

An Educational Approach to Green Governance for Sustainable Development of Janakpurdham

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Abstract- *Green governance, a policy for a lifeline of healthy future, is a concept related to balancing human life, nature and natural resources. The study exclusively focuses on essentiality of green governance for sustainable development of this region, the region of Janakpurdham. Apart from some concerns of green governance, its one of the concern is how to teach the students, the main change agents of society, to internalize the concept of green culture for a better future. The purposes of the study were to raise awareness among school and college graduates. Hence, the study was conducted as a project work through workshop, cleanliness campaign, and oratory contest. It also included an expert to get insights into indispensability of green governance for healthy human life and economic prosperity, its feasibility, the role of concerned stakeholders, and its impacts on society. The study has recommended to teach the young generation the concept of green culture both for healthy life and economic prosperity.*

Keywords: *Green Governance, Sustainable Development, Healthy Social Life, Environment, Students' Initiatives, Educational Approach*

I. INTRODUCTION

This mini-research is based on an educational approach suggesting the educational institutes to teach their students to embrace 'green culture' for sustainable development of their locality.

Background

The nascence of this research goes back to IIA (Innovative Idea Award-2080) provided by Rajarshi Janak University, Janakpurdham. Studying the need of *Green Culture* for the safer future of Janakpurdham, this city was purposely selected for mini-research.

Stand anywhere, be it the city centre or outskirts, you can get the real picture of the city. It doesn't appear easy to ascribe this city as a modern city and people as civilized people. From common public to noted figures, from private agencies to government agencies, and from local government to the federal one, they seem insensitive towards these life-devouring issues. Hence, the concept of green governance needs to be disseminated to the common people here. Green governance is related to ecological sustainability. As it is universally acknowledged that a green environment is a driving agent of human life, it is indispensable to work collaboratively on green governance. It is essential to bring balance to ecology so that we can live safely. As it has caught the world's attention, it has created a marked room in academics too. Hence, schools, colleges, and universities should take social responsibility in awareness raising among students. Universities can/ should introduce a discipline that will explore study and contribute to this field. They can take the initiative in making their graduates responsible citizens who will bear social and ecological responsibility with accountability. The effort applied at the local level might culminate in becoming the focal point of policy-making in provincial and federal government.

Meaning and Scope

Green governance is a policy of decision-making process where environmental protection is a core issue. The purpose of environmental protection is to maintain the ecosystem and protect biodiversity so that each species can survive on this planet. The term 'green governance' is understood in different ways in different fields. Anthropologists take it as an adoption of green culture whereas economists understand it as a green economy. Rajesh (2020) defines this term as the government's idealistic, tactical, and involved sustainable natural resource administration. To him, 'green governance' encompasses a broader meaning,

that is, it talks about a higher level philosophy of a government in what soever forms about dealing with nature. Further, Green governance, according to Nansikombi et al. (2020), consists of five structures: norms, common objectives, involvement, communication, and resources. In the same way, Green governance, Omri & Mabrouk (2022) define it as a long-standing social, economic, and ecological sustainability. In a nutshell, 'green governance' duly acknowledges the natural resources, especially focusing on the green earth which is the lifeline of all. In the political, educational and diplomatic arena, it is highlighted as sustainable development.

Green Governance, obviously one of the most burning issues of the globe, is the topmost priority talks for this city's (Janakpur) sincere citizens too. This is so because the city is facing problems with water for both drinking and other purposes, rising temperature, garbage management, traffic, DJ sound, and open Paan Guthka consumption. There are lots of other issues that seem to be making this place unsafe to live. For instance, right after mid-March, the hand pumps start drying out. And the city dwellers start looking for public hand pumps which are very few. Conversely, people here seem insensitive towards waste management, flowering, plantations, garbage management, greening the city, and others.

The issues highlighted above need to be explored through extensive study and research so that detailed information can be gathered regarding green governance, which is the basis of sustainable development.

Rationale

Planting trees in the city, keeping it tidy, and making it clean is about ensuring a sustainable and balanced ecosystem. It also implies the conservation of nature. Hence, conserving nature plays a crucial role in the intricate web of life. The reality is human beings live their healthy life in undisturbed scenarios of nature. And we civilized beings should carry responsibility and accountability to keep society safe in terms of a healthy environment. This is also because it keeps nature, culture and the future intact. Imagining the apex of development is obviously desirable; however, we should keep the term sustainable development at the centre of our thought.

