



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT AND MANAGEMENT

CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	RESPONSIBILITY ACCOUNTING IN SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE INDUSTRIES MANUFACTURING AUTO COMPONENTS <i>ANIRUDDHA THUSE & DR. NEETA BAPORIKAR</i>	1
2.	LIBERALIZED FINANCIAL SYSTEM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA <i>LOWE, OLUSEGUN</i>	6
3.	AN INVESTIGATION ON HIGHER LEARNING STUDENTS SATISFACTION ON FOOD SERVICES AT UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA <i>SARAVANAN RAMAN & SUBHASENI CHINNIH</i>	12
4.	IDENTIFYING AND PRIORITIZING THE MAIN BARRIERS TO KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT <i>DR. S. ALI AKBAR AHMADI, MOHAMAD ALI AFSHARI & HAMIDEH SHEKARI</i>	17
5.	PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SPONSORED MUTUAL FUNDS IN INDIA <i>NOONEY LENIN KUMAR & DR. VANGAPANDU RAMA DEVI</i>	24
6.	TALENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN IT SECTOR <i>DR. K. JANARDHANAM, DR. NIRMALA M. & PRATIMA PANDEY</i>	36
7.	FREQUENT PATTERN MINING USING DYNAMIC PROGRAMMING <i>V. G. RAJALEKSHMI & DR. M. S. SAMUEL</i>	41
8.	PRICE AND LIQUIDITY CHANGES AFTER STOCK SPLITS - EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM INDIAN STOCK MARKET <i>DHANYA ALEX, DR. K. B. PAVITHRAN & EAPEN ROHIT PAUL</i>	45
9.	THE IMPACT OF REVERSE CULTURAL SHOCK AMONG REPATRIATES <i>N. PADMAVATHY & DR. N. THANGAVEL</i>	50
10.	BRAND LOYALTY'S INFLUENCE ON WOMEN'S BUYING BEHAVIOR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS <i>R. SUNDARI & DR. M. SAKTHIVEL MURUGAN</i>	57
11.	ANALYSIS OF COTTON TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN KARUR DISTRICT, TAMILNADU <i>DR. N. RAJASEKAR & M. GURUSAMY</i>	63
12.	ANALYSING THE TRADING ACTIVITIES OF MUTUAL FUNDS TO IDENTIFY THE TREND OF THE INDIAN STOCK MARKET <i>M. JEEVANANTHAN & DR. K. SIVAKUMAR</i>	69
13.	VIABILITY OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS' BUSINESS AMONG THE NON-ORGANIC PRODUCT CONSUMERS – A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY <i>DR. R. DHANALAKSHMI</i>	75
14.	EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON VEDANTA LTD. IN ODISHA <i>DR. B. CHANDRA MOHAN PATNAIK, DR. IPSEETA SATPATHY & DEEPAK KUMAR SINGH</i>	79
15.	CASH CONVERSION CYCLE AND CORPORATE PROFITABILITY – AN EMPIRICAL ENQUIRY IN INDIAN AUTOMOBILE FIRMS <i>DR. A. VIJAYAKUMAR</i>	84
16.	A STUDY ON BEST PRACTICES IN FINANCIAL SERVICES AT A PUBLIC SECTOR COMPANY AT BHOPAL <i>DR. N. SUNDARAM & AJAY KUMAR SHARMA</i>	92
17.	AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF FIRM STRUCTURE AND PROFITABILITY RELATIONSHIP: THE CASE OF INDIAN AUTOMOBILE FIRMS <i>DR. A. VIJAYAKUMAR</i>	100
18.	PERCEPTION OF BANK EMPLOYEES TOWARDS ADOPTION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS OF INDIA <i>BINDIYA TATER, DR. MANISH TANWAR & NAVRATAN BOTHRA</i>	109
19.	KEY SKILLS IDENTIFICATION AND TRAINING NEED ANALYSIS @ SMALL AND MEDIUM RETAILERS IN DELHI AND NCR <i>POOJA MISRA, NEHA JOSHI & RAHUL GOYAL</i>	118
20.	STRATEGIES FOR MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS – CASE STUDIES OF SELECTED BUSINESS HOUSES <i>DR. PREETI YADAV & DR. JEET SINGH</i>	127
21.	MANAGEMENT OF NPAS IN DCCBS IN INDIA – AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT <i>DR. A. DHARMENDRAN</i>	136
22.	IMPACT OF MOBILE MARKETING ON THE PURCHASE DECISION OF CONSUMERS: A STUDY OF JALANDHAR REGION <i>HARENDRA SINGH, SALEEM ANWAR & SHUJA QAMMER SHAH</i>	141
23.	A STUDY ON LEADERSHIP STYLE AND THEIR IMPACT IN PUBLIC SECTOR – TAMIL NADU <i>N. PRABHA</i>	146
24.	PARAMETERS OF RATING OF INDIAN COMMERCIAL BANKS – A CRITICAL ANALYSIS <i>DR. MUKTA MANI</i>	149
25.	IMPACT OF INTERNET BANKING ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS, PRIVATE SECTOR BANKS AND FOREIGN SECTOR BANKS <i>RITU SEHGAL & DR. SONIA CHAWLA</i>	156
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK	164

