

**A THEORITICAL STUDY ON THE NATURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT IN LOCAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE STORY OF NIYAMGIRI HILL MOVEMENTS WITH AN EFFORT TO UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT .**

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**ABSTRACT**

Environmental movements also known as ecological movement are the most suitable example of collective action of social groups. The subaltern masses takes control over the resources which forms the basis of their livelihood and which are not govern by the law and order of the state . the environmental movement tries to maintain the ecological balance as any disturbance in the ecology affects the human life to a great extend and the worst sufferer are the subaltern masses whose depend on environment for their basic need . This seminar paper deals with the nature of environmental movements in global and local perspective, it studies the different characteristics of local and global environmental movement. It explores how environmental movements exist in local and global perspective. It also tries to understand the connection between global and local environmental movement perspective taking the example of the Niyamgiri movement.

**KEYWORDS**

Environment , mobilization ,local ,global, scale shift , diffusion , networking , ideologies .

**METHODOLOGY**

This seminar paper contains secondary data collected from different sources like article , and internet and books .

**OBJECTIVE**

- To explore the nature of environmental movement how it exist in local and global perspective.
- To examine the features of global and local environment movement .
- To understand the nexus and connection between the global and local perspective .

**ANALYSIS**

Viewed as global phenomena environmental movement may be considered as departure from industrialism , in that context global environment movement successfully challenge uncontrolled capitalist economic growth . This movement raise a moral and ethical question about nature, because they demand change in nature ,demand change in which we connect , we use and approach natural resources of the environment . this movements aims to protect and conserve the planet earth , in this sense this movement are necessarily global in nature , because the issue they raise are of global

significance the resources they wanted to protect are global in nature .this environmental movement aims to protect humanity because the environmental argue that “what is at stake is survival of humanity .” humanity is at stake ,our future generation is at stake and therefore we need to protect the natural resources because our sustainment on the planet earth essentially related to existence of a safe environment. Therefore this environment movement is well aimed to protect natural resources and aim to preserve humanity on the planet earth.

This global environment movement manifest both in eco centric approach and managerial approach. By eco centric approach , this environmental movement tries to re look the way at protecting then resources and nature for the sake of nature . at the same time managerial approach aims to managing the nature or dealing with nature so that nature can be manage in an efficient way and humanity can take benefit out of this nature. Global environmental movements raises the issues such as pollution, greenhouse effect, global warming , climate change ,bio diversity and ozone depletion etc,.

Characteristics of global environmental movement

1. Institutionalization – contemporary global environmental movement are institutionalized or this movements are heading towards institutionalization . institutionalization means focus is more on organizational aspect rather than protest events contemporary environmental movements manifest through environmental movement organization like the Green peace ,UNEP, etc. which aims at preserving and protecting the nature .
2. Professionalization – environmental movement organization are emerging as professional organization .they works as pressure groups , public interest lobby organization which aims at putting pressure on the state ,to prepare policies ,t prepare programs for better environmental management or for protection of nature .
3. Successful use of mass media –this movements are always mediated through mass media makes successful use mass media to convey message to the society .it makes use of different media like print media , electronic media etc.
4. Formation of political parties –like in western European countries like Germany ,England or other Scandinavian countries where environmental movements organization have successfully transform themselves into political parties which aims for better environment framework policies ,better governance framework for protection and preservation of nature.
5. Resources rich and focus on membership base – the green environmental movement emphasis more on organizational aspect and resources mobilization and relies more on science and technological knowledge

#### **LOCAL ENVIROMENTAL MOVEMENT & GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT**

With regard to action and collective mobilization these movement function at the grass root levels. Local environmental movements are intensely local and materials still continues to dominate in some of the environmental movement .this movements highlights issues of environmental degradation arising out of pollution ,deforestation ,water scarcity etc. one of the defining

characteristics of these environmental movements is direct action while the global environmental movement prefers to function more through institutionalized mechanism and professionalism. Local environmental movements emphasize more on events of collective mobilization, this movement essentially mobilizes people at grass root level and emphasizes less on organizational structure of the environmental movements. So here more emphasis is on protest events, mass participation, popular participation in a more confrontational manner. In this sense another defining characteristic of local environmental movement is its relationship with issues of class, gender, ethnicity, human rights etc.,. For example – issues of class emerge significantly in the local environmental movement organization because as this movement emerges out of local context of environmental degradation, these movements try to figure out that environmental degradation is not class neutral, they affect different classes differently, so there is a significant class dimension in environmental movement whereas global environmental movement manifests itself as neutral, classes not significant in global environmental movement because the issues they raise are global in nature which are beyond class, geography, and space.

