

EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: AN EVALUATION OF THE NEW CURRICULUM OF THE FORMAL PRIMARY EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

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Abstract

The social purposes of education are long term and oriented towards the construction and maintenance of a sustainable future. Primary education must receive a special attention in developing nations because it plays a vital role in fostering basic intellectual abilities such as literacy that are crucial to success. In Bangladesh the newly introduced curriculum of the primary education is a step ahead to achieve the vision of education for sustainable development. Thus the paper tries to find out what are the prospects of the new curriculum of primary education in Bangladesh as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and its relative problems as well. The paper also tries to find out what necessary measures to be taken to make an effective ESD curriculum for primary education in Bangladesh.

Keywords: ESD, primary education, curriculum

Introduction

Education is one of the key elements of human asset. It is also one of the principal sources of increased economic growth, development and enhanced welfare of an individual and a household in the process of economic transformation. Increased labor productivity, effective use of land and other physical assets, and improved socio-economic empowerment are three important routes through which education can contribute to economic development. On the other hand, education can also lessen the burden of poverty — one estimate for Bangladesh reveals that households without any formal education have about six time higher poverty incidence than those who have access to education (Rahman, Kabir, and Alam, 2005).

Because of all this, educational attainment is considered to be the most important indicator of development. Right to education is a fundamental human right. However, the importance of primary education cannot be overstated because it creates the literacy base of a nation (Rahman et al, 2003). Therefore, in most developed countries primary education is considered to be more important than higher education. In all the least developed countries including Bangladesh, it is also considered to be an important element of social progress and economic development. Primary education has been made universal and compulsory, and there is a large-scale national campaign for enrolling all school-aged children at primary educational institutions.

Education is a life-long process for the betterment of human well-being. Education for sustainable development (ESD) is fundamentally about the links between the awareness of the human as a whole in the nature and its supporting social systems and the health of the planet which we inhabit with responsibilities of present and future world. Amartya Sen to group of educationalist in New Delhi on 2 January 1999 said “In developing nations, a plan for sustainable development must address the issue of primary education because it plays a significant role not only in expanding further educational opportunities, but also in fostering basic intellectual abilities such as literacy that are crucial to success in a world where power is closely linked with knowledge”.

A number of researches (UNESCO, 1984; Tietjen, 2003; BANBEIS, 2005; Rahman, Kabir, and Alam, 2005; TIB, 2008; Rabbi, 2008; UNICEF, 2009) have been done on primary education which identifies several challenges of primary education in Bangladesh. A very few (Chowdhury, 2005; Shohel, 2006; Stanfield, 2010) have been done on primary education which identifies several challenges of the curriculum of formal education to be effective for implementing education for sustainable development in Bangladesh. But the new curriculum of the primary level as introduced in 2013 has given us an optimism to achieve the vision of education for sustainable development.

Objectives

The paper tries to find out what are the prospects of the new curriculum of formal primary education in Bangladesh as Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and the relative problems of structuring and placing it in the national curriculum. Hence, the study has been implemented with the following objectives:

1. To find out what are the prospects of the new curriculum of primary education in Bangladesh that reflects Education for Sustainable Development.
2. To identify what are the relative problems of structuring and placing Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the national curriculum of the primary education in Bangladesh.
3. To find out what necessary measures to be taken to make an effective ESD curriculum for primary education in Bangladesh.

Methodology

The present study is an exploratory one and aims to respond to the research questions of qualitative nature. In this study, the following methods of exploratory research are used:

