IDENTITY, ECONOMIC RATIONALITY & ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Analyzing the inter-relationships and resolving the conflicts for the achievement of Sustainable Development.

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ABSTRACT

*I*n the context of the growing culture of consumerism and the unabated utilization of scarce resources for large scale productive activities, the environmental sustainability is significantly endangered. Mass depletion of resources and increasing rates of pollution has weakened the ecological balance of the planet and poses a significant risk and threat on the survival of the future generations. The relentless pursuit of the objectives of economic development and welfare by the economic agents and the authorities has put the environment at a greater risk due to their interaction with the environment.

The identity of the economic agent determines his choice and rational behaviour and the execution of the rational behaviour affects the environmental sustainability. Thus it implies that there exists an important relation among the concepts of identity, rationality and sustainability. Moreover rationality and sustainability are mutually conflicting concepts in most of the situations. However the conflict arises due to a local identity of the economic agent. The agent's behaviour is solely confined to the fulfillment of his own objectives regardless of the impact of his actions on the environment. If the agent has a global identity his objectives would become broader and would take into account the external effects of his behaviour on the environment. Therefore the rational behaviour of the agent would modify with environmental consciousness being included in his objective function. Environmental awareness can play a crucial role in shaping the consciousness of the agent and modifying his rational behaviour.

KEYWORDS: *Environmental Sustainability, Global Identity, Pollution, Environmental Awareness.*