

ROLE AND IMPACT OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Monika Kadam
Assistant Professor
Delhi Metropolitan Education

ABSTRACT

Worldwide education has been recognized as an essential component for sustainable development. It is recognized for the important role in improving livelihoods worldwide and has made many valuable contributions to and development globally. Quality education should prepare societies to actively participate in global politics and economics, as well as provide people with the skills necessary to make informed decisions and take responsible actions. Throughout the world, societies have recognized education as a key component of sustainable development.

Environmental education is not only just a program to teach about the natural world and functioning of ecosystems, but also it is the process of identifying and acknowledging values and clarifying concepts to develop skills and attitudes essential to understand and appreciate the inter-relatedness of man, his culture and his biophysical surroundings. Environmental education cannot be considered as a field of study. Rather it is a lifelong process that is infused in various other fields of study.

The role of environment education can also positively influence the management of the world's increasingly stressed natural resources through the incorporation of successful techniques of environmental education. Environmental education provides students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences essential to become successful community leaders, as well as making intelligent decisions pertaining to the management of their natural resources.

Basically, sustainable development is all about working towards the development of economy without compromising or depletion of natural resources. The United Nations defines "sustainable development as a development strategy that focuses on meeting the demands and needs of present-day citizens without compromising the future's ability to meet theirs."

The objective of Environment Education for Sustainable Development is not only to be environmental-friendly; in fact, it also involves life-skills development that includes leadership, communication and management; all of which are extremely important for personal development. By equipping young people with these relevant capabilities in addition to their environmental knowledge, they can excel at living lives which not only further humanity, but that care for and respect our planet's resources too.

Current research continues to expand our understanding of the field, but there are no recent reviews of the literature addressing the impact of these educational interventions. The objective of this paper is, to examine the role of environment education and highlight its impact as a key enabler in the realization of the sustainable development goals.

Keywords: *education, impact, development, awareness, environment education, education for sustainable development*

INTRODUCTION

Worldwide education has been recognized as an essential component for sustainable development. It is recognized for the important role in improving livelihoods worldwide and has made many valuable contributions to and development globally. Quality education should prepare societies to actively participate in global politics and economics, as well as provide people with the skills necessary to make informed decisions and take responsible actions. Throughout the world, societies have recognized education as a key component of sustainable development.

Environmental education is not only just a program to teach about the natural world and functioning of ecosystems, but also it is the process of identifying and acknowledging values and clarifying concepts to develop skills and attitudes essential to understand and appreciate the inter-relatedness of man, his culture and his biophysical surroundings. Environmental education cannot be considered as a field of study. Rather it is a lifelong process that is infused in various other fields of study. It should be regarded as a multidisciplinary approach. It can be linked to three components:

Education about the environment: Considering the environment as a subject of investigation it deals with the augmentation of knowledge.

Education for the environment: focusing the need of imparting the values in order to create a concern of pro-environmental behavior. Eventually, developing attitudes for generating responsibility towards sustainable living.

Education through the environment: To develop a deeper understanding of environmental issues and the skills to make informed and responsible decisions.

The role of environment education can also positively influence the management of the world's increasingly stressed natural resources through the incorporation of successful techniques of environmental education. Environmental education provides students with the knowledge, skills, and experiences essential to become successful community leaders, as well as making intelligent decisions pertaining to the management of their natural resources.

Basically, sustainable development is all about working towards the development of economy without compromising or depletion of natural resources. The United Nations defines “sustainable development as a development strategy that focuses on meeting the demands and needs of present-day citizens without compromising the future’s ability to meet theirs.”

The objective of Environment Education for Sustainable Development is not only to be environmental-friendly; in fact, it also involves life-skills development that includes leadership, communication and management; all of which are extremely important for personal development. By equipping young people with these relevant capabilities in addition to their environmental knowledge, they can excel at living lives which not only further humanity, but that care for and respect our planet’s resources too.

Current research continues to expand our understanding of the field, but there are no recent reviews of the literature addressing the impact of these educational conducts. The objective of this paper is, to examine the role of environment education and highlight its impact as a key enabler in the realization of the sustainable development goals.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ✓ To understand the concept of Education for Sustainable Development
- ✓ To know how Education for Sustainable Development will make an impact on all aspects of governance and improve the quality of life of citizens.
- ✓ To find the impacts of Education for Sustainable Development.
- ✓ To explain the challenges faced by Education for Sustainable Development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

