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A Critical Analysis of the Education for Sustainable Development

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Abstract: Our young people have a wonderful opportunity to engage with and address the intricate problems of sustainable development through education for sustainable development (ESD). This article used qualitative content analysis to describe the state of ESD in Pakistani elementary school curricula. Four topics from grades 4 and 5—General Science, Social Studies, Urdu, and Islamic Studies—were examined for various ESD components. A coding system for qualitative content analysis was created. According to the study's findings, the curriculum did contain some information about sustainable development (SD), but it never used the terms sustainability or SD. Overall, the skill content was the most focused ESD component in the primary school curriculum, followed by the social and environmental material. The economic component of ESD was one of the least represented in the curriculum due to its conceptual complexity. It suggests that the SD tenets were not followed in the development of the elementary school curriculum. It is recommended that the ESD principles be taken into account while creating or updating the primary school curriculum.

Keywords: Curriculum Analysis; Social Sustainability; Education for Sustainable Development; Sustainability; Skills; and Values.

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I. Introduction

Motorized vehicles and other businesses emerged as society started to industrialize. The human population exploded in tandem with this (de Pauw et al., 2015). As a result, there was an increase in waste and garbage, and a lot of gasses and particulates polluted the air. Solid waste was being used irresponsibly, and new chemicals were being developed. This was done without considering the detrimental effects on the environment. While "criticality" is discussed in international policy frameworks, this study looks at how it is reinterpreted or ignored in national ESD policymaking (Hasslöf & Malmberg, 2015). This research examines the idea of "criticality" in education in a non-Western cultural and historical context, with Vietnam as a case study. It considers how far a universal or decontextualized concept of criticality can be applied across the world, or whether criticality is context-dependent. Through a comparative policymaking analysis of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in Vietnam and a critical policy framework examination of global and Vietnamese policy initiatives, this study contends against the adoption of a one-size-fits-all criticality approach to ESD. Rather, it posits a nuanced conceptualization of criticality that considers its historical and contextual specificity (Yuan & Zuo, 2013).

This comparative analysis seeks to reveal the socio-historic distinctions in critical thinking and schooling by looking at the incompatible hegemonic assumptions that drive them. Instead of concentrating on similarities that may imply a universal design, this study indicates the distinctive ideological and historical contexts that determine schooling in various contexts. "Hegemonic" implies the prevailing ideologies and structures of power that shape schooling and education. Through a comparative methodology, this research aims to "decolonize" education research, laying bare the rich ontological orientations and hegemonic assumptions that support educational systems globally (O'Flaherty & Liddy, 2018. Since what is hegemonic does not directly manifest in, say, legislation or instruction, but rather is so widely accepted that it is not critically scrutinized and is viewed as the fundamental referents of meaning, this decolonizing can only be accomplished indirectly. However, this study discusses the disparities across hegemonic perspectives on education by highlighting the distinctions and similarities in how "critical thinking" might be interpreted when taking into account various hegemonic presumptions about education.

Using the Enlightenment's emphasis on the reasoning subject as fundamentally individual and the Confucian idea that critical thinking is mainly concerned with culture and life, I will now look at the several ways that critical thinking is conceptualized (Kopnina & Meijers, 2014).

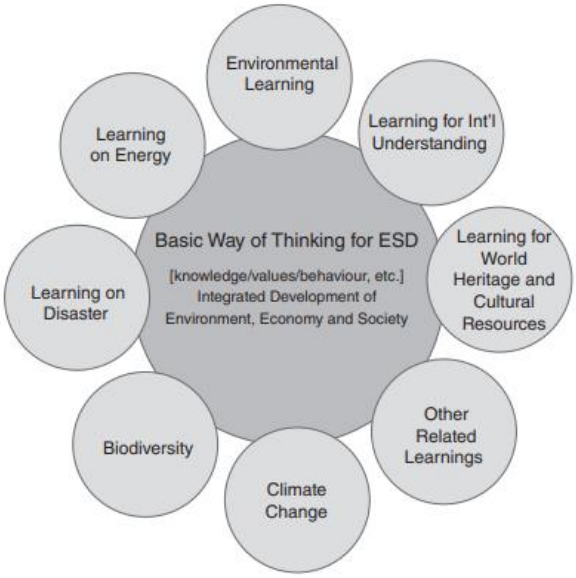

Figure 1: ESD Concept Illustration

II. Review of Literature

The Belgrade Charter, which was started by the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the UN Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), supported this education. The Charter established educational standards to help students learn the fundamentals of ecology, understand the natural world and its current state, be sensitive to the need to preserve it, and gain knowledge and abilities to assist in addressing environmental issues (Lozano et al., 2013).

