



Is Our Planet Really On Fire?!

A Research about teenagers' attitude towards
the Global warming phenomenon

Done By:

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Abstract:

A research done by a group of three 16 years old female students under a local prospective based on a survey among teenagers in age between 14-18 years old, to summarize levels of awareness, actual knowledge, degree of concern and willingness to pay or sacrifice to mitigate or adapt to potential negative impacts.

The research indicates the following: an awareness of and concern for global warming, a flawed understanding of global warming and a limited willingness to sacrifice to better cope with global warming.

The Data we gathered showed that teenagers are familiar with global warming phenomenon, but they cannot be expected to voluntarily alter their life.

Introduction:

Regular assessment of public attitudes on general environmental concern began both in the United States and other countries, in the 1970s.

Interest in and concern for the specific issue of global warming (the green house effect) was a relative latecomer as a survey topic. Surveys including global warming items surfaces in the early 1980s.

Questions generally focus on some or all of the following: levels of awareness, actual knowledge, degrees of concern, perceived risk and willingness to pay or sacrifice to mitigate and adapt to potential negative impacts.

Environmental concern is likely candidate for the exhibition of these problems. Few teenagers in any country are likely to admit a lack of concern for environmental degradation because this is akin to being ignorant and uncaring.

Since Teenagers are an important sector of the society, our data put teenagers' attitudes and beliefs toward global warming under the microscope.

And this paper should provide people with a better understanding of how concerned teenagers are.

Review of literature:

Many Social analysts argued that there has been a world wide revolution in environmental awareness (Milbrath 1984, Dunlap & Scarce 1991, Dunlap et al. 1993) to the degree that traditional ways of understanding the world have been replaced by a ' New Environmental Paradigm' (Dunlap & Van Liere 1978). Other analysts have been less effusive (Ladd & Bowman 1995).

However, interest in the issue of global warming started in early 1980s and full-blown interest emerged in the late 1980s and continues.

Richard j. Bord, Ann Fisher and Robert E. O'Connor has published a research about public perceptions of global warming in both United States and international perspectives.

Al Gore and Leonardo DiCaprio took advantage of their well known reputation and produced movies and lectured all around the world trying to spread knowledge among public about the global warming phenomenon.

Albert the second Prince of Monaco, Balqees Othman Al Asha Sudanese environment researcher, Temothy weirth American senator, Mr. Ateeq Al Rahman excutive director of the advanced research center, Liz Tomson and Mr Abdel Qader Ba Jamal. All of them have been awarded by the United Nation environment programme as the heroes of earth for their efforts in countering the global warming phenomenon.

Aim and purpose:

We want to go through some light and understand the teenagers' attitude towards the global warming phenomenon. We hoped to find out how it is affecting us in our lives and what we as individuals, government and non-government organizations are doing about it. We need to know how the teenagers are likely to respond to climate impacts or initiatives, because those responses can attenuate or amplify the impacts.

Methods and Materials:

On a two months period we picked 14 female secondary school students randomly and we distributed the first questionnaire (*1) which was to examine the level of awareness and their actual knowledge.

After that we showed them a 5 minutes movie (*3) about the global warming phenomenon and it's affects on the planet. After the movie we distributed the second questionnaire (*2) that focused on degree of concern and willingness to help to mitigate possible negative effects of the phenomenon.

We took ethics of research under consideration; we tried our best to use simple and understandable questions, we explained the purpose of the research and we obtained confidentiality on the data we gathered from the sample as well as the information about the sample itself e.g. (age, name).

