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**INNOVATIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION - A NEW DIMENSION**

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**ABSTRACT:**

In the words of Sri Aurobindo, “The past is our foundation, the present our material, the future our aim and summit. Each must have its due and natural place in a national system of education.” There is a dire need to create public opinion world-wide in order to save our environment and our sweet home, the ‘Earth’. And for this very purpose, environmental education is needed which rests on the foundation of awareness about social and ecological balance. We know that environmental Education is a process that allows people to explore more & more about environmental issues, engage in problem solving, and take action to improve the environment. As a result, individuals develop a deeper understanding of environmental issues and have the skills to make informed and responsible decisions .keeping the scenario in mind this present paper attempts to throw light on the innovation in environmental education and its leading way to protect it.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Environmental education refers to organized efforts to teach how natural environments function, and particularly, how human beings can manage behavior and ecosystem to live sustainably. It is a multidisciplinary field integrating disciplines like biology, physics, ecology, earth science, atmospheric science etc. However through education we can create awareness and educate the masses including printing media and electronic media. Basically there are many kinds of environment, such as - physical environment, social environment, and cultural environment and so on. As the demand of our topic here we particularly centralized about physical environment. Let’s first of all we should define what is physical environment? The physical environment consists of flora, fauna, natural structure and interrelationship among the m. As an old accustomed Indian saying, “as our external world so your internal world”. On the basis of this saying we can say that physical environment is the most significant among many kinds of environmental; and it is the root of all kinds of environment.

Before 1960 there was no separate branch of environmental education. We used to obtain information regarding environment mostly through informal education and to some extent through interdisciplinary studies which is a part of formal education. But through these channels we have got only a rough and general information regarding environment. Hence after 1960 the scenario has been changed due to some unwanted factors. Since then of late environmental education has occupied a significant place in our academic curriculum. Of course there are several problems before us. But environment crisis is the most burning among them all. Environmental crisis means a disbalanced situation in environment which is harmful to us. There are many factors behind the environmental crisis but excess human activities are most vital to endanger our environment. Any disbalance into environmental structure might cause negative effect upon us. So the question of endangered environment is most woeful for us. This issue is related with the existence of human being. To ignore environment means to ignore human identity. Although quite a few has been done for environmental education but much is left much to be desired. The environment crisis turn on more endangered so we adopt some innovative steps regarding environmental education. We should left the beaten track and follow some new steps. There are some innovative steps to adopt environmental education.

**NATURE OF ENVIRONMENT**

Environmental education refers to organized efforts to teach about how natural environment function and, particularly, how human beings can manage their behavior and ecosystem in order to live sustainably.

Environmental education is a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and an associated challenge develop the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges and fosters attitudes, motivations and commitments to make informed decisions and take responsibility action.

Science and technology has revolutionized the living standards of human life by the innovative technology and applications. These fields were growing in a fast pace and contributing in understanding the scientific base of life. The same way human beings are exploiting nature beyond their requirement from nature and damaging the nature in various ways. This article deals with major environmental concern that have been identified as important areas.

Still today most of us are unfamiliar with the exact and accurate terms regarding environment. What is our environment? Its different components? What is the importance of each and every Fauna and Flora in nature? Which harmful factors or activities endangered our environment? What are environmental pollutions? How can we protect and safeguard our environment? The information regarding this should be communicated at fundamental level.

At present the most prominent problem in front of us is of environmental degradation and depletion of natural resources. The problem is basically due to the fact that our society is fiercely intent on producing and consuming as much as possible, and increasing the volume as fast as possible every year, without any limit in sight. We can only have an ecologically sustainable society if we move on to the simpler way. i.e. to a society in which we have materially simple lifestyles, in highly self sufficient local economies that are run mostly through co-operative arrangements, in a quite new economy; one that is not driven by the profit motive and market forces and has no economic growth.

