

Mechanisms of Environmental Protection Associations and Achieving Environmental Security among Local Population

Abeer Ali ElNe'na'y

Community Organization Department
Higher Institute of Social Work in Port Said
Princess Noura University in Saudi Arabia.

Ihsan Abdallah Ahmed Abdallah

Community Organization Department
Higher Institute of Social Work in Port Said

Abstract:

The research identifies the mechanisms used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security among local population. The research is a descriptive study that used the social survey method, which applied a comprehensive listing to 24 respondents of social workers in associations and 35 respondents of associations' members and also selected a sample of 49 beneficiaries and 30 non-beneficiaries from these associations.

The study used a questionnaire in data collection; the research identified four mechanisms that environment protection associations use to achieve environmental security among local population, and these mechanisms are coordination, training, communication, and partnership.

The study found consistency in the responses of association's members, and social workers on applying by these mechanisms. The study concluded that these mechanisms achieve the dimensions of environmental security among local populations, namely the cultural dimension - the social dimension - the health dimension and the economic dimension. The study also identified obstacles facing organizations in achieving environmental security, and suggestions for addressing these obstacles.

Keywords: Mechanisms - Environmental Security.

Introduction:

Environmental security is one of the most important axes of sustainable development. It is a challenge to human security, which is linked to protecting the freedom and personal security of individuals from threats, whether direct or indirect. Human security includes food security, employment and environmental security. This essentially includes protecting people from all threats to their lives, maintaining health, human dignity, personal security, and granting individual's freedom and protection from need and poverty (Shukla, 2014, p.3).

The Scientific Committee on Environment and Development has established the need for intergenerational management of resources. The needs of this generation should be met without affecting the rights of future generations by environmental resources. Thus, it is necessary to preserve them and to avoid their depletion to ensure environmental sustainability (Markandga & Halnaes, 2007, P.22). There is a close link between security and the environment, where humanity depends on the environment, the basic needs and the resources needed to improve human life. Despite the importance of

the environment for human beings, the humanitarian impact on the local, national and global environment is large and growing, and this represents a challenge to human security, welfare and humanity. Environmental security is an important factor in human survival.

The relation between human security and environmental security becomes evident in case of ecological imbalances and degradation of resources, where humans depend on their access to natural resources. When resources are threatened by environmental change, human security becomes threatened (L, Chalecki, 2013, P. 3).

Therefore, the environmental problems and the rapid increase in the population density in Egypt necessitate a concern for environmental security. Environmental security represents a crucial response to environmental changes and problems that lead to environmental degradation, contamination, waste or misuse of natural land and aquatic resources. It would also respond to the increased continuous pollutants resulting from industrial development, including biological contaminants, food industry contaminants, and radioactive pollutants (Al-Qasimi, 1997, P.35).

This is in addition to the risks resulting from the elimination of natural environment, the threats to the ozone layer, climate change, and threats to environmental security resulting from waste material (Abdel Moneim, 2003, P.18), as well as solid wastes and ensuing health problems that affect local populations (Abdel Wahab 1997, P.62).

This was confirmed by Ismail's study (2009) which indicated that solid waste, water pollution, sewage problems, air pollution and lack of green areas were the most important problems that threaten the environmental security in Egypt.

Thus, environmental pollution became one of the most important problems facing environmental security in Egypt. It poses a threat to environmental health and its organisms as a result of increased human activity. This led to a significant increase in the concentration of environmental pollutants that surpassed the global pollutant limits. Therefore, environmental security aims to preserve the natural environment in which humans live against activities that lead to ecological imbalance. El Shahry's study (2009) asserted that the effects of over-exploitation of vegetation cover and natural environment lead to deterioration of national wealth and its depletion. This, in turn, leads to desertification and negative climatic changes causing environmental imbalances.

The objectives of environmental security are achieved through a comprehensive strategy that includes addressing the obstacles facing environmental security. This is achieved through increasing environmental awareness, developing social participation, and organizing efforts and measures for reducing environmental aggression to achieve environmental security. Khan's study (2005) emphasized that environmental threats and challenges and their impact on environmental security must be examined. Necessary measures should be taken to protect the environment.

