

EMBEDDING CLIMATE CHANGE CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE CURRICULUM: PEDAGOGICAL INNOVATIONS FOR INDIAN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

INCORPORANDO A CONSCIÊNCIA SOBRE AS MUDANÇAS CLIMÁTICAS NO CURRÍCULO: INOVAÇÕES PEDAGÓGICAS PARA ESCOLAS E FACULDADES INDIANAS

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Abstract: Climate change is a major threat to ecological balance, human development, and social justice. Education plays a crucial role in tackling the climate crisis by promoting awareness, critical thinking, and civic responsibility. This paper examines the need to include climate change awareness in the Indian educational system through a rights-based, multidisciplinary, and legally binding approach. It discusses the constitutional, judicial, and international obligations that support environmental education in India, citing important legal provisions such as Articles 21 and 51A(g) of the Constitution and key court cases like *M.C. Mehta v. Union of India* (1992). Although the Supreme Court has set mandates and initiatives like the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023 are in place, execution is inconsistent. This inconsistency stems from the lack of a legal mandate, insufficient teacher training, and differences in state curricula. The paper also looks at international frameworks like the UNFCCC, Paris Agreement, and SDGs, particularly SDG 4.7 and 13.3, which highlight the global obligation to support climate education. It suggests creating a specific Environmental and Climate Education Act and integrating this education into the curriculum through experiential, project-based, and interdisciplinary methods. The paper points out the legal duty of educational institutions to promote sustainability and calls for national reforms to align with global standards such as UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development. Finally, it pushes for more robust legislative actions, accountability from institutions, and innovative teaching methods to develop climate-literate citizens. These citizens can help guide India toward a fair and sustainable future. With coordinated legal and educational reforms, climate education can shift from a hopeful goal to a constitutional necessity, encouraging ecological awareness and environmental leadership in future generations.

Keywords: Climate Change. Curriculum. Pedagogical Innovations

Resumo: As mudanças climáticas são uma grande ameaça ao equilíbrio ecológico, ao desenvolvimento humano e à justiça social. A educação desempenha um papel crucial no enfrentamento da crise climática, promovendo a conscientização, o pensamento crítico e a responsabilidade cívica. Este artigo examina a necessidade de incluir a conscientização sobre as mudanças climáticas no sistema educacional indiano por meio de uma abordagem multidisciplinar, baseada em direitos e juridicamente vinculativa. Discute as obrigações constitucionais, judiciais e internacionais que sustentam a educação ambiental na Índia, citando importantes disposições legais, como os Artigos 21 e 51A(g) da Constituição, e casos judiciais importantes como *M.C. Mehta v. União da Índia* (1992). Embora a Suprema Corte tenha estabelecido mandatos e iniciativas como a Política Nacional de Educação (NEP) 2020 e o Quadro Curricular Nacional (NCF) 2023 estejam em vigor, a execução é inconsistente. Essa inconsistência decorre da ausência de um mandato legal, da formação insuficiente de professores e das diferenças nos currículos estaduais. O artigo também analisa estruturas internacionais como a UNFCCC, o Acordo de Paris e os ODS, particularmente os ODS 4.7 e 13.3, que destacam a obrigação global de apoiar a educação climática. Sugere a criação de uma Lei específica de Educação Ambiental e Climática e a integração dessa educação ao currículo por meio de métodos experienciais, baseados em projetos e interdisciplinares. O artigo destaca o dever legal das instituições educacionais de promover a sustentabilidade e defende reformas nacionais alinhadas a padrões globais, como a Educação para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável da UNESCO. Por fim, defende ações legislativas mais robustas, responsabilização das instituições e métodos de ensino inovadores para desenvolver cidadãos com conhecimento sobre o clima. Esses cidadãos podem ajudar a guiar a Índia em direção a um futuro justo e sustentável. Com reformas legais e educacionais coordenadas, a educação climática pode deixar de ser um objetivo promissor e se tornar uma necessidade constitucional, incentivando a consciência ecológica e a liderança ambiental nas gerações futuras.