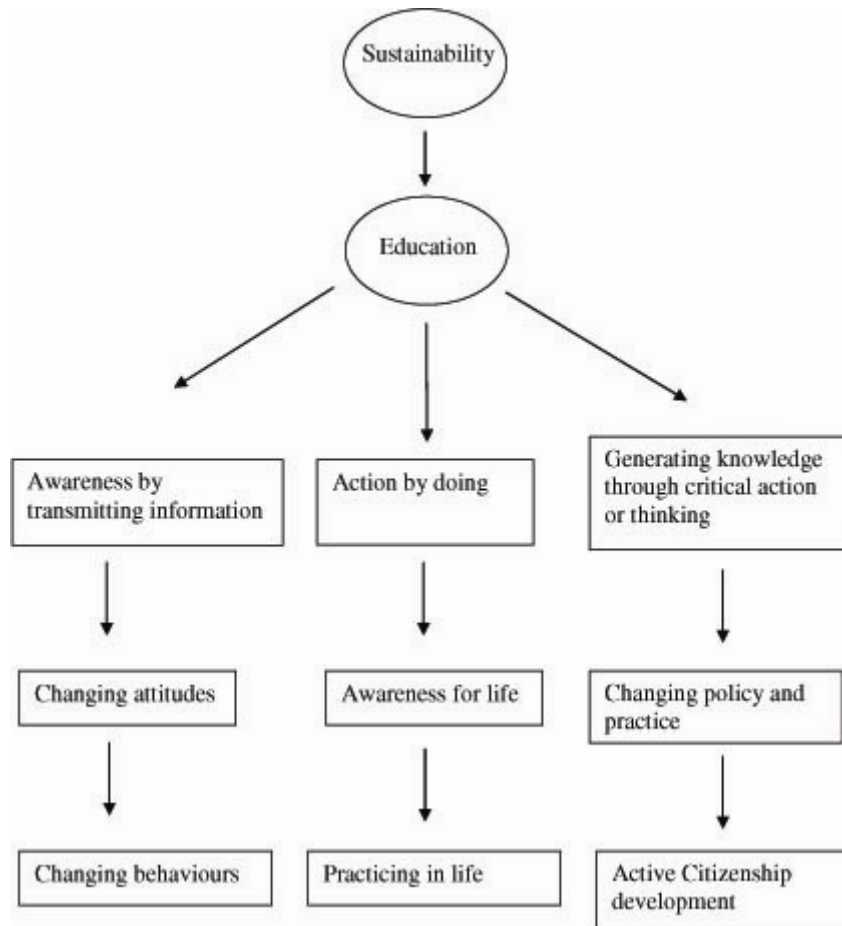
1. Secondary data analysis
2. Content Analysis

Sustainable development and education

Education is the key to any sustainable development program - “Education ... should be recognized as a process by which human beings and societies can reach their fullest potential. Education is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address the environment and development issues” (UNCED 1992: Agenda 21).

How can education play a role in promoting sustainable development (SD)? Different theories (Shohel and Howes, 2006) have been used, implicitly or explicitly, in answering this question, and we can group them into three main models:

1. education about sustainable development;
2. education for sustainable development;
3. critical education towards sustainable development



ESD Model (Source: Shohel, 2006)

In brief, the first model, education about sustainable development, provides awareness which generates changes in attitude and then in behavior. The second model, education for sustainable development, focuses on actions which change attitudes and build awareness for life and then so develop lifelong practice. The third model, critical education towards sustainable development, emphasizes generating knowledge through critical action, and the development of active and critical citizenship. (Wikipedia)

Primary education in Bangladesh

Primary education has been a priority in Bangladeshi politics since independence from Pakistan in 1971. Though initially the scenario was bleak; after the 1990 World Conference on Education for All (WCEFA) the primary education programs in Bangladesh dramatically improved (BANBEIS, 2005). Following this conference, donors in Bangladesh invested in the education sector much more heavily and NGOs increased their involvement in assisting Bangladesh government in meeting its primary education goals. (BANBEIS, 2005)

Later Bangladesh became one of the signatories to the UN Millennium Declaration in 2000, and has committed to eight Millennium Development Goals that asserts a vision for the 21st century (Burns et al, 2003:23). Bangladesh also promised to implement the MDGs roadmap by 2015. The MDG-2 targets for ‘Achieving Universal Primary Education’ are claimed to be on track in Bangladesh, showing remarkable achievements in terms of net enrollment rate in primary education 73.7% in 1992 to 87% in 2005 and primary education completion 42.5% in 1992 to 83.3% in 2004 (Titumir, 2005:120).

