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A STUDY ON ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND POLICY ADVOCACY

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Abstract

Environmental justice is a serious issue that has to be addressed right away. The numerous components of environmental justice are examined in this article, along with its socioeconomic, racial, and ethical implications. It explores the historical causes of environmental injustice, showing the disproportionate vulnerability of vulnerable groups to environmental risks. It acknowledges that vulnerable communities, frequently made up of people of color and low-income individuals, bear an unequal share of the costs of pollution, hazardous waste sites, and other environmental risks. The importance of policy advocacy in resolving these gaps and promoting just and sustainable environmental policies is also emphasized in this study. It demonstrates how grassroots movements, legal action, and policy reform can lead to beneficial change by looking at case studies and effective advocacy activities. We will examine how the social movement for environmental justice has changed over time, from its inception during the Civil Rights movement to its current iterations. In the end, this study emphasizes the critical need for environmental justice and the crucial role that policy advocacy plays in establishing a more just and sustainable global community.

Keywords

Environmental Justice , policy , pollution , vulnerable

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INTRODUCTION

Environmental justice refers to the equal treatment and meaningful participation of all people in the establishment, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, regardless of race, color, country origin, or income. Environmental justice (EJ) arose in the 1980s in reaction to discrepancies in environmental burdens faced by minority and low-income communities. The word became popular following the 1991 “People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. “Equity is ensuring that no one group or community bears a disproportionate part of the burden of environmental devastation. Inclusion is the process of involving all stakeholders, particularly underprivileged communities, in decision-making. Accountability is the process of holding institutions accountable for correcting environmental injustices. Equity is ensuring that no one group or community bears a disproportionate part of the burden of environmental devastation. Inclusion is the process of involving all stakeholders, particularly underprivileged communities, in decision-making. Accountability is the process of holding institutions accountable for correcting environmental injustices. Examine India’s existing environmental laws and regulations, such as the Environment (Protection) Act of 1986 and the National Green Tribunal Act of 2010. Examine the policies’ success and limitations in fostering environmental justice. Cross-border advocacy groups frequently work together to solve problems like environmental deterioration in underdeveloped countries brought on by the consumption trends of nations with greater resources. In order to deal with historical and current environmental injustices, environmental justice is essential in policy advocacy. Environmental justice is essential in creating reasonable and efficient environmental policy because it promotes fair treatment and takes underprivileged people’ demands into account.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Hornik et al. investigate how individuals conceive the relationship between environmental justice and sustainability using stakeholder perspectives in Milwaukee, WI, USA
2. Jennings, V.; Larson, L.; Yun, J. The article examines the significance of ensuring that urban ecosystem services and health advantages are distributed equally across all demographic groups, utilizing ideas from several disciplines to highlight the link between cultural ecosystem services and health equality.

3. Lambert .The study on industrial degradation by Lambert et al. gave rise to the idea of environmental justice, a participatory research that focuses on injustices in the environment and their consequences on human health.
4. Drolet et al. 2015 . An in-depth approach that includes research, practice, and policymaking components is needed to integrate environmental justice and sustainability into social work practice in rural communities.
5. Pfeifer . With the aim to promote sustainable community development, social workers must integrate their knowledge, handle the special challenges of rural life, work in partnership with residents and government officials, and maintain a strong sense of place .
6. Carey et al., 2015 . It is possible to lessen present health disparities and expand health equity by utilizing a focused policy change tactics, or “proportionate universalism,” that focuses on macro-level components that disproportionately affect the populations via the highest demands .

METHODOLOGY

Study Location : Chennai district of Tamil Nadu

Study Duration: 01/09/2023 To 10/09/2023

Sample Size : 50

Research Method : Descriptive survey method

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To Promote stronger environmental rules and regulations to prevent pollution and save ecosystems.
- Encourage community engagement in local environmental efforts and policy debates
- To Promote legislation that supports eco-friendly and sustainable business, transportation, and agricultural operations.
- To Reduce inequalities across populations in pollution exposure and availability to clean water, air, and green areas.

Study Mode : Synchronic study because the entire data is collected within a single time frame Google form.

GENDER OF THE STUDY RESPONDENTS

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	27	54
Female	23	46
Others	0	0
Total	50	100

Regarding the gender 54% of the respondents are male and the remaining 46% are female.

