



## **AWARENESS ABOUT ENVIRONMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND LITERATURE**

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### **Abstract**

The rapid developments and growing population in the world are of serious concern for environmental damages in the recent years. The environmental challenges faced by almost all countries due to pollution of water, air and soil are inestimable. In order to combat the menace of environmental pollution and human hygiene, there is huge need of mass awareness on the environment and use of natural resources among the society. This paper focuses on the promotion of environmental education and awareness through literature to the society and need of changes in the curricular structure.

**Key Words:** awareness, challenges, education, environment, natural resources, responsibility

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To know a person about the impacts of activities on environment .
2. To have the knowledge about the status of different natural resources, needs and modes of their conservation etc.
3. To enable a person to understand the phenomenon of Globalization and its impact on environment, economy and the social equality.
4. To assess the Environmental Awareness Potential of the students on the basis of different environmental problem.
5. To suggest proactive roles of National Green Corps, Eco-Clubs, Green Clubs and other similar innovative measures in schools in building environmental awareness and sustainable action in the society to solve the environmental problems.

### **Introduction-Environment**

In a simple language it can be said that Environment is the surrounding among us in which we live. It includes physical, chemical and other natural forces. In the environment there are different interactions between animals, plants, soil, water and other living and non-living things. All the natural things which makes life possible on the earth includes under an environment like water, air, sunlight, land, fire, forests, animals, plants, etc. It is considered that earth is the only planet in the universe having required environment for the life existence. Without environment we cannot guess life here so we should keep our environment safe and clean to ensure the life possibility in future. It is the responsibility of each and every individual living on the earth worldwide. Everyone should come forth and join the campaign for environment safety.

### **Environmental Awareness**

Awareness means having update knowledge of realizing the possible danger of a thing. As such, by environmental awareness we simply mean having the latest knowledge of/or visualizing the possible dangers, threats of environmental degradation. It includes making aspects of the environment. These elements are inter-related and interdependent and are essential for the survival of humanity. Environmental Awareness proves important for several reasons; it fosters a sense of connection to the natural world, promotes sustainable development and encourages conservation of irreplaceable. Environmental awareness essentially serves as an educational tool, helping people around the world understand the economic, aesthetic and biological importance of preserving resources and reducing

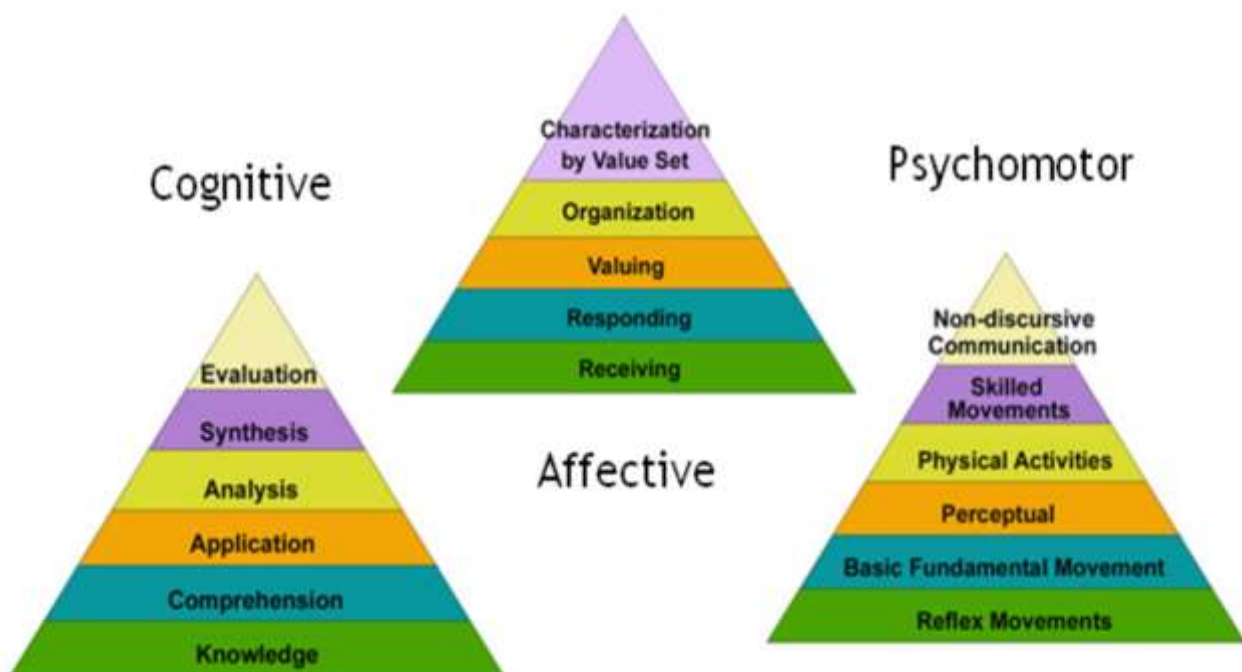


or eliminating the harmful impacts of man-made alterations. Environmental Awareness education helps people understand the consequences of human activities on various lands and identifies remedial solutions awareness needs sensitivity.