(*1): check appendix 1

(*2): check appendix 2

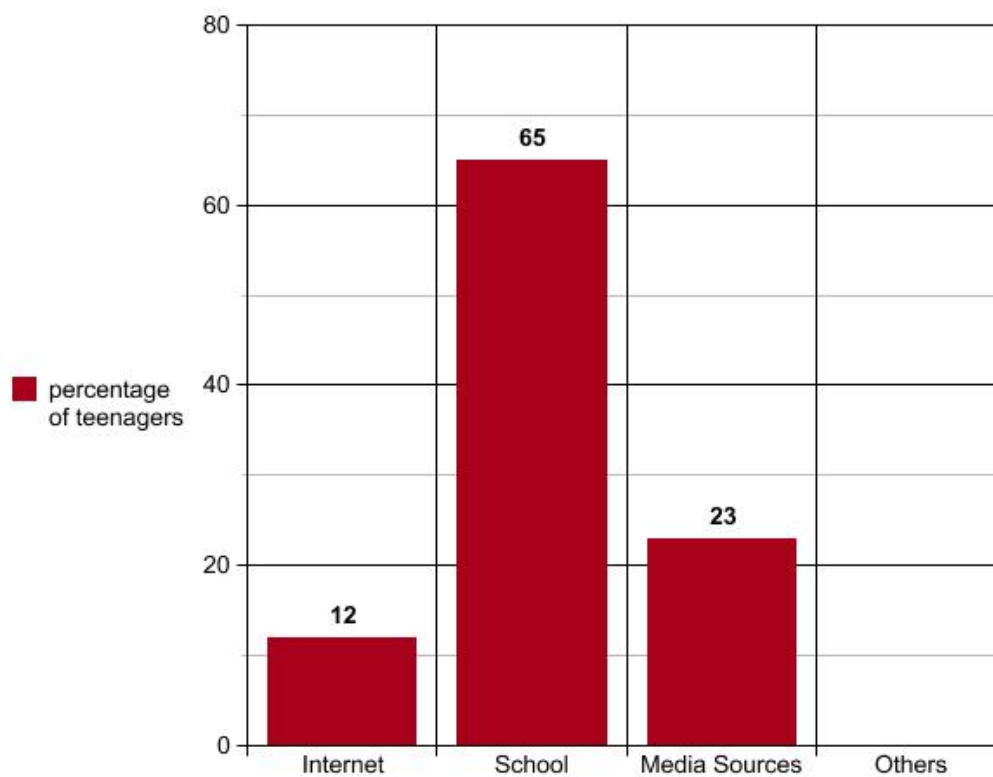
(*3): check the link on the References

Results and findings:

On April and May of 2008, we collected data on teenagers' beliefs, attitudes and behavioural intentions about global warming.

* First questionnaire:

- This questionnaire showed that 100% of the sample heard about global warming.



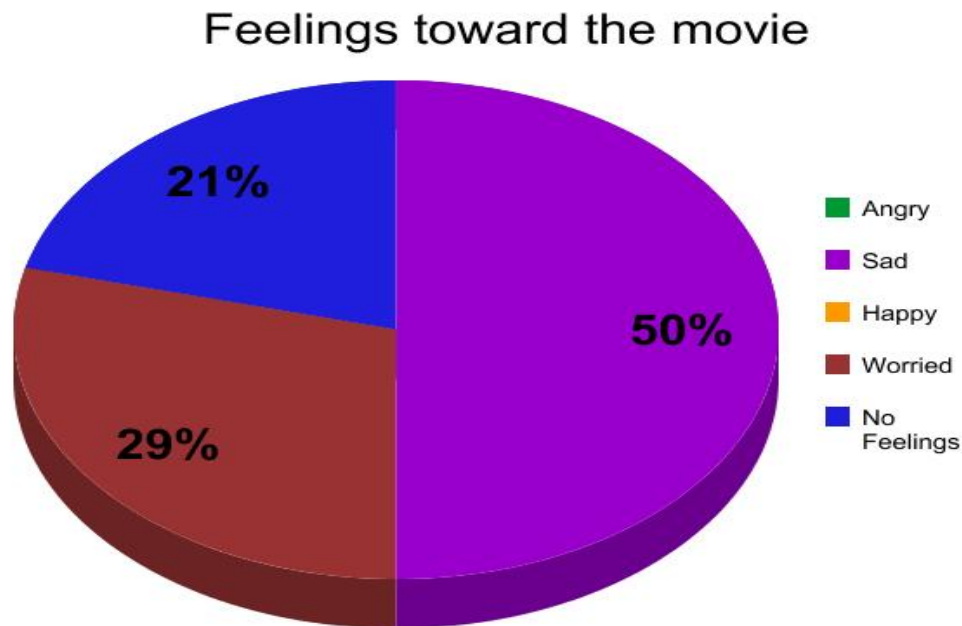
- 65% became aware of this phenomenon at school, 12% by the internet and 23% by different media sources.