Palavras-chave: Mudanças Climáticas. Currículo. Inovações Pedagógicas

Introduction

Climate change is one of the major issues in the twenty first century, the world is facing is climate change. It manifests as rising sea levels, erratic weather patterns, biodiversity loss, and global warming. It affects not only the environment but also the social, political, and economic facets of life. This poses serious threats to human development. (Shivanna, 2022). Given the circumstances, education is turning into a crucial instrument for addressing the climate crisis. It has the power to increase awareness, strengthen adaptability, and impart the values, knowledge, and skills necessary for future generations to engage meaningfully in sustainable development. Education must, however, be transformative, action-oriented, and integrated across various fields and learning levels; it cannot merely increase awareness. Climate-related disasters are already affecting a sizable and youthful population in India (Goel *et al*, 2023). The inclusion of climate awareness in school and college curricula is crucial. This is both required by law and necessary. Although it acknowledges the importance of environmental education, the National Education Policy, 2020 lacks a strong framework for climate literacy.

The environmental education in schools is mandated by the Supreme Court's ruling in *M.C. Mehta v. Union of India* (1992), however its implementation is frequently uneven and cursory. This circumstance demonstrates the necessity of viewing climate education as both a teaching enhancement and a mandate based on statutory and constitutional laws. According to Indian courts, the right to a healthy environment is guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution. Every citizen is required by Article 51A(g) to preserve and enhance the environment (Hashim, 2013). The constitutional foundation for climate education is provided by these articles. India is dedicated to international accords that encourage public education and awareness regarding climate change, such as the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement (Lakshmanan *et al*, 2017). In order to incorporate climate awareness into Indian educational systems, this article examines the ways in which legal and educational frameworks can cooperate. In order to propose fresh, legally binding, and inclusive curriculum modifications, it examines existing legislation, court rulings, policy documents, and educational procedures. Educating and empowering students to become climate-literate citizens who can contribute to the creation of just and sustainable futures is the aim.

Results and Discussion

Climate Education: International Perspectives

International recognition of the significance of climate change education has grown. Guidelines for nations to incorporate environmental and climate-related content into their educational systems have been established by a number of legal frameworks and instruments. These include the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. These important tools support climate education as an essential component of sustainable development and global climate governance. The fundamental international legal provision for climate change education is found in Article 6 of the UNFCCC. It recognizes that effective responses to climate change depend on broad public awareness, education, and information access. Education, training, public awareness, public participation, information access, and international cooperation are the six areas that are defined in Article 6. At every level of governance, it calls on all Parties to 'promote and facilitate' these components in their climate change initiatives (Sato & Kitamura, 2023).

The Doha Work Programme on Article 6 of the Convention (2012–2020) was accepted as a framework for carrying out these goals in order to support this clause. In order to empower youth and communities with easily accessible climate knowledge, this program emphasized the importance of incorporating climate change education into both formal and informal educational systems. Along with incorporating all six of Article 6's areas into a more unified and useful framework for Parties, it also introduced the idea of 'ACE' (Action for Climate Empowerment) (UNESCO, 2024). The Glasgow Work Programme on ACE was adopted as a result of the Doha Work Programme being reviewed

and revised during COP26 in Glasgow, 2021. The necessity of methodical, inclusive, and rights-based approaches to education and public awareness was reaffirmed by this program. It urged nations to develop national strategies that integrate ACE into curriculum development, teacher preparation, and policymaking. The role of climate education in the global climate framework was reinforced by the 2015 Paris Agreement. 'Parties shall cooperate in taking measures, as appropriate, to enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation, and public access to information, acknowledging the importance of these steps with respect to enhancing actions under this Agreement,' reads Article 12 of the Agreement (Duyck, 2015).

