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Efficacy of Green Education and Green School in Sustainable Development

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Abstract:

The concept of Green School in the modern world goes on to distribute the idea of creating a clean, protective, healthy and a green environment alongwith protecting natural resources for our future generations and avoiding unnecessary wastage of energy.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002 developed the concept of the needs of having Green Schools in the present modern world.

In this paper we will study the importance of green education in the modern world and how we can develop more and more Green schools to spread the awareness of protecting our environment from the childhood days of a individual human being.

This study has been casual, exploratory and empirical in nature and the data needed for research work has been collected by using both the direct and indirect methods of data collection.

Keywords: Green Education, Green School, Society, Sustainable Development, Environment.

Introduction:

Green Education:

Green Education in the modern society tends to bring together both the formal and non-formal methods of education which goes on to help in increasing the awareness among the modern day human beings, in the areas of environmental protection, conservation of bio-diversity and climate changes for the overall betterment of not only the modern generations but also for the future generations.

Importance of Green Education:

The most important aspect of Green Education or Environmental Education is that it helps the students of the modern world to come out of their normal text book education and spent some time with the nature to understand the actual importance of nature in solving many problems including health related problems like obesity, mental depression or disorders and learn the importance of having a proper and balanced food which provides good nutritions for having a proper healthy human body.

Benefits of Environmental Education:

- **Increases the imagination and enthusiasm of the students:** Environmental education is actually a hands-on practical interactive learning process which when integrated with the normal curriculum increases the enthusiasm of the students and helps them in increasing their achievement in academic areas.
- **Learning Outside the normal classroom:** Environmental education helps the students in experiencing the interconnectedness of social, ecological, economical, cultural and political issues by offering opportunities for experimental learning in the real world outside their normal classroom learning.
- **Enhances the creative thinking skills among the students of the modern society:** Environmental education goes a long way in helping the students to develop a research and analytical mind to investigate and find out why certain things happen and make their own decisions about various types of complex environmental issues .
- **Encourages practicing healthy life styles:** Environmental education helps students to come out of their normal classroom learning methods and understand their surrounding environment which in turn helps them to understand why good nutrition is needed or how to reduce stress or how to address and solve some health issues which the children of the modern world are facing today.
- **Increases proper actions towards sustainable development of the environment:** Environmental education goes on to help the modern students to understand the complex environmental issues and adopt proper measures to maintain the environment healthy and sustainable for the future .
- **Enhances & develop the strengths of various communities around the world:** Environmental education goes on to help in community developments throughout the world when the students in order to improve their environment reach out to various types of persons of the society like volunteers, community experts, local individuals and families etc to jointly understand the problems of the community and address them to improve the environment in which they live.

Green Schools:

The concept of Green School is basically a new and a emerging concept in the modern world which distributes the idea of protecting the environment from the school level as the school going children are more likely to be effected by the modern days environmental degradations and the basic idea behind having green school programmes is to encourage the children of the modern society to

come out of their routine text book studies and understand the nature or their environment where they live, the importance of protecting the nature or the environment not only for the current generation but also for the future generations to come by practically doing or performing some environmental extra curriculum activities within the broad guidelines of their school studies.

Benefits of Green Schools:

The basic benefits of introducing Green Schools in the society is to teach the students how to use the available natural resources in a proper manner and have reduction in wastage of water and other energy resources alongwith improved air quality and better day lighting to improve the overall health and well being of the children of the modern society.

The overall benefit can be that the concept of green schools will go on to produce some young teams of modern day youths who with better skills and knowledge will try to make their school buildings much more environmental friendly alongwith installing methods and techniques for proper usage of various types of resources and avoid unnecessary wastage of energy and other resources.

Therefore we see that this concept of Green School in the modern society is a idea which is trying to bring the children much more closer towards the nature.

Concept of Green School in India:

Historically the concept of environmental education is not a new idea or concept in India as this concept was actually rooted in India's traditional system of knowledge acquiring since ancient times but due to almost two hundred years of past British colonial rule and some other modern developmental issues and problems there has been a change in the attitude towards environment which went on to influence the modern day schooling system causing loosing of significance of proper environmental education .

In modern India the concept of Green School is an emerging concept which is distributing the idea of protection of the environment from the school level as the schools are considered as the basic point of education in the society.

Green School can be described as a school which normally tries to utilise all its various types of resources in a better and efficient manner and the concept of Green School in India tries to fully utilise all the available resources and opportunities both inside and outside the school to properly sensitise both the teachers and the students towards environmental protection and sustainability through active involvement of the communities in proper environmental protection and development of the same.

In India the concept of identifying the Green Schools and their recognition is done by Green School Programme an initiative of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).

Objective of the Study:

The main objective of this study is to find out the efficacy of Green education in developing the modern societies of the world alongwith finding out the challenges and opportunities of green education in achieving sustainable development.

Literature Review:

1) Walaa Mustafa Mohammed EI - Wardany in his report, “Green Education for sustainable development: A Case Study of Faculties of Tourism and Management of Hotels in Egypt” stated that basically ignorance about green education is one of the main problems which the modern concept of sustainable development face therefore proper green education among the general population can be considered as the most important tool for sustainable development which goes on to induce in taking effective ecological actions for proper and sustainable development .

