

The Impact of Environmental Awareness on Teachers' Attitude towards Environmental Education

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Abstract

Environmental issues have become a subject of due importance because of increasing interaction between population and its environment. The rise in pollution in an alarming rate has given birth to various health problems influencing the economical growth of a country. The root cause of this problem is the low level of awareness among people towards environment.

From the survey of the literatures on environmental awareness and its education, it can be concluded that for a successful green movement, the planning and execution of the awareness programmes in the education sector of a country is important. Thus, the subject about a teacher's attitude towards environmental awareness becomes important to promote environmental education at all educational levels-primary, secondary, senior secondary. Some studies also concluded in their brief reports about differences in teachers' attitude in environmental awareness in accordance with teachers' qualification, gender, school boards, rural and urban setups. It was generally observed that teachers showing knowledge towards the

environmental concerns like- pollution, conservation, recycling, protection, along with higher and qualitative qualifications and trainings were seen having more positive attitude towards their active responsibility in delivering the environmental content by adopting possible strategies and models for making the connections and satisfying the cognitive and affective domains of environmental education thus successfully strengthening their learners in psychomotor domain.

Thus it confirms that the level of environmental understanding among children is high when teachers realize their conscious role-playing towards the importance of environmental awareness. If the teachers themselves are highly active in getting aware towards such issues, only then, they will be able to kindle the flame among their students. So it becomes important to have a planned environmental educational curriculum and training both pre-service and in-service, for teacher educators for educational levels, as it is a chain reaction spinning and working in the whole educational system within a country.

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The mammoth task of realizing the importance of environmental awareness among teachers to harness the nation's human resource potential in conserving the environment, is important to have a balanced relationship between the environmental education and other educational disciplinary subjects thus eliminating the environmental stagnation.

Keywords: Environment | teachers' attitude | environmental education

Introduction

The biggest impact of the scientific and industrial revolution in recent past year can be seen in the rise of new factors disturbing the balanced relation between man and its environment in an alarming rate. The need for environmental awareness is thus necessary to be recognized by all, as there is less knowledge or action provided for the same.

Environmental education refers to a systematic and organized plan, designed to teach about the interaction between the human and its environment, to live a sustainable and balanced life. In broad terms, it include, the teaching-learning process carried out within a system in co-ordination with other subject disciplines. It includes an effort to educate a diversified class of learners, ranging from students to general public and other audience. Environmental education focuses and promotes:

- Knowledge and understanding related to various environmental challenges.
- Awareness programmes-sensitizing the public of all ages.

- Practices to mitigate the environmental problems by the apt utilization of green economy.
- Building and encouraging the stewardship of environment protection.

Hence, ensuring the health: - physical, mental and social, of a Nation. This catalyzes the environmental awareness programmes by addressing its issues and associated challenges by expertise. The role of expertise, here, is generally played by teachers.

Famous entrepreneur, Bill Gates, quoted, "technology is just a tool. In terms of getting kids working together and motivating them, the teacher is the most important." So, until a teacher is not self motivated and concerned towards the need of environmental awareness, it is impossible to get its class work done in same direction.

The reviews of literatures on environmental awareness and its education also highlighted directly and in-directly then role playing of teachers in promoting awareness. Awareness regarding the need to protect the environment cannot be implemented after a person reaches adulthood; it has to start at the very basic level through an educational process in school (Gopinath, 2014). Thus, the subject about a teacher's attitude towards environmental awareness becomes important to promote environmental education at all educational levels-primary, secondary, senior secondary. The teachers' environmental education awareness and attitude in accordance with the variables sex, school board and teachers' qualification showed differences. The female teachers of CBSE Boards who have higher qualification are

more aware and held positive attitude towards both the environment and environmental education (Kumari, Gangwar, Jaspal Singh, A.P. Singh, 2012) . a well trained teacher can effectively apply the acquired philosophy into practice, by developing strategies for both general and environmental education goals and will successfully be able to bring the contents in the “cognitive”, “affective” as well as “psychomotive” domain of learning in students (Sahay, Singh, IGNOU). Awareness creation is a key measure to address the impact of climate change. In the educational sector, teacher can play an important role in educating the students about climate change, related issues and solutions. This is possible only when teachers themselves have the necessary level of awareness. This therefore necessitates the need for introducing climate change programme into education reforms (Ekpoh, Uduak, Imo, Jackson).

Thus the above mentioned report findings suggest that the level of environmental understanding among children is high when teachers realize their conscious role-playing towards the importance of environmental awareness. If the teachers themselves are highly active in getting aware towards such issues, only then, they will be able to kindle the flame among their students. So it becomes important to have a planned environmental educational curriculum and training both pre-service and in-service, for teacher educators for educational levels, as it is a chain reaction spinning and working in the whole educational system within a country.

Conclusion

For a successful green movement, the planning and execution of the awareness programmes in the education sector of a country is important. Teachers who are the key elements of this socialization as the practitioners of the education in schools are of great importance, because the teachers, performing the educational goals of schools, play an important role in shaping the future of the society (Berns, 2009:233). So if the teachers themselves are motivated and aware towards the various environmental challenges, then only they can positively raise and transfer the knowledge to the society.

As we enter a new millennium, equipped with all kinds of scientific and digitized system it becomes, important to create the surge of interest, enthusiasm and activities to awake and make them vigilant towards its environment. Thus, helping its nation to overcome and grow- social, economic and culturally.

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