

Growing Consciousness of Teachers Towards Environment

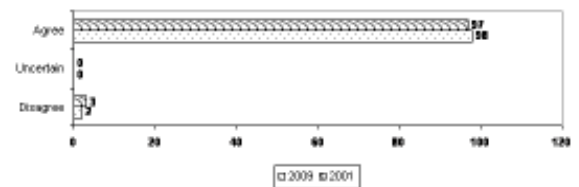
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A certain level of environmental consciousness has become a cultural norm nowadays. Sometime back in the 1970s the individuals exhibited a changing attitude towards environmental issues regarding the importance of the environment, of the concern about non-replenishable resources, and of the fragility of the ecosystem. Awareness and sensitivity to environmental topics continue to widespread in all sectors of society. There is a real sense of slow, but inevitable catastrophe associated with growing pollution, destruction & depletion of resources, and the gradual warming of the planet. The people's perceptions towards the environment are complex and are affected by a number of different factors. These issues are so interlinked and technical enough to create disbelief in scientific solutions and judiciary system. These considerations sap the energy for thinking further or dealing with viable solutions to these problems. This is further supporting that the underlying cause of environmental deterioration is a pervasive climate of rampant selfishness and greed. Since this moral demolition is irreversible, hence the environmental problems seem to be unsolvable. This can add to increased frustration and confusion but convincing people about the seriousness of the issues can be part of the solution. Widespread concern about global environment can build required pressure for certain measures to be taken to improve the only habitat of human beings – The Earth.

In present study a comparison is done between two sets of responses on ten environmental attributes given by teachers in 2001 and 2009. The questionnaire survey reveals that the effectiveness of environmental information depends on environmental consciousness of the responder. It is noted that

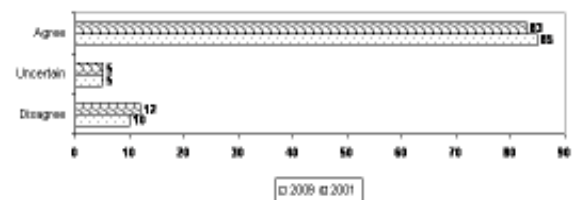
increased number of teachers favour the statements that explore environmental concerns in recent study. Sample of 400 teachers, 200 each from 1st and 2nd set was taken. Comparative study was done on their views regarding environment on ten different statements. They were required to assess on three point scale ranging from Agree, Uncertain and Disagree. The percentage of responses compared for each statement was drawn and discussed as follows:

1. Overpopulation is the prominent factor for the degradation of environmental quality:



In the response to first statement, slight increase by 1% is noted in the 2nd set of the teachers who agree strongly that over-population is the main cause for the degradation of environmental quality. Almost all believe in irreversible effects of population explosion except very few number and no body is uncertain about it in both sets. This shows that education can solve the problems of population and environment. Teachers have to present themselves as role models in the society so they seem to be conscious since long of small families and healthy environment.

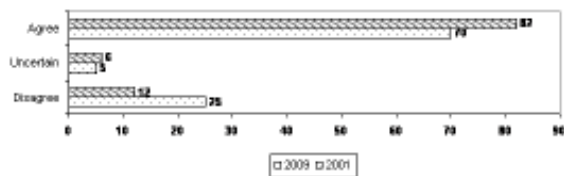
2. Population explosion causes human beings unrestricted misuse of natural resources:



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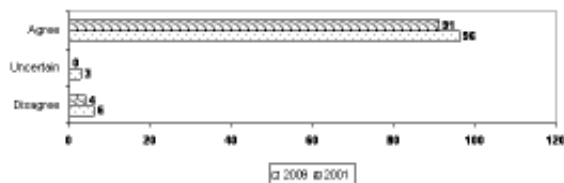
A good number of teachers support that uncontrolled population causes unrestricted misuse of natural resources and an increase in the responses to second statement is noted in 2nd set by 2% but still a number of teachers disagree to this fact and equal number of teachers in both sets are uncertain about it. This points towards another fact that it is not the needs of people but the unchecked greed that is causing over exploitation of natural resources. There is no scarcity if people utilized these in judicious manner irrespective of population.

