

Remarking An Analisation Environmental Protection : The Role of Ngo's

Abstract

The article is related to the role of NGO's in environment protection, the problems of NGO's working in the field of environment protection which are discussed in this article. Problem's of NGO's and suggestions for the effective role in the area of environment protection are discussed in this article. Role of administration to make the effective role of NGO's are also analyzed in the article.

Keywords: NGO, Environment, Air Pollution, Water Pollution, *Noise Pollution.*

Introduction

In the Constitution of India, the Directive Principles of State Policy are incorporated in which the Government has enunciated the welfare state as one of the Directive Principles of State Policy in which society and social organization have an important role to provide basic needs and to redress the social problems. Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have made an expert analysis and monitored the important specific project in the field of environment protection. NOGs also help to raise public awareness of the issues.

An NGO is a voluntary organization set up to work in social and development sector. It includes groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of Government and they have primarily humanitarian or cooperative rather than commercial objectives. David Sill defines an NGO as "a group of persons organized on the basis of voluntary membership without state control, for the furtherance of some common interest."¹ N.R. Inamdar also holds:

"A voluntary organization in the development to be of durable use to the community has to nurse a strong desire and impulse for community development among its members, to be economically viable to possess dedicated and hardworking leadership and command resources of expertise in the functions undertaken."²

It can thus be said that an NGO is a non-profit making, service oriented voluntary organization work without any state control. It works for the community welfare on the basis of participative style of management.

Characteristics of an NGO

A Non-Government Organization is perceived to be an association of persons or a body of individuals. Such body with a definite name and its objectives may be a registered or unregistered one. Some of the important characteristics of an NGO are given below

1. An NGO is a non-profit making, voluntary, service oriented, development oriented organization for the benefit and welfare of the society.
2. It is an organization of private individuals who believe in certain basic social principles and who perform their activities to bring about the development of community in which they are servicing.
3. It is a social development organization assisting in the empowerments of people.
4. It also helps to encourage people's participation in social development.
5. It is an organization or a group of people working independently without any external control, with specific objectives and aims in order to fulfill tasks that are oriented to bring about desirable changes in a given community or area situation.
6. It is an independent, democratic and non-sectarian people organization working for the empowerment of economic and socially marginalized group.
7. It is an organization which is not affiliated to any political parties, generally engaged in the welfare and development of the community

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Remarking An Analisation

with the overall objectives to make the quality of life of the community better and brighter.

8. These organizations are established by and for the community with or without intervention of the Government. They are not only a charity organization but also the work on socio-economic-cultural activities.

J.B. Singh describes an NGO as an essential requirement for a welfare state. It encourages people's participation in planning, implementing and analyzing community development programme. The important characteristics of NGO's described by J.B. Singh³ are as follows

1. Simple charity supplement for the welfare of the state.
2. Encouraging people's participation in implementing programmes launched by the Government for larger benefit of the community
3. Involving people in program planning, raising resources, implementing activities and sharing responsibilities of the Government.
4. Organize people and enabling them to demand and undertake planning and implementation of development programs beneficial to them.

Some of the important characteristics of NGO's as pointed out by D. Paul are as follows⁴:

1. It is the result of the voluntary efforts motivated by different parties.
2. It is an organization initiated and governed by its own members on democratic principles without any external control.
3. It is registered under an appropriate act to give a corporate status so that they get a legal personality and legal liability.
4. It has definite aims, objects and programs of socio-economic activities.
5. It is known and accepted by the community in which it is formed.
6. It has a considerable autonomy, flexible planning and management of its programmes and services.
7. It has a sense of commitment to human development welfare.
8. It undertakes people's need and helps to solve their socio-economic problems.
9. It maintains its accounts and is accountable to people and the Government.

Voluntary members of the governing body of NGO's are taken from society. They are the trusty of the funds given by Government, sponsored by funding agency and collected from the public. Some important qualities of Non-Government organizations which are necessary to achieve objectives successfully are discussed as under

Human Touch

The main motivation behind voluntary action is charity. A healing human touch is rendered by the volunteers either in their personal capacity or through a voluntary agency but this human touch is eroded with the introduction of professionalism in social work.

Sense of Dedication

The sense of dedication is very important to NGO's without any sense of commitment and dedication, no NGO's would meet its destiny.

