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Environmental Awareness of Students at SDN Pauh, Tungkal Jaya District and SDN Mendis Jaya, Bayung Lencir District, Musi Banyuasin Regency

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Abstract
This paper describes the school's efforts to increase environmental awareness of students at SDN Pauh, Tungkal Jaya District, and SDN Mendis Jaya, Bayung Lencir District, Musi Banyuasin Regency. The focus of awareness is seen in daily behavior, such as attitudes towards waste in the surrounding area, concern for plants and animals in the area, and an understanding of the importance of maintaining cleanliness and environmental sustainability. To achieve this goal, both schools carry out various programs such as providing trash cans, environmental simulations, awareness campaigns through t-shirts worn by teachers and school staff, distributing environmental awareness posters, and planting trees around the school.

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1. Introduction

Environmental awareness among elementary school children in Indonesia remains relatively weak, including in Musi Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra. This is evident in various daily behaviors, such as littering, a lack of concern for surrounding plants and animals, and a lack of awareness of the importance of maintaining environmental cleanliness and sustainability. Lack of environmental awareness in the long run leads to environmental disaster (Kennedy *et al*., 1996) [6]. Several factors contribute to this lack of environmental awareness, including education, culture, facilities, and the role of adults around children (Cetin & Nisanci, 2010) [4].

From an educational standpoint, elementary school environmental education frequently consists of theoretical content with little real-world application (Szeberenyi *et al*., 2022) [8]. Youngsters may be aware that trash should be disposed of properly, but they are unaware of how bad behavior directly affects the environment. It is challenging for kids to integrate environmental principles when there is a dearth of actual, real-world learning opportunities like recycling projects, tree planting, or trips to waste treatment plants. Additionally, the elementary curriculum does not place a high premium on environmental education.

Community factors and cultural influences are also important. Littering and environmental pollution are still seen as normal practices in many Indonesian communities (Tekin and Gunes, 2018) [9]. Children have a tendency to emulate these practices when they are raised in an atmosphere that does not care about environmental sustainability or cleanliness. There aren't many excellent examples of how to love and care for the environment from parents or the neighborhood. Environmental character education is still not ingrained in routine household routines.

Children's lack of environmental awareness is sometimes a result of inadequate supporting facilities (Evan *et al*., 2007). Many elementary schools lack separate trash bins for organic and inorganic waste, or adequate sanitation facilities. If children are not provided with an environment that supports good habits, they will struggle to develop an environmentally conscious attitude. A dirty, ungreen, and poorly maintained school environment reinforces the impression that destroying nature is not a major issue.

Another obstacle is the active role that parents and educators play in fostering environmental values (Altin *et al*., 2014) [3]. In schools, teachers could place more emphasis on intellectual subjects than on cultivating a caring character. But fostering environmental consciousness calls for dependable behaviors and role models. Simple tasks like cleaning the yard, planting trees, and sorting trash are frequently neglected by parents. Children are deprived of the chance to immediately understand the value of environmental conservation as a result.

Overall, a number of issues contribute to elementary school students' inadequate environmental awareness. As a result, schools in the districts of Bayung Lencir and Tungkal Jaya are making a variety of attempts to raise students' understanding of environmental issues. To foster an atmosphere that encourages and supports eco-friendly behavior, schools, families, and the community must work together. For children to grow up to be a generation that loves and protects the environment from a young age, environmental education must be created in a contextual, entertaining, and exemplary way. This article examines the various efforts undertaken by SDN Pauh in Tungkal Jaya District and SDN Mendis Jaya in Bayung Lencir District, Musi Banyuasin Regency, in this regard. These two schools were chosen because they receive support from the PHE Jambi Merang Independent School program.

2. Method

A comprehensive and sustainable strategy is required to address Indonesian primary school students' poor level of environmental awareness. Many stakeholders must be involved in the strategies used, particularly the local community, families, and schools. The following are some practical strategies that can be used to raise primary school students' knowledge of environmental issues: 1)A curriculum that incorporates environmental education. 2) Project-based and contextual learning. 3) Building Environmentally Friendly Habits in Schools. 4) Parental and Community Involvement. 5) Using Educational Media and Technology.

Instead of being a stand-alone subject, environmental education ought to be incorporated into a number of other courses, including social studies, science, Indonesian language, and arts and culture. Students might be taught about the water cycle and recycling in science class, for instance, or they might be challenged to create a tale about the value of environmental preservation in Indonesian language class. With this method, kids may learn about environmental challenges from several angles and apply their principles to their everyday lives.