- In a question that if they believed that global warming affects their lives in this country (Qatar), 50% responded as Yes, 13% responded as No and 37% responded as Don't know.

- Then there was a question to examine the level of awareness about the effects of global warming, 94% thought that global warming effects on raising the sea level, when 6% thought that it doesn't.
- 56% of the sample believed that their everyday activity effect in increasing the global warming phenomenon, while 44% believed that it doesn't.
- 75% of the sample has not heard about any group in Qatar which is interested in preventing global warming only 25% did heard about it.
- 63% heard about organizations in other parts of the world that are considered in prevention of global warming and 37% have not heard about any.

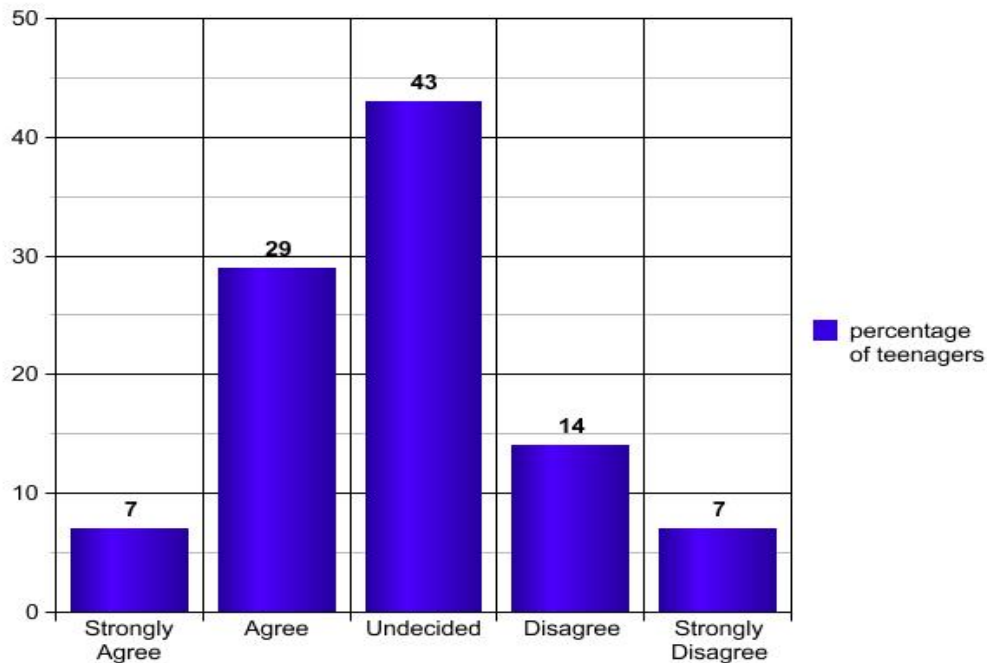
* Second questionnaire:

- After showing them the movie, the respond of a question about how the displayed movie made them feel was as shown below:



- 100% of the sample thought that Global warming is Due to human activity in industry, but only 77% thought that if they stopped using cars they would make the phenomenon decrease. On the other hand 8% thought it won't and 15% don't know.

- When we checked the level of agreement on the statement that says: "People do their best to solve the global warming phenomenon" the charts were as shown below:



