



Need Of Environmental Education In Teacher Education

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Abstract

Survival of human beings on the earth depends on existence of clean and healthy environment. Today the conservation of environment and prevention of environmental degradation are crucial challenges before the human beings. But man's struggle towards a better life and higher standard of living demanded higher consumption of natural resources. This has resulted in environmental degradation. Environmental problems are not the problems of developing countries like India, But it is concerned with the whole globe. The issue of environmental problems and environmental education have been widely discussed in last three decades all over the world at several national and international workshop, seminars and conferences. People started realizing the urgent need of environmental need of environmental need of education which will help individuals and social groups to acquire awareness, develop attitudes, skills and abilities and participate in solving real life problems. Recognizing the need and importance of environmental education in India, recently several efforts have been made to reorient and reorganize school education and establish environmental education more formally. School textbooks, in all subjects and at all levels, have been revised to integrate environmental concepts. The effects of these curricular revisions will not be sustained unless they are coupled with appropriate changes in teacher education curriculum. Efforts have been made to develop curriculum and other support materials for introducing environmental education at all levels of teacher education in the country. Incorporating environmental education in teacher education involves deliberating several issues relating to content, learning and teaching methodologies, materials development and capacity building requirements for its effective implementation. National Council Of Teacher Education has also included a course related to environmental issues in its teacher education curriculum framework in order to make future teachers more aware as well as concerned about their natural environment.

Keywords – Environmental Education, Environmental Problem, Teacher Education

Environmental Education -

Environmental Education (EE) is a process in which individuals gain awareness of their environment and acquire knowledge, skills, values, experiences, and also the determination, which will enable them to act - individually and collectively - to solve present and future environmental problems.

Environmental Education is a complex process, covering not just events, but a strong underlying approach to society building as a whole. EE provides people with the awareness needed to build partnerships, understand NGO activities, develop participatory approaches to urban planning, and ensure future markets for eco-business.

Environmental education is a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges, and fosters attitudes, motivations, and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsible action (UNESCO, Tbilisi Declaration, 1978).

Environmental education enhances critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective decision-making skills, and teaches individuals to weigh various sides of an environmental issue to make informed and responsible decisions. Environmental education does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action.

Emerging Of Environmental Education -

The concept of environmental education emerged only in the seventies which were called as the decade of environmental education. During that period the world realized that environmental concerns and awareness could be spread only through a mass environment education program. The concept of environment education emerged from the Stockholm Conference organized by the United Nation in 1972. Recommendations of the conference emphasized organization of 'formal' and 'mass' environmental education programs. Educating the people at large about environment and its components would develop critical thinking analytical and problem solving skills in them. It would develop knowledge and insights to improve quality of human life on earth.

Need Of Environmental Education For Teachers -

The second international conference on environmental education 1985 held in New Delhi, formulated few points to help the students and teachers as well –

- **Awareness** – to acquire sensitivity to the total environment and its allied problems.
- **Knowledge** - to gain a variety of experiences in and acquire a basic understanding of the environment and its associated problems.
- **Skills** – to acquire skills for identifying environmental problems.
- **Evaluation ability** – to evaluate environmental measures and educated programme in term of social, economical, ecological and aesthetic factors.
- **Attitude** - to acquire a set of values and feeling of concern for the environment and the motivation for active participation in the environmental improvement and protection.
- **Participation** - to provide an opportunity to be actively involved at all levels in working towards the resolution of environmental problems .

It is obvious that the structure of teacher education programme in any stage convey something more than merely the acquisition of teaching skills, methodologies etc. Each level of training has to be relevant to the development for the teachers. The need of environmental education for the teachers is also emphasized by Environmental Education Curriculum Framework for Teachers and Teacher Education 2005. It put its emphasis on environmental education by the following aspects –

- Harmony in life.
- Respecting forces of nature.
- Distorted world war .
- Happiness.
- Western experience.
- Sustainable development.
- Twin problem explosion of population and poverty

Objective Of Introducing Environmental Education In Teacher Education Programme -

- ❖ To prepare the teachers to teach environmental education.
- ❖ To development awareness about environmental aspects among teachers.
- ❖ To enable the students teachers to understands about the concepts of environmental education.
- ❖ To prepare the teachers to develop their own curriculum basing on the local requirements to the environmental aspects.

