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Role of Hig-Her Education in Environment Conservation and Sustainable Development: A Dossier of Vsc-Atmiya Campus, Gujarat, India

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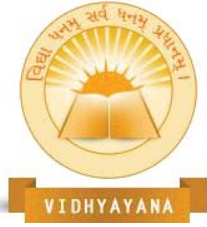
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Abstract:

Humanity can achieve sustainable development by meeting present needs without compromising ability of future generations, as outlined in the transformative Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Sustainable Development Goals call for ending poverty and inequality, protecting the planet, and ensuring health, justice, and prosperity for all, emphasizing the importance of leaving no one behind, despite environmental degradation and pollution not being widely recognized as urgent public concerns. Society must realize the urgency of addressing environmental degradation for sustainable development, achieving human development goals requires balancing the ecosystem with human desires, and every individual should take personal responsibility for environmental conservation. The Government of India vision to transform India into a developed nation by its 100th year of independence in 2047, thereby this observation providing a platform for environmental sustainability. Higher education plays a crucial role, not only through educational legislation but also in shaping attitudes toward sustainable development on a large scale. With social responsibility and active contributions, higher education is essential for promoting



sustainable development and inspiring the use of alternative energy sources, contributing to making the world a better place to live. This observation explores the role of higher education in promoting sustainable development. It aims to deliberate on environmental issues related to sustainable development and seeks strategies for higher education to engage students and society in the sustainable development process.

Keywords: Environment conservation and sustainable development, Higher education, Environment science.

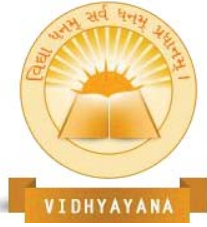
INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions were involved in research and environmental problem solving lately, but in recent years their efforts had quadrupled and have taken the initiative to provide different programs through which students can learn more. Universities recently have been working on SDGs and MDGs within these environments, and clean water and sanitation are the most important subjects to focus on.

Governments in numerous countries actively support sustainability in higher education, fostering a more profound integration of sustainable values within various disciplines and professions. This reflects a significant reform in the educational landscape. (Jadhav et al., 2014).

The global distribution of education for sustainability is uneven, highlighting geographic disparities that must be addressed through increased efforts worldwide. Closing these gaps is crucial to ensure equal access and opportunity for sustainable education across all regions (Samuelsson and Park, 2017; Nagendra et al., 2018).

Thousands of students have availed from exchange programs within universities to share the same concerns and work on unique environmental issues related to a specific region of the world. This paper aims to assess higher education systems' effectiveness and indoor and outdoor education's importance in promoting environmental protection. Furthermore, the role of Shri M & N Virani Science College (Autonomous) and Atmiya University, Rajkot are



assessed through a survey to observe the efficiency of environmental education in this campus.

Role of higher education environment conservation and sustainable development: Virani-Atmiya Campus (VAC)

The environmental studies include a wide variety of forms including PPT and lectures with electronic media like television, radio, newspapers and short films. Contemporary society exhibits deep dependency on export resources for creates environment awareness. It is a well known fact that awareness programme has an immense power to shape the Role of people in reconstruction of reality. People develop shared constructions of reality through environmental studies. The environmental studies provided interpretations of certain issues have a deep and far reaching impact on the masses.

The environmental studies have the key power to push various issues into the public domain. It is the need of the hour that sustainable development is given priority by the awareness. Lack of environmental studies coverage of issues pertaining to sustainable development in the mainstream news reinforces the attitude that environmental degradation is a fact of life rather than a human error, rather than an issue which should be considered on priority basis and solutions found to conserve environment. Any effort on sustainable development cannot be successful without effective student's participation and social alteration.

An environmental study is a powerful tool which can model powerful social regional changes. There are many international organizations and non-governmental organizations who have taken up the issue of sustainable development to create greater awareness among people but a lot needs to be done. People are raising their voice against environmental degradation but a task of this magnitude can only be accomplished with the active participation of environmental resources. The solution for preserving the environment lies in change in attitudes and perceptions regarding increasing consumerism and changes in lifestyle which lay emphasis on reuse and recycle principles. It is essential to develop awareness against consumerist culture and variations in terms of consumption should be reduced in order to scale down diversified demands on limited resources.



An environmental study is a powerful and pervasive tool which can act as a catalyst for changes in the current paradigm of development. The environmental study tools must give prominent exposure to issues concerning conservation of environment. Many legislations and policies have been framed for environment conservation, but policies do not work without attitude change in society. Policy changes have to be accompanied by deep commitment towards changing attitudes if meaningful transformation is required.

