

# ANALYZING THE EVOLUTION AND IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY

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#### Abstract

This comprehensive study aims to analyze the evolution and impact of environmental movements in India. Over the years, environmental movements have emerged as powerful forces advocating for the protection of the environment and sustainable development. Understanding the factors that have shaped the growth and effectiveness of these movements is crucial for devising strategies to address pressing environmental challenges. The study investigates various aspects of environmental movements, including their historical progression, organizational structures, strategies, and tactics. It examines the impact of these movements on policy formulation, implementation, and public awareness. By assessing both successful and unsuccessful instances, the study aims to identify the underlying factors that have influenced the effectiveness of environmental movements in India. The findings of this study will contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics and significance of environmental movements in India. By identifying the drivers and challenges faced by these movements, policymakers, activists, and stakeholders can develop more effective strategies and policies to address environmental issues. Moreover, the research outcomes will provide valuable insights to scholars and researchers interested in the field of environmental activism and social movements in India, facilitating further exploration and understanding of this critical area.

Key words: Movement, environment, development, Policymakers, Forest, Economy.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Environmental movements have played a pivotal role in shaping the discourse on environmental issues and influencing policy decisions

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worldwide. In India, a country renowned for its rich natural resources and diverse ecosystems, environmental movements have emerged as powerful drivers of 2939 change. These movements have mobilized public opinion, raised about awareness environmental degradation. and pushed for sustainable development practices. Understanding the evolution and impact of these movements is essential for comprehending the dynamics of environmental activism in India and formulating effective for environmental strategies conservation.

India's environmental movements have a rich history, rooted in the country's struggle for independence and the subsequent focus on social justice and equality. The Chipko Movement in the 1970s, a grassroots movement led by local communities to protect forests, stands as a notable example of the early environmental activism in the country. Since then, a plethora of environmental movements, varying in scale and focus, have emerged across India, addressing issues such as deforestation. water scarcity, pollution, land encroachment, and climate change. The growth and impact of environmental movements in India can be attributed to a confluence of factors. One crucial factor is the recognition of the intrinsic link between environmental degradation and socio-economic disparities. Environmental movements in India often highlight disproportionate impact of the environmental issues on marginalized communities, leading increased awareness and to mobilization affected among

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populations. Additionally, the emergence of a well-informed and environmentally conscious middle class has provided a significant impetus to these movements.

Technological advancements. particularly the rise of social media platforms, have also played a pivotal role in shaping the evolution and impact of environmental movements in India. Social media has provided a powerful tool for activists to disseminate information, organize campaigns, and mobilize public support, transcending geographical boundaries and reaching a wider audience. The ability to share stories, images, and videos instantly amplified the voices of has environmental activists and facilitated the creation of virtual communities working towards environmental goals. common environmental Moreover, movements in India have catalyzed policy reforms and institutional changes at both the national and local levels. The advocacy efforts of these movements have led to the formulation of environmental laws. regulations, and policies aimed at protecting ecosystems, conserving biodiversity, and promoting sustainable development. The implementation and enforcement of these policies, however, remain a challenge, and analyzing the impact and effectiveness of environmental movements is crucial for identifying areas of improvement.

This comprehensive study aims to delve into the evolution and impact of environmental movements in 2940 India. By examining the historical development, organizational structures, strategies, and tactics employed by these movements, as well as their influence on policy formulation and implementation, this research seeks to shed light on the factors that have contributed to their success or posed obstacles to their progress. The study will also explore the role of technology and community engagement in shaping environmental movements. highlighting transformative the potential of these elements. The findings of this study will not only contribute to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of environmental movements in India but also provide valuable insights for policymakers, and stakeholders activists. in formulating strategies to address environmental challenges effectively. By recognizing the achievements and learning from the limitations of environmental movements, it becomes possible to forge a sustainable and environmentally conscious future for India, ensuring the well-being of both the present and future generations.

