

“A study on opinion of Teachers about role of Education in Sustainable Development”

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Abstract: The research study was taken up to investigate the opinion of teachers towards role of education in sustainable development. The sample of 50 secondary School teachers from Mysore was selected by adopting random sampling technique. Teacher's opinion was collected with the help of Scale for opinion about role of education in Sustainable Development constructed by the investigator. Specific objectives formulated were: 1. To analyze the opinion of teachers towards role of education in sustainable development. The data obtained from the survey was analyzed using percentage analysis. Findings of the study were 1. A majority of the teachers opine that education plays a key role in bringing environmental awareness, citizenship education, and respect for human life, value change and also attitudinal change with respect to sustainable development among its students. 2. Most of the teachers opine that education can bring about awareness about sustainable development and students should concentrate on utilizing the natural resource for development and also think about saving them to the future. Secondary School Teachers do not feel that in changing Sustainable Development in their lessons as a class will not burden them.

Key Words: Sustainable Development, opinion, teachers, education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Today we live in a globalised world. Globalised Societies generally expect educational systems to prepare young people for their future professions. The educational system is seen as having a socializing role and is expected to contribute to preparing young people to take up their responsibilities in helping to shape the complex society in which we all now live. It is because of the latter reason that, by the mid sixties and early seventies, so-called adjectival educations –such as environmental education, health education, citizenship, peace education etc.- were introduced into the curriculum of many educational systems. Hence, the society requires competencies from their citizens which will markedly differ from the competencies citizens needed about three decades ago. The introduction of issues of sustainable development in the curriculum of both primary and secondary education is therefore strongly recommended by several international organizations.

Sustainable development is complex, because of the tight connections between social, economic and ecological aspects, and also because many proposed solutions, may lead to new global risks. This implies that education for sustainable development requires at least a holistic approach, rather than the reductionist approach which is common in traditional educational systems. Indeed, a reductionist approach can often be the origin of these problems. It follows that, if we desire a consensus rather than a (usually messy) compromise, then sustainability challenges need to be approached at a systemic level. (Sterling, 2001; Tilbury, 2005).

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development was defined by the Brundtland Commission as a development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (UN, 1987). With the arrival of Agenda 21 (UNCED, 1992) sustainable

development became a regulatory idea in international policy. Within its policy, Agenda 21 delegated part of the action necessary for sustainable development.

Education empowers people for their role in society and therefore it is of vital importance to promote sustainable development of our global community. Education plays an important role in improving peoples' lives. While it is broadly understood that literacy and education plays a crucial role in preparing people for their future in a highly connected, interlinked and globalized world; secondary education in particular occupies an important position in shaping the way in which future generations learn to cope with the complexities of sustainable development.

Globalization has spurred technological, economic, social and cultural change as well as the greater mobility of capital, technology, information and labor. This phenomenon has created a growing demand for society's capacity to acquire process, disseminate and apply knowledge. Education forms a link between knowledge generation and transfer of knowledge to society in two ways. First, they prepare the future decision-makers of society for their entry into the labour market. Such preparation includes education of teachers, who play the most important role in providing education at both primary and secondary levels. Second, they actively contribute to the societal development through outreach and service to society.

Secondary schools, as important centers of learning, play an important role in this context. In addition to fundamental research, secondary teachers also have to undertake innovative, action-oriented research. They should be particularly attuned to the provision of appropriate knowledge and skills relevant for sustainable development to the student community as local knowledge centers. In addition to their traditional teaching functions, teachers must consider their role in retraining students as well as other local

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professionals to contribute to learning for sustainable development. Secondary school teachers are important actors in the community, as employers, purchasers and service users; where prudent use of resources saves money and safeguards reputations. Thus, schools can be perceived as models for society in the pursuit of sustainable development. Schools are expected to contribute to innovation, to contribute to reflection on values and ethics, and to contribute to the transformation to a more sustainable society. The provision of knowledge as a "public good" is one of the tasks of higher education, and unhindered access to knowledge is a prerequisite for sustainable development.

Education for Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is a self-motivated concept that utilizes all aspects of community awareness, education to enhance an understanding of the linkages among the issues of sustainable development and to develop the knowledge, skills, perspectives and values which will empower people of all ages to assume responsibility for creating and enjoying a sustainable future. It has four major thrusts, which were:

- Promotion and improvement of high quality, relevant basic education;
- The reorienting of existing education policies and programmes to address the social, environmental and economic knowledge, skills and values inherent to sustainability in a holistic and inter-disciplinary manner;
- The development of public understanding and awareness of the principles;
- The development of specialized training programmes to ensure that all sectors of society have the skills necessary to perform their work in a sustainable manner.

Education for sustainable development is equally relevant and critical for developing countries like India. The challenge for secondary education in the context of Education for Sustainable Development is to innovate traditional learning environments and learning processes in such a way that they not only support the learning process of children and young adults in formal education, but lifelong learning, training and informal learning as well. Secondary education institutes are challenged to co-operate together in networks that constitute a supportive infrastructure for lifelong learners. Co-operation between secondary educations is not enough, however. In order to fulfill their service function at regional, national and international levels as well, universities and higher educational institutes will have to be active nodes in international/national/regional networks with other partners such as teacher education institutions and universities, vocational education, science centers, small and medium sized companies, chambers of commerce, NGOs, national and regional governments, etc..

