

EFFECT OF ENVIRONMENT AWARENESS AND HEALTH EDUCATION ON STUDENTS'

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ABSTRACT

Humanity's global population has grown fast, as is common knowledge. Technology and scientific progress can scarcely keep up with the burgeoning human population. Having more people needs more of everything, from oxygen to more food to more clothing. Similarly, they needed a greater number of educational institutions. Procuring even the barest essentials may be a major challenge. This is a factor in the overpopulation crisis. In the eyes of the well-to-do, the environment is an extraordinary concern. In the name of self-preservation, humans break natural cycles even when they aren't aware they're doing it. If this situation persists for several more years without a workable solution, it will be extremely challenging to avoid natural environment from deteriorating. Spreading knowledge about this issue among the general public is essential, and it must begin in the classroom. The future educators who are now in school will begin working as educators very soon. A student teacher may be an effective means of extinguishing concern for the environment and health among their students if given the duty of implementing programs to do so.

KEYWORDS: Environment Awareness, Health Education, Students, global population, natural cycles

INTRODUCTION

It is only on Earth that conditions are right for human life. A person's immediate surroundings have a significant impact on them. The damaged environment poses a serious threat to human existence since man is behaving as if he were master of the natural world by contaminating all natural components. Over use of limited resources, massive amounts of trash, acid rain, deforestation, desertification, global warming, ozone layer depletion, radiation, extinction of species, etc. are only some of the environmental challenges the globe currently faces. The largest health hazards of the 21st century are related to environmental pollution and climate change. Temperature increases and extreme weather events are a direct

cause of death, contribute to the spread of illness, and threaten environmental factors that contribute to good health including access to clean water and nutritious food (WHO, 2015). In 2012, 12.6 million individuals died as a direct result of being exposed to unsafe living or working conditions. Around the world, environmental dangers account for over a quarter of all deaths (WHO, 2016). More than a hundred different diseases and injuries may be traced back to environmental risk factors include air, water, and soil pollution, chemical exposures, climate change, and UV radiation. The South-East Asian area suffers from an estimated 3.8 million fatalities per year because of environmental catastrophes, according to a 2012 assessment by the World Health Organization. All of these indicators demonstrate that environmental degradation has become a serious threat to human health.

Both population expansion and environmental deterioration are happening at the same time in a country like India. This has led to extremely unsafe levels of pollution in India's priceless natural resources, such as its air, soil, and most of its rivers. "US-based institutes believe that India's rising air pollution caused roughly 1.1 million premature deaths in 2015," Mohan (2017) wrote in Times of India. According to Chan (2016), "A healthy environment is the foundation of a healthy population," and "if governments do not take efforts to make places where people live and work healthy, millions will continue to grow ill and die too young."

India has a total land area of over 1 billion acres, however almost 175 million of those acres (or 35%) are severely degraded. Construction, transportation, and manufacturing are just some of the developmental activities that put a strain on natural resources while also generating copious amounts of waste that ultimately contribute to air, water, soil, and ocean pollution, which in turn contributes to climate change and other environmental problems like acid rain. The contamination of waterways and environmental deterioration leading to health problems are both exacerbated by garbage that has not been adequately processed or disposed of. This is why environmental education is so important; it raises people's consciousness about the need of protecting the planet and stresses the idea that the natural world is a part of our shared cultural legacy that must be handled sustainably.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "health is a fundamental right of every human being" (2009). The right to health is only one of many human rights that may be advanced or undermined by the policies and programs enacted to achieve that goal.



The duty of the health sector to ensure the well-being of all people requires that it act in a way that respects and protects human rights. Poor living conditions and bad lifestyle choices are major contributors to the global health crisis. Knowledge is the basis for action, as it alters one's outlook and, in turn, their Behaviour.

Because of their increased importance, schools and their instructors bear a greater burden in ensuring the long-term viability of the next generation. A thorough familiarity with environmental factors such as air, water, soil, atmosphere, and seasonal fluctuations are essential to human sustainability.

Having a critical attitude toward the environment is crucial, and so is engaging in eco-friendly Behaviour, which ultimately benefits human health. To instil in students the significance of a healthy environment and the effects of a poor environment on human health, teachers and environmental educators play a crucial role.

With his background in education, the researcher picked as his topic the "Effectiveness of Environment Connected Health Education Module on Awareness, Attitude, and Behaviour of College Students," reflecting his appreciation for the connection between environmental and human health.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

To better understand the environment and the problems it faces, to acquire the knowledge, skills, and expertise to deal with those problems, and to cultivate the attitudes, motivations, and commitments necessary to make educated decisions and take responsible action — all of these are the goals of environmental education (UNESCO, 1978). Environmental education, on the other hand, is the process by which people become more attuned to their surroundings and obtain the information, understanding, attitudes, and motivation to address both current and future environmental challenges.

This leads to people having a better grasp of environmental challenges and the ability to make educated, ethical choices. The goal of environmental education is to help people achieve their immediate needs without jeopardizing the quality of life for future generations.