Environment justice is highlighted all over the world which highlights the issues and concerns of people who are facing environment injustices. The movements have started in developed societies like United Kingdom, United state of America and now a day's these are evident movements in developing societies like India. Environmental injustice is generally

understood as the process by which certain social groups facing the environmental problem, for which people have to take major steps for the protection of environment. In order to reduce the environmental injustices in developing countries like India have to apply the policies of sustainable development, use of renewable resources and planting more and more trees in around. Environmental injustices lead inequalities serious among the different social groups and burden of environmental hazard. The concept of environmental injustices supports the principle that all the individual and communities have the right to protection under equal health environmental and regulations, and to meaningful involvement in decisions affecting their health according to Bullard. When individual and communities consent about the environment it will lead to a meaningful life, for which every individual has an obligation the environmental justices. Everyone is responsible for the environmental injustice neither state nor the communities have to be blame; it is an equal responsible for the climate change. Environmental justice can be achieved through reactionary and precautionary practices. Manv early conceptualizations of environmental justice focus primarily on the reactive notion of distributional justice. Environmental justice, in this context, refers to the belief that all environmental burdens and benefits should be divided equally 2941

environment. There are lots of thing to be done for justice of environment

among all the communities in a society by Vaughan.

Justice to nature is where all people can enjoy their life with no fear of health hazard and different kinds of diseases, not only for human beings but the other species on the earth can live with freely and harmony in the forest. In developing societies like raising problem of are India environmental pollution because of developing the nation and materialistic in individual has impact on environment which puts the human beings on environmental risk. Environmental justice should repay to the nature which human beings taken and this justice can be achieved by doing the necessities thing for the protection of environment for example afforestation, minimising the usage of natural resources and reducing the limitation of humans wants. At this present scenario of India People are facing multiple problem in their life because of Environmental injustice. People lack of understanding on nature and fail to give justice to the environment; people only know how to demolish the nature for satisfying their needs. Demolishing nature and running after materialistic and to live easy life will only give injustice to the environment, and this is not only injustice to environment but also all the creature in the earth. Injustice to climate will only face the consequence which is incurable. The best notion of giving justice to environment is safe the nature and plant trees. When people concern about climate it will giving justice to

the environment because is completely destroyed by human being in order to develop the nation as well as for easy life. Throughout the centuries India favour for the nature in their daily lives of people and enshrined in culture, art and religion but despite the rich and heritage, there is an increasing negative impact on environment because of growing industries and due to overpopulation. In India the nature has being destroyed in order to meet the basic needs of people like food, education, job, shelter and clothing. Deforestation came out the resulted in depletion of wildlife, degradation of natural resources, soil erosion, and air and water pollution. Factories use Chemical is the most dangerous for the environment because sewage goes to river and the noxious pollutant into the air makes environmental injustice. the Agriculture aids like pesticides and the fertilizer caused major harm in India's rivers and it also affect in drinking water. India is one of the richest lands in the world with its biological diversity, climate and geographical, it has a different environmental heritage. Globally discussing about the justice for two decades but what exactly is environmental justice of the justices? Many researchers argue who will be the responsible for the injustice of environment whether developing countries or developed nation who is to be blame? But it

will not come out the solution for

arguing on one another. And do those who people talk about environmental justice and those who call for ecological justice understand the concept 'justice'. There is a lot of different between theories and practical, likewise arguing will not help to bring justice to environmental justice, it should be done in action. The best way solution or to give environmental justice is to repay which have been taken away from the nature and this things will done be through afforestation instead of deforestation, sustainable development, minimising the industries and factories. Each and every individual should protect and concern about the environment will be the meaningful to justice.

# ENVIRONMENTALISM IN INDIA

The social movement in India concern on environment it begins during 1970s and thereafter. The approach of social movements reflected in the writings on mahatma Gandhi and some romantic poets in Hindu and other vernacular languages, the analysis of social movements is all about the environment justice and concern about the human beings lives which is affected by destroying the forest. The social movements like Chipko movement opened a new chapter to protect the nature and also increase activism in the social science. The last two decades many social science have researches shown tremendously. Modern

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environmental movements especially Chipko movement and the Narmada Bachao Andolan as well as fight over natural resources like water, fisheries and forest have found in the place of social science research in India. Many scholars turned out to understand about the ecological changes. Some studies focused on social and environmental colonial problem of state interference, which effect on the tribal people lives.

