

## **Effects of Nature Education on Ecology Culture and Wildlife Awareness of Participants: Sample of IDE Projects**

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**Introduction:** Four Nature education projects (IDE; IDE-2; IDE-3 and IDE-4) were realized in NPA's in Isparta from the years 2007 to 2011 with 308 participants most of them teachers. In this study measurable changes concerning ecological perspective of participants arisen by training courses have been investigated. It was aimed to determine main factors had played role in development of ecology culture and wildlife awareness of participants.

**Material and Methods:** Main material of the study constitutes of survey and interview data in IDE web site (<http://ide.sdu.edu.tr>) that contain accessible documents since the year 2007. In survey, there were questions with multiple choices, some graded and only a few open ended questions. It was used the 4 versioned Likert-type scales. Three different surveys were realized by using form of the questionnaires, the first one at the beginning of the training, the second one at the end and the last one (follow-up survey) after courses. Interviews, on the first and the last day of the courses conducted with the participants. After evaluated the data from interviews qualitatively, results were compared with the ones from quantitative techniques. In assessing applied relationship among the frequencies, priorities and varieties the SPSS program and the Mc excel software were used

**Results:** According to interviews, among training activities which were more effective on raising awareness of natural values were found as respectively observations for wildlife/bird watching (47.1 %), observation for vegetation/flora (25.0), landscape values (15.6%) and others (12.3%) such as geological observation (rocks, 4.3%) or monitoring insects, mainly butterflies and beetles (8.0%). We have called these rates as Activity Efficiency Rates (AER). Answers to closed ended questions of many of the participants in questionnaires' forms and produced numerical values have also been used to confirm AER findings.

**Discussion:** The fact that participants were able to notice main components of the ecosystems - such as fauna and flora as well as landscape- at the end of the courses shows that the courses of IDE have created a considerably awareness concerning Nature. Wildlife and flora were found essential elements in realizing Nature. Participants addressed that the training activities towards to wild animal -like bird watching- help them bringing of awareness of Nature.

A number of patterns of statements from participants in the web site have showed that they could developed their ecology culture by means of observation on geological formation, plants or animals. Learning about especially wild animals and plants together was significantly (72.1%) detected as most affective on the awareness of the participants towards Nature.

**Keywords:** Nature Education, IDE Projects, Ecology Culture, Wildlife Awareness, Mixed Methods, Activity Efficiency Rates.

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