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EMPLOYEES PERCEPTION TOWARDS ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON VEDANTA LTD. IN ODISHA

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ABSTRACT

The present paper makes an attempt to understand the perception level of various levels of employees in Vedanta Ltd. specially, considering the environmental clearance problem faced by the Vedanta in Odisha in recent times. In this regard 180 questionnaires distributed to various levels of employees and out of this 84 response received. For this purpose 14 various attributes considered and survey conducted. The study finds that the almost all the employees aware of environmental problem and also its impact is felt at the organisation level. In this direction the damage control initiatives have been taken keeping the image in mind. However, we felt that for the industrial development, the environment ministry should find an alternative solution. For the purpose of confidentiality, we are not mentioning the units covered for survey; under the special request of the participants. Of course this was the pre-condition for the participation in our survey.

KEYWORDS

Happy employees, Perception level, Top level manager (TLM), Middle level managers (MLM), Subordinate Staff (SS).

INTRODUCTION

Industrialization and environmental issues cannot be separated from each other. Whenever the questions of industrialization arise, this follows the environmental issue. As we know no economy can grow without the industrialization development. However, at the same time in the name of the industrialization we cannot compromise the environment in the interest of our present and future generations. In recent time this subject seems to burning issue in all most all the states. Specially, during the regime of present environment ministry led by Shri. Jaya Ram Ramesh. The subject was also more in news during the period of Mrs. Menaka Gandhi, then environment minister of India. Considering the importance of the issue we tried to touch and experience the same with the employees of Vedanta Ltd. In our study, we have not tried to comment anything we attempted to present our field experience in this paper.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Vedanta has been criticised by human rights and activist groups, including Survival International and Amnesty International, due to their operations in Niyamgiri Hills in Orissa, India that are said to threaten the lives of the Dongria Kondh that populate this region. The Niyamgiri hills are also claimed to be an important wildlife habitat in Eastern Ghats of India as per a report by the Wildlife Institute of India as well as independent reports/studies carried out by civil society groups. In January 2009, thousands of locals formed a human chain around the hill in protest at the plans to start bauxite mining in the area. Vedanta's Alumina Refinery in Lanjigarh was criticised by the Orissa State Pollution Control Board (the statutory environmental regulation body) for air pollution and water pollution in the area. According to Amnesty International, local people reported dust from the plant settling on clothes, crops and food. An environmental impact assessment by the government found dust pollution was within acceptable limits. Vedanta officials claimed there was no dust pollution from the plant at all. An environmental inspection of the plant reported water pollution by the plant including increasing the pH value of the river Vamshadhara below the refinery and a high level of SPM in the stack emissions. In October 2009 it was reported that the British Government has criticised Vedanta for its treatment of the Dongria Kondh tribe in Orissa, India. The company refused to co-operate with the British Government and with an OECD investigation. They have rejected charges of environmental damage, saying it may be related to the increased use of fertiliser by farmers. In 2007 unsafe mining operations led to 1,246 injuries and 26 deaths involving the group's employees and contractors.

