International perspective of environmental education: an applied research in the Philippines and Japan

Tan, Merle C (National Institute for Science and Mathematics Education Development, The University of the Philippines)  
Fujii, Hiroki (Faculty of Human Life and Environmental Science, Hiroshima Women's University)

The study involves to widen the students' views of environmental problems to international level. It also places a great deal of emphasis on development of scientific inquiry skills to empower students to take action and be able to apply scientific knowledge to real-life issues and problems. The study compared the results of the Philippines and Japan data on following:

1. Do the students recognize environmental problems in their community and the global nature of these problems?
2. Does recognition of the problems generate interest in Environmental Education and change attitude toward the environment?

The study developed four instructional materials focused on global environmental problems: water pollution, forest destruction, air pollution, and waste management. These materials were organized into 3 to 4 lessons and based on scientific inquiry skills by using the experimental approach. The materials were used in the trial in school lessons, science classes in elementary and secondary school, to attain objectives of the study.

The results of the trial and the evaluations through questionnaires and drawing concept-map for the students showed the following:

1. In both countries most students understood close environmental problems in their daily life and the global nature of these problems.
2. In both countries many student developed some positive attitudes towards living things in the environment. But it depends on the contents of instructional material and teachers' knowledge and understanding about the interconnectedness of environmental systems.