

**Dr. Dharam Singh**

### **Environmental Education**

Environmental Education refers to awareness of physical and cultural environment perceive its relevance for real life situations. All of them consider environment in its totality and highlight the need for developing favorable behaviours, knowledge, attitudes and skills for protecting and preserving the environment. Education in the environment and education about the environment create an awareness of the environment and education for environment helps to develop appropriate behaviors pertaining to environment. Environmental Education creates an awareness of the economic, social, political and ecological interdependence of the modern world so as to enhance a spirit of responsibility and solidarity among nations. Such awareness forms a pre-requisite for solving serious environmental problems.

**Importance of Environmental Education:** Environmental education is aimed at developing responsible action necessary for preservation, conservation and improvement of environment and its components.

1. It improves the quality of surrounding
2. It helps to improve the skills of solving problems related nature
3. It provides opportunity to interact with real life situation and to develop insight about it
4. It develops man power for managing, protecting, preserving and improving our environment.
5. It give idea about other sources of energy which are environmentally suitable

**Objectives of Environmental Education:** These were formulated to help social groups and individuals toward the following:

1. Awareness: i.e. acquire an awareness of and sensitivity to the total environment and its allied problems
2. Knowledge: i.e. gain a variety of experiences and acquire a basic understanding of the environment and its associated problems.
3. Altitude i.e. acquire a set of values and feelings of concern for the environment and the motivation for active participation in environmental important and protection.
4. Skill i.e. acquire skills for identifying and solving environmental problems
5. Evaluation ability i.e. evaluate environmental measures and education programmes in term of ecological, economic, social, aesthetic and educational factors
6. Participation i.e. provide an opportunity to be actively involved at all level in working towards the resolution of environmental problems

**Scope of Environmental Education:** scope of Environmental Education includes not only in imparting knowledge about environment but also in (1) developing positive attitudes, values and practices in students. (2) generating positive actions that will help improve the quality of the environment. (3)

promoting a conservation ethic and encourage adoption of environmentally responsible life styles. (4)  
creating a drive for greater involvement in the community oriented environmental programmes.

**Guiding Principles of Environmental Education:** The Tbilisi Conference (1977) conference recommended several principles to help guide efforts in developing and promoting Environmental Education at the national, regional and international levels. The International Conference on Environmental Education at Tbilisi in 1977 has made the following description of Environmental Education which has received wide acceptance internationally and it has proved to be useful for guiding environmental efforts and actions.

1. Environment should include all aspects of natural and man-made environments. It is a complex of natural, built and social components of the life of man. The social components constitute a set of cultural, moral, religious and personal values.
2. Environment should be viewed in its totality blurring political, cultural and physical boundaries since each affects others.
3. Interdisciplinary approach is best suitable for the study of environment and its interacting and inter-dependent parts.
4. Environmental Education should be a lifelong process.
5. Environmental Education should help individuals work for the development and utilization of natural resources with least destruction and pollution.
6. Environmental Education should help individuals to seek improvement of the quality of life for everyone by eradicating poverty, hunger, illiteracy, human exploitation and dominance.
7. It should help individuals utilize technology not only for self gain and a life of luxury in the short term but also for the survival of man – kind in the long term.
8. Environmental Education should begin with the local, current and most relevant environmental situations and issues and should move on to issues and situations that are national, regional and global in scope.
9. Experience through participation in real environmental situations makes greater impact. Hence local environmental problems are a good starting point for learning environmental attitudes and values.
10. Environmental Education should be regarded as a continuing process which involves constant renewal of the approach, content and methods resulting in knowledge appropriate to the changing conditions of the environment.
11. Environmental Education should cater to all ages and socio-professional groups of the population. It should be addressed to a) the general non-specialist public groups of young people and adults whose daily conduct has a decisive influence on the preservation and improvement of the environment. b) to particular social groups whose professional activities affect the quality of the environment and c) to scientists whose

specialized research and work provide knowledge based on which education, training and efficient management of environment should be based.

12. For providing effective Environmental Education, both public and private facilities available in the society must be utilized to the maximum extent possible

**Environmental Education Programs:** Environment education (EE) is a rapidly emerging and dynamic concept of education, which requires a new vision of empowering people about their nature and their role in conservation initiatives. It is now widely acknowledged that the EE is one of the effective conservation tools, which can play an important role in changing the behaviour of individuals. The Newman (1981) proposed a three fold classification of environmental education programs based on different disciplines

1. Environmental Science
2. Environmental studies
3. Environmental Engineering

#### I: Formal environmental education

- A) Primary School Stage
- B) Lower Secondary Stage
- C) Higher Secondary Stage
- D) Tertiary (College) Stage
- E) University Education
  - i) Environmental Engineering
  - ii) Conservation and management
  - iii) Environmental health
  - iv) Social ecology

#### II. Non-formal environmental education

- 1) Adult education
- 2) Rural youth and non student youth
- 3) Tribal / forest dwellers
- 4) Children activity
- 5) Eco-development camps
- 6) Non- governmental organization
- 7) Public representatives
- 8) Foundation courses