

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

Raising Environmental Awareness through College Outdoor Education

Dr. Madhu RoopChand Sewani*

INTRODUCTION

The growing concern with environmental issues and their impact on general awareness is one of the most noticeable phenomena of the last three decades. Increase in economic activities in developing countries results in more energy and consumption demand which generally leads to environmental degradation. There is a conventional belief that such environmental degradation would resolve as soon as these countries grow economically, since that would enable them to afford environmental friendly technology as well as pro-environmental regulations and policies. However, several studies indicated that many developing countries already equipped with environmental policies, legal frameworks and economic instruments, which are regarded as highly sophisticated by international standards and yet face the worsening of environmental conditions. Major difficulties these countries confront are not only the lack of legal and economic framework for environmental protection, but also lack of participation among general public in pro environmental behaviors. Some of the environmental problems which are critical at the present are fairly widely known because of the growing awareness of all levels of society, including governments, general public and the scientific community. However, the present study is trying to discuss the environmental awareness and practice among college students. It will be inevitable for us to face the fact that it would not be easy to find a solution to environmental problems. India has more than 40% of young people in the world. The sensitizations and practice of environmental manner is will improve the present environmental conditions.

Still, India has a long way to go to reach environmental quality similar to those enjoyed in developed economies. Pollution remains a major challenge and opportunity for India. India has adopted various international and national strategies to solve and mitigate many environmental issues such as Environmental Courts, Environment Friendly Products, Un-leading of Petrol, and Ban on Harmful Pesticides, National Waste Management Council, Public Liability Insurance, and Pollution by Motor Vehicles, Regulation of Sea Shore Hotels, National River Action Plan, Solar Energy Commission, and Prohibition of Smoking in Public Places. The priority goes mainly for creating awareness among the students through mass media, campaign, competitions, voluntary work etc., but by viewing the present situations which is happening all over India. The environment is not only concern with ecological aspects, but it also affects the livelihood options for the marginalized groups. As environmental issues are becoming more and more complex and the need to take action becomes more urgent, college students need to be equipped

***Dr.Madhu RoopChand Sewani** ,Asst. Prof.Arts,Science and R.A.Patel Com, Bhadran.

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

with appropriate skills that can help them to make better decisions and choices.

Objectives of the Study

Environmental Education Working Group (1980) defines Environmental Education as a multitude of processes and activities by which an understanding of environment is developed and through which caring and committed responses are evolved. It is concern with knowledge, emotions, feelings, attitudes, and values. Its aim is to produce informed and responsible citizens capable of playing an active role in all matters concerned with the environment in which we all inhabit. People need to be made aware of the importance of our environment in which we live and the need to preserve and protect it, as well as the consequences of our actions in the course of developmental activities. Thus the ultimate aim of environmental education is to redirect and shape human behavior towards responsible acts and commitments to environment. As such therefore, effective environmental education gears and promotes responsible citizenship behavior toward the environment and environmental protection. Thus, environmental education and awareness as well as induced public participation in environmental protection become paramount to attaining environmental sustainability.

The study has been undertaken to :

- 1) Study the level of environmental awareness among students of the colleges/university.
- 2) Study the students` attitudes and sense of responsibility towards the environment and environmental problems.
- 3) Study students` participation and level of engagement in environmental activities and protection.
- 4) Suggest recommendations on the basis of the results obtained from the study.

Recommendations

Results from the study of various studies revealed high level of environmental knowledge and positive attitudes towards the environment among the students, but low level participation in environmental protection activities. This implies that, other factors than environmental knowledge and awareness may be the stimulants to induce students` active participation in environmental protection and improvement activities.

Since students form an educated part of community, and hence the future leaders and policy makers. Therefore, there is the need for an in-depth study in order to find out a foolproof result and become certain about what other issue stimulate active participation. This will ensure the success of environmental education program and help in attaining environmental sustainability at the grass roots.

Awareness among the students can be generated by different media. Environment includes all living and non-living objects. We live in the environment and use the environmental resources like air, land and water to meet our needs. Development also means meeting the needs of the people. While meeting the ever-

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

growing needs, we put pressure on the environment. When the pressure exceeds the carrying capacity of the environment to repair or replace itself, a serious problem of environmental degradation happens. If we use any environmental resource such as ground water beyond its limit of replacement, we may lose it forever. Therefore, there is a need to create 'knowledge' about Environmental protection.

Environmental awareness implies not only being knowledgeable about the environment, but also being acquainted with sets of values, attitudes and skills for addressing environment related problems. Students, especially of higher institutions/universities are the hope for future betterment of environment, and for attaining environmental sustainability.

In the past three decades, Environment has attracted the attention of school and college students in India. They are becoming increasingly conscious of issues such as famines, droughts, floods, scarcity of fuel, firewood and fodder, pollution of air and water, problems of hazardous chemicals and radiation, depletion of natural resources, extinction of wildlife and dangers to flora and fauna. Therefore, it is important to know the knowledge of environmental awareness among the future generation and their present practice towards environmental protection which leads for sustainable development.