#### **CONNECTION BETWEEN LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT AND GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS**

With respect to ideology or ideological orientation these issues of environmental movements at stake are beyond local, regional and perhaps national. Environmental movement tries to pass on the message that there is one earth, one environment and one humanity. It aims to preserve and protect humanity, nature and ecosystem. So there is a continuity of ecosystem resources and environmental movements are global in nature. When viewed the mobilization and environmental protest at grass root level, we realize that they are intensely local. Because the mobilization which takes place at grass root level raises the issue of environmental degradation that are felt and experienced at the local level while global concerns remain important elements of environmental movements the issues of locality cannot simply be ignored. Therefore we may say that with regard to action, mobilization and environmental ideologies, environmental movements transcend between local and global. They are both local and global movements, there is a continuity or connection between global issues and local issues.

In environmental movement, global ideas diffuse to the local level and local level action shifts its scale to merged as global environmental movements. Therefore what becomes more important to understand in the contemporary environmental movement is that instead of focusing on locality we shall focus on network between environmental movement organization which helps in bridging the gap between global and local perspective. So, unlike other social movements in the context of environmental movement, networking plays an important role because, it is these networking between several environmental movements organization which helps in shifting the scale of environmental movements from that of a local to non local or beyond local.

### **NETWORKING, SCALE SHIFT AND DIFFUSION**

Scale shift is an important process in any social movement through which ideas and identities are diffused. These diffusion of ideas, identities and collective mobilization can take place in both vertical and horizontal manner. By vertical diffusion, it means movement expanding to different regions and localities.

Scale shift may be understood as a change in number and level of coordinated contentious action to a different focal point, involving new actors, different object and broad claims. It is the scale shift which helps in transcending the boundary between local and global. Therefore a movement may emerge at a particular locality with local issues of environmental degradation but with scale shift these movements diffuse into global level and emerge as a global environmental movements. So scale shift in any social movements helps in several manner like –

- Shifting scale of the movement, it helps in wider diffusion of the movements.
- It also helps change in claim of contestation identity and meaning of a movement
- It results in producing new alliance target and identities

The success of a movement depends to a large extent upon the scale shift and diffusion.

### **HOW SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS HAPPENS IN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS OR MECHANISM OF SCALE SHIFT**

Scale shift takes place through three different processes. There are-

1. Non relational diffusion
2. Relational diffusion
3. Mediated diffusion

**Non relational diffusion** – transfer of information by impersonal carriers (mass media) and diffusion among people who have no or few social ties. For example – if an environmental movement takes place in a particular locality the movement comes up with several writings, articles, journals, newspaper publications, etc which the people read, understand and join hands to participate in the movement. The impersonal carriers with that of non local participants.

**Relational diffusion** – transfer of information takes place through long established lines of interactions through related movements networks or organizations who know each other, who have social ties among them

**Mediated diffusion** – scale of movement shift through a third party, which link two or more previously connected movement's site or network. It takes place through a third party who may not itself participate in the movement but plays a major role in connecting two different parties. The mediator or the broker play important role to connect local participants with that of global participants.

To better understand the nature of environmental movement in local and global perspective and the mechanism of scale shift let us see to an example -

**The NIYAMGIRI movement** – the movement started with a local tribal resistance over land acquisition in 2002 which turned out to emerge as a transnational environmental movement by 2006.

To understand this movement we need to understand the role of network in Niyamgiri movement and scale shift and diffusion that took place between local and global in context of this movement.

### **The story of Niyamgiri tribal environmental movement –**

Niyamgiri is a hill range situated in the Kalahandi and Rayagada district of south western Odisha .this hills are home to several tribal communities, especially Kondh tribes. There are different kinds of Kondh tribe who reside in these hills especially the Kutiya Kondh tribe, Jarniya Kondh tribe and Dongria Kondh tribe.

Government of Odisha sign an MoU to mine bauxite from Niyamgiri hills and established a alumina refinery factory in Lanjigarh or the foothills of Nyamgiri and this MoU assign with Vedanta resources . the Vedanta resources was suppose to construct a alumina refinery factory in the foothills of Niyamgiri in Lanjigarh in the border between Rayagada and Kalandhi district . Vedanta was supposed to mine bauxite from the Niyamgiri hills. But the proposed mining project raised several issues of concern like –

1. Issues of deforestation and loss of biodiversity
2. Threat to life and livelihood of Dongria tribe
3. It also raise the concern of displacement of several villages for construction of the alumina factory.
4. And violation of religious belief and cultural beliefs of tribal communities.

With this issues of concern “Save Niyamgiri” Movement began with local tribal mobilization against land acquisition in 2002 . the tribal communities mobilized themselves at the local level while the movement emerged at a grass root level by 2006 within 4 years save the Niyamgiri movement emerged as a global environmental movement with manifestation and mobilization transgressing beyond local .