The Role of formal education in sustainable development

Formal education is provided for the majority of children and young people in Bangladesh. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is 96 per cent according to World Bank statistics; Bangladesh has increased public spending on education by more than 50 per cent since 1990 and spends 45.1 per cent of it on primary levels. In this way formal education is making a significant contribution to achievement of universal primary education and to the Millennium Development Goals.

However, in terms of sustainability, the picture is not satisfactory. Researches (Shohel & Howes, 2006) show that the formal education represents the model of education about sustainability; the results of which are rarely implemented in real life. Instead, this model emphasizes the theoretical aspects of knowledge. Education in this form is often influenced by a political agenda based on and supporting the power of central state institutions. In most cases, the curriculum and organization of the school is not based on a democratic process; rather the school is run by powerful people for weak subordinates. As a consequence, the formal school system finds it difficult to adapt to changing priorities, or to experiment with alternative approaches.

The curriculum of formal primary and high school education in Bangladesh is highly centralized. An USAID report (2002) says:

‘A critical feature of the formal school system- at least at the primary level- is the lack of input from the broad education sector, including parents, community leaders, and students, as well as teachers and administrators, at every level of the system’ (p.10).

Hossain (1997) also notes that the ‘Bangladesh school education system is left with an extremely centralized, non-participatory, non-transparent and bureaucratic educational administration, management and planning system. The system appears to be quite inadequate for the challenges of achieving the goal of education for all, including UPE, in Bangladesh’ (p.75).

In practice, there is no chance for teacher to offer something beyond or outside the curriculum. The formal school curriculum as it stands has little to offer in relation to environmental and sustainable development.

The un-sustainability of development has an impact on schooling, and thereby on individual development. That is why in countries like Bangladesh, many children still have no chance to attend even low-quality primary schools. Dropout and failure rates are alarming; many leave semi-literate, soon to relapse into illiteracy (Rahman, Kabir, and Alam, 2005). Given that the result of such failure is often an exclusion from social processes, such poor quality education is part of a vicious circle of un-sustainability.

As a developing country, Bangladesh faces particular challenges in educating its citizens for sustainable development. It is facing multiple developmental challenges, among them most crucial problems are as follow (Howes, 2006):

- Extreme Population Density
- Mass Poverty and Illiteracy
- Unstable Political Situation
- Corruption
- Fragile Ecology
- Limited Natural Resources

Strikingly, most of the literature linking education and sustainability is drawn from Western contexts, and of course there are major challenges for sustainability facing these societies, but they are likely to be different from those facing developing countries. Given the developmental challenges mentioned earlier in respect to countries such as Bangladesh, any list of actions for sustainability is likely to emphasize meeting basic needs and improving the quality of life, rather than dealing with problems associated with mass consumption for

example. Table-1 bellow illustrates the range of issues and actions that are likely to be prominent in this context:

Priority issues	Actions for sustainability
Population growth	Emphasizing disadvantages of early marriage and more children
Food insecurity	Using organic fertilizers
Widespread illiteracy	Education for All
Restricted access to loans	Expansion of micro-credit programs and skills development
Lack of agency	Citizenship awareness
Corruption	Moral and systems development
Shortage of energy	Saving energy (oil, gas and electricity)
Deforestation	Social forestation
Pollution	Pollution control
Unequal status of women	Women's rights and education

Table 1, (Source: Shohel, 2006)

Existing ESD model in Bangladesh

Formal Education about Sustainable Development – links to Model 1

Shohel and Howes (2006) have mentioned that formal primary education of Bangladesh has generally represents the model of education about sustainability, with several steps coming between the educational experience and practical implementation by young people. Controlled and influenced by central state institutions, particularly through a centralized curriculum (Robinson 1999) makes it difficult for formal schools to adapt to local priorities, or to experiment with alternative approaches appropriate to their social and environmental context. In addition, the formal education system is very rigid (Shohel & Howes, 2006) with limited provision for ESD curricula. Formal education fails to relate knowledge and action.