Environmental issues, like air quality and climate change, have been the hot talk for every sincere citizen around the globe. The realization is that if it remains unchecked, it can cause irreversible damage to the environment. Hence, sustainable development appears possible only if the surroundings are green. Again, keeping the surrounding green can be maintained through a collective approach. It should begin from every nook and corner. School and college graduates should be pioneers to carry the responsibility as they are often understood to be the main change- agents of a society.

Purposes

The main purpose of this study is to explore the ways of raising awareness among school and college graduates in and around the city, and to observe the impact of different awareness campaign, and record their effectiveness. This study also aims to find how 'green culture' taught to students can contribute to the sustainable development of the local place.

Review of the Related Literature

The theoretical base of this study is 'Green campus governance for promoting sustainable development in institutions of higher learning-evidence from a theoretical analysis' by Junior, B. A., Majid, M. A., Romli, A., & Anwar, S. (2020), 'Role of social media in promotion of green school initiatives by government green schools in India by Verma & Grover (2022), 'Effects of sustainable governance to sustainable development' by Gündoğdu & Aytekin (2022), and few others.

Green Governance Initiative in School/ University Education

The world scientists' advocacy of green governance for sustainability has its reflection in school and university education. The state of Gujrat has already launched the 'Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) project' for Green schools in Gujarat, (Verma & Grover, 2022). The project message is disseminated using social media to heighten the 'Go Green Campaign' creating awareness and promoting sustainable Education. Their study claims a sudden rise in demand for adopting environment-friendly practices focusing on the need to create awareness on environmental issues. In the same way, Malaysian universities'

initiative for 'Green Campus Government' is worth mentioning. Abd-Razak et al. (2011) write:
.....university campuses in Malaysia started to initiate green campus governance, by promoting green implementation and making sustainable development a priority within the university planning and development. This can be attributed to the fact that several benefits can be derived when universities balance the social, environmental and economic goals. (p.2)

These are just an example. There is a lot of evidence of the Green Governance Initiatives in School/University Education around the globe.

Importance of Green Culture Campaign in School, College and University

Green culture is a conscious adoption of values that teach us to love nature and make the surroundings green by planting trees. It fosters beliefs, practices, and values that prioritize environmental sustainability. Moreover, it is green knowledge that expects us to respond to the deteriorating and degrading quality of the environment for better environmental performance. Different studies are evident that green culture contributes to the sustainable development of society and a nation. Verma & Grover (2022) acknowledge the importance of developing a 'green culture' in school graduates through the 'Go Green Campaign' in Gujarat for awareness and promotion of sustainable leadership and education. They claim that the sense of green culture fosters emotional relationship which flourishes on the basis of affection and personal connection culminating in an emotional bond. This culture also develops affective commitment towards the attainment of universal goals like environmental education and sustainable leadership. Their study hopes to retain students in schools through the green school concept.

Darus et al. (2009) talk about healthy and prosperous living for the present and future. They have their opinion about the need for sustainable development which base is green culture through green governance. In the same way, Abd-Razak et al. (2011) highlight the need for green culture in higher education for eco-friendly practices and environmental protection.

Research Gap

Unlike other forms of research, it was conducted as a project work and implemented in different schools and colleges. The data were collected from different educational events like oratory contest, workshop, and green campaign. For insight sharing, an expert was invited and interviewed. Hence, this work has a marked gap from the previous research conducted in the area of green governance and sustainable development.

Method

The study was conducted employing some students and teachers of school, college and university, namely, Laxminiya Secondary School, Kumhroda, Model Multiple College, Janakpurdham, and Rajarshi Janak University, Janakpurdham. Teachers were consulted for coordination and cooperation in this project. School and college chiefs were asked for permission and facilitation. Different rounds of talks were held to discuss its currency. After assurance from the management, I reached out to the randomly selected sections and discussed my purposes with them. The need for a 'Silent Green Movement' for ecological balance remained the main issue of discussion. Disclosing my tentative plan about how to proceed, we concluded the first meeting with promises for further discussion the next day with a detailed plan. The same process went for Model Multiple College and Rajarshi Janak University.

Personal -Meet

To get insight into green governance, I contacted a noted economist and environmentalist with whom I had a detailed discussion on the essentiality of green governance for the sustainable development of Janakpurdham.

Study, Result and Discussion

First, I arranged a semi-formal meeting with my expert to explore the issues planned ahead and planned different events, like an oratory contest, essay writing and a workshop. Then, we went for a cleanliness event in public places. The purpose was to foster the concept of green culture and raise awareness regarding environmental promotion.

