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EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY: PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS AND PRACTICES IN URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF MYSORE

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Abstract

Sustainable development requires a change in the way people think and act. Even though many educational methods are available, sustaining sustainability in the classroom and school campus is still a challenge. Stakeholders such as school administration, teachers, students, parents and community have key roles to initiate and maintain sustainability. The presented study is qualitative in nature to explore and understand teachers' perception and opinion on various educational strategies and methods practiced by them. Teachers of private primary school of Mysore were the respondents of the study. Teachers were interviewed using a structured interview schedule. It has covered various approaches of education imparted by teachers and views of teachers on promotion of students' skills and execution of project based learning. The study found inappropriate understanding of sustainability concept among the teachers. The execution, facilitation and assessment strategies of project based activities in schools were not linked to sustainability concept properly.

Key Words: Education, Sustainability, Project based learning, Learning activities, Teaching approaches.

Introduction

Bringing sustainability approach in development programmes is a challenge before contemporary society. Although science and technology and financial bodies are providing basis for development but sustainable development requires a change in the way people think and act. To bring change in people's attitude and action, it is essential to integrate education sustainable development in all levels from early childhood to higher education, workplace learning and even in technical and vocational education and training. Education for sustainable development can help everyone to acquire the values, skills and knowledge needed to build a sustainable future (UNESCO, 2012). Decade of Education for sustainable development (DESD)'s goal is to "integrate the principles, values, and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning" (UNESCO, 2005). UK's 'Learning and Skills Council' (LSC, 2005) considers sustainable development as the heart of all learning. Stressing on importance of education for sustainable development, LSC mentions the need for all learner to acquire skills that will make them able to lead their lives and work in a sustainable way. Education for sustainable development includes a range of environment and social skills. A report by UNESCO (2005b) discussed the skills need of young people which included cognitive, reflective, self-management and social skills. These skills are necessary in all four pillars of education; learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and with others and learning to be.

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