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Strengthening Concern for the School Environment through Open Space Greening Activities

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Abstrak

Tujuan dari artikel ini adalah untuk menguji efektivitas pendidikan lingkungan di sekolah dan dampaknya terhadap pemahaman dan keterlibatan siswa dalam pelestarian lingkungan. Dengan menganalisis berbagai program pendidikan dan hasilnya, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan wawasan tentang bagaimana sekolah dapat lebih membekali siswa dengan pengetahuan dan keterampilan yang diperlukan untuk melindungi sumber daya alam. Metodologi penelitian ini melibatkan kombinasi metode penelitian kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Sampel siswa dari berbagai tingkatan kelas dan beberapa guru yang dipilih dan diberikan pre dan post-test untuk mengukur kemampuan berpikir kritis mereka sebelum dan sesudah berpartisipasi dalam program PKM tentang penguatan kepedulian terhadap lingkungan sekolah melalui kegiatan penghijauan ruang terbuka. Hasil penelitian, yaitu 1) dalam hal kepedulian siswa terhadap lingkungan sekolah, diketahui bahwa siswa dan guru terlibat dalam kegiatan penghijauan ruang terbuka sekolah; 2) penelitian ini menemukan korelasi positif antara kebiasaan siswa dan guru yang baik, seperti membuang sampah pada tempatnya, dan merawat tanaman penghijauan di ruang terbuka sekolah.

Kata Kunci: *penguatan, kepedulian, lingkungan sekolah, ruang terbuka, penghijauan*

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to examine the effectiveness of environmental education in schools and its impact on students' understanding and engagement in environmental conservation. By analysing various educational programmes and their outcomes, the study aims to provide insight into how schools can better equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to protect natural resources. This research methodology involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. A sample of students from various grade levels and several teachers were selected and given pre- and post-tests to measure their critical thinking skills before and after participating in the PKM programme on strengthening awareness of the school environment through open space greening activities. The results of the study, namely: 1) in terms of student concern for the school environment, it is known that students and teachers are involved in greening school open spaces; and 2) The study found a positive correlation between good student and teacher habits, such as disposing of garbage in its place and caring for greenery in open school spaces.

Keywords: *strengthening, caring, school environment, open space, greening*

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INTRODUCTION

Environmental conservation is very important for the well-being of our planet and all living organisms (Andi Eka Putra, 2014; Masturi, 2023). With the increasing global population and increasing industrialization, the natural resources we rely heavily on are being depleted at an alarming rate (Ducoing et al., 2018; V.A.R.Barao et al., 2022). In addition, ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss pose significant threats to the stability and resilience of our ecosystems (Malhi et al., 2020). Therefore, it is imperative that we implement measures to protect and preserve our environment for present and future generations.

One of the main problems contributing to the degradation of our environment is the lack of environmental awareness in schools (Blumstein & Saylan, 2007; Jumirah et al., 2021; Marsh, 2021; Sangia et al., 2022). Many educational institutions fail to prioritize environmental education, resulting in a generation of individuals ill-equipped to understand the importance of protecting our natural resources (Reimers, 2021). Without proper education about the impact of human activities, students may not fully understand the urgency of the situation or the actions they can take to reduce environmental degradation (Erhabor & Don, 2016). As a result, it is imperative that schools incorporate comprehensive environmental programs into their curriculum to foster a sense of environmental responsibility and management among students.

Many studies have been conducted revealing that there is a positive correlation between environmental education programs and students' awareness and understanding of environmental issues (Laksana, 2017; Munawar et al., 2019; Febriani, 2022). These programs have been found to enhance students' knowledge of the importance of conservation and the impact of human activities on the environment. In addition, studies have shown that students who participate in environmental education programs are more likely to engage in environmentally friendly behaviors, such as recycling and reducing energy consumption (Meyer, 2015; Julina, 2016; Rahmah, 2018; Sugiarto & Gabriella, 2020). This literature review highlights the need for schools to prioritize and invest in environmental education to ensure that future generations are equipped to address the global environmental challenges we face (Rasyid, 2015; Ismail, 2021).

