

A Study on the Awareness of Peri-urban Sri Lankan Youth towards Environmental Protection (A Case Study from Minuwangoda DS Division)

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to evaluate the environmental awareness of peri-urban youth toward environmental protection in the *Minuwangoda* Divisional Secretariat Division (DSD). The study used questionnaires, observations, and focused interviews to collect data from the field. The main respondents were 260 youth including school students, school leavers, university students, and employees. The main data collection instrument was the questionnaire. Data analysis was done as a comparison of self-evaluation results. The study revealed that the environmental awareness of youth in the Minuwangoda DSD is high. All have heard about environmental protection and the sustainable development concept. Moreover, the availability and viability of environmental awareness programs among youth were good. Most of them have participated in Environment Protection Activities (EPA) at home and school. Having no patronage for the EPA and time limitations have become the major reason for the non-participation of youth in the EPA. Problems related to public participation appear to be the major challenge to the youth when implementing EPA. Proper actions should be taken to enhance the participation of youth in the EPA more. Less awareness is not a matter of the existing environmental problems but the attitude of the students. However, it is further recommended to include environmental studies as compulsory education in schools.

Keywords: Environment Protection Activities, Sustainable Development.