



EDUCATION: A TOOL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

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Abstract: Education is an instrument of social change, as well as social control. It plays a significant role in controlling and solving the societal problems. Education has the power to modify the society and present better knowledge to its populace. It can stand as a proper solution to solve different sorts of problems that exist in a society and therefore it plays a big role in saving environment. Nowadays, various issues related to the degradation of environment pose a serious threat to the mankind. Problems like global warming, pollution, climate change, over population and so on are ruining our environment badly. These issues are a matter of grave concern not only at local or national level but also at the global level. The main role of education when it comes to the protection of environment is creating awareness to everyone in a society. When people know the importance of a healthy environment then they take all the possible measures to keep the environment healthy. One of the most effective means to promote healthy environment is giving proper education to both new as well as old generations. Environmental education and protection is crucial for the benefit of both the environment and humans. In the present paper an attempt has been made to highlight the role of education in the conservation of environment. The paper also throws light on the roles that teachers or educational institutions must play in saving the environment.

Key Words: instrument, significant, controlling, Education, knowledge, populace, solution .

INTRODUCTION- Education is an instrument of social change, as well as social control. It plays a significant role in controlling and solving the societal problems. Education has the power to modify the society and present better knowledge to its populace. It can stand as a proper solution to solve different sorts of problems that exist in a society and therefore it plays a big role in saving environment. Nowadays, various issues related to the degradation of environment pose a serious threat to the mankind. Problems like global warming, pollution, climate change, over population and so on are ruining our environment badly. These issues are a matter of grave concern not only at local or national level but also at the global level. The main role of education when it comes to the protection of environment is creating awareness to everyone in a society. When people know the importance of a healthy environment then they take all the possible measures to keep the environment healthy. One of the most effective means to promote healthy

environment is giving proper education to both new as well as old generations. Environmental education and protection is crucial for the benefit of both the environment and humans.

OBJECTIVES- 1. To discuss the causes of environmental degradation.

2. To discuss the role of education in saving environment.

1. Environmental degradation means overall lowering of environmental qualities because of adverse changes brought in by human activities in the basic structure of the components of the environment to such an extent that these changes affect adversely all biological communities in general and human society. The degradation of environment is caused by pollution and the hazards. The hazards are sudden by natural processes or by human activities which require the immediate relief and prediction can be made for the safeguard. These hazards can cause sudden and severe pollution. Environmental pollution is taking place due to slow



and gradual human activities. E.g., increase of human population, establishing factories and industries, development of transportation facilities, etc. The pollution degrades the quality of the environment which can be protected by proper environmental management and assessment. Environmental degradation leaves direct impact on the ecology and causes ecological imbalance because of marked reduction in the ecosystem and ecological diversity. The ecological imbalance is the sign of environmental degradation. It is difficult to perceive environmental degradation directly at the initial stages. It can be easily observable in living organisms.

CAUSES OF ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION-

- a. The development of modern technologies- : with the advent of the industrial revolution in the 19th century, the world moved fast towards better living- termed it as growth and development- but at the same time, degrading the purity of nature in all forms.
- b. The increase in human population-: population impacts on the environment primarily through the use of natural resources and production of wastes and it associated with environmental stresses like loss of biodiversity, air and water pollution and increased pressure on arable land.
- c. There is pressure on natural resources- : The exploitation or overuse of natural resources is the use of natural resources for economic growth, sometimes with a negative connotation of accompanying environmental degradation.
- d. The high rates of exploitation of natural resources- : The exploitation or overuse of natural resources is the use of natural resources for economic growth, sometimes with a negative connotation of accompanying environmental degradation.
- e. Growing industries and factories- : Industrialization to achieve economic development has resulted in global environmental degradation. At the same time, new problems linked to industrialization are emerging, such as rising

greenhouse gas emissions, air and water pollution, growing volumes of waste, desertification and chemical pollution.

f. Increasing settlement of urbanization-: rapid urbanization has caused wide spread environmental degradation. Due to uncontrolled urbanization in our country as well as the world as a whole, environmental degradation has been occurring very rapidly and causing many problems.

g. The development of economic functions of man- : The development of economic functions has resulted in sheer ignorance towards our environment.

All these causes are to be modified to such an extent that the adverse effects on the environment are reduced to minimum by 'Homeostatic Mechanism'. The physical and biological processes of the natural environmental system self regulatory to compensate the negative feedback.

2. Education is an instrument of social change, as well as social control. Education plays significant role in controlling and solving the social problems. The main role of education when it comes to environment protection is offering awareness to everyone in a society. Education can provide better awareness of a variety of environmental issues that take place day by day. Everyone in a society including kids, youths, adults and matured people can understand and become aware of the various environmental issues if they get proper education on it. Education teaches individuals and communities to know about the environment and its related problems, become aware of the solutions to the environmental problems, motivate the people to solve the issues and take proper actions to save environment from potential issues. Education system can play a huge role in saving environment by imparting knowledge on how to protect the environment to people in diverse communities. Saving environment is a practice of looking after the natural environment on individual, organizational or societal levels for the gains of both the environment and humans. Environmental



education helps to resolve main environmental problems like acid rain, ozone depletion, climate changes, global warming etc. Environmental issues are one of the main causes of many diseases, health issues and long term livelihood problems in India. So, incorporating education in schools and conducting environmental awareness campaign in communities can bring people together, discuss about the environmental issues, engage with different sorts of people, make practical judgements about varied environmental issues and respond to the issues effectively. Education on environment will guide people to think seriously, deeply, and productively. Education on saving environment or effective environment protection programs promote a holistic and lead by example approach among people. It allows people to make certain sustainable and fair use of resources devoid of damaging the environment. Effective programs conducted in schools or any other places encourage kids and parents to carry environmental education into their home. Environmental education strategies include training individuals to prosper in a sustainable society. Education helps people to establish a strong bond with nature. Nature appreciation and awareness education or programs promotes an ecologically sustainable future.