In respect of bauxite mines at Lanjigarh, Orissa, public interest litigations were filed in 2004 by Indian non-government organisations led by the Peoples Union for Civil Liberties to the Supreme Court sub-committee regarding the potential environmental impact of the mines. The Ministry of Environment and Forests received reports from expert organizations and has submitted its recommendations to the Supreme Court. The sub-committee has found "blatant violations" of environmental regulations and grave concerns about the impact of the Niyamgiri mine on both the environment and the local tribal population. The committee recommended to the Court that mining in such an ecologically sensitive area should not be permitted. Considering the relevance of the topic to the general public the present research paper focused on Vedanta.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- To know the awareness of the employees towards the present problem faced by Vedanta Ltd. and Odisha.
- To know the employees perception towards the various given attributes.
- Provide some suggestions to boost the morale of the employees.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is restricted to the selected units of the Vedanta in Odisha.
- The sample is limited; it may not represent the scenario of all the employees of Vedanta Ltd.
- The period of study conducted for the period of 3 months i.e. 1st Jan - 31st March 201

SAMPLING PLAN

In response to the objective of the research there is a primary research through questionnaire administration method in the field through random sampling method to analyze the data.

Category	Questionnaire served	Response received	% of response to total response
Top level managers (Male)	30	16	17.58
Top level managers (Female)	30	15	16.48
Middle level managers (Male)	30	19	20.88
Middle level managers (Female)	30	12	13.19
Subordinate Staff (Male)	30	16	17.58
Subordinate Staff (Female)	30	13	14.29
	180	91	100

RESPONDENTS' RESPONSE WITH REGARD TO VARIOUS ATTRIBUTES

To measure the perception level of the participants with regard to happy employees are productive employees, the various attributes identified are awareness about environmental challenges faced by the Vedanta Ltd., awareness about the objections raised by the environment ministry, sharing of information by the top management, crisis within Vedanta, affect of mental attitude while discharging the work, uncertainty among the employees, impact felt by relocation of some employees, fresh recruitment is not taking place, non absorption of campus placed students, all this because of political issue rather than environmental issues, its affect on the expansion policy, its affect on HR policy and leaving of some employees because of uncertainty. In this regard we have taken five point scale and assigned as +3, +2, +1, 0 and -1 for the response of the respondents such as " Strongly Agree", " Agree", " Neutral", " Disagree" and " Strongly Disagree" respectively. Final scores for each feature are calculated by multiplying the number of respondents by the weight of the corresponding response.

COMPUTATION OF RESPONDENTS' PERCEPTION: IDEAL AND LEAST SCORE

Ideal scores are calculated by multiplying the number of respondents in each category with (+3) and product with total number of attributes. Similarly, the least scores calculated by multiplying the number of respondents in each category with (-1) and the product with number of attributes in the questionnaires.

Category	Equation	Ideal score	Equation	Least score
Top level managers (Male)	16x14x3	672	16x14x-1	-224
Top level managers (Female)	15x14x3	630	15x14x-1	-210
Middle level managers (Male)	19x14x3	588	19x14x-1	-266
Middle level managers (Female)	12 x14x3	504	12 x14x-1	-168
Subordinate staff (Male)	16 x14x3	672	16 x14x-1	-224
Subordinate staff (Female)	13 x14x3	546	13 x14x-1	-182

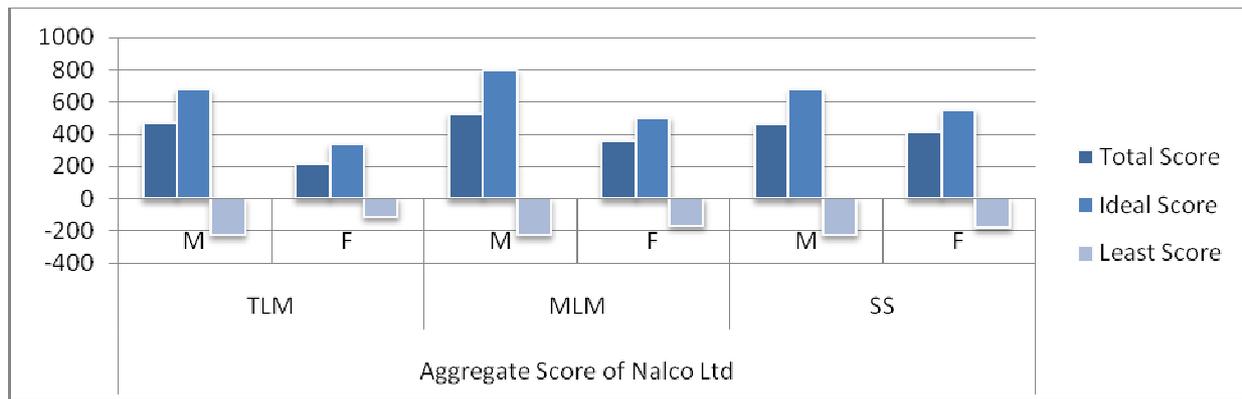
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Findings of the study are as under. The table is formed on the basis of questionnaire contained in questionnaires.

