



Original Article

Climate Change and Its Consequences: A Review

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Abstract

Nature is a god as a whole itself, and provides us security. Some naturaphile people have a strong connection with it and are keen observers. Their social, cultural, and economic lives are dependent on nature. Many plant and animal species, including trees and snakes, are regarded as their life-saving deities. However, almost all of us have harmed the environment and its ecology for our own benefit in the name of progress. We are clearing forests and roadside trees to make room for widened roads, excavating hills and destructing mountains for mining minerals, and converting farmland into factories and settlements. Consequently, the climate is changing fast; global is warming and mountains are in the edge of extinction and glacier on it is melting now. These human errors endanger not only local inhabitant, but tourists, fishers and hunters. Climate change is responsible for earthquakes, floods, wildfires, droughts and the extermination of plant and animal species in many parts of the world. In other words, these are man-made natural disasters that have distorted nature and its beauty. It is a peak hour for all to awaken and make efforts to save nature and rectify the damage done to it.

Keywords: ecology, mountains, climate, glacier, wildfire, nature etc.

Introduction

Nature is the eternal and divine force, under whose benign shelter all living beings flourish on Earth. For thousands of years man has had a close and sacred relationship with nature. For these primitive communities, nature was not only a physical environment but a living God who nourished and sustained life in myriad ways as they depended on forests, rivers, mountains, animals, rainfall, fertile soil and changing seasons for their survival, livelihood, culture and spiritual fulfillment. This deep dependence on nature developed reverence for the natural world. Thus, people worshipped trees, plants, rivers, lakes, hills, animals, and celestial figures as representations of the divine power. Nature was worshipped as the supreme power, the universal mother, who maintained and nourished all forms of life. Selim explores, "The folkloric tales, legends, myths, sayings, songs, ballads, dances, music, and poetry can significantly illuminate on the man-nature relationship. (Selim 2018). This connection reveals the fact that human life and nature are inseparable. Indigenous and tribal communities had possessed profound ecological wisdom because of their close association with nature and its divine beauty. They always paid their heartfelt gratitude toward the Earth and its resources as their social customs, rituals, folklore, and festivals were not accomplished without it.

The deities were worshipped as rivers, mountains as protectors, trees as sacred symbols of life, and animals as friends in the universe. These beliefs made man and nature live in harmony and refrain from unrestrained exploitation of natural resources. The ancients knew that human life could survive only as long as the balance of nature was not disturbed. "A significant driver of ecocide and the environmental crisis, for society has been madly pursuing project 'human planet' without considering that humanity is fully dependent on nature". (Kopnina, 2018).

Climate change and environmental transformation are not entirely new phenomena. Ever since life's inception onto the Earth, it has been undergoing natural changes such as volcanic eruptions, solar radiation, earthquakes, floods, droughts. The Earth is interconnected in its components as a change in it influences the others. It is the part of natural evolution that varies in climate, temperature, and ecosystems that have been occurring over millions of years. Therefore, the statement "change is the law of nature" reflects the dynamic character of the universe.

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But now the people for selfness, have deformed the nature and its components like air, water, rivers, soil, forests, mountains, animals etc. physically, biologically and chemically that cause many diseases to human beings and lead them to death. "Ecocriticism believes that literary, visual, and other representations of nature are very much to do with an age's views and treatment of nature. Further, it seeks links between literary studies and environmental activism, between human and social sciences and environmental discourse. It appropriates the rhetoric or environmentalism while looking at the effects such discourses have on the culture." (Nayar P. 2010).

Technologically advanced people often treat the ancient people as a commoditizer for profit who worshiped nature as a protector. This shift from reverence to exploitation has weakened the bond between humans and the nature.

Discussions

In present scenario, in the name of development, man has created ecological imbalance. Instead of living with nature, humanity has attempted to dominate and control it. The pursuit of industrialization, urban expansion, scientific advancement, and economic growth, humans have exploited natural resources without restraint. Forests are being cleared for industries and urban settlements; rivers and oceans are being polluted with industrial waste, chemicals and plastic; air is being poisoned by smoke and the gases of the greenhouse; and the fertile lands are being degraded by the excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers. "Banyan tree was considered holy in India; a tree that unselfishly gave its all to others, building an ecosystem that sustained many birds and animals. Innumerable plants and shrubs found succour and shade under its protective cover" (Tripathi 2013). The human greed to make money has thoroughly changed the physical, biological, and chemical composition of the Earth knocking the door of destruction for entire humanity. Today, we pursue the industrialization, urbanization, economic growth, and technological advancement regardless of its horrific consequences. We are rapidly destroying the forests for industries, widening roads, and housing projects. Many NGOs, governments, naturaphile individuals, and writers through their writings tirelessly are running the campaign and appealing the people to save the environment. Amish Tripathi, a distinguished contemporary writer, highlights the beauty of nature in his novel *The Immortals of Meluha*, in ancient India, reveals how Indian culture, tradition and society are connected with environment and natural resources. He remarks, "The vast valley was covered by a lush green canvas of grass. On it was painted the masterpiece that was Kashmir. Rows upon rows of flowers arranged all of God's colours, their brilliance broken only by the soaring Chinar trees, offering a majestic, yet warm Kashmiri welcome. The melodious singing of the birds calmed the exhausted ears of Shiva's tribe, accustomed only to the rude howling of icy mountain winds." (Tripathi A. 2022).