### **Environmental Awareness through education and literature**

Education plays a very important role in the life of man. It is this tool makes a man human being who can think, analyse and act judiciously. Many philosophers have defined education in many ways from different points of view. In overall we can say that “ Education is the process of acquiring the knowledge and skills.” It develops a critical thought and encourages intellectual curiosity, which lead to long life learning.

Education and environment are inter-related. One cannot think of environment without considering education. While focusing on environment if education is neglected, it will have further impact on the development. So environment education is needed. The teacher is the key to the whole teaching-learning process in Environmental Education. We need to redefine the role of the teachers. The Environmental education can be effective instrument that can be used in the development of civic consciousness and inculcation of positive attitudes among students towards the environment its protection, preservation and conservation. These things are to be promoted in effective ways through the involvement of school, parents and the community. At secondary level students need to be introduced to the problems of environment that we have the social responsibility of the community in maintaining it, and making it healthy. This is necessary due to the fact that living conditions of people have become complex due to rapid technology of advancements, urbanization and population explosion.





Bloom's Taxonomy defines the educational goals in terms of three domains viz. the cognitive, the effective and the psychomotor or the connative. Environmental Education also comprises the three domains. Informational regarding the various aspects, of environmental hazards is related to cognitive domain. All the possible latest information should be imparted to the people, so that they may have update knowledge of the environment. Here the role of the environmentalist, scientists, sociologists and teachers matters to great extent. They are regarded to work in an integrated manner to leave a positive impact. This information will surely result in creating belongingness among the people with the nature. They will be emotionally attached with various environmental protection movements as a result of such an inner urge of the people. It comes under the affective domain. The psychomotor domain seeks physical involvement i.e. the activities demanding manual labour like plantation, cleanliness, recycling, skills of waste materials, increasing forest cover. The three domains are mutually inclusive.

A number of the transactional modalities have been suggested by experts across the country and most of them have been included in the National Curriculum Framework. Some of these transactional modalities of Environmental Education are mentioned below:

1. **Assignments and Projects:** Through assignments and projects they can have the deep knowledge of Environment.
2. **Field Trip and Visits:** Apart from the text book students will take in perspective environmental education.
3. **Eco-Club:** To empower students to participate and take up meaningful environmental activities and projects, through which students can reach out to influence, engage their parents and neighbourhood communities to promote environmental behaviour.
4. **Brain Storming and Quiz:** To encourage students to research, investigate how and why things happen and make their own decision about complex environmental issues. By developing enhancing critical and creative thinking skills. Environmental education foster a new generation of informed consumers, workers as well as policy on decision makers.
5. **Drama:** Environmental Education through dramas or Role play will have an great impact on students as well as on the audience for awareness.

At the same time role of the teacher should be hanged according to the new paradigm of education embodying the spirit of science democracy and care for environmental, emphasis on number of key elements such as learning rather than teaching, building capacity of critical thinking and problem solved in along with local specificity in the context of a global education. (NCF, 2005). At this juncture teacher's role becomes very vital.

### **Importance of Environmental Education:**

The points given below will help in understanding the importance of environmental education.

1. Environmental education is one of the subjects in the curriculum in schools. When children study the environment and its functions, they develop a sense of understanding of the environment in the early stage of their life.
2. It is important to increase the awareness of individuals about the environment. With the help of environmental education, people's knowledge about the environment is instilled into every country's citizens.
3. There are a lot of environmental issues that the world is facing. To avoid them in the future, people need to understand the environment and take proper care of it. It can only be done with the help of environmental education.
4. Environmental education polishes various other skills of an individual. The ability to make decisions is strengthened with environmental education as people become more responsible and



aware.

5. Individuals can deal with any environmental problem through environmental education. This, in turn, increases problem-solving skills.
6. One develops sensitivity towards the environment because of the environmental issues that have been happening for a long time. In this way, each individual takes any action by keeping in mind the harm it can cause to the environment.
7. There is no particular viewpoint that is advocated through environmental education. All the aspects are taken into consideration to reach an informed decision.
8. Just no one can solve the issues that arise in the environment. Environmental education makes an individual rich in the knowledge of the environment so that the best possible solutions can be provided for even the smallest of situations the environment faces.

