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**ONE DAY INTERDISCIPLINARY NATIONAL SEMINAR
ON
Sustainable Development in India:
Strategies & Emerging Trends in Businesses**

Saturday 16th March 2024

Organized by
Department of Commerce & IQAC

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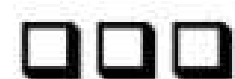
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF ECO CRITICAL APPROACH IN LITERATURE

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Abstract:

Sustainable development is the organizing principle for achieving human development objectives with the sustainable maintenance of ability of natural systems to provide natural systems and ecosystem. Gender equality is prerequisite for achieving the aim of sustainable development. The awareness and practice of equality is important for the achievement of objectives of sustainable development.

Key Words: Sustainable development, Eco criticism, Ecosystem.

Introduction:

Ecocriticism is a school of literary criticism that started developing in the 1990s in America. It is the study of representation of nature in literary works. It studies the relationship between literature and environment or how man's relationship with his physical environment is reflected in literature. According to Heise, 'ecocriticism investigates how nature is used literally or metaphorically in certain literary or authentic genres and tropes and what assumptions about nature underline genres that may not address this trope directly. In the essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism," Rueckert defines ecocriticism as 'the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature because ecology (as a science, as a discipline, as the bases for human vision) has the greatest relevance to the present

and the future of the world'.

Significance of the Study:

The connection between nature and man is very important in the work. There cannot be plot without setting i.e. place. To Buell, there cannot be is without Man always exists within some natural environment. Environment always influences the speech and actions of the man. Place and environment are set to human action or symbol of human feelings or thoughts. In literature landscape has a symbolic meaning. However, the relationship between man and his physical environment had always been interesting to the writers and literary critics. Ecocritical approach brings out the importance of the environment to the major themes in the works. The environment always plays important role in the work as well as in life. It provides relief from the tensions. The writer tries to compare his life with nature and finds relief. He uses different nature images in his work. However, nature imagery in the work allows the reader to perceive the human psyche. These images from nature contribute to the themes in the work. Ecocritical reading also provides solutions to environmental problems. Ecocriticism attempt to discover nature as absence, silence in texts, and construe environmental representation as a relevant category of literary, aesthetic, and political analysis; often in conjunction with a focus on gender, class and race issues in literary texts.

Concept of sustainable development:

Sustainable development has been defined in many ways, but the most frequently quoted definition is from Our Common Future, also known as the Brundtland Report: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." The concept of sustainable development can be interpreted in many different ways, but at its core is an approach to development that looks to balance

different, and often competing, needs against an awareness of the environmental, social and economic limitations we face as a society. The way we approach development affects everyone. The impact of our decisions as a society has very real consequences for people's lives. Poor planning of communities, for example, reduces the quality of life for the people who live in them. Sustainable development provides an approach to making better decisions on the issues that affect all of our lives. By incorporating health plans into the planning of new communities, for instance, we can ensure that residents have easy access to healthcare and leisure facilities.

Ecocritical approach in Literature:

Twenty first century is often called the century of the environment. Ecocriticism is a coherent and broadly based movement. Without biosphere and planetary conditions human life could not exist. Ecocriticism challenges too much postmodern critical discourses as well as the critical systems of the past. Our perceptions of nature are necessarily human constructed. Nature plays a vital role in shaping human attitudes and behavior. Literary work has the environmental context. Charles Darwin asserted in *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* that humans are descended from earlier forms of life. Ecocriticism draws the attention of the world to the crucial issues of environmental degradation through the forum of literature, Nature and culture are inclusive terms. Ecocriticism is committed to making the world less unjust. Well-conceived and sincerely implemented policies can make a difference to people. High economic growth rates do not at all mean inclusive growth. The ecological analysis of the human life reflected in literature has been called ecological Criticism or Ecocriticism. Ecocritical theory deals with the relationship between human life and nature. It transcends the exclusive categories of center and periphery. It is high time now to ponder over

the evil consequences of industrialization and mechanization, globalization, privatization and liberalization. It is the study of the interrelationship between nature and human life.

The environment nurtures, uplifts our senses and sustains our existence. Wendell Berry explores the political and moral implications of degrading and neglecting place in novels such as *The Memory of Old Jack* (1976). In the United States the environmental literature includes poetry, fiction, and drama that scrutinize the relationship between humans and the natural environment. The consciousness of the ethical component of literature is an important principle of the new ecological literary criticism or Ecocriticism. The writers such as Berry Lopez, Terry Tempest Williams, Rick Bass, Robert Michael Pyle, Scott Russell Sanders, Wendell Barry, Gary Snyder and other environmental writers achieve not only aesthetic brilliance but understanding of human society's relationship with the planet.

Literary artists consider that values are at the heart of their work. Literary scholars give the utmost importance to the issues of human values and attitudes. Environmental writers create interest among their readers. They present a long-term vision of our relationship with the planet. They stimulate ethical reformation. We have approached the 21st century. It has become clear that the model of free economy, Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization does not work. The problems of environmental degradation, poverty and domestic inequality have begun to threaten the very existence of society and nation. They are threatening the quality of human life and the security of the nation. The model has proved ultimately self-defeating, as it threatens the beneficiaries of the so-called progress. The world needs an alternative approach. The new approach is Sustainable Development. The development pattern should create social cohesion rather than social inequality.

The development pattern should aim at the improvement of the quality of life. Environmental degradations affect the quality of life. In the absence of a healthy environment people are victimized by various types of diseases. Future generations feel insecure. Economic development pattern is responsible for the present problems. The problems are endemic not incidental. We need to reassess what we mean by economic and social progress. We should introduce fundamental changes in economic.