Various attributes	Aggregate Score					
	TLM		MLM		SS	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Do you know the environmental challenge faced by the Vedanta?	39	18	47	25	33	33
Do you agree with the objections raised by the Environmental ministry?	33	14	39	24	32	29
Do your top management shares the information about the development?	32	13	38	29	33	28
Is there any crisis within Vedanta related to this issue?	29	19	37	28	31	21
Does it effects to your mental attitude while discharging the duty?	36	16	39	24	32	35
Do you agree that this creates an uncertainty among the employees?	37	15	45	30	31	31
Does its impact felt, as some of the employees relocated?	32	16	42	32	36	25
Do you agree that due to this no fresh recruitment is taking place?	37	17	35	27	42	27
Do you agree that its impact felt as those placed in campus recruitment have not absorbed by the company so far?	33	14	41	24	31	32
Do you agree all this because of political issue rather than environmental issue?	28	13	40	21	35	35
Do the Vedanta complies all the environmental issues?	35	15	47	23	34	30
Does it affect the expansion policy of Vedanta?	35	16	47	28	33	31
Does it affect the HR policy of the Vedanta?	34	16	48	25	28	30
Does some employees left the organisation because of uncertainty?	32	12	45	22	28	28
Total Score	472	214	527	362	459	415
	(70.24)	(33.96)	(66.04)	(71.83)	(68.30)	(76.57)
Ideal Score	672	630	798	504	672	542
Least Score	-224	-210	-226	-168	-224	-182
No of respondents	16	15	19	12	16	13

Source: Annexure A, B, C, D, E & F

Note- TLM- Top Level Managers, MLM- Middle Level Managers, SS- Subordinate Staff, M-Male & F- Female



INTERPRETATION

In the present study the ideal scores for the Top Level Managers male and female, Middle Level Managers male and female and subordinate staff male and female are 672,630, 798, 504, 672 and 546 respectively. However, the total score for the same are 472, 214,527,362, 459 and 415. The percentage of total score to ideal score is higher in case of female subordinate staff with 76.57% and lower with female participants of top level manager. In no case the perception level is negative. Hence the hypothesis considered seems to be proved in the study. The exceptions in case of top level female managers may be due to their own understanding and view to the Vedanta issue.

CONCLUSION

Environment issues cannot be ignored in the name of industrialization. Both environment and industrialization are important for the very survival of mankind and economic development. However recent controversies involving Vedanta in Odisha has caused tremendous impact on the morale of the employees, which we had experienced in our survey. Recently the conditional approval allowed to the POSCO by the Environmental ministry in Odisha, which had also same problem. Considering the importance of environmental and industrialization issue a compromise acceptable approach should be adopted by the Vedanta and Environment ministry, so that it will not disturb the environment and at the same time the Vedanta project can be materialized in Odisha. It is the dream project of Mr. Anil Agarwal, the Chairman of Vedanta Resources and also it will contribute to the economic development of Odisha in general.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE –A (16)