Education for and towards Sustainable Development – Models 2 and 3

Given that the formal education system has never addressed the needs of the whole population in Bangladesh, there has been, since the 1960s, a flourishing non-formal education sector engaging in a wide range of educational and training activities organized outside the formal school system (Shohel 2004). In this trend, innovative learning methods are aimed at the development of practical skills, including matters of health, sanitation, literacy, to be applied in real life situation. This now accounts for approximately 8 per cent of primary school enrolment (Ahmed et al 2007) – higher in geographically remote areas and among socio-economically disadvantaged groups. Non-formal education is based on the pedagogy from the ideas of transformative learning and participatory democracy (Shohel 2008, Schugurensky and Myers 2003). In relation to sustainable development, non-formal education facilitates public involvement in resource management and policy formation.

Prospect of the new curriculum (2013) of primary education of Bangladesh

In 2013, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) of Bangladesh has introduced a new curriculum and changed the entire textbooks from Class I-V (www.nctb.gov.bd). So far, our centralized national curriculum does not emphasize on ESD or include the issues of sustainability in its curriculum as researches shows. This is the first time, the present curriculum at least tries to focus on the issues of ESD. In the Preface of the textbooks, the Chairman of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Dhaka says, “Topics and themes have been selected in a way that would not only help students address the needs of real life situations, but would also inculcate humanistic values in them as well as broaden their mental horizon.” In the following table, we can see the reflection of these objectives and goals of the Textbook Board which shows inclusion of wide variety of subjects regarding ESD in the books prescribed by NCTB from Class I-V.

Class	Books	Topics/Lessons
One	Amar Bangla Boi	Lesson 3, 46, 47, 52
	English For Today	
	Primary Mathematics	
Two	Amar Bangla Boi	Lesson 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13
	English For Today	
	Primary Mathematics	
Three	Amar Bangla Boi	Lesson 1, 3, 8, 12, 14, 21
	English For Today	Unit 3-Lesson 3, 4, Unit 5-Lesson 1, 2, Unit 10-Lesson 1, 2, 3, 4, Unit 11-Lesson 1, 2, 3, 4
	Primary Mathematics	
	Bangladesh & Global Studies	Chapter 1: Our Society & Environment, Chapter 2: Let Us Live Together, Chapter 3: Our Rights & Responsibilities, Chapter 4: Different Social Occupations, Chapter 5: Human Qualities, Chapter 6: Development Works in Family & School, Chapter 7: Environment Preservation & Development, Chapter 9: Bangladesh Our Country, Chapter 12: Population of Bangladesh
	Primary Science	Chapter 1: Our Environment, Chapter 2: Living and Non-living, Chapter 3: Different Types of Matter, Chapter 4: Water for Life, Chapter 5: Soil, Chapter 6: Air, Chapter 7: Food, Chapter 8: Health Rules, Chapter 9: Energy, Chapter 10: Introduction to Technology, Chapter 11: Information & Communication, Chapter 12: Population & Natural Environment
	Religion & Moral Studies	<p>Islam & Moral Education: Chapter 2: Ibadat (Cleanliness & Purity, Wadu, Cleanliness of Hands and Feet), Chapter 3: Akhlaq (Obedience to Parents, To behave nicely with classmates, Exchanging Salam, To behave nicely with guest, To serve people, Show mercy to the living beings, To speak the truth)</p> <p>Hindu Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 4: Fellow Feeling, Chapter 5: Modesty, Decency and Priority, Chapter 6: Honesty & Truthfulness, Chapter 7: Good Health & Exercises, Chapter 8: Patriotism</p> <p>Christian Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 6: Ten Commandments of God, Chapter 7: Sin, Chapter 13: Mother Teresa The Model Service, Chapter 16: Earthquake</p> <p>Buddhist Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 3: Daily Work and Salutation, Chapter 5: Moral Education: Grihisil, Chapter 7: Sub-division of Work, Chapter 12: Inter Religion Amity</p>
Four	Amar Bangla Boi	Lesson 1, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 19, 21, 22
	English For Today	Lesson 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 20, 25, 26,
	Primary Mathematics	
	Bangladesh & Global Studies	Chapter 1: Our Environment & Society, Chapter 2: Togetherness and Cooperation in the Society, Chapter 3: Ethnic Groups of Bangladesh, Chapter 4: The Rights of Citizens, Chapter 5: Social and State Resources, Chapter 6: Dignity of Various Occupations, Chapter 7: Tolerance of Others Opinion, Chapter 8: Moral and Social Qualities, Chapter 9: Development Works of the Locality , Chapter 10: Disaster & Disaster Management, Chapter 11: Population of Bangladesh
	Primary Science	Chapter 1: Living bodies & Environment, Chapter 2: Plants & Animals, Chapter 3: Soil, Chapter 4: Food, Chapter 5: Healthy Lifestyle, Chapter 7: Natural Resources, Chapter 8: Universe, Chapter 9: Technology in our life, Chapter 10: Weather & Climate, Chapter 11: Security of Life & First Aid, Chapter 12: Information in our life, Chapter 13: Population & Natural Environment
	Religion & Moral Studies	<p>Islam & Moral Education: Chapter 2: Taharat, (Purity), Wadu (Ablution), Gusal (Taking bath)Chapter 3: Al-Akhlaq (To respect Parents, To honour teachers, To honour elders and love younger, To behave well with the</p>

