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**Dr. Vineeta Rana**  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Education,  
Noida College of Physical  
Education, Dhoom Manikpur,  
G.B Nagar, Uttar Pradesh,  
India

## Global issues of sustainable development

**Dr. Vineeta Rana**

### Abstract

Education is one of the best inventions of human beings. Education is a super highway for achieving nation goal of socioeconomic development. It is only through a sound educational system that a nation can create educated man power for its social construction. Higher education plays a vital role by providing outreach and service to communities and nations. In this way it is continuous effort of the educational institutions to develop values among students to make their future life more successful. Sustainability is possible if our education system is able to fulfill desires of society. Teaching and learning for sustainable future will enable teachers to plan learning experiences that empower their students to evaluate alternative visions of a sustainable future. Sustainable development is the organizing principle for meeting human development goals while simultaneously sustaining the ability of natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services based upon which economy and society depends. Therefore we need preservation of natural resources, protection for environment and the improvement of quality of life for our people.

**Keywords:** sustainable development, global issues, ecosystem, social issues, economical issues

### Introduction

As stated in Sustainable Development Education Panel 1999, P.11., our vision is a world where there are many opportunities to learn about sustainable development. A world where skilled population makes informed decisions in community and working lives and in their leisure activities; where people understand the impact, they have on other people's quality of life.

The world commission of Environment and Development published a report "Our Common Future" wherein they described sustainable development as development that meets our present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and desires. It is possible to have development without harming the environment. In this way sustainable development is defined as a development that continues forever or is long lasting. It is also defined as a regularly maintained development. Sustainable Development is largely thought to have three components: society, environment and economy. The wellbeing of areas mentioned above is intertwined and not separate. For instance, a healthy and a prosperous society relies on a healthy environment to provide food and resources, safe drinking water and clean air to its citizens.

Education and learning create necessary and beneficial conditions for all people to make a common effort to meet the challenged that face the world today. A fundamental principle of sustainable development is the idea of everyone's involvement and commitment towards local and global discussion on our common future, which gives democracy a central role in education of sustainable development. It is providing opportunities for learners to participate in democratic discussions about what is important to them personally and for society in the future.

### Understanding sustainable development

Following the Brundtland Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1992 Earth Summit, Rio De Janeiro accelerated the process of awakening the world to the urgency of sustainable development and secured the beginnings of a process of international cooperation on development and environmental issues. Among several historical documents signed at Rio, one was Agenda 21 through which many countries committed themselves in promoting sustainability through a great variety of means,

**Corresponding Author:**  
**Dr. Vineeta Rana**  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Education,  
Noida College of Physical  
Education, Dhoom Manikpur,  
G.B Nagar, Uttar Pradesh,  
India

including education. /the entire chapter 36 Agenda 21 is dedicated to education as “Education is important for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environmental and developmental issues”. Education of sustainable development should be intended at empowering learners with the ability and the desire to work towards addressing sustainable development locally and globally.

### **Global issues of sustainable development**

A holistic view of sustainable development sees it no less than a process of change guided by several values and principles. In this process a view of sustainable development is embedded, for example, in ‘caring for the Earth’, a strategic plan for a sustainable future prepared by a consortium of the world’s leading environmental organisation IUCN, The World Conservation Union, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in 1991. ‘Caring for the Earth’ largely focused on the process of ‘living sustainably’ defining it as “a form of development that provides with real improvements in the quality of human life and along with that conserves the vitality and diversity of the Earth. The aim is development that meets these needs in a sustainable way. Living sustainably means a duty to seek harmony with people and with nature around you. The guiding rules are that people must share with each other and care for the Earth. Humanity must take no more from nature than nature can replenish. This means adopting lifestyles and development paths that respect nature and work within its limits. It can be done without rejecting many benefits that modern technology has brought, on condition that technology also work within those limits.” (IUCN, UNEP and WWF 1991 p.8)

People are a part of nature and depend utterly on her. We should respect nature at all times as nature is our life. To respect nature means to have an approach towards nature with humility, care and compassion; to be frugal and efficient in resources use; to be directed by the best available knowledge, both traditional and scientific and to help and to support public policies that promote sustainability. We should preserve the complexity of ecosystems to safeguard the survival of all species and the preserving of their habitats. We should take extra care of our natural resources; the environment should be treated carefully and sustainably and we should cooperate to restore the degraded ecosystems. We should treat all creatures amiably and protect them from cruelty and avoidable suffering.

