

# Teacher’s Perspective in the Context of Environmental Education

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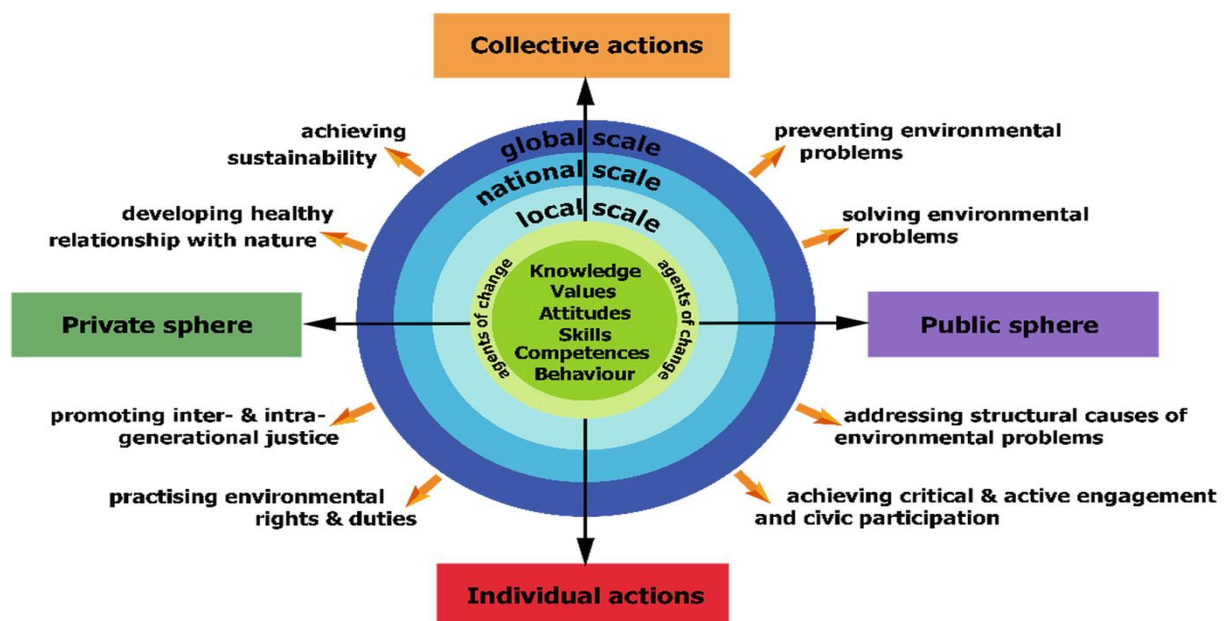
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**ABSTRACT:** This inquiry explores teachers' perspectives on enacting environmental education in a UP (Uttar Pradesh) urban locale with high student diversity. Participating in focus groups and interviews, teachers from three schools from Lucknow, Kanpur and Mathura discussed their experiences incorporating environmental education into their multiculturally-diverse classrooms. Challenges included value clashes, a lack of common lived experiences, and reconciling contradictory educational perspectives and political policies, which often placed teachers in paradoxical positions. Findings suggested moving toward practices of culturally-responsive environmental education that demand more than awareness but include interactive dialogue. Teachers need support from beyond the classroom and the capacity to develop curriculum facilitating the inclusion of students' culture.

**KEYWORDS:** perspective, teacher, school, environmental, education, classrooms

## I. INTRODUCTION

The present study was an exploratory study of Indian secondary schools in Uttar Pradesh, Integrated Science teachers' perceptions of environmental education. Both questionnaire survey and interviews were used. [1,2]



Teachers were classified according to their scores of attitudes, perceived barriers, and current emphasis on teaching environmental education. This study found that Integrated Science teachers' attitudes toward environmental education, skills of teaching environmental education, beliefs in the relevance of Integrated Science to environmental education,

