

Environmental Education Policy in China

- Case Studies of Education for Sustainable Development -

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1. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE DISSERTATION

Environmental governance is defined as a decision-making process in which various actors discuss how environmental problems are solved. In recent years, more attentions have been paid to environmental education in China as it is critical to enhance people's environmental awareness and their ability to solve environmental problems in order to have effective environmental governance. The main objectives of this dissertation are to examine the current environmental education trends in China and to argue what kinds of educational roles can play for better environmental governance.

2. BACKGROUNDS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN CHINA

In 1990s, environmental education in China became regarded as a part of education for sustainable development. Many actors including governmental and non-governmental organizations and international institutions have been engaged in environmental education activities. These actors, together with teachers, students, families and local people plan and implement environmental education programs in order to foster the growth of positive attitudes to the environment. This will lead to forming effective participation in environmental governance.

3. CASE STUDIES OF SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROJECTS IN CHINA

The survey conducted for teachers and students in China suggest that there be more need to encourage students to participate in environmental activities and to provide training to teachers so that they can understand the ideas of sustainable development. Similarly, with the interviews, conducted for environmental education organizations, it was pointed out that all the environmental activities have premises on the idea of sustainable development and of student-oriented education, and that the organizations provide opportunities for learners to move toward taking the necessary action and responsibility to solve environmental problems.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ROLES TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

It is the role of environmental education to encourage learners to raise their awareness and to gain appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes and motivations required for building a sustainable society. School education has important roles to play in enhancing the ability of environmental management for students, families, and local citizens. The full participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of education programs will enable various actors to effectively participate in environmental governance as well. Thus, environmental education can contribute to environmental governance and creating a sustainable society.