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## ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL FILMS: AN OVERVIEW

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### Abstract:

Environmental Films can be used to develop people's sustainable thinking. There have been many environmental films from 1964 to 2019 focusing on environmental issues. Although these films seem to be the logistics of the environment and the digital world, they are a suitable way to educate mass people about the environment in an informal way. These environmental films are the path to environmental gates. The environmental film is actually a real-world reel experience on environmental issues. Through environmental film, people are learning sustainable environmental thinking and growing their environmental knowledge too. At present, many scientific methods are being considered to save nature, but if these environmental films are included with the course curriculum, they will be beneficial to sustainable development. Environmental issues-oriented Films are helpful for making awareness, consciousness, and decision-making process to cope the contemporary environmental issues. The Reel of environmental films can present real environmental facts on contemporary issues of the environment that are important for academicians to politicians for environmental education. This article highlights the importance of environmental films to make environmental awareness of mass people.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Thinking, Sustainable Development, Environmental Awareness, Environmental Knowledge, Environmental Education

Humans and nature both have a voice. Human's voice is for their civilization only, but Nature's voice is for the mother earth only. The voice of civilization should be the voice of nature, the philosophy of nature, and the existence of nature. Again, environmental sustainability has its voice, i.e., the voice of biodiversity (Pal and Lozovanu, 2019), forest, and Pancha Bhoota (Gopal, 1990) or five elements to make the human body as per Ayurveda and Indian Philosophy (Venkatesan, 2013). If you want to stop the voice of environmental sustainability, then the breathing of nature will be stopped. Education means the knowledge which is acquired by people and is channelized to others for sustaining the future of our prolific Earth. Our education should be mapped for our Nation. In this era of the digital revolution the demand for motion photos, or films have increased soundly to spread digital education among the mass people. A film does not indicate only the entertainment rather it makes aware of the thematic expression of the issues related to social, cultural, economic, or environmental. People can get the knowledge of nature and the environment after watching cum entertaining the aesthetic presentation of the thematic emerging events or issues of the environment through environmental films.

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Environmental documentary film has the ability to dramatize the reality of environmental issues and empower audiences to become an active part of the change necessary to address environmental crises (Gregg, 2011). Environmental films are showing how the impact of environmental issues on the reality of life and society. It explores new and old analytical and theoretical approaches connected to man-made environmental disasters. “The important events in drama are not accidents of nature, disease, or automobiles-things that occur because of some outside force that we call Fate. Drama is about individual human decisions and actions, and the consequences of both” (Suber, 2006). Films which are based on environmental issues show the revamps on how making a settlement on the natural climatic condition. Environmental films affect the viewers to understand the many urban systems worldwide. It can make an impact severely on the urban system, population, and services. Viewers can develop new plans to reduce the climatic harshness after watching environmental films. Each environmental film is based on an individual environmental issue. By watching these films, people can learn about different climatic disasters or human-made disasters. People can learn about urban planning to be aware of the urban people. The Resilience society can use the experience obtained by environmental films. Environmental films can be important for the learners of the future because it provides the knowledge and arrangement of settlement, industry, market, disposal ground, chemical uses, groundwater conservation, climate change, etc. Digital society has emerged in recent thus the digital education has become an important factor for modern education.

The types of human-induced disasters have increased in contemporary society. Most of the environmental films have developed on thematic environmental issues. After watching the environmental film, the environmental cognition and environmental philosophy may be increased among the student. To aware industrial entrepreneurs about industrial pollution, this type of film is important. An environmental film can show how your destructive thought will be the reason for the destruction of nature. It also highlights the future of the earth and that prediction is important to predict the future of civilization.



Fig. 1: Environmental films can be a part of sustainable planning to protect the Earth (Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021)

Environmental films are helpful to encourage the environmental education of the students. Every film focus on an individual theme. Actually, environmental films are a very easy method to aware of the mass people. The person who is not admitted to any educational institution he /she/third gender can get knowledge about climate change. Mass participation in environmental movements can be started through environmental films. The environmental films also increase our knowledge

on urban planning, urban geography, urban resilience sustainability, urban management, urban disaster monitoring, and urban education. Total 37 different environmental films have been reviewed here to highlight the impacts of environmental films on the social mind.

