

Environmental and Health Impacts of Air Pollution: An Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Environmental pollution identify as unwanted substance in the environment due to human activities. Paper focuses on waste products, microbial action degrade, biodegradable pollutants, for instance, sewage. Paper highlights noise and radioactive radiation with concentrations harmful to humans, other living organisms, property, and plants. Environmental pollution makes undesirable effect on the vital resources like air, water and plants as well as on the health and life of humans. Pollution becomes a very common yet serious issue in today's world.

Key words: Environmental, pollution, human, sustainability, development, industrial and government

INTRODUCTION

Environmental pollution is at present one of the most important and prevalent issues in modern life. The problem of environmental pollution is one of the main subjects for discussion in the universal. Manufacturing, carbon emissions, plastic, etc, Never before in the history of India has the environment pollution drawn such attention of policy makers, academicians, social-activists and the court as in the present time. The population of India has crossed 100 crore marks. We Indians live in cities and villages. The immediate neighborhood of these living areas forms our environment. This environment has been polluted beyond repair as a result of rapid industrialization and urbanization. The unemployed people from the villages are migrating to the urban areas and increasing the population in the cities. The uncontrolled growth of industries has led to excessive levels of pollution in the urban environment, posing a serious threat to the health of the people.

Our natural resources, however bountiful, are bound to be depleted if human pursuit for more and more profits is allowed to continue. We know that we have achieved material progress at the cost of a clean environment. India and other developing countries should not ignore environmental degradation in the name of development. It is only to the good of the country and humanity if the gap between development and environment is narrowed down to the minimum. To this end we need an alert public opinion, a vigilant media, a responsible industrial leadership and a non-compromising government policy on the environment.

In this era of rapid development, global environmental pollution poses a major problem. The UN conference on human resources has focused attention on the dangers facing the world ecology today. To remind the governments of various countries of their responsibility to control the environmental pollution, the UN conference on Human Environment observes June 5 as World Environment Day every year. "20th century. Sites where historically polluting industries released persistent pollutants may have legacy pollution long after the source of the pollution is stopped. Major forms of pollution include air pollution, water pollution, litter, noise pollution, plastic pollution, soil contamination, radioactive contamination, thermal pollution, light pollution, and visual pollution" (Gaur, Nidhi; Sharma, Swati; Yadav, Nitin 2024:23)

Man has followed the path of progress through scientific and technological advancement. He has established factories, developed rail/roadways and exploited the natural resources for development. "Agricultural air pollution comes from contemporary practices which include clear felling and burning of natural vegetation as well as spraying of pesticides and herbicides" (Silent Spring, R Carlson, 1962) For that our forests are made victims. Trees are felled mercilessly for raw material without planting and rearing matching number of trees. The tall chimneys of the factories emit smoke and pollute the entire environment, thereby causing incurable diseases to the people in its vicinity.

The major pollutions in the environment are of three type's air pollution, water pollution, and industrial noise pollution. The air pollution is caused by the presence of certain harmful gases and particles in the air. The polluting gases are carbon

dioxide, carbon monoxide and the lead peroxide. These gases and particles are emitted from the vehicles and the generating sets in industry and house-holds. These pollutants are inhaled by the living beings and cause severe damage to their respiratory system. Diseases, such as asthma, tuberculosis, lung cancer, severe headache, skin cancer and irritation in the eyes are quite commonly caused by these pollutants. The industries also throw certain gaseous products into the atmosphere wherefrom they are spread in the air and inhaled by the living beings. The pollution levels are seen rising almost every week in all the industrial and urban areas of India.

The second major pollution is the water pollution. Water is the main life-supporting liquid. However, the effluents from the industry and wastes from the household have polluted our rivers, underground reservoirs and ponds to dangerous levels. The polluted water can cause dysentery amoebiosis, dehydration, cholera, viral fever, jaundice and other serious diseases. In metropolitan cities of the Indian sub-continent, many lives are lost every year for consuming the polluted water.

The third major pollution is the rapid industrialization and haphazard urbanization all over the world. The natural processes which keep the planet habitable in the short-term are primarily cyclic. Materials moving through these cycles utilize solar energy and return to their natural state before other processes start. In contrast, modern technology causes materials to be removed from the limited geological deposits or from living systems to be eventually discharged as water. Not only do these wastes act as pollutants of the natural cycle but they also change the composition of the atmosphere. Thus, our industrial activities add more stresses to the biosphere. Haphazard urbanization makes it quite difficult to provide and maintain the required civic amenities. Some cities have become so large, so crowded and so unmanageable that the municipalities fail to properly maintain the sewage, provide clean drinking water or adequate garbage removal facilities. Consequently, the public suffer eternally.

The adulteration of food is also a cause of pollution. Food has been found contaminated due to overuse of the organic fertilizers and pesticides. Many chemicals are sprinkled on the fruits, vegetables and grains in order to protect them from bacteria and insects which cause their decaying. These chemicals penetrate, in traces, into the interior of the food stuff and when eaten by human beings, they cause severe damages to the body systems. Some of the chemicals may even be fatal.

