Name: Edidiong Joseph Eyo

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Types of environment

Environment can be divided into two categories

1. Natural Environment
2. Man-made environment

Natural environment is characterized by natural component. All biotic (living) and abiotic (non-living) are created through a natural process and creation of these biotic and abiotic component do not require any human support.

**Abiotic components** are non-living chemical and physical factors in the environment, which affect ecosystems. Examples are soil, water, air and wind, temperature, minerals and sunlight.

**Biotic components** are those living components that surround us that influence the ecosystems. Examples are producers (plants), consumers (animals) and decomposers (fungi and bacteria).

**Biophysical component** is a combination of biotic and abiotic factors of the surrounding that have an influence on the survival, development and evolution of organisms. Examples are the marine environment and terrestrial environment.

**The different domains of the natural environment**: These are the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere.

* The lithosphere is the solid crust or the hard top layer of the earth. It is made up of rocks and minerals and covered with a thin layer of soil. The lithosphere is an irregular surface with mountains, plateaus, plains, valleys, landforms, etc. It is the domain that provides us with forests, grasslands for grazing, land for agriculture and housing. It is also a source of minerals.
* Hydrosphere is the domain of water. It comprises of the various sources of water and different types of water bodies like rivers, lakes, seas, oceans, estuaries, etc. It is essential for all living organisms.
* The atmosphere is the thin layer of air that surrounds the earth. It is held by the gravitational force of the earth. The Atmosphere protects us from the harmful UV rays from the sun by blocking them out. It contains a number of gases like oxygen, which is essential for life, dust and water vapour. Changes in atmosphere bring changes in weather and climate.
* All life makes up the biosphere. It is the zone of the earth where land, water and air interact with each other to support life.

Man-made environment is the artificially made environment made by man and is spearheaded by modern technologies capable of modifying the environment according to his needs to a great extent. This environment encompasses places and spaces created or modified by people including buildings, roads, school parks or green spaces and supporting infrastructures, such as water supply, or energy networks, transportation systems etc.  It can further be divided into two types of environments.

* Inner Environment
* Outer Environment

The Inner Environment

It is a social environment and it exists as long as a particular society exists. It pertains to the regulations, traditions, organizations and institutions. It involves customs and folkways which is existent in every human group. It is addressed with names such as non-material culture, social heritage etc. This heritage is essential for the social life of humans to flourish, it is known to have an influence on an individual’s life. The altered form of the economic and physical environment – artificial environment, are seen as two different aspects of the man-made environment.

The Outer Environment

Through advancement in the field of science and technology, humans have attempted to alter conditions of their physical environment. This outer environment is as a result of these modifications which includes modern infrastructure in cities, our homes and their associated amenities, our modes of communication and transport, our resorts to conveniences and luxury, different kinds of industry manufacturing luxurious commodities, electrical appliances and so on which ultimately aims at civilization and urbanization.

The inner and the outer environments are correlated and hence inseparable.