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LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES



Edited by
Dr. Arghadip Paul



BAMANPUKUR HUMAYUN KABIR MAHAVIDYALAYA
Bamanpukur, Minakhan, North 24 Parganas

**COMMUNITY ETHICS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: ISSUES AND
CHALLENGES IN ASSAM**

*Dr. Jakir Hussain Choudhury**

ABSTRACT

Environmental protection is getting mammoth importance across the discipline and for the protection of environment or the promotion of sustainable development; the environmental philosophy induces community ethics in the whole process. In this context, to achieve sustainable development, it is the responsibility of every individual to take part in the process of environment protection. With this mindset, the present study intends to focus not only on environmental ethics among the people and their substantial role throughout the system. The study also focuses on different ethical dimensions and values that human beings should make ensure in their day today life. It is an empirical study supported with some reliable data collected from different sources based on different communities across Assam.

Keywords: Environment, Ethics, Protection, Communities and Assam.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of environmental protection is the result of the growing awareness of the global links between mounting environmental problems, socio-economic issues to do with poverty and inequality and concerns about a healthy future for humanity. It usually links environment with different socio-economic issues. At the same time it considers the ethical relationship between human being and in the process of environment protection. There are many ethical values that every human being should make ensure in the process of environment protection.

* Assistant professor, Dept.-Philosophy, Kharupetia College, Assam
Email- choudhuryjakirhussain@gmail.com

The concept of sustainable development within environmental protection is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Environmental protection has continued to evolve as that of protecting the world's resources while its true agenda is to control the world's resources. Environmental protection refers to growth of economic development. Environmental protection needs to economic development providing natural resources and raw material that we can enjoy today.

Participation by local groups and citizens appear particularly important in the context of community planning and visioning exercises related to environmental and economic regeneration, and for the identification of local priorities. Moreover project focused processes, where community decision-making and volunteer action can go hand in hand – cleaning up a polluted river, implementing a habitat protection scheme, or renewing local green spaces – also have considerable potential. In terms of interactions beyond the district, site selection is one area where local communities should have some role: in defining the general policies which make selection of a site necessary in the first place (infrastructure plans, housing construction targets, waste and energy policies); drawing up criteria for site selection; and taking and implementing sitting decisions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are some classic works on environment we have, but the notion of ethical values and contribution of environmental philosophy is apparently neither focused nor specifically studied in the context of environment protection. Here, a few contributions related with the theme are incorporated briefly to understand the changing situation related with environment. At this juncture, a study conducted by *Paramjit (1993)* on “Environmental Awareness among the student of Different Socio-Economic Status”. He found that environmental awareness was more among boys having better socioeconomic status if compared with girls. On the contrary, girls of lower socio-economic status had more environmental awareness in comparison to boys. Accordingly *Kalpana Thakur (2012)* conducted a study on environment awareness among senior secondary school students of Chandigarh. The major findings of her study were that student of both government and private schools showed comparable environment awareness, science students exhibited very high degree of environment awareness to compare with the students of arts. Moreover, male science students exhibited very high degree of environment awareness than female science students but overall no significant difference was found between male and female students in this context. Moreover, *Fernande manzand et. al. (2007)* in his

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i) To identify the level of awareness among the members of the community with regard to environmental protection and their role towards it.
- ii) To understand the impact of such awareness in the study area.
- iii) To describe human value towards environment can be realized.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Whether the concept of sustainable development in the study area is in form or in substance?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study is based on empirical survey and descriptive in nature.

Sample Size

The study has been carried out with 120 respondents from four localities of Darrang District in Assam namely- Kharupetia, Dalgaon, Bechimari, and Dhula

Sampling Technique

The researcher has adopted convenient sampling method.

Data Collection Method

Data has been collected by applying both primary and secondary method. Secondary data is gathered from books, journals, internet sources etc. and which are important to justify the existing ideas related with sustainable development in the milieu of theory and practice. Primary data has been collected by using interview schedule with a questionnaire and group discussion.

Technique of Analysis

To analyse and interpret the data so collected, the researcher has adopted the Mathematical tools for the study like Percentage and ratios.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is limited to the four towns and villages of Darrang District of Assam only and therefore the findings of the study may not be generalized.
- All the findings and observations made in the study are purely based on the respondent's answer which may be biased.

DATA ANALYSIS

Sl. No	Factor	Category	Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Community	Hindu	58	48.33
		Muslim	62	51.67
2	Age	Below 25	35	29.17
		25-30	43	35.83
		30-35	28	23.33
		Above 35	14	11.67
3	Literacy level	Below Matriculation	38	31.67
		Matriculation to H.S	42	35
		H.S to Degree	28	23.33
		Above Degree	12	10

Table 1.2: Indicating Factors Regarding Ethical awareness and Impact of Environmental Protection

SL. NO.	Variables	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1	Awareness regarding plastic ban	87	72.5	33	27.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Awareness regarding alternative use of plastic	35	29.17	42	35	-	-	22	18.33	21	17.5
3	Awareness regarding drainage system	73	60.83	27	22.5	-	-	-	-	20	16.67

4	Awareness regarding use of garbage container	9	7.5	8	6.67	45	37.5	58	48.33	-	-
5	Awareness regarding govt. policies regarding environmental protection	7	5.83	31	25.83	-	-	82	68.33	-	-
6	Participation in local meeting regarding environmental protection	-	-	12	10	15	12.5	65	54.17	28	23.33
7	Impact of use of plastic materials	15	12.5	-	-	-	-	77	64.17	28	23.33
8	Active participation in environmental protection	17	14.17	11	9.17	78	78	14	11.67	-	-

FINDINGS

- i) In the study area it has been observed that majority of the respondents are unknown about the concept of environmental protection.
- ii) Major challenges that majority of the respondents opined their ignorance regarding the various aspects of environmental protection measures.
- iii) It has been found that majority of the respondents viewed their lack of moral ethics regarding government effort regarding the environment protection.
- iv) In the study area majority of the respondents opined that lack of awareness is caused due to non-participation on their part, lack of proper information from the government part or any other non governmental agency.
- v) Majority of the respondents are not aware about the adverse impact of plastic materials and continue its uses.
- vi) Major issues and challenges that communities are not in active participation in environmental protection means.

SUGGESTIONS

- i) In the study area there should be more and more awareness programme with respect to environmental protection from the government ends.

- ii) There should be active participation of the NGOs and local authority to increase the ethical awareness among the community members.
- iii) The moral awareness programme should be conducted at regular intervals in the study area.
- iv) The community in the study area should be made known on the impact and consequences of ill treatment towards the environment.
- v) The civil society should take interest to bring awareness in the study area.
- vi) The various aspects and latest development of environment protection and sustainability development should be made known to the community in the study

CONCLUSION

Thus the study concluded that ethical awareness with respect to environmental protection is required among the members of the community in the study area to know the impact of it and their judicious decisions regarding the adoption of various means to protect the environment and to have sustainability development. With respect to addressing research question of the study, the study further concluded to have the environmental protection in substance and not in form.

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