The first thing that needs to be considered is the purpose of education. The topic of whether colleges "exist not (merely) to service the economy but to contribute to the intellectual and moral improvement of the human condition" (Gough and Scott, 2007) has been brought up by higher education and sustainable development. (page xi). Assuming that education is linked to more general societal objectives, it should provide students with the skills and information required to tackle issues like sustainability.

Many "wicked problems," or difficulties, have no obvious answers because they are interrelated and hard to define (Rittel & Webber, 1973). For instance, attaining the first two SDGs—eradicating poverty and hunger—is likely to lead to an increase in the use of natural resources, exacerbating environmental issues like climate change and biodiversity loss. Long-term social and economic advancement will therefore probably be impacted by this issue (Washington, 2018).

The Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987) essentially provided a justification for government organizations, including legislators, to remove the word "environment" from the political discourse. Consequently, environmental protection disciplines have been marginalized by "development" concerns, with ecological sustainability receiving only a passing mention (Washington, 2015). This raises the question of whether it should be desirable to teach for the SDGs in the first place.

Apart from the highly immoral relationship with nature, the quest for economic growth is associated with the depletion of biodiversity on a global scale, climate change, and the depletion of natural resources.

The triple social, economic, and environmental goals—People, Profit, Planet—are at the heart of the sustainable development philosophy. Economic growth and development are intended to accomplish the three goals of sustainable development (Agbedahin, 2019).

2.1.Purpose of the Study

The primary goal of this qualitative content analysis is to determine whether the KP, Pakistani primary school curriculum includes values, knowledge, and skills related to the environmental, social, and economic facets of education for sustainable development. A transformative process, education for sustainable development equips students with the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and abilities necessary to actively contribute to the creation of a sustainable future.

Research Question

a) What is the primary school curriculum's presentation of the knowledge content regarding social, environmental, and economic sustainability?
b) How are the lessons on sustainability skills presented in the elementary school curriculum?
c) How the curriculum for elementary schools presents sustainability values?

III. Methodology

In literal terms, research is the pursuit of knowledge. It involves methodical research utilizing scientific methods to collect data on the subject under study. In the social sciences, research is utilized to gather information and apply that information to real-world scenarios. In order to facilitate the valid and reliable study of people's or subjects' behaviors, Young (1996) defines social research as a scientific investigation using logical and systematic techniques with the goals of discovering new knowledge, verifying old facts, analysing relationships, sequences, and causal explanations derived from theoretical frameworks, and developing new concepts, theories, and scientific tools. The methodical process of studying, evaluating, and conceptualizing social life with the goal of adding, enhancing, or validating knowledge—whether that knowledge supports the development of a theory or the practice of an art—is known as social research. Social research aims to confront skepticism, correct misconceptions about social life, and find solutions to incomprehensible social phenomena.

3.1.Research Design

A research design is a master plan for data collection and analysis that tries to balance efficiency and applicability to the goals of the study. Essentially, the research design is the theoretical framework that governs the whole research process. It is a clear plan for collecting, measuring, and analyzing data, and the procedures the researcher will follow from formulating the hypothesis to final data analysis (Kopnina, 2020).

For this study, both primary and secondary data were collected. A structured questionnaire that was adapted from previous research in the field and adjusted for this study under the supervision of the supervisor was used to gather primary data. To get primary data from respondents through field visits, a great deal of field work is conducted. A questionnaire has been issued to the chosen samples, and they have been asked to return it once they have completed it. Employees have received adequate explanations of the study's goal and purpose, and it has been guaranteed that their answers will remain private and be used exclusively for scholarly purposes. Secondary data was gathered from a variety of sources in addition to the survey, including research papers published in various publications relevant to the topic of study, magazine articles, and websites. For this investigation, books and research methodology were also consulted.