According to Ramchandra Guha the Chipko movements is all about peasant movement where people fight against on the state intervene on forestry. Bandopadhyay and Shiva (Bandopadhya, J and Shiva V , 1998, Maintaining development activity in India has marched on resource Intensive path which is the colonial legacy. The demands of its resources process Undermining the productive capacity of natural resources created and severe ecological Instability. For Bandapadhyay Shiva, and the environmental movement came up with the response by the people is for the new threat which they want is for their survival and also demand for the nature protection in order to support their life.

Baviskar (Baviskar, 1995), mainly focused on the tribal conflict on the government which the state sponsored for the development. She studies on Madhya Pradesh tribal people where the states dominate the people for development by destroying the forest and the natural resources. These tribal people have strong relationship with nature but due to development they have been threatened by the state development.

# ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

The environmental movement in India emerged because of injustice to the people by the companies for a few years profits and also for the dam project which affect the livelihood of the people because the people dependent on nature produce and collecting the nature produce for generation. The movements also emerged due to the climate change during ancient people are not about the environment consent because the environment was healthy but now due the to development the nature has been destroving for more than two decades for which the environment impact is facing by the people with different kinds threat of environment. also And environmental justice movements emerged for the protection the forest and to conserve natural resources.

# Narmada Bachao Andolan

Narmada Bachao Andolan is one of the most powerful environmental justice movements in India; it was started in the year 1985, against the development project for construction a huge Dam on the Narmada River. Narmada is a largest flowing west river in India which support different kinds of people with distinguished culture and tradition vary tribal people inhabited in the The tribal people forest. lost

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thousands of acres forest and agriculture for constructing the dam; the dam will displace 250.000 people therefore, this mass movement fights for rehabilitation of those people. The World Bank invested US\$450 million in the Sardar Sarovar Dam. In 1991 anti movement against and dam approach to the World Bank to stop funding on Sardar Sarovar Dam construction. This project is a multi core which will generate huge revenue for Indian government. The Narmada valley development plan is of the most challenging plan in Indian history. According to this project it will produce 1450 megawatt (MW) of electricity and it will also provide pure drinking water to 40 million people covering thousand of villages and towns. The two dams i.e. tawa and Bargi has been completed and the others are under construction, but the opponents are against on the project says that it will devastate human lives and biodiversity by exploiting thousands of acres of forests and agriculture land. On the other hand thousands of people will deprive their livelihood due to the construction of dam. Narmada people believe that the water and energy could be provided to the people through advance technological means, and that will also help to save ecological and it will be beneficial for everyone.

Narmada Bachao Andolan movement led by one of the social activist leader Medha Patkar now the movement has been turned out into international protest and this environmental movement gaining support from many NGO'S all around the world. The protester of Sardar Sarovar dam is agitating the issues through mass media, rallies, silent protest and hunger strike. In 1994 the hunger strike began and ends after 14 days by the protester including Medha Patkar because police arrested the hunger striker and then government promises that a complete review of the project and the strike ends. A month later no steps has been taken towards a comprehensive review the homes and belongings 40 Adivasis families are wash away. The NBA announces that unless the review process begins several activists including Medha Patkar will drown them-selves in Narmada on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August. The described sacrifice actions bv drowning. As the world media present on the dam site the government inbox the official secret act restricting the movement of the press. The police launch a hunt to Medha Patkar and others. Thousands of women supporters are jail but key activist succeed avoiding arrest.

The strong protests not only made impact on local people but also the protests influenced famous Indian celebrities Amir Khan has supported Narmada Bachao Andolan. He said that he only want for rehabilitation to those who rendered homeless and he request to the common people to take part in the movement to bring the best possible solutions for the movement.