Finally, the noise pollution has assumed alarming proportions in urban areas. The industrial noise, the noise of the speeding vehicles and the noise of the loud-speakers used in temples, mosques and in various social functions cause several new problems, such as insomnia, hypertension, blood pressure, mental instability and deafness in the urban masses. If the noise levels are high (say, of the order of 100 decibel) the diseases like depression, high blood pressure, schizophrenia and similar other psychological problems will certainly engulf the masses in times to come.

Now it is obvious that something must be done to cleanse the environment or to minimize the various types of pollutions. We use these practical methods to reduce the environmental pollution. We must use lead-free petrol and make minimum possible use of our vehicles. We should use car pools for going to the office; and we must get our vehicles serviced regularly and get them checked for pollution in time. More trees should be planted all along the streets of cities to generate more oxygen in the atmosphere. The government must punish those industries whose plants throw pollutants in the atmosphere and whose effluents are mixed in the river water. The polluting industries must be shifted from the urban areas, as is being done in Delhi. In Agra, the polluting industries around the Taj Mahal are being shifted to remote areas.

Four decades of planned industrial development in India have been accompanied by an uncontrolled emission of effluents. However, of late, there has been a sudden increase in awareness of the environmental damage caused by this energy-intensive and technology dominated industrialization. A 'green movement' has caught on. There are protests against industries from several quarters, especially those which create environmental damage. An activist policy governs the approach of environmentalists. Some of the environmental activism or green activism' is fraught with grave social consequences.

It is the duty of the government, the society, the industries and every individual to minimize the pollutions of all types. If the rising levels of pollution are not checked, it may cause a serious eco-disaster in the near future. To my mind the biggest and most glaring problem that must be tackled on top priority basis is the population which threatens our environment to an alarming level. If it is controlled, these major problems that we are facing will minimize considerably and can be sorted out without much ado.

The world grew at a rapid pace once the industrial revolution began. But the practices that we adopted were not environmentally sustainable. As a result, the global average temperature has risen by 1.2°C in the last 150 years. This poses

a direct challenge to our future economic development as well. Climate change is seen in changing rainfall patterns, melting of glaciers and extinction of many species, we should understand that our economy depends on all these natural factors to be stable in the long run.

However, some critics to the theory of climate change say that there is no link between environment sustainability and economic development. Even USA President Donald Trump has taken an anti-stance to the climate change goals that the world adopted by signing the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC.

There are indeed some arguments put forward to prove that environmental sustainability and economic development are mutually exclusive. For instance, a major part of the economy, particularly of the developed countries, now relies on services and it has not much association with the environment. Also, overemphasis on environment sustainability can hamper economic development.

Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) has become a hurdle for many industries and companies in land acquisitions and in exploiting natural resources through mining and other means. This decreases the ease of doing business in many areas as barriers have been created in the name of environmental sustainability. We still do not have the best scientific tools to arrest the impact on the environment and relying on irrational arguments can sometimes affect economic development.

“Plastic pollution is choking our oceans by making plastic gyres, entangling marine animals, poisoning our food and water supply, and ultimately inflicting havoc on the health and well-being of humans and wildlife globally. With the exception of a small amount that has been incinerated, virtually every piece of plastic that was ever made in the past still exists in one form or another. And since most of the plastics do not biodegrade in any meaningful sense, all that plastic waste could exist for hundreds or even thousands of years. If plastic production is not circumscribed, plastic pollution will be disastrous and will eventually outweigh fish in oceans” (Hassan, Sidra; Haq, Ihsan ul (2016:29)

It is true especially with regard to the developing and the least Developed Countries (LDCs) who are now facing burden to shift towards renewable energy sources which are costly and currently not so technologically advanced. When such countries begin focusing on environmental sustainability, their economic development is ought to suffer. "Pollution is one of the great existential challenges of the Anthropocene era. Pollution endangers the stability of the Earth's support systems and threatens the continuing survival of human societies” (Carrington, Damian 2017)

India currently has two contradictory targets. One is made in India, which aims at rapid manufacturing growth and the other one is fulfilling our national commitments (i.e. Intended Nationally Determined Contribution) to check climate change. It can become difficult for us to achieve both the goals simultaneously. However, if we manage to do that, then it will strengthen our resolve to ensure both of environment sustainability and economic growth together. Investing in renewable energy projects like solar energy via the International Solar Alliance, nuclear power, wind energy and biomass energy will increase our economic prospects to become a future leader in renewable energy.

The need for all the countries is to balance both the requirements together. To ensure the fruits of economic development, we need to be cautious about environmental sustainability. Movies like the Revenant, Interstellar, Mad max: The fury road highlight through science fiction the possible future of our world if we compromise our environment for our economy. We should take cues from such artworks and other scientific studies to enable us to manage both the economy and environment in a sustainable manner.

CONCLUSION

Environmental pollution is the contagion of the environment through the emissions of pollutants such as harmful gases, chemicals, and particulate matter. Environmental protection is a remarkable change, particularly through environmental laws. Pollution is the adding of unnecessary material, which is included into the environment that can damage our Earth. Pollution disturbs our environment and the balance and the balance in the environment. The rise of population and increase in industries the problem of pollution is becoming more serious.

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