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ENVIRONMENTAL PERCEPTION OF RURAL AND URBAN PUPILS

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Abstract

Secondary school pupils of rural and urban residencies in Bavaria were monitored with respect to their environmental perception by focusing on factor analytic structures, this study surveys attitudinal and behavioural preferences. A total of about 2400 pupils aged between 11 and 16 years from two types of residential location responded to a paper-and-pencil questionnaire and rated the items on a multiple-choice Likert-scale.

Additionally, an 1100-pupil sample of suburban residency was included in the study. The variables covering conservational attitudes and attitudes towards exploitation of nature as well as reported environmental behaviour (environmental action and verbal commitment) were taken from a previous study.

The study yielded two main findings: first, there were no differences between the responses of the three groups, except on the dimension for 'Verbal Commitment'; the urban and suburban pupils professed a stronger verbal commitment to their

environment than did rural pupils. Second, rural pupils' self-reported verbal commitment to their environment was significantly less than their self-reported environmental action; urban and suburban pupils do not differ in their verbal commitment and their reported environmental action. Potential reasons for this discrepancy as well as consequences for educational approaches are discussed.



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