

Improving Students' Critical Thinking Skills Using Methods Natural Based Learning On the Exploration of Papuan Itchy Leaf Plants (*Laportea decumana*) in Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT Improving students' critical thinking skills is one of the important focuses in elementary education. This study aims to describe the application of the Natural Based Learning method in the exploration of Papuan itchy leaf plants (*Laportea decumana*) in order to improve the critical thinking skills of elementary school students. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection techniques in the form of observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study indicate that the application of Natural Based Learning encourages students to actively observe, analyze, evaluate, and draw conclusions based on real observation data in the natural environment. Although there are several challenges, such as differences in exploration abilities, lack of observation and exploration skills, motivation and focus on learning and environmental factors. Students show enthusiasm, high curiosity, and a significant increase in critical thinking skills. Thus, Natural Based Learning has proven effective in developing students' critical thinking skills while fostering a love for the environment from an early age.

Keywords: Natural Based Learning, Critical Thinking, Papuan Itchy Leaf

108 Introduction

Methods that can be used to improve critical thinking skills are Natural Based Learning, namely a learning approach based on direct experience in nature. This method encourages students to actively explore the surrounding environment, make observations, and draw conclusions based on their own findings. Method Natural Based Learning as an innovative approach that connects learning with the natural environment around students.

One of the interesting local potentials to be explored in nature-based learning in Papua is the itchy leaf plant (*Laportea decumana*). This plant is widely known by the Papuan people because of its properties and unique characteristics, but has not been widely used as a scientific learning medium at the elementary school level.

The aim of this research is to examine how the method Natural Based Learning can improve students' critical thinking skills through exploration activities of the Papua itchy leaf plant in elementary schools.

Based on previous data, the researcher wrote an article about improving students' critical thinking skills through methods Natural Based Learning in the exploration of Papuan itchy leaf plants (*Laportea decumana*) in elementary schools, with problem formulation on how to

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implement, challenges and student responses to the method Natural Based Learning in the exploration of itchy leaves (*Laportea decumana*) to improve students' critical thinking skills in elementary schools

109 Literature Review

Utilizing the surrounding environment as a learning space that provides an interesting and enjoyable atmosphere will have a positive impact on student learning outcomes [1]. One of the benefits of nature-based learning is that children will understand things more easily if they