

**Business Ethics**  
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**Lecture – 57**  
**Sustainability**

In this module we will be discussing on the issue of sustainability. So, as we discussed in the earlier module sustainability means the capability to deal with the environment, society and economy so that they have the capability or the capacity to continue, to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the future generation to meet their own needs. So, we are dealing with the environment, the society and the economy in such a way like they are not drained of their capacity to provide to the needs of the future generation while answering to the needs of the present generation and that is how we are trying to make a balance in this situation.

So, when we are talking of environmental sustainability here, we discuss the capacity of the natural environment to continue to meet the needs of the present generation and without compromising the ability of it to future generation so that they can meet their needs from that environment. So; however, in the present context are the sustainability is interpreted in terms of more than just environmental concerns. So, it is dependent on three pillars; economic activities, the social activities and the environmental activities and all these three pillars are interrelated to each other and the sustainability in one domain is possible when the other domains are sustainable also. So, the way that we carry our economic activities will definitely affect the environment and the way that its affects the environment may have effect on the society at large.

Suppose we are gearing our economic activities through a manufacturing processes that rapidly depletes the resources of our environment and continued degradation of environment can limit the growth, economic growth of the present generation in future or this may dip like because we will get accustom to some lifestyle, but when these resources becomes scares and nonexistent then the economic activities gets affected and we have to adjust our lifestyles also. So, economic activities, economic sustainability then requires like structuring a economy so that the environmental sustainability and in the social sustainability also are taken care of. So, the lifestyles that the economic

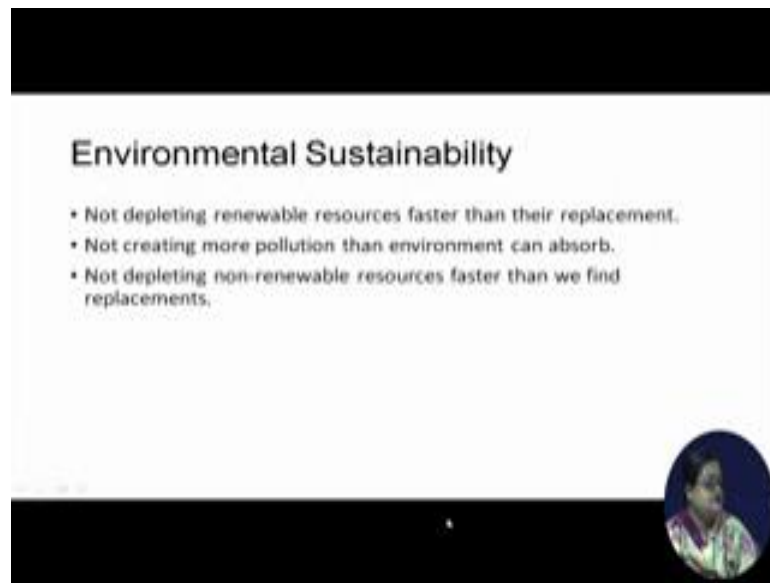
activities promote, the quality of environment that it leaves with so all these will depend on the future cultured picture that the society gets and also the quality of environment that they, quality of environment that they live in.

So, the economic activity has to see like it is not making and do use of the environment putting over pressure on the environment and we concerned about the environmental sustainability and go and so for the social sustainability which requires creating societies that. That we have already discussed while we were discussing the social ecology, the ecofeminism point in the feministic orientation of conserving resources. Like the societal values should be such that it is the, it should be promoting the development of cultures, communities and practices, ways of life so that it nurtures the and respects the environmental sustainability. So, that the environment continuous to provide those things and which our life depends. So, it is the mutuality of the relationship between the three players like the environment, economic sustainability and social sustainability.

So, responsible actions taken from during to achieve economic sustainability, favorable culture and social system which respects the rights of the environment and respects life for the sake of life itself. So, reverence to life as you may call it. So, these have, these act as facilitators for environmental sustainability. And if the environment is sustainable it is going to provide on the way, the hand whole support in the way for the future generation also like that which is doing in present. So, this may sound somewhat anthropocentric in nature like we are may be taking thinking of environmental sustainability, but at the end we are talking of like keeping it sustainable to the extend, like that when it can also be providing the same way. So, that it can provide to the needs of the future generation, is it not light we are sounding like anthropocentric in nature.

So, this is when we are talking of may be the conservation of the non, if this is, but; however, this is only one part of looking in to the aspect of sustainability. So, if we are to look into the ecological perspective also where the preserve is for its own values also has to be taken side by side. Otherwise if you are looking only into the anthropocentric view we may be careful of those resources which have the possibility of using in future, but we may not be careful for those resources for which we do not see any present or future use. So, that ecological perspective also needs to be embedded while we are talking of the renewable energy nonrenewable energy and how it should be balanced? How we can balanced so that needs for the present at the future are met together?

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And what specific things needs to be done? So, three points which can be taken into consideration is like, renewable in a resources should not be a depleted faster then they their rate of replacement. So, if the renewable resources are depleted at rates which is faster than their replacement in a certain point of time the resource gap will obviously, be there. The emission rate of pollution should not exceed the capacity of the environment to clings and assimilate that pollution. And third nonrenewable resources should not be depleted at a rate which is no greater than its replacements. So, the first two items in the list are widely accepted like not depleting renewable resources faster than the replacement or not creating more pollution that the environment can absorb.

