BA (H) Sociology

Discipline Specific Elective 03

Environmental Sociology

Course Objectives:

1. This course is designed to allow students to reflect on the ‘environment’ as an object of sociological inquiry. It would orient them to the core debates of environmental sociology, different approaches within the sub-discipline and how these approaches may be used to understand environmental issues and movements in India.

2. The aim is to convey the fact that since environmental issues in contemporary times have come to assume utmost significance representing a complex interplay of several factors that are material, ideal and social in character; these linkages need to be analyzed from a sociological standpoint as they play out in our societies in varied forms.

3. The themes running throughout this paper highlight the interactive and unfinished character of causality in environmental sociology, the central role of social inequality in environmental conflicts, the important influence of democratic institutions, the connect between the local and the global and finally the role played by the community at large.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. An understanding of dynamic between natural and social worlds from a sociological perspective.


3. An ability to contribute from a sociological stand point to any research endeavors or public policy conversations that assess causes, effects and possible solutions of environmental issues and problems.

4. To be alive to the questions of ecology and inequity and sensitive to the questions of environmental justice and ethics.
Course Content:

Unit 1: Envisioning Environmental Sociology

1.1. What is Environmental Sociology?
1.2. Realist-Constructionist debate.
1.3 Indian Environmentalism: Cultural Responses

Unit 2: Theoretical Approaches in Environmental Sociology

2.1 Treadmill of Production
2.2 Ecological Modernization
2.3 Risk
2.4 Ecofeminism and Feminist environmentalism
2.5 Social Ecology

Unit 3: Environmental Movements in India

3.1 Forest based movement – Chipko
3.2 Water based movement – Narmada
3.3 Land based movements – Anti-mining and Seed

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Unit 1. Envisioning Environmental Sociology [Weeks 1-3]

1.1 What is Environmental Sociology?


1.2 Realist-Constructionist Debate


1.3 Indian Environmentalism: Cultural Responses

Unit 2: Theoretical Approaches in Environmental Sociology  [Weeks 4-10]

2.1 Treadmill of Production

2.2 Ecological Modernization

2.3 Risk

2.4 Ecofeminism and Feminist Environmentalism


2.5 Social Ecology

Unit 3: Environmental Movements in India [Weeks 11-14]

3.1 Forest based movement – Chipko

3.2 Water based movement – Narmada

### 3.3 Land based movements – Anti-mining and Seed


**References:**

**Compulsory Readings:**


Additional Resources:

a. Books & Articles


b. Audio Visual Material


4. “The Call of Mother Earth- A Documentary on Niyamgiri” By Saroj Mahapatra

5. “Seed: The Untold story” by Jon Betz and Taggart Seigel

**Teaching Learning Process:**

Environment and environmental Sociology are deeply contentious, hence the teaching learning for this course necessarily has to be deliberative with an emphasis on debates and discussions. The lecture classes have to be accompanied by movies and documentaries on several contemporary environmental issues. Guest lectures by public servants, activists, NGO workers and various stake holders would be integral to the class. The students would be encouraged to set out into the field and grasp issues concretely. Learning would also involve an attempt at encouraging collaboration with science departments in the college to make it truly interdisciplinary.

**Assessment Methods:**

Assessment for this paper would be in the form of tests, written assignments, projects reports and Presentations.

**Key Words:**

Environment, nature, realism, constructionism, ecology, climate change, capitalism, modernization, sustainability, development, economic growth, environmental justice, power, movements, genetically modified crops, clean and green technology.