

DEVELOPING STUDENTS' MOTIVATION AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCIENCE WITH A NATURE EDUCATION PROJECT

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Abstract

Nature education can be expressed as individual's understanding and realizing nature by making various associations. The purpose of this study is to measure the effects of a science instruction project realized as part of The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (STRCT) 4004 Nature Education and Science Schools Support Program on students' motivation to learn science and their attitudes towards science lesson. Within the scope of the project, a total of 40 8th graders living in rural areas of Samsun, which are difficult to access and which have low economic levels, were taken in a science camp for 9 days. This study was designed as one group pre- post-test experimental research. "Motivation towards Science Learning Scale", which had 23 items, was implemented as pre- and post-test to find out the change in students' motivation to learn science. In order to find out the effect of the instructions in the project on students' attitudes towards science lesson, "Attitudes towards science lesson scale", which included 20 items of 3 likert type, was implemented as pre- and post-test. The statistical analysis of the data was conducted with SPSS 23.0 package program. "Motivation towards Science Learning Scale" and "Attitudes towards science lesson scale" were found to have normal and homogenous distribution since their pre- and post-test results were $p > ,05$. Dependent samples t test, which was conducted to find out the significance of the increase, showed that the change was statistically significant ($t = -2,873, p < 0,05$). Dependent samples t test showed that the change in attitude scores was statistically significant ($t = -3,201, p < 0,05$). The results show that nature education project has a positive effect in increasing students' motivation towards learning science and the science education activities in the project help students to develop positive attitudes towards science lesson.

Keyword: Motivation, attitude, nature education.