3. All individuals are responsible for environmental pollution:



Significant decrease (12%) is recorded in recent set in percentage of teachers who agree to the third statement of all individuals being responsible for environmental population. An increase in the responses of teachers who disagree depicts that pollution is caused not due to all individuals but a few consumeristic societies are main contributors. Developed countries throw excessive affluents in air, water and land which is accepted by more educated people as noted in recent data. This is true that the people inhabiting developing and underdeveloped nations are victims to global pollution.

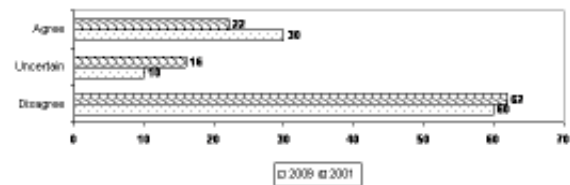
4. Environmental problems of the world today are caused due to change in the life style and value system of people:



Most of teachers in both sets agree to the fourth statement i.e. the environmental problems of the world today are caused due to change in the life-style and value system of people. 5% increase in responses of teachers

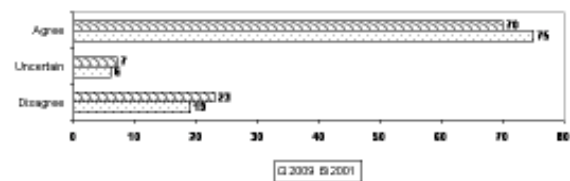
of recent study go in favour of the truth that erosion of value system and modern life-style are responsible for environmental problems. There is no uncertainty about this truth but still a few disagree to it, may be due to some other more serious consideration. The data shows that the race towards modernization, which focuses the individuals to materialistic gains without considering its consequences, is exerting more pressure on nature. Over exploitation of natural resources for comfort is due to short-sightedness of human being which needs correction so that future generations can also take their share.

5. Environmental problem is political problem:



Some of the teachers agree to fifth statement of environment as political problem. An increase in the positive responses by 8% of teachers is noted in 2nd set for this controversial view. During the recent study less number is seen uncertain about this linkage between politics and environmental problems. Almost equal (60%) teachers disagree to the role of politicians in environmental issues. They may be of this view that environment is much wider perspective beyond the reach of politics which is just a part of it and has no solution in present circumstances. Most of teachers support the fact that rather than political it can be more a social problem.

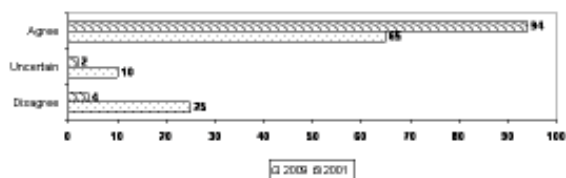
6. Polluting industries should be forced to close down:



In recent study 5% increase is noted in more than 70% total teachers who agree to the sixth statement of forced close down of polluting industries. This shows that serious

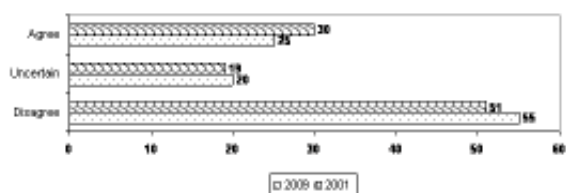
and strict measures should be taken to combat the problem of pollution from industries in habitable areas. The number of responses to disagree has decreased enough which indicates towards practical difficulties in application of treatment of pollutants at the source itself due to corruption and greed of industrialists and also industries are considered indicators of development. The educated people are developing conscious approach towards the sufferings of common masses at the cost of money spinning practices of few effluent, influential and apathetic businessmen.