Attributes	Response of Top Level Managers (Male)					Score
	SAG	AG	N	DAG	SDAG	
	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	
Do you know the environmental challenge faced by the Vedanta?	10	4	1	1	0	39
Do you agree with the objections raised by the Environmental ministry?	8	4	2	1	1	33
Do your top management shares the information about the development?	9	3	1	1	2	32
Is there any crisis within Vedanta related to this issue?	7	5	1	0	3	29
Does it effects to your mental attitude while discharging the duty?	10	3	1	1	1	36
Do you agree that this creates an uncertainty among the employees?	11	2	1	1	1	37
Does its impact felt, as some of the employees relocated?	9	3	1	1	2	32
Do you agree that due to this no fresh recruitment is taking place?	10	3	1	2	0	37
Do you agree that its impact felt as those placed in campus recruitment have not absorbed by the company so far?	8	4	2	1	1	33
Do you agree all this because of political issue rather than environmental issue?	7	3	3	1	2	28
Do the Vedanta complies all the environmental issues?	9	4	1	1	1	35
Does it affect the expansion policy of Vedanta?	10	2	2	1	1	35
Does it affect the HR policy of the Vedanta?	11	1	1	1	2	34
Does some employees left the organisation because of uncertainty?	10	1	2	1	2	32

Source: Compiled from field survey

Note: SAG- Strongly Agree, AG- Agree, N- Neutral, DAG- Disagree & SDAG- Strongly disagree.

ANNEXURE –B (15)

Attributes	Response of Top Level Managers (Female)					
	SAG	AG	N	DAG	SDAG	Score
	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	
Do you know the environmental challenge faced by the Vedanta?	5	1	1	8	0	18
Do you agree with the objections raised by the Environmental ministry?	4	1	1	8	1	14
Do your top management shares the information about the development?	3	2	1	8	1	13
Is there any crisis within Vedanta related to this issue?	4	3	1	7	0	19
Does it effects to your mental attitude while discharging the duty?	3	3	1	8	0	16
Do you agree that this creates an uncertainty among the employees?	4	1	1	9	0	15
Does its impact felt, as some of the employees relocated?	4	2	1	7	1	16
Do you agree that due to this no fresh recruitment is taking place?	5	1	1	7	1	17
Do you agree that its impact felt as those placed in campus recruitment have not absorbed by the company so far?	4	1	1	8	1	14
Do you agree all this because of political issue rather than environmental issue?	3	2	1	8	1	13
Do the Vedanta complies all the environmental issues?	4	1	2	7	1	15
Does it affect the expansion policy of Vedanta?	3	3	1	8	0	16
Does it affect the HR policy of the Vedanta?	5	1	0	8	1	16
Does some employees left the organisation because of uncertainty?	4	0	1	10	1	12

Source: Compiled from field survey

Note: SAG- Strongly Agree, AG- Agree, N- Neutral, DAG- Disagree & SDAG- Strongly disagree.

ANNEXURE –C (19)

Attributes	Response of Middle Level Managers (Male)					
	SAG	AG	N	DAG	SDAG	Score
	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	
Do you know the environmental challenge faced by the Vedanta?	15	1	1	1	1	47
Do you agree with the objections raised by the Environmental ministry?	10	5	1	1	2	39
Do your top management shares the information about the development?	9	6	1	1	2	38
Is there any crisis within Vedanta related to this issue?	10	4	1	2	2	37
Does it effects to your mental attitude while discharging the duty?	11	3	2	1	2	39
Do you agree that this creates an uncertainty among the employees?	12	4	1	2	0	45
Does its impact felt, as some of the employees relocated?	10	5	2	2	0	42
Do you agree that due to this no fresh recruitment is taking place?	9	4	2	2	2	35
Do you agree that its impact felt as those placed in campus recruitment have not absorbed by the company so far?	10	5	2	1	1	41
Do you agree all this because of political issue rather than environmental issue?	11	4	1	1	2	40
Do the Vedanta complies all the environmental issues?	12	5	1	1	0	47
Does it affect the expansion policy of Vedanta?	13	4	1	0	1	47
Does it affect the HR policy of the Vedanta?	12	5	2	0	0	48
Does some employees left the organisation because of uncertainty?	11	6	1	0	1	45

Source: Compiled from field survey

Note: SAG- Strongly Agree, AG- Agree, N- Neutral, DAG- Disagree & SDAG- Strongly disagree.