# The Chipko environmental justice movement in India

The Chipko movement, started in 1970's the movement was non violent movement which aims to protect and to conserve trees and forest which has being destroyed. The word Chipko means 'embrace' as the villagers hug the trees and protect from cutting down by the wood cutters. This movement is based on Ghanaian philosophy where they can achieve the goal through in a peaceful manner. It rises up a strong against on cutting down the trees and destroying the natural resources of the forest and also cutting down the trees makes ecological in balance. The first Chipko movement was started in Chamoli district under Uttarakhand state of India in the year 1973. Thereafter the movement spread to other parts of the country where many people against of cutting down the trees and destroying natural resources of the forest. There is one famous story of one girl name Amrita Davi who sacrifices her life while trying to save the tree from wood cutter in her village. The village was under the rule of local Maharaja, who wants to build a palace for his family. So he ordered to his servants to bring wood from forest nearby his village. When a wood cutter arrived the village forest to cut down the trees the girl Amrita Davi and her friends jumped near by the trees and she hugged tree not to cut down. She said to the wood cutters if they want to cut the trees cut her first before cutting down the

trees but the servant have to obey the master he was helpless the wood cutter cut down the tree and Amrita died on the spot. The incident inspired many rural women, and launched similar movement in other parts of the state in 1970's.

# The silent valley movement in Kerala

The Silent valley is the people's movements that save a forest in the state of Kerala. It was in the late 70's when the silent Valley project converted into a major was environment versus development controversy. The planned project was to build a dam over the Kuntipuzha River in the district of Palghat which is the least developed area of Kerela state .As it flows through the valley, the river drops 857 meters, making the valley beautiful for generating electricity. Those who were in favour of the project argued that it would produce 240 MW of power irrigate 10,000 hectares of land and offer more than 2000 jobs. The state government of Kerela argued that the dam can damaged some hectares of land that will be the 10% of the ecosystem although environmental safeguards will prevent the rest .but many nongovernmental organisations strongly fight against the project and advised the state government of Kerela to yield they claimed that the whole valley will be damaged by the will devastate dam that its biodiversity .the climax of the conflict of silent valley started with the report of the taskforce of the

National council for environmental and planning conservation (NCEPC).In 1976. the NCEPC selected a taskforce under the chairmanship of the renowned environmentalist Zaffer Fatehally in order to study the ecological and environmental problems of the western Ghats. Based on its report, which stated, that the taskforce feels very strongly should be throw out and the area proclaimed a Biosphere Reserve. The NCEPC advised the state govt. of Kerala to stop the construction of SVHP. If the state govt. goes forward with the SVHP, the NCEPC recommended some precautions for the security of the area. the involvement of the NCEPC failed to evoke a positive response government Kerela from the affect undesirable from the adaptation of the silent valley into a hydroelectric project were first the state faced many climatic conditions by the deforestation, secondly the protection of forests was needed for research purposes ,control of pests etc. The silent spring turn into the foundation of environmental protest throughout the country and became the first major India's environmental movement. The achievement of the silent valley movement became the motivation for the same agitations, like Narmada Bachao Andolan protest against Tehri dam etc. The silent valley was a fight between the then P.M Morarji Desaie, the state government of Kerala and the environmentalist. In 1978, Desaie made agreement regarding to the performance of legislation to ensure

the necessary safeguard .however, some NGOs which is led by the Kerela Sastra Sahitya Parishad strong against the project. The NCEPC repeated its advice that the silent valley forests should be protected in their entity the international union for conservation nature (IUCN) adopted of а resolution urging the state to preserve silent valley. Finally in the month of December 1980 the state government of Kerala announced the fragmentation of the project .the silent valley was announced as national park the Kerela sastra Sahitya Parishad which is the largest popular organisation in Kerala which connects serious attention on this project has never take part in anti-developmental role ,it only pleased that.

