



## ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY: NEED OF THE HOUR

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### ABSTRACT :

The concept of environmental education emerged in the seventies, known as decade of environmental education. During this period, the world realized that environmental concerns and awareness could be spread only through a 'mass environment education program'. The point of natural training is unmistakably to demonstrate the financial, social, political and environmental association of the cutting edge world, in which choices and activities by various nations can have global repercussions. EE should build up an awareness of other's expectations and solidarity among nations and districts as the establishment for another worldwide request which will ensure the preservation and enhancement of condition (UNESCO). It is now widely accepted that environmental education should be included at several levels in schools, colleges, universities and other academic institutions. For creating environment consciousness among the common public as well as for providing first hand exposure to the basic principles, sincere efforts will have to be made at all the levels.

**KEYWORDS :** environmental education , environmental concerns , natural training.

### ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

The concept of EE emerged from the Stockholm conference organized by United Nations in 1972. Recommendations of the conference emphasized organization of 'formal' and 'mass' environmental education programs. Educating the people at large about environment and its components would develop critical thinking, analytical and problem solving skills in them. It would develop knowledge and insights to improve quality of life on earth.

"Environmental Education is the process that allows an individual to explore environmental issues, engage in problem solving and take action to improve the environment. As a result, one can develop a better and deeper understanding of environmental issues and have the skills to make precise and responsible decisions."

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN- 1971):

" The process of recognizing values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the interrelatedness among men, his culture and his bio-physical surroundings EE also entails practice in decision making and self-formulation of a code of behaviour issues concerning environmental quality."



Natural instruction is worried about those parts of human conduct which are all the more straightforwardly identified with man's cooperation with bio-physical condition and his capacity to comprehend this association. A standout amongst the most glaring issues of today is natural contamination. The goals of environmental education are to develop concern and awareness among world population about the total environment and its

associated problems and commitment to work individually and collectively towards solution of current problems and prevention. Training and open support may change and enhance the nature of condition.

As per UNESCO, "Environmental Education is way of implementing the goals of environmental protection. It is not a separate branch of science but life long interdisciplinary field of Study." It implies , instruction towards assurance and improvement of the earth training as an instrument of advancement for enhancing the personal satisfaction of human networks.

EE shows us how to weigh different sides of an issue through basic reasoning and it improves our very own critical thinking and basic leadership aptitudes.

### Aims of Environmental Education

The fundamental point of ecological training at the grass root level is to prevail with regards to influencing people and networks to comprehend the intricate idea of common and the manufacture conditions. Additionally, to secure the learning, qualities, demeanors and useful abilities to take an interest in a dependable and viable path in envisioning, and in the administration of the nature of the earth.

The goals of EE are: To create awareness among the people on environmental problems and conservation; To improve the quality of environment; To create an atmosphere so that people participate in decision-making and develop the capabilities to evaluate the developmental programmes.

### Objectives of Environmental Education

- **Awareness and Sensitivity** to the environment and environmental challenges.
- Knowledge and comprehension of the earth and natural difficulties.
- Attitudes of worry for the earth and inspiration to enhance or keep up ecological quality.
- Skills to recognize and help settle natural difficulties.
- Participation in exercises that lead to the goals of natural difficulties.
- **Evaluation Ability**

### Environmental Education is More Than Information about the Environment

Environment Education	Environmental Information
Increases public awareness and knowledge of environmental issues.	Provides facts or opinions about environmental issues.
Teaches individuals critical-thinking.	Does not necessarily teach critical thinking.
Does not advocate a particular view-point.	May advocate a particular view-point.
Enhances individuals problem solving and decision making skills.	Does not necessarily.

### Principles of Environmental Education

- **EE must involve everyone** :- EE cannot be confined to any one group of society rather it is the responsibility for everyone- government, industry, the media, educational institutions, community groups, as well as individuals.
- **EE must be lifelong** :- Learning from past experiences, we should develop and apply better environmental technologies. All individuals need to continuously refresh the knowledge and skills which they apply to the environmental challenges they face. This is necessary to achieve ecologically sustainable development of a nation.
- **EE must be practical** :-The measurement of our efforts in the EE can be made by the fact that it must lead to actions which result in better environmental outcomes and not only the accumulation of knowledge and impractical skills.
- **EE must be holistic** :-One has to think broadly in order to understand the environmental challenges which themselves have social, scientific, economic, cultural and ethical aspects, all of which must be

considered for effective management. It is very important to establish a better communication link between those people working on, or learning about, similar to related environmental issues, but who came from different professional or disciplinary backgrounds. The quality of EE can be improved by opportunity to appreciate and learn from our indigenous people's experience and their affinity with the environment in which they lived.