It is agreed that the magnitude of the environmental problems that Egypt suffers from is too large to be addressed by one entity- whatever its size or capacity is- or one organization, including the state. Therefore, environmental protection associations have emerged lately in Egypt due to societal needs and environmental changes, which caused many problems, primarily environmental pollution. The importance of these associations stems from the danger to the surrounding environment and natural resources in the major cities, especially industrial cities and slum areas that are spread all over Egypt.

As Fisher (1994) has pointed out, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in third world countries are important for their activities and efforts to preserve the environment and for the strong influence on government policy that they possess.

Umla's study (1996) confirmed that the network of NGOs in Mexico focused on the enormous environmental problems. Their importance increased as NGOs possessing political channels that controlled fundamental crises and had an impact on the state's environmental policy. They thus helped strengthen environmental activity.

El Amir's study (2010) concluded that addressing environmental problems requires the integration of efforts between the state and NGOs. The role of NGOs in achieving environmental security lies in prioritizing environmental problems, monitoring, raising awareness, providing information for clarifying environmental policy, and conducting researches for dealing environmental issues and problems.

The role of NGOs in the field of environmental protection is not considered less important than the role of governmental organizations by virtue of their composition, their direct contact with the public, and their ability to influence public opinion. This is

confirmed by Banathy's study (1997) which asserted that the local populations' involvement in community education programs and environmental awareness contributes to the acquisition of positive attitudes towards their environment. This enables community members to address environmental problems positively within the framework of participation and cooperation with local leaders.

The social work profession is one of the professions most related to the environment and its components. Social work is concerned with people and their environment, seeking to find forms of balance between humans and the environment. Therefore, the community organization method is one of the most contributing methods in the field of environment. Its methods and tactics can be used to achieve the objectives of environmental protection associations for preserving the environment and achieving environmental security among local populations.

The authors identified the theoretical guides that can be used through researching the theory of ecological system. The theory explains the relation between social systems and the environment and attempts to maintain a positive relation with the environment. This is because social systems need suitable environmental inputs (resources - information) to achieve their objectives.

Study goals:

1. Determine the consistency of respondents' responses on mechanisms used by environmental protection associations (coordination, training, communication, and partnership) to achieve environmental security among local populations. The respondents were social workers and board members.
2. Determine the extent to which the mechanisms used in environmental protection associations achieve the environmental security dimensions of the local population, namely the cultural dimension, the social dimension, the health dimension and the economic dimension.
3. Identify the obstacles facing environmental protection associations in achieving environmental security among local populations.
4. Gather suggestions for addressing the obstacles faced by environmental protection associations in achieving environmental security among local population.

According to this, the study asked a key question as follows: What are the mechanisms used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security among the local population?

Do these mechanisms achieve the environmental security dimensions of the local population?

Study Concepts: environmental protection mechanisms.

The Webster Dictionary defines mechanisms as processes, methods, or systems that reach a result (Webster's, 2003, P647).

Mechanisms are also defined as the knowledge, skills, or methods and procedures used to achieve clear goals (Baker, 1991, P.147).

The operational concept of mechanisms in this study means:

The methods and means used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security among populations of the local community, namely (coordination mechanism, training mechanism, communication mechanism, and partnership mechanism). These mechanisms will be identified through the questionnaire (study tool).

Environmental protection means:

1. Protecting all components of the environment from irrational use improve the quality of the environment and adapt them to humans (Rob. Mcrac, 2002, p.180).

2. Achieving the maximum protection of the environment from pollution for the individual to be true in a safe environment (Ghashom, Hussein, 2011 p.57).

The operational concept of mechanisms in this study means:

Achieving the mechanisms of environmental protection associations to the environmental security dimensions of the local populations (cultural dimension - social dimension - health dimension - economic dimension). These dimensions will be determined through the questionnaire (study tool).

Study hypotheses:

- 1) There are significant differences between members of environmental protection associations scores mean and the social workers scores mean on the measuring tool which determined the mechanism used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security in local communities.