AGE GROUP

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 to 23 years	20	40
23 to 28 years	15	30
Above 28 years	15	30
Total	50	100

Age groups in the categories varies differently. 40% are from 18 to 23 years, 30% are from 23 to 28 years and the remaining 30% are above 28 years.

1. Which type of pollution should be treated first in order to address environmental justice issues?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Air pollution	20	40
Water pollution	15	30
Soil contamination	15	30
Total	50	100

The respondents chose the options in an equal ratio that 40% of the respondents preferred Air pollution and the remaining 30% choose water pollution as their options and other members choose soil contamination as 30%

2.How does wealth disparity affect vulnerable groups' access to clean water and air?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Environmental imbalance worse	19	38
Increase environmental equity	20	40
No impact	11	22
Total	50	100

Most of the respondents shows increase environmental equity which is 40%, 38% of the people chose environmental imbalance worse and the other 22% choose no impact as their options.

3. Which policy approach is most effective in preventing environmental displacement of vulnerable communities?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Initiatives to provide affordable housing	16	32
Strict zoning laws	26	52
No specific policies needed	8	16
Total	50	100

In the study 52% of the people chose strict zoning laws, 32% of the people chose Initiatives to provide affordable housing and the remaining 16% chose No specific policies needed

4. Which economic models are most compatible with achieving environmental justice and sustainability goals?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Socialist economic models	30	60
Circular economy models	10	20
Growth-focused capitalist models	10	20
Total	50	100

The perspective of the respondents Are different from one another. some agreed with the Socialist economic models which is 60 % and both 10% choose the statements of Circular economy models and Growth-focused capitalist models.

5. Which indicators should be used to measure the success of environmental justice policies?

Options	Frequency	Percent age
Reducing pollution and health inequalities	25	50
Lightweight regulation of industry	17	34
Economic expansion and employment creation	13	26
Total	50	100

As we could see that Most of the respondents shows Reducing pollution and health inequalities which is 50%, 34% of the people chose Lightweight regulation of industry and the other 26 choose Economic expansion and employment creation as their options.

6. What is the primary goal of Environmental Justice?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Protecting endangered species	20	40
Promoting economic growth at any cost	15	30
Ensuring fair treatment and involvement of all people in environmental policies	15	30
Total	50	100

In the study 40% of the respondents choose Protecting endangered species as their option, 30% of the people chose Promoting economic growth at any cost as their option and the remaining 30% chose Ensuring fair treatment and involvement of all people in environmental policies as their option.

7. What does the term “environmental racism” refer to ?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
An eco-friendly fashion fad	18	36
Environmental policies that impact minority groups disproportionately.	25	50
Promoting equal access to clean energy sources	7	14
Total	50	100

Most of the respondents chose Environmental policies that impact minority groups disproportionately. as their option which is 50% following that 36% of the respondents chose An eco-friendly fashion fad and the rest chose Promoting equal access to clean energy sources as their option which is 14%.

8. Which branch of government is typically responsible for creating and implementing environmental policies in many countries?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Judicial	21	42
Legislative	18	36
Executive	11	22
Total	50	100

We could see that 42% of the respondents choose Judicial as their option, 36% of the respondents shows Legislative as their option and the remaining 22% of the people chose Executive as their option.

9. What is the term for the practice of advocating for the protection and preservation of natural ecosystems?

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Pollution	20	40
Exploitation	16	32
Pollution	14	28
Total	50	100

Most of the respondents choose Conservation as their option which is 40% and the remaining 32% chose Exploitation as their option and remaining peoples chose 14 % as a pollution

CONCLUSION

Policy advocacy and environmental justice are essential in addressing environmental disparities and promoting sustainable behaviour's. Advocates work tirelessly to ensure underprivileged individuals have a voice in decision-making, aiming for equitable access to clean air, water, and a healthy environment. They advocate for effective policies and lobbying to hold governments and industries accountable. Environmental justice efforts are supplemented by policy advocacy, which converts grassroots concerns into practical policies. With increasing environmental challenges like climate change and biodiversity loss, these activists' work is crucial for a sustainable, inclusive, and environmentally responsible future.

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