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ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AND ITS IMPACT ON HEALTH

Dr. Smt. Desai M.B.

RajarshiChhatrapatiShahu College, Kolhapur

ABSTRACT:

The health of a nation mainly depends on food – habits, living conditions ecology, changing habits, immunity to medicines and of course the condition of medical services. Environmental pollution is a global problem and is common to both developed as well as developing countries. The decline in environmental quality as a consequence of pollution is evidenced by loss of vegetable cover and biological diversity, excessive concentration of harmful chemicals in the ambient atmosphere and in food grains, growing risks of environmental accidents and threats to life support system. Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Summing Report puts that man's activities have disturbed the eco –balance by deteriorating the environmental conditions suitable to sustain life. Cost of pollution is the cost of health. It gives rise to new bad diseases, leads to many fatal disorders and causes loss of human beings efficiency due to non-conductive atmosphere: thereby reduction in output causing economic loss.

The present paper tries to trace the effects of various types of pollution on the health of human beings and concludes that multi-dimensional strategies are needed for maintaining the balance between development and environment.

Key words:

Ecosystem, Biological Diversity, Deterioration

Introduction:

The health of a nation mainly depends on food - habits, living conditions ecology, changing habits, immunity to medicines and of course the condition of medical services.

Environmental pollution is a global problem and is common to both developed as well as developing countries. The decline in environmental quality as a consequence of pollution is evidenced by loss of vegetable cover and biological diversity, excessive concentration of harmful chemicals in the ambient atmosphere and in food grains, growing risks of environmental accidents and threats to life support system. Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Summing Report puts that man's activities have disturbed the eco -balance by deteriorating the environmental conditions suitable to sustain life and have caused pollution. Any undesirable change in the physical, chemical or biological characteristics of air, water, and soil that may create a hazard or potential hazard to the health, safety or welfare of any living species is called pollution. Environmental pollution seriously affects the health and well-being of human beings.

Cost of pollution is the cost of human health. A number of fatal disorders like tuberculosis, typhoid, lung cancer, respiratory diseases, hypertension etc. Also there is loss of efficiency of workers as a result of non-conductive environment in which they work. This caused

reduction in working hours and thereby reduction in output causing economic loss.

Objectives:

The present paper is undertaken with following objectives:

1. To know the types of Environmental Pollution
2. To study the effects on environmental pollution on human health
3. To draw conclusions

Division of the Paper:

The present paper is divided into three parts. First part introduces the various types of environmental pollution. Second part gives information about effects of environment on human health. Conclusions are drawn in third part.

Methodology:

The information for the present paper is obtained through secondary sources. The secondary data is collected from various books related to environment.

Pollutions can be classified as follows:

Air pollution, Land pollution, Noise pollution, Marine pollution, Water pollution, Thermal pollution and Solid waste pollution.

1. **Air pollution:** Effects of air pollution on human health are when ozone in the troposphere, occurring in concentration above normal it produces deleterious effects in plants as well as animals including man.

2. **Water pollution:** Water is said to be polluted when it is changed in its quality or composition directly or indirectly as a result of waste disposal and other human activities so that it becomes less suitable or harmful for drinking. Polluted water are turbid not pleasant for drinking, sometimes smell bad and are not suitable for bathing, washing or other human activities. They are generally harmful and diseases like typhoid, dysentery and cholera spread through polluted water. When such polluted waters are drunk by humans nitrates taken into body are converted to toxic nitrites by intestinal bacteria. This in turn combines with the haemoglobin to form methamaglobin which interferes with the oxygen carrying capacity of the blood, producing serious diseases known as methaemoglobinaemia. The various elements that results from this disease include damage to respiratory and vascular system, blue colouration of the skin and even cancer. When the level of methamaglobin exceeds 20%, the subject is afflicted with headaches, giddiness and tachycardia. Formation of 807 methamaglobin may result into death. Babies when infected turn blue and die.

3. **Fluoride pollution:** Fluoride pollution is not absorbed in the blood stream. It has an affinity for calcium and gets accumulated in the bones, resulting in the matting of teeth, pain in the bones and joints and outward bending of legs from the knees. According to WHO, fluoride concentration below 0.5 ppm over a period of 5 – 10 years may result in fluorosis terminating in crippling or paralysis.

4. **Lead pollution:** Lead and processing industries constitute the major sources of serious lead pollution. Lead pollution causes liver and kidney damage, reduction in hemoglobin formation, mental retardation and abnormalities of fertility and pregnancy. Pregnancy may result in a miscarriage or stillbirth and if the child is born living, there is a higher infant mortality. Children may suffer from macrocephaly or convulsions or both.

5. **Noise pollution :** Unwanted sound dumped into the atmosphere leading to health hazards Effects of noise pollution on human beings are:

Auditory Effects :

a. **Auditory Fatigue** – It appears into go Db and may be associates with side effects such as whisling and buzzing in the ears.

b. **Deafness** – Continuous noise may lead to gradual decline in hearing ability and eventually deafness.

Non – auditory Effects :

a. **Communication Interference** – Frequencies in the range of 300 – 500 h2car 50 to 60 db, commonly produced by road traffic interferes with speech, sometimes making it unintelligible, sound of warning are misunderstood or even not heard.

b. **Sleep Interference** – Noise reduces the depth and quality of sleep and thereby adversely affects the overall mental and physical health.

c. **Annoyance** – Psychologists say that prolonged exposure to noise for a day only may lead to severe mental illness and emotional distress, and in a few cases, it result in violent behavior as a consequence of mental collapse.

d. **Loss of working efficiency**

e. **Physiological disorders** – nervous, anxiety, insomnia, hypertension, increase in sweating, nausea and fatigue cardiovascular system is especially vulnerable to high levels of noise.

6. Radioactive pollution :

Radioactive substances are among the most toxic substances known as radioactive pollution.

Effects of radioactive pollution are –

a. **Somatic effects** – The direct results of action on the body cells and tissues are called somatic effects.

Health of a nation is not dependent on number of doctors and hospitals but there are several factors too. It may be one of the many factors. It depends on food habits, immunity to medicines and of course the condition of medical services. All these situations are deteriorating so fast that it will not be a surprise if by the end of the century; India will be an unenviable country with so called diseases of poverty and affluence coexisting with each other.

Conclusion:

Environment is very important for our future sustenance. Development process is also equally important. Therefore, considering two aspects, we must have sustainable development. Environment does not mean only aspects of effluents. But Environment is the way of life including way of living condition, sanitation, habitat and income of minimum need for living conditions.

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