

The Primacy And Necessity For Knowledge Acquisition For Self-Transformation In The Fight Against Global Warming In Yola Metropolis

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Abstract: *The study investigated the knowledge of the people of Yola Metropolis regarding Global Warming. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study a survey design was adopted for the study. The population frame of the study was 4600 students of 5 higher institutions sited within the Metropolis. Out of which 460 (239 (52%) male and 221 (48%) female were sampled using stratified sapling technique. The study used 4-points likert scale. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage score. Findings revealed that people in Yola Metropolis are aware of global warming but do nothing to curtail it. Based on the findings, it was suggested that government should mount and funds sensitization structures and programmes for the people to become enlightened on what to do to curtail global warming in the study area.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Humankind's impact on the earth's climatic system is leading to a world where life on the planet as a whole, may over the next few decades, become radically different. In some part of the globe it may be difficult for much life to survive at all.

The problem of global warming is regarded as one of the most serious environmental problems of our time. Many conferences were held and many articles published about the dire consequences of global warming. Experts like Oreskes (2004:306), Tremberth, et al (2007:244), Margira, et l (2007:466) and Hegerl et al (2007: 17) attribute the raise in temperatures to the accumulation of gases in the atmosphere that is caused by factories, power stations and car emissions. These accumulated gases led to a rise in air and ocean temperatures that threatens to melt the ice caps and cause flooding of land which changes the climate of vast areas on earth. Although there are scholars and scientists like Timothy Ball (2007), Michael Wichton (2006) and Richard Hindzens (2005) that do not believe that global warming is as a result of human activities. They say it is a natural activity that has to be experienced by the earth just as global dimming was experienced in the past. Some Muslim scholars, Ashghar Ali (2008) Sheykh Abdul Aziz al-Zan Daami (2009), Muzammal al-Hussain (2007) really believe that there is global warming but it is caused by the evil and mischievous activities of man. Be it as it may and whether we belief it or not, there is global warming and this is a fact from meta data, more so, when there was global dimming something was done to warm the earth and now that there is global warming do we seat back with folded arms and watch? Certainly No.

Undoubtedly, there is the need for humanity to come together to confront the challenge of climatic change especially to prevent the process becoming too advanced that a tipping point is reached and the earth continue to warm up regardless of human intervention which follows.

This paper believes that the in-put of all is vital in rising to the challenges presented to us by the process of global climatic change particularly in Yola Metropolis where no or very little attention is paid to the issue.

The focus of this paper is to examine the necessity and primacy of knowledge acquisition for self-transformation in the fight against global warming in Yola Metropolis.

In 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was formed by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). The IPCC along with the World Metrological Organization (WMO) were commissioned by the UN to assess the level of knowledge generally and scientific knowledge in particular on global warming. The IPCC and the WMO did a very fascinating job but they neglected the area of study of this paper. This paper therefore attempts to fill this gab.

II. STATEMENT OF PROBLEMS

The task of this presentation is to examine the necessity and primacy of knowledge acquisition for self-transformation in the fight against global warming in Yola Metropolis. In discussing this issue, it is expedient to begin with some conceptual definitions of:

- i. Knowledge acquisition
- ii. Self-transformation

iii. Global warming, if only to set the stage for adequate appreciation of the issue.

Operationally knowledge acquisition is a process of absorbing those values by an individual that the society accepts and takes as worthwhile through education and training for one's survival and positive participation in the society and economy (Tahir, 2010). As suggested by Ipaye (1998), the context of knowledge acquisition can be formal (school), non-formal (conference) and informal (private conversation). Public education is one of the mandates of media and environmental agencies and no programme or few are designed and no local attempt was made in order to educate people in Yola metropolis on the fight against global warming using this traditional method. Consequently the knowledge about global warming relies on the formal and non-formal modes of education to deliver vital information to masses of our people with the hope to positively change their attitude and behavior and shun activities that cause global warming for the overall development of the area.

Self-transformation is used to stand for a changed attitude (Kamil, 2009). Attitude may be changeable due to social influences such as education. The acquired information and knowledge is internalized and practicalized based on established norms. In our context the expectation is that one that is transformed will not be engaged in those behaviors that are adjudged as capable of causing global warming and will even take a deliberate step to alert authorities of any move suspected to cause any havoc to the environment. The intention here is to drastically reduce opportunities for global warming to occur.

