Creating Cooperative Communities for Building Green Societies

Translating education for responsible consumption into practices for sustainable lifestyles

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What is Education for Sustainable Consumption?

When you think about how Education for Sustainable Consumption is taught in your country, what types of images come to mind?
Is this ESC? - Option 1
Is this ESC? - Option 2
Is this ESC? - Option 3
Problem Oriented ESC:
• Highlighting the impacts of unsustainable consumption.
• Explaining the science of climate change.
• Addressing the limits to growth, resource supplies & flows, and planetary boundaries.
• Setting the urgency for action now!

Mitigation & Abatement Oriented ESC:
• Highlighting opportunities for reducing the impacts of unsustainable consumption (i.e. recycling and 3Rs).
• Identifying more responsible consumption options provided within current market system (i.e. ecolabel and energy efficient products).
• Targeting individual responsibility for addressing sustainable consumption challenges.
• Setting agenda that wiser resource use is key to sustainable consumption.

Solutions Oriented ESC:
• Active exploration of solutions for responsible and sustainable living.
• Encouraging learning through cooperation & collective engagement.
• Oriented towards creating locally-based means for addressing both sustainable production and consumption.
• Aimed at establishing alternative paths to securing healthy living, well-being, resilient communities, and productive ecosystems.
“The main challenge in relation to education for sustainable consumption is how to support initiatives which stimulate the individual’s awareness of the central role they play in forming society and empower them to choose responsible, sustainable lifestyles.”

(UNEP: Here and Now, 2008: 9)
Conceptual Evolution of “Consumers”

* With an increasing level of responsibility and duties attached to the consumer’s role at each new conception.

Understanding that Consumption Patterns are affected by lifestyle choices and also systematic/institutional factors – Consumers must have an active role in social change & transformation to achieve sustainable lifestyles.
“Creating Sustainable lifestyles means rethinking our ways of living, how we buy and what we consume, but it is not only that. It also means rethinking how we organize our daily life, altering the way we socialize, exchange, share, educate and build identities. It is about transforming our societies towards more equity and living in balance with our natural environment.”

Objectives of Solutions Oriented ESC

- Transition from a problem-oriented focus to a solutions-oriented focus.
- Individuals’ realisation of personal roles and responsibility in the pursuit of sustainability.
- Addressing the “Value-Action Gap”.
- Improvement of Quality Education.
- Strengthening Life-long Learning Skills.
- Empowering collective envisioning of a sustainable future and cooperative action for its achievement.
- Inspiring Transformative, Social Learning.
Principles of Solutions Oriented ESC

- Experiential education based on critical reflection & practice and problem solving.
- Creating communities of practice and opportunities for cooperative inquiry & reflexive discourse.
- Engagement in local community, contextualised learning, and cultural relativism.
- Knowledge production through iterative interaction.
- Group processing to establish and manage systems of knowledge and making sense of new information.
- Participation and power sharing, shared ownership/commonality.
- Positive interdependence and trust building.
- Holistic teaching applying whole systems thinking/perspective.
- Interdisciplinary and cross-boundary teaching.
Means for Operationalising Solutions Oriented ESC

- Schools should provide safe and effective Learning Environments as models of sustainable practice for experience-based learning and as hubs of community learning.
- Improve Quality and Relevance of Curricula through application of progressive learning objectives, use of clear learning methodologies, and provision of skill-based learning.
- Provide Cooperative and Participatory Learning opportunities for reflexive discourse and collaborative action.
- Develop critical Analysis and Problem Solving Skills, measured through use of performance based assessment.
- Enshrine both Global Citizenship & Peace Education and Values-Based Learning into the learning process (applying multi-cultural perspectives, service learning, and capacity building for civic engagement).
ESD Learning Performance Framework

- **Progressive Pedagogies**
  - The Educational Theories and Learning-Teaching Methods that are used to ground the entire instruction and teaching of ESD

- **Learning Processes**
  - Incorporation of Multi-stakeholder, Social Learning, Networking & Partnerships processes that ESD engages with

- **Sustainability Competencies**
  - Capacities needed to be able to contribute to SD, i.e., knowledge, skills and values traditionally referred to when discussing the content of ESD

- **Framework of Understanding & World-View**
  - Integrative and pluralistic system for knowledge generation and codification

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Thank you for your kind attention!

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