



## Environment Education for Better Tomorrow

Dr. Ranjana Ruhela Principal SOS J.N.Kaul Institute of Education Bhimtal, Nainital

### ABSTRACT

*An environment crisis has become an important issue and a matter of concern for everyone in this world. Due to urbanization, industrialization, population explosion, nuclear disasters, environment dimensions have gained prominence.*

*Education is a powerful tool and educational institutions must bear responsibility for the role they can play in forming and facilitating the individuals understanding of nature environment. Environment education can play a substantial role as it will encourage the students to protect and sustain the environment. It is the need of the hour to propose environmental education with the essential elements of moral philosophy. Conventional educational methods are no longer adequate for the real needs of tomorrow.*

*The subject of this paper includes the urgency to impart education, the aims and strategies to implement it so that the students who are the future of the nation can help in restoring the disturbed cycle of nature and make this world a better place to live in.*

**KEYWORDS :** Environmental Education, Natural disaster, Sustainable development, Pedagogical strategies

### INTRODUCTION

Degrading environment is a source of concern and poses a great menace to the survival of human life and other species on the planet. Today planet is suffering deterioration. The fact is if something is not done immediately the changes being faced will soon be irreversible.

Today the world's natural environment is a worse shape through depletion of resources such as air, water and soil, the destruction of eco-system and the extinction of wild life is taking place.

An environment crisis has become an important issue and a matter of concern for everyone in the world. The awareness among the public and industrial generators has to be created and motivated by the updated techniques and incorporating the innovative and implementable solutions to reform our economy. These can be achieved through environmental education. Environmental education has two essential components:

- Alerting the public to the need to achieve global sustainable development.
- Focusing the educational curricula for global sustainable development by incorporating the know-how and skills and also the moral imperatives.

### NATURAL DISASTERS - AN AWAKENING CALL

The natural disasters suffered by mankind all over the world are an outcome of changing climate, indiscriminate and unchecked development and rampant destruction of forests.

A natural calamity, in fact is the man-made disaster and colossal greed eats up the lives of thousands. From time to time nature gives an awakening call to mankind in form of natural disasters so that he can mend his ways but mankind ignores these warnings and continues his race for development.

- Nov -11<sup>th</sup> 2011 - An earthquake of magnitude 9.0 on Richter scale in north-east Japan caused a tsunami that set onto Japan's coast.
- April- 7<sup>th</sup> 2012 - Pakistan - An avalanche hits a Pakistan military base near the Siachen glacier region. 129 soldiers and 11 civilians were killed.
- July – 2012 Nigera - An extreme rainy reason caused flash flooding
- Sept -12<sup>th</sup> 2013 Colorado - Flash floods around Boulder, Colorado caused massive damage, cutting off highways destroying hundreds of homes.
- Oct -13<sup>th</sup> 2013 - New South Wales bushfires in Australia across the state of New South Wales followed by the worst of the fires beginning in the Greater Blue Mountain area on 16th and 17th oct.
- June 17<sup>th</sup> 2013 - The disastrous flooding in the himalayan state of Uttarakhand claimed more than 6,000 lives. This disaster called by some "Himalayan Tsunami" was initially thought to be a glacial lake outburst flood. Later reports suggested the huge amount of water that surged downstream was caused by a

breach in the boundary of a small lake that formed due to a huge landslide and heavy rainfall upstream.

- April 25<sup>th</sup> 2015- Nepal earthquake (the Himalayan earthquake) which is believed to have killed more than 10,000 people as of 28 April 2015, occurred at 11:56 NST on 25 April with a moment magnitude of 7.8 or 8.1 and a maximum Mercalli Intensity of IX. Its epicenter was approximately 34 km east-southeast of Lamjung, Nepal, and its hypocenter was at a depth of approximately 15 km.

### NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

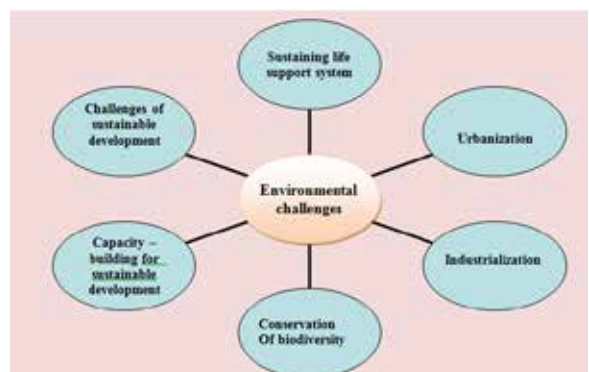
In this era of environment crisis of the role of environment education has increased. At no point of time in the history of human civilization the environmental concerns has acquired a pivotal significance as it has today. The degradation of the environment as apparent and perceptible now calls for an urgent redressal. Creating a well-informed population on environment issues is a challenge, but by implementing the environment education we can develop a quite different and healthier world.

For the conservation of the environment it is necessary that environment awareness should be created among children to develop concern for the environment. There is urgent need for the youth to be responsible about the importance of environment sustainability. Nature has its own capacity to recover and rejuvenate, and humans should not challenge it.

A well informed and well organized community can help to reduce the damage if they understand why it happens and what can be done to prevent or mitigate it.

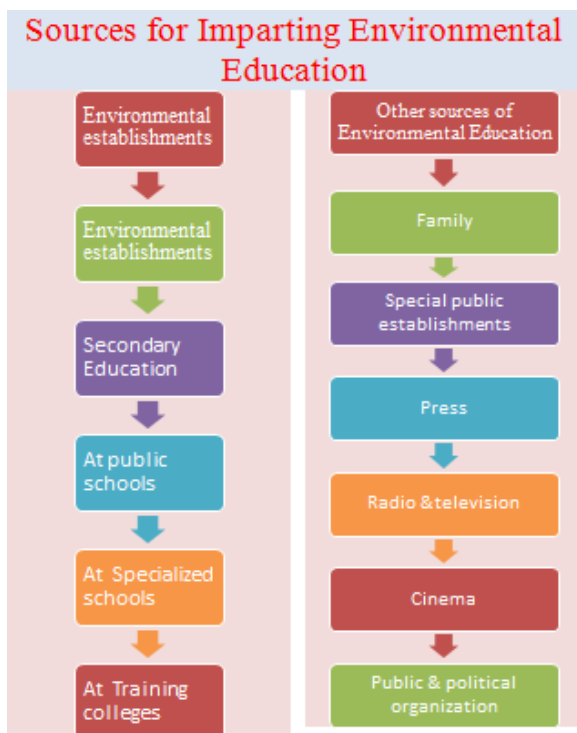
### ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES:

Some of the most important environmental challenges are as follows in Fig. 1:



**AIMS OF ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION**

- To help in developing the understanding of environment issues.
- To bring attitudinal change in students so that they can be equipped to face the environmental challenges.
- To help the students to take the right decisions.
- To help to develop responsible environmental behavior leading to improved environment.
- Develop awareness and understanding of the environment in which we live.
- To develop skills to mitigate the environment problem.



In the field of Environmental Education, some explains the stages of experiential learning in the following manner.

- **Concrete experimentation** is a mode of learning centered on feeling. During this stage, the learner is in a learning or problem-solving situation; one gains new experiences by interacting with one's environment.
- **Reflective observation** is centered on the act of observing. The learner must observe, reflect and try to understand reality from his or her experiences.
- **Conceptualization**, the learner thinks about, fashions and constructs his or her conceptions.
- **Active experimentation** is centered on the act of doing. At this stage, the learner relies on his or her new found knowledge to make decisions and solve problems. The learner also makes a transfer by experimenting that knowledge in new situations.

**BENEFITS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

**Studying Environmental Education Creates Enthusiastic Students, Innovative Teacher-Leaders** – Environmental Education offers opportunities for rich, hands-on, real world and relevant learning across the curriculum.