- 2) There are significant differences between the scores mean of beneficiaries from the environmental protection associations and non-beneficiaries on environmental safety measures and its dimensions

Methodology:

Method:

The current study is a descriptive study that provides information about the mechanisms of environmental protection associations and achieving environmental security among local populations. The study used the comprehensive social survey by using two questionnaires.

The first questionnaire identifies the mechanisms used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security among local population, applied to social workers and associations' members.

The second questionnaire identifies the environmental security dimension of the mechanisms to achieve environmental security used by environmental protection associations, applied to a sample of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries from environmental associations

Population:

First stage

The study used the comprehensive social survey on number of board members and social workers in environmental protection associations who are 59 and distributed as follows: 35 board members and 24 social workers in environmental protection associations, and the characteristics of board members were as follows: (57% males), and (42.8% females). and as for years of experience: (51.4% had more than 15 years of experience, while 48.6% had 10 to 15 years of experience).

The characteristics of social workers were as follows: (58% males), and (42% females). and as for years of experience: (71.5% had 5 to 10 years of experience, 12.5% had 17 years of experience or more, 9% had 11 to 16 years of experience, while 7% had less than 5 years of experience).

The two authors applied to them the first questionnaire to identify the mechanisms used by environmental protection associations.

Second stage

The random sample of the beneficiaries of the 1100 associations; A random sample representing 10% of 490 respondents and the definition of the sampling frame for which the criteria for selecting the

sample is met through the direct interaction with the associations, participating in associations programs and benefiting from its services, 49 respondents were selected.

And a random sample representing 10% from 300 non-beneficiaries from environmental protection associations using these mechanisms who are 30 respondents were selected.

The two authors applied to them the second questionnaire to identify the mechanisms' dimensions used by environmental protection associations

And also the examined the homogeneity between the characteristics of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries by test (t) as shown in the table below

Table (1) Test homogeneity between the sample of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries

Variables	GROUP	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Age	1	49	33.1429	10.05816	1.43688	.207	77	.836
	2	30	32.6667	9.67875	1.76709			
Level of Education	1	49	2.6327	.63554	.09079	-.005	77	.996
	2	30	2.6333	.61495	.11227			

The table above shows that there are homogeneity between the characteristics of the samples of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries from environmental associations and there are no significant differences between them in age and education variables

Research procedures:

The two authors interviewed the director of the Civil Society Department in the Social Affairs in Port Said Governorate to limit the number of environmental protection associations, which are (6). The four active associations were selected. The associations were visited to meet the social workers and the board members.

Two environmental protection associations not using the mechanisms to achieve environmental security , The two authors obtained the official approval to complete the questionnaire forms after presenting the research idea and clarifying its objectives and confirming that the data obtained were confidential and not used except for research purposes.

Study instruments:

Consistent with the research requirements, the two authors used two tools:

First tool: A questionnaire applied on members of environmental associations and social workers in environmental protection associations to determine the mechanism used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental safety for local population community.

The design of the questionnaire forms was based on scientific steps in order to familiarize them with the theoretical heritage and the previous Arab and foreign studies related to the subject of the study and interviews with the experts. In this stage, the dimensions of the questionnaire forms were determined according to the objectives of the study. And the dimensions as follows:

First dimension: Preliminary data: Identifying the personal characteristics of the respondents (gender – age) and their professional characteristics (education - years of experience).

Second dimension: Mechanisms used by environmental protection associations in achieving environmental security for the local population and their indicators.

[Coordination mechanism]: Consists of six phrases including:

- The associations interest in the coordination between the government agencies to implement joint programs to protect the environment.
- Exchange of experience between associations and community organizations.

[Training mechanism]: Consists of six phrases including:

- The associations interest in renewing the training needs of the employees.
- Implementation of training programs volunteers.

[Communication mechanism]: Consists of six phrases including:

- The opening of channels of communication between associations and community services.
- Providing information on environmental problems.

[Partnership mechanism]: Consists of six phrases including:

- Establishing protocols between associations and community agencies.
- Developing partnership between associations and community organizations.

Third dimension: Identifying the obstacles faced by environmental protection associations in achieving environmental security among local populations. It consists of six phrases including:

- Weak budget allocated for the implementation of joint programs.
- Rigidity of regulations and laws governing the work of associations.

