



Sustainable development through Environmental Education in India

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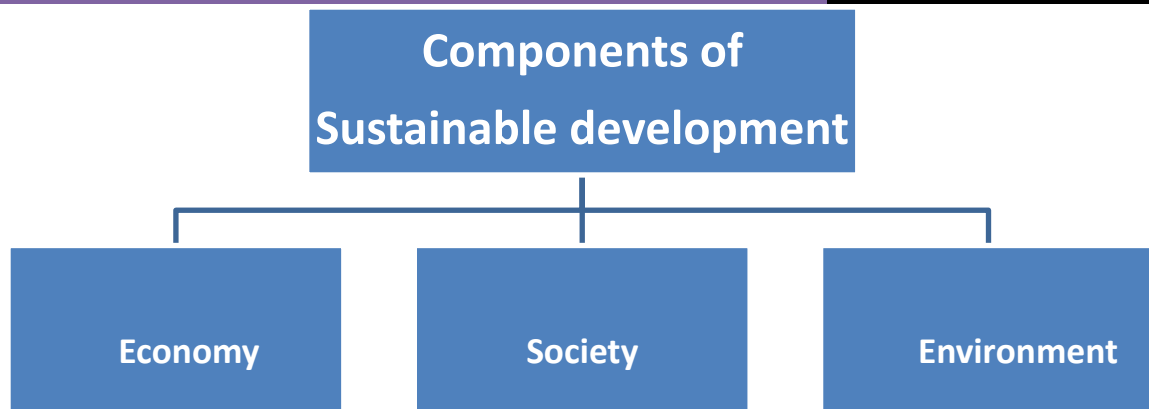
Abstract:

The environment which sustains life is in danger at present. 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. Rapid industrialization, advancement in science and technology and the abuses of this advancement in an arbitrary way and the fast growth of urbanization have posed danger to man himself. Man's life in term of quality and sustainability, is dependent on the interrelationships among the natural environment, social environment and technological environment and the latter two being man made. As proposed by the sociologist William-Ogburn, a change in anyone of the environment will lead to greater or lesser changes in every other part of the total complex, and these changes ,as a result will have tremendous impact on the very living of the man .The most threaten aspect is the uncertainty prevailing about the fact our future generations. All these facts remind us of Threats , of death instinct ,which may sweep the entire world .We have started to realize, and are rather haunted by the feeling that the world is moving headlong towards disaster, or destroy ourselves. It is, therefore, very urgent that we may diagnose this malady and adopt prevention and curative measures. Environmental Education is one of the best means for curative measure. It is an essential tool for achieving sustainability or sustainable development.

Keywords: Environment, Environment education, Sustainable development

1. Meaning of Sustainable Development

It is obvious that sustainable development is a difficult concept to define; it is also continually evolving, which makes it doubly difficult to define. One of the original description of sustainable development is credited to the Brudtland Commission "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own need " The National Town meeting on sustainability in Detroil ,Michigan, established that the term "Sustainable development" although frequently used is not well understood . We believe that it means new technologies and new ways of doing business, which allows us to improve quality of life today in all economic, environmental and social Dimension, without impairing the ability of future generations to enjoy quality of life and opportunity at last as good as ours people argue about the meaning of sustainable development and whether or not it is attainable. The Human Right Community says "Sustainability is attainable through and supported by Peace, Justice, and Democracy". On the other hand Economics Educators says that sustainability is living on the interest rather than the principle. Sustainable development is not limited to only economic development, infect it has three components-



If we consider the three to be overlapping circles of the same size, the area of overlap in the center is human well being. As the environment, society and economic become more aligned, the area of overlap increase, and so does human well-being. The wellbeing of these three areas is intertwined, not separate for example, a healthy, prosperous society relies on a healthy environment to provide food and resources, safe drinking water and clean air for its citizens. The sustainability paradigm rejects the contention that casualties in the environmental and social realms are inevitable and acceptable consequence of economic development. Thus we can consider sustainability to be a paradigm for thinking about a future in which environmental, societal and economic considerations are balanced in the pursuit of development and improved quality of life.

2. The Problems that affect Sustainable Development

As we know balance environment is must for getting sustainable development but there are many problems which are hurdles for it. In this connection.

The first problem is that merits our attention is that of population explosion. This population explosion raises the problem of poverty. The million people in developing countries are awfully poor and are breathing between life and death. Any moment starvation may shove them in the open jaws of death pressure of population causes back of agriculture field, polluted drinking water various types of contagious disease like malaria, trachoma, tuberculosis, malnutrition etc.

The second problem is that of depletion of physical resources, which are of two types- renewable and non renewable. The renewable one are soil, water, forest, vegetation, and wild life. The nonrenewable ones are minerals oil, and coal. These resources does not gives us the license to use these resources ruthlessly if cut forests or destroy our plants without caring for them, the equilibrium in nature would be disturbed. The food chain would be affected. Many animals which live on vegetable would die, and in turn many carnivores which feed on these animals would die, In the process man will be affected. destruction of renewable resources may land us in to such serious ecological problems which may be difficult to be solved and which may result in the wiping away of man of species of animals, so necessary to maintain equilibrium in nature.

