


Chapter 11

Foundations of Sustainability Education: Concepts and Contexts

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable education is about assisting the human beings to acquire knowledge, skills, as well as values through which they can effectively contribute to shaping a sustainable future. In sustainable education, key areas like climate change, biodiversity, and environmental protection are considered. Education institutions have been promoting the concept of sustainable education as it helps the students to develop knowledge about the community along with the ways to maintain it. The present study emphasizes integrating sustainability into education along with the initiatives which schools have taken in order to contribute to a sustainable society. Conducting secondary research, it has been found out that education institutions are focusing on emerging trends in sustainability education, and they use those aspects while developing policies and frameworks.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-2987-0.ch011

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INTRODUCTION

Sustainability education has gained immense popularity in today's changing world as it plays an important role in shaping the mindset of students which in turn develop their understanding about environmental challenges. In education sector, environmental education is crucial as it teaches and empowers the students to make informed decisions and actions that can positively contribute to making a sustainable future (Harahap, MSuherlan, Rijal & Ausat, 2023). The concept of sustainability education emphasizes typically on environmental protection, economic development as well as social equity. Teaching about sustainability helps the students to learn skills and develop attitude where they can connect with the global systems and comprehend the importance of environmental development. In the domain of education, the concept of sustainability helps in addressing varied challenges related to biodiversity, climate change as well as depletion of natural resources. Teachers as well as educators believe that nurturing the sense of environmental responsibility can empower the students to become better citizens where they can actively contribute to developing greener future (Okada & Gray, 2023).

It is important to understand the impact of human actions on planet; therefore, considering this the concept of sustainability education has been introduced in education sector. Henfrey *et al.*, (2023) in this context says that one of the primary objectives of implementing sustainability education is to promote responsible consumption as well as production patterns. It is essential for the people to understand and become aware about sustainable choices and how it impacts people's daily lives. The knowledge and awareness about sustainability not only helps in reducing wastage but also it supports eco-friendly business that develops more sustainable lifestyle. On the other hand, the concept of sustainability education also cultivates critical thinking and problem-solving skills which engages the learners and individuals in real-world sustainability challenges; hence, this aids them to explore innovative solutions for overall environmental benefit (Abulibdeh, Zaidan & Abulibdeh, 2024).

Another important aspect of sustainability is developing equity, diversity and social justice. The concept fosters inclusivity and equality wherein all individuals are treated equally with respect. Thus, incorporating the concept of equality in schools helps the students to learn about equality. Alongside, focus on sustainability education promotes sustainable leaders who can address global sustainability issues and bring positive changes in the world (Rauch, Glettler, Steiner & Dulle, 2023). The schools are incorporating sustainability curriculum because it prepares the students for the emerging green job market. It not only develops practical skills and knowledge but also it equips the individuals to bring positive impact in sectors such as renewable energy, sustainable agriculture as well as environmental conservation (Heald, Lengyel & Wolpert, 2023). Hence, the present research is attempted to describe the concept

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