

Learning to play natural percussion instruments: an environmental expression for preschool trainee teachers

Abstract

As future preschool educators, trainee teachers need to experience how to connect their children to their natural environment and instill environmental consciousness. This study qualitatively explored the trainee teachers' expressed particular concerns or special interest for the natural environment after participating in the natural percussion instrument-making activities and the ideas of how trainee teachers would incorporate this activity into their future classroom. The sample for this study comprised of 30 preschool trainee teachers. Information was collected through trainee teachers' written reflections, video-recorded observations and written song for a percussion activity. With some natural materials found in the campus compound such as small pieces of wood, sticks, stones, dry branches, small branches, and bamboo, trainee teachers were able to create percussion instrument and sing an environmental song. The findings showed that engaging trainees in percussion activities using natural materials enables him/her to develop a stronger sense of responsibility and stewardship towards taking care of their environment. Trainees also developed ideas of how children should interact with nature and learn through their senses so that they are given the appropriate basis for exploring and learning to appreciate and love nature. The study provided ideas that could help preschool trainee teachers in enhancing the development of children's environmental consciousness in future classroom.