**Table 1: List of environmental films to raise sustainable environmental thinking among mass people**

Name of the Environmental Films	Year	Based on key environmental issues
<i>The Last Paradises: On the Track of Rare Animals</i>	1967	Endangered species
<i>Godzilla vs. the Smog Monster</i>	1971	Ocean Pollution
<i>Minamata: The Victims and Their World</i>	1971	Water pollution, mercury poisoning among coastal communities
<i>Silent Running</i>	1972	Future of the Earth's flora and fauna
<i>Soylent Green</i>	1973	Fight for Food
<i>Star Trek: The Voyage Home</i>	1986	To save humpback whales
<i>The Bell of Chernobyl</i>	1987	Chernobyl nuclear disaster
<i>Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest</i>	1992	To save the rainforest from the logging industry
<i>Waterworld</i>	1995	To realize the importance of dry land in the future and the issue of sea levels rising
<i>Princess Mononoke</i>	1997	To make peace between the human settlement and, iron town, and the creatures living in the forest that surround it
<i>The Day after tomorrow</i>	2004	Catastrophic climatic effects following the north Atlantic ocean circulation
<i>The Chances of the World-Changing</i>	2006	Endangered species
<i>The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour</i>	2007	Global warming, deforestation, mass species extension, social responsibility
<i>The Simpsons film</i>	2007	Pollutes the town's water supply and effects.
<i>Crude</i>	2007	Petroleum industry and climate change
<i>Earth</i>	2007	Environmental changes and effects on species
<i>The Happening</i>	2008	Natural disaster
<i>The Burning Season</i>	2008	Deforestation of Indonesia
<i>Avatar</i>	2009	Resource depletion and the future of the earth
<i>The Antarctica Challenge: A Global Warming</i>	2009	Climate change in Antarctica
<i>Climate Refugees</i>	2010	Climate change and effects on natural resources
<i>Semper Fi: Always Faithful</i>	2011	Water pollution Camp Lejeune water contamination
<i>Chasing Ice</i>	2012	Global Warming
<i>Dr. Seuss The Lorax</i>	2012	Fight to protect the world
<i>GMO OMG</i>	2013	Issues related to Genetically Modified Organisms
<i>Snowpiercer</i>	2013	Earth's second Ice Age
<i>Black Hole</i>	2015	Coal mining of Australia and its environmental impacts
<i>Angry Inuk</i>	2016	Seal hunting
<i>Before the Flood</i>	2016	Global climate change
<i>Agantok</i>	1991	Philosophy of Tribe
<i>Bhopal express</i>	1999	Air pollution from a pesticide factory
<i>Children of Tsunami: No More Tears</i>	2005	Earthquake and tsunami of 2004
<i>Banno</i>	1987	Forest official's against mercenary and bureaucratic despoliation of forest
<i>Cheluvi</i>	1992	Tree conservation
<i>Rape in the virgin forest</i>	1995	Problem of deforestation
<i>Dasavatharam</i>	2008	Harmfulness of bioweapon
<i>Jal</i>	2013	Scarcity of water in the desert and decreasing the Fleming birds of Russia

Source: Compiled data by researchers, 2020

- Each of the environmental films has its own environmental message. Like, 'Mother India' has presented the impact of the flood on the human settlement and the disaster management by the local dwellers.
- 'Jal' has described the importance of freshwater of Rann of Kutch of Rajasthan to decrease the avian community (Flamingo; a type of vulgar) of Russia. Again, when the scientists are tried to boring the groundwater to supply it in the lake they are disabled by a traditional boy Bakka has done it based on his traditional knowledge. This film has described that how the

decreasing fresh water in the lake is the cause of the death of migrated flamingo's babies because when these baby birds take the training from their mother to catch the food from the lake at that time they are unable to identify what is food or what is small pebble and ultimately that pebble is clogged in the throat (Malik, 2014).