## Save Mahan movement

Save Mahan movement is where local people want their Rights and the forests Right Act (2006). The local people of Madhya Pradesh were opposing the companies of Essar and Hindalco were these two companies want to mine for coal for that they have to destroy the forests and have to displace people. In this movement the local people want their right to live in their own land; due to the coal mining the forest has been destroying and displacing the local people. Over 14, 190 lives in that area where the coal mining is situated and the local people dependent on the Mahan forest for their livelihood and natural produce. They will face the threat of an

absolute wipe out by coal mining and its going to be displaced from their natural habitat. According to local community is that fair to destroy the oldest forest for coal? Mahan is their home not the powerful companies, the companies cannot forced them to displace is our home. They for support because they said that it's our forests, our nature and now our people need your support for our lives. They cannot let powerful companies to displace them where the existence of a community. People of Mahan come up together to reclaim their rights and Mahan Sangharsh Samiti (MSS) formed in 2103 for the purpose to protect the forests and land from coal mining. The MSS has been expanded to 11 villages and the MSS is supported by KC Deo minister of tribal affairs and also civil society groups supported to MSS. The Mahan Sangharsh Samiti also organised rallies and meeting s for the awareness of their rights in their region. But the member of MSS has been harassed and they have been offer bribed every other day. And the indigenous people's signature copied fraudulently for illegally to take the coal from their land in Mahan. The MSS members threaten by the companies for raising the issue; companies told them to leave the forest. People Mahan people are fighting for their right for Forests Act because this law is implemented for everyone so it should ensure their rights and it should respect the law. The indigenous people need forest to live

not for mine of coal; the companies want to wipe out all the forests for a few years profit. If the companies wipe out where they will depend for their livelihood because in Mahan forest they have collecting variety of forest produce for generation and now the forest belong to the companies, we don't have right on it said by one member of MSS. The mining in Mahan forest will affect the life people who alwavs dependent on the forest produce ,because the companies is going to destroy the forest for the coal mining so unless companies stopped it will affect the life of people who live in Mahan forest.

Environmental movements in India have emerged as powerful drivers of change, advocating for the protection of the environment. sustainable development, and social justice. These movements have evolved over time, responding to the pressing environmental challenges faced by the country. They have played a crucial role in raising awareness, mobilizing public support, and influencing policy decisions at both the national and local levels. The dynamics of environmental movements in India are shaped by various factors. including the country's diverse ecological landscapes and the tangible threats to the environment. The significance of these movements lies in their ability to raise awareness about the adverse impacts of unsustainable practices, pollution, and climate change on human health and ecosystems. They

also emphasize the interconnectedness of environmental issues with social justice, advocating for equitable access to resources and the protection of marginalized communities' rights. Technological advancements, particularly the use of social media, have revolutionized the dynamics of environmental Digital movements in India. platforms enable activists and organizations to disseminate information, mobilize support, and amplify their message. Environmental movements have not only raised public awareness but also influenced policy formulation and implementation. They have prompted development the of environmental laws and policies and ensured their enforcement, holding and corporations governments accountable for their environmental responsibilities. The impact of environmental movements extends beyond policy changes. They have fostered a culture of environmental consciousness and activism, particularly among the youth. Young activists are driving sustainable challenging established solutions, norms, and shaping India's sustainable development trajectory. generational shift This in environmental consciousness holds promise for a more sustainable and equitable future. Understanding the dynamics and significance of environmental movements in India is crucial for policymakers, activists, stakeholders. provides and It insights into effective strategies for addressing environmental

challenges, promoting sustainable practices, and protecting India's natural heritage. By recognizing the transformative power of these collaboration movements. and collective action can be fostered to create a more environmentally sustainable society.

# FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Understanding these major findings provides valuable insights into the achievements, dynamics, and challenges of environmental movements in India. It helps policymakers, activists. and stakeholders in formulating effective policies, and strategies, collaborations address to environmental challenges, promote sustainable practices, and foster a more environmentally conscious society.

- 1. Evolution and Diversity: Environmental movements in India have evolved over time. from starting grassroots movements like the Chipko Movement to a diverse range addressing movements of various environmental issues deforestation. such as pollution, water scarcity, land encroachment, and climate change. The movements have adapted to changing contexts have become and more inclusive. encompassing social justice and human rights concerns.
- 2. Linkage with Social Justice: Environmental movements in

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India recognize the intersectionality between environmental degradation and social justice issues. They emphasize the disproportionate impact of environmental problems on marginalized communities and advocate for equitable resources. access to sustainable livelihoods, and the protection of indigenous This rights. linkage has strengthened the movements and facilitated broader alliances.