Forests represent quite a unique situation in terms of global environment issues. Geographically, they are located within the boundaries of sovereign states, yet their environmental role extends beyond their borders, that is, at both transboundary and regional as well as global levels. Sustainable development and Conservation of all types of forests(worldwide) have now emerged as priority items on the international policy agenda, particularly in the context of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) to be held in Brazil in June 1992. It is essential to understand the evolution of the structure and content of international deliberations on forests, the shifts in our values and the consequent impact on the forestry practices. The forestry and scientific communities are face numerous challenges of defining sustainable forest

development, formulating a conceptual framework and establishing internationally acknowledged criteria and approaches for the practice of sustainable forest development that will help to meet multiple human needs.

### **Social issues for sustainable development**

Education acts as the most powerful tool for moving nations, communities and households towards a more sustainable future. The relationship between environment and development can be established as an art of education. People must be made aware of the importance of cleanliness, disposal of waste materials, plastic materials, nurturing of kitchen garden, care for plants and pets etc. and should realise the need for their participation and cooperation. We must also enhance people’s intellectual, emotional and resilience quotients for sustainable development. It is not only helpful to achieve an improved overall level of human health, but it also necessary that people must be made aware of their special responsibility to protect nature. We must help to foster values which promote harmonious relationships between human beings, their society and nature. Sustainable development requires a system of lifelong learning and education. People must develop harmony with nature and environmentally friendly habits. Higher education institutions play a crucial role not only in shaping the future by educating the professionals of tomorrow but also by creating a research base for sustainability efforts and by providing outreach and service to communities and nations.

### **Economical issues for sustainable development**

We need quality education for all so that every citizen can participate in the selection of the suitable path for the sustainable development of their communities and their county. It is not denied that the present human lifestyle involving appropriation of natural resources, indiscriminate energy consumption, exponential population growth, an inappropriate technology etc are too vulgar, irrational unbalanced and unsustainable. If we go on being as destructive and as greedy as we have been, we will soon find ourselves freezing or stifling, starving in teaming warrens on a plundered and polluted planet. Economic growth of this enormous magnitude will undoubtedly have for reaching environmental consequences by stretching the planet earth beyond the enduring capacity. Indeed, the association between economic growth and environmental protection is not so simple. They do interact but, in a system, which is both natural and man-made. The concept sustainable development stresses. It also goes further in asserting that the future is uncertain unless we can deal with issues of equity and inequality throughout the whole world. Inequities in the allocation of wealth between the developed and developing countries have led to uneven development and uneven development is not compatible with sustainable development. So, sustainability cannot be secured unless and until developmental policies pay attention to consideration of equity such as access to resources and the distribution of environment. Sustainability refers to the maintenance of environmental capacities throughout the world. It cannot allow one environment say in the North to be preserved over time by the simple expedient of exploiting resources in or exporting pollution to another area, such as the South.

**Environmental issues for sustainable development**

Sustainable use of biodiversity is considered today to be essential for sustainable social and economic development. It is possible to have development without damaging the environment. To ensure sustainable development, the depletion of our renewable resources should not take place at a rate faster than their regeneration. World organisations have realized that economic development cannot succeed unless enough attention is given to the natural environment in activities and planning. We should develop certain technological aspects which have minimal environmental hazards in order to uphold the environment for future generations. It is also important to note that sustainable development is closely linked to the carrying capacity of an ecosystem. So, these developments should prevent further damage to our life support systems like air, water, land forests. It should also conserve and nurture the biological diversity and other resources for long term food security. It is our duty to deliver future generations with the same environmental potential as presently exists. We should integrate environmental, social and economic sectors when developing sustainability policies. People should manage economic growth to be less resource intensive and less polluting. They should maintain and enhance the adaptive capacity of the environmental system. People and communities should investigate problems and develop new solutions for preventing irreversible long-term damage in ecosystems and human health. It is higher education's responsibility to foster among students the skill and attitudes that will allow all people, present and future, to have fairly adequate and equitable access to the earth's resources, have a decent quality of life preserve the biologically diverse ecosystem on which we all depend.

**Conclusion**

Education relating to sustainable development should be based on an integrated approach to global, social, economic and environmental development. Teachers play a critical role in enhancing education for sustainable development. All teachers need to be educated and involved in learning for sustainable development. There are over 70 million teachers in the world and each one is key agent for bringing about the changes in system we need. For this reason, innovative teacher education is an important part of education for sustainable future. Education for sustainability will enable students to develop a personal critique of society and produce graduates who are ideologically aware and socially critical. If students comprehend sustainability as an aspect of their social and ethical responsibility, they will have the capacity to facilitate the development of activities that will provide sustainability rather than accelerating degradation.

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