

Environmental Education: Meaning, Importance and Scope.

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A. **MEANING OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:**

Environment is derived from the **French** word “**Environner**”, which means encircle or surrounding. Environment is a complex of many variables, which surrounds man as well as the living organisms. Environmental education describe the interrelationships among organisms, the environment and all the factors, which influence life on earth, including atmospheric conditions, food chains, the water cycle etc. It is a basic science about our earth and its daily activities, and therefore, this science is important for everyone.

B. **SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:**

Environmental education discipline has multiple and multilevel scopes. This study is important and necessary not only for children but also for everyone. The scopes are summarized as follows:

1. The study creates awareness among the people to know about various renewable and non-renewable resources of the region. The endowment or potential, patterns of utilization and the balance of various resources available for future use in the state of a country are analysed in the study.
2. It provides the knowledge about ecological systems and cause and effect relationships.
3. It provides necessary information about biodiversity richness and the potential dangers to the species of plants, animals and microorganisms in the environment.
4. The study enables one to understand the causes and consequences due to natural and induced disasters (flood, earthquake, landslide, cyclones etc) and pollutions and measures to minimize the effects.
5. It enables one to evaluate alternative responses to environmental issues before deciding an alternative course of action.
6. The study enables environmentally literate citizens (by knowing the environmental acts, rights, rules, legislations, etc.) to make appropriate judgments and decisions for the protection and improvement of the earth.

7. The study exposes the problems of over population, health, hygiene, etc. and the role of arts, science and technology in eliminating/ minimizing the evils from the society.
 8. The study tries to identify and develop appropriate and indigenous eco-friendly skills and technologies to various environmental issues.
 9. It teaches the citizens the need for sustainable utilization of resources as these resources are inherited from our ancestors to the younger generation without deteriorating their quality.
 10. The study enables theoretical knowledge into practice and the multiple uses of environment.
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C. Importance:

1. World population is increasing at an alarming rate especially in developing countries.
2. The natural resources endowment in the earth is limited.
3. The methods and techniques of exploiting natural resources are advanced.
4. The resources are over-exploited and there is no foresight of leaving the resources to the future generations.
5. The unplanned exploitation of natural resources lead to pollution of all types and at all levels.
6. The pollution and degraded environment seriously affect the health of all living things on earth, including man.
7. The people should take a combined responsibility for the deteriorating environment and begin to take appropriate actions to save the earth.
8. Education and training are needed to save the biodiversity and species extinction.
9. The urban area, coupled with industries, is major sources of pollution.
10. The number and area extinct under protected area should be increased so that the wild life is protected at least in these sites.

11. The study enables the people to understand the complexities of the environment and need for the people to adapt appropriate activities and pursue sustainable development, which are harmonious with the environment.

12. The study motivates students to get involved in community action, and to participate in various environment and management projects.

13. It is a high time to reorient educational systems and curricula towards these needs.

14. Environmental education takes a multidisciplinary approach to the study of human interactions with the natural environment.

15. Environmental study is a key instrument for bringing about the changes in the knowledge, values, behaviors and lifestyles required to achieve sustainability and stability within and among countries.