Fourth dimension: Suggestions for overcoming obstacles faced by environmental protection associations in achieving environmental security among local populations, such as:

- Providing budgets for the implementation of the associations programs.
- Flexibility of regulations and laws governing the work of associations.

The questionnaires were presented in their initial to ten community organizations teachers; the percentage of agreement reached was 85%. Some phrases were deleted and others were edited so the final version was then designed.

In order to verify the reliability of the questionnaire forms, the method of testing and retesting was used. The sample was applied to 15 respondents and re-application after 15 days. The relationship between the two applications was calculated to verify the reliability of the questionnaire using the Spearman coefficient. The proportion of the agreement before and after the application to the questionnaire applied to members concerned with environmental and social workers was (88%).

Second tool: A questionnaire applied to a sample of local community beneficiaries and non- beneficiaries from environmental protection associations to determine the dimensions of the mechanism used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental safety for local population community.

The design of the questionnaire forms was based on scientific steps in order to familiarize them with the theoretical heritage and the previous Arab and foreign studies related to the subject of the study and interviews with the experts. In this stage, the dimensions of the questionnaire forms were determined according to the objectives of the study. In addition, the dimensions as follows:

First dimension: Preliminary data: Identifying the personal characteristics of the respondents and their professional characteristics (gender- age- education - years of experience).

Second dimension: The cultural dimension consists of 6 phrases including: awareness of environmental problems - changing negative thoughts - awareness of environmental security requirements.

Third dimension: The social dimension consists of 6 phrases including: acquiring environmental guidance skills - participating in campaigns to protect the environment - a sense of social responsibility towards the environment.

Fourth dimension: The health dimension consists of 6 phrases, including: changing health habits - the ability to face environmental problems that threaten health - learning ways to prevent pollution.

Fifth dimension: The economic dimension consists of 6 phrases, including: rationalization of consumption of environmental resources - provision of resources for preserving the environment - investment of environmental resources.

The questionnaires were presented in their initial to ten community organizations teachers; the percentage of agreement reached was 85%. Some phrases were deleted and others were edited so the final version was then designed.

In order to verify the reliability of the questionnaire forms, the method of testing and retesting was used. The sample was applied to 15 respondents and re-application after 15 days. The relationship between the two applications was calculated to verify the reliability of the questionnaire using the Spearman coefficient. The proportion of the agreement before and after the application to the questionnaire applied to a sample from local community beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries from environmental protection organizations was (88%).

Limitations:

The researchers faced many difficulties in getting administrative approvals for gathering data from associations. The researchers overcame this difficulty through meetings with relevant officials in the Directorate of Social Solidarity in Port Said Governorate. The researchers also faced difficulties in data collection because of the lack of understanding on environmental security among respondents. The researchers conducted an intensive meeting for respondents including board members and social workers, and staff of environmental protection associations to present the concept of environmental security and to clarify the objectives of the study.

The study results presented several suggestions for overcoming the obstacles that environmental protection associations

face. This included expanding the associations' financial resources for implementing their programs, increasing the flexibility of laws and regulations, formation of networks among community organizations, building the capacities of associations' staff, establishing a database, and increasing environmental information.

This study has been applied to the environmental protection associations in Port Said Governorate. Its results can be used in all environmental protection associations all over Egypt. The study identified mechanisms used by the environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security, and identified obstacles facing environmental protection associations in Port Said. These obstacles however, apply to all NGOs in Egypt. The study presented suggestions to overcome these obstacles. Future studies of various methodologies can focus on the mechanisms for achieving environmental security.

This study has introduced new topics that can be further studied in detail, such as conducting experimental research using each of the mentioned mechanisms to build the capacity of environmental protection associations. Other topics included developing training programs for building the capacities and skills of social workers to activate their professional performance in environmental practice. In addition, the study highlighted the importance of conducting joint conferenced between governmental and non-governmental organizations to integrate the exerted efforts for achieving environmental security in society.