**Environmental Education Helps Build Critical Thinking and Relationship Skills** - Environment-based education emphasizes specific critical thinking skills central to “good science”—questioning, investigating, forming hypotheses, interpreting data, analyzing, developing conclusions, and solving problems.

**Environmental Education Instructional Strategies Help Foster Leadership Qualities** - Environmental education emphasizes cooperative learning (i.e., working in teams or with partners), critical thinking and discussion, hands-on activities, and a focus on action strategies with real-world applications.

**Increased Focus/Improved Cognition** - Wells observed that proximity to nature, access to views of nature, and daily exposure to natural settings increases the ability of children to focus and improves cognitive abilities.

**STRATEGIES FOR IMPARTING ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION**

In order to meet the challenges of environment education and accomplish the aims of it, different methods need to be implemented so that awareness can be created, attitude is developed, and skill is learnt through which an individual can contribute to the solving of the problem through action oriented approach. Some strategies are given in Fig. 2

**Field Trips**

The first and foremost thing is to sensitize the students to develop in them love for nature, a caring attitude then only they will be able to understand the enormity and gravity of the situation. Field trips to villages, zoos, areas which are affected by famine, water scarcity etc. will give direct exposure to the students and will help in creating environment awareness.

**Projects**

Students can be invited to make projects on different environment issues such as cleaning of rivers, neighborhood, and plantation of trees with suitable remedies. This will encourage the students to get involved in various research works. The projects then could be exhibited and awarded.

**Debate and essay writing** Organizing debates on various aspects of environment will not only create awareness and interest in environment but will also help them to find and suggest remedies to the problem. The interest among the students may also be enhanced by conducting essay writing competitions.

**Guest Lectures**

Guest lecturers given by eminent personalities will encourage and motivate the students and will help them to participate in environmental activities.

**Exhibition**

Art competitions on environment and our planet earth can be organized. This will help the students to think creatively about the problem and its solution. The work done can be exhibited.

**Subject in curriculum**

Environment studies can be made a part of curriculum. This will help in creating an understanding of the environment. Students will be exposed to different environment problem and thus would realize the gravity of the problem.

**Seminars and role-play**

Various role-play and seminars can be organized, which help in creating will interest as well as exposing the students to different aspects of environment.

**Eco-clubs in Schools**

A non-formal pro-active system of imparting environmental education to school children by involving them in various environmental activities through the scheme of Eco-clubs. Each Eco-club will be in charge of an active teacher in the school concerned.

**IT/ Web sites**

Information Technology (IT) advances in the last few years has thrown up an entirely new medium, which is fast and economical. The site for children aims at not only providing information about our environment but also provide opportunities for children to interact with one another and also with experts,.

## SHAPING TOMORROW

Environment Education will help to create awareness about the environment its problem and measures of protection. It will not only encourage ways of understanding the environment problems but will also inspire the faith that each individual has the ability, the power to bring about a positive change in the restoration of environment.

The need of the hour is to provide environment education as it will create awareness and will help individuals to take environmental issues as their personal concern and harmonize their efforts for a common action.

With a strong foundation of environmental conservation laid out before them, children will then be well equipped to face the ecological challenges ahead of them. That is why ultimately environment education is the key to ensure the safety of our species and the future bio-diversity of the planet.

## CONCLUSION

To achieve the balance between technology and ethical dimension; experts should at least have environmental consciousness in addition to their environmental knowledge. Tomorrow's leaders need to be equipped for tomorrow's challenges and therefore as their guides and educators it is our duty to adequately prepare them for future.

This can be done if there is a commitment to provide children with environment education. It is profound that the next generation grows with an understanding of nature. In the present era where we see that children are disconnected from nature it becomes imperative to engage them in learning and developing concern for environment and natural resources.

Take action- seek information- understand your role in safe guarding the environment and ultimately find the courage to stand up and do something about it. The communication perspective opens the door to another kind of tools that environmental educators can use in order to improve the educational practice.

## REFERENCES

1. <http://wgbis.ces.iisc.ernet.in/> | 2. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2015\\_Nepal\\_earthquake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2015_Nepal_earthquake) | 3. <https://www.plt.org> |