### **Let us understand how the Scale shift and diffusion that took place in this particular movement**

Viewed from the perspective of scale shift and diffusion of social movement we may say that both relational and mediated diffusion shaped the nature, identity and context of the movement. The contentious politics of Niyamgiri was able to transgress the social ,political and geographical boundaries due to the network of social movements organization .therefore the central factor which lead to transgression of this movement is that of social movement organization who mediated among themselves who network themselves and that lead to expansion of the movement beyond local . therefore we need to understand the diffusion of Niyamgiri movement through relational and mediated network .we can divide the movement into two phases i.e.

1. The incident that took place from 2002 to 2005

2. And the event which took place from 2006 or onwards.

In the initial year from 2002 to 2005 movement diffusion in Niyamgiri movement organization takes place through relational network or through different social movement organization who know each other or among whom there is sufficient level of social ties. The local tribal resistance emerged in the form of the issue of land acquisition at this point, the issue was intensely local in nature, it was a kind of displacement issue, land acquisition issues, therefore the tribal's mobilize themselves with their conventional premodule social loyalties with their local clan and caste groups and protested against the land acquisition and displacement. The affected villages organized to form Niyamgiri Surakshya Samiti (NSS), which was formed as an umbrella organization. The NSS mobilize the tribal's with the issue of **Jal, Jameen, and Jungle** (water, land, forest) which became crucial issue for the struggles because the tribal's depends upon these 3 resources for their livelihood.

However the scale shift happened when new social movement organization joins the movement and mediated between different organizations. With the joining of important organization like Action Aid (AA) which coordinated with NSS and together they both reached out to other communities both inside the forest and the foothills. The NSS coordinated with other two organization – Sachetan Nagrik Manch (SNM) and Green Kalahandi (GK). So the NSS formed a network with which the movement expanded from the Niyamgiri foothills to that of regional movement involving participants from nearby district and gradually the focus of the struggle shifted from Niyamgiri foothills to district headquarters and gradually to the state capital.

However this issue did not stop here, gradually save the Niyamgiri movement expanded to the international level with protest events taking place at the cities like London, where Vedanta Resources had its headquarter, because Vedanta's resources was an international company and the focus of contestation shifted from the local tribal villages to that of the headquarter of Vedanta resource which was held responsible for displacing this tribal's and creating environmental degradation in that area.

From 2005 onwards significant vertical shift scale took place in Niyamgiri movement which involved crucial activist and organization who mediated to connect to other organization at national and international levels.

Two different kinds of network is identified in this movement.

1. Mediated national diffusion – where different national network which were at district level or state level organization with that of some of the national organization especially NAPM (National alliance for peoples movements) got associated with the movement, the movement expanded itself as one of the national issues. There were personalities like Medha Patkar, Vandana Shiva, Prasant Bhusan, etc.
2. Mediated international diffusion – several international organization like action aid, foil Vedanta, survival international also associated with the movement, they also form a network with local Niyamgiri Suraksha Samiti which was spearheading the movement.

By 2005 save the Niyamgiri movement had shifted its scale from that of a being a grass root level tribal struggle to that of a global environmental movement. This shift in scale or expansion of the scale took place because of networking among several movement organizations.

#### **Visible changes in the save the Niyamgiri movement due to movement diffusion**

1. With diffusion and change in the struggle of the movement there occurred a change in site of the struggle while in the initial year the site of struggle was foothills of Niyamgiri hills in the tribal village of Kalandhi and Ravaged district of Odisha ,these movement shifted its site of struggle to that of state capital ,national capital and even international level like in the cities of London where Vedanta had its headquarter . this networking resulted in shifting the site of struggle from that of local to non local
2. These diffusion and scale shift was helped in changing the meaning and issue of the movement . the issue of contestation changed from displacement due to land acquisition to law environment ,human rights and the indigenous community ,because the movement which was at protest in global level was the issue of concerning the local level like the issue of biodiversity ,deforestation due to mining loss of religious and cultural believe of indigenous community .
3. The diffusion and the scale shift also resulted in change of the identity of the movement from that of an anti displacement movement to that of a environmental movement.
4. Changes in the strategies of the movement took place like preservation of ecological balance restoration of forest, rights of primitive tribal groups and this became new strategies of mobilization or struggle.

Save the Niyamgiri movement saw the global local linkages; the movement emerged as a local protest, local mobilization but this did not necessarily remain as local protest because the issue that this movement raised was of global significance.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Instead of considering environmental movement in local struggles indifference of livelihood when we see the literature concerning environmental movement most often we come across the idea that environmental movement are local struggles . a critical analysis will tell us that while locality is important that is not the defining characteristics of environmental movement , locality or materiality is important to begin a struggle .but environmental movement have the potential to expand themselves and build network with like minded issues because the issue they raise are of global significance . his movements may be local so far as action and mobilization is concern but with regard to ideology and implementation this environmental movements are essentially global.

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