Results

Results Related to the Research hypotheses:

Table (2) - the difference between associations' members and social workers to determine the mechanisms used by environmental protection associations to achieve the environmental security

Sr.	Dimensions	Respondents	N	Mean	Std Deviation	t	Sig. (2tailed)
1	Coordination mechanism	Associations members	35	13.2286	4.29833	-.317	.753
		Social workers	24	13.5833	4.11695		
2	Training mechanism	Associations members	35	17.1429	2.15765	.044	.965
		Social workers	24	17.1667	1.80980		

Sr.	Dimensions	Respondents	N	Mean	Std Deviation	t	Sig. (2tailed)
3	Communications mechanism	Associations members	35	15.2000	2.76320	.099	.921
		Social workers	24	15.1250	2.98214		
4	Partnership mechanism	Associations members	35	13.1714	.57172	-.464	.645
		Social workers	24	13.5833	.67544		

The results of the table meet the objectives of the study; the table above shows that there are no significant differences between the associations' members and social workers in determining the mechanisms of environmental protection in achieving the environmental security among local populations as follows

First dimension [coordination mechanism]: There are no significant differences between respondents, the average calculation for respondents' members concerned with environment, managers 13.2286, and average calculation for social workers 13.5833, the standard deviation for associations' members 4.29833, the standard deviation for social worker 4.4695 with sig. .753.

Second dimension [training mechanism]: There are no significant differences between respondents, the average calculation for respondents' members concerned with environment, managers 17.1429, and average calculation for social workers 17.1667, the standard deviation for associations' members 2.1565, the standard deviation for social worker 1.80980 with sig., .965.

Third dimension [communication mechanism]: There are no significant differences between respondents, the average calculation for respondents' members concerned with environment, managers 15.2000, and average calculation for social workers 15.1250, the standard deviation for associations' members 2.76320, the standard deviation for social worker 2.98274 with sig., .921

Fourth dimension [partnership mechanism]: There are no significant differences between respondents, the average calculation for respondents' members concerned with environment, managers 13.1714, and average calculation for social workers 13.5833, the standard deviation for associations' members .57172, the standard deviation for social worker .67544 with sig. .965.

The data above indicates there are no significant differences between members of associations and the social workers to determine the mechanism used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security in local communities

Table (3) –the differences between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries to determine the achievement of the mechanisms used for local security dimensions

Sr.	Dimensions	Respondents	N	Mean	Std deviation	T	Sig(2-tailed)
1	Cultural dimension.	Beneficiaries	49	9.5714	2.76887	7.252	.00001
		Non beneficiaries	30	5.7000	1.17884		
2	Social dimension.	Beneficiaries	49	7.0408	2.78358	2.494	.015
		Non beneficiaries	30	5.7000	1.20773		
3	Health dimension	Beneficiaries	49	13.2014	3.41553	7.081	.00001
		Non beneficiaries	30	7.9333	2.83978		
4	Economic dimension	Beneficiaries	49	8.3265	3.81547	3.125	.003
		Non beneficiaries	30	6.0333	1.58622		
Dimension tool.		Beneficiaries	49	38.1429	11.17475	5.814	.00001
		Non beneficiaries	30	25.3667	5.64760		

The table above shows that there are significant differences between the average scores of beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries from the environmental protection associations for the beneficiaries on the questionnaire of the sub dimensions for environmental security [Cultural dimension – social dimension – health dimension – economic dimension, the statically function value (t) with sig .0001].

Table (4) – Obstacles Facing Environmental Protection Associations.

Sr.	Obstacles	Board Members and Persons Concerned with the Environment N=35							Association Managers and Social Workers N=24						
		Response			Weighted Total	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage	Ranking	Response			Weighted Total	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage	Ranking
		Yes	To Some Extent	No					Yes	To Some Extent	No				
1	Weak budget allocated for joint programs.	32	3	-	102	2.914	97.142	2	24	-	-	72	2	100	1
2	Rigidity of laws and regulations.	33	2	-	103	2.942	98.95	1	24	-	-	72	2	100	1
3	Lack of interest in providing	31	2	1	100	2.857	95.238	3	21	3	-	69	2.875	95.833	2