Flexible Work Style

A need of flexibility in work style of NGO's is also important to achieve the goal because the concept is to be open and non – bureaucratic. It is based on people's participation.

Close to Community

Non-Government organizations should be close to community having its roots in the community in which they are working. So it is said that NGO's should think globally but act locally. They should not only know the needs and problem of the community but also remain sensitive to them.

Innovative and Self – Reliance

One of the important virtues of NGO's is innovation and self – reliance in their programs and services. The Government has made an effort to join its hands with NGO's to make them innovative and active.

Participative Management Style

NGO's should follow the participative style of management to achieve effectiveness in its working in which the following important aspects should be delegated at community level

1. A flat management structure with decentralized authority
2. Planning and decision-making should be delegated at community level
3. Strong field presence in remote area with high proportion of staff among local origin.
4. Participation in staff matters i.e. recruitment criteria, incentive parameters, training methodology etc.
5. Efforts should be made to make the positive perception of community leaders and members of the NGO.

Most of the above qualities are not generally found in NGO's in India since they are of more bureaucratic nature than that of the Government organizations. They have become social service agents between the Government and the community. NGO's are drifting away from the people. They have become more formal like bureaucratic setup with an element of professionalism. So there is a need for considerable rethinking to make positive changes in working style of NGO's.

Objectives of NGO's in the Field of Environment

The following are the important objectives of NGO's working in the field of environment:

General Objectives

The general objectives are mainly to

1. Describe and discuss the common characteristics of environment system functioning in the given socio-economic, socio-cultural, political and ecological settings;
2. Highlight and delineate crucial factors responsible for the environment sector reforms and undertake, as the most challenging Endeavour, effective and efficient environment management

Remarking An Analisation

and provide better environment to the community;
and

3. Mainly to act as a catalyst in bringing about local initiative and community participation in overall improvement in quality of life.

Civic and Environmental Objective

This aims at developing civic and environmental consciousness among the public. Organization of civic amenities and sanitary facilities on a self – help basis, enactment of suitable legislation for the betterment of civic standards, environmental protection are some means by which a cleaner and healthier environment can be achieved.

Service Objective

NGO's are formulated to provide service to all segments of the society like the poor, women, children and youth through various schemes like environment awareness programmes and organization of rallies against excessive use of pesticides and chemical fertilizer etc. and organize awareness camps to save soil, air, fuel, water, paper etc. This also includes the protection and preservation of nature, wildlife, historical and heritage monuments.

Solid Waste Management

This includes both municipal solid waste and bio-medical wastes including collection of garbage from individual households and the deposition of the same in secondary collection points by appointing street beautifiers in the concerned areas.

Zero Waste Management

NGO's have now started paying their due attention to the concept of zero waste management by which practically all wastes can be converted into wealth through recycling. This also solves the problem of handling and disposal of all wastes, and is also trying to find a solution beneficial to all concerned.

Citizens' Water Quality Control Programme

This programme can be started by NGO's for the purpose of clean and pollution free water in cities and for creating a healthy living environment for all city dwellers. Objectives of this programme are to:

1. Stop pollution of water.
2. Maintain the clean and pure water supply in the city; and
3. To check and control the water borne diseases.

Continuous monitoring meetings should be conducted with various governmental agencies. If the Government and the NGO's implement the plan properly with the help of public, this will result in the achievement of clean water supply.

Community Sanitation Improvement Projects

Inadequate sanitation facilities are a major problem to human health, especially in the neglected low – income areas and slum settlements. NGO's concept of self – help is best displayed by the community sanitation improvement projects in these areas.

Student Environment Programme (STEP)

This program has a dual role to play in creating environmental awareness amongst the student community and in developing each child's mind resources through various personality development programs. A teachers' manual and an

activity book that have been brought out as a part of this program are designed in the 'do-and learn' format and provide an easy understanding of the problems faced by us.

Tree Planting

Planting trees for the purpose of beautification of roads, parks, playgrounds, burial grounds, etc., with the larger perspective of environmental protection can be started by NGO's.

Vegetable Roof Gardening

Vegetable roof gardening is the important area of environment protection in urban areas. NGO's can do work for propagating and training youth in setting up and maintaining vegetable roof gardens in households of cities. The programme can be undertaken with the help of the Government Horticulture and Agriculture Departments.