- 'Cheluvi' mentioned a comparative picture between the tree and a beautiful lady were caring for both of them is important for civilization. 'Bhopal Express' (1999) highlighted the dangerous impact of the MIC Uranium Carbait plant on the livelihood of Nagar Slum (Bhopal) in 1984. This film will teach the people about sustainable urban planning and awareness of chemical disasters.
- 'Dhashavatar' is giving the lesson on 'Chaos theory' (i.e. every event is connected to another event) and 'Butterfly effect' (a small change can change the large). The effect of nano-science and bioweapon will be a danger for the future of the earth (Ravikumar, 2008) and it has been highlighted to the audience here.
- 'Children of the Tsunami' (2004) has given the picture of the student's mind after passing the Tsunami and Nuclear Plant Blast just side by side. Japan Government had used a mandatory radio measure machine for every student in the Okhawar Coward Primary School and take it on their neck during the time of traveling outside the home.
- 'Irada' has made conscious of the adverse effects of the plant of Chemical pesticides and mixing the wastewater of plant with groundwater through reverse boring. If it happens then chemical contamination may be started if a municipal pipeline is connected with it.
- An Oriya film 'Nirbachan' explained how the stone mining industry destroys agricultural land due to emerging of huge dust particles. Moreover, when the local people want to stop this mining then the nominated candidate of the political party has assured them if he wins, then the problem will be solved i.e. environmental politics has been raised here.
- 'Silent Running' (1997) expressed the concept of a Geodetic dome or greenhouse dome to highlight the future of the biodiversity of the earth. This film will alert the destructive phase of biodiversity and the probable day will come when an ecologist crewman may move to space with the last green plant to survive it to the earth.
- An Australian film 'Ferngully: The last rainforest' highlights the concept of deforestation of fern gully forests by the loggers for industrial purposes. This film shows that if the trees are disappearing then the pollution (which is marked as giant) which is absorbed by trees may come back into the air (Kroyer, 1992)
- The film 'Avatar' shows the concept of 'Pandora moon' and 'Navi'. It predicts the future of the earth in the year 2054 when the resources of the earth will be finished and people may move to the Pandora Moon to get resources for the earth. So, this is an alarming concept of civilization (Cameron,2009)
- The film 'Chernobyl' shows the adverse effects of the blast of a nuclear plant in Ukraine in 1986. It shows that due to the careless authority and their mismanagement the fire was flaking at the core center of the nuclear plant and ultimately the whole Pripyat town was affected by the radiation, even the dead bodies were buried in zinc box. The whole biodiversity was destroyed within a 5 km radius of the nuclear plant.
- 'Water World' (2007) shows the picture of the earth of 2500 and during that time people can't imagine about the land because sea level may rise at 2000 feet and there are some hill stations like Everest will be free of snow and vegetation and animals will be found. During that time people may fight for soil and the whole world will fight to find out the Dryland (Reynolds, 1995).
- 'The Burning season: the Chico Mendes story' (1994) show the fight of forest dwellers (rubber tappers) to protect their Amazon Rainforest. It's a real story of Chico Mendes, who fights from 1951 to 1988 to save the forest rights of forest dwellers. This film described the lots of

educational philosophy, like Progress v's Development, and said a great line like 'landowner can buy anything except the law of the constitution.' This film highlights the concept of 'clear the land (forest) means weaker the soil' and 'no forest means no hunting, and no hunting means no food' (Frankenheimer, 1994).

