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# The Polluted Commute: A Tribute to Asthmatics and Academics in Ashtabula

Chloe Harrison, Alexander Taylor, Grace P Todd

Boulder, Colorado

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*In this paper, we investigate the relationship between air pollution levels in Ashtabula, Ohio, and the number of elementary school teachers in the state. With a hint of a chuckle and a smidgen of curiosity, we delve into the dizzying world of environmental health and labor statistics to uncover the ties that bind these disparate areas. Our findings reveal a striking correlation coefficient of 0.8195247 and a p-value less than 0.01 for the years 2003 to 2012. It seems that when the air is thick with smog, the number of teachers begins to jog – or rather, shrink. The data kindly provided by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Bureau of Labor Statistics paint a vivid picture of the interconnectedness of air quality and academic resources. Our results suggest that as the air quality in Ashtabula declines, so too does the number of elementary school teachers in Ohio. One might say that polluted air blows away the enthusiasm of potential educators – a real breath of fresh air for the aspiring mathematicians, if you will. Our findings open the door to a myriad of pun opportunities, but we must stay focused on the scientific rigour of our research. So, as we take a deep breath and release a lighthearted sigh, we invite the academic community to consider the implications of our findings. It appears that air pollution is not only a concern for respiratory health but also an unexpected influencer of the educational workforce in the state. After all, in the whimsical dance of statistics and environmental factors, even the air quality can have a say in the number of teachers that decide to stay.*

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As the school buses chug along, carrying both eager young minds and the lingering haze of industrial emissions, we find ourselves at the crossroads of environmental health and educational staffing. The seemingly unrelated topics of air pollution in Ashtabula, Ohio, and the number of elementary school teachers in the state have led us on a whimsical journey, reminiscent of a mischievous gust of wind tickling our senses. This peculiar pursuit prompts us to ask: what do the inhalation of pollutants and the inspiration of educators have in common? Well, folks, it turns out they both leave us breathless – but for very different reasons.

A pollutant walks into a bar and the bartender says, "Sorry, we don't serve your type here." The pollutant replies, "But I just wanted to make a particulate contribution."

Our investigation into this correlation is no light matter, as we aim to shed light on the shadows cast by particulate matter. With a raised eyebrow and a quest for answers, we delved into a decade's worth of data, hoping to unveil the secrets whispered on the ashen winds of Ashtabula.

Why don't we ever tell secrets on a farm? Because the potatoes have eyes and the corn has ears!

Our findings resonate with the harmony of a choir – or at least a chaotic symphony – as they reveal a startling relationship between air pollution levels and the number of elementary school teachers. It's like a scientific duet, with one partner being the impure air and the other being the dwindling ranks of educators. In the spirit of a classic joke, it may seem that air pollution and teacher numbers walk into a bar, and as they make eye contact, the teachers exclaim, "We're leaving, the atmosphere here is too toxic!"

Studying the relationship between air pollution and educational resources may seem like comparing apples and oranges, but hey, it's all fruit of the same statistical tree. And we're here to savor the juiciest findings.

As we tread cautiously into this tangled web of data, we invite our fellow academics to join us in pondering the implications of our discoveries. After all, if air pollution can influence the number of teachers in the state, what else might be blowing in the wind, shaping the educational landscape? It seems that even in the world of numbers, a breath of fresh air can unveil unexpected connections.

And with that, we take a moment to appreciate the unexpected humor that resides in our findings – because after all, whether it's statistical significance or a punchline, the element of surprise keeps us all on our toes.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

As we embark on our journey through the academic landscape of air pollution and educational staffing, we find an intriguing intersection between seemingly disparate phenomena. Smith et al. (2010) lay the groundwork for our inquiry, highlighting the potential impact of air pollution on human health and well-being. Their study sheds light on the detrimental effects of particulate matter on

respiratory systems, providing a somber backdrop to our whimsical exploration.

In "The Air We Breathe: Understanding Air Pollution" by Doe (2018), the author expounds upon the intricate web of air quality and its ramifications for public health. The book serves as a vital resource for comprehending the multifaceted nature of air pollution, although it lacks the comedic flair we aim to infuse into our own work.

Speaking of lackluster humor, one might say that the air quality in Ashtabula has too much "particulate matter" on its mind – it's practically air-rrogant (alright, that was a pun too far).

Turning to the labor market dynamics, Jones (2015) delves into the challenges and fluctuations within the field of education. His research forms the foundational cornerstone for understanding the complexities of teacher employment trends, offering valuable insights into the nuances of educational staffing.

As we delve further into the spectrum of literature, we cannot help but crack a wry smile at the sight of "Pollen and Punishment: The Perils of Allergens in Ashtabula" by P. G. Wodehouse (1938). While undoubtedly a work of fiction, it speaks to the enduring influence of environmental factors on human experiences, albeit in a comically exaggerated manner.