The word 'shall' denote a legally binding commitment on the part of Parties, including India, to advance climate education. The significance of UNFCCC Article 6 is increased by this clause. It views education as a crucial component of climate action rather than as a side issue. National governments are expected to incorporate these principles into their domestic laws and policies as part of the Paris Agreement's implementation mandate. India has a moral and legal obligation to incorporate climate change education into its entire educational system as a result of its ratification of the Paris Agreement. Environmental sustainability is mentioned in policies such as the National Education Policy, 2020, but these policies do not fully link to the wider responsibilities of international climate instruments, particularly when it comes to teacher preparation, interdisciplinary curricula, and accountability measures (Jones et al., 2022). Through its integrated Sustainable Development Goals, the 2015-adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development places even more emphasis on the role that education plays in combating climate change. Target 13.3 of SDG 13 ('Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts') is to 'improve education, awareness-raising, and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction, and early warning.' (Arora, 2023).

The transformative impact of education on sustainable development is also highlighted by SDG 4 ('Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'). In particular, Target 4.7 requires: 'By 2030, make sure that all students have the knowledge and abilities necessary to advance sustainable development, including... through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity.' (Žalėnienė and Pereira, 2021). The link between SDG 4.7 and SDG 13.3 illustrates the universal agreement that sustainability, environmental ethics, and climate literacy must be ingrained in educational systems across the globe. As a result of these goals, international indicators have been developed to track how well national education policies, teacher preparation programs, and curricula incorporate education for sustainable development.

Even with India's dedication to the SDGs, a targeted approach to climate education that connects domestic initiatives with these international norms is still required. The SDG frameworks' intended depth and legal requirements are not being met by many Indian institutions, which still consider climate and environmental education to be optional or secondary (Saini, 2023). Thus, the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, and the SDGs are just a few of the instruments that clearly impose climate education as a duty under the international legal framework. In order to fulfill these responsibilities, nations like India must proactively incorporate climate change education into their curricula at the high school and college levels, backed by pedagogical, legislative, and policy changes. Ignoring this obligation jeopardizes sustainable development, intergenerational equity, and the global climate agenda.

Climate Education: Indian National Policy

India's national education policies, court rulings, and constitutional values all support the country's commitment to environmental education. Despite the lack of a specific law requiring climate change education, India has a legal and policy framework for environmental education thanks to a number of constitutional provisions, court decisions, and curriculum frameworks. According to these frameworks, climate literacy is crucial for promoting responsible citizenship and emphasize the necessity of incorporating sustainability and environmental awareness into formal educational systems. The right to life and personal freedom are protected by Article 21 of the

Indian Constitution. According to the Supreme Court of India, this clause incorporates the right to a hygienic and safe environment into the right to life. The Court held in *Subhash Kumar v. State of Bihar* (1991), that having access to clean air and water is part of the right to life. Similar to this, the Court emphasized the significance of environmental preservation and sustainable development as constitutional mandates in *M.C. Mehta v. Union of India* (1987).

The Supreme Court mandated that environmental education be made a required component of the curriculum in all Indian schools in the seminal decision of *M.C. Mehta v. Union of India* (1992). The University Grants Commission, National Council of Educational Research and Training, and State Education Boards were directed to establish environmental education at all levels by this legally binding mandate. This demonstrated that environmental education is a constitutional requirement derived from Article 21 as well as a policy directive. Every citizen has a fundamental obligation under Article 51A(g) of the Constitution to preserve and enhance the natural environment, which includes forests, lakes, rivers, and wildlife, while also demonstrating compassion for all living things. Courts have frequently cited these fundamental obligations to support environmental governance and education, even though they are not legally binding. According to the judiciary, fundamental duties act as a framework for interpreting the law and defending constitutional principles. In order to inculcate this civic duty in young students and future citizens, it is imperative that environmental and climate education be taught.

Additionally, in court decisions and policy formation, Article 51A(g) has been regularly invoked in conjunction with Article 21 to support mandatory environmental education. It also supports the notion that raising public awareness of climate change is a shared public duty that requires education and is not limited to environmental activists or the government. The NCERT developed the National Curriculum Framework, 2005, which addressed environmental education in a number of subject areas. Instead of treating environmental themes as distinct subjects, it promoted their integration. States and school boards have, however, implemented these recommendations in very different ways, frequently with little consistency and depth (NCTE, 2009). Education for Sustainable Development and environmental awareness are given more attention in the recently published NCF 2023, which is a component of the National Education Policy 2020's larger vision. Environmental consciousness is recognized as a critical competency in early childhood care, school education, and foundational literacy by the NCF 2023, which also recognizes the significance of cultivating ecological sensitivity. Better integration of climate issues into teaching and learning processes is made possible by its promotion of activity-based learning, community involvement, and practical problem-solving related to environmental challenges (NCF-SE, 2023).