To discuss in depth with the expert the essentiality of green governance for the sustainable development of Janakpurdham, I had the following agenda:

Why green governance in Janakpur? How to raise awareness among school and college graduates? How will it contribute to the Sustainable Development of Janakpurdham? How is it related to economy, prosperity, and culture promotion? How to aware stakeholders?

After in-depth discussion with the expert about the issues above, the study concluded that the concept of green governance is desirable for the sustainable development of Janakpurdham. Since antiquity, Janakpur's identity has been as a religious place. It is a place where Goddess Janaki was born as the daughter of King Janak. Nature-worshipping culture is its singularity. The new year here called JUR SITAL begins with watering plants. This city is known to be the city of 100 ponds. But along with population explosion and unmanaged town planning, the lifestyle has turned to be a dirty one, like, throwing garbage hither and thither, chewing paan, dirtying the public places. People assume their dirty habits as their culture. To solve this problem, the municipality should allocate a budget to implement green governance. Cleanliness of ponds and drainage, budgeting for awareness, and green education in local culture appear to be the major tasks required to be performed. Besides the Janakpur sub-metropolis, other stakeholders, like Comprehensive Janakpur should also play a major role in greening public places and beautifying cultural heritage through green culture.

When discussed why 'green governance', it was learned that it is essential for action for climate change, and proper management of natural resources, like the Jalaid River (to the east of the city) which is completely dried, the Dudhmati River (to the west of the city) which is almost dead, and many more like such. It is for natural ponds, like Ganga Sagar, Dhanush Sagar, etc. It is essential for strengthening the local economy. It is required to make people realize social justice which is affected by natural decimation, for example- rich people in a room, but poor people living in scorching heat. If the city turns into a green city, social justice can be experienced. The city lacks oxygen for which green governance is essential. It is

also essential to fight environmental pollution. The concept above resembles the concept of the Chinese researchers, Xu, S., & Zhu, H. (2022) who write:

Rapid and widespread changes in the environment and climate, such as rising temperatures, water and air pollution, floods, and droughts, disease vector migration are putting human health at risk. In this case, green governance is an essential driver for the restructuring of economic development and realizing a green technological revolution for sustainable development and its implications for public health. (p.1)

In the same scenario, Johan & Turan (2016) write that environmental degradation, climatic changes, and global warming evolving as a major concern, and sustainable development is rapidly changing from a simple issue into an important agenda (p.2).

While discussing how to raise awareness regarding green culture for green governance in students, the expert advised conduct events, like workshops, seminars, and inspiring events, assign project work on green culture, encourage them to maximize the use of technology and media, go for field visit like Ghale Gau in for awareness/ green club formation in schools and colleges. To support this concept, Sonetti et al. (2016) mention that campus greening is mainly the first strategy universities incorporate for sustainable development attainment.

From the discussion, it was learned that the concept of green governance can contribute to developing environment-friendly institutes and factories, making use of local resources, utilising indigenous knowledge, skills and expertise, making new innovations, enjoying improved health, developing youth leadership and many more like such.

After the city turns into a green city, it can attract internal and international tourists, which will help in business flourishing. The city which has been able to attract a large number of pilgrims will be able to attract a large number of tourists. Obviously, this will enhance in local economy. Through the enlargement of tourism, its language, culture and tradition can be popularized. Local knowledge, skills and expertise can be professionalized. Through different modes of

marketing, local products can be taken to the global market.

The advocacy for green education in education may help improve in education system and enhance creativity, and critical thinking. Local communities will be empowered. Simply, it will contribute to the building -healthy students-healthy citizens-healthy activities-healthy nation.

How to aware stake holders

Firstly, municipality itself is not aware of the importance of green governance. They should be made aware through information dissemination. They should be convinced to develop a strong mechanism so that they can conduct a participatory meeting including all the concerned stakeholders, that is, from people representatives to civil society, from youth to senior citizens, from business people to professional members, and from any other authorities to justice delivery institutes. They should bear the ownership, and make it a mission for the sustainable future of Janakpurdham. If training is required for policy making, they should go for it. They must develop a network for implementing the spirit of green governance in all required sectors. The municipality must coordinate among all forms of government because they might need big budgeting.