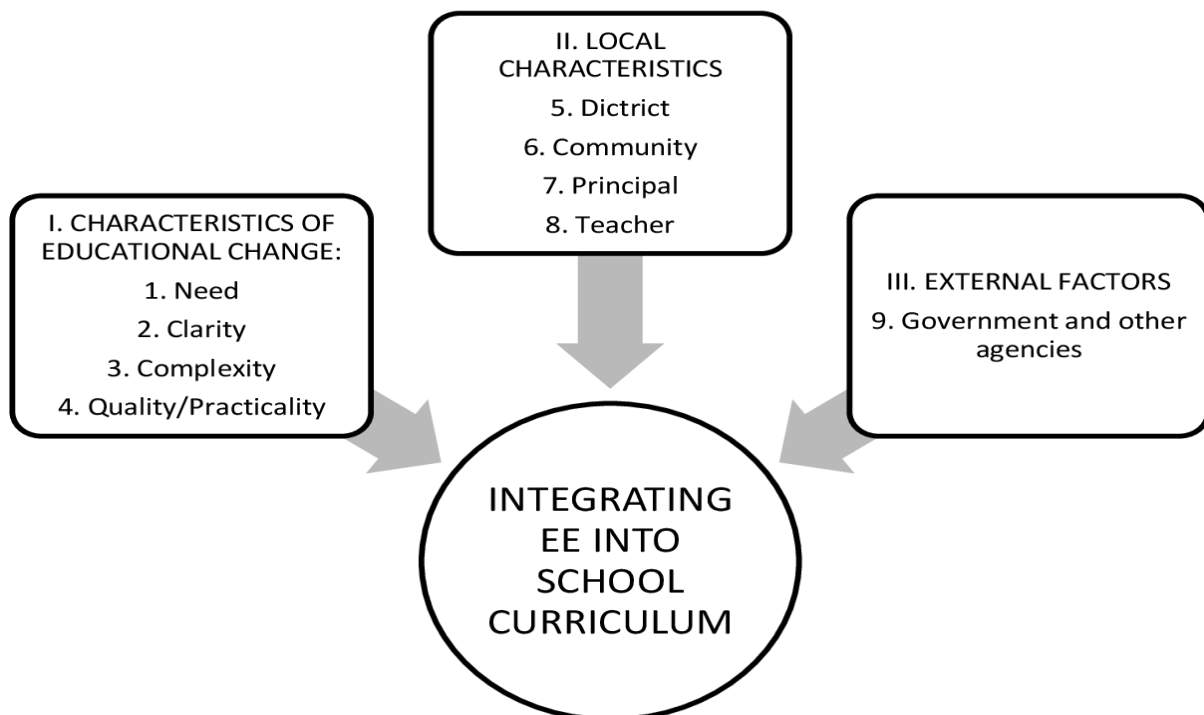
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and intentions of teaching environmental education in Integrated Science classes were associated with their actual ways of teaching of environmental education.[3,4]



Teachers tended to teach more environmental education if they held more favorable attitudes toward environmental education, had more skills of teaching environmental education, believed more in the relevance of Integrated Science to environmental education, and would actually want to teach more environmental education in Integrated Science classes if there were fewer constraints. Moreover, variations in the teaching of environmental education were reflected by teachers' emphasis on teaching environmental education, and their use of a variety of teaching methods and their regular practices of extracurricular activities on environmental education.