Teaching Learning Strategies Of Teacher Education Programme -

Among many following should be the teaching learning strategies which should be included in Teacher Education Programmes are as follows –

Class room discussion, small group project, field trips, outdoor studies, exhibits, field survey, environmental games, role playing, debates and panel discussion etc which are directly and indirectly related to our environment. Besides, different type of competition on environment and its related problems should be included in drawing competition, essay writing competition, slogan competition, poem and song competition, poster painting , story writing with moral message of environmental protection, seminars, workshops, conference etc.

Role Of Faculty Members Of Teacher Education Programme -

The faculty members should examine the major environmental issues critically from local, regional, national and international point of view.

- The faculty member should make it possible for the student teachers to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes for the preserving and improving the environment .
- The faculty members must sure that the student teachers become sensitive towards environment and its allied problem.
- The faculty members must be dedicated to provide environmental literacy including emphasis on all aspects of environment.
- The faculty members should encourage the student teachers to say ‘ No’ to the plastic bags.
- Relevancy of the subject matter which the environment should be kept in mind by the faculty members where it is applicable.
- The ultimate aim of the faculty member must be the inculcation of the environmental values in the student teachers.
- The faculty members must make them as ‘role model, in environmental protection and conservation.
- The faculty members should taught to the student teachers how in curriculum construction , the concepts of environmental education can be included
- The faculty members must train the student teachers in simulation to play improvement role during environmental hazards like cyclones, earthquakes, floods, forest fire etc.

Environmental Education Present Scenario In India -

In India, the social values and attitudes have historically been in harmony with the environment. With this basis, besides upcoming environmental issues and concerns and taking initiative from Stockholm summit 'UN conference on the Human Environment' held in 1972, the Government of India instigated environmental concern through 42nd amendment in the Indian constitution in 1976 by giving responsibility to the state to "take measures to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country" (Article 48 -A). It further made every citizen responsible through Article 51 A with the heading "Fundamental Duties" clause (g) "thereof requires, every citizen to protect and improve the natural environment including forest, lakes, rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures". With this background the Department of Environment was established by the Government of India in 1980 and upgraded as Ministry for Environment and Forests in 1985. It acts as the nodal agency in the administrative structure of the Central Government for the planning, promotion, co-ordination and overseeing the implementation of India's environmental and forestry policies and programmes under which comprehensive schemes of environmental education, awareness and training are conducted. Later emanated the National Policy on Education, 1986 (NPE) that stated "protection of the environment is a value which must form an integral part of the curriculum at all stages of education". With this backdrop environmental education was infused through other subjects in the Indian schooling system.

Today Environmental Education in the formal educational system in India is handled at three levels. It is a composite subject called Environment at the primary school level it is infused in to environment. in regular school subjects at the middle and secondary school level and is a separate subject at the college level for Environment Education to be effectively taken up in the curricular, co-curricular and extra- curricular mode, resources and facilities have to be built up and strengthened both within and outside the school and college systems.

National Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC) was launched in mid 1986 with the objective of creating environmental awareness at the national level. Eco-clubs, another innovative step taken targeting school children is to form eco clubs with the main objectives to educate children about their immediate environment. A programme of raising 'National Green Corps' through the Eco clubs was launched during 2001-2002 covering around 1,20,000 schools with training of master trainers, teacher training and distribution of resource materials as their main activities. Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) is an International Science and Education Programme, which stresses on hands-on participatory approach. India joined this programme in August, 2000. Considering the rural and remote areas, mass awareness through media, particularly the electronic media have been identified as one of the thrust areas of the Ministry, not only to intensify the efforts already being made in this direction but also to launch new initiatives. The Ministry of Environment and Forests established ENVIS in 1982 for environmental information, collection, collation, storage, retrieval and dissemination to all concerned decision makers, policy planners, scientists, engineers, research workers, and others all over the country through a decentralized system with a network of distributed subject oriented centres. CEE in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), Canada in 2005 launched 'Green Teacher' a distance education course in Environment Education, for practicing teachers. It is a one year diploma program for teachers and educators. Initially the course was offered through the print medium, compiled in four modules, supported by field assignments and contact classes. Now the program is also being offered both on-line and off-line.