The lifestyles of people must be environment-friendly, conserving forests and water resources, reducing pollution and using renewable energy to protect

biodiversity. "Environmental awareness and moral responsibility are essential for saving the earth for future generations." S. Udhaykumar remarks, "Amish Tripathi incorporates nature as the core character of his novel and the conflicts happening in the novel revolves around the nature and to preserve the mother land with its abundant resources." Climate change has caused devastating natural catastrophes in many parts of the world. For example-Joshimath sinking in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand in India, Kashmir's flood (2014), Kedarnath's flood (2013), Bihar's flood (2007) etc had caused massive destruction of properties and loss of thousands' lives. In 2020 India had severe cyclones like Cyclone Amphan in Kolkata and Cyclone Nisarga in Mumbai in the months of May and June. Heavy rains at the same time caused flooding in many districts affecting millions of people. We have an unseasonal rain that causes crops ruins and sometimes it takes human lives by thunderous lightening, road accidents and other life taking causes. Such disasters are a showcase of the hazardous impact of climate change and exploitation of the environment.

In the contrary, when the entire world was suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of India announced a nationwide lockdown in which people were caged in their houses, vehicles were banned on roads, a system was developed to work from home, it seemed as if the primitive age had returned. One of the greatest effects of lockdown was that nature had begun to heal itself. When humans slowed down, the levels of pollution dropped quickly. The air became cleaner, rivers and water bodies began to clear themselves, and mountains that had remained hidden behind pollution for decades became visible again from miles of distances. Animals and birds also moved more freely in many areas. This period clearly showed that nature has the power to recover itself if human beings set it free from exploitation and live in harmony with the environment.

Human beings are dominating over nature, without knowing its harmful effects day by day. As Franz Broswimmer states ecocide, "The horrifying scope and cumulative effects of the human-induced crisis of mass extinction and habitat destruction." (Broswimmer, 2020). Literary writers and scholars study literature and environment in an interdisciplinary way to create awareness about the significance and presence of nature. They are a reminder to society through literary works that humans have to learn from nature and live in harmony with nature. Nature is primary, and human beings only part of it. Human life cannot survive without nature, because nature provides everything necessary for existence.

But thing is not permanent, only nature is. Amish Tripathi captures the mystery, danger and grandeur of the Dandak Forest beautifully in his novel *The Secret of the Nagas*. The thick forest stands for fear and mystery, but also wisdom, knowledge and the hidden truths of life. In this novel, the Dandak Forest is presented as a powerful natural world where humans have to respect the strength and balance of nature. In this portrayal, the writer points to the close link between forests, human civilization and spiritual knowledge. "That the Dandak Forest is the largest in the

world. That it stretches from the Eastern Sea to the Western Sea. That it is so dense that the sun hardly ever cracks through. That it is populated by monstrous animals that will devour those who lose their ways. That some trees themselves are poisonous, felling those stupid enough to eat or touch things better left alone." (Tripathi, A. 2022). The Dandak Forest is described as dense as impenetrable even for the air but now it has lost its formidable beauty.

Reasons for the slow and silent death of the Earth are as- The burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas results in the release of large amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The gases form an invisible blanket around the planet, trapping solar heat and amplifying global temperatures. There is therefore a pressing need to restore harmony between human beings and nature. The tragedy of the modern age is that even the humble worshipper of nature has become its destroyer forgetting that they are inseparably connected with the environment.

The destruction of forests, depletion of natural resources and contamination of air and water are the consequences of humanity's wrong doing with nature and failure to respect the sacred bond between life and nature. Thus, it is an urgent need to restore the harmony of human civilization with the natural world. The environmental conservation, afforestation, sustainable development, renewable energy and ecological awareness are necessary to prevent the Earth from an irreversible destruction. We need to re-learn the ancient wisdom that revered nature and realize that the survival of mankind depends on the preservation of the environment.

Conclusion

Overall climate change issues have become a global concern over the last few decades. These changes are naturally destructive ones caused by human greed and irresponsible development which are severely damaging the Earth. While humanity has plethora of things to learn, coherently it has to maintain balance with nature, because protecting nature ultimately means protecting human existence itself.

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Conflicts of interest

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