IV. Statistical Measures

The following analysis was conducted using the identified study objectives, the hypothesis, and the survey questionnaire. descriptive statistics on sample characteristics, such as employee reactions to the idea of green HRM, ONGC initiatives, challenges for HR professionals, green HR practices, organizational citizenship behavior, employee commitment, and corporate performance, such as frequency charts and histograms. The developed hypothesis is tested using regression analysis, one-way ANOVA, and the independent T-test.

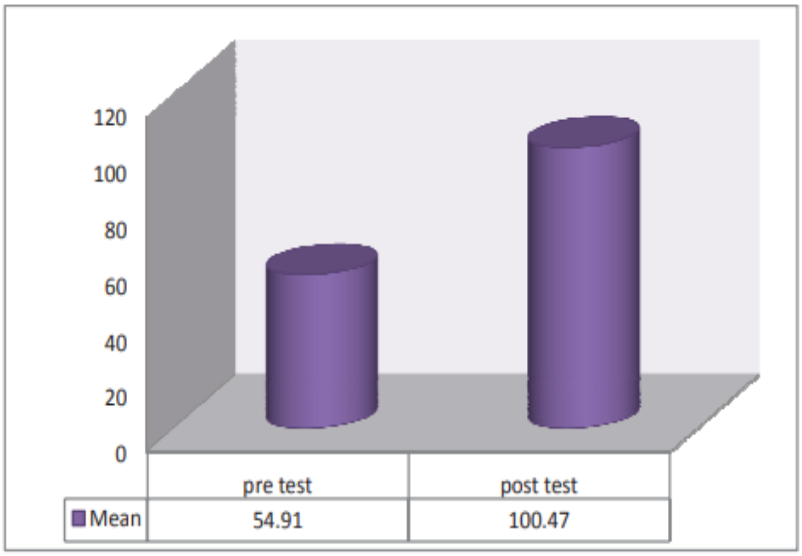

Figure 2: Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of School Students

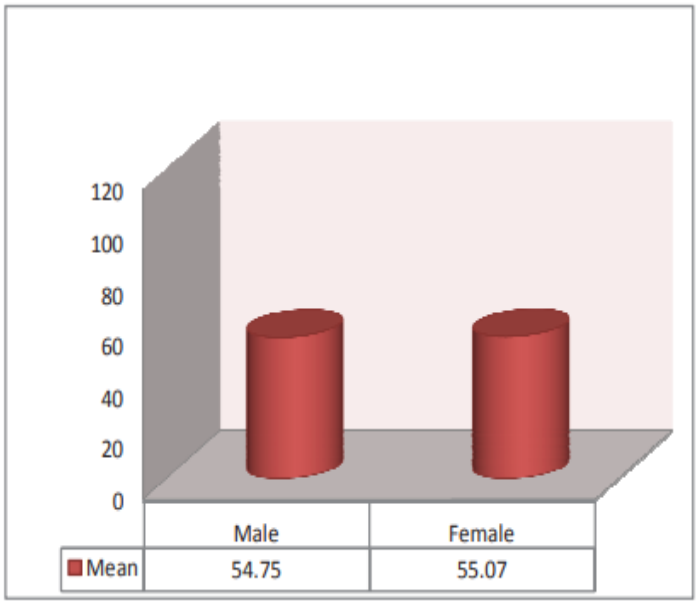

Figure 3: Awareness of Eco-Friendly Life Style

In this case, the dependent variable is the sum of all the corporate environmental performance variables, which are the same set of independent variables as all employee relations dimensions. The R Square score indicates that there is a high degree of explanation of the dependent variable by the independent factors at 60%.