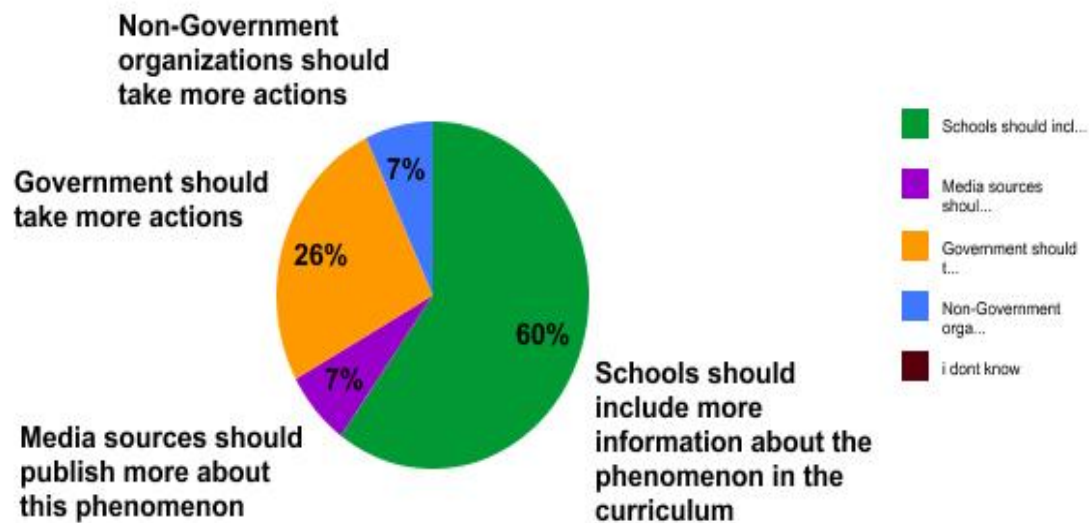
- 38% of the sample heard about the Kyoto Protocol, 62% didn't.

- 21% thought that non-government organizations' efforts are effective in the perspective of global warming prevention, 22% thought it is not effective and 57% did not know.

- Then we asked them what they would do if a Non-Government Organization was formed. The answers varied between 56% who would join the organization, 28% who would encourage it and 36% of the sample was not interested.

- 79% of the sample was willing to actually sacrifice any daily activity if they knew it could make the global warming phenomenon worse and 21% was not.

- Finally, we asked them how they think that knowledge of global warming should be disseminated among teenagers, and their respond is shown below:



Discussion:

Almost 100% teenagers have heard about global warming phenomenon from different sources, the majority (65%) heard about it at school.

50% think that global warming effect their lives here in Qatar, while 13% thinks it doesn't, probably because the negative impacts are unforeseen danger, it doesn't show clearly as in the United States or East Asia, where storms, Hurricanes and cities flooding with water are global warming impacts that show all the time.

Still there's a few part of teenagers who aren't aware enough of the effects of global warming, shown as 6% who believes that global warming has nothing to do with rising sea level. As well as the 44% who thinks that their everyday activities doesn't make global warming worse in any how.

75% haven't heard about any organization here in Qatar that is interested in preventing the previous mentioned phenomenon, though Qatar has signed all the international Conventions and agreements to prevent Global warming and preserve the atmosphere.

However, more than half the students (63%) heard about world wide organizations such as the Green Peace Organization and Natural Resources Defense Council, that makes 37% of the students who haven't heard of any organizations, it's a huge percentage on it's own, we think it's probably due to the less concern of the media sources which doesn't consider global warming as an important and harmful issue.

After showing the sample the movie, we realized (based on their responses on the second questionnaire) that exactly 50% feels sad about what is happening to our planet, more than quarter (21%) are actually worried, but 21% of them have no feelings about it, as we mentioned

previously, maybe because they can't see the disadvantages clearly around them.

Our entire sample thinks that this phenomenon is due to human activity in industry, 77% actually believe that driving cars will make the situation worse, while 8% think it will not, probably because they see a lot of cars in the society and they are convinced that their cars in particular won't be quite harmful.

The rest (15%) responded as I don't know, which means that they don't have enough knowledge to link between cars and global warming, Emission of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, which increases the absorption of sunlight, and raises the temperature of the earth.

The noticeable point was when we asked if they think that people do their best to solve the phenomenon 14% disagreed, 7% strongly disagreed, 29% agreed and 7% agreed, while 43% were undecided, that shows how vary are teenagers' feelings toward the efforts of others.

21% think that Non-Government Organizations' efforts are effective, 22% think it doesn't, probably this part of the sample are individuals who thinks that official work which is done by the government is more effective since they haven't heard about any Non-government organization here in Qatar.

Most of the teenagers are ready to join a formed Non-Government Organization, 28% will encourage it, but 36% aren't interested, which means that teenagers are not ready to be responsible about such an issue or maybe they think that the harmful impacts will not reach their society.

However, most of them are willing to sacrifice some of their own activities in order to adapt potential impacts and disadvantages of this phenomenon.