The challenges for education in this context are thus enormous, but the opportunities as well. New media and Information and Communication Technology offer many possibilities to enhance human activities in the field of education by providing flexible access to educational resources, facilitating sustainable development. Emphasis should not only be on competition at a global scale, but also,

and even much more, on co-operation and sharing of knowledge at a global scale.

UNESCO has built partnerships with governments, civil society groups, and other United Nations and international agencies to meet important education and literacy targets. Global Higher Education for Sustainability Partnership is such a partnership focusing on the specific role of education in the context of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. UNESCO has a dual role in relation to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD): first as a substantive implementer of ESD-accelerating reforms and coordinating activities of multiple stakeholders to implement ESD at international, regional and country levels. Second, UNESCO also acts as the lead agency in the promotion of DESD (2005-2014). The Decade offers an opportunity for UNESCO and its partners to advance progress made in human resource development, education and training to promote a more sustainable development of our global society.

II. NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The study mainly intends to measure the opinion of secondary school teachers towards the role of education in sustainable development. Education is one of the greatest services provided by teachers. The role played by teachers becomes a very important component and in fact it can be said that they are in way our nation builders. A teacher help in building up the future of their students and secondary education plays a vital role to build sustainable development of students.

The ultimate goal of education for sustainable development is to impart the knowledge, values, attitudes and skills needs to empower people to bring about the changes required to achieve sustainability. It needs to serve teachers, other professionals and all citizens as lifelong learners to respond to society's challenges and opportunities, so that people everywhere can live in freedom from want and fear, and to make their unique contribution to a sustainable future. In this direction there is a need to study the opinion of teachers towards role of education in sustainable development.

The review of related literature has revealed that there are no attempts to study the opinion of teachers towards role of education in sustainable development. Hence this investigation is a modest venture in this direction.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the study.

1. To assess the level of opinion of teachers towards role of education in sustainable development.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The present study was taken to investigate the opinion of teacher's towards role of education in sustainable development Descriptive survey method of study was followed.

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Variables of the study:

The following are the variable of the study

Main variables: Opinion of teachers about role of education in sustainable development

Sample of the Study:

The study was conducted on a sample of 50 teachers of Mysore. The selection of teachers was done on the basis of random sampling method.

Tools used for collection of Data:

Scale for opinion about role of education in Sustainable Development: It was constructed by the investigator. The scale contains of 25 statements which represent sustainable development in education.

Procedure for Data Collection:

Data for the study was collected by administering the Opinion towards role of education in sustainable development Scale to the selected sample by the investigator.

V. ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULT:

The obtained data was analyzed using percentage analysis. The analysis of data, interpretation and discussion of the results are presented below:

In pursuance of the objective of the study the analysis is presented in table no. 1

Table No.1: Table showing the percentage of the opinions of secondary school teachers with respect to their role of education in sustainable development.

Sl. No	Statements	Percentage of Response				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	It is normally seen that lesser the education higher is the environmental ethics	12.4	40.0	17.1	20.1	10.4
2.	Education promotes respect for human life and thus sustainable development.	38.2	51.4	0	10.4	0
3.	Higher education should aim at preparing students for a job market and not worry about preserving the culture.	3	2.9	8.6	42.6	42.9
4.	The teaching of sustainability principles should be integrated into the curriculum in all disciplines of Education.	65.7	17.1	11.4	5.8	0

5.	Economic development is not possible without ecological deterioration.	5.7	23.6	5.7	45.0	20.0
6.	Environmental awareness should be enhanced among students of secondary education.	77.1	22.9	0	0	0
7.	Stereotyping behaviour is highly prominent in our culture and education cannot erase it from the minds of the students.	7.7	40.0	2.9	34.3	17.1
8.	Citizenship education is an important component of education for sustainable development and hence it has to be a part of education.	60.1	22.7	5.7	5.8	5.7
9.	The curriculum of education can imbibe the values of sustainability in the students.	42.9	51.4	5.7	0	0
10.	Students of higher education should concentrate on utilizing the natural resource for development without thinking about saving them.	5.7	2.8	0	42.9	48.6
11.	Students need to be taught to change their life style to reduce waste.	68.6	17.1	0	5.7	8.6
12.	Education can bring positive attitudinal change for sustainable development among its students.	57.1	34.3	5.7	0	2.9
13.	It's an additional burden for teachers to incorporate values of sustainable development among their students.	0	5.7	5.7	42.9	45.7
14.	Education removes gender discrimination and hence contributes to sustainable development.	20.0	42.9	14.3	17.1	5.7
15.	Values of peace and international understanding developed in teachers of higher education helps in sustainable development.	37.1	42.9	14.3	5.7	0
16.	Teaching about sustainable development helps students to know about the future needs as it is about what we need today.	51.5	31.4	5.7	5.7	5.7
17.	Sustainable development could be promoted by courses offered in institutions of teacher education.	31.5	57.1	5.7	5.7	0
18.	There is a dire need for education to concentrate on enhancement of positive attitude of students towards sustainable development.	48.7	40.0	2.9	2.9	5.7
19.	As teachers of secondary education we can sensitize students to issues regarding ecological balance.	60.0	34.3	0	0	5.7
20.	It is not necessary that students should think of economic development need not worry about saving the resource to future generations.	5.7	0	5.7	25.7	62.9
21.	Education cannot play a key role in bringing awareness about sustainable development.	5.7	5.7	0	40.0	48.6
22.	Education helps in developing certain skills of bringing about balance between individual success and also maintaining cultural traditions.	45.7	42.9	5.7	5.7	0
23.	As teachers we need to think of development of the nation and not about preserving the resources.	34.3	31.4	8.6	8.6	17.1
24.	Education brings change in values and makes its students globally responsible citizens.	40.0	42.9	5.7	11.4	0
25.	Education can take the responsibility of preparing future citizens who can bring in national development and also be environmental friendly.	62.9	37.1	0	0	0