2) Angelo George in his report, “Why Sustainable Education is crucial to create a greener future“, stated that today’s youth are the future of our nation and the driving force of the society and youngsters like Swedish environment activist Greta Thunberg or Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai have with their work made the world realise that the next generation will be the most critical and most affected stakeholder when talking about the global future and climate change as today’s youth is actually inheriting a planet which has been affected by the various types of wrong actions of their preceding generations, one of which is plastic pollution .

3) Akash Deep in his Article, “ Green Schools : The first step to sustainability“ , stated that the world today is grappling with many banes of urbanisation from the growing energy and water crises, to piling waste woes , filthy air and many more , that are cumulatively making life difficult for us and also for our future generations and even though sustainability may seem a big word , it is a pertinent issue that needs immediate attention and also action of adults and children of the modern society alike .

Research Methodology:

This study has been exploratory, casual and empirical in nature and the data needed for such research work has been collected through both direct and indirect methods of collection of primary and secondary data.

Direct Methods:

Primary data has been collected by two stage sampling technique during field visit by personal interview through a structured questionnaire of randomly selected respondents who are somehow involved with imparting green education in the society.

Questionnaire:

This method was undertaken to collect information and find out the views of the normal ordinary residents of Kolkata city of India who are either teachers, professors or are somehow engaged with imparting education in the society.

Interview:

Primary information related to this study has been collected by personal interview of randomly selected respondents who are mainly ordinary Indian citizens of Kolkata city of India and are either a teacher or a professor or are somehow related with imparting education in the society in any form and are mainly residents of the Kolkata city of India.

Indirect Methods:

A number of books, newspapers, magazines, journals, websites, edited volumes, working papers, e-books and other reports were consulted to gather information related to our study.

The data obtained from both the primary and the secondary sources was examined and analysed thoroughly and the results of the analysis are presented below.

Findings:

The study has revealed that the concept of Green School is actually a very important concept which is gaining much importance in the modern day world and it actually caters the idea of imparting education and knowledge from the levels of school children regarding how to protect their environment.

The modern day Green School programmes of various countries of the world are not only just environmental educational programmes which aims to educate the students about the environment with practical hands on training of various types of activities but it can also be treated as any Management Audit system which aims to audit the actual consumption of the natural resources within the school campuses and in the process it goes on to help the schools in proper managing of their environments by introducing various types of innovative solutions to reduce the wastage of precious resources.

Centre for Science and Environment:

In India the basic work of identifying the Green Schools and providing recognition is done by Green School Programme which is mainly conducted by The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) which is a not-for-profit, public interest research and advocacy organisation, established in 1980 and based in New Delhi and works on researches which is related to development that is sustainable and have a long standing effect in the society.

The Centre for Science and Environment goes on to advocate for policy changes and better implementation of the already existing policies.

Efficacy of Green Education for a sustainable future:

The basic and the most important aspect of Green education is that it goes on to develop a group of skilled and knowledgeable workforce in the society who will be properly equipped to design and produce products which are safe for the human health and their surrounding environment, with the utilisation of eco-friendly technologies which are different from the technologies which were used in the past and are according to the specific demands of the modern day world.

Suggestions:

It has been observed that the peoples of the advanced western countries normally thinks the climate change as one of the most serious problems which the modern world is facing today and so proper education and training should be implemented among all the sectors to take proper action to address this modern day planetary crisis .

In June 2022 , the Council of the European Union (EU) adopted a Recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development and the Policy Statement mentioned how sustainability can be integrated into all aspects of education and related training and called on the member states to follow the below mentioned practices:

1) To make education and learning on green transition and sustainable development a must in the education and learning policies or programmes.

2) To mobilise some of the national funds to invest in green and sustainable equipment, resources etc to develop the required infrastructure.

3) Support educators in developing their required knowledge and skills to teach their students about the modern day climate crisis and sustainability to develop ecological knowledge among the students of the modern society.

4) Provide all types of learners i.e students from schools, colleges, universities and of various other types of institutes with the required opportunities to learn about the climate crisis and sustainability through both the formal and non-formal education which includes various types of extra-curricular activities.

5) To try and involve all types of students, staffs, research organisations, other local authorities and communities in learning for development of green education for the overall betterment of the society in the long run.

Conclusions:

As it has been observed that as environmental education goes on to help in acquiring knowledge and methods to solve various types of complex environmental issues the basic objective of having Green schools is to help the students of the modern world to come out of their text book theories and concentrate and think regarding how to protect their own environment, it goes a long way to develop and maintain a clean and healthy surroundings which in turn goes on to protect and save various types of environmental resources from unnecessary wastages and helps the society to make proper utilisation of their scarce energy and resources to get the utmost benefit from them.

Therefore it is understood and well accepted that a normal ordinary students will not be able to make amendments in their school buildings but it is obvious that the practical learnings which they will receive at their young age in their schools will go on to help them in their future to make a better society as a whole.

References:

1. Deep Akash, “Green Schools: The first step to sustainability”, November, 2019.
2. George Angelo, “Why Sustainable Education is crucial to create a greener future”, February, 2023.
3. Wardany EI Mohammed Mustafa Walaa, “Green Education for Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Faculties of Tourism and Management of Hotels in Egypt”, October, 2018.

