



## Environmental Education : Concept, Need & Challenges

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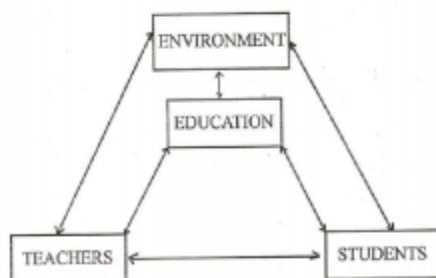
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**Abstract:** *Education is both the seed and flower of the vital process of societies. Education shapes societies and society guides the process of Education. Education causes an effect of "environment" the view about "education" and environment demand systematic frame work for our understanding. Environmental education is very essential for human life. We people think vital term of environment for all rounds, development of society and nation.*

**Key Words:** Education, vital process, societies, shapes, societies, guides, environment, systematic .

Environmental education is that education by which man sees himself as a part of the total ecological system and the need for harmony between man and his environment. The greatest need of today is that man in his mad race in pursuit of transient materialistic gains and objectives, should, at least occasionally, pauses and reflects on the real purpose and value of human life and gives a fresh orientation to his view of life based on such introspective reflections. If this was done on, should have no difficulty to realize that amongst all living species, the human occupies a special and very significant place by reason of his alone being endowed with powers of reason and discrimination added by a discerning intellect and faculties of analytical thinking, assimilation and recollection. From time immemorial these special gifts have generated in man a keen sense of inquiry in search of truth, wisdom and bliss - "Sath, Chit, Ananda".

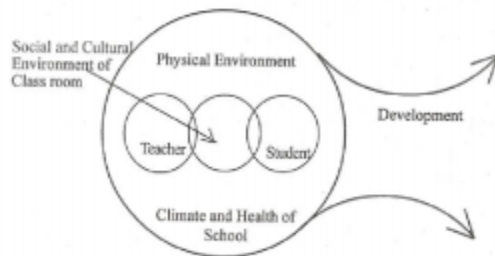


### Conceptual Frame work of Environmental Education

Education is the process of development. Environment is the aggregate of all the external conditions and influences affecting the life and development of man and other living organisms. Every organism has its own environment. Man's environment consists of natural as well as socio-cultural environment. Education may change and improve the quality of man's environment to achieve desirable modification of his behavior.

On relationship between environment and education Bernard points out that the educational process of development is organized formally in the educational institutions' classroom, where an interaction takes place between teacher and taught. To generate conducive social and emotional climate to provide the new experiences to his students for desirable changes and modifications in their behavior a teacher performs certain activities verbally and non-verbally. Thus, the process of development is carried on in schools. The organization, climate and health of the institutions provide new experiences to their students. Educational process of development occurs in physical, social, cultural and psychological environment.

This may be understood with the help of following figure.



### Aspects of Environmental Education

Environmental education is problem-centered, interdisciplinary, value-oriented, community-oriented, and concerns with man's survival as species, based on student-initiated activities and involvements present and future-oriented. Environmental activities lead to the study of natural and physical sciences and social sciences. Construction and creative skills provide the basis for the practice of healthy living serving as the basis for the environmental education.

Thus, Environmental education involves a comprehensive, life-long education, responsive to changes in a rapidly changing world. Through an understanding of the major problems of the interaction of the biological, physical, social economic and cultural aspects of the individual and communities it prepares the individual and communities for life. It provides skills and attitudes required to play a productive role in improving life and values, to enable people to enjoy good health and high quality of life.

