



Original Article

Role of Literature in Promoting Environmental Sustainability

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Manuscript ID:

IBMIIRJ -2025-020832

Submitted: 14 July 2025

Revised: 22 July 2025

Accepted: 12 Aug 2025

Published: 31 Aug 2025

ISSN: 3065-7857

Volume-2

Issue-8

Pp. 123-125

Aug 2025

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Quick Response Code:



Web. <https://ibrj.us>



DOI:

[10.5281/zenodo.17275530](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17275530)

DOI Link:

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17275530>



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Abstract

Environmental issues are the most concern issues in present days. Each and every living organism is in danger because of these concerns. Many people are well aware about such environmental issues but now also there are many people who are unaware about it. They don't care much about environment and nature. The selfish nature of human being indirectly harms nature as well as different living organisms. Because of degradation of natural resources and imbalanced nature the world is facing different problems. So we need to take proper actions to stop damage of nature and environment. Environmental sustainability is important to preserve resources like clean air, water and wildlife for future generations. There are many ways with which we can expand sustainability knowledge. Literature is one of the important tool to create an awareness about prevention of nature or environment among people. Literature is also helpful to promote different sustainability programs with which we can save environment. This paper explores the role of literature in promoting environmental sustainability by analyzing Eco critical themes in English Literature. It aims to illustrate how literature help to understand responsibilities of human being regarding environment to protect it.

Keywords: - Literature, Environment, Nature, Sustainability

Introduction

Environmental sustainability is important to preserve resources like clean air, water and wildlife for future generations. It is nothing but the responsibility to conserve natural resources and protect global ecosystems to support health and wellbeing for now and in the future. United Nations defines sustainability as, "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs." In other words, it's a responsible management of natural resources so that these resources will remain available for future generations, while maintaining ecological balance. As the world grapples with climate change, deforestation, pollution etc., sustainable practices have become crucial. Literature plays a vital role to make people aware about today's condition of environment and importance of it for future generation.

There are many literary works which explore environmental issues from pollution and degradation of the natural world to the impact of climate change on human societies. The literary work which depicts such issues is called as environmental literature or eco-literature. Eco-literature or ecocriticism has emerged as a crucial genre in contemporary literature. It reflects societies growing concern for environmental issues and sustainability through literature. This genre shades light on pressing ecological concern and also encourages readers to think their relationship with the natural world. Through the portrayal of natural world, exploration of ecological issues and reflection on human nature relationship, eco literature can engage readers on environmental concerns and encourage them to become conscious of their impact on the planet. Literature has a remarkable capacity to serve as catalyst for action, inspiring individuals and communities to engage with important issues and contribute to meaningful social and environmental transformations. It has a capacity to motivate readers to take proactive steps towards creating a better world. Literature plays a vital role in promoting sustainability in human beings by raising awareness about environmental issues. It reflects and shapes cultural attitudes towards sustainability.

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How to cite this article:

Badekar, P. Y., & Kamble, S. G. (2025). Role of Literature in Promoting Environmental Sustainability. *Insight Bulletin: A Multidisciplinary Interlink International Research Journal*, 2(8), 123–125. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17275530>

Many literary works help individuals to promote environmental sustainability among themselves. The book *'Let My Country Go Surfing: The Education of a Reluctant Businessman'* is written by Yvon Chouinard. It is an autobiography. He is a founder of a company 'Patagonia'. This book tells the story how 'Patagonia' becomes successful and sustainable company that prioritizes environmentalism and ethics over profit. It highlights the importance of taking responsibility for our impact on the planet and embracing a purpose

driven business model. Yvon was born in 1938 in Maine to a French-Canadian family. Later his French speaking family moved across the continent to California where he began to feel like an outsider. He felt happy in nature. So he started mountain climbing. After graduation he started to work as a blacksmith so that he will make his own climbing gear. At that time majority of climbing gears came from European countries that had a different approach to mountaineering.

They build tools that often damaged the environment. So he redesigned the climbing equipment and started its production. He became a successful businessman but one day when he was climbing the mountain he saw that pitons were left dug into the sides of mountains everywhere. So he decided to phase out pitons and only produce aluminum chocks. In this book Yvon tells us that though he is a businessman, he didn't think about profit and company's growth instead of it he prioritizes to keep the nature safe. He tried his best to keep the natural beauty of the mountain safe. In this way this story inspires readers to think about nature as well as an environment.

Rachel Carson's *'Silent Spring'* is an environmental science book. In this book, the writer describes the adverse effects on environment due to excessive use of pesticides. This book forced government to ban DDT and spurred revolutionary changes in the laws affecting our air, land and water. There is a description of warning about the dangers of pesticides particularly called as DDT and its effects on wildlife and nature. One more book *'Flight Behavior'* by Barbara Kingslover, published in 2012 explores the impact of climate change on the lives of insects. It is a story of Dellarobia Turnbow who is a housewife. In this novel Kingslover describes how so many butterflies migrated from Mexico to a mountain located on property of Turnbow's family. As the natural habitat of the butterflies was disrupted because of torrential flood in Mexico, large number of butterflies migrated to Feathertown which is a fictional town in rural Tennessee. As butterflies are quiet large in number, the color of the whole sky turned orange. So many villagers terrified when they saw the scene. This book shows that because of climate change how we are facing problems like flood and its impact on living organisms, even the life of small insect like butterfly is disturbed because of such kind of natural disasters.

The book *'Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place'* is one of the striking memoir written by Terry Tempest Williams. In this book she records the ecological phenomenon of Great Salt Lake Desert. She describes the flooding of the Great Salt Lake which results in dwindling populations of birds at Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge to illustrate the importance of nature preservation, acceptance of change and the impact of human intervention on the natural world. The representation of nature in literature is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that has evolved over time. Many literary works have reflected different environmental issues such as climate change, global warming, pollution, conservation sustainability and its impact on all living organisms. Such kind of description is helpful to make people aware about environment and shape societal attitude towards the natural world. The

books which mentioned above and other ecocritical literary work play a crucial role in shaping environmental discourse which influences cultural attitude and promote sustainability.

Conclusion: -

Literature has an ability to raise awareness about environmental issues as well as it helps to inspire new ways of thinking about solving environmental issues and to protect the environment. Literature also fosters empathy and understanding for the impact of human activities on the environment. It fosters a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between human and the natural world. Literature plays an important role to make reader to understand the importance of protecting ecosystems, managing pollution, minimizing waste, promoting renewable energy, taking proper decisions that balance environment, maintaining the stability of ecosystem to prevent long-term damage of environment etc. Many authors convey the importance of environmental conservation and consequences of neglecting our responsibilities towards the natural world through their literary works, which will help us to protect environment for future generations.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who supported and guided me in the preparation of this research paper.

First and foremost, I extend my heartfelt thanks to my guide, Dr. Sachin Gundurao Kamble, Associate Professor and Head, Department of English, D.J.G. Arts, Commerce, Science College, Vaduj, for his valuable guidance, encouragement, and insightful suggestions throughout the course of this work.

I am also grateful to the Department of English, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, for providing the necessary academic environment and resources that enabled me to complete this study successfully.

Special thanks are due to my colleagues, friends, and fellow research scholars who have continuously motivated me and shared their constructive feedback.

Finally, I express my deepest gratitude to my family for their unwavering support, patience, and inspiration, without which this research would not have been possible.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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