Workshop Conducted at RJU

To accumulate more insights into green governance, I organized a workshop on Sep 9, 2024, at Rajarshi Janak University with BBA/ BCA graduates- 56 participants (30 girls, 26 boys). The event was inaugurated and observed by the Research Director of the university, and my collaborator, a forest officer as a Chief Guest followed by some faculties.

The students were randomly grouped into five units, each with one specific task to be performed. They were asked to discuss the issue in detail and present it to the group in the last session. The tasks were as follows:

The first group- *why green governance?*

The second group- *How to raise awareness among school and college graduates*

The third group- *How will it contribute to the Sustainable Development of Janakpurdham?*

The fourth group- *How is it related to economy, prosperity, and culture promotion?*

The fifth group- *How to aware of stakeholders?*

Through the workshop, the study found the importance of green governance for environmental protection which will culminate into pollution reduction, natural resources conservation, and ecosystem maintenance. Hence, it will have a positive impact on public health, sustainable development, and climate change mitigation. It will help in economic prosperity, and lead to new job opportunities. This can be achieved by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and by preventing extreme weather events.

The concept of green governance can be implemented through policy development on pollution control, resource management, and climate change mitigation. The government or agency can engage public too. They can involve the stakeholders, like , NGO/INGO in the decision-making process. Through the policy of Education and awareness, Collaboration between Govt bodies and civil society, and Incentives and supports, it can be implemented.

As one of the concerns was how to raise awareness among school or college graduates about green culture, it was concluded that conducting different workshops on green governance involving students from schools to colleges, designing different posters and pamphlets, organizing roadshow plays to give a message to the common people, advocating for the prescribing of green governance-related courses right from the school level, campaigning for plantation, using social media for campaign and awareness, conducting exhibition programs for the use of paper plates and other accessories, campaigning for avoiding plastic-related materials, using public transport, investing in research on the environment, imposing strict law, and campaigning for green product industries.

Green governance will, as the workshop concludes, will contribute to sustainable development through environment protection, climate change mitigation, sustainable economic growth, efficient resource management, and international cooperation. It is related to *economy* as it will create green jobs (jobs related to environment protection), *prosperity* as it will create inclusive prosperity, sustainable prosperity, innovation and competitiveness, *Culture promotion*,

as it will work for cultural heritage protection, promotion of eco-friendly lifestyle, and protection of ingenious knowledge.

Regarding the awareness, the workshop concluded the need of introducing Green Education in local curriculum and info sharing (through workshops/ training/ reports/..), through partnering with NGO/INGO, media campaigning, documentaries, through manipulating stakeholders (local govt/ provincial and central govt.), empowering political leaders, door-to-door campaigning, imposing strict implementation of the law, plantation campaigning, organic farming, saving water resources like ponds/ rivers/ lakes, and applying Reduce-Reuse-Recycle Oratory Contest and Cleanliness Campaign

As a part of the study, an 'Oratory Contest' was conducted on September 13, 2024, at a college participating class 12 students, on the topic entitled - *An Essentiality of Green Governance for Sustainable Development of Janakpurdham*. The participating contestants highlighted the importance of green governance, its positive impacts on society for sustainable development, and possible policies that can be introduced to implement here. To observe its impact at a micro-level, the cleanliness campaign was conducted by Green Club with different sub-units of the club in different sections of Model Multiple College, Janakpur and Laxminiya Janata Secondary School, Janakpurdham. The event showed their enthusiasm to work for natural and cultural heritage protection.

CONCLUSION

Today's effort to foster a green culture in the young generation will be a milestone for making Janakpurdham, a green city tomorrow. The future of this city rests on what effort we make today regarding green governance. This appears to be a lifeline. Green governance is not a philosophy, but rather a comprehensive planning to make a sustainable development. The concept of green governance gives multi-dimensional meaning. It is directly related to ecology and bio-diversity. It is also related to economy and prosperity. It is related to health. It is related to the promotion of local culture and identity.

For the promotion of green governance in Janakpurdham, the municipality can/ should play a vital role. They can make policies, design strategies for implementation, and act accordingly. While doing so, coordinate with different agencies, different governments, different organizations, different administrative bodies, business people, media, and civil society, and ask them to take ownership. While making policies to impose and apply green governance, the promotion of local products must be at the centre. Local knowledge, local skills, and local expertise must be professionalized.

To give longevity to this concept, the idea of green governance should be taken to school and university students. Since they are the real change agents, they must be empowered. The concept of green governance should be introduced in the local curriculum.

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