

Teaching Environmental Education: Trends and Practices in India. Chong Shimray. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2016, p. 268

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Teaching Environmental Education: Trends and Practices in India is authored by Dr. Chong Shimray, Assistant Professor in the Department of Education in Science and Mathematics, NCERT. Shimray's book is an exploration of the scenario and development of environmental education in different settings in the Indian context. The book also incorporates global trends and their respective implementation in India.

It is insightful and striking in the sense that it does not only target the factual or potential spheres of environmental education, but also challenges our mindsets by adding the ideological angle. Environmental education has long been viewed through the narrow understanding of the subject being merely limited to tackling pollution.

To break this misconception, the limitations of other disciplinary subjects to address environmental concerns and hence the need for focusing on the interdisciplinary nature of environmental education is discussed in detail. Catering to the readers, the complexity of addressing these concerns and defining the approaches for their solution has been streamlined and made more comprehensible.

The book is systematic in bringing together a fair amount of information and methods and practices and dividing them under meaningful sections. There is special attention given to the inclusion of environmental education in the school curriculum and the strategies for the same have been traced alongside the evolution of the subject till date in India. Thus, as an educational tool at the formal schooling level, the book delivers excellently.

Further, the book serves as a considerable aid especially to those interested in the field of teaching the subject. It analyses the existing teacher-education courses vis-a-vis environmental education and explains the barriers that hinder the popularization of the subject in teacher-education courses. With this, the book also succeeds to an extent to equip the reader with clarity regarding the similarities or differences between environmental education and full-fledged education for sustainable development and its importance in today's context.

Additionally, the book sports supporting illustrations, pictures and tables along with highlighted opinions and findings of various professionals and researchers for the ease of understanding.

However, the book falls short in some areas as it seems to view 'education' itself through a peephole and restricts its scope to only formal school education. For overall growth of the subject, informal and non-formal environment education needs to be stressed upon too.

Moreover, as the book is mainly a guide for teachers and educators to deliver courses, a more creative approach rather than the conventional explanatory approach would have encouraged them to deliver courses in the same way. Thus the scope of the book to uplift the value of the subject as something more than just to memorise and pen down in exam papers is not fully utilised.

To sum up, the book proves to be effective in its attempt to consolidate appropriate material for the study of environmental education. It makes a strong case for the necessity of the subject to be studied separately and given more attention. As a preliminary resource material for students and teachers across India, it can definitely be termed a success.

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