The Effect of an Authentic Learning Environment on Creating Conceptual Awareness in Environmental Education, Shaping Value Judgments and Increasing Participation Levels

Abstract

In today’s world of rapidly increasing environmental concerns, traditional environmental education provides the level of knowledge that will meet teaching targets but is ineffective in achieving the highest goals in this context. Effective environmental education should facilitate the highest level of attitude development in individuals, helping them to form value judgments and attain participatory skills. In this study, a program of authentic learning-based teaching was designed to be used in the teaching of today’s environmental issues and an attempt was made to determine the effectiveness of such teaching. The research data were collected by posing 10 open-ended questions to 168 pre-service teachers before and after the teaching program. The data were subjected to qualitative and quantitative analysis. The results showed that teaching by making use of the authentic learning-based technique of panel discussion was markedly effective in achieving the higher level skills of forming value judgments and increasing initiative-oriented participatory skills focused on the environment.

Keywords: environmental education, authentic learning, Balıkesir-Kazdağ gold exploration and processing