sustainable development is increasingly felt.

The population explosion and the unrestrained use of the natural resources have put the environment in danger. They have to face continuous spells of drought, floods, epidemics, malnutrition and many more problems. Again, they would scarcely get even food and water, if the man does not stop his mindless interference, observed noted scientist Lester Brown.

IV. GLOBAL EFFORTS TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT

In view to control the environmental decay and conserve it, the concept of World Restrain came up. It stressed the community education and mutual cooperation. The term sustainable development was coined in the paper Our Common Future, released by the Brundtland Commission. Sustainable development is the kind of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It stressed a need for a political, economic, social, international and administrative mechanism which invites the participation of people. Due to environmental studies and new nature-friendly technologies, more production can be taken and environment-friendly practices to be adopted in trade and business as well.

To effectively implement the global restrains for Environmental Dictates, it requires being launched as a public movement. It could be achieved only through public education. After 1970 a great emphasis has been seen put on environment protection. A great effort was made through the Stockholm Conference in 1972. It boosted the process and formed United Nations'

Environment Protection (UNEP) programme. However, only 25 nations approved UNEP. Till 1980. Its ambit increased to more than 140 nations and consequently national offices for the environment conservations were set up. The Earth Summit was a major United Nations conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Around 7000 representatives of 178 nations participated in the summit. Its summit in (1997) Kyoto and (1998) Buenos Aires took measures to lessen the greenhouse effects. 130 Agreements were signed during 1972 to 2000. The World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg during 26 August to 4 September 2002. In view to stop cutting of trees, Chipko agitation held in the leadership of Chandiprasad Bhattad in Chamoli district of Uttar Pradesh also grabbed the world attention.

In the 42nd Amendment to the Constitution in 1976, some provisions for conservations were included. The laws regarding Environment conservations are as follows:

1. Wild Life Protection Act-1972
2. The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
3. Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
4. The Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981

Despite the legal efforts of conservation of the environment, the emphasis has been put on education and public awareness. Public education is taken up to give impetus to nature conservation. Different programmes have been implemented at the school and college levels.

V. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: NEED OF EDUCATION

The environment has great importance in view of the life cycle on our planet. Without the balanced environment, our life can hardly be healthy and easeful. Since earliest period, the need of nature conservation was highlighted by great teachers. In the old period, there was no need of studying of the environment, but in recent years, the scenario has been changed. The Industrial Revolution and the unrestrained exploitation of natural resources have put worsening impact on the environment. So, in present times, we cannot achieve development, ignoring our environment. In view to keep the quality of the

environment and also achieve sustainable development, education is required to be taken up as a vehicle of mass awareness. The following points highlight the importance of Environment Education.

1. Environmental education is required to understand the interdependence between nature and living being and Environment and man.
2. Environmental education is required to understand the fact that without the balanced Environment man cannot live a healthy life on our planet.
3. Environmental education is required to understand the importance and worth of Forest, Water, Minerals on earth and ozone and oxygen in air,
4. In view to keep the environmental cycle intact and understand the importance of forests, water, and air, Environment education is a must.
5. It is also required to educate people about the impact of environmental imbalance and their effect on their lives.
6. It is required to make people aware of the worsening impact of the population explosion.
7. It is also required to give the message of Live and Let Live to all people.

In the present scenario, there has been no alternative to the study and practice of Environment Education and achieve the sustainable development to stop the mindless deforestation, air pollution, consequent depletion of Ozon layer. The sustainable development is the only way for the present and the future generation.

VI. REFERENCES

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