

**Can Documentaries Be Used to Enhance Attitudes and Practices of G.C.E. (A/L) Students
Towards Environmental Conservation in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka**

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Abstract

Environmental documentaries have the ability to dramatize environmental issues by enhancing students' attitudes and practices to find solutions for environmental crises. The present study investigated the effectiveness of documentaries to teach Environmental Biology for G.C.E (A/L) Biological science students in Batticaloa Educational zone, Sri Lanka. The objectives of the study are, to identify the level of environmental attitudes and practices; investigate the effectiveness of documentaries to develop positive environmental attitudes and good practices in students. The sample consisted of 80 students from Grade 13 in three selected schools in Batticaloa Educational Zone. The data were gathered using reliability tested structured questionnaires to test attitudes and practices in pre and post-tests. Documentaries were prepared to aid teaching for an experimental group for two lessons in Unit-Eight. The control group was taught using the lecture method. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Mann-Whitney and Wilcoxon signed rank tests, and Pearson correlation in SPSS. This study identified that the mean percentage of attitudes (57.90 ± 1.76), and practices (58.26 ± 1.84) of students were moderate in the pre-test. The mean percentage marks of attitudes ($Z=5.581$, $p=0.000$) and practices ($Z=-5.585$, $p=0.000$) of the experimental group were significantly higher in post-test than pre-test. Positive attitudes and environmentally friendly practices in the experimental groups were significantly higher than the control groups in post-test. The mean gain of positive attitudes ($U=141.0$, $p=0.000$) and mean gain of environmental practices ($U=157.0$, $p=0.000$) of experimental groups were significantly higher than control groups. Environmental attitudes and practices showed high positive correlation in pre and post-tests. The study concluded that usage of documentaries to teach environmental-related lessons at G.C.E. Advanced Level developed positive attitudes and environmentally friendly practices in Grade-13 biological science students in Batticaloa educational zone, Sri Lanka.

Keywords: *Attitudes, documentaries, environmental biology, practices*

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