Special contemporary environment awareness packages for the students through NSS by forming separate department should be employed for conserving environment. Environmental study should be included in college curriculum and should be taught all students irrespective of their gender. It can be included in their study by adding more practical oriented programmes and outdoor activities. Environment awareness is a not a topic which can be taught in classroom. Outdoor experience is essential for the students. They can be sensitized by celebrating special day like world environmental day, wildlife day; world water day, forest conservation day etc., and also knowledge about alternatives for plastic should be imparted and promoted among student population. It should not be mere a study, rather it should become part of their life. It can be achieved through the help of NGOs who are working on environmental issues, social activists, government and Social Work professionals. That is to say students from various disciplines have to work together to create better environment. Social Workers in collaboration with other disciplines can undertake scientific researches to explore unexplored aspects of environments. Colleges should provide the necessary platforms to encourage students' participation in environmental activities through students' environmental associations and clubs, debates and seminars. This will stimulates students' interest in environment and make them assume certain level of responsibility towards environmental protection and improvement.

Students should be guided to take up a project/environment problem of their surrounding and the actually suggest measures to resolve the problem. They should be given an opportunity to implement the suggestion by outdoor activities and they should be asked to analyze the problem and its solution at the end of the term the

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

student should be graded according to his active participation in this awareness programme.

Conclusion

The importance of the environment in which we all live and carry out our daily life routines cannot be overemphasized. The quality of our lives and well being is directly or indirectly dependant on the quality of such environment. The interdependence between man and environment is so conspicuous beyond any doubtful mind. Over the recent decades, environmental degradation became evident, natural catastrophic events became prevalent, which was seen largely as the result of man's greediness action aggravating the situation. Hence, this drawn the attention of global community towards a better and quality environment through sustainable development.

In an attempt to attaining this goal, environmental education and awareness became important mechanisms to inducing community participation in environmental protection and improvement.

This study suggests students' environmental awareness and participation level in environmental protection and improvement. Environmental sustainability is rather a new concept and the attainment of it is associated with long term series of strategic plans and activities. Students, especially of colleges/universities are the hope for future development policies and hence environmentally viable policies and technologies necessary to attaining environmental sustainability. Thus, result from the study revealed that students have high environmental awareness, and positive attitudes towards environment, but low level participation in environmental protection activities and improvement. This implies that, students being aware of environment, and environment related problems alone, does not make them participate actively in the protection and improvement of environment. Hence, this means that, there could be factors other than being knowledgeable about the environment that may stimulate students' participation level. This also calls for an in-depth research in this arena to explore more of what other factors are essential to inducing students participation in particular and the larger community participation in general. All together, this will ensure the successful attainment of Environmental Education objectives, and hence environmental sustainability at long run.

This may apply to the larger community as well since students form an educated part community, and hence the future leaders and policy makers. Therefore, there is the need for an in-depth study in order to find out a foolproof result and become certain about what other issue stimulate active participation. This will ensure the success of environmental education program and help in attaining environmental sustainability at the grassroots.

Educational policy maker should be reformed the curriculum offered in the arts and science stream books. Various activities related to environmental education like essay writing, mime etc. can be arranged in schools. Organizing awareness campaigns about environment related social issues in rural areas. Environmental

Saarth

E-Journal of Research

ISSN NO: 2395-339X

education should be introduced as a separate unit in the higher secondary level with an infused approach of teaching.

We as academicians can take this initiative and should help the society in this task. At the college level we should design and new programmes for the students for Environmental Awareness taking the help of NSS, NCC, CWCD etc. Special rewards and grades should be given to the students who actively take part in these activities.

REFERENCES

A.D. and Pongracz, E. (2000). Public Waste Awareness and Green Consumerism a Comparison of Finish and British Practices. The 5th world congress on Integrated Resources Management, Toronto.

Singh, R.D. (2005). A Study of Scientific Phenomenon between Holistic Education and Environmental Awareness. Indian Journal of Psychometry and Education, I.J.P.E., pp. 168-172.

Mohon.I, (2007). Environmental crisis (New Dimensions and Challenges). New Delhi – 110 002: Ammal publications Pvt.Ltd.,.

Joseph, L. A., Victoria, E. A., Campbell, A. B. & Louie, R. (2004). Teaching students to make better decisions about the environment: lessons from the decision sciences, Journal of Environmental Education, 36(1), 33–44.

Abbas M. Y (2013), Modern System of Garbage Disposal in Lovely Professional University Phagwara. Published by International Journal for Innovative Research and Studies. Vol3 issue-4/6.

Hungerford H. R and Volk T. L (2010), Changing Learner Behaviour through Environmental Education. Journal of Environmental Education. Vol11/3