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Literature, Russian Literature



Professor Wilhelm ENG11210 December 2017 Global Warming In the last few decades, global warming has become an increasingly discussed topic. However, in recent years and especially following the 2016 presidential election, speculation surrounding the topic is at an all-time high.

Typically, there is little debate on if this phenomenon exists as there is a wide-spread consensus among the scientific community that this is a real occurrence. There are still individuals who deny the existence of global warming but they make up a small percentage of the population. Rather, it is over if global warming is a legitimate threat to humanity and our planet as a whole. In addition, there is also speculation about what impact humanity has on global warming and how great this impact really is. The second argument is intriguing because evidence has been found, through multiple scientific studies that have been conducted on global warming, that human activity has an impact and is the greatest impact of them all. The issue of climate change should not be a bipartisan one, but should be dealt with by united parties where the focus is on the greater good of our planet and humanity rather than who is right or wrong.

In this paper, I will be discussing the different factors that contribute to the planet's changing climate patterns. These changing climate patterns have an impact on global warming. Multiple scholarly articles have examined the previous statistical data that provides evidence for the existence of global warming while also looking at research studies that are currently being conducted. A number of scientific studies have found evidence that there have been changes in the Earth's overall climate, more specifically that, "Over the last 100 years the average temperature on the Earth has

risen approximately 1°F Fahrenheit (F), increasing at a rate twice as fast as has been noted for any period in the last 1, 000 years” (Afzal). Secondly, statistical data from different scientific studies will be used to discuss the specific impacts that contributing factors have on this phenomenon. Some of the recurring topics within these studies include ozone layer depletion, health issues that stem from global warming, and weather patterns along with the natural disasters that may accompany them.

As stated earlier, there is also a strong interest within the scientific community in the factors that are related to different human activities. According to a research study conducted by the IPCC, “...most of the global warming changes are attributable to human activities; the Pew Center on Climate Change (2001) has noted that global warming is largely the result of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from human activities, including industrial processes, fossil fuel combustion, and changes in land use, such as deforestation” (2). The specific impact that these contributing factors have on the overall issue of changing climate patterns will also be discussed in further detail later within this paper. The public’s opinion on global warming has a larger impact on the acknowledgment of its existence than most would assume.

For example, the way that global warming is referred to or the context it is in may impact an individual’s viewpoint on the topic. A study was conducted in 2016 that found 85.8% of individuals agree with the existence of “climate change” while only 80.9% agree that it exists when it is referred to as “global warming” (Schuldt). This study also found evidence that this

difference is much greater when comparing samples of Democrats and Republicans, with Democrats being the more flexible party with its label. Democrats, regardless of the term used, had a higher consensus of the existence of global warming at 94%. However, approximately 10% more of the individuals who identified as Republican agreed with the existence of climate change over global warming (2). Another study conducted examined additional factors that contribute to a lack of belief in global warming.

One factor, in addition to what political party a person identifies with, was an individual's religious affiliation. One man performed a study that combined data obtained from the 2012 American National Election study and the United States Historical Climatology Network's monthly temperature log to show that the evangelical fundamentalist viewpoint had the highest correlation with a denial of global warming along with its human implications (Shao).

Public opinion on global warming is best described as a domino effect. Gaining knowledge on such a detrimental, world changing phenomenon is an incredibly important duty that we as Earth's inhabitants have. Reaching the conclusion that humans are the leading cause for global warming is the first and most important step we can take. Taking this step leads us to the next, which is intervention.

A common ideology is that the effects of global warming will not be seen in our lifetime and that they will not be visible for hundreds of years. This is simply false. The effects of global warming have been occurring for years and continue to happen today. If individuals are made aware of the impact that they have on our planet and the impacts global warming can have on us

personally or our family members, it will change the minds of those who are in question.

As previously mentioned, there are negative health implications that come along with the growing threat of our planet's increasing climate changes. One of the negative impacts global warming may have on an individual would be their respiratory health. A study using a group of adults from the Netherlands and the United Kingdom set out to provide evidence that in areas of high air pollution, a factor in global warming that is mostly due to human activities, there were higher rates of individuals with wheezing and shortness of breath. This study concluded that when these adults were exposed to particulate matter as well as nitrogen dioxide air pollution, their wheezing and inability to catch their breath increased (Dorion). Even though this study was completed outside of the United States, it does not mean that a similar situation cannot occur here as well. Air pollution is not an issue that is present solely in other countries.

Air pollution is an issue the United States deals with as well; one that has sparked discussions in different cities across the country on how to combat this problem. The respiratory problems observed in these individuals exposed to these high levels of air pollution could be seen in different locations across the country, if they haven't been observed already. Decreasing birth weights in infants is an additional negative health phenomenon that is correlated with the Earth's changing climate.

A study examined data from nineteen different African countries to find evidence there is a relationship between patterns of precipitation and

temperature with birth weights in children. Data collected during the study provided evidence that there is indeed a relationship but that it, similar to public opinion, is a domino effect one. It found an inverse relationship between temperature and precipitation.