**Need of Environmental Education** - In the Rigveda, it has been stated that "The dust of mother earth and light of father sky should remain associated with full brightness for our welfare." According to Rigveda, there are three kinds of god the celestial, the aerial and terrestrial i.e. land, air and water. The whole Brahmanda is full of peace and happiness as life and environment are so closely related that it is, difficult to think of man and organism as something separate from nature or environment. Thus man and environment are interrelated, There is an interdependence between

them. The nature or environment is a source of sorrow and happiness, because the dust of earth, light and air of sky have effect on human beings. Therefore, the need of introduction of 'environmental education' has been widely recognized with the recommendations of different committee Indian Government have accepted the need for environmental education Kumar, K. Shiva, and Patil, S. Mangala. (2007) attempt to explore the impact of environmental education course on the post-graduate students' attitude towards environmental pollution, that has become a world wide problem and found that the standard environmental education course influences the attitude level of the students towards environmental pollution and related issues. Indian Governmental recognizes an urgent need for environmental education Besides introducing the subject of 'Environmental science' at all levels of education, emphasis should be laid on the new approaches and programmes of environmental education. Thus, the idea in to bring environmental concerns in all subjects and to all facets of life.

The area of environmental education includes both formal and non-formal education. In the formal education four different but inter-related components are recognized (a) Awareness of environment (b) Environment and real life situation (c) Conservation of resources and (d) Sustainable development of an individual these four components are related to the four levels of education i.e. Primary, Secondary, Higher Secondary and Higher education respectively. These should be four major areas (a) Environmental (b) Conservation and Management (c) Environment Health and (d) Social Energy.

The non-formal education must cater to adult education, rural youth, tribal's administrators and foundation courses and different services. Thus, education has a very significant area of environmental education.

**Challenges of Environmental Education-**  
The relationship between humans and environment



has varied from the early period of human settlement on the earth to the present day. The relationship between environment and human being has also been varying from place to place at any given period of time. For example, early human considered the environment to be dominant. They were afraid of lightning and thunder, dense forest and wild life, vast Ocean and large rivers. They had no tools at their command to overcome the hazards posed by the environment. They worshipped different aspects of nature like mountains, rivers, oceans, forests, etc. They had to adapt themselves to the environment. When human started making tools out of stone and metals and learnt the use of fire, their impact on the environment came to be felt. Their tools enabled them to cut the trees to fashion their house with logs. They set fire to forests or grassland to make a clearing for themselves and their animals. Fire also protected them from wild life and cold weather. Hunting and fishing gave them some position of dominance over other animals. Their activities had very little impact on the environment. The industrial Revolution which provided mechanical power, the invention of steam engine and other machinery, greater use of metal, etc., gave them opportunities to modify the environment. Human became an activities agent in changing the environment to suit their needs. At the same time, agriculture provided abundant food so that they could settle down permanently instead of wandering from place to place in search of food. This gave them security; they could rear their family in safe houses. The family grew in size and people migrated to other parts of the world. Transport by road, rail and sea improved and new lands in North America, South America and Australia came to be settled by people from Europe. It is not as though degradation of environment is only a recent phenomenon. In the past also human activities have resulted in the degradation of

environment. Though they were not aware of it. The decline of Mesopotamian civilization in Iraq, Incas in Peru and India Valley civilization have been attributed to deforestation hill slopes which induced fires and falling of trees on a large scale. This resulted in famines, death and desertion of village.

Till recently we have been unaware that construction of a dam across a river to regulation water supply result in serious consequences to environment. Man's impact on the environment has resulted in pollution of environment. Pollution affects not only air, water and land but also the organisms in the biosphere. The natural ecosystem has the capacity to decompose dead organisms or excreta and recycle them. When harmful substance contaminate the environment in large quantities, the ecosystem is unable to absorb them and they accumulate in the system resulting in degradation of environment. Man is at top of ecological pyramid. He acts as an omnivores feeding of plant and animals. Human Impact on Biosphere.

Human have come to realize that their economic activities are threatening their survival on the earth. Their survival depends on their realization that they have to live in harmony with the various elements of the environment which are interconnected. An understanding of the components and processes which takes place in the environment the relationship between different a biotic and biotic components, and the assessment of resources with reference to needs of people in region is essential for their survival. A reduction in rate of growth of population in developing countries and a reduction in consumption of resources by developed countries would aim at a balance between population and resources. Awareness of the problems faced by environment would enable people to take appropriate decisions to make the earth habitable for future generation.

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