When children are actively engaged in real-world activities, they are more likely to comprehend and retain information (Altin *et al*., 2014) [3]. As a result, environmental education ought to be project-based. For instance, children can be motivated to plant trees, compost organic waste, perform a school waste audit, or establish a classroom garden. These engaging activities promote environmental sensitivity while offering practical and pleasurable experiences.

Schools ought to provide an example for a green and clean environment. One approach is to use the Ministry of Environment's "Adiwiyata" program, which is intended for schools that value and foster an eco-friendly culture. Simple measures like setting up distinct trash cans, scheduling frequent cleaning shifts, and hosting contests for the cleanest classroom are good places for schools to start. Students will develop discipline and environmental responsibility as a result of these behaviors.

Environmental awareness is not only developed in schools but also needs to be reinforced at home. Through initiatives like the "One House, One Tree" program, eco-friendly family seminars, and house cleaning contests, schools can engage parents. By teaching their kids to sort trash, save water, and keep their house and surroundings clean, parents may lead by example. Local communities, such as neighborhood associations (RT/RW) or environmental organizations, can also collaborate with schools to conduct environmental campaigns with children.

Children in elementary school are particularly drawn to technology and visual media. Thus, educators might address environmental topics through educational movies, digital games with an environmental theme, or educational applications. Students can feel proud of their eco-friendly actions and be inspired to keep up their good work by using school social media to promote them (Aliman & Astina, 2019) [2].

By implementing some of these methods consistently and in a fun way, elementary school children's environmental awareness can be significantly improved. Although environmental education takes time, children will develop into a generation that is conscious of and accountable for their surroundings if the proper strategy is used and support is given by all parties.

3. Results and Discussion

Environmental awareness at the elementary school level has been carried out at SDN 02 Suka Jaya which is the initial pilot project for Sekolah Lestari Berdikari program from Pertamina Hulu Energi Jambi Merang. The program was then replicated to other schools such as SDN Pauh, Tungkal Jaya District, and SDN Mendis, Bayung Lencir District, Musi Banyuasin Regency, implemented several programs who collaborated with Jambi University. These programs included providing trash cans, environmental simulations, ecobrick training, awareness campaigns using t-shirts worn by teachers and staff, distributing environmental awareness posters, using tumbler lunch boxes, and planting trees around the school.

Providing trash cans: A simple way to encourage students to dispose of trash properly is by having trash cans close to student activities or classrooms. If trash cans are far away, students might resort to littering. Placing trash cans close to classrooms makes it easier for students to dispose of their trash. Adding a sufficient number of trash cans allows for closer proximity of trash cans to student activities.

Environmental awareness simulation activities involve simple games, including puzzles, which are familiar to students. Games vary, ranging from three to five, with prizes awarded to the winners of each game. This simulation was given to students in grades 3, 4 and 5. The students were enthusiastic about raising awareness with these games.

Ecobrick training was also provided to students. Ecobricks are essentially bricks made from recycled plastic that are inserted into used mineral water bottles (Yustina el al., 2022). These used bottles hold the plastic waste, reducing the impact of plastic. Ecobricks, like bricks, can be used to build simple structures and other structures. At SDN Pauh, ecobricks were used to make the school board sign.

The school also ran a campaign using uniform t-shirts with the simple message "school loves the environment." This

message reminds those who see it to love the environment. By loving the environment, students, teachers, and staff are expected to maintain and improve the school environment, making it more conducive to school activities.

The environmental awareness program also included posters displayed on school walls. The posters were displayed in easily visible locations. The posters were intended to remind everyone who cares about the environment and provide new information on how to maintain the environment (Aldo *et al*, 2024) [1].

SDN Mendis Jaya, with the assistance of PHE Jambi Merang, distributed t-shirts and lunchboxes to all 400 students. The use of tumblers and lunch boxes is expected to reduce plastic waste caused by consuming food and drinks using disposable plastic cups, with tumblers and lunch boxes being reusable (Safitri dan Setiyarini, 2023) [7]. Previously, students purchased snacks and drinks in plastic packaging, which was usually discarded after use.

The school also implemented a green program by planting trees around the school grounds. The trees serve as shade trees, creating a cooler and more conducive school environment. Furthermore, several types of trees are fruit trees, such as mango, sapodilla, and guava, which students and teachers can enjoy while also improving their nutrition.

4. Conclusion

These programs are expected to have both immediate and long-term impacts on the environment. Environmental awareness will improve the quality of the teaching and learning process, not only now but also for the next generation entering school. It will also bring about character changes for graduating students, who will pass these values on to their new environment. These programs also align with the Adiwiyata Program, launched by the government and participated in by the school.

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