

AN EVALUATION OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH RISKS AND THEIR ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE RISKS

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ABSTRACT

The goal of the study was to determine the students' general awareness of the environmental health risks and their attitudes towards the risks. The study population comprised five thousand two hundred and twenty students from different disciplines as well as from different levels of study programmes namely: Certificate, diploma, bachelors and postgraduate. A sample of 192 students was obtained using stratified random sampling. Data were analyzed descriptively by use of the statistical package of social scientists (SPSS) and excel Microsoft software 2007 version. Fifty one percent of the students were able categorize the health risks. Chi square statistical tool was used in the analysis. The results show a highly significant difference between the correct and incorrect responses. Fifty one percent of the students indicated the health risks were prevalent. Over fifty percent were aware of the existence of these risks. It was concluded that students were exposed to environmental health risks while at the university and that their behavioural activities contributed to their vulnerability to these health risks. The study recommended that the university invest resources in creating a conducive study environment by adopting appropriate intervention measures such as: utilization of aspects of ergonometic, the science of designing the tasks, equipment and learning/living place to fit the user/student; postage of safety rules and regulations in the instruction venues like the laboratories and workshops; adopting better waste disposal procedures and the provision of adequate sanitary facilities.

Keywords: Environmental Health Risks, Perception, Awareness, Attitudes.
