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Strengthening Eco-clubs and Maintaining Eco-schools: Reflections of Students and Teachers

(With Special Reference to Government High Schools of Balasore District, Odisha)

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Abstract

Eco-clubs and eco-school are flagship schemes of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) to aware the community about the importance of environment protection through young children. Quantitatively, this programme is extended to the length and breadth of Indian schools but its impact in bringing environmental sensitisation among individual students, teachers, school and community is not visible and has not been analyzed also. The current study is an attempt to understand the views and suggestions of students and teachers to strengthen eco-clubs and maintain Eco-schools. Study was conducted in four randomly selected government high schools (having eco-clubs) out of seven such government high schools in Balasore district of Odisha. Focused group discussion methods have been used to collect the data. Participants were asked to participate voluntarily in the discussion. Study found that schools were not conducting regular eco-club activities. During discussion teachers expressed mainly about financial support, training, co-ordination with other government department and students highlighted support from teachers, co-ordination among the students, and school infrastructure as major needs to strengthen eco-clubs and maintain Eco schools.

Keywords: *Eco-club, Eco-school, Student, Teacher*

Introduction

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MOEFCC) initiated National Green Corps (NGC) to build cadres of young children to work towards environment conservation and sustainable development. Currently more than 1 lakh eco-clubs are there in the country. It is mentioned in the MOEFCC website that Eco-Club programmes are going beyond and promoting school-society interaction to sensitize society towards environment protection and conservation (MOEFCC website).

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