

The Necessity of Incorporating Ecological Civilization Education into China's Compulsory Education Stage

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Received: 15 September 2024; **Accepted:** 12 October 2024; **Published:** 1 November 2024

Abstract:

The 20th CPC National Congress report emphasizes China's commitment to harmonious human-nature coexistence by 2035, aiming for a beautiful China. Education must integrate ecological principles to form an ecological education system, nurturing talents with ecological literacy. In middle school Chinese, focus is on awakening ecological consciousness, building ethics, and forming behaviors.

Keywords:

Compulsory Education in China, Ecological Civilization Education, Ecological crisis

1. Introduction

Ecological education is an educational practice that is guided by ecological civilization. It aims to systematically and profoundly guide students in acquiring knowledge and skills related to environmental protection. By consciously interpreting texts from an ecological perspective, teachers can stimulate students' awareness of ecological protection and firmly establish values of respecting nature and caring for the environment. This series of educational activities extend beyond mere knowledge transmission; they are also about shaping behaviors, with the ultimate goal of enhancing students' overall ecological literacy and protection capabilities, thereby contributing to building a sustainable future. [1]

At its heart, ecological education aims to ignite within students a sense of responsibility and stewardship towards the natural world. By exploring the intricate relationships between humans and the environment, students develop a deep appreciation for the fragility and interconnectedness of ecosystems, thereby nurturing a proactive attitude towards conservation. Teachers play a pivotal role in weaving ecological themes into various subject areas, not just science or environmental studies. By adopting an eco-centric lens to interpret texts, historical events, literary works, and even mathematical concepts, students are encouraged to view the world through a more holistic and sustainable lens.

2. Analysis of Foreign Background

Since the Enlightenment era, the advancement of capitalist industrial civilization has gradually liberated humanity from primitive agrarian civilizations, bringing about an abundance of material wealth. The triumph of rationalist philosophy further fueled the rapid development of modern science and technology, empowering humans to conquer nature and elevate productivity. As a result, nature lost its aura of mystery in the face of this triumphant capitalism, marking humanity's disenchantment with nature. Currently, the world is confronted with severe ecological challenges, and China, as a member of the global community, is susceptible to the impacts of global events on its development. [2]

In the face of the escalating natural ecological crisis worldwide, China urgently needs to embark on ecological civilization education in the new era. This endeavor not only demonstrates our proactive commitment to international environmental responsibilities but is also indispensable for ensuring the country's stable and long-term development, as well as accelerating the process of national rejuvenation. Ecological civilization education aims to ignite a sense of environmental protection among the entire populace, nurture green lifestyles among students, and inject robust momentum into the country's sustainable development, collectively safeguarding the ecological civilization of our shared planet.

Moreover, to effectively address the challenges of ecological environment and achieve sustainable economic and social development, China has adopted various strategies and actions:

2.1. Green Development Transformation

Promoting the optimization and upgrading of industrial structure, vigorously developing green and low-carbon industries, restricting the development of high-polluting and energy-intensive industries, encouraging and supporting the research and application of clean energy and energy-saving technologies, and facilitating the transformation of the economy from "black" to "green".

2.2. Ecological Protection and Restoration Projects

Implementing a series of major ecological protection and restoration projects, such as returning farmland to forests and grasslands, wetland protection and restoration, and desertification control, to enhance the stability and service functions of ecosystems and improve the self-recovery ability of the natural environment.

2.3. Strict Environmental Regulatory System

Establishing and improving the environmental regulatory system, strengthening environmental law enforcement, taking a zero-tolerance approach to illegal pollutant discharge, promoting environmental information disclosure, enhancing public participation, and fostering a positive atmosphere of social oversight.

2.4. Resource Conservation and Recycling

Promoting a circular economy model, encouraging resource-saving and environment-friendly industries, implementing waste classification and resource utilization, improving resource utilization efficiency, and reducing waste emissions.

2.5. Innovation-Driven by Science and Technology

Increasing investment in scientific and technological research and development for ecological and environmental protection, leveraging modern information technology such as big data, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence to enhance the intelligence level of environmental monitoring, early warning, and governance, and providing strong technological support for ecological and environmental protection.

2.6. International Cooperation and Exchange

Actively participating in the global environmental governance system, strengthening cooperation and exchange with other countries and regions in the field of ecological and environmental protection, jointly addressing global environmental challenges such as climate change and biodiversity conservation, and promoting the construction of a community with a shared future for mankind.

