

Abstract

The Role of the Palestinian Curricula and Extra-Curricula in Developing the Environmental Awareness of the High Primary School Students in Ramallah and Al- Beira District

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This thesis aimed to evaluate the role of environmental education as well as the extra-curricula in developing the environmental awareness of the high primary students in Palestine. Six questions have been stated for the study:

1. What are the educational units related to environment included in the new curriculum in the 7th, 8th, and 9th grades?
2. What is the important of environmental educational units as perceived by the Palestinian teachers?
3. What are the differences in the perceptions regarding the environmental educational units included in the official curriculum based on the specialization, gender, and qualifications?
4. What is the important of extra-curriculum activities implemented in selected schools as perceived by the Palestinian teachers?
5. What are the differences in the perceptions regarding the important of the extra curricula environmental activities based on the specialization, gender, and qualifications?
6. What is the impact of implementing extra curricula environmental activities in the accomplishments of students in four major areas of environmental education?

In addition to these research questions, eight null hypotheses have been formulated to examine the existing differences between the perceptions of two participant groups in the study (one group participated in extra-curricular activities while the other group did not) and the levels of accomplishments of students in both groups regarding environmental literacy.

To accomplish the objectives of the study, a special three-part questionnaire has been developed. A special exam was also conducted to measure the students' cognitive level related to environmental issues in both groups. About 130 teachers affiliated to 11 schools and 180 students affiliated to four schools in Ramallah and Al-Beira District participated in the study.

The study found that health education is the most important topic in the environmental education as perceived by the primary school teachers. The study also found that there are no significant differences between the teachers' perceptions with respect to the importance of environmental curricula units, while there were significant differences among groups of teachers based on gender, regarding some extra curricula activities: environmental clubs, clean-up campaigns, general lectures, and wall journals. Another finding of the study is that the level of environmental education awareness as expressed by the average grades of students in schools with extra-curricula activities is higher than the level of average grades of students affiliated to schools which have no environmental extra activities.

The study recommends the following. First, extending the extra-curricular activities related to the environmental education to other schools and districts. Such a recommendation implies that activities of this sort be initiated and financed by the schools rather than by external support. Another recommendation is to generalize the experience of using environmental clubs to all schools and districts. A further recommendation is to develop games, case studies and work sheets related to the environmental education in order to enhance the official curricula of environmental education in the Palestinian schools.