Sr.	Obstacles	Board Members and Persons Concerned with the Environment N=35							Association Managers and Social Workers N=24						
		Response			Weighted Total	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage	Ranking	Response			Weighted Total	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage	Ranking
		Yes	To Some Extent	No					Yes	To Some Extent	No				
	financial support.														
4	Neglecting to build the capacities and skills.	30	5	-	100	2.857	95.238	3	21	3	-	69	2.875	95.833	2
5	Lack of data and information.	29	5	1	98	2.8	93.333	4	19	4	1	66	2.75	91.666	3
6	Lack of modern technology.	29	4	2	97	2.771	92.38	5	18	4	2	64	2.666	88.888	4

The results of this table meet the objectives of the study in identifying obstacles facing the environmental protection associations in achieving environmental security among local populations. In the first rank, rigidity of laws and regulations governing NGOs (mentioned by 98.95% of board members and 100% of social workers), followed by weak budgets allocated for joint programs with other organizations (100% of managers and social workers, and 97.142% of board members). Following this was the government's lack of interest in providing organizations with financial support for implementing environmental projects, and neglecting to build the capacities and skills of local community members to enable them to address their environmental problems (95.238% of board members and 95.833% of managers and social workers).

Table (5) Suggestions for overcoming the obstacles Facing Environmental Protection Associations

Sr.	Suggestions	Board Members and Persons Concerned with the Environment N=35							Association Managers and Social Workers N=24						
		Response			Weighted Total	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage	Ranking	Response			Weighted Total	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage	Ranking
		Yes	To Some Extent	No					Yes	To Some Extent	No				
1	Allocating budgets for associations.	35	-	-	105	3	100	1	24	-	-	72	3	100	1
2	Flexibility of laws and regulations.	35	-	-	105	3	100	1	24	-	-	72	3	100	1
3	Training and capacity building for associations' staff.	33	2	-	103	2.942	98.95	2	23	1	-	71	2.958	98.611	2
4	Establishing databases.	30	5	-	100	2.857	95.238	4	21	3	-	69	2.875	95.833	4

Sr.	Suggestions	Board Members and Persons Concerned with the Environment N=35							Association Managers and Social Workers N=24						
		Response			Total	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage	Ranking	Response			Total	Weighted Mean	Weighted Percentage	Ranking
		Yes	To Some Extent	No					Yes	To Some Extent	No				
5	Formation of networks.	32	3	-	102	2.914	97.142	3	22	2	-	70	2.916	97.222	3
6	Establishing communication channels.	33	2	-	103	2.942	98.95	2	23	1	-	71	2.958	98.611	2

The results of this table meet the objectives of the study in determining ways for overcoming obstacles associations in achieving environmental security among local populations. The most frequently mentioned were allocating budgets for organizations to implement their programs (100% of respondents), and increasing flexibility of laws and regulations governing the work of organizations (also 100% of respondents). This was followed by providing training and capacity building for staff of organizations and establishing communication channels between organizations and communities to increase environmental awareness (98.95% of board members and 98.611% of social workers).

Discussion:

The study identified the mechanisms used by the environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security in local communities; the identified mechanisms conformed to the procedural definition espoused by the researchers. These mechanisms are coordination, training, communication, and partnership.

The results of the study agreed with other several studies in the same field. They agreed with Fisher’s study (1994), which pointed to the importance of NGOs, their impact on citizens, and the importance of the activities they provide for preserving the environment. In addition to their role in as influencers on government policy. The results also agreed with El Amir’s study (2010), which pointed to the importance of integration between NGOs and GOs in addressing environmental problems and achieving environmental security.

The study was unique in identifying the mechanisms that NGOs use. One of those mechanisms is coordination between associations and community organizations for designing joint environmental programs to preserve the environment and achieve environmental security in local communities. Another is the training

mechanism, applied through training programs to increase the efficiency of staff in associations and the associations' provision of training for volunteers participating in the associations' projects and programs. A third is the communication mechanism represented in establishing communication channels with the local community members to raise awareness on environmental problems and conservation of the environment. This is consistent with the theory of ecological system, which indicates the importance of the relations between social systems and the environment.

Finally, the results of the current study pointed to the partnership mechanism with community organizations and its importance in achieving environmental security. This is confirmed by Umlas' study (1996), which indicated that NGO networks have a prominent role in strengthening their activities and influencing environmental policy.