2.7. Public Education and Awareness Enhancement

In addition to integrating ecological civilization education into daily teaching practices in schools, promoting environmental protection knowledge through media campaigns, public events, community involvement, and other forms, raising public environmental awareness, advocating green lifestyles, and forming a strong collective force of concern, support, and participation in ecological and environmental protection among the whole society.

In summary, China, facing ecological and environmental challenges, has addressed them not only through policy formulation, legal and regulatory construction, and industrial restructuring but also through multi-dimensional advancements in scientific and technological innovation, international cooperation, public education, and awareness enhancement, striving to achieve a win-win situation for economic development and environmental protection, leaving behind a beautiful homeland with blue skies, green lands, and clean waters for future generations.

3. Domestic Background Analysis

The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China stands as a monumental testament to China's commitment to forging a path towards a future that harmoniously intertwines human progress with the delicate balance of nature. Amidst the grand narratives of national rejuvenation and societal transformation, the emphasis on ecological civilization stands out as a beacon of hope, guiding the nation towards a greener, more sustainable future. By 2035, China aims to lay the foundational framework and showcase key achievements that embody the essence of a Beautiful China, a vision that encapsulates not just physical landscapes but also the deeply entrenched values and behaviors that foster a symbiotic relationship between humanity and the environment. [3]

Within this overarching narrative, education emerges as a cornerstone, indispensable to the success of China's ecological civilization aspirations. The imperative to nurture a new generation of environmentally conscious citizens is not just a matter of policy but a profound call to action, recognizing that the seeds of change must be sown early and nurtured throughout the educational journey. Ecological civilization education, therefore, becomes a pivotal element in shaping the minds and hearts of the young, empowering them with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to tackle the environmental challenges of the 21st century.

The Chinese language subject, occupying a central stage in the school curriculum, holds immense potential as a conduit for ecological civilization education. More than just a tool for communication and literacy, the Chinese language is a rich tapestry of culture, history, philosophy, and aesthetics that offers a unique lens to understand and appreciate the intricacies of the natural world. By harnessing the power of language and literature, educators can imbue students with a profound sense of respect for nature, instilling in them a sense of urgency and responsibility to protect the fragile ecosystems that sustain life on Earth.

3.1. The Solid Foundation of Language and Culture

At its core, the Chinese language provides students with a solid foundation upon which to build their understanding of ecological concepts. Through meticulous study of vocabulary related to nature, students learn to articulate the intricacies of ecological systems, from the microscopic intricacies of ecological niches to the macroscopic sweep of climate change. Grammar and syntax exercises allow them to construct sentences that convey their thoughts and feelings about the environment, fostering a sense of agency and ownership over their environmental narrative.

Moreover, the oral communication skills honed through language lessons equip students with the ability to engage in discussions and debates about environmental issues, both in the classroom and beyond. They learn to articulate their opinions, listen attentively to others, and engage in constructive dialogue, laying the groundwork for informed decision-making and collaborative problem-solving in the realm of ecological conservation.

3.2. Aesthetic Appreciation and Emotional Connection

Beyond the practicalities of language acquisition, the Chinese curriculum fosters an aesthetic appreciation for nature that deepens students' emotional connection to the environment. Classical poetry, ancient prose, and modern literature are replete with descriptions of nature's beauty and the profound philosophical insights derived from it. Through the study of these texts, students are transported to lush forests, rolling hills, and sparkling streams, experiencing the tranquility and awe that nature inspires.

This aesthetic engagement sparks a sense of wonder and appreciation for the natural world, awakening in students a profound longing to preserve and protect these wonders for future generations. It also encourages them to see themselves as part of a larger ecological tapestry, fostering a sense of interconnectedness and responsibility towards the wellbeing of all living beings.

3.3. Fostering Ecological Morality and Responsibility

At a deeper level, the Chinese curriculum fosters the development of ecological morality and responsibility among students. Through the exploration of philosophical and ethical concepts embedded in Chinese culture, students come to understand that respect for nature is not just a pragmatic necessity but a moral imperative. They learn that humanity's relationship with the environment is intricately bound to notions of harmony, balance, and compassion.

This moral awakening is further reinforced through the study of contemporary environmental issues and their impacts on society. Case studies, documentaries, and discussions on topics such as pollution, deforestation, climate change, and biodiversity loss help students comprehend the severity of the challenges facing our

planet. They are encouraged to reflect on their own actions and their impact on the environment, fostering a sense of personal responsibility and a commitment to making positive changes in their lives and communities.

