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The Impacts of Environmental Education on Youth and their Environmental Awareness

ORIGINAL ARTICLE



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Abstract

The main aim of their study is to identify the effects of environmental education on youth including building a connection to the related to environment charging perceptions of youth awareness. The study evaluate and observe the Environmental Education programs, science exhibitions, science and environmental camps etc. These all programs emphasize on three main terms, soil, water and trees. To collect the data a questionnaire was used. Result of the study should a significant positive effect related to environment. The results gained from this study can be useful in providing a framework for future environmental education programs.

Key Words

Environmental Education, Awareness, UNESCO, NAAEE.

Introduction

The main objective of this article is to identify the effects of Environmental Education to youth and how environmental education reflects long term appreciation for environmental awareness. Environmental education defines how natural environments function and how a human being effect the environment through its acts and behaviour, human being is the final product of the environment by which he draws the resources and maintain his life in the natural way by exploring the natural resources at an alarming rate. Hence environment has become the concern for all academicians, intellectuals, scientists, policy maker and Government across the country. The ultimate goal of environmental education weather it is formal or non-formal is to create awareness among the citizens of the country in relation to conserve our environmental resources.

Environmental awareness means, “To help the social groups and individuals to gain a variety of experiences in and acquire basic understanding of environment and its social problems” To take part in an environmental organization or voluntarily involve in various environmental activities is known as participation in environmental activities. To achieve the participation of the community, environmental awareness must be provided to the entire community through environmental education.

What is “Environment and Education”

The conjunction of the two entirely word “Environment” and “Education” has raised many questions as to why, when, and for what purpose these words have been linked.

The book “ Silent Spring “ by Carson (1962) gave an important message that the heavy use of insecticides for mosquito control affects the environment very badly. This message gave an insight into the discriminate use of poisons chemicals. During the later year environment, a word that not many had heard or much less thought of became a widely discussed issue. Gradually a realization came that the fight against environmental degradation is an issue of everybody’s concern so attempts are to be made to explore ways to sensitize people about the intimate relationship between quality of environment and human wellbeing. Our duty is not only to prepare the environment and ensuring the quality of life but also to educate the people and the Government about the need to manage and maintain the environment. So the main aim of environmental education is that individual should acquire awareness and can develop a positive attitude towards the participation in environmental problems.

Environmental Education

Over the last 30 years environmental education was the main interest of the Governments, communities, schools, universities. These organisations demanded that schools include environmental education in the curriculum of K-12 education. According to the North American Association of Environmental Educators (NAAEE) (Ballard and Pandya,1990) rely on a series of environmental activities that can be incorporated into any course within an existing curriculum.

In 1978 UNESCO recommended the primary categories of environmental education curriculum goals and objectives (a) awareness (b) knowledge (c) attitude (d) skills and (e) participation. The role of teacher according to social reconstructive curriculum planners is to serve as an agent of change and reform by making students aware of problem confronting humanity and by creating opportunities for students to solve such problems. This process rests in the hands of well-educated persons and organisations that can train their new generation towards becoming responsible environmental citizens

Environmental Awareness

The development of environmental awareness means to understand the environmental problems and to develop critical and problem solving skills in the youth. Environmental awareness is to understand the value of our environment and the importance of its protection. To explain and define environmental awareness one must understand the environmentalist’s movement. Environmentalism is an ideology that explain the responsibilities of human to respect, protect and preserve the natural world from its anthropogenic affliction. Environmental awareness is an important part of the success of movement. By teaching our friends and family that the physical environment is fragile and indispensable we can begin fixing the problem that threatens it. Numerous resources are available to promote environmental awareness, group learning, informational and inspirational seminars etc.

Impact of Environmental Education on Youth

Today’s youth will become tomorrow’s leaders and to guide them in a proper way is our duty. It is also our responsibility to provide them educational and personal experiences and to make them able to take knowledgeable decision regarding the environment. Environmental Education is one of the most important factors for preventing environmental problems. Environmental Education connects us to the world around us. Environmental Education teaches us about both natural and built environment. It raises the awareness related to the factors affecting the environment upon which we all depend. It also gives knowledge and suggestions to improve and sustain it.

When we bring nature into the classroom and find an important teaching topic for the classroom our youth get many benefits for their personal and social life. Here we are explaining some major points that how Environmental Education impacts youth:

1. Environmental Education sparks the imagination and unlocks the creativity of the students.

When Environmental Education becomes a part of education curriculum students become more

enthusiastic.

2. Environmental Education not only offer opportunities to learn inside the classrooms, it enables students to make conclusions and apply their learning in the real life.
3. Environmental Education develops the critical thinking in the students, it encourages the students to research, investigate how and why things happens. It enhances problem solving skills and students make their own decisions about environmental issues.
4. State and national learning standards are multiple subjects through Environmental Education
5. Environmental Education involves youth in nature and it helps to remove some of the healthy issues we are seeing in children today, such as stress depression, obesity attention difficulty disorders
6. Environmental Education fasters sensitivity, appreciation and respect for environment in youth.
7. Environmental Education helps the students in developing the decision-making skills.
8. Environmental Education promotes active learning citizenship and student leadership. It empower the youth to share their voice and make a difference at their school and in their communities. Environmental Education helps teachers to build their own environmental knowledge and teaching skills.

Methodology

The survey methodology was used. Data was collected through fitting the questionnaire by the students participated in different Environmental Educational programs.

Analysis of Data

In this study, the researcher analysed data through the interaction and observation with the students, participated in different Environmental Educational programs, seminars and workshops and found that through some extra effort and hard work, support and proper guidance, the youth of our nation can do best in Environmental Education.

Recommendations

From the findings it is evident that this is not very difficult task to make aware the youth about their environment and to provide them Environmental Education in a better way. Teachers should have proper knowledge they can guide the youth properly. The following recommendations based on the findings of the investigation are offered for the development of the environmental ethics:

1. Environmental Education should be compulsory subject at school, college and university level.
2. Students should be motivated to participate in Environmental Educational programs to increase environmental awareness.
3. Measures should be taken to give importance to Environmental Education at school and college level.
4. Environmental Clubs and Eco Clubs should be established in all educational institutions as a compulsory component to make responsible the youth.
5. Awareness should be given to the youth about the usefulness of using eco-friendly products.
6. Speeches, discussions and debates should be conducted time to time at college and university level about current environmental issues.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to identify the effects of teaching Environmental Education on youth and how can Environmental Education provide a long-term Environmental Awareness. The aims and objectives were to create environment, changing the perception youth has on the environment.

Result should a significant increase in awareness among the youth. The study can be used as a resource for further research in the field of Environmental Education. In this study I found that all my significant results reside within the youth groups, results were limited based on the studies extremely small sample sizes. Analysis of significance become more difficult with a smaller sample size. The study could observe the similarities and differences in the children's perception of Environmental Education and Environmental Awareness.

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