The term global warming refers to the increase in the average temperature of the earth near surface air and oceans and its projected continuation. It is also said that it is a phenomenon caused by clearing the global dimming causing pollutants. Natural events and human activities are believed to be contributing to the increase in average global temperatures. This is caused primarily by an increase in the greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. What most writers fail to talk about as the primary cause of global warming is the atomic bombs and other related chemical weapons that are being tested by the super-powers. This can cause more havoc to the ozone layer, as it is believed by the writer, than most automobile emissions.

The converse of global is a healthy, cool and friendly environment. Most literatures on environment see global warming as harmful and devastating to the environment. There is no wonder therefore, that governments of various countries had set up various mechanisms to look into the problem and find solutions to it in their nation's body politic. These mechanisms, which are by and large formal conventional methods for combating global warming, have their limitations. Of the numerous problems facing the globe today is global warming; the issue had been emphatically prominent for over fifty years. The key issues about the problem for consideration here include:

- i. Are people in Yola Metropolis aware of climatic change generally and global warming in particular?
- ii. What has been the source of their information and knowledge?
- iii. To what extent are they involved in those activities that prevent global warming in their localities?
- iv. Have the knowledge and information acquired added their urge to prevent global warming from taking place?

III. METHODOLOGY

In order to resolve these four issues, a survey was undertaken among students of higher institutions in Yola Metropolis. A 52 item questionnaire was specifically designed for this purpose. The questionnaire was trying to solicit for information on the demography of the respondents, their knowledge on climate change and global warming, role of the community in preventing global warming, respondent's source of knowledge and utility of knowledge acquired.

A simple statistics namely mean percentages were employed to analyze the data obtained.

A total of 460 students participated in this survey. The target group is a fair representation of the metropolis, as none of the 34 wards was not represented in the survey. Majority of the respondents are male 239 (52%) and more than half of male 167 (70%) are more than 40 years old. 55 (12%) of the respondents hold one type of degree or the other and 36 (8%) have various master degrees. Most of the respondents 276 (60%) are engaged in one form of employment or the other; only 23 (5%) of them have less than 10 years working experience. 97 (21%) have more than 10 years working experience while 184 (40%) do not work at all. 161 (35%) of the respondents work with education institutions while 92 (20%) work in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). Those working with the State House of Assembly and Organized Private Sectors constitute 23 (5%). More than half 244 (53%) of the respondents are in the senior and middle staff cadre with a marginal number at the management level.

We can conveniently say that the respondents are matured, responsible and enlightened segment of the society who are in the best position to positively respond to the issues in the survey. We can therefore with some degree of certainty claim that the responses of our sample are valid. The major composite of the respondents therefore are 55 (12%) graduates, 180 (39%) undergraduate students of Modibbo Adama University of

Technology, Yola. 115 (25%) NCE II students of Federal College of Education, Yola. 60 (13%) Diploma II students of Adamawa State Polytechnic, Yola and 50 (11%) are students of College for Legal Studies, Yola.

Findings

The findings of this survey are organized along those issues highlighted earlier.

Table 1: Respondent’s awareness about climate change and global warming

Frequency and percentage distribution regarding respondent’s awareness about climate change and global warming

Response	frequency	percentage
Yes	437	95
No	23	5
Total	460	100

Analysis of the responses clearly indicates that the respondents have adequate knowledge of climate change and global warming. Indeed 95% of the respondents are aware of the increased heat and have demonstrated their lack of awareness of the most of the causes of this change. All of them have indicated the need to have a good environment that will support all kinds of life and conducive for all human endeavor.

The respondents have also demonstrated a good understanding of the effects of the heat by listing its consequences which include the following: raise in temperatures, extinction of certain species of life, dwarf economy and drying off of the rivers. It is instructive to observe that the prevention method have not been mentioned at all by respondents. Their perceived consequences are purely those within the metadata and human common experiences, nearly 60% of them have agreed that strategies have to be developed to fight against climate change and global warming.