		neighbours, Nursing the patients, Speaking the truth, Keeping fulfillment promise, Not to be greedy, Not to waste, Not to backbite Hindu Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 4: Respect & Patience, Chapter 5: Sacrifice & Liberality, Chapter 6: Keeping a Promise & Devotion to our Elders, Chapter 7: Maintenance of Health & Posture, Chapter 8: Patriotism Christian Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 6: Ten Commandments of God, Chapter 7: Sin, Chapter 11: Confession, Eucharist and Confirmation, Chapter 12: Abraham, the Father of the Faithful, Chapter 16: Flood and Drought Buddhist Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 6: Right & Wrong Activities, Chapter 11: Religious and Social Co-existence
Five	Amar Bangla Boi	Lesson 1, 3, 6, 9, 20,
	English For Today	Lesson 7, 9, 16, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26, 27
	Primary Mathematics	
	Bangladesh & Global Studies	Chapter 4: Economy of Bangladesh: Agriculture & Industry, Chapter 5: Population of Bangladesh, Chapter 6: Climate & Disaster, Chapter 7: Human Rights, Chapter 8: Our Duties & Responsibilities, Chapter 9: We all are equal, Chapter 10: Democratic attitude, Chapter 11: Gender equality, Chapter 12: Some minor races and their cultures in Bangladesh
	Primary Science	Chapter 1: Life & our Environment, Chapter 2: Environment Population, Chapter 3: Water for Life, Chapter 4: Air, Chapter 5: Matter and energy, Chapter 6: Food for good Life, Chapter 7: Healthy lifestyle, Chapter 9: Technology in Our Life, Chapter 10: Information in our life, Chapter 11: Weather & Climate, Chapter 12: Climate Change, Chapter 13: Natural Resources, Chapter 14: Population & Natural Environment
	Religion & Moral Studies	Islam & Moral Education: Chapter 2: Ibadat, Purity-Cleanliness, Cleanliness, Chapter 3: Service to the creation, Patriotism, Forgiveness, To co-operate in performing good deeds, Honesty, Service to the parents, Dignity of labour, Human Rights, Environment, Natural Disaster Hindu Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 1: Ishvara and Service to Living Beinga, Chapter 4: Singularity of Ishvara, Religious Equality and Harmony, Chapter 5: Etiquette and Tolerance of Others Views, Chapter 6: Non-malice and Benevolence, Chapter 7: Keeping Health & Yoga and Postures of Sitting Chapter 8: Patriotism Christian Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 6: The meaning of Ten Commandments, Chapter 10: Mission of the Church, Chapter 12: Ruth, Chapter 13: Nelson Mandela, Chapter 15: Tornado & Cyclone Buddhist Religion & Moral Education: Chapter 6: Karma and Its Consequences, Chapter 11: Religion and Patriotism

Table 2, Source: NCTB 2013

Thus the new curriculum has introduced extend of priority issues for sustainable actions that we have discussed earlier in Table 1.