- 'Before the flood' shows the recent condition of the earth through climate change, global warming, sea-level rise, and biodiversity extinction due to fossil fuel, arctic melting, human activity, cooking industry, processed food industry, excessive cattle rearing land, etc. This film has shown the lifestyle and energy consumption of different countries and highlights the maximum energy consumption scenario of America. Thus, people can get the knowledge on what should be the lifestyle to save the earth (Stevens, 2016).
- 'Chasing ice' shows the rate of the retreating of different ice sheets and glaciers like Yukon territory glaciers, Calving, Columbia glacier in Alaska, Mendelhala glacier in Alaska, Solheim glacier of Iceland, Ilulissat glacier of Greenland, Greenland. This documentary film discusses the rate of destruction of ice and which will be dangerous for the future of the Earth (Orlowski, 2012).
- 'Godzilla vs the smog monster' (1971) film is started with the caption of 'Save the Earth' and shows the imprint of plastic civilization. It shows that huge amounts of garbage and pollutions are mixing in ocean water and air. Due to this mixing monster-type creatures may be developed and it will take energy from the black smoke of industries. Viewers can know about the acid rain of Tokyo and Dhaka. Thus, the alarm condition is opened here for mass people (Banno, 1971).
- 'Crude' (Berlinger, 2009) shows the impact of the Texaco oil production factory in the Aquarico River of amazon and the scenario of soil contamination, forest drinking water contamination, and river pollution. The Secoya tribe and Cofan tribe are affected due to this pollution and tribal people raised their voice for 'rights of hunting and fishing in the forest'. Due to pollution, the banana, yucca trees were stopped growing. Finally, the soil of Ecuadorian soil was tested under the Govt. jurisdiction and environmental researchers were sent to the Rainwater collection unit to store drinking water for their livelihood.
- The film 'The Antarctica Challenge: A Global Warming' shows that the recent changing characteristics of Antarctica like the rapid glacier melting, formation of neo-ecosystem, death of penguin, death of seal, presence of seal fish on land due to lack of ice, exposure of rocky land, the birth of green vegetation, the suicide of penguin, death of starfish due to warm ocean water, etc (Terry, 2010).
- 'Earth' shows the changing climate and its impact on the polar bears. It discussed that every new generation is under threatening conditions due to climate change. Now the desert is extending, like Kalahari Desert, snow is falling in March in the temperate region, the tree line is changing, elephant community is moving in the water zone, the dust storm is increased, Mongolian birds are unable to enter India due to climacteric turbulence on Himalaya, moving Humpback whale 400 miles journey to equator area for a breeding time, etc.
- 'Soylent Green' (1973) shows the impact of population growth in New York and the food scarcity. To solve it Govt. will send a typical Soylent green food (plankton) for the city and it makes an alert to our future that the time will come when the food of the land will be finished due to overpopulation and people have to depend on ocean plankton.
- 'Koun Kitna Pani Me' (2014) shows the importance of water in society. Here a prostitute does her business in exchange for drinking water, a priest takes water to do his profession. This cinema teaches us about the importance of drinking water through the sale of the village because a village which is dry completely and nobody want to buy it.

- ‘Man vs Earth’ shows the actual cause of the destruction of civilization and here Homo sapiens is the only factor. It teaches us that the destruction of biodiversity means the destruction of human diversity.
- ‘It’s a Plastic World’ highlights the destruction of the marine ecosystem due to the plastic world. Thus, it has instructed to change the pattern of consumption.
- ‘Forget Shorter Shower’ explained the huge application of electricity in our life and that is the source of a more luxurious life. And ultimately, we have forgotten recycling and green technology. So, if it is continued then Amazon Rainforest will be converted into an Amazon desert.
- ‘The Story of the Stuff’ shows how we exist in materialistic life and a linear economy; which is not eco-friendly. We need a cycle of the economy. We are following the concept of profit maximization and thus everything is handover to a private company. The rate of trash and stuff have increased in recent time. In America, more than 3000 advertisements are used for marketing sales. The clear picture of ‘Go Shopping’ and ‘DIOXIN’ (Man-Made Toxic) are mainly advertising to the customer rather than the advertisement of ‘Green chemistry’ or ‘Zero waster’.
- ‘The Impossible’ (2012) shows the importance of tree plantation on the coastal side to protect the coastal civilization.
- Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home’ shows the picture of the 23rd century when the humpback will be the item of the aquatic museum. The overexploitation of ocean resources after the end of land resources what will be the future (Nimoy, 1986).
- ‘The day after tomorrow’ (2004) shows the impact of climate change in the future, especially the people of the northern hemisphere are moving towards the southern hemisphere, birds are leaving Manhattan, the cold air is moving towards North America rather than in Siberia, etc (Emmerich, 2004).