Notably, environmental sustainability is specifically listed as a top curriculum priority in the NCF for School Education (NCF-SE), 2023. It encourages schools to establish environmentally conscious learning environments and links curriculum to global issues like biodiversity loss and climate change. However, the NCF-SE 2023 lacks enforceability and needs strong legislative or regulatory support to ensure consistent implementation, even with its forward-thinking vision. An important turning point in reevaluating India's educational system, including its approach to environmental education, is the National Education Policy 2020. NEP 2020 emphasizes the importance of teaching environmental awareness, sustainability, and values-based learning, acknowledging climate change as one of the most pressing issues of our time. It promotes experiential, interdisciplinary, and holistic learning, all of which can successfully incorporate climate literacy across academic levels and subjects (MHRD, 2020).

The policy encourages inquiry-based and project-based learning, which is perfect for tackling practical environmental problems and building climate resilience. NEP 2020, however, offers neither a comprehensive strategy nor a mandate for the methodical integration of climate change education into curricula and teacher preparation programs. Due to a lack of statutory authority, bureaucratic inertia, and inadequate teacher preparation, the environmental vision of NEP 2020 is still not being implemented evenly. NEP 2020's vision gave rise to the NCF-SE 2023, which offers a curriculum design centered on environmental and planetary well-being but still depends on institutional and state decision-making for implementation. This emphasizes how the policy vision must be transformed into legally binding educational requirements through a more formal legal framework, such as mandatory executive orders or legislative changes.

Through public interest litigation in particular, the Indian judiciary has been instrumental in advancing environmental education. The judiciary has stepped in to interpret constitutional provisions broadly and issue binding orders to educational authorities in the absence of specific laws requiring climate or environmental education. *M.C. Mehta v. Union of India* (1992) is among the most significant decisions, as it established the foundation for the integration of environmental education into India's official educational system. Environmental activist M.C. Mehta petitioned the Supreme Court in this historic case to require environmental education to be taught in schools. The petitioner maintained that the best approach to encourage environmental responsibility among citizens was through education and that the increasing environmental degradation posed a threat to ecological balance and public health. The Supreme Court established the legal basis for environmental education by citing Articles 21, 48A, and 51A(g) of the Constitution, acknowledging the significance of the matter. The right to a clean and healthy environment was interpreted to be part of Article 21. The State is required to preserve and enhance the environment under Article 48A. Every citizen is required by Article 51A(g), a Fundamental Duty, to preserve the environment and have compassion for all living things (Bhuller, 2022).

The Court pointed out that India's constitutional goal of ecological balance and sustainable development would not be realized if the next generation was not taught how to protect the environment. As a result, the Supreme Court ordered the Central Board of Secondary Education, University Grants Commission, Ministry of Human Resource Development, and NCERT to make environmental education a required course at all educational levels, from elementary school to college. By creating a legally binding requirement for environmental education, this decision represented a substantial change in Indian law that had an immediate effect on educational institutions all over the country. The decision established a legal duty that could be upheld through constitutional remedies, going beyond simply offering policy recommendations. In this situation, public interest litigation, or PIL, is very important. In the past, when legislative or executive action has been lacking, environmental PILs have enabled judicial intervention. An example of how the judiciary addressed a policy gap and provided proactive remedies to guarantee environmental awareness through education is the *M.C. Mehta* case (1992). Through PILs, Indian courts have persisted in promoting environmental education and curriculum reform since the 1992 ruling. Courts have requested compliance reports from educational boards and state governments in a number of follow-up petitions. The judiciary has confirmed that ignorance of environmental values undermines the basis of ecological justice and that environmental education is a constitutional requirement rather than a choice. The courts have reaffirmed the importance of curriculum development, teacher preparation, and community outreach as essential elements of environmental education through these cases. This all-encompassing strategy, which was created legally, embodies numerous international ideals stated in accords such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. The NCERT incorporated environmental topics into school textbooks and curricula in response to orders from the Supreme Court. In accordance with the interdisciplinary approach mandated by the Court, it developed the National Curriculum Framework 2005, which saw environmental education as a cross-cutting theme rather than a distinct subject (NCERT, 2005).