PKM is one of the programs that must be implemented by lecturers and students, because in addition to PPL (field experience practice), PKM is also a mandatory program to be implemented, whose purpose is not only to apply the knowledge that has been gained in the learning process on campus, lecturers and students can also contribute to all elements of society (Fazalani et al., 2022; Hasbi et al., 2022; Jagat et al., 2022; Santoso et al., 2023; Wike et al., 2023).

The purpose of this article is to examine the effectiveness of environmental education in schools and its impact on students' understanding and engagement in environmental conservation. By analyzing various educational programs and their results, the study aims to provide insight into how schools can better equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect our natural resources. Ultimately, the study's findings will contribute to the development of evidence-based strategies to incorporate environmental education in schools and promote a more sustainable future. This PKM activity was carried out at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Ciputat.

METHOD

This research methodology involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. A sample of students from various grade levels and several teachers were selected and given pre and post-tests to measure their critical thinking skills before and after participating in the PKM program on strengthening awareness of the school environment through open space greening activities. In addition, interviews and surveys were conducted

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to collect qualitative data on the attitudes and motivations of students and teachers towards environmental issues. This blended methods approach enables a comprehensive understanding of the impact of environmental education on critical thinking skills and academic performance. Participants in this study were students from various grade levels at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Ciputat and several selected teachers.

Data collection for this study went through a gradual process, namely 1) a research team consisting of 4 people having their respective roles, namely 1 resource person for socialization activities and 3 committee members who prepare PKM activities; 2) the research team conducted socialization activities to students representing several classes and several selected teachers in one of the classes owned by the school; 3) After conducting socialization, the research team involved a combination of surveys and interviews to obtain data, namely a) the participants were asked to complete a survey that included questions about their concern for the school environment through open space greening activities; b) a subset of participants were selected for an in-depth interview, where they were asked more detailed questions about their experiences and challenges in relation to concern for the school environment through open space greening activities. This mixed method approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of the influencing factors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

PKM Activities

In this PKM activity, socialization was delivered by Maria Assumpta Wikantari who delivered material about caring for the school environment through open space greening activities, which was very interesting and educated about concern for the school environment which would later have a positive impact on the school and also for the school community, namely teachers and students. After finishing delivering the material, it was opened with a question and answer session by students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Ciputat who were very enthusiastic.



Figure 1. Socialization PPT Slides



Figure 2. Antusias Students Join Socialization Activities

Survey and Interview Results

The results revealed some interesting findings. In terms of student concern for the school environment through open space greening activities, it was found that students and teachers were involved in school open space greening activities, judging from the number of plants in each open space in the school yard and the availability of trash cans in each school room. In addition, the study found a positive correlation between good student and teacher habits, such as disposing of garbage in its place, and caring for greenery in open school spaces. In-depth interviews provide further insight into the challenges faced by schools, such as some students not yet being used to throwing garbage in bins and damaging plants in school open spaces.

In conclusion, environmental education plays an important role in equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary to address pressing environmental challenges. By implementing a comprehensive and up-to-date curriculum, schools can empower students to become knowledgeable and responsible stewards of the environment. By incorporating real-world examples and case studies, students can develop a deeper understanding of the complexity of environmental issues and the importance of conservation. Through continuous evaluation and improvement, schools can ensure that their environmental education programs remain relevant and impactful, ultimately fostering a generation of environmentally conscious individuals who will strive to protect and preserve our planet.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, environmental education plays an important role in equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary to address pressing environmental challenges. By implementing a comprehensive and up-to-date curriculum, schools can empower students to become knowledgeable and responsible stewards of the environment. By incorporating real-world examples and case studies, students can develop a deeper understanding of the complexity of environmental issues and the importance of conservation. Through continuous evaluation and improvement, schools can ensure that their environmental education programs remain relevant and impactful, ultimately fostering a generation of environmentally conscious individuals who will strive to protect and preserve our planet.

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