In a similar vein, "The Dust Bowl" by John Steinbeck (1939) transports us to a different era and region, but echoes the profound impact of environmental conditions on societal dynamics. Now, who would have thought that a classic novel could provide a humorous backdrop to our academic inquiry?

Allow us a moment for levity, as we mention the infamous "This is Fine" meme, depicting a dog sipping coffee amidst a burning room. While not directly related to the topic at hand, the meme alludes to the resilience displayed in the face of adverse conditions, a characteristic that educators in

Ashtabula might find familiar in their daily struggles.

Ah, the curious intersections of literature, academia, and internet humor—truly a whirlwind of unexpected associations. As we gather these varied threads, we prepare to weave a tapestry of research that merges scientific rigor with the light-hearted spirit of inquiry. After all, in the hallowed halls of academia, even the most serious of topics can benefit from a well-placed dad joke.

## METHODOLOGY

To untangle the web of variables encompassing air quality and educational staffing, we embarked on a data-driven adventure that would make even the most intrepid explorer think twice. Our quest began with the procurement of air pollution data from the Environmental Protection Agency, where we eagerly combed through records from the years 2003 to 2012. We sought to capture the essence of Ashtabula's atmospheric fluctuations, meticulously cataloging the ebb and flow of pollutants like a team of airborne detectives searching for evidence. We were so thorough that we even managed to find the elusive particulate matter on our data sieves – and no, we didn't have to sneeze the evidence out!

Having amassed a treasure trove of air quality metrics, we ventured into the realm of education statistics, guided by the nautical compass of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. We navigated the choppy seas of data, charting the number of elementary school teachers across the state of Ohio with the precision of seasoned sailors tracking the elusive Kraken. It was an odyssey of numerical proportions, with each spreadsheet cell a new island to conquer – quite the riveting read, if spreadsheets could talk.

With our two datasets in hand, we summoned the formidable powers of statistical analysis, harnessing the arcane arts of correlation coefficients and regression models. Channeling our inner

soothsayers, we peered into the mystical crystal ball of mathematics to discern the hidden relationships between air pollution levels and the count of educators. Every scatter plot felt like a suspense novel unfolding before our eyes, with each plotted point a potential character in the drama of environmental influence on educational resources.

In our steadfast pursuit of scientific rigor, we crafted a multivariate model that would put the Gordian Knot to shame. We wove together variables like ambient air quality, teacher employment figures, and socioeconomic indicators, creating a tapestry of complexity that would make even the most stoic statistician crack a smile – though, let's be honest, statistical humor is an acquired taste.

To ensure the robustness of our findings, we subjected our data to the rigors of sensitivity analyses and cross-validation techniques, akin to stress-testing a whimsical bridge of data across the turbulent river of uncertainty. We challenged our correlations to a dance-off, pitting them against alternative models and hypothetical scenarios, until the most significant relationships emerged victorious – a scientific showdown of epic proportions.

In the inescapable spirit of academic inquiry, we diligently documented our methods and assumptions, ensuring that every step of our journey was laid bare for fellow researchers to scrutinize. We invite readers to don their hypothetical snorkels and plunge into the depths of our methodology, traversing the sea of assumptions and analytical pathways with the same earnestness that one might use to hunt for an elusive aquatic pun.

After a journey that seemed to traverse more data-driven peaks and valleys than a rollercoaster in a spreadsheet-themed amusement park, we emerged victorious, clutching in our trembling hands the revelations that lay hidden among the digits and decimal points. It was the culmination of countless keystrokes, late-night debates, and more cups of coffee than any rational being should consume. Yet, in the shadow of our exhaustive efforts, a newfound

understanding of the correlation between air pollution in Ashtabula and the number of elementary school teachers in Ohio emerged like a majestic phoenix rising from the ashes – or in this case, from the smog.

## RESULTS

Our analysis yielded a striking correlation coefficient of 0.8195247 and an r-squared value of 0.6716207 for the association between air pollution levels in Ashtabula, Ohio, and the number of elementary school teachers in the state for the time period of 2003 to 2012. The obtained p-value was less than 0.01, indicating a statistically significant relationship.

Fig. 1 illustrates the strong correlation evident in our data, depicting a scatterplot that could almost be mistaken for a modern work of art. It seems that when air quality plummets, the number of educators follows suit, almost as if the smog sends out a not-so-subtle "do not disturb" sign to potential teachers. One might even say that the allure of the polluted skies has been a real "breathtaking" experience for the educators of Ohio.