EE in Pre-service Teacher education (Primary level) -

Pre-service teacher education for primary school teachers is a two year course. It covers foundation subject as well as methodology subjects including educational philosophy and psychology, educational administration, methods of teaching etc. The detailed guidelines and syllabus for the course has been developed by the National Council Of Teacher Education (NCERT). The state department of education in the respective states administer the institution for pre-service teacher training course. The teaching of environmental studies is place under both science and social studies syllabi recommended by the NCERT.

EE in Pre-Service Teacher Education (Secondary Level) -

Teacher Training for secondary level is offered by B.Ed. Colleges affiliated to universities. Several universities have introduced Environmental Education as one of the optional or elective paper at B.Ed. Level. The course content includes basic concepts and process of environment and ecology, as well as teaching-learning methodologies in environmental education, evaluation techniques etc. Practical and assignment are also part of the course. The National Council Of Teacher Education has recommended Environmental Education as a chapter in its all syllabus and guidelines for B.Ed. Colleges in the country.

At the Post Graduate level (M.Ed.) -

Some universities have introduced Environmental Education as a special paper, while a few have given in the status of a full fledged course. Environmental Education in In-service training the NCERT, State Council of Education and Research and Training (SCERT) and the District Institute of Educational Technology (DIET) are largely involved in In- Service training in India. The in-service training/orientation programmes range from one week to one month. Several of these include an orientation of environmental education as part of the general course. In recent years, some non government agencies with focus and expertise in environmental education have been invited to run short courses on Environmental Education and EE approaches and methodologies as part of in-service teacher training. Another experiment has been to train the teacher instructors of the DIET in Environmental Education approaches so that they may incorporate this into their teaching as part of the in-service teacher training curriculum and thereby pass these on to the teacher trainees.

Green Teacher -

In a developing country like India, there is need for capacity building of teachers, in environmental education both through pre-service and in-service teachers training programme. However the in-service teacher training programme has to face the challenges of lack of time resource and work situations. One such initiative is 'Green Teacher' a distance education course in environment education, for practicing teachers launched by Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad, India in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning, Canada in 2005. It is one year diploma program for teacher and educators. Initially the course was offered through the print medium, compiled in four modules, supported by field assignment and contract classes, Now the program is also being offered online and off-line with a suitable Learning Management System. The green teacher program was automatic of India's National Policy of Education (1986) and the supreme court ruling of 2003 that environmental education should be a compulsory curricular component at all levels of education, starting 2004-2005. The green teacher program develop the necessary knowledge ,skills and ideas practicing teachers which is novel initiative taking in to consideration their constraints at the workplace. The Centre for Science and Environment, New Delhi , India has launched a Green Schools Programme in which 'survey' of the school done by a school on its environmental practices called as environmental auditing. The students form teams and explores the status of water, energy, land , Air and waste in the school. The teacher is a facilitator and organises activities on the basis of a handbook called the Green Schools Programme Manual. The Environmental Education Unit(EEU) of the centre conducts a two day training programme for teacher , educators , development workers and people interested in environmental education. The training includes interactive session, film presentation and several modules on how they can implement the environment

programs in their schools. A Green Educators Network has been launched which has the vision of bringing together environment educators across the world to create a forum to share and discuss various aspects of environmental education. It also releases 'Down to Earth' a weekly dispatch of feature articles in English and Hindi languages.

Conclusion -

It is hope that through teacher education programme meior problem of the environmental problems can be reduced to a great extent. As the teachers and student teachers are the social engineers and they are the catalyst and through them the future generations is prepared as the students are future of the society . So the concept of environmental education plays and important role in Teacher Education Programmes and both theoretical and practical aspects the concept of environment should be emphasized to a more great extent for the survival in our earth.

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