3.4. Leveraging Textbook Resources and Beyond

Teachers are encouraged to mine these resources creatively, designing lessons that integrate language learning with hands-on experiences and practical projects. Field trips to natural parks, community clean-up initiatives, and eco-friendly craft projects are just a few examples of how students can apply their knowledge and skills in real-world contexts, fostering a deeper connection to the environment and a stronger sense of commitment to its protection.

Moreover, educators should look beyond the textbook to tap into the vast array of resources available online and in the community. Videos, podcasts, guest speakers, and collaborations with environmental organizations can all enrich the classroom experience, bringing students closer to the frontlines of ecological conservation and inspiring them to take action.

3.5. The Power of Storytelling and Narratives

At the heart of effective ecological civilization education lies the power of storytelling and narrative. By weaving compelling narratives that explore the relationship between humanity and nature, educators can capture students' imaginations and spark their passions. Stories of courageous conservationists, inspiring ecological restoration projects, and the struggles of indigenous communities to protect their ancestral lands offer a human face to environmental issues, making them more relatable and impactful.

Through these narratives, students learn about the sacrifices, triumphs, and challenges faced by those working to protect the environment. They are inspired to see themselves as part of this global movement, recognizing that even small actions can contribute to meaningful change. The power of storytelling, therefore, becomes a potent tool for fostering empathy, compassion, and a sense of shared purpose among students.

3.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Chinese language subject serves as a potent platform for implementing ecological civilization education at the school level. By harnessing the rich cultural heritage and linguistic resources of the Chinese curriculum, educators can foster in students a profound respect for nature, a sense of ecological morality and responsibility, and a commitment to making positive changes in their lives and communities.

As China moves towards realizing the vision of a Beautiful China, the role of education becomes increasingly crucial. By nurturing a new generation of environmentally conscious citizens, educators are laying the foundation for a more sustainable and harmonious future. Through the Chinese language subject, they are not just teaching a language but also nurturing the hearts and minds of the future stewards of our planet. [4]

4. Conclusions

Integrating ecological education into language education is not merely about adding an extra content, but rather a fundamental reshaping of the educational landscape. It necessitates a collective effort across various sectors, from policymakers to educators, parents to students, all working together towards a shared goal: nurturing a new generation of environmentally aware and socially responsible citizens equipped with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to realize the vision of harmonious coexistence between humanity and nature, and thereby contributing to the construction of a Beautiful China. [5]

Ecological education stands as a powerful catalyst for positive change, reshaping the mindset and values of youth in profound ways. It is an educational paradigm that transcends traditional boundaries, infusing environmental consciousness into every aspect of learning and fostering a new generation of environmentally responsible citizens.

At its core, ecological education recognizes the urgency of addressing the environmental crises facing our planet and the critical role that young people must play in forging a sustainable future. It accomplishes this by systematically weaving ecological perspectives and principles into diverse curricular strands, from science and geography to history, literature, and even the arts. Through this interdisciplinary approach, students are encouraged to see the world through an eco-centric lens, recognizing the intricate web of interdependencies that exists between humans and the natural environment. [6]

This process of ecological awakening fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students. It challenges them to question conventional wisdom, analyze complex environmental issues from multiple angles, and devise creative solutions that balance human needs with the needs of the planet. As they engage in discussions, debates, and research projects that explore topics such as climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, and sustainable development, students develop the skills and confidence necessary to contribute meaningfully to environmental decision-making and advocacy. [7]

Moreover, ecological education goes beyond the cognitive realm, promoting sustainable lifestyles and behaviors that extend into students' personal and community lives. Through experiential learning opportunities such as eco-clubs, community service projects, and field trips to nature reserves, students are encouraged to put their knowledge into practice by adopting eco-friendly habits, reducing their environmental footprint, and inspiring others to do the same.

In addition, ecological education nurtures a sense of global citizenship among students, recognizing that environmental challenges are inherently global in nature and require collective action from all corners of the world. By engaging in cross-cultural dialogues, participating in international environmental initiatives, and collaborating with peers from diverse backgrounds, students develop a deep appreciation for the interconnectedness of all life on Earth and a commitment to working together towards a common goal.

Ultimately, ecological education lays the foundation for a world where humans coexist harmoniously with nature, respecting the inherent value of all living beings and working towards a sustainable future that ensures the well-being of all life on Earth. It is a transformative force that empowers young people to become active

agents of change, armed with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to create a brighter, greener future for generations to come.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

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