

Reduced Field Work in Environment Based Education: A Qualitative Approach in Secondary Education

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UN Decade Education for Sustainable Development (2001-2010), emphasis development of moulding the younger generation to appreciate the environment and society. The inquisitive learner with exposure to field work is encouraged be a meaningful learner and promote greater awareness and meaningful change in learner's insight and attitudes towards the environment. This study investigates the implementation of active learning within Environmental Education fieldwork in primary schools. This paper describes the reason for recent trends in field work opportunities for students in environment based subjects such as Social Sciences (Geography and History), Environmental Science and Biology for secondary education in some of the schools in the Colombo District.

A literature review on Environmental Education, importance of field work and the present education system of Sri Lanka was carried out to establish the base for this study. Subject teachers who teach above subjects from fifteen different schools both national and international, were chosen for in-depth interviews.

The major finding of the study shows that many schools do not carry out any field work compared to the number of lessons taught in class, even if it means working in the school garden. Only a few international schools carry out limited field work which is required for the course work. Lack incentives, unclear methods of teaching and resources are the key factors of the present trends.

Simple structural changes with creative ideas can be applied to facilitate such issues in Environmental Education.

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