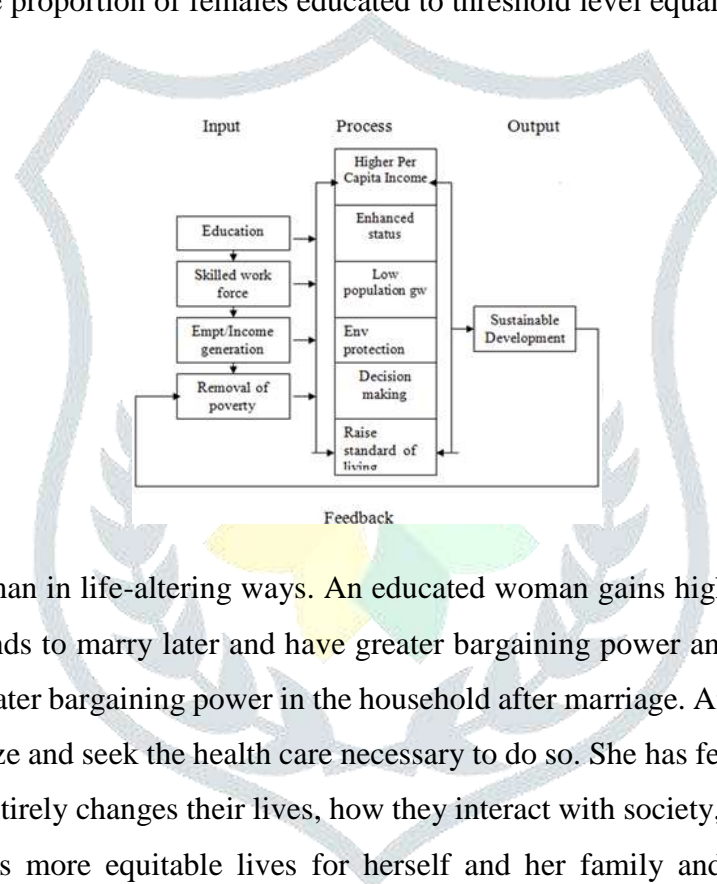
Type of Research- Descriptive Research

For this research purpose secondary data is used to analyze and gain in-depth knowledge about Education for Sustainable Development. Secondary data has been collected from central government official websites, journals, newspapers and related studies.

IMPACT OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Every one of India’s 1.3 million schools, as well as all of its 650-plus universities, are required by a Supreme Court order to educate each young Indian about the environment and sustainability. Driving the program is a belief that teaching these topics is key to addressing India’s many severe ecological problems, from polluted air and water to a disease-spreading lack of sanitation.

There is a complex relationship between education and sustainable development. Many research has proved that basic education is a nation's key for sustainability. Research has shown that education can improve agricultural productivity, enhance the status of women, reduce population growth rates, enhance environmental protection, and generally raise the standard of living. But the relationship is not linear. For example, four to six years of education is the minimum threshold for increasing agricultural productivity. Literacy and numeracy allow farmers to adapt to new agricultural methods, cope with risk, and respond to market signals. Literacy helps the farmers to mix and apply chemicals such a fertilizers and pesticides according to manufacturers' directions so that the risks to the environment and human health can be reduced. A basic education also helps farmers gaining the title to their land and applying for credit at banks and other lending institutions. If the proportion of females educated to threshold level equals that of males then effects are greatest.



Education benefits a woman in life-altering ways. An educated woman gains higher status and an enhanced sense of efficacy. She tends to marry later and have greater bargaining power and success in the "marriage market." She also has greater bargaining power in the household after marriage. An educated woman tends to desire a smaller family size and seek the health care necessary to do so. She has fewer and healthier children. For females, education entirely changes their lives, how they interact with society, and their economic status. Educating women creates more equitable lives for herself and her family and increases their ability to participate in community decision making and work toward achieving local sustainability goals.

Another educational threshold is primary education for women. At least a primary education is required before birth-rate drops and infant health and children's education improve. Nine to 12 years of education are required for increased industrial productivity. This level of education also increases the probability of employment in a changing economy. Few studies have been carried out on how education affects environmental stewardship, but one study suggests that a lower-secondary education (or approximately nine years) is necessary to intensify use of existing land and to provide alternative off-farm employment and migration from rural areas. Finally, a subtle combination of higher education, research, and life-long learning is necessary for a nation to

shift to an information or knowledge-based economy, which is fueled less by imported technology and more by local innovation and creativity (UNESCO-ACEID, 1997).

Sustainability education initiatives in the in India's business schools can be traced back to the early 90's when the premier business school in India such as the Indian Institute of Management at Ahmedabad and Calcutta decided to offer environmental management courses as electives in their post graduate courses. Since then many more schools have incorporated environmental management courses into their curriculum. Such initiatives have also been strongly influenced by the directives from the higher education regulatory agencies and the judiciary. For instance, the University Grants Commission, the controlling authority for Universities in India, mandated that an environmental management course must be taught in the MBA programmes offered by universities.

A survey on Corporate Responsibility education in India among top ranked 104 schools by Partners in Change concluded that while corporate responsibility education had made some progress, significant steps were further needed (Partners in Change, 2007). A second study on the status of ethics, corporate governance and environment education concluded that of the 107 schools surveyed "ethics was offered by 64.49%, corporate governance by 31.78%, CSR by 10.28% and environment and sustainability by 14.02% of the business schools surveyed (Srinivasan, Srinivasan & Anand, 2012).