Poverty is the mother of all ills. Poverty is responsible for the rise in crimes and anti-social behavior. The shadows of globalization of markets have made even the middle class vulnerable and insecure. Unequal society cannot stand the challenges, it breaks down. The middle class instead of solving the problem of the decay of society wants to evade job. They try to find peace and security within the four walls of their home. The people confront fear and tension and anxiety in their homes too. Sustainable development is the best model of development which improves the standard of life for all. The market economy has belittled the governments in the various countries of the world. It has caused anarchy in some African countries like Nigeria. In the present model of market economy people have developed distrust over the political institution which governs them. Democracy needs to be strengthened in the real manner.. The society at large is united in the true sense.

The supporters of globalization said that the path of globalization will reduce poverty but globalization actually widened the gulf between the rich and the poor. We need a new direction of development. The new direction of such a type will not give rise to division in the society, but it will create cohesion in society. Conventional economic and social policies are creating the problems instead of solving them. The quality of life is declining: The problems of availability of drinking water, homes, jobs, security have become severe. There is a rise in crimes all over

the world. The poverty and inequality within society has been threatening the very security of the nations. The people have developed disaffection for politicians and politics as an institution. Because politicians have become very selfish, they do not have commitment for inclusive development. They have made the business of politics for their own selfish interest. Ecocriticism addresses these interlocking problems. The Real World offers the vision for the twenty first century which is appropriate for every nation and every century:

Our vision is of a Britain in which a reduction in inequality and an increase in both collective and individual security provides everyone with the opportunity to fulfill their potential, in which greater social cohesion strengthens both national and local communities; in which cultural diversity is celebrated; in which the improved provision of social goods raises everybody's quality of life even as material consumption falls to sustainable levels; in which a thriving democracy allows all to participate (The Politics of the Real World, P. 125)

Ecocriticism is an avowed political mode of analysis. It enables us to analyze and criticize the world. in which we live. Culture is something lived, part and parcel of one's everyday existence. The authentic culture must be natural. Radical changes have taken place in the study of literature during the last decades of the twentieth century. The human beings themselves have done a lot of damage to nature and ultimately to themselves. The harmony of humanity and nature enhances the quality and standard of life. It is closely related to history, philosophy, psychology, art history, and ethics. It is a political mode of analysis of literature, as the comparison with feminism and Marxism suggests. It draws much from the environmentally oriented developments in philosophy and political theory. It shows a synthesis of environmental and social concerns.

The theory is morally and politically oriented.

John Passmore has made a distinction between 'problems in ecology' and 'ecological problems'. According to him problems in ecology are scientific problems which need hypothesis, experiments they need scientific analysis, but ecological problems have arisen out of our dealing with nature. Ecocriticism helps to define, explore and resolve ecological problems and other consequent problems. Structuralism and post-structuralism dealt with the linguistic function of the signs that relate to each other. They do not refer to the real things, events and incidents on the earth. It is an interdisciplinary approach that draws on literary and cultural theory, philosophy, sociology, psychology and environmental history and ecology. It has profound moral and political significance in the 21st century.

Ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between the human and the non-human. It analyses human life in the context of nature. Ecocriticism supports indigenous ways of life as potential models for a harmonious existence on the earth. It explores human life in the scenario of globalization, privatization and liberalization. Environmental crisis poses severe threats to the values, political, economic and cultural life of the people in various nations of the world. Ecocriticism began in the 1990s. It has a historical background. From ancient times various people have been expressing concerns about the natural world. Ecocriticism takes a strong ethical stand. It has a commitment to the natural world as an important thing rather than as an object of study only. It is a very young school of Literary Criticism or Movement. It explores how to use the stored energy of literature in effective political action for solving contemporary problems. Lawrence Buell published *The Environmental Imagination*, where he defines "Ecocriticism" as a study of the relationship between literature and the environment conducted in the spirit of

commitment to the natural environment. It explores environmental issues and its influence on human life. It takes an ethical stand for effective change in the world. Ecocriticism is not only a critical approach to analyze literature but also a movement towards a sustainable development on the earth. It expresses the need for cultural change in the world. It broadens the view of life to include nonhuman life forms and the environment as a part of the global community. Glotfelty rightly said that traditional criticism failed to explain green issues. It is an important literary theory. Evolution of Ecocriticism in Literary Studies.

William Rueckert is the first person to use the term Ecocriticism. In 1978, Rueckert published an essay titled Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism. He made an important suggestion to apply ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature, ecologically minded individuals and scholars have been publishing progressive works of Eco theory and criticism since the explosion of environmentalism in the late 1960s and 1970s. However, there was no organized movement or school to study the environmental aspect of literature. They were scattered and categorized under different subject headings: Pastoralism, Human Ecology, Regionalism, American Studies etc. British Marxist critic, Raymond Williams wrote a seminal critique of pastoral literature in 1973, *The Country and the City*. He professed decidedly a Green Socialism. Another early ecocritical text is Joseph Meeker's *The Comedy of Survival* published in 1974. He made an argument that environmental crisis is caused primarily by a cultural tradition in the west of separation of Nature from Culture. The argument dominates Ecocriticism and Environmental philosophy. Ecocriticism analyses representation of nature in literary genres. Early efforts made by the critics were disunited. Ecocriticism crystallized into a coherent and organized movement in 1990s in the United States of America.

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