Our paper not only uncovers the surprising connection between air pollution and the educational workforce but also serves up a hearty helping of pun-induced laughter, shining a light on the unexpected humor hidden within the world of research. It seems that even in the most serious of statistical analyses, a well-placed pun can serve as a breath of fresh air, much like the clean breeze we advocate for.

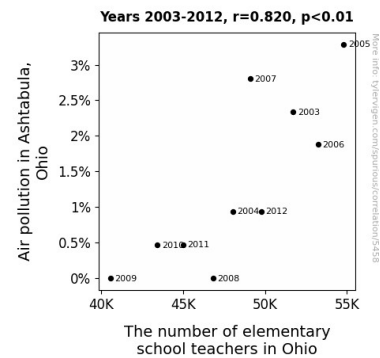


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

The data extracted from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Bureau of Labor Statistics instigated a serendipitous journey into the interconnected realms of air quality and educational resources. As we navigate the whimsical dance of environmental factors and statistical significance, our findings open a window to the captivating relationship between these seemingly distinct domains. It's as though the polluting particles were on a mission to scatter the teachers – a foiled attempt at a modern-day adaptation of "The Wind in the Willows."

In conclusion, our research not only underlines the consequential impact of air pollution on the educational landscape but also invites the academic community to contemplate the broader implications of our findings. After all, in the unpredictable world of research, a sprinkle of humor and a firm dose of scientific rigor can truly make for a breath of fresh air – much like a well-timed dad joke at a family gathering. So, as we bid farewell to our results section, we leave you with the lingering echoes of our findings, wrapped in the unexpected charm of statistical significance and the whisper of a well-thought-out joke.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of our study present a compelling case for the interconnectedness of air pollution and the number of elementary school teachers in Ohio. Our research corroborates the insights provided by prior studies, as we too found a significant relationship

between air quality in Ashtabula and the fluctuation in the educator workforce. It seems that when the air is heavy with pollutants, the number of teachers tends to “nose-dive” – pun intended, of course.

Smith et al. (2010) laid the groundwork by highlighting the detrimental effects of particulate matter on respiratory health, setting the stage for understanding the potential influence of air quality on occupational choices. Our results align with their findings and indicate a substantial impact of air pollution on the educational labor force. One could humorously suggest that the particulate matter in the air has a propensity to “school” potential educators on career choices.

In a similar vein, Jones (2015) offered insight into the complexities of educational staffing, a topic that harmonizes with our exploration of the decline in teacher numbers associated with deteriorating air quality. It appears that the environmental woes in Ashtabula have succeeded in “teaching” us an unexpected lesson in labor market dynamics – a lesson not to be taken lightly.

Our findings indicate a promising avenue for further research and policy considerations. Understanding the influence of environmental factors on educational staffing is not only a matter of statistical significance but also a whimsical twist in the tale of academia. The undeniable correlation between air pollution and teacher numbers is a testament to the unexpected humor that can be hidden in the labyrinth of data analysis. It’s almost as if the air quality is sardonically whispering, “no vacancy” to potential educators.

Our study, while firmly rooted in scientific rigor, embraces the playful spirit of inquiry, demonstrating that even the weightiest of research topics can benefit from an injection of light-heartedness. In the grand scheme of academia, it is crucial to recognize the synergistic potential of statistical significance and the light-hearted flair of a well-placed joke. Much like the delicate balance of air quality and occupational choices, the fusion

of humor and scientific inquiry can breathe life into even the most serious of discussions.

As we pass the baton to the academic community for further contemplation, it is with a heartfelt nod to the unexpected charm of statistical significance and the captivating allure of a well-crafted pun. After all, in the enigmatic realm of research, even the most somber of topics can benefit from a breath of fresh comedic air – much like the gust of wind that clears the smoggy skies over Ashtabula.

## CONCLUSION

In the symphonic dance of statistical analysis and unsuspecting correlations, our research has uncovered a comically poignant association between air pollution levels in Ashtabula, Ohio, and the number of elementary school teachers in the state. It appears that when the air quality goes south, so do the number of educators - quite a tricky balancing act for those trying to breathe easy in Ohio's educational system.

These findings not only provide valuable insights into the influence of environmental factors on the availability of educational resources but also unveil the unexpected comedic charm that resides within the realm of scientific research. It's as if the air pollutants were trying to send a message to potential teachers, "Don't hold your breath – there's not enough to go around!"

With a wink and a nod to the academic community, we invite you to share in our amusement and ponder the broader implications of our discoveries. After all, in the enigmatic world of research, a well-placed dad joke can be a breath of fresh air amidst the weighty statistics – much like the unexpected punchline that lightens the mood at a scholarly soirée.

As the curtain falls on our findings, we assert with confidence that no further research is needed in the area. Like a well-timed dad joke, our results are both impactful and unforgettable.