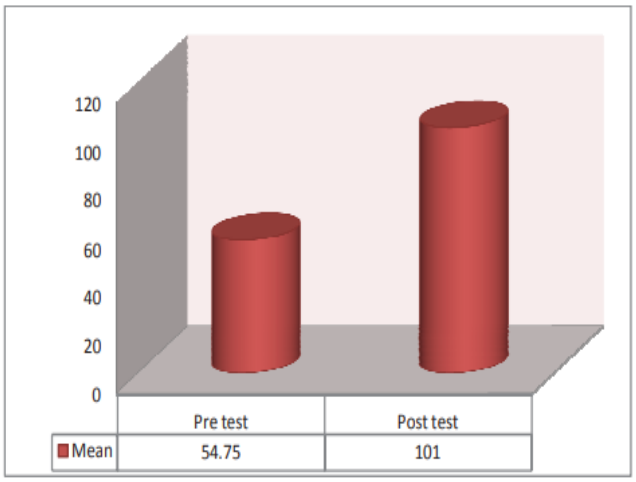

Figure 4: Awareness of Pre-Test and Post-Test Life Style

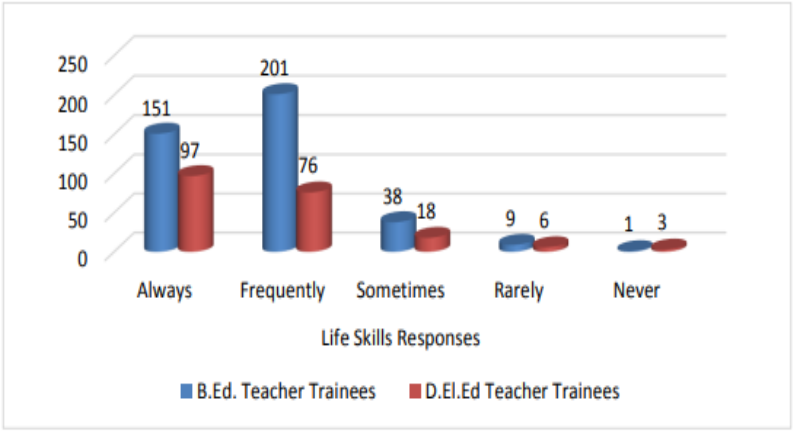

Figure 5: Association in Communication Skills Responses and Level of Prospective Teachers

The F value (54.456), which indicates a substantial link between the variables under study, indicates that the model is statistically valid (p=.000). The company environmental performance is therefore impacted by green employee relations practices, and any modifications to employee relations practices result in a change in the corporate environmental performance by 60%.

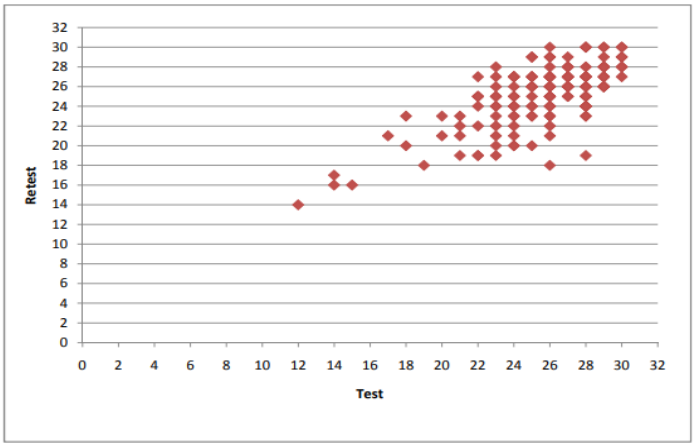

Figure 6: Scatter Plot

The globe is being rapidly harmed by pollution, which we are not doing enough to stop. The growing pollution of the air, rivers, seas, and oceans is one of the major issues facing the globe today. A healthy environment is crucial to the health of both the present and future generations. Therefore, fighting pollution is the only way to keep our ecology healthy. Pollution is the term used to describe undesirable alterations to the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of the air, water, and land that have an adverse effect on human health, other living plant and animal species, and other activities by either increasing or decreasing the proper concentration of different environmental components.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, strengthening India's educational system is crucial to laying a solid basis for the country's future. Any size school in India can provide high-quality instruction and differentiate itself in a crowded market by tackling issues including poor facilities, a shortage of teacher preparation, and financial constraints. Varthana is dedicated to doing its share by promoting high-quality education in both urban and rural areas and supporting educational projects. We want you to work with us to guarantee that all people have access to top-notch education. Together, we can close the gaps and bring about long-lasting change. Therefore, pollution is defined as the addition or deletion of necessary concentrations of several environmental components, not just the addition of harmful stuff to the ecosystem. Consequently, the very nature of matter that modifies any aspect of the environment, whether directly or indirectly, based on its nature, position, or quantity, and has the potential to endanger the safety and well-being of living things or property.

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