The study findings confirmed the validity of both research hypotheses. The first hypothesis was related to the existence of significant differences between the respondents' responses in determining mechanisms used by environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security in local communities. The results confirmed the consistency of the responses of board members and social workers in this regard. The second hypothesis, related to existence of obstacles facing environmental protection association in achieving environmental, was also conformed.

The results of the study revealed many obstacles including the rigid laws and regulations governing NGOs, weak budgets allocated for environmental programs, and the lack of financial resources for developing environmental protection projects. There is a general lack of information on the environment and environmental problems, a lack of modern technological means because of the weak financial resources. In addition, NGOs do not promote their programs adequately, thus limiting their projects and affecting their achievements of goals. NGOs lack the capacity to implement their plans, and neglect building the abilities of local community members to be able to face their environmental problems. These obstacles hinder the work of NGOs in Egypt, especially environmental protection association. This is especially in light of the limited NGO resources and the rigidity of the NGOs law that restricts their freedom to obtain grants and financial resources for implementing their programs and projects.

The study results presented several suggestions for overcoming the obstacles that environmental protection associations face. This included expanding the associations' financial resources for implementing their programs, increasing the flexibility of laws and regulations, formation of networks among community organizations, building the capacities of associations' staff, establishing a database, and increasing environmental information.

The results of the study confirmed the validity of the second hypothesis. There are significant differences between the beneficiaries from the environmental protection associations and non – beneficiaries' average scores on environmental safety measures and its sub – dimensions, the study results confirmed that the beneficiaries from environmental protection associations which using mechanisms of [coordination – training –communication –partnership] achieve the environmental security dimensions in local community population, the most important dimension is the cultural dimension consists of: awareness of environmental problems - changing negative thoughts - awareness of environmental security requirements.

The social dimension consists of: acquiring environmental guidance skills - participating in campaigns to protect the environment - a sense of social responsibility towards the environment.

The health dimension consists of: changing health habits - the ability to face environmental problems that threaten health - learning ways to prevent pollution.

The economic dimension consists of: rationalization of consumption of environmental resources - provision of resources for preserving the environment - investment of environmental resources.

The results of the study confirmed the validity of the second hypothesis. It is expected that the mechanisms used in the environmental protection societies are expected to achieve the environmental security dimensions of the local populations: (the cultural dimension) through awareness of the environmental problems of the local community, awareness of the importance of environmental security and its requirements and to know the most important environmental protection legislation and laws. The health dimension is achieved through the acquisition of citizens the ability to address their environmental problems and changing behaviors and habits that affect health and learning ways to prevent environmental pollutants. The social dimension is achieved through the citizens' sense of social responsibility towards the environment and the acquisition of

environmental guidance and voluntary participation in environmental protection projects. Achieving the economic dimension by taking advantage of available resources to preserve the environment and rationalize the consumption of environmental resources.

These results were agreed with Banathy, 1997 study, which indicated that the practice of community awareness programs for quality awareness and environmental education gives them positive attitudes toward their environment to deal with their problems and achieve environmental security.

The results indicate the importance of using the mechanisms of [coordination – training- communication-partnership] in environmental protection associations to be able to achieve its goals to protect the environment and achieve the environmental security dimensions for local community population.

This study has been applied to the environmental protection associations in Port Said Governorate. Its results can be used in all environmental protection associations all over Egypt. The study identified mechanisms used by the environmental protection associations to achieve environmental security, and identified obstacles facing environmental protection associations in Port Said. These obstacles however, apply to all NGOs in Egypt. The study presented suggestions to overcome these obstacles. Future studies of various methodologies can focus on the mechanisms for achieving environmental security.

This study has introduced new topics that can be further studied in detail, such as conducting experimental research using each of the aforementioned mechanisms to build the capacity of environmental protection associations. Other topics included developing training programs for building the capacities and skills of social workers to activate their professional performance in environmental practice. In addition, the study highlighted the importance of conducting joint conferenced between governmental and non-governmental organizations to integrate the exerted efforts for achieving environmental security in society.

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