The environmental study holds a pivotal and constructive role in promoting sustainable development by actively disseminating information and framing it as an urgent issue requiring intervention. A crucial aspect involves motivating society members to actively combat environmental pollution. The studies should prioritize programs and articles that enhance general awareness about the environment and advocate for measures crucial to its preservation. By leveraging its reach and influence, the environmental study can foster a collective commitment to sustainable practices and environmental stewardship. Recognizing the importance of a global and integrated approach, effective environmental study intervention must be acknowledged as a key strategy for sustainable development.

Higher education institutions can provide their assistance in regards to promoting environmental safety through the followings:

- Curriculum
- Fieldwork/Practical work/Assignment
- Collaboration with society and industry

OBJECTIVES:

Here are the environmental studies objectives as highlighted by

☞ Create awareness

☞ Explore knowledge

☞ Attitude towards nature

☞ Skill development

☞ Capacity building framing

☞ Participation and action



METHODOLOGY:

This is a case study which is depending on qualitative analysis. Here, case study explore in depth of program run by Shri M & N Virani Science College (Autonomous) and Atmiya University campus (VAC). So, different events activities and process are bound by time and schedules. So, here be present collection of detail information using verities of data collection, procedure the sustain period of time accordingly.

Following activities are tools of methodology.

1. Group discussion on pollution issues, waste management and conservation of forest
2. Theme based poster presentation
3. Street plantation
4. Plantation on campus and field
5. Workshop on kitchen gardening, terrace gardening, hydroponics, vertical gardening, bird nest distribution in society
6. Guest lecture on different environmental day celebration
7. Environment study tour

OBSERVATION AND RESULT:

The Shri M & N Virani Science College (Autonomous) and Atmiya University, Rajkot provides adequate research space for students and encourages the students and faculties to work on contemporary issues. The campus was established in 1967. However, today it has 21 departments with 3540 students. Dossiers are followed as per methodology.

Virani-Atmiya Campus (VAC), Rajkot, Gujarat			
YEAR	DOSSIER	PARTICIPATION	PLACE
2017	Ghanishth Vruksha Ropoan	100+ students and 20 Dignitaries	Aji Dam Smruti Van
2017	Awareness program for waste management	02 students + 70 participant	Vagudad Village, Rajkot District



2018	Distribution of Bird Nest	55	Virani Science College and Atmiya Campus
2018	Tree Plantation in Society	12 Students +08 Society member	Ramkrushna Nagar, Rajkot
2018	Hands on training on Kitchen Garden for Society	58 students	Hands on training on Kitchen Garden for Society, Rajkot
2018	Visit MET Office & ATC tower at AAI Rajkot	48 students + 05 faculty	Rajkot Airport
2018	Poster presentation on Environment Them	300 + students	VSC -Atmiya campus, Rajkot
2020	International Environment Day	120 Students	Virani Science College, Rajkot
2020	Visit medicinal garden for study of plant diversity	120 students	VSC -Atmiya campus botanical garden, Rajkot
2021	Guest talk	112 students	Virani Science College
2022	Exhibition - Biological specimen for study Biodiversity	200+ students	VSC square
2023	Terrarium Activity- Go Green Concept	50 students	Virani Science College, Rajkot
2023	Visit NIRAMAY for Terrace gardening	500 + students	VSC -Atmiya campus, Rajkot
2023	Excursion for Hydroponics & Vertical farming	500 + Students	VSC -Atmiya campus, Rajkot

Distribution of bird nest and hanging nest for birds



Tree plantation in society



Guest talk



Awareness program for waste management





International Environment Day



Terrarium



Hands on training on Kitchen Garden for Society



Visit MET Office & ATC tower at AAI Rajkot





Field visit



CONCLUSION:

The issues of environmental degradation and pollution have not yet become a matter of grave public concern. It is high time that the society realizes that urgent and adequate measures are required to be taken to check environmental degradation and educational concepts that are necessary to achieve the objectives of sustainability. This has resulted in new concepts of education, especially higher education, which is reflected in an innovative and interactive learning process that is based on the aim of strengthening critical thinking that allows the use of case studies as learning methods. Human development goals can be achieved only by ensuring a proper balance between the ecosystem and desires of mankind. As higher education system – VSC and Atmiya Campus play an important role along with different educational activities attitudes towards environment conservation and sustainable development (ECSD). The higher education – institutional activities has social responsibility and active contribution of educational learning media is essential for promoting sustainable development and motivating students to use alternative sources of energy so that we can make this world a better place to live.

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