The respondents are also of the view that the fight against global warming is not the responsibility of the government and its agencies alone but a collective one. They suggested that the family, individuals, faith based organizations, civil societies, the community and educational institutions have important roles to play. The respondents have also listed various strategies that each of the stake holders should pursue in the fight against global warming in the metropolis. These are as follows: the family has the mandate for moral training and inculcating of good environment values, the individual should live within his or her environment peacefully and report any incident of environmental violence, religious institutions should preach against environmental mismanagement, civil societies should embark on awareness campaigns and educational institutions should include in to their various curricula those values that shun environmental violence while the media should emphasize on awareness campaigns on the dangers of environmental misuse to the people and their institutions.

Table 2: Respondents source of information and knowledge about climate change and global warming

Frequency and percentage distribution as regards to the respondent’s source of information about climate change and global warming.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Media	146	31.7
Literature	55	11.9
Academic fora	50	10.9
Internet	38	8.3
Friends	136	29.6
Not certain	35	7.6
Total	460	100

An analysis of the data on sources of information about global warming indicates that there are multi sources of information that people draw from in order to gain information and knowledge about the phenomenon and its effects. The sources are : literature on global change, television, radio and news papers; internet and lectures/seminars/workshops/ conferences. Of these sources the print and electronic media are a major source of people’s knowledge about global warming. 9% of the respondents have identified mass media as their main source of information and knowledge followed by literature on environmental sciences, conferences/ lectures/ seminars/workshops and then internet with 4%.

When asked to indicate whether the information and knowledge so acquired have impacted on their perception of climate change and its effects, only 4% have indicated lack of impact thus 96% of the respondents have agreed that as a result of their exposure to information about climate change their knowledge about the phenomenon and its effects have increased. It has also changed their perception about the environment and their relationship with it.

Table 3: Respondent’s involvement in activities that cause global warming

Frequency and percentage distribution pertaining respondent’s involvement in activities that case global warming

Activity	Frequency	Percentage
Bush burning	83	18
Cutting trees	157	34.1
Waste burning	200	43.5
Others	15	3.3
Can’t remember	5	11
Total	460	100

The table above shows that many of the respondents have engaged in one form of violence or the other against the environment by involving in activities which cause global warming. The respondents have indicated that both bush burning and cutting down of trees cause serious havoc to the environment and therefore capable of raising the temperature and causing climatic change. Some expressed ignorance of the effect of waste burning on the atmosphere but are aware of its effects on the soil.

When asked whether the knowledge and information on climatic change and global warming have changed their attitude towards the environment, the result indicates that the content of the information and the knowledge obtained through these sources increased their awareness of the damage global warming does to the society and the necessity to react by reverting acts of violence and misuse of the environment. The respondents also agree that individual violence against the environment is a violation of the divine laws.

83 (18%) of the respondents are involved in activities that curtail global warming. 10 (2%) of them have indicated that they have anti-environmental violence in their localities while out of this proportion only 37 (8%) reported environmental violence. Consequently, 138 (30%) of them believe that enlightenment and reporting cases of environmental violence may reduce activities that could cause global warming. More than 414 (90%) have indicated that the new knowledge they have acquired have their disposition and habit about environmental usage. 368 (80%) have confessed that they will not engage in violent practices against the environment anymore and 391 (85%) have agreed to be cautious on they relate with both human and physical elements of the environment. However, only 161 (35%) stated that they are willing to report incidence of environmental violence to appropriate authorities.

IV. CONCLUSION

The result of this survey has shown that the process of knowledge acquisition and self-transformation is painfully slow. Although the result have shown that an appreciable success have been recorded in the area of information and knowledge acquisition, only a marginal success was reported under social transformation. This is expected because it takes some time before people come in to terms with new interventions. This should not in any way discourage the government on relying on public education strategy in combating global warming in Yola Metropolis.

It is expected that the results of this survey should spur the government to intensify effort by shaping its strategies and massively deploy them to achieve a reduction in global warming. There is no denying the fact that environmental agencies are better positioned to succeed in this war than any other agency. Mass education and consciousness rising are a potent instruments in creating a corruption free environment. We need to have faith in them and government should continue to invest handsomely in this strategy in order to increase the tempo of the climatic anti-corruption campaign in our society.