

SOCIAL ECOLOGY OF SUSTAINABILITY

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability is a concept that has been rising in recent years due to different economical, social and environmental crises that have been happened. Although psychology is logically link to behavioral patterns, its insertion as a specialized discipline in human behavior study has been relatively recent. In fact, contributions to analysis and promotion of sustainability generated from this knowledge area evidence certain turns regarding the idea about the phenomenon in question. Both behavioral and environmental models emphasize on one of the extremes of human being-context binomial, which limits interactive processes' explanation that facilitate or hinder sustainability. In this article, some characteristics of three approaches looking for sustainability promotion are analyzed: behavioral, cognitive and social-ecological. Contributions and limitations of each approach are identified and some studies to promote sustainability from social ecological perspective are suggested.

Keywords: Sustainability, environmental psychology, behaviorism, cognitivism, social ecology.

INTRODUCTION

A History Summary

It may be said that, as a process, sustainability came from human societies that were transforming from nomads into sedentary groups. Provision and administration of resources that allowed human group survival was a "sine qua non" condition to societies' proliferation (Engels, 1981). Nonetheless, sustainability is a relatively recent scientific concept.

Studies from Malthus (1798) were the first ones to point out the existence of limits in the Earth, attracting attention about evidence that population increases geometrically every 25 years, meanwhile food increase is growing arithmetically. This contrast of population growth vs. agronomical increase represents one of the antecedents to study sustainability from an

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