Harvesting

NGO's can do work for the propagation of the system of rain harvesting in residential areas in the city with a view to exploiting rain water. Many cities suffer from perennial water problems in every summer and therefore it is important that all avenues of water source be tapped. By using simple and inexpensive techniques, the NGO's can do the rain harvesting work with the help of the Government.

Pollution Control

The task of pollution control in India is a complex one due to the large number of heavy, large and small-scale industries involved. Further, the rise in the number of vehicles coupled with poverty and the large population put tremendous pollution pressure on air, water and land. A comprehensive approach to pollution control is being undertaken based on the following principles

1. Prevent pollution at source.
2. Encourage, develop and apply the best available practicable technical solution.
3. Ensure that polluter pays for pollution and control arrangements.
4. Focus on protection of heavily polluted areas and river stretches.
5. Involve the NGO's in educating the public about pollution control measures to be taken.

Noise Pollution

Noise pollution has become a major health hazard in the metropolitan cities and in other urban areas. With a view to regulating and controlling noise producing and generating sources, the Ministry of Environment and Forests has notified the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, for prevention and control of noise pollution in the country. NGO's can arrange and organize the awareness programmes to educate the people about the harmful effects of noise pollution.

Air Pollution

The sources of Air Pollution are industries like thermal power plants, sugar mills, distilleries, paper mills etc. Vehicular emissions are another source of air pollution. The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 has classified the industries as red, orange and green depending on degree of pollution caused

Remarking An Analisation

by them. It further specifies the various pollution control measures to be adopted by these industries. NGO's can aware the people through education programmes among people.

Water Pollution

The rivers of India are part of its cultural heritage. Over the years, the quality of the water has deteriorated due to the uncontrolled release of effluents by industries into the rivers. A National River Conservation Plan (NRCP), which includes the second phase of GAP (Ganga Action Plan) also, has been formulated which aims to control the pollution of grossly polluted rivers of the country. A National River Conservation Authority has been setup to review the implementation of the programmes related to cleaning of rivers. The NRCP covers 141 towns located along 22 inter state rivers in 14 states. A National Lake Conservation Plan envisaging the conservation of lakes by prevention of pollution by catchments area, treatment, desalting, weed control, based on the integrated water shed development approach, is under implementation. Many NGO's are also working to execute the river conservation programme.

NGO's Role in Pollution Control

The success of India's environmental programmes depends to a large extent on the awareness and consciousness of the people. A National Environmental Awareness Campaign has been launched to sensitize people to the environmental problems through audio – visual programmes, seminars, symposia, training programmes etc. ParyavaranVahinis have been constituted in 184 districts involving the local people to play an active role in preventing poaching, deforestation and environmental pollution. 4000 NGO's have been given financial assistance for creating environmental awareness. An Environmental Information System (ENVIS) network has been setup to disseminate information on environmental issues. India has a large network of NGO's which are involved in spreading the message of sustainable development to the public.

“An integrated effort is required in environmental planning, management and action. Interdisciplinary understanding, cooperation and coordination and increased public participation and support are important components in the process towards sustainable development”⁵. A comprehensive environmental training and monitoring institute for NGO's is required with the following objectives to

1. Train the staff of NGO's;
2. Do grading of the NGO's according to work quality, educational status and reputation in the public; and
3. To evaluate the works of the NGO's

Important Functions of the NGO's to Save the Environment

1. Educate the students about the pollution problem and the harmful effects of pollution.
2. Educate the public to minimize the use of plastic cover for different purposes.

3. Promote the public to buy only environment friendly products i.e. the products which are not reducing the natural resources.
4. Not to waste water for various purposes.
5. Plant and grow trees in the house garden.
6. Support the other NGO's financially which are rendering service to the Health and Environment sector.
7. Motivate research on different measures to be taken to solve environmental problems and
8. To support the initiatives taken by the central and state governments in protecting our environment.

Problems of NGO's

The achievements and success of NGO's in various fields and excellent work done by them in specific areas are remarkable to meet the changing needs of the social system. Their contribution to achieve the objectives of sustainable development can not be limited but there are many problems which are faced by NGO's. These problems may differ from organization to organization and from region to region. Some of the common problems are discussed below

Absence of Spirit of Volunteerism

The basic characteristic of NGO is volunteerism but the extent of volunteerism is declining day by day and turning it into professionalism. People's participation in these NGO's is negligible. They are becoming agents of the Government.