- 3. Impact on Policy **Formulation**: Environmental movements have significantly influenced policy formulation in India. Through sustained advocacy and public pressure, these movements have led to the development of environmental laws. regulations, and policies at the national and local levels. They have played a crucial role in ensuring the enforcement and implementation of these policies, holding governments and corporations accountable for their environmental responsibilities.
- 4. Technological

Advancements and Digital Activism: The advent of technology, especially social platforms, media has revolutionized environmental activism in India. Activists and organizations leverage digital platforms to raise

awareness, mobilize support, and amplify their messages. Social media has facilitated the rapid spread of information, enabled virtual communities, and broadened participation in environmental movements.

- 5. Youth **Engagement**: Environmental movements in India have witnessed significant youth engagement participation. Young and activists have taken a leading advocating role in for environmental conservation and sustainability. Their involvement has brought fresh perspectives, innovation, and a renewed sense of urgency to the movements. Youth-led initiatives and organizations sustainable are driving solutions and challenging established norms.
- 6. Challenges and Limitations: Environmental movements in India face several challenges and limitations. These include resistance from vested inadequate interests. institutional support, limited resources, and the need for sustained momentum and collaboration. The movements also face the challenge of translating policy changes into effective on-ground implementation.
- 7. Holistic Approach: Environmental movements in India increasingly adopt a holistic approach by

addressing interconnected environmental and social issues. They recognize the need for sustainable development practices, ecological conservation, and the protection of human rights. This approach fosters greater collaboration among different stakeholders and long-term promotes sustainability.

8. Global Connections and Influence: Environmental India are movements in interconnected with global environmental movements contribute and global to sustainability efforts. They exchange knowledge, share best practices, and learn from international experiences. Indian environmental activists participate global in conferences, collaborate with international organizations, and contribute to global advocacy for environmental protection.

The environmental problem in India coupled with livelihood issues have led to environmental movements. Environmental justice movements have come to represent the resistance and proclamation of rights by local inhabitants to mega energy and infrastructure projects that are feared to endanger their livelihood and the local environment. In this studies how the people came forward for the environmental movements what are the issues that

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issues embedded in environmental justice conflicts have two unique

characteristics. First, the issues in an

environmental justice conflict are

human rights oriented. Second, the

issues of concern in environmental

justice conflicts are framed in ways

inequality and ecological conditions.

I have attempted to highlight some

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they faced for the survival. The local people who are living in danger life it has been threaten by the companies and for the project of dam because of the dam project the local people are displace and lose their lives for that reason in India the environmental justice movements has emerged for their rights and for the protection of environment. The companies and the government were not thinking about the environment impact before they decide for the project and for the local people. The decision making did not consent to the local people. The local people live in their own land for generation and now the projects displaced them their home land. from The indigenous people collecting nature produce from forest for generation has been destroyed by the dam project and for mine of coal which is injustice to the local people. The development for nation and for commercial development is needed but it should not only think for development rather it should look into the problems of the people. Manv environmental justice movements in India emerged is for the climate change, displacement of the people and injustice to their rights. For example Narmada Bachao Andolan movements emerged for the displacement of the indigenous people from their own land and destroyed the forests which have affected their livelihood. The dam project injustice to the local people because they lose their forests which they collect forest produce since generations. The

environmental justice. Therefore processes in mutual environmental justice context need to be planned and managed in a manner that recognizes and is attentive to the characteristics of environmental iustice conflicts. Traumatic histories of racial and economic procedural discrimination, past injustices, relationships of distrust, and the nature of environmental justice issues impact the potential collaboration for by perceptions of incentives participate. heightening concerns regarding process fairness, broadening the issues that need to be addressed. Recognizing accommodating these through process management strategies can facilitate effective collaborative processes in environmental iustice situations. Management strategies include heightening attentiveness to transparency, ensuring a facilitation staff that reflects the social diversity

of participants, and providing time and space for the acknowledgement and discussion of past injustices. Collaborative processes in the environmental justice context may need to he broadened to accommodate the acknowledgement and discussion of past and current injustices in order to create a process that is meaningful to environmental participants and iustice that addresses issues salient to them.

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