### **Aims and Objectives of Environmental Education:**

The primary aim of environmental education is to make people aware of the environment and its associated problems. The study involves knowledge, skills, motivation, attitude, and commitment to work individually and collectively towards solutions to current problems. There are various objectives that the study of environmental education tends to achieve.

Given below are the objectives of environmental education.

#### **1. Awareness**

Awareness is one of the fundamental objectives that any subject of study offers. Through environmental education, awareness about the environment, the issues of the environment, and the solutions for the problems are generated. In addition, there is a proper understanding as to why there are various functions present in the environment.

#### **2. Knowledge**

Environmental education helps a person gain knowledge and information about the current happenings in the environment. There is in-depth and proper education that is provided about the environment and the factors of the environment.

#### **3. Responsibility**

It is only when we understand the reasons behind the disruptions in the environment; we can take proper steps to prevent them. Individuals understand which activities harm the environment, be it small or big, and take necessary precautions to face the adversities. It also helps in taking any future actions and decisions responsibly.

#### **4. Participation**

When we dive deeper into a particular subject, we tend to get more involved in it. The environment concerns us all, so we must save the environment and prevent it from being harmed. Through environmental education, individuals are encouraged to participate in saving and taking care of the environment as they become aware of the harm they can cause to their lives.

#### **5. Creating New Patterns**

With increased awareness of the harm that man's actions are causing to the environment, environmental education aims to create a new behaviour pattern and attitude towards the environment. This results in less harm as the new pattern is aimed at being environmentally friendly.

#### **6. Understanding the Complexity of Environment**

The environment that we humans live in is complex and involves various activities that happen within it. Environmental education fulfils the aim to make people understand the complexity of working in the environment and the process that occurs in it. By understanding this, people become more indulged in saving and protecting the environment.



### **Scope of Environmental Education:**

Environmental education has a wide scope as it is one of the most important areas of study. People need to understand their duties and responsibilities towards the environment.

The scope of environmental education can be explained with the help of the points given below.

#### **1. Biological Aspect**

The most important aspects of environmental education are biological aspects. The best example is human beings. Other examples of biological aspects include animals, birds, insects, microorganisms, and plants.

#### **2. Physical Aspect**

The physical aspect of environmental education is further divided into natural and man-made aspects. Physical aspects include air, water, land, climate, etc. On the other hand, man-made aspects include roads, highways, airports, railroads, buildings, bridges, dams, and reservoirs, etc., which humans make.

#### **3. Socio-cultural Aspect**

These are the practices, cultures, and traditions which humans make to live in a society. It can include rules, laws, religious beliefs, etc. Human beings, with their efforts, have created these.

### **Environmental Awareness and Literature**

The significance of environmental awareness, especially to youngsters, is worth being stressed since they are the future adult citizens to participate dynamically towards the conservation of the environment. To that direction, children's Ecological Literature may lead a contributory role (Kanatsouli, 2005). As O'Brien and Stoner infer, children's books with a literacy character are far more interesting to children than knowledge books and offer them a chance to acquire knowledge on different environmental concepts (O'Brien and Stoner, 1987). Critical environmental literacy involves the capacity to engage in debate about environmental issues at an ideological and philosophical level to "unpack" text, and thus carries with it the possibility of effective and reasoned political action with respect to the environment. Critical literacy is essential for effective action (cf. Habermas conception of critical emancipatory knowledge: Habermas, 1978) yet is impossible if not grounded in a good level of functional and cultural environmental literacy. (Stables, 1998)

Literature being one of the Fine Arts, serves not only in shaping personalities but in forming the social structures as well. As a form of Art, Literature holds this asset; whatever is provided by the other forms of theoretical life in a rationalized process, naturally degrading to becoming rather tiresome to the reader, is offered by Literature- and apparently Art in general- in a pleasing way through the enticement of the Fine and the expression of the Beauty. At one point however, it should be mentioned that the success in raising environmental awareness along with the concomitant change in the children's conduct (a result not always achieved through the typical use of Environmental Education) through the reading of relevant books has already been demonstrated by different researches. (Chawla, 1998 and 1999; Tanner 1980; Gardner and Stern, 1996).

### **Conclusion**

The urgency of integrating environmental education into the whole system of formal education, and also across the school curriculum, cannot compensate for lack of strategies that raise environmental awareness. Since there has been many steps taken to conserve environment but there is still the need to discuss about this topic. The generation next has already made and is making new innovations which are very useful for preserving the environment. We have to practice sustainable development otherwise what our forefathers gave us we could not give the same to our next generation. Through environmental education, individuals develop a much deeper understanding of the environment and





the environment's issues. It enables them to make responsible decisions towards the betterment of the environment.

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