

A survey of environmental awareness amongst standard seven pupils in some primary schools in Lari division, Kiambu district

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Abstract:

The aim of this project was to survey the Environmental awareness amongst standard seven pupils in primary. The objectives of the survey were to find out; (a) Whether the pupils know the importance of soil, causes of soil erosion, types of soil erosion and the measures that can be used to prevent soil erosion. (b) Whether the pupils know the sources of water, uses of water, causes of water pollution and some ways of conserving water. (c) Whether the pupils know the causes and dangers of overpopulation and the implications it can have on other resources. (d) Whether the pupils know the importance of wildlife and the need to protect them. (e) How the pupils would respond when faced with some of the problems mentioned above. (f) Whether they are able to make the correct value judgment on environmental issues. Piloting was carried out in Kirenga Primary School in the Education Zone under survey. The questionnaire was adjusted accordingly after piloting. The sample was drawn from seven primary schools randomly selected in Lari Division, Upland Education Zone. The sample consisted of standard seven pupils regardless of their sex and age from the schools of Githirioni, Kibagare, Nyamweru, Githithia, Kimende, Mukeu and Bathi. The total respondents were 367. The researcher selected randomly a single standard seven class in each of the schools except for Mukeu which had only one standard seven stream. Design. A Questionnaire was used to collect the required data. It was in three sections, each section soliciting different information from the pupils. Section A, had twenty questions relating to knowledge, section B with fifteen questions relating to application of knowledge and section C had ten questions relating to attitude. Each section was marked differently and the data analysed accordingly as shown in Chapter IV. Findings. The survey found out; (a) 82.6% of the respondents scored 60% and above on questions relating to knowledge. (b) Only 40.9% of the respondents scored 55% and above on questions relating to application of knowledge. (c) (i) 88.8% of the respondents had the correct view about a river passing near a factory as compared to a river passing through a forest. (ii) 69.8% observed correctly on the position of a well in relation to a latrine. (iii) 86.2% made correct judgment on the location of a pit latrine in relation to a river. (iv) 47.1% observed correctly on the characteristics of clean water. (v) 74.9% observed correctly the use of organic manure as compared to chemical fertilizers. (vi) 55.3% observed correctly the timing as to when soil conservation should start. (vii) 40.3% made correct observation on preservation of forests. (viii) Only 37.6% observed correctly on the issue of family size and its relation to population growth. (ix) 65.7% observed correctly regarding the preservation of wildlife. (x) 56.4% observed correctly on the importance of environmental knowledge acquired during the school years. On the basis of the findings, the researcher made the following observations: * The pupils have gained a lot of knowledge about the environment. * Most of the pupils cannot apply the gained knowledge to solve practical environmental problems. * There seem to be little relationship between what is learnt in school and real life situations. The researcher therefore made the following recommendations:- * more emphasis be put on applying the acquired Environmental knowledge both by the teacher and pupils in the classroom. * practical participation by pupils on environmental issues outside the classroom be encouraged. * teachers be encouraged to use other materials other than the text book to help pupils update their environmental knowledge especially with issues that affect their country. * teachers should help identify environmental

problems in their immediate environment and guide them in formulating simple solutions. * the Ministry of Environment ought to be more involved in schools by providing current information about the Environment at all levels of primary school. * other relevant organisations that deal with environmental issues such as KENGO, CARE, wildlife society of Kenya should be encouraged in providing materials and talks at all levels of the primary school.