ABSTRACT

Sustainable Development (SD) is one the most discussed issue now-a-days, which is gaining priority day by day due to the exploitation of nature in a drastic way. It is from this apprehension that ‘Education for Sustainable Development’ (ESD) emerged with an immediate urge to preserve and conserve our nature and natural resources. The concept of Education for Sustainable Development entangles the different nations and world as a whole for a sustainable society, which merges the environment, economic and social dimensions.

The present study is about the effectiveness of an integrated approach to education for sustainable development on the students’ knowledge, critical thinking, problem-solving and value preference on sustainable development. A curriculum was developed by integrating the concepts of sustainable development into science and social science of VII standard of NCERT syllabus and designing various pedagogical strategies. The study was of quasi experimental in nature with a non-randomized pre-test and post-test design, whereby the integrated curriculum was taught to the experimental group for about five months and the control group was exposed to the conventional curriculum and methodology. Five tools developed and validated are Knowledge test on sustainable development, Critical thinking test of sustainable development, Problem solving test on sustainable development, Value preference scale on sustainable development and an Observation schedule to measure the participatory and performance skills of students.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarise the pre test scores and the post test scores. Cronbach’s alpha and correlation was used to establish internal reliability of the tool. ANCOVA, t-test, regression analysis and Pearson’s product moment correlation was employed to test various hypotheses. Percentages were used to analyse qualitative data.

It was found that the integrated approach to education for sustainable development was effective in improving the knowledge, critical thinking and problem solving on sustainable development among upper primary school students. There was no significant difference in knowledge critical thinking, problem solving and value preference on sustainable development of male and female students. There was no significant difference between the value preference on sustainable development of
students in the experimental and control group. There was a significant difference in critical thinking and problem solving of High, average and low knowledge group of experimental group. It was found that majority of the students in the experimental group had a good participation and performance skill to do activities that lead towards sustainable development.

There was a significant and positive relationship between knowledge and critical thinking; knowledge and problem solving; knowledge and value preference; critical thinking and problem solving; critical thinking and value preference; problem solving and value preference on sustainable development. Also problem solving predicts knowledge and value preference; knowledge predicts critical thinking and problem solving on sustainable development

On the basis of the findings, it was concluded to highlight the importance of integration of SD components in education at all levels.