- **EE must be in harmony with economic and Social goals:** - EE should also strengthen the other powerful social and economic goals. It should not be taught to people to pursue an agenda on the margins of the society but it should be incorporated in such a way that it can provide knowledge, understanding and capacity to influence mainstream of the society.
- One more objective of EE is to develop a fundamental acceptance in the community that the nation's environmental objectives should be accorded the same priority as its social and economic objectives.

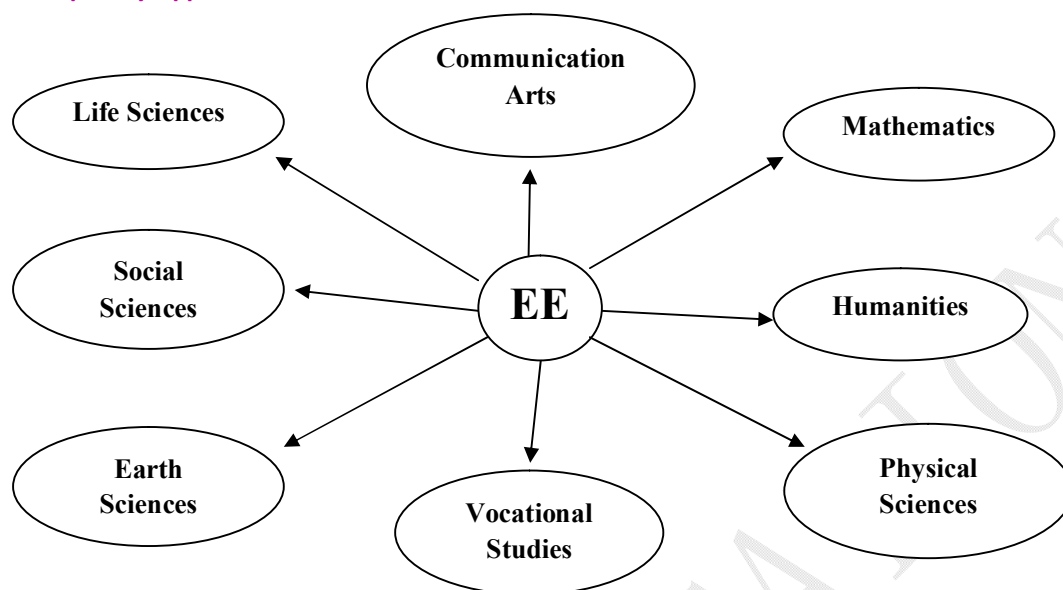
### Major Environmental Issues

- Climate Change
- Environmental degradation
- Intensive Farming.
- Land Degradation.
- Nuclear Issues
- Over Population
- Ozone depletion
- Pollution
- Resource Depletion

### Providing EE at Different levels of Education

Level	Objectives
Primary Education	Building up awareness among the children
	Real-life situation and conservation.
	Sensitize the child about concept of environment.
Secondary School Level	Content surrounding from home to school to outdoor situations.
	According to syllabus formed by NCERT
	Objective: real life experience, awareness and problem identification
Higher Secondary Level	Content-used at primary level supplemented with general situations
	Emphasis must be given on conservation, assimilation to knowledge, problem identification and action skills.
College and University Level	Content- Science based and action- oriented work.
	Sustainable development by solving problems of environment Attitude and Evaluation.

### Interdisciplinary Approach



### Role of Teachers about Environment Education

- To develop the interest of the children in environment and to raise the challenging problems.
- To discuss the approach to problems or topics.
- To arrange visits for environmental education.
- Organizing social service and community service programs.
- To provide material needed for practical work.
- Developing habit of cleanliness among students.
- To arrange for visiting speakers.
- Awareness programs.
- To develop practice of discussions and debates.
- Organizing population days and environmental days.
- To provide facilities for displays and exhibitions of the work carried out.

### CONCLUSION:

The problem of environment abuse is serious one and needs to be addressed at the local, national and international levels. It is essential to spread awareness and educate humankind about environmental challenges to achieve a good quality of life on earth. Schools and universities have to play an important role to translate the objectives and recommendations of the various commissions and committees into practice for achieving environmental literacy and awareness among learners. There is a need to train teachers regarding environment education (UNESCO-1985) .

In addition to teachers training, on going support should reach into schools/colleges/ universities to influence the EE programs.

Non-formal channels of education like tv , radio, press and satellite technology can be effectively utilized for capacity building of environmental experts.

EE is a better tool to make this world a better place.

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