NEED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION



Learning and growth toward one's full potential are important goals of education. Yet, "environmental education" is a catch-all term that encompasses not just the natural but also the social, built, transport, cultural, etc. environments. The program's ultimate goal is to cultivate a population of individuals who are well-versed in issues pertaining to the biophysical environment, who are prepared to contribute to the solution of these issues, and who are inspired to do so (Stapp, 1969). Lack of familiarity with fundamental ecological truths has contributed to the rapid degradation of our planet's natural resources. Humans are mostly to blame for this disaster. The impact is felt on a worldwide and regional scale. Hence, we alone are responsible for making amends for our own wrongdoing. It's crucial to have a solid environmental education in order to conserve and manage the environment. The next generation may learn how to solve the underlying problems that are causing pollution in their communities through environmental education. Everyone must do their part to keep the planet safe. Hence, environmental education must reach as many people as possible. Saving the planet is going to need the effort of every single person. According to Malebye (2005), "a programme for Environmental education which draws on the curriculum will give learners the opportunity to consider environmental issues from the physical, geographical, biological, sociological, economic, political, technological, aesthetical, ethical, and spiritual perspective" (emphasis added). So, learning about any subject may lead to new insights about human Behaviour and its effects on the natural world.

ROLE OF TEACHER IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Helping to solve environmental problems on a local, national, and international scale, educators may play a crucial role in disseminating environmental education and raising environmental consciousness. The environmental education program has to have the backing of the teaching community, who should be motivated to see it through and committed to its aims. They need to teach children about the causes, effects, and solutions to environmental challenges like climate change, global warming, solid waste, and pollution. Teachers, on the other hand, need to shoulder a heavy burden of responsibility if they are to be effective in their mission to raise students' environmental consciousness. It is crucial that educators have enough knowledge of environmental ideas and practices before passing such knowledge on to students. Teachers need to know what they're doing, know how to teach it, and have the resources at their disposal to ensure that their students develop a healthy respect for and appreciation of the natural world. There is a tremendous deal of duty on the shoulders of

teachers and other environmental educators to impart knowledge about environmental contamination and how to combat it.

ENVIRONMENT RELATED HEALTH EDUCATION

The concept of environmental health refers to the state of a person's health as it relates to their surroundings, including the physical, chemical, and biological elements (WHO, 2015). Learning about the environment, environmental pollution, and health issues and how to prevent them is an important part of a well-rounded health education. The phrase "environmental health" refers to the state of people's bodies and the incidence of sickness that are both affected by their surroundings (WHO, 1999). Environmental health also includes the study and management of the many external elements that can have an impact on human health. Landon (2006) further explains that "the environmental health highlights the connection between the state of the environment and the health experiences of individuals and communities" and "the relationship between human activities and the environment has the potential to either impair or improve health". The goal of environment-based health is to reduce or eliminate the incidence of illness, injury, and disability as a result of people's interactions with their surroundings.

When it comes to human health and illness, environmental health is the branch of study that examines the many ways in which the natural world may play a role. This definition of "environment" encompasses not only the natural environment, including the air, water, and soil, but also the built environment, including buildings and infrastructure, as well as the biological and social components of the community. The most well-known of them are the initiatives taken to guarantee wholesome and hazard-free eating, drinking, breathing, and living situations. Finally, the gap between environmental knowledge and health Behaviour is bridged through environment-related health education.

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Principles for environmental education were developed during the Tbilisi Conference. Given this, it is clear that environmental education should:

1. Think of the environment as a whole, not just the natural and constructed, but also the technical and social aspects (economic, political, cultural, historical, moral, aesthetic).

2. Be an on-going activity that begins in early childhood and continues through entire schooling and adult life.
3. Make use of knowledge from a variety of fields to provide a more complete picture of the issue at hand.
4. In order to provide pupils a better understanding of environmental situations in different parts of the world, it is important to look at significant environmental concerns from a variety of perspectives, including those at the local, national, regional, and international levels.
5. In order to solve environmental concerns, it is essential that people from all levels of government work together.
6. Include environmental considerations in your growth and development goals.
7. Give students agency over their education by letting them participate in curriculum design and giving them chances to choose and own the consequences of their own choices.
8. Think about the future of the environment, keeping in mind the lessons of the past.
9. Emphasize environmental sensitivity to the learner's own community in the early years, and continue to emphasize environmental knowledge, problem-solving abilities, and the clarity of values throughout the learner's life.
10. Guide students in identifying environmental issues and their root causes.
- 11 Stress the importance of learning to think critically and solving problems, since both are essential in tackling the complex issues facing the environment today.
12. Use a variety of settings and pedagogical techniques to teaching and learning about and from the natural world, with an emphasis on hands-on, experiential learning.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this research was to examine the impact of a health education module on college students' knowledge, perspective, and actions about environmental issues. The health of individuals, communities, and ecosystems may be safeguarded via teaching students about environmental crises and encouraging them to engage in environmental hygiene. Human



actions have caused several environmental concerns that pose grave risks to the well-being of people and all other forms of life (Gore, 1993). Lack of information and attitude about environmental factors and their impacts on health may contribute to unhealthy environment-related health Behaviour of people. Hence, it's crucial that we educate the public by instilling environmentally responsible habits in the minds of tomorrow's leaders. Students are the nation's future, thus teaching them means teaching society. This is something they take into their own sphere. This, in turn, may encourage their parents to adopt healthier routines. As Newham (2005) puts it, "one can never disregard the power of the children to influence their parents," thus it's crucial to focus on their education first. Because of this, studying these students is crucial for determining how well an environmental health education module has impacted their knowledge, outlook, and actions.

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