Lack of Dedicated Leadership

Leadership qualities of the leaders in the NGO determine the quality and condition of the services rendered by any NGO. In the post independence era, the NGO's are facing the crisis of leadership who pioneered voluntary action and worked for it with the spirit of devotion and dedication. Dedicated leaders have changed their activities and entered into politics to find berths in legislature and parliament through getting popularly in these organizations. Similarly, there is frustration among new young leaders who have new ideas, initiatives and innovations because elder leaders are not interested in leaving their positions.

Lack of Funds

Most of the NGO's suffer from paucity of funds. Government does not give hundred percent grants-in-aid, Non-Government Organizations have to make matching contribution which they are sometimes unable to manage and avail of the grants.

The funds allocated to the various schemes are not revised for so many years. NGO's are facing rise in the prices due to inflation which effects the quality of the services. So there is need to raise funds through various resources but unfortunately the concept of charity and donation is not so strongly seated in the mind of people.

Inadequate Trained Personnel

The main requirements of the personnel's working in the NGO are a sense of dedication, commitment and interest in social sciences. Due to advancement of technology, there is a need of trained personnel's having technical knowledge. The trend has been developed to take services of professionals

Remarking An Analisation

having technical knowledge and scientific training but there is a need of trained personnel having interest in NGO's. There is another problem that the growth and development of the school of social work education is urban oriented. Urban trained personnel's are not interested to work in remote area. Moreover, these professionally trained personnel having high expectations in term of salaries, status and opportunity of their growth are not interested to work for longer time in NGO. So it is suggested that training facilities should be developed at grass-root level to fulfill the requirement of trained personnel's at all levels.

Lack of coordination

The absence of coordination forum of NGO's existing at local, state and national levels has laid to the common problem such as overlapping of work, duplication, non-coordination etc. Absence of coordination with Government, funding agency, local Government and Community also restrict to achieve the objectives of the NGO. Sometimes it is observed that there is conflict among NGO's, local administration and local political leaders. This state of affairs also does not facilitate exchange of information, data collection, research, training and publication. This situation creates unfavorable conditions where the common difficulties can be placed before the Government. So there is a strong need to make coordination among the effected parties.

Centralization in Urban Area

NGO's are more developed in the urban areas than in the rural areas. The backwardness and ignorance of the rural people and lack of enthusiasm among social workers to work among them in the absence of availability of minimum comforts are the important reasons for the backwardness of the NGO's in rural areas. NGO's are needed to operate in rural areas to enlist the cooperation of the village people in making their lives better. The Government has made efforts to motivate people to decentralize the NGO's by way of making special provisions in eligibility conditions in getting grants.

Deterioration in Quality of Services

NGO's are engaged in many social areas. They expend their services in which neither have they had professional competence nor the infrastructure. With the expansion of services without adequate preparation, the quality of services was deteriorated. A number of NGO's are working below standard.

Lack of Public Participation

Objectives of NGO's can be achieved only through democratic participation of local community but they have not been able to fulfill this obligation due to the manner in which they function. They have failed to attract people interested in constructive work and develop channels for people's active and enthusiastic participation.

The factors responsible for such a state of affairs are general backwardness of the people, absence of devoted persons, political interference, vested interests, availability of funds without proper planning, lack of decentralization and distrust of agencies and workers who do not have a base in the

community. There is need to develop parameters regarding public participation by funding agencies.

Monopolization of Leadership

There is a growing tendency towards monopolization and interlocking of leadership at the top level of NGO's where a particular person is working as a president or chairman in one organization and secretary or managing director in another organization, treasurer in third and executive officer in the fourth organization. On the one side, interlocking of leadership can be advantageous in formulating and coordinating policies, programmes, activities, facilitating exchange of technical know-how, benefit of experience and capacity of mobilization of people for a common goal but the greatest disadvantage of such leadership is that the fresh blood is not allowed to flow into the organization.

At the same places, it is observed that there are many powerful and manageable persons who have only inadequate and symbolic participation in management and they have a negative inclination towards self-help programmes sponsored by the NGO's.