The content and pedagogy of sustainability courses also vary greatly between business schools. The most common approach has been to introduce standalone courses in sustainability or allied areas such as corporate governance, ethics, corporate social responsibility, green operations etc., Much of these initiatives have been individual faculty driven. A second approach now being adopted by a few schools is to introduce compulsory core courses as a part of the first-year core curriculum as in the case of schools like IIM Ahmedabad, Xavier School of Management Jamshedpur, Xavier Institute of Management Bhubaneswar, IIM Lucknow and others. In many of these instances multiple courses on environment are offered. However, in most instances the courses are strongly driven by faculty interests and their future depends on continued faculty interest, something that is difficult to sustain, given the wide variations in student interest and institutional support. Even where environmental courses are offered, these are currently done in a very disjointed manner and not integrated with the functional areas. Also in the absence of a concerted effort and lack of adequate focus by the business schools themselves the impact of these pioneering efforts is limited. A third approach has been to introduce masters level programs in sustainable business management as given in Table 1. An early attempt at starting a sustainability programme was from Symbiosis University in 2008 by way of an integrated Energy and Environment program. The most recent have been the launch of Post Graduate Programmes in sustainability by two premier institutions: Xavier University and the Indian Institute of Management Lucknow (IIML). However most of these programmes have remained small and have not been scaled up.

CHALLENGES OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Even after the decade of progressing ESD, still there are areas of education and learning where ESD has to be streamlined. The UNESCO report has identified a number of remaining daunting challenges ESD faces as it has entered the next decade. These are:

- Closer calibration and adherence across education and sustainable development sectors
To ensure implementation of ESD on a systemic level, political support is required.
- Better Knowledge: More research, innovation, monitoring and evaluation for the effectiveness of ESD and subsequently on the adoption of sustainable development as the core development paradigm.
- sustainable development should be learnt by each and every student.

These challenges are non-negligible. ESD has been treated as a separate component within the education systems. However, it has been argued for years that sustainable development needs to be embedded within main stream disciplines at all levels of education. This requires a systemic change in all kind of textbooks, including science, math, technology, social sciences and humanities.

ESD forms part of a larger effort of states and societies to use education as an agent of transformation such as ethics, civics, peace education, human rights education, critical thinking, skills for cooperation, and global citizenship education – all contribute to educating for a more peaceful and sustainable world. A more effective transformative education for the future will be based on better interface between all these components.

Economic growth needs to be aligned with sustainable development at macro level. ESD should not be treated as luxury during the availability of resources and growing economy instead it needs to be integrated all along.

Better pedagogy needed: The third major challenge is the development of new pedagogies that are more suitable and aligned with the principles of sustainability. Just like reading and writing, sustainable development should be the part of core literacy.

The Global Action Program has identified five focus areas that are potential to address some of these challenges but only with careful and strategic design. The five areas of the Global Action Plan are:

- Advancing policy;
- Integrating sustainability practices into education and training environments (whole-institution approaches);
- Increasing the number of educators and trainers;
- Empowering and mobilizing youth; and
- Encouraging local communities and municipal authorities to develop community-based ESD programs.

CONCLUSION

Continued support from authorities, appropriate policies and laws, responsible action by individuals and communities, and above all a deep compassion for our planet will together serve to alleviate the global environmental crises we face today. Education for Sustainable Development can help change the future.

This type of learning goes beyond the school. What a child learns during this process shouldn't stop there – it must be practiced by the family too. Wise use of water and energy both at home and in the work place must be part of our natural behavior as parents and care-givers. Greater efforts must be put in by families and communities to reduce waste, recycle regularly and opt for public transport to demonstrate the importance to our children of living more sustainably. Our homes and communities can be the ideal platform for children to exercise and experience what they learn in the classroom.

Literacy and basic education are essential for enabling the poor access the benefits offered by development initiatives and market opportunities. Basic education is therefore a precondition for sustainable development. In India, education has been a mere marks scoring exercise characterized by mugging taking precedence over learning and thereby undermining the very essence of education. As a result, our country has a very low Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 25.2% in 2016-17 and Education spending of 3.71 percent and we do not produce individuals of character and this is a great liability for our country.

A major step in this regard can be providing quality educational infrastructure to our students at all levels. The socio-economic balance to improve human lives can only be achieved through sustainable education. This will also help in creating a more equitable society. This can be done by collaboration of education institutions with the private sector in research, faculty development, infrastructure creation, student scholarships, and governance. While quality is a problem, access to education is a bigger problem. Private institutes must collaborate with banks to make student loans available to deserving students at an affordable rate. The government policies in this regard would be a great enabler to achieve sustainability.

REFERENCES

- http://www.academia.edu/6111249/Identity_Catapult_in_a_Globalizing_World_A_Critique
- https://www.carnegiecouncil.org/publications/articles_papers_reports/772
- <https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_for_sustainable_development
- Contributions of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) to Quality Education: A Synthesis of Research Robert Laurie, Yuko Nonoyama-Tarumi, Rosalyn Mckeown, Charles Hopkins September 6, 2016

- www.wwf.se/source.php?id=1670998
- <https://en.reset.org/.../advancing-sustainable-development-through-education-india>
- <http://www.wise-qatar.org/sustainable-development-goals-education>
- <https://www.weforum.org/.../why-education-is-the-key-to-sustainable-development/>