ANNEXURE –D (12)

Attributes	Response of Middle Level Managers (Female)					
	SAG	AG	N	DAG	SDAG	Score
	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	
Do you know the environmental challenge faced by the Vedanta?	7	2	1	1	1	25
Do you agree with the objections raised by the Environmental ministry?	7	1	2	1	1	24
Do your top management shares the information about the development?	8	2	1	1	0	29
Is there any crisis within Vedanta related to this issue?	8	2	1	0	1	28
Does it effects to your mental attitude while discharging the duty?	7	1	2	1	1	24
Do you agree that this creates an uncertainty among the employees?	9	1	1	1	0	30
Does its impact felt, as some of the employees relocated?	9	2	1	0	0	32
Do you agree that due to this no fresh recruitment is taking place?	8	1	1	2	0	27
Do you agree that its impact felt as those placed in campus recruitment have not absorbed by the company so far?	7	2	1	0	2	24
Do you agree all this because of political issue rather than environmental issue?	6	2	1	1	2	21
Do the Vedanta complies all the environmental issues?	5	4	1	1	1	23
Does it affect the expansion policy of Vedanta?	7	3	1	1	0	28
Does it affect the HR policy of the Vedanta?	7	2	1	1	1	25
Does some employees left the organisation because of uncertainty?	7	1	1	1	2	22

Source: Compiled from field survey

Note: SAG- Strongly Agree, AG- Agree, N- Neutral, DAG- Disagree & SDAG- Strongly disagree.

ANNEXURE –E (16)

Attributes	Response of Subordinate staff (Male)					
	SAG	AG	N	DAG	SDAG	Score
	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	
Do you know the environmental challenge faced by the Vedanta?	10	2	1	1	2	33
Do you agree with the objections raised by the Environmental ministry?	9	3	1	1	2	32
Do your top management shares the information about the development?	8	4	2	1	1	33
Is there any crisis within Vedanta related to this issue?	8	4	1	1	2	31
Does it effects to your mental attitude while discharging the duty?	7	5	2	1	1	32
Do you agree that this creates an uncertainty among the employees?	10	1	1	2	2	31
Does its impact felt, as some of the employees relocated?	11	1	2	1	1	36
Do you agree that due to this no fresh recruitment is taking place?	12	2	2	0	0	42
Do you agree that its impact felt as those placed in campus recruitment have not absorbed by the company so far?	10	1	1	2	2	31
Do you agree all this because of political issue rather than environmental issue?	9	4	1	1	1	35
Do the Vedanta complies all the environmental issues?	8	5	1	1	1	34
Does it affect the expansion policy of Vedanta?	7	6	1	1	1	33
Does it affect the HR policy of the Vedanta?	8	3	1	1	3	28
Does some employees left the organisation because of uncertainty?	9	1	2	1	3	28

Source: Compiled from field survey

Note: SAG- Strongly Agree, AG- Agree, N- Neutral, DAG- Disagree & SDAG- Strongly disagree.

ANNEXURE –F (13)

Attributes	Response of Subordinate staff (Female)					
	SAG	AG	N	DAG	SDAG	Score
	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	
Do you know the environmental challenge faced by the Vedanta?	10	1	1	1	0	33
Do you agree with the objections raised by the Environmental ministry?	9	1	1	1	1	29
Do your top management shares the information about the development?	8	2	1	1	1	28
Is there any crisis within Vedanta related to this issue?	7	1	1	1	3	21
Does it effects to your mental attitude while discharging the duty?	11	1	0	1	0	35
Do you agree that this creates an uncertainty among the employees?	9	1	2	1	0	31
Does its impact felt, as some of the employees relocated?	8	1	1	1	2	25
Do you agree that due to this no fresh recruitment is taking place?	8	1	2	1	1	27
Do you agree that its impact felt as those placed in campus recruitment have not absorbed by the company so far?	10	1	1	0	1	32
Do you agree all this because of political issue rather than environmental issue?	10	2	1	0	0	35
Do the Vedanta complies all the environmental issues?	8	2	2	1	0	30
Does it affect the expansion policy of Vedanta?	8	3	1	1	0	31
Does it affect the HR policy of the Vedanta?	8	3	1	0	1	30
Does some employees left the organisation because of uncertainty?	8	2	1	1	1	28

Source: Compiled from field survey

Note: SAG- Strongly Agree, AG- Agree, N- Neutral, DAG- Disagree & SDAG- Strongly disagree.

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Thanking you profoundly

Academically yours

Sd/-

Co-ordinator