‘English For Today’ textbooks have been developed to help students attain competence in all four language skills in English through meaningful and enjoyable activities. Grammar points and planned activities to develop students’ competence in all four language skills have been presented within contexts in a systematic and graded way.

The textbooks of Mathematics ensure that the children get adequate mathematical understanding and skills. Special attention has been given to make the contents of the book, as far as possible, plain and lucid to the tender aged learners. The salient feature of the new book is that it is learner-centered and activity-based. To make the book attractive to the young

learners, it is printed in four colors and varieties of pictures are included in it. The book encourages that the students will learn through games.

As for the science education, the attributes of the revised curriculum is to maintain consistency among different branches of science as well as between science and technology. Special attention has been given to create more interest, curiosity and motivation among the children by using improved quality of paper, four colored pictures/diagrams in the books.

The textbooks of Bangladesh and Global Studies have included the most diverse range of topics related to ESD. The society and environment of Bangladesh, tradition, culture, the history of liberation war, basic needs, children right, duties and responsibilities of children, sense of cooperation and compassion toward all walks of people of the society, attaining the qualities for becoming good citizens of the society, being respectful to the culture and occupation of others, proper use and maintenance of resources, social environment and disaster, population and human resources all these issues have been introduced in the book in the context of Bangladesh. Issues like how children can manage unfavorable conditions or disasters have introduced. These are obviously critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of our future generation to address the environment and development issues. Besides, a number of new topics have been included to create sense of acceptability and develop a sense of harmony in the minds of the children for the people of all walks of the society, professionals, rich-poor, and children with special needs. Security issues have been provided and constitution has been followed in the usage of the term “Ethnic Minority” in these books.

All most all the books of different religion have included the topics related to moral education, cleanliness, patriotism, forgiveness, good deeds, honesty, service to the parents and elderly, dignity of labor, human Rights, environment, natural disaster etc. This learning would obviously awaken the children’s intellectual, social and moral values.

Moreover, if we carefully analyze the curriculum from class I-V, we can easily find that there is a consistency and repetitive inclusion of ESD materials among the lessons of different classes. If we consider the assessment process, we see more objectives tests; project and practical works which will help to make potential human resources.

Problems of structuring and placing ESD in the national curriculum

In reality, to introduce an ESD based curriculum is really difficult since nations need to clarify whether their educators are being asked to teach about sustainable development or to change the goals and methods of education to achieve sustainable development. It is like creating another “add on” subject, (e.g., Sustainable Development, Environmental Education, or Population Education) or to reorient entire education programs and practices to address sustainable development.

ESD by nature is holistic and interdisciplinary and depends on concepts and analytical tools from a variety of disciplines. As a result, ESD is difficult to teach in traditional school settings where studies are divided and taught in a disciplinary framework. So, in countries like Bangladesh where national curriculums describe in detail the content and sequence of study in each discipline, ESD will be challenging to implement. Education related to sustainable development is not implemented in a wide range, in both depth and breadth. Thus the following problems need to be reoriented to address sustainability.

Necessary steps to be taken for structuring and placing ESD in the national curriculum

- i.** The initial step in launching an ESD program is to develop awareness within the educational community and the public that reorienting education to achieve sustainability is essential.
- ii.** We need to adapt reform movement that can guarantee ESD to every child in school.