Misuse of Funds

Some unwanted elements have made NGO as the organization for their personal gains and managing grants from Government. It is the common experience about serious charges of misuse and misappropriation of funds received as grants-in-aid from the Government, foreign donors and raised through their own resources. A proper mechanism for supervising and monitoring the activities of NGO's is imperative.

Certain specific factors have been observed in the workings of NGO's which are as follows:

1. Most of the NGO's have the problem of formulating of project proposals which are acceptable to grant giving agency. So these NGO's accepted implementation of schemes formulated by grant-giving agency. These proposals are made without their initiations and innovation based on community felt needs.
2. Newly established voluntary agencies find it difficult to get grants. They could not fulfill the requirements of the funding agency.
3. Because of modernization, professionalization and introduction of management techniques, the NGO's need funds for certain infrastructure and administrative expenses but funding agency gives only contingency grants. So the grant-giving agency should provide a lump sum amount or a percentage of total amount for overhead expenditure.
4. One of the major problems of NGO's is to maintain proper books of accounts because of non-availability and financial affordability of accounts staff.

Suggestive Working Style of NGO's

NGO's working in environment area should follow a successful management style to achieve its objectives. A suggestive management style for NGO's is discussed as below:

Remarking An Analisation

Community Involvement

Community involvement is necessary to achieve objectives of NGO's working in environment area. The following strategy for community involvement will be helpful to protect environmental degradation

1. Group dynamics between
 - i. Women
 - ii. Old and influential people
 - iii. Young population
2. Problem identification – Discuss the issue
3. Community mobilization-Approach the people from house to house
4. Informal communication
5. Role playing to solve the community problems
6. Objectivity, monitoring and evaluation
7. Use of media
8. Organizing signature campaigns

Participatory Action Research

1. Identification of environmental problem
2. Gathering and analysis of data
3. Drawing the conclusion
4. Consultation with the community
5. Making the strategy and implementing it
6. Monitoring and evaluation

Environmental Skills

1. Planning
2. Participatory management
3. Negotiation with parties
4. Applying of labour - management strategy
5. Understanding legal aspects
6. Organizing cooperative and credit unions
7. Monitoring and evaluation
8. Quick decision-making
9. Generating controlling mechanism

Training Technology

1. On job training-participants observation
2. Group dynamics
3. Practice-theory/Action reflection
4. Exposure programme
5. Self learning kits and modules
6. Group discussion and synthesis-brain storming
7. Use of cultural forum

Fund Mobilization

1. Standard membership fee
2. Organizing local fund collection campaign
3. Arranging Government grants
4. Making continuous contacts with funding agencies

Co-ordination

1. Co-ordination with Government and its policies
2. Co-ordination with funding agency
3. Co-ordination with other NGO's
4. Co-ordination with local administration
5. Co-ordination with community
6. Co-ordination with working staff

Participatory Management Style

1. A flat management structure with decentralized authority
2. Strong field presence in remote area with high proportion of staff of local origin

3. Participation in recruitment criteria, incentive parameters and training methodology regarding staff
4. Efforts should be made to make positive perception of community leaders and members regarding NGO's.

Aim of the Study

Environmental degradation and socio-economic development are two important process of modern era. Man has disturbed our ecosystem, generated chemical and radioactive pollution, destroyed plants and animal species, dumping lakes, rivers and oceans with sewage and industrial waste. Increasing area of desert, shrinking of forest, alarming pollution of water, air and land and exhaustion of natural resources are the main problems which every nation will have to face.

There are certain drawbacks in environmental laws. Environmental policy and laws should be updated as per requirement of present scenario which is not possible without detailed study. Implementation of environmental laws are also poor. Study is required to make effective role of administration in implementation of laws. Comparative study of judicial decision and its implementation is also required for better results. Environmental policy and laws and not be successfully implemented without help of people's participation. Study is required to make effective participation. Comparative study of Government agencies and NGO's are also required for better utilization of resources and to achieve better results. Improved implementation strategy and better environmental management will be helpful of achieve our objectives.

Conclusion

The achievements and success of NGO's in the field of environmental protection and the excellent work done by them in specific areas such as water harvesting, forest management etc. are no doubt a tremendous task that has helped to meet the changing needs of the social system. The areas covered by the NGO's, their approach, involvement and contribution are of prime importance in the social progress. The inherent defects and weaknesses which if overcome, would equip them to function more effectively in the formulation and implementation of the environmental policies, plans and programmes.

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