But when it comes to the third step like the, it is we should because it hints towards the present generation using less of nonrenewable resources or limiting the use of the nonrenewable resources such as oils, minerals until and unless we have found out a substitute, which will act as a replacement. So, there could be two views on this; the technology pessimists say like science will never find a substitute for all renewable resources. So, we must reduce the consumption and try to achieve the sustainability. The technology optimists saying like the science will definitely find such substitute. So, the sustainability requires neither the conservation nor reducing consumption for the nonrenewable resources.

So, there so at two different views like whether to conserve or not to conserve, but even if we are taking the view point of the technology optimist where we are assuming like the science will find such substitute. So, sustainability requires neither conservation nor reducing consumption. So, there; however, always some time gap will be there regarding this, the fast use of the nonrenewable resources and the time taken for its replacement to appear. So, at that and it is time required for its replacement to appear. So, during this because by that time may be a substitute has not yet been found. So, during that time conservation becomes essential. So, though there are certain controversy regarding how sustainability can be achieved. It is; however, we can understand it is in consensus with the justification of ethical judgment of Rawls and Attfield; that, we should leave our children a world that is no worse than the one that our parents left us.

So this, hints to the fact that we must not consume renewable resources faster than they can renew themselves and that we must not produce more pollution than the environment can absorb. How we interpret the third point, that we should not deplete the resources nonrenewable sources faster than a technology can develop adequate substitutes depends on whether a person is a technological optimist or a technological pessimist, but we have to take the both the views into consideration and need to have some self regulations in the amount that we are trying to consume or the eagerness, the motivation with which we try to find out substitutes. To many observers even conservation measures will feel to or answer to what is fully needed to ensure sustainability. It may fall short of what it is needed for sustainability.

Some environmentalists have argued that if we are to preserve our enough of a limited nonrenewable and non substitutable resources. So, that future generation can maintain their quality of life at a level which is similar to ours we shall have to change our economic sustainability by scaling down from the persuade of a economic growth. Even shoe maker have claimed like the individualize machines will have to cut down from their or to convert from their growth oriented capital intensive technologies to much more labor intensive technologies in which the human do the work the mach machine do not. So, some have argued that the economy have systems will have to abandon the goal of steadily increasing production and put in its place the goal of decreasing production. So, that will come to a steady state, it is where then it is a point at which the social, the stock of physical wealth that is maintained and the total population are remained constant

at some level which we take to be the minimum level, the minimum thing which should be present to take care of the needs of the present generation and so by take care of the maintenance throughout.

So, there may be the taking care of the birth and death rates and taking cares like taking care of the population explosion and also taking care of death due to malnutrition. So, these type of balancing activities taken. So, that this balance is maintained; however, the view like the economic activities or the group must be abandoned if the society is to be able to deal with the problems of domination resources faced with major challenges. So; however, it has been it is arguable that adherence to continued economic growth will end up degrading the quality of life of future generations and possibly the later life of the current generation. So, this will lead to the moral questions like, whether like the some economies will have access to more of the resources and some of the countries will be having access to less of the resources and what are the rights of the future generation in those two countries?

And where the developed countries consumed more of the resources and the developing countries are left with adjusting to consume at lower rates. So, or this the question like we discussed now is like, is it not like the search for going for more economical growth will lead to degradation of the quality of life of the future generation because then there will be no resources left for the future generation to satisfy their need in the way that they want to do it until and unless they have found out some substitutes for the resources that have been over used by the present generation and also it may so happen that the later part of the existence of the present generation also may suffer to some extent so because the no resources are left to take care of the economic growth.

So, these type of controversies may arise, these types of moral questions may arise and then will find like the, this living standards of people will move up and down in the same country as the time passes or the living standards of people of developed county and a developing country are going to vary and like if you are studying the throughout the time frame the rates of pollution and the growth of a particular country and may be comparable two countries will try to find out the relationship of economic growth and the environmental sustainability. And to what extend it will remain sustainable for future generation also? So, these are moral questions and. So, when and which helps us to answer the fact like; yes, these possibilities are there. So, because gradually we may be

approach into the scarcity of energy resources and it makes us face this question whether high development, higher consumption nations are morally justified in continuing with their economic growth policies that lead them to appropriate for their own use the nonrenewable resources of other movable machines that a two way economically if you use these resources or to be military in a military way to protect them.

So, all based again the because these are again international context because it depends on the corporate citizenship, roll of the business houses, how they are focusing on their relationship with the environment in which they are doing their business, the country to which their going to do their business in. So, these type of things which are important discussions to understand like the, what are the, may be ways in which practices which are there, which needs to be adopted and so that the depletion of resources can be prevented. And what are the self regulations to be done so that and ethics to be followed so that the or what are the like pressures that the, may be CSOs and the government in terms of codes of conduct these bodies can may, can enforce on the business houses corporates. So, that they follow it and the sustainability is maintained for the like in talking of environmental sustainability.

So, it should not be like that the, we are taking away the share of resources that is available to another developing countries and then we are flourishing at the cost of it because either the developing country or the future generation do not have a strong power to represent itself and tell these are my resources and you should not be polluting it or depleting it. So, in some cases it is defined by the ethics of care, how much careful your to respect and recognize the needs of the future generation for the resources, for a livable environment and the steps taken by you to control the misuse and over use of the nonrenewable and the renewable energy sources, resources and also not to pollute the environment. So, that the future generation have access to these resources also.

Thank you.