7. Pollution can be controlled by strictly enforcing laws:



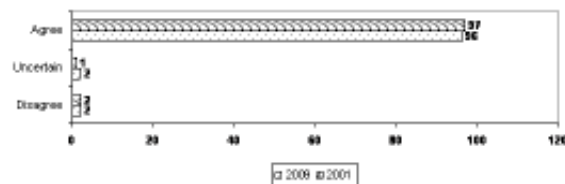
Notable decrease of 29% is seen during set in teachers who agree to the seventh statement that pollution can be controlled by strictly enforcing laws. This disbelief in judiciary appears to be developed gradually over a period of 8 years as maximum number (94%) of teachers agree to this statement in 1st set. Increasing corruption and misuse of law forces people to think about other alternatives viz. NGOs, activists movements and common mans collective pressure to save their surroundings. Educated people are the best example of this awakening and in this process the number of teachers who are uncertain about this statement has also increased. This data reveals teachers rising awareness that laws cannot help people any more to live in moderately hygienic surroundings but collective consciousness is a must for healthy living.

8. Science and Technology can solve all environmental problems:



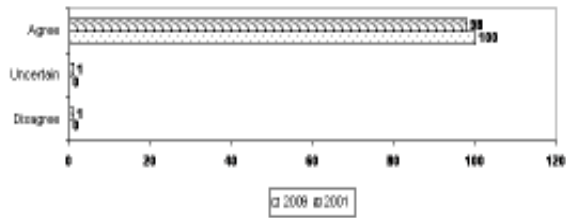
Decrease in positive responses of 2nd Set by 5% is noted in already less number of teachers who believe in science and technology to solve all environmental problems. More than 50% disagree to this statement while about 20% are still uncertain about the role of science and technology in improving the circumstances in which human beings are living. The data shows that educated people have lesser faith in scientific procedures as means of finding remedies to all environmental issues. This also supports the reality that if the deterioration of the environment continues in present rate without any check then even scientific measures cannot help the humanity. Mass awakening is needed before applying science and technology for correction so that these problems may not reoccur.

9. Sensitivity towards environment can best be inculcated by properly educating the people:



In response to ninth statement of both the sets, almost equal number of teachers (97%) believe that sensitivity towards environment can best be inculcated by properly educating the people. Despite this, data shows few teachers (2%) from both the groups who doubt the role of education to develop desired sensitivity towards environment. The maximum positive responses from the teacher community towards the role of education in correction of social and physical environment endorse the need of all individuals to be properly educated for healthy society and surroundings. Once people are made aware about various aspects of environment through education, they can become sensitive to maintain hygiene at least at local level.

10. Man is morally responsible to protect the natural environment:



Man is morally responsible to protect the natural environment – Yes, all the teachers agree during previous and recent study with this final statement. This depicts that it becomes the moral duty of all human beings to protect and conserve their natural surroundings. If all individuals contribute towards it in their best possible way then there can be no further deterioration and all the environmental problems can be solved

within no time. The level of awareness about environment is increasing in educated people.

As seen in comparison between present and previous studies, a rise in consciousness is recorded, regarding the birth right of people to breathe fresh air, to drink pure water and to eat hygienic food to be healthy. Teachers can spread the message to further sensitize the society and become role models to do efforts to regain the healthy environment instead of man-made altered surroundings. When everyone starts acting at the local level in all places, there can be no place for a handful of individuals to flourish their selfish trade in achieving more and more profit at the cost of environment and humanity. This global mass movement is needed after conscious awakening of people to solve various complex issues of the existence of human beings in natural environment.



Qualities of an educated person: The educated person must be able to distinguish between the monetary and the momentous, the effervescent and the lasting. He/she must not run after glitter and glamour but seek instead the good and golden. He/she must know how to keep the body in good trim, the senses under strict control, the mind well within check, the intellect sharp and clear, unhampered by prejudices and hatred, and the feelings untouched by egoism

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