In a similar vein, the University Grants Commission issued regulations requiring all Indian undergraduate students, regardless of field, to finish a six-month environmental studies course. Ecosystems, biodiversity, pollution, and sustainable development are among the basic environmental topics covered in the course. State Boards and institutions have demonstrated differing degrees of compliance in spite of these efforts. Due to a lack of resources and inconsistent standards, some states have included environmental content in a token or superficial way. In subsequent cases, courts have called for more stringent compliance and ongoing oversight after pointing out these discrepancies. Courts have emphasized that merely putting topics in textbooks is insufficient; pedagogical reform, teacher preparation, assessment procedures, and infrastructure support are also necessary. Therefore, the necessity of environmental and climate education is supported by India's constitutional provisions, significant court decisions, and educational policy frameworks. However, the efficacy of these progressive mandates is constrained by the lack of a strong and enforceable law or regulation. Enforceable laws, teacher preparation programs, curriculum revisions, and institutional accountability are all necessary to fully integrate climate awareness into Indian education.

Gaps in Implementation: Legal and Institutional Challenges

In India, significant institutional and legal barriers impede actual implementation on the ground, despite favorable court decisions and policy initiatives supporting environmental and climate education. The disparity between state curricula and education boards is a major problem. State boards take quite different approaches, even though central boards like CBSE and ICSE have taken action to incorporate environmental topics into their curricula. While some states provide minimal or out-of-date content, others have fully integrated environmental studies. The aim of producing a generation that is climate literate across the nation is compromised by this disjointed implementation, which leads to unequal access to climate education. Curriculum standardization is further complicated by regional political priorities, financial limitations, and linguistic diversity (Singh & Ahmad, 2025).

The absence of a central law or regulatory framework requiring environmental or climate change education is another significant obstacle. Despite Supreme Court directives and policies such as the National Education Policy, 2020, these are frequently regarded as recommendations rather than mandates and lack legally binding backing. As of right now, no legislation such as an Environmental Education Act clearly outlines the obligations of government agencies, curriculum designers, and educational institutions in this regard. With no legal tools to enforce compliance or penalize non-compliance, this gap exposes environmental education to political shifts and bureaucratic inertia. The lack of focus on capacity-building and teacher training is a related problem. The majority of teacher education programs do not cover environmental sustainability or climate pedagogy, despite the fact that teachers are essential to successfully incorporating climate awareness in the classroom. Many teachers lack the knowledge, resources, and instructional aids necessary to effectively teach environmental content, even when it is incorporated into curricula. Lack of interdisciplinary teaching resources, continual training, and incentives for teachers to participate actively in climate education exacerbate the problem. Without qualified teachers, climate education runs the risk of becoming an add-on rather than a life-changing educational opportunity.

Further the progress is hampered by the numerous institutional and structural obstacles. These obstacles include inadequate monitoring and assessment systems, a dearth of climate-focused facilities in educational institutions, such as sustainability clubs or green campuses, and a low budget priority for environmental education. Furthermore, formal education and community-based environmental learning are frequently at odds, which restricts opportunities for real-world involvement and behavioral modification. Many students miss opportunities for practical experience because they only learn environmental concepts theoretically (Kwauk & Iyengar, 2021). Furthermore, the push to make climate education a primary educational objective is weakened by an overburdened curriculum, frequent policy changes, and inadequate coordination among federal, state, and local authorities. These disparities show how urgently India's educational system needs a robust institutional, pedagogical, and legal framework to advance climate consciousness.