- iii.** Because sustainable development is hard to define and implement, it is also difficult to teach. Most of our teachers do not have any idea about ESD. So, it will require creative teachers who are comfortable and skilled at teaching across disciplines.
- iv.** Education for sustainable development remains an enigma to us. Our government, ministries of education and educators has expressed a willingness to adopt ESD programs; however, no successful working models currently exist. Without models to adapt and adopt, governments and schools must create a process to define what education for sustainability is with respect to the local context. Such a process is challenging. It calls for a public participation process in which all of the stakeholders in a community carefully examine what they want their children to know, do, and value when they leave the formal education system. This means that the community must try to predict the environmental, economic, and social conditions of the near and distant future. Interactions between school and community must be encouraged as this is very influential and fruitful for students' development.
ESD carries with it the inherent idea of implementing programs that are locally relevant and culturally appropriate. Just as any sustainable development program must take into consideration the local environmental, economic, and societal conditions, so too must ESD programs consider these same conditions. As a result, each region must create its own ESD program.
- v.** Popular thinking promotes the myth that an informed society is solely the responsibility of the ministry of education. In reality, however, the ministries of environment, commerce, state, and health also have a stake in ESD, just as they have a stake in sustainable development. By combining expertise, resources, and funding from many ministries, the possibility of building a high-quality, successful education program increases. Unfortunately, we do not have this coordination.
- vi.** The successful implementation of a new educational trend will require responsible, accountable leadership and expertise in both systemic educational change and sustainable development. We must develop realistic strategies to quickly create knowledgeable and capable leadership. We must find ways, such as employing the strengths model, to use existing skills.
Two models of human resource development currently exist – in-service training and pre-service training. For initial success in ESD, both in-service and pre-service training are necessary. While the effort can begin with the current teaching professionals around the globe, it is clear that teacher education institutions need to reorient pre-service teacher education to include ESD. Teacher education programs need to produce professionals who not only teach sustainability themes but also can "pull together" the various disciplinary strands that will give their students a holistic understanding of a sustainable future and the role of individuals, communities, and nations in a sustainable world. The development of this cadre of expertise will profoundly affect how rapidly nations will begin the move toward sustainability.
- vii.** Perhaps one of the greatest expenses of implementing ESD will come with providing appropriate basic education. In fact, national and local governments have spent little on ESD beyond improving basic education. Yet, effective ESD will depend on funding at both national and local levels. At the national level, financial resources must fund curriculum, administration, and teacher education. At the local level, resources must finance curriculum development and accompanying materials, as well as teacher training.
- viii.** Perhaps the most difficult obstacle to address in implementing ESD is that of popularity. Because principles of sustainable development are not currently woven into daily life and governmental policy, the emergence of ESD could become an important "bottom-up" driver of community-based sustainable development. ESD

could shape and encourage behaviors and ethics that support an informed, knowledgeable citizenry that has the political will to achieve a sustainable future.

- ix.** Support the incorporation of sustainable development issues using an integrated and systemic approach in formal education as well as in non-formal and informal education at all levels, in particular through the development of effective pedagogical approaches, teacher education, teaching practice, curricula, learning materials, and education leadership development, and also by recognizing the significant contribution of non-formal education and informal learning as well as vocational and work-place learning. Sustainable development is a cross-cutting theme with relevance to all disciplines and sectors.
- Experts (Shohel & Howes, 2006) divide the activities inherent in non-formal education relating to ESD into two main areas: through the curriculum, and through social action as part of the community. These could be an example for formal education system.
- x.** Enhance the major contribution and key role of civil society in stimulating debate and public participation, and initiating ESD actions. Explore ways to further this involvement and commitment.
- xi.** Value and give due recognition to the important contribution of traditional, indigenous and local knowledge systems for ESD and value different cultural contributions in promoting ESD.
- xii.** ESD should actively promote gender equality, as well as create conditions and strategies that enable women to share knowledge and experience of bringing about social change and human well-being.
- xiii.** It has been revealed in research (Shohel, 2006) that students of NGO schools are aware of their school environment since they do not like, relating to cleanliness, health and safety issues, such as dirty toilets and bathrooms, dusty benches and ceiling fans, and smells from the nearby chicken farm. So, it can be expected that since the Govt. primary schools have these facilities, like toilets, bathrooms, tube-wells or ceiling fans, the active participation of students of Govt. schools made them more aware of the value of caring for their environment.

Conclusion

We can expect that the new curriculum of formal primary education in Bangladesh affords an opportunity for young people (and their teachers) to integrate existing cross-curricular issues such as health education, personal and social education, economic and industrial understanding and environmental education. As a result, young people of the development of environmental and political awareness leading to reflection and action at the local level. A greater realization of this potential would involve the integration of environmental education and development education with practitioner base life-skills education and training for a wide range of occupations, constituting a holistic and viable education for sustainable development. This combination is not just a content issue, but an ideological and an epistemological task which involves a locally derived empowerment process.

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