



**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH –  
GRANTHAALAYAH**  
A knowledge Repository



**SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND ENVIRONMENT**

**Mani Kant<sup>1</sup>, Shobha Shouche<sup>2</sup>**  
Government Madhav Science College, Ujjain, (M.P.)



**ABSTRACT**

Without self-understanding we cannot hope for  
Enduring solutions to environmental problems,  
Which are fundamentally human problems.

—Yi-Fu Tuan, 1974

Human beings interact both with the social world and nature. Both, economic development and stable environment are required for the continual improvement of lifestyle and living standards of the people in the society and for the Earth Community as a whole. But until now, the development was human oriented and limited to rich nations. The development was achieved by damaging the environment and over exploitation of natural resources which were nonrenewable. That caused instability of environment and crossed the threshold limit of environmental damage.

The major challenge of our times is to find new and practical ways of drawing inspiration from the rich diversity of human experience as well as modern scientific insights in order to establish effective means of governing human behavior to ensure that we contribute to the prosperity of the whole Earth Community instead of destroying it.

**Keywords:**

*Environment, diversity, nonrenewable.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Constitution gives everyone the right to have the environment protected 'through reasonable legislative legal and other measures that secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development', sometimes recognized as Social-sustainability also. In framing this basic human right in this manner, the Constitution recognizes the reality that economic and social development, or for that matter social-sustainability can only occur within the limits of what can be sustained ecologically.

Despite this constitutional right, in many cases we are not only failing to achieve the goal of ecological and social sustainability, but accelerating away from it. Human pressures on Earth's life-supporting systems are causing them to deteriorate rapidly and possibly irreversibly. However praiseworthy our reasons for 'development' may be, if we catch fish or cut down trees or erect super structures faster than they can be replenished we are mortifying our world, impoverishing our children, and in the long run, destroying the habitat on which we and other species depend.

## **SOCIAL ISSUES AND THE ENVIRONMENT FROM UNSUSTAINABLE TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Until two decades ago the world looked at economic status alone as a measure of human development. The current strategies of economic development are using up resources of the world so rapidly that our future generations, the young people of the world, would have serious environmental problems, much worse than those that we are facing at present. Thus current development strategies have come to be considered unsustainable for the world's long-term development.

The newer concept of development has come to be known as "Sustainable Development" Sustainable development requires the integration of three pillars, social justice, economic growth and environmental protection. . As defined by Brandt Land Commission Sustainable development is a "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Sustainable development promotes the idea that social, environmental, and economic progress is all attainable within the limits of our earth's natural resources. Sustainable development approaches everything in the world as being connected through space, time and quality of life.

### **URBAN PROBLEMS RELATED TO ENERGY**

Urban centers use enormous quantities of energy and are very embodied energy intensive. If we learned to save energy and become energy efficient, we would begin to have a more sustainable lifestyle.

### **WATER CONSERVATION, RAIN WATER HARVESTING, WATER SHED MANAGEMENT**

#### **Water conservation**

Conserving water has become a prime environmental concern. Clean water is becoming increasingly scarce globally. Saving water in agriculture by drip irrigation and saving water in urban settings will really contribute to our future lives.

#### **Rain water Harvesting**

Current technologies of rainwater harvesting require that all roof and terrace water passes down into a covered tank where it can be stored for use after the monsoon.

#### **Watershed Management**

This is a land management program that looks at a region from the perspective of all its water related issues. It can be used to manage a river from its source to its termination. Watershed management could also consider the management of a single valley as a unit, based on its small streams.

#### **Resettlement and Rehabilitation of people, its problems and concerns**

Major projects such as dams, mines, expressways, or the notification of a National Park disrupts the lives of the people who live there Uprooting people is a serious issue. Resettlement not only puts pressure on the project affected people but also on the people who have been living in the area that has been selected for resettlement.

#### **Environmental Ethics**

Environmental ethics deals with issues related to the rights of individuals that are fundamental to life and well-being.

#### **Resource consumption patterns and the need for their equitable utilization**

Environmental ethics deals with issues that are related to how we utilize and distribute resources.

### **Equity – Disparity**

Environmental ethics are concerned with, who owns resources and how they are distributed.

### **Urban – rural equity issues**

The common property of rural communities has increasingly been used to supply the needs of the urban sector. Thus while the cities get richer, the rural sector, especially the landless, get poorer.

### **The need for Gender Equity**

All over India, especially in the rural sector, women work on the whole longer hours than men.

### **Preserving resources for future generations:**

This ethical issue must be considered when we use resources unsustainably.

### **The rights of non-human**

The plants and animals that share the earth with us too have a right to live and share our earth's Resources and living space.

## **THE ETHICAL BASIS OF ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION AND AWARENESS**

Perhaps the most important concern is related to creating an ethos that will support a sustainable lifestyle in society. This brings us to the need for environmental education.

### **Climate change, Global warming, Acid rain, Ozone depletion, nuclear accidents and Nuclear Holocaust**

#### **Climate change**

The global average surface temperature has increased by  $0.6^{\circ} + 0.2^{\circ}$  C over the last century. Changes in climate may affect the distribution of vector species which in turn will increase the spread of disease,

#### **Global Warming**

About 75% of the solar energy reaching the Earth is absorbed on the earth's surface which increases its temperature. The rest of the heat radiates back to the atmosphere. . As carbon dioxide is released by various human activities, it is rapidly increasing. This is causing Global Warming.

#### **Acid Rain**

The corrosive nature of acid rain causes many forms of environmental damage.

#### **Ozone layer depletion**

The destruction of the ozone layer is seen to cause increased cases of skin cancer and cataracts.

#### **Nuclear Accidents and Nuclear Holocaust**

A single nuclear accident can cause loss of life, long-term illness and destruction of property on a large scale for a long period of time.

#### **Nuclear Holocaust**

The use of nuclear energy in war has had devastating effects on man and earth. in the form of cancer and genetic mutations .

#### **Wasteland Reclamation**

Loss of vegetation cover leads to loss of soil through erosion, which ultimately creates wastelands.

This is one of the pressing problems of the country.

#### **Need for wasteland development:**

Wasteland development provides a source of income for the rural poor. It ensures a constant supply of fuel, fodder and timber for local use. The program helps maintain an ecological balance in the area.

## **CONSUMERISM AND WASTE PRODUCTS**

In modern societies with increasing purchasing power, wasteful consumption linked to market driven consumerism is stressing the resource base of developing countries further. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, or the 3Rs principle, is the new concept in waste management.

### **The Environment (protection) act**

This Act was thus passed to protect the environment, as there was a growing concern over the deteriorating state of the environment.

### **The Air (prevention and control of Pollution act)**

The Government passed this Act in 1981 to clean up our air by controlling pollution. Sources of air pollution such as industry, vehicles, power plants, etc. are not permitted to release particular matter, other toxic substances beyond a prescribed level.

### **The Water (prevention and control of Pollution act)**

The Government has formulated this Act in 1974 to be able to prevent pollution of water by industrial, agricultural and household wastewater that can contaminate our water sources.

### **Public awareness**

Environmental sensitivity in our country can only grow through a major public awareness campaign.

This has several tools. The electronic media, the press, school and college education, adult education, are all essentially complementary to each other.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In order to achieve ecological sustainability, we need to make a dramatic philosophical shift from a worldview that places human beings at the center of the universe, to a view that sees the maintenance of the integrity of the whole Earth system as the overriding concern.

The inescapable conclusion is that if we continue with our present modes of behavior, our species (and many others) do not have a viable future.