The table no. 1 shows that approximately 94.3 % of teachers agree with the statement, 'the curriculum of higher education can imbibe the values of sustainability in the students'. Majority of the teachers (91.4%) agree with the statement, 'education can bring positive attitudinal change for sustainable development among its students'. Majority of the teachers that is 80% of them agree with the statement, 'values of Peace and international understanding developed in teachers of higher education and helps in sustainable development. Approximately 88.6% of teachers agree with the statement, 'sustainable development could be promoted by courses offered in institutions of teacher education'. Hence it can be concluded that sustainable development should be promoted by course offered in institutions of higher education. Most of the secondary school teachers (88.7%) of them agree with the statement, 'there is a dire need for higher education to concentrate on enhancement of positive attitude of students towards sustainable development'.

Around 88.6% of the teachers agree with statement education helps in developing certain skills of bringing about balance between individual successes and also maintain cultural traditions. Approximately 82.9% of the teachers agree with statement education brings change in values and makes its students globally responsible citizens. A majority of secondary school teachers that is 100% of them agree with statement education can take the responsibility of preparing future citizens who can bring in national development and also be environmental friendly. A majority of teachers that is 52.4 % of them agree with statement it is normally seen that lesser the education higher is the environmental ethics. It can be concluded that they opine that lesser the education higher is the environmental ethics is contrast with higher education but it not play a higher education.

Approximately 85.5% of teachers disagree with the statement that higher education should aim at preparing students for a job market and not worry about preserving the culture. Hence it can be concluded that higher education teachers support the view that development is possible even if cultural preservation is emphasized. Majority of teachers (51.4 %) of them disagree with the statement, 'stereotyping behavior is highly prominent in our culture and higher education can not erase it from the minds of the students'. Hence it is concluded that teachers opine that stereotyping behavior of the students is highly prominent and it cannot be erase it from the minds of the students.

Around 91.5% of the teachers disagree with the statement student of higher education should concentrate on utilizing the natural resource for development without thinking about saving them. Approximately 88.6 % of the teachers disagree with the statement it's an additional burden for teachers to incorporate values of sustainable development among their students. Hence it can be concluded that it's not additional burden for teachers to incorporate values of sustainable development among their students. A majority of the secondary school teacher that is 88.6 of them disagree with the statement education cannot play a key role in bringing awareness about sustainable development.

VI. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

It is found that:

1. A majority of the secondary school teachers opine that education plays a key role in bringing environmental awareness, citizenship education, and respect for human life, value change and also attitudinal change with respect to sustainable development among its students.
2. Most of the secondary school teachers opine that education can bring about awareness about sustainable development and students should concentrate on utilizing the natural resource for development and also think about saving them to the future.

VII. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The following are the educational implications of the study

1. Education should continue to explore and develop approaches to Sustainable Development in teaching and learning and curriculum through the Subject Centers themselves, as well as through an interdisciplinary group focusing on subject connections applying systems thinking and practice also to identify ways of implementing and supporting the integration of Sustainable Development into teaching and learning and curriculum.
2. Teachers feel the importance of environmental, social, political and economic aspects to their disciplines and hence felt the need to provide students with a broad and balanced foundation of Sustainable Development, its key fields: Cooperation among teachers of different subjects can be encouraged and to work together in organizing learning experiences for students both in course work and extra curriculum activities.
3. There is a need to create a stimulating and supportive environment for inter disciplinary learning and research and to enable students to think critically about the nature of knowledge, and about the ways in which knowledge is produced and validated. Education must enable students to identify, understand, evaluate and adopt values conducive to sustainability and to enable students to develop social and environmental responsibility

VIII. CONCLUSION

Education through raising awareness and influencing behaviour has a pivotal function if sustainable development is to be achieved. This role is especially pronounced in the realm of secondary education because at this level of students are being prepared to enter the civil society and emerge with skills to support green economies and as messengers of ideas. Progressively, colleges of education and other education institutions should incorporate sustainable development values and practices into their core activities of teaching and learning. However, the debate thus far has focused primarily on the rationale and reasoning for why sustainable development needs broad adoption. The international discussion, however, has failed to specify the various actions that education institutions can adopt.

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