Air pollution, poor managing of waste, rising water shortage, declining groundwater tables, water pollution, low conservation and quality of forests, biodiversity loss, and land & soil degradation are a few of the main environmental issues faced by global world and population explosion also adds stress to environmental issues and its resources. Issues related to environment are problems of grave concern not only at local or national level but also at global level. So, education on environmental issues are important today since it lets people to build up skills, foster a dedication to take steps individually and communally to maintain and enhance the environment.

The following methods can be used in solving the problems at these levels:

- 1) Providing the awareness of environmental issues in every type of educational institutions.
- 2) Providing the specific and more scientific knowledge subject wise.
- 3) Organizing orientation programmes and courses for administrators, executives and the authorities at different levels.
- 4) Interdisciplinary seminars, conferences, group discussions at regional and local levels
- 5) Including 'Environment Education' as a compulsory course and organizing some project work in Teacher-education programmes.
- 6) Scouting, girl guiding N.S.S. programmes and village workers should be provided the awareness about environmental issues and remedial ways.
- 7) Encouraging the scholars for research studies on environment related issues. These should be interdisciplinary in nature.
- 8) Environmental Management, organization, impact assessment and agencies work effectively and sincerely in solving the problem of Environmental pollution.

ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS- Educational Institutions of all types should introduce some programmes in their curriculums for improving the organizational climate in terms of quality of environment. In the daily assembly some topic on Environment should be presented by different subject teachers from their point of view. Some practical work should be assigned to different classes of sections for improving the organization quality of the institutions as well as the locality of the institutions. On teachers day, parents day or other important occasions some lectures on issues related to environment and the ways to address these issues should be organized. The group who has contributed significantly, should be regarded and praised by the heads of the institutions.

ROLE OF TEACHERS- 1) Providing scientific knowledge about environmental issues- Subjects like geography, botany, chemistry, zoology,



Physics, geology are directly concerned with the components of environment. The environmental degradation is concerned with ecological imbalances and instability of the ecosystem. Three types of pollutions - air, water and soil are most significant, but these are interrelated. The study of these is interdisciplinary in nature. The students of geography have to study atmosphere (air) hydrosphere (water) and lithosphere (land), similarly students of chemistry also study these components of environment. The students of botany tries to understand plants growth in terms of environmental component, similarly those associated with zoology attempt to understand the animal growth and development with reference to the environment. Physics students are mainly concerned with physical, solar, atomic and radiation energies in terms of stability of ecosystem of local and regional environmental pollution along with the remedial ways and means.

2) Orientation programmes for administrators : executives and authorities should provide the awareness of environmental issues and various acts for preventing and conserving the environment so that these can be enforced immediately and effectively.

3) Interdisciplinary approach- seminars and conferences on environmental issues should be organized on the issues of environment at local, regional and national levels. During the past such programmes have contributed significantly in environmental problems either suggested same remedial measures or legal steps.

4) Environmental education- it should be included as the course of study in teacher education programmes and practical work as community work suggested by NCTE in its approach paper. There should be four objectives- understanding, skills, practical work, attitudes and values towards environmental problems and pollutions. In daily assembly programmes environmental issues should be discussed and practical work should be assigned to pupil-teachers to improve the quality of local

environment.

5) Enforcement of Acts and laws- Executives, administrators and organizations must work sincerely and honestly to enforce the environmental acts and laws properly in preventing and controlling environmental pollution. Thus the quality of environment can be improved and maintained.

6) Proper execution, organization and management of environment- it is the most crucial measure to prevent and control the environmental pollution.

7) Interdisciplinary researches- Interdisciplinary researches on environmental issues should be encouraged in Education faculties because in teacher education community have the scholars of different disciplines. This type of research projects should be given priority in financial assistance to the scholars. The study should have practical value for human community.

8) Providing awareness to organizations and agencies- workers-N.C.C., N.S.S, scouting, girls, should guiding, village workers and local social workers should be provided the awareness of such problems. Group discussions should be organized for solving the problems of the local level as they are involved in it. They may suggest effective workable ways and means for environmental pollutions

CONCLUSION- Education plays a massive role in building up a society that is knowledgeable towards the environment and its associated problems. Education can help to solve complex issues that are present in a society. It is the only viable solution that can come to the rescue of our environment. Education on environmental issues are the need of the hour as it lets people to build up skills, foster a dedication to take steps individually and communally to maintain and enhance the environment. Education indeed enhances appreciation of environment amid people. Enhancing appreciation of the environment among citizens can give rise to overall positive environmental behavioural change. This type of research projects should be given priority in



financial assistance to the scholars.

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