As temperatures increased, there was an observed decrease in precipitation. This pattern would cause the affected communities to suffer from an unstable food and water supply. As a result, children would have lower birth weights (Grace). The article also examined the potential for this pattern to continue through many generations as women who were underweight when they were infants are more likely to give birth to children who are underweight as well (2). Lastly, an additional health repercussion due to global warming is the interference it has with TB (tuberculosis) treatment. The study that was conducted surrounding this interference focuses on just one specific type of air pollution, traffic related.

The sample used for this study was a group of individuals who were going through TB treatment and lived in California at the time. A correlation was found between air pollution due to cars and mortality rates during these treatments (Blount). The group of individuals who conducted this research was also able to adjust it around multiple outlying variables such as demographics, additional health problems and different health histories, and socioeconomic factors (2). This study is one that I have a personal connection to, as one of my family members who resides in California was going through TB treatment. I would have had no idea that something I do on a daily basis could be interfering with my own family member's health and recovery if I

had not done the proper research. Another issue that is highly debated within the scientific community, along with members of the general public, is that of the depletion of our ozone layer.

Studies conducted over the last few decades have found evidence proving that there is depletion of the ozone layer that has been occurring for some time. In fact, a study done by R. L. McKenzie and others explicitly states in its findings that, “ There are strong interactions between ozone depletion and changes in climate induced by increasing greenhouse gases (GHGs).

Ozone depletion affects climate, and climate change affects ozone” (McKenzie). Along with the previously stated interactions, this depletion is having an impact on global weather patterns and the increasing frequency of severe natural disasters. It is clear with the recent hurricanes surrounding the Atlantic Ocean that global warming should be taken seriously. Natural disasters similar in severity have been occurring more frequently and have required government intervention. These interventions include providing medical care to victims along with efforts to help stimulate the ruined economies of said affected places.

The repairs that are needed after these disasters can cost governments millions of dollars and the money needed will only increase along with the disasters' severity. For example, one study showed that the average intensity of a hurricane may go up anywhere between 1.8% and 4.2% and in comparison to the last two centuries, the lifetime intensity of the hurricanes may reach a maximum increase of 5.3% (Balaguru).

The government has a responsibility to examine the impact we have on our planet and to take the necessary steps to ensure we are investing resources into researching this topic further. Many people are increasingly questioning why we do not already have more thorough research on this topic along with legislation in place to aid in eliminating as much damage to our planet as possible. A study done by James Hein addresses this question. Hein's research found that the criticism and objection by the nation's top business executives are the reasons why the United States still does not have an effective policy regarding global warming (Hein and Jenkins). The criticism these individuals, among other members of our country, have against global warming is that it either does not exist at all, or that humans have no input on it when both of these things have been proven to be untrue. This is why it is our duty as inhabitants of our planet to do what we can as citizens to reduce the effects of global warming. Some of the things we can do to lessen the negative effects of global warming can also be done at home.

One way we can do this is by buying energy-efficient household appliances such as washers and dryers. Another way we can reduce our contribution to climate change and the overall heating of our planet is to take public transportation or begin making a shift to driving electric cars. This would make a huge difference in the amount of air pollution we release into our environment on a daily basis. The last and most obvious way to help would be to begin recycling if you do not do so already. There are also things you can do outside of the home to help reduce the effects of global warming. One option is bringing your at home recycling habits to the workplace and encouraging others to participate as well. Some places of work still

incinerate their used or disregarded materials instead of recycling them and this worsens our already polluted air supply.

Now that some of the things citizens can do to make an impact on global warming have been established, another topic of discussion should be what the government can do to help. As I previously discussed in this paper, climate change is an issue of speculation among the corporate elites of our society. A scholarly journal written by Shane J. Ralston discusses a possible solution to our planet's increasing climate and how to reach that goal. He suggests first that we raise awareness and then begin the geoengineering process. He states that this process will at least improve the current state of our planet if not completely reverse global warming as a whole (Ralston).

Another way we can make an impact on global warming is to stop waiting for government level intervention. With the state that our planet is in, we cannot afford to wait for the government to step up and do something.

Another journal suggests that we do the same as well as begin to make improvements on the state level. As one example, it discusses the Healthy Air Act that was introduced in 2006 in Maryland (Afzal).

This Act was created with intent to reduce carbon emissions from power plants. This goes to show that not everything has to be done on a national level in order for it to be heard or to make an impact of some degree. Making a simple phone call or writing a letter to your Senator or House

Representative expressing your concern about global warming is a great way to start.

In conclusion, our job as occupants of this planet is to take care of it and to respect it. This notion should be set aside from all political or

religious affiliations since it falls nowhere near either of these categories (even though that is what it is made out to be). Our planet is abused on a daily basis by our own activities. Our lack of recycling, deforestation, fossil fuel combustion, and numerous other methods of polluting our planet has brought us where we are today.

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