

An Exploration into Environmental Protection Training Methods from Students' Perspective at Primary School

Alireza Araghi¹, Azam Inanloo² and NargesBorzabadi Farahani³

¹ Assistant professor in Islamic Azad University (IAU), IslamshahrBranch, Educational Management & Planning Group, Islamshahr, Iran

² MA Student of Educational Management, Islamic Azad University (IAU), IslamshahrBranch, Iran

³ MA, Department of Psychology, Tehran Central Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

ABSTRACT

School authorities should train students' thought concerning to what they see, hear and read and prepare ground for the students to be an architect for their own culture and nurture. The present survey is also intended to prepare an opportunity to discover environmental training techniques from perspective of students at primary schools. According to default of this study, student is an individual who is able to analyze general issues rationally and determine his/ her positions when exposed to social- scientific subjects like environment. Methodology of this study is of simple randomized sampling and statistical population (sample) of the present research includes 150 students of primary schools at regions 11 and 18 from Tehran Education Department in 2011-12. In this methodology, Delphi Method is adapted and based on which initially participants were asked to prepare a list of environmental training techniques and then a primary list was prepared from the collected lists and this primary list was put at their disposal in order to adopt any amendment that they discerned necessary to be included. Finally, a new list was arranged based on the purposed comments and exerted adjustments so this list was polled by participants again. Eventually, findings of study have been assessed and purposed based on environmental training methods from students' viewpoints.

Key words: Education (Training), Environment, Students at Primary School, Delphi Method

1. INTRODUCTION

Educational System is one of the social systems at any country and this system is tasked to create appropriate changes in recognitions, attitudes and eventually learners' behavior rather than conveyance of cultural heritage and human experiences to new generation. Method of performance and efficiency (effectiveness) in educational centers require identifying educational goals and principles, characteristics of students and teachers, curricula and training methods. In modern world, educational system is responsible for doing several tasks and performances overtly and covertly and it is deemed as tool for realization of social objectives and intents of nations. Its performances are so high that different communities expect these organizations to meet their spiritual and material requirements and they are considered as a factor to realize individual and social needs and of socio-cultural and economic growth and development in the society. Environmental goals are some of functions and objectives of educational system in Islamic Republic of Iran as well. Among those goals, one may imply improvement of spirit to observe public healthcare and environmental protection [1].

Students should be assumed themselves responsible for environmental protection and nature preservation and to be accountable against them; they should know what materials are hazardous for environmental and nature protection and in general they should ask themselves in this regard and find the solution for their problems [2].

1.1. Subject Interpretation:

Educational system is one of the organizations that play particularly vital role in all communities. This crucial nature is mainly due to this reason that their internal operations are exposed to the public and judged by all of them. Thus, educational system shall be effective since trend of social development and advancements makes it necessary to adapt an educational efficient system. To achieve such an objective, educational system needs to an atmosphere in which children and teenagers to be brought up as thoughtful, creative and innovative individuals with self- reliance and at the same time school authorities shall train the brave students that are learning by reliance on their own internal energy. Such attributes are originated from an open and participation-seeking atmosphere and primary educational career is deemed as the foremost period for nurturing such traits so

that this period is crucially important in all educational system throughout the world in terms of formation of personality and comprehensive growth in learners [3].

It is a period when the opportunities and positions are prepared for education, training and learning the proper way of communication with society and surrounding environment to the child. At these circumstances, schools authorities should use this opportunity and teach the learner some educational subjects such as citizenship training and environmental protection techniques via different curricula and improve sense of responsibility in them in this regard [4].

Experts suggest that training of some issues like observance of personal healthcare, social subjects, environmental protection and sense of responsibility for them should be started at childhood [5] since it has been seen that those students who were taught under above trainings during primary education would have more basic rational and social capacities in the future [6].

With respect to role of this period in formation of individual personality, educational centers shall make more efforts in nurturing intellectual potential in primary school students in different field and including environmental protection and prepare some opportunities for primary school students to employ their own rationality potential for solving individual and social problems. In educational systems where one of their problems is traditionally memory- driven training, children may understand that they have to use their own brain and wisdom further for memorization of hints and points than interests, ideas or problems in primary schools. However, for many children who were learned to think successfully, change that asked them by educational institutes from thinking to memorization serves as a shock [7].

To recede from memory- oriented shock in educational subjects, learners' participation should be sought for architecture of their training and education. According to Friere, we should respect learners when we communicate with them and ask them to be aware of social real condition where they live as well as those conditions that formed their personality [8].