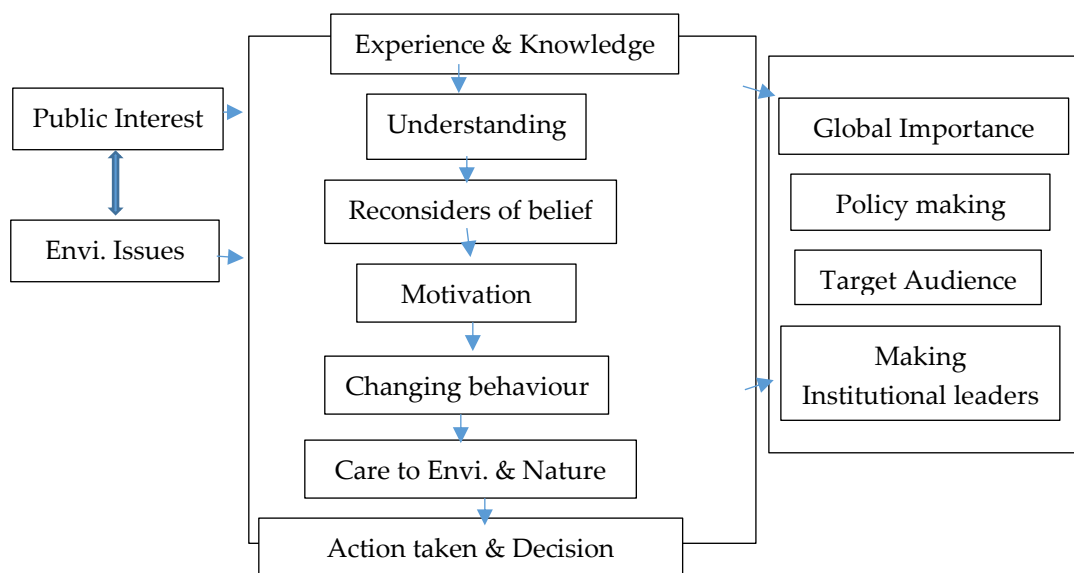


Fig. 2: Environmental films is helpful in the environmental action & decision-making process (Source: Prepared by the authors, 2021)

At present, environmental education needs to be considered as a subject of stable education in the syllabus of B.Ed. and M.Ed. The method of ‘Experience-based exercises’ is useful and this technique can be superimposed in the sector of environmental films. NCERT (2008) has given this method to the students of class VI and used the term ‘Movie’ and ‘Cinema’ here to apply it among students. Nowadays all the environmental films play a significant role in the urban areas about to

aware the historical environment. This type of film gives us more information on environmental disasters. For students to common people can understand the strategy of a healthy environment. The safety of the planet is important. And, this safety is connected to sustainable (to hold) development which means development (environmental, social, cultural, etc.) that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability or demands of future generations to meet their own needs. It is an integral part of 'Our Common Future' and our view about promoting these SDGs. These terms are very much important i.e. encourages sustainable thinking and sustainable application. Again, here community engagement and social responsibility are two vital parts for mission 'UN 2030'. With the help of reel world of films, the appropriate thinking for nature and human responsibility can be generated. If the authority of the educational field adds these environmental films in the course of the curriculum, then sustainable development goal number 5 i.e. quality education will be energized. UN 2030 vision has decided a vista to achieve sustainable earth by the year 2030. Everyone wants sustainable development but we forgot the actual stewardship. So, the actual step to nourish it is the theory of sustainable thinking. Everything is generated from our mind and after that, the thinking of the mind is converted into works i.e. mind to work. So, the planning should be started from the lab and will be finished at land. The mind can think of anything like making sustainable earth. For example, an eco-friendly green mind can give birth to a green world and a destructive mind can blast the atom bomb on civilization. Actually, the nature of the seeds of the plants provides the nature of the fruits. The basic philosophy of sustainable development is sustainable thinking. If the thinking is not sustainable, then how the people will apply sustainable development. Every work of civilization must have an attachment with sustainable thinking. In the lab, people can make a sustainable plan which will never harm the environment or nature, and that lab will be sustainable in the field of society. Environmental films have positive vibes and hikes to generate awareness about the nature of the works of people. The reel of environmental films is based on real environmental facts, issues, events, disasters, and for that the environmental perception among the viewers of that film may be controlled. Actually, education highlights the knowledge, values, skills, habits to build trust in the process. As well as environmental education is a process of environmental awareness and understanding of the environment that builds a close relationship with humans and related activities. Environmental issues should be discussed in traditional curricula at primary or secondary or higher education. To do it the non-formal education, e.g., ecosystem development camps, movies or documentaries, poster, and essay writing competitions, exhibitions, seminars, nature camps, nature-club activities, audio-visual slides, small exhibitions, etc., are relevant. Environmental films or documentaries play a very important role in non-traditional education. Because it is one of the means to present a realistic image of the environmental issues and related events. Review of environmental films must be added in every course of environmental films. The educational qualifications of the rural folk are comparatively lower than in the cities. The environmental documentary or a movie is useful in areas where formal education is low. Environmental documentaries include the practice of solving the problems which are raised by noxious works by the people. Environment-based learning can be achieved from environmental films.

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