#### **AS A CONCERN**

We should take-up environment as a concern rather than a subject. If we want the conservation and protection of environment then every person should take-up part and parcel of environment. To apart environmental education is not merely the task of state or NGO's. It is accountability and responsibility of society too. If everyone should pull well with another the motive must be achieved. As we can take example from our remote past. There was lacking of as such awareness in ancient India as we have in present time regarding environment. But our Vedas and other religious text books are abundantly fill-up with environmental conscious efforts. They provide different components of environment into religious sheds. As we see there are severely homage and respect for lakes, ponds, trees, animals and so on. Do not let the grass grow under our feet. We should live it up and be adopt natural life, the life which is suitable and safe to environment.

#### **ECO-FRIEND**

There should be appointment of eco-friends at root level of administration. Their post should be at ward level and village level. These persons must have taken the responsibility to educate the local people about environmental education. This way people will be aware about their roles and responsibilities towards the society as well as nature.

#### **ALL INDIA ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

There should be creation of all – India environmental services as such- IAS, IPS. As there are different departments engaging in the work of protection and preservation of environment. They are responsible for different tasks related to environmental proceedings. But there should be a separate and an integrated department in place of various departments to tackle the environmental issues. So government functionaries could be more accountable and responsible for this.

#### **OATH**

The Paryavaran Ambassador of India Hon'ble A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has given an environmental oath and a message for the students.

There should be environmental oath during prayer session in schools daily. With this the students who are the future of our nations will develop an emotional affection or attachment with environment. By teaching our friends and family that the physical environment is fragile and indispensable we can begin fixing the problems that threaten it.

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Instead of modern model of development which is anti-nature, which puts man against it and makes exploitation and destruction its sole- objective, a new ‘model of sustainable development’, which takes care not only of the present generation of mankind but also of the future, be accepted and nurtured.

As we know the main cause behind environmental crisis is human activities. If we control ourselves then there could be so effective controlling of environment that we cannot imagine our self. Industrialization, urbanization and material culture are the major causes of environmental pollutions.

Sustainable development is such type of development in which the physical resources skillfully utilized. In this process in place of rapid growth we take support of gradual development and it is durable and having less side effects. So there more efforts regarding sustainable development. But in this field there is a requirement of more researches as its scope is wide. That is why many developed countries are seriously devoting their attempts regarding sustainable development.

### **POSTERS, HOARDINGS, BANNERS**

There is a proportional need to explore ways to deepen environmental awareness to be able to tackle the problem successfully. It is, no doubt, a powerful vehicle and panacea for all evils that can bring about change in all aspects of human behavior to deal effectively with the growing environmental concerns.

Newspapers like the Times of India, The Hindustan Times and a Magazines like The Tribune, ‘ Down to Earth’ have always been the perfect accompaniment with the morning cup of tea. They act as a motivational source and also help in exposing environmentally damaging plans, policies or practices being followed by various industrial or household establishments T.V., radio, mass media can provide extensive coverage of acute environmental issues. In this way, media’s role in increasing environmental awareness of the population is an enormous one as it reaches a vast percentage of India’s complex society.

Besides media, there are several modes to attract people about environmental consideration, such as banners, hoardings, posters etc. These should be managed by state authority. In these activities state should also receive the support of NGO’s. There should be splendid celebration of environmental date such as forest day, forest week, Earth Day, Water conservation and so on.

### **POPULATION EDUCATION**

As we know when human population was in limited scope these was no serious environmental problem. In fact our endangered environment is the result of our growing population. To facilitate the need of growing population these problems are being emerged. Rapid urbanization, industrialization, and deforestation all these problems have the direct result of growing population. So there should be strict measures to control the population unless our natural resources will be depleted soon.

### **ROLE OF MEDIA**

In this scientific and technical era we should not ignore the role of media regarding education. It should be compulsory for all electronic channels as well as print media so that they can spread awareness regarding environment haphazards. They should contribute and make their best efforts regarding environmental education. Everyday electronic channels must broadcast a programme of minimum 30 minutes at prime time related with environmental education. These norms are to be followed by print media too. So that we may achieve our target of safe and healthy environment.

