

Students' and Teachers' Awareness of and Attitude towards Environmental Pollution: A Multivariate Analysis Using Biographical Variables

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ABSTRACT The purpose was through a multivariate analysis, to examine students' and teachers' environmental *Awareness* and *Attitude* in relation to selected biographical data. Participants were Grade 8 to Grade 12 students with ages ranging between 13 years and 23 years ($M = 16.5$ years, $SD = 1.8$) as well as their teachers with ages ranging between 23 and 57 ($M = 40.6$ years, $SD = 9.8$). All were from schools within a precinct of coal mines and electricity generating power stations; this being industry that characteristically releases large amounts of carbon dioxide into the air. The basis of this investigation was the researchers' argument that it is important for students in their teenage years to know and be aware of environmental matters because they will grow to be conscious and responsible adults who will take care of their environment. The researchers therefore determined the participants' biographical factors that had an effect on environmental *Awareness* and *Attitude*. An *Awareness* and *Attitude* scale comprising 24 - items on a 5 point Likert type format was administered to students and teachers in the first quarter of 2012. Among students, no gender effects were found however, significant effects with respect to age and *Attitude*, as well as grade level and *Awareness* were established. For teachers, on the other hand, no significant effects were established for all the biographical variables tested. More pleasing was that teachers had higher scores with respect to environmental *Awareness* and *Attitude* compared with their students. The researchers argue that these findings are important because it is the teachers who will hopefully pass the proverbial baton to their students, for them to embrace environmental issues in the air polluted area whence they reside.