Miller says: "If you are mainly abided by a behaviorist orientation, it is impossible for educational materials in your classroom to act in the course of humanistic orientation." In fact, learning become significant and completed when student employs it in daily and real time activities what he/ she acquired within training flow. This training technique that is called "Active Learning" requires that student to do something and to think and ponder about what he/ she did. He/ she plays role of an active learner instead of passive one and participate in training process. In this technique, student finds an opportunity to speak and write about what he/ she learns and create link between his/ her talks and writings with his/ her previous experiences and to create new knowledge and employ Quran's training in daily life. This one is an individual that thinks and acts along with students and eventually learns by mutual training [9].

Today, many school authorities tend to codify curricula that invite students to express ideas and to participate in learning. Such plans that are called as participatory learning may call up students for discussion, negotiation and eventually learning each other. Participatory learning in fact acts as a solution to tackle a mass of educational problems, society and is accepted as successful educational strategy where all students along with teacher are participating in teaching and learning process [10] and in order to prepare such environment during primary school period, learning conditions should be closer to real and natural circumstances [11].

Also in this study, learners have played role of active learners than passive one and they actively participated in process of giving response to this question that "By what kind of educational methods one may train others how to protect the environment?" and they purposed useful techniques that might be effective for training about environmental protection from their viewpoint.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The methodology that used in this study was of surveying type by application of Delphi Method. Basically Delphi technique is source forecasting method thereby one may gather individuals' comments about business related requirements and issues and then identify the important needs by adaptation of different theories and based on which to organize educational curricula. The main tools in this method were open- ended questionnaires that were put at sample participants [12].

2.1. Research Goal

Review of educational methods for environmental protection from students' view

2.2. Statistical Population

Statistical population includes 250 students from grades 4 and 5 in primary schools situated in regions 11 and 18 of Education Department of Tehran city where by using randomized sampling, 150 participants were shared in this survey.

3. RESULTS

In the present study, holding basic briefing session for students, test- retest questionnaires were handed in students at first step and it was asked them to suggest appropriate educational methods for environmental

protection. At the second step, completed questionnaires were gathered and the given results were analyzed and a perfect list of offered frequent titles and subjects was prepared. At third stage, the most frequent suggestions were put at their disposal again for order- preference and the priorities were extracted for each title based on the obtained mean and purposed as follows:

- 1- Application of Islamic traditions and narratives and witty remarks and axioms about cleaning and health on colorful posters and installation of them to exposed to the public;
- 2- Training nursery rhymes to children about environmental protection;
- 3- Adoption of very beautiful designs about environment cleaning and indication of the existing pollution in city;
- 4- Building alarming robots for environmental protection; and
- 5- Construction of orchard for planting trees and their maintenance by students

Table 1. Educational methods suggested by students about environmental protection

Suggestion	Suggestion 1	Suggestion 2	Suggestion 3	Suggestion 4	Suggestion 5
Mean	3.18	2.92	2.79	2.56	3.5

As it characterized in Table-1, suggestions No 5 and 1, which respectively concern to a) Construction of orchard for planting trees and their maintenance by students; and b) Application of Islamic traditions and narratives and witty remarks and axioms about cleaning and health on colorful posters and installation of them to exposed to the public, have the highest means in this test.

3.1. Educational methods suggested by students about environmental protection based on Table 2:

- 6- To teach children that earth is our friend and to grant something (gift) to our friend (earth) that it could synthesize it;
- 7- To design some cards with small dimensions on which some short messages were written about environmental protection;
- 8- To design and make computerized games in which the user might enter into the next steps if he/ she had tried for environmental protection;
- 9- If someone poured trash on ground we should pick up and put it in dust bin in order to teach him/ her for environmental protection by observing such behavior.
- 10- Keeping any classroom clean should be on students' onus from the same classroom.

Table 2. Educational methods suggested by students about environmental protection

Suggestion	Suggestion 6	Suggestion 7	Suggestion 8	Suggestion 9	Suggestion 10
Mean	3.09	2.3	3.43	3.32	3.28

As it shown from Table 2, suggestions No 8, 9 and 10, which respectively concern to a) design and make computerized games in which the user might enter into the next steps if he/ she had tried for environmental protection; and b) If someone poured trash on ground we should pick up and put it in dust bin in order to teach him/ her for environmental protection by observing such behavior; and c) Keeping any classroom clean should be on students' onus from the same classroom, have the highest means in this test.