The rapid expansion a new break through in the arena of science and technology has taken humankind into a new age. The developments have both pros and cons. On the one hand, while technological developments have affected almost every aspect of human life, at the other it has its devastating effect on the nature itself. This mankind faces double challenges from modern machines and from saving the nature, the mother earth. At this paradoxical juncture, the role of media, so to say, becomes very important and worthwhile.

Regarding the issue of environment awareness, media plays a vital role in spreading the true message. Along with bringing it into the hub of debates and discussions, it tries to suggest alternative to people and policy makers. Thus, environmental awareness is one of the important issues which media presents consciously and effectively to say a few things to the people. The awareness on environment has shown multiplicity of results in the form different issues of livelihood rights, of displacement and rehabilitation of sustainability, of pollution led damages and its control etc. thus the all pervading media has really raised the awareness on environment among people.

### **AS A SUBJECT**

There should be a separate and compulsory subject of environment from primary level to higher level education. On time to time there should be Guest lecturers, seminars, workshops at school or college level with the coordination of environmental department. The subject must be consisted of theoretical as well as practical aspects. Without practical knowledge the motive behind it could not be achieved. Students should directly be involved in environmental protection and conservation under the supervision of their teachers. Visit of natural sites such as – mountainous area, lakes, rivers, sanctuaries, National parks should also be included in practical aspects. As students are to be familiar with their prosperous biodiversity. With this effort a natural affection towards the environment will generate in their heart and mind.

Environmental studies as a separate subject at all levels of education may have tremendous effect on our way of protecting environment. We need to impart education that it helps to develop responsible environmental behaviour leading to an improved environment. The text books on environmental science should not only provide space for physical and natural environment but also for the social environment content of the text book need not be all inclusive. The stress should be on interesting and meaningful treatment of selected themes rather than superficial and information -laden treatment of a smultitude of topics, so that it does not burden the child.

Today's students are tomorrow's leaders and decision makers. They need to learn and practice the skills necessary to protect, preserve and restore the environment quality. This education will lead to the acquisition of knowledge, environmentally conscious attitude and ultimately, a responsible behavior.

### **PLANTATION**

Since the dawn of civilization man has a close relation with nature. Man has made friendship with nature. Nature helps us in many ways. Trees are one of the best gifts of nature. The purpose of tree plantation is save the endangered environment and to beautify our life. At the global level, tress and forests are closely linked with weather patterns and also the maintenance of a crucial balance in nature. Hence, the task of environment protection is a universal responsibility of all.

The role of forest to the existence of human being is most vital. If there are abundant quantities of forest there would be less problem of environmental crisis. Forest is one of the major sources of biodiversity. They are the chief sources of environmental balance. They are the sources of rains. They interrupt flooding and soil erosions. Thus provides tremendous help in making the environment balanced.

### **CONCLUSION**

In a word if we want stable development, quality of life and above all human existence then we would have turned a new leaf. Due to endangered environment the existence of human-being is on the edge of

depletion. Everything is going to be in a mess. It is the need of hour when we would have to live it up and do not let the grass grown under our feet. We move heaven and earth to maintain the environmental loss. We have struggled with destructive forces with might and mains. Every person keeps himself abreast with the latest developments of environmental issues.

Many health hazards are emerging on the forefront because there are fewer plantations and trees are being cut down for construction purposes. What we are not realizing is how much these trees benefit us. Trees are a defined remedy to counter pollution which is increasing every day due to scientific inventions and technological advancement. If we are saving our trees we are promising our future generation a healthier and better life, which is obviously their due share and we cannot deprive them of that.

The existence of human being is going on their last phase by and by due to environmental disbalance. To protect and conserve the environment is a burning question before us. There is a dire need to change the entire system of education as well as society as to make this earth more beautiful than ancient past. On the whole, radio is an extremely promising medium suitable to reach the illiterate, less educated and rural parts of population and it should be retained for providing relevant entertainment cum education in the future also.

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