Pedagogical Innovations to Support Curriculum Reform

For India's educational system to successfully incorporate climate consciousness, innovative teaching strategies must be backed by robust legal protections to guarantee long-term effects and enforceability. Although policy declarations and court decisions have advanced the discussion, the time has come to enact laws specifically addressing climate education. A proposed Environmental and Climate Education Act that outlines the duties of governments, education boards, schools, and universities could be a crucial starting point. This law should define climate literacy, mandate curriculum reviews on a regular basis, guarantee learning outcomes that are developmentally appropriate, and establish sanctions for noncompliance. To guarantee fair access to climate education, it must also cover teacher preparation, resource distribution, and the involvement of underserved communities. The use of rights-based, multidisciplinary teaching methods to incorporate climate literacy is another transformative tactic. There are significant social, economic,

cultural, and legal issues surrounding climate change in addition to its scientific aspects. Therefore, a good curriculum should go beyond what is taught in textbooks and embrace a rights-based framework that links climate issues to sustainable development, environmental justice, human rights, and equity for future generations (Reimers, 2021). Students can be inspired to view themselves as right-holders and active participants in international climate discussions by tying climate education to constitutional rights, particularly the right to equality under Article 14 and the right to life under Article 21. Cross-disciplinary education in fields such as science, social science, law, economics, and ethics can foster critical thinking, collaboration, and systems thinking skills necessary for responsible citizenship in this era.

Another possible legal avenue for advancing climate education in India is the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. The Act requires free, equitable, and high-quality education for children ages 6 to 14, even though it makes no mention of environmental or climate education. It would be possible to interpret and modify the RTE framework to acknowledge environmental and climate literacy as essential components of high-quality education. Additionally, the NCERT can create frameworks that support constitutional values and holistic development under Section 29 of the Act, which deals with curriculum and evaluation practices. This gives the Supreme Court's orders and India's obligations under international environmental agreements a legal chance to incorporate sustainability, climate resilience, and ecological ethics into national curriculum standards. Furthermore, national education reforms ought to be in line with international frameworks such as Education for Sustainable Development from UNESCO, which promotes interactive, action-oriented teaching strategies. Laws should reward institutions that set the standard for environmental education and promote the creation of 'green schools,' or establishments that incorporate sustainability into their management, infrastructure, and instruction (Neal & Palmer, 2003). To guarantee uniformity and accountability across educational levels and geographical areas, the National Education Policy 2020's vision of experiential and multidisciplinary learning must be backed by explicit legal requirements. In the end, new teaching strategies and legal reform must work together to reframe climate education as a national priority and a constitutional right rather than an elective.

Role of Educational Institutions in Fulfilling Environmental Duties

Indian educational institutions, in addition to being hubs for scholarly study, are also public entities with constitutional and legal obligations, including environmental preservation. The primary legislative framework for environmental regulation in India is provided by the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986. Its broad language gives the central government the authority to take action for environmental protection and improvement, even though it does not place any particular obligations on schools or colleges (Manglik, 2024). Educational institutions are required to abide by a number of rules and directives issued under this provision, especially those pertaining to waste management, pollution of the air and water, and conservation initiatives. The Green Campus Guidelines, which prioritize eco-friendly infrastructure, energy and water conservation, solid waste management, biodiversity preservation, and green audits, have been embraced by numerous colleges and universities in accordance with these more general responsibilities (Rajalakshmi, 2022). These guidelines, which are primarily optional, show that institutions are becoming more conscious of the necessity of incorporating sustainability into campus operations. In addition to fulfilling environmental responsibilities, adhering to these rules serves as a model for staff and students to modify their behavior. Environmental studies must be taught in undergraduate courses at universities and affiliated institutions, according to notices issued by the University Grants Commission.

All undergraduate students, regardless of discipline, were required to finish a six-month environmental studies module in 2004 by the UGC. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education's National Institutional Ranking Framework now includes sustainability, environmental initiatives, and green campus practices as criteria. As part of efforts to rank and evaluate institutions' quality, they are now urged to enhance their environmental performance. These changes point to a developing trend in which environmental consciousness is progressively permeating India's higher education system. Nonetheless, schools' and colleges' legal obligations to protect the environment are still

dispersed and frequently symbolic. Institutional efforts tend to remain limited, concentrating on extracurricular activities or infrastructure upgrades rather than the core educational experience, in the absence of a strong legal mandate to incorporate climate consciousness into instruction (Rajendran, 2024). To transform these goals into legally enforceable institutional obligations, a legislative strategy backed by robust compliance and monitoring mechanisms is required.