The most recognizable respond was that 60% thinks that knowledge and information about the global warming phenomenon should be taught at school, 26% believes

that the government should take more actions, so this support our theory of teenagers who prefer efforts provided by official sources as in schools, governments... etc.

While 7% believes that Non-Government Originations should take more actions and 7% thinks that media sources should mention the phenomenon more often.

Conclusion:

Teenagers are an important category in our society. They are the future scientists and future researchers. And the global warming phenomenon is a huge, rapidly growing natural tragedy which is caused by human themselves. Hopefully after this research, more actions would be taken, by individuals, organizations and Media sources in order of disseminating knowledge among teenagers and public in general.

Lots of Regards to:

- The Supreme Education Council for giving us the opportunity to accomplish such an experience that would help us in our future life and career.
- Students who co-operated and responded to the questionnaires
- Ms. Hessa Hamed (Principle of Amna Bint Wahab Scondary School)
- Dr. Mary Kellett
- Ms. Tarfa Nasser al-Naimi
- Ms. Nada Al Balam
- Ms. Amna

And everybody who helped us in this research, we appreciate your efforts.

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<http://www.int-res.com/articles/cr/11/c011p075.pdf>

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(*3) The Movie:

http://www.leonardodicaprio.org/files/videos/globalwarning.html?q=whatsimportant/globalwarming_movie01.htm

(*1) Appendix

Questionnaire [1]

This questionnaire has been designed by a group of 3 secondary school female students and it's going to help us to go through some light and understand the teenagers' attitude towards the global warming phenomenon. We also hope to find out how it is affecting us in our lives and what we as individuals, government and non-government organizations are doing about it. The information will be treated entirely confidentially. Thank you for your co-operation. (Hopefully, this questionnaire would not take long)

1. What Age Group you are in:

14-16 years 17-18 years

2. Have you heard about Global Warming?

Yes No

3. If yes, Where/How did you become aware of this phenomenon?

School Internet

Media Sources (TV, Radio, Newspapers...)

Others (Please specify in the space below)

4. Do you think that global warming affects our lives in this country?

Yes No I don't know

5. Do you think that global warming has an effect on raising the sea level?

Yes No

6. Do you believe that any of your everyday activity can affect increasing the Global Warming Phenomenon in any way?

Yes No

Please specify the activity (ies) in the blank below:

7. Have you heard about any group in Qatar which is interested in prevention global warming?

Yes No

8. Have you heard about any such organization in other parts of the world, such as Green Peace Organization?

Yes No

Thank You For Your Time

Questionnaire [2]

This questionnaire has been designed by a group of 3 secondary school female students and it's going to help us to go through some light and understand the teenagers' attitude towards the global warming phenomenon. We also hope to find out how it is affecting us in our lives and what we as individuals, government and non-government organizations are doing about it. The information will be treated entirely confidentially. Thank you for your co-operation. (Hopefully, this questionnaire would not take long)

1. What Age Group you are in

14-16 years 17-18 years

2. What feeling did you have after watching the previous displayed film?

Angry Happy Sad

Worried No Feelings

3. How does global warming affect our life?
(The movie showed some disadvantages)

4. Do you think that Global Warming is Due to human activity in industry?

Yes No I don't know

5. If you stopped using cars and replaced that with riding s bicycle, would that make Global Warming phenomenon decrease?

Yes No I don't know

6. "People do their best to solve the global warming phenomenon".

How much do you agree with this statement?

- Strongly Agree Agree
 Undecided
 Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. Have you heard about the Kyoto Resolutions for the prevention of global warming (Kyoto Protocol)?

- Yes No

8. Do you think that non-government organizations (N.G.O.s) efforts are effective in this respective?

- Yes No I don't know

9. If an N.G.O. group is formed, would you join it to support its efforts?

- Will join it Will encourage it
 Not really interested

10. Would you give up any activity that you daily do if you knew that it could harm the environment and make global warming worse?

- Yes No

11. Please add any other comments that you may have about the global warming phenomenon?

12. How should/can the knowledge of global warming phenomenon be disseminated among teenagers?

- Schools should include more information about this phenomenon in our curriculum.
- Government should take more actions.
- Non-Government organizations should take more actions.
- Media Sources should publish more about this phenomenon.
- I don't know.

Thanks For Taking Part In This Study