3.2. Educational methods suggested by students about environmental protection based on Table 3:

- 11- We would like that principal of our school to bring us for going to a camp outside city and students to gather trashes at that region and instead municipality of that area to provide the school with the needed instruments and/or to buy them from us;
 - 12- During Ashura and Tasooa ceremonies (Moharram month), this message should be announced that some people to have bag to gather the possible trash and the used disposable plates for eating vowed foods and put them in garbage can;
 - 13- We may create a fantastic character in this country by animation that it never pours trash and children also learn not to throw away trash outside dustbin like it;
 - 14- Don't compel children to read books but we should expose some books about environmental protection to them in order to read them voluntarily;
 - 15- To train children about this matter via movies, drama and dolly theatre.
- According to mean values of suggested priorities given in Table 3, the following techniques were most important than others based on order- preference:

Table 3. Educational methods suggested by students about environmental protection

Suggestion	Suggestion 11	Suggestion 12	Suggestion 13	Suggestion 14	Suggestion 15
Mean	3.24	2.84	2.67	2.99	3.25

As it indicated in Table-3, suggestions No 11 and 15, which respectively concern to a) We would like that principal of our school to bring us for going to a camp outside city and students to gather trashes at that region and instead municipality of that area to provide the school with the needed instruments and/or to buy them from us; and b) To train children about this matter via movies, drama and dolly theatre, have the highest means in this test.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to Fig 1, suggestions No 5, 8, 9, 10, 15, 11 and 1 have the highest frequency respectively.

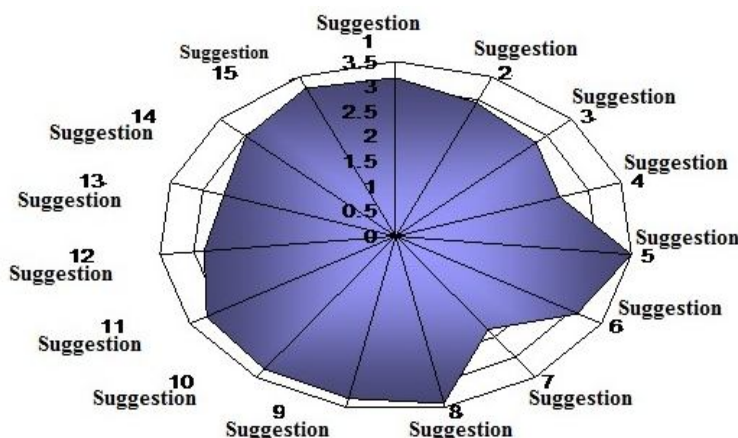


Figure 1. Diagram of methods suggested by students for training environmental protection

As it implied before, learning and training became significant if it is thought comprehensively about what taught and done and play an active learner instead of passive one and participates in teaching process. According to above default point, some of training techniques for environmental protection were examined from students' view in primary schools and based on their comments, 7 items with the highest priority are selected and they are purposed to be included in teaching programs. These methods are as follows:

- I) Construction of orchard for planting trees and their maintenance by students;
- II) To design and make computerized games in which the user might enter into the next steps if he/ she had tried for environmental protection;
- III) If someone poured trash on ground we should pick up and put it in dust bin in order to teach him/ her for environmental protection by observing such behavior.
- IV) Keeping any classroom clean should be on students' onus from the same classroom.
- V) To train our children about this matter via movies, drama and dolly theatre.
- VI) We would like that principal of our school to bring us for going to a camp outside city and students to gather trashes at that region and instead municipality of that area to provide the school with the needed instruments and/or to buy them from us; and
- VII) Application of Islamic traditions and narratives and witty remarks and axioms about cleaning and health on colorful posters and installation of them to exposed to the public.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

1- It is suggested to construct orchard in school areas and students to plant some trees there at the beginning of academic year and groups of students or their classrooms to be tasked for taking care of young trees during the year.

2- It is suggested to design and make computerized games in which user to be able to elevate to higher steps only by environmental protection and thereby indirect (metacognitive) methods to be adapted for training about environmental protection.

3- It is purposed to employ indirect techniques for environmental protection such as observation method in order to correct individuals' behavior. For example, some people have bag in their hand and gather the wasted disposable plates that were thrown away on the ground, street and passage routes.

4- Some efforts should be made in order to increase sense of responsibility among students regarding to environmental protection by employing some techniques like assigning duty of cleaning the classroom and school environment and separation of waste materials from each other.

5- It is offered to adapt some methods like display of movies, dolly theatres and making animated character as an alarming symbol and icon for environmental protection.

6- It is suggested to arrange camping plans for students outside the city and some extracurricular programs for those camping plans in order to gather waste materials from environment. Finally, authorities in municipality should provide reward plans for these students in order to encourage them at individual level and within their school.

7- It is suggested to use appropriately Islamic traditions (Hadith) and witty remarks and axioms concerning to environmental protection on colorful posters, game cards with small dimensions as well as other innovative techniques.

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