The third problem is that of controlling pollution which is increasing day by day on account of technological growth. The pollution of the Ganga's with the waste products of the factory of Rishikesh which has reached magnitude of its own is a case in point. A second example is that of the carbon monoxide emitted by the chimneys of thermal power station and other factories. By automobiles, buses, trucks. These problems of pollution are further aggravated by noise pollution which too sometimes becomes meaning. The noise of traffic in the Moreover, pollution is also caused metropolises, the thundering sound of the supersonic jets, and the roaring of the mills, all pollute the atmosphere. We have to think of controlling air and water pollution, if ecological balance is to be maintained and if living being are to be saved from extinction.

3. Environment Protection and Sustainable Development

Environment –protection has been operationalized in to a concept of sustainable development which implies meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of the present generation. It is sought to be a process of development that discourage the present generation to become better off at the cost of the future generation. Economic growth and development are thus no longer to be pursued independence of the ecological aspects. This development has given the background for the general realization that the environment has to be safeguard in any case. This has been accepted as a major guiding factor for striving for an environmentally friendly development particularly in third countries. In the last four decades, development has been perceived as a multi-dimensional process involving reorganization and reorientation of national institutions, social structure and people's attitude in the perspective of economic growth and reduction of poverty ,inequality ,unemployment ,illiteracy and disease Thus development seeks to improve the quality of life including making accessible safe and clean water , healthy air better housing and sanitation facilities .This also implies that aiming at environment quality along with economic growth are not mutually exclusive rather they are supplementary to each other.

4. How Environmental Education can be helpful for sustainable development

Environment education is education through environment, about environment and for environment. In so far as the teaching for environment is concerned , it means controlling the environment, establishing proper ecological equilibrium which entails proper use and conservation of resources and also includes proper environmental planning so that environment is not only functionally useful but is also aesthetically enjoyable. This aspect would include horticultural planning, rural planning and urban planning.

Environmental education is a medium and process of education that covers man's relationships with his natural as well as social and man-made environment and it also includes the relationship of population, industrialization, pollution, resource allocation and depletion, conservation, transportation , technology, energy and rural planning to the total biosphere . viewed so, the next of environmental education is multidisciplinary in character and its quintessence is a commitment on the part of one and all, on the part of all of us inhabiting this planet earth; to prevent deterioration of air, water, land and physical and social environment including interrelation among people so that a nuclear war, a chemical warfare or any other cataclysm generated by man may not destroy the world. Further ,environmental education should be a lifelong process and should aim at not merely imparting knowledge and understanding of man's total environment and of the methods and their application for improving our near and distant surroundings but it should also aim at including skills, the attitude and values necessary to understanding ,appreciate and improve our bio sphere and troposphere.

Environmental education is indeed very important for person's self-fulfillment and social development. It helps in the maintenance of life and health, in self-preservation and in the preservation of human race. It helps appreciate different social institutions and regulative relationship in primary groups like family and secondary and tertiary groups like place of work, political institutions, etc. It helps in appreciating and enjoying nature and society. It simulates concern for changing environment in a systematic manner for the maximum long-run as well as the immediate welfare of mankind. It direct the attention towards the problem of population explosion, exhaustion of natural resources and the pollution of environment and sheds light on the methods of solving these problems.

Environmental education can also increase environmental literacy, foster and encourage responsible citizenship, develop and teach personal, civic and global responsibilities, and generally help to prepare students for adopting sustainable life styles. Environmental education encourages individual activism and emphasizes local ideas in the context of project-based learning that is tied to purposeful activity and action in support of the environment

Although environmental education includes both indoor and outdoor activities, it allows students to get out of the classroom, and into natural outdoor settings. As such, environmental education can build on real-world knowledge that students already have. Environmental learning can involve students in science activities that mirror real life issues and expose students to environmental science as a potentially desirable career.

Environmental education can provide students with a variety of transferable skills such as basic classification skills. In addition, students can build their collaborative problem-solving skills. Since environmental education emphasizes cooperative versus competitive learning, students can increase their group cooperation skills. Environmental learning can focus on student's independent thinking, critical thinking and critical-inquiry skills.

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. Since educational institutions are the places where the contact of the society is more, it is possible to bring remarkable changes 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 learner's awareness of their environment's ambient conditions, as well as their active participation in solving local problems.

To this there is the need of a generic outline syllabus, including essential elements of moral philosophy has to be proposed for environmental education in schools and also undergraduate students in college level. Environmental education in school system is generally lacking the logical concept, knowledge, and skills that are needed to deal with the environmental problems. Instead, the introduction to Environmental education in the overall curricula created incoherence. The country's main environmental problems are land degradation, degradation of forest, pollution of soil, water, air, biodiversity conservation, solid waste management and the degradation of landscape. But introducing students to bigger and wider issues of a wider territory is as logical and beneficial to introduce children to local eco-systems. Unless the environmental problems are adequately defined and solved at the local levels, we cannot deal with such issues at national or global levels.

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