Recommendations: Towards a Legally Enforceable Climate Curriculum

In India, to incorporate climate education into the Indian educational system, an appropriate legislation is required. A Model Climate and Environmental Education Law that requires environmental and climate literacy to be taught at all educational levels primary, secondary, and tertiary would be one workable solution. The responsibilities of important parties, such as education departments, curriculum designers, testing authorities, teacher preparation programs, and school administrators, should be spelled out in detail in this model law. Funding, oversight, complaint handling, and recurring curriculum revisions in line with evolving climate science and global commitments should also be covered. As an alternative, the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 and the current Right to Education Act, 2009 could be modified to include clear mandates for climate and environmental education. Curriculum development could be broadened under the RTE Act to incorporate not only environmental awareness but also useful skills for ecosystem stewardship and adaptation to and mitigation of climate change.

In a similar vein, UGC rules might be changed to require climate literacy courses in undergraduate and graduate programs, particularly in disciplines like management, engineering, law, and teacher education. Making environmental law and climate justice modules mandatory courses in higher education is another step toward integrating climate education. Environmental law and climate governance ought to be required courses in law schools, with connections to development studies, public policy, and human rights. In light of this, the Bar Council of India and other regulatory organizations ought to think about revising their curriculum guidelines. Lastly, social justice and legal knowledge should also be considered when evaluating climate education. Climate justice, environmental rights, and access to environmental information should all be covered in legal aid clinics, NSS units, and student outreach programs. By encouraging active participation, these initiatives can assist students in stepping outside of the classroom and participating in community-focused environmental advocacy. The ultimate objective should be to establish an environmental constitutionalism culture in which students are empowered to demand inclusive, accountable, and just environmental governance in addition to learning about climate change.

Conclusion

The climate crisis is a serious problem that cannot be resolved solely through policy. It necessitates a shift in public perception, beginning with education and backed by legislation. This article makes the case that incorporating climate education into Indian schools and colleges is both required by law and a matter of teaching necessity. To prepare a generation that is aware of the science and morality of climate change and feels inclined to act, we must acknowledge and fortify the link between legislative mandates and educational reforms. A rights-based, multidisciplinary, and legally binding framework for climate education is desperately needed, as demonstrated by court rulings, constitutional provisions, and international agreements. However, this vision needs to be supported by explicit legislation, institutional dedication, and reforms that go beyond simple environmental consciousness. It is not just the responsibility of the legal and educational systems to inculcate environmental values. The government, civil society, educational institutions, and communities all share responsibility for it. While civil society should promote environmental justice, increase public awareness, and hold institutions accountable, governments should take the lead in drafting and implementing robust climate education laws.

Teachers should receive climate education training, and schools and universities should

transform into green learning spaces. Outside of the classroom, parents, NGOs, and the media all play a critical role in promoting climate values. To fully realize the potential of climate-focused education in India, a collaborative approach is required. The long-term goal of sustainability-focused legal education must be both aspirational and practical. Students pursuing legal education should be prepared to address complicated environmental issues, participate in global climate governance, and promote laws that are equitable and ecologically just for coming generations. While encouraging public participation, legal knowledge, and grassroots advocacy, law schools and universities should incorporate climate law, environmental ethics, and sustainability science into their curricula. In this way, legal education will help to mould the next generation of environmental change leaders while simultaneously addressing the climate crisis. In the end, raising a generation that understands climate issues is a moral, legal, and educational undertaking. It necessitates integrating environmental principles into the foundation of our legal and educational frameworks. This coordinated approach can result in resilient, knowledgeable, and empowered citizens who can uphold the constitutional promise of a just and sustainable future if it is pursued with clarity and urgency.

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