## II. DISCUSSION

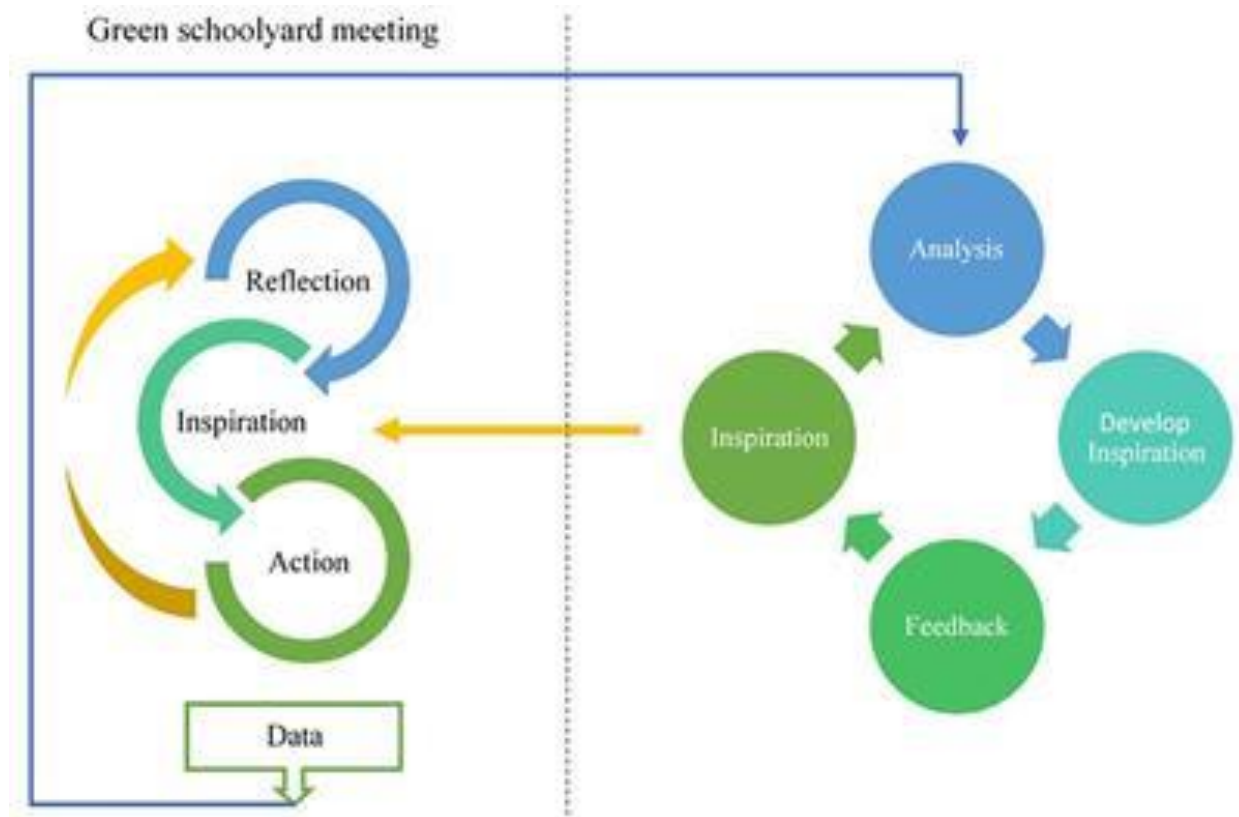
Reduction in biodiversity has been established as a global environmental issue, mainly over the last 10 years. However, there is disagreement amongst experts whether it is a natural phenomenon or strongly influenced by human activity. This review study considers biodiversity as a controversial issue in the education of students in schools, particularly in relation to science education. It includes a study of teachers' attitudes and approaches to biodiversity education in India and was undertaken using participatory appraisal methods with 'focus' groups of teachers. It was shown that the teachers in the study were frequently well informed, they considered biodiversity to be an important issue and[5,6] although the formal science curriculum had a contribution to make it was also a matter that the whole institution could address. Suggestions for evaluating the possible indicators and outcomes of effective biodiversity education were made. In conclusion it was shown that while programmes included many of the essential components of knowledge for biodiversity education there was usually little attempt to ensure that students achieved a more coherent understanding of the complex issue or how to deal with matters that are truly controversial. The methodology provided a useful model for reflection on practice and professional development in many possible contexts.

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### III. RESULTS

Environmental education (EE) is often lauded by educators as an ideal way to integrate academic disciplines, stimulate the academic and social growth of students, and promote conservation of the natural environment. The benefits of environmental education are:-

- Improves Academic Achievement
- Encourages Environmental Stewardship
- Deepens Personal Development and Wellbeing
- Strengthens Communities

Using outdoor settings like the schoolyard, nearby parks, or public lands like wildlife preserves, wetlands, or even national parks can infuse a sense of richness and relevance into a traditional school curriculum. In addition to gaining valuable skills and environmental knowledge, students often experience advances in other academic areas.

In a world where it is increasingly challenging to get students interested in classroom lessons, environmental education offers an enriching way for both students and teachers to connect their appreciation of the natural world to academics.[7,8]

In a study examining how outdoor learning influences the satisfaction of basic psychological needs, researchers collected data relating to a week of learning in two educational settings: a regular classroom and a residential outdoor learning course. These two settings incorporated social learning, personal development, and ecological knowledge in a

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regional context, as students worked in groups to learn about various science topics. Students completed questionnaires in each educational setting to evaluate the effect that each had. Additionally, researchers held group-interviews that provide insight into students' attitudes and beliefs.



Environmental education and outdoor programs utilizing explorative learning can drastically improve the student's learning attitudes. Additionally, when these outdoor learning experiences are implemented by trained teachers in familiar settings, students are more engaged and experience greater science achievement

Interested students are motivated students, and motivation is a key ingredient for academic achievement. [9,10] By using technology to teach environmental education concepts, educators impart to set students a valuable life skill. One study observed the effects of using digital technology during outdoor education experience. Project EARPOD (Engaging At-Risk Populations Outdoors, Digitally) used an integrated technology program to engage underserved students in environmental education while also examining the effectiveness of incorporating technology into their educational experience. Results showed that students reported an increase in using technology outdoors, gained

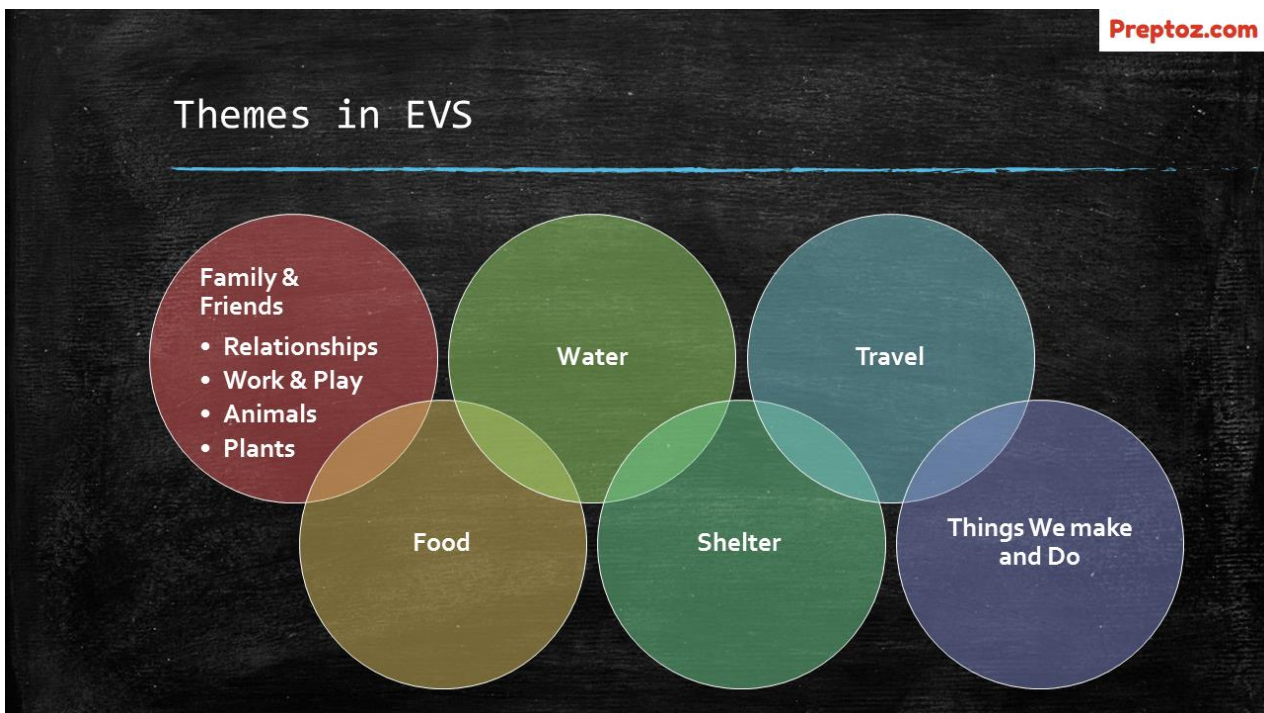
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knowledge of available technologies, and expanded their knowledge of different technologies. This increase in technology-specific knowledge leads to an increase in confidence while using technology.



## IV. CONCLUSION

Environmental education courses typically -expect- results such as positive impacts on students' environmental attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge. Due to the nature of program design, courses can also develop other skills in students. In a project-based learning EE course where students developed projects to solve environmental problems, students were found to not only have increased positive environmental attitudes but also enhanced creativity. When working together to collaborate and seek unique solutions to problems, they were able to hone into their creativity and take on more active tasks in the solution process. This review examining the crossroads of public art, nature, and environmental education states that the benefits are:

- Promotes intellectual development
- Encourages inspiration
- Supports consciousness about social and environmental issues
- Develops a sense of connection with nature
- Teaches how to ask questions and examine contextual information[11,12]

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