

Gardening as a Contextual Scaffold for Learning: Connecting Community Wisdom for Science and Health Learning through Participatory Action Research

Authors : Kamal Prasad Acharya

Abstract : The related literature suggests that teaching and learning science at the basic level community schools in Nepal is based on book recitation. Consequently, the achievement levels and the understanding of basic science concepts is much below the policy expectations. In this context, this study intended to gain perception in the implementation practices of school gardens 'One Garden One School' for science learning and to meet the target of sustainable development goals that connects community wisdom regarding school gardening activities (SGAs) for science learning. This Participatory Action Research (PAR) study was done at the action school located in Province 3, Chitwan of Federal Nepal, supported under the NORHED/Rupantaran project. The purpose of the study was to connect the community wisdom related to gardening activities as contextual scaffolds for science learning. For this, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were applied to collect data which were analyzed using a thematic analysis. Basic level students, science teachers, and parents reported having wonderful experiences such as active and meaningful engagement in school gardening activities for science learning as well as science teachers' motivation in activity-based science learning. Overall, teachers, students, and parents reported that the school gardening activities have been found to have had positive effects on students' science learning as they develop basic scientific concepts by connecting community wisdom as a contextual scaffold. It is recommended that the establishment of a school garden is important for science learning in community schools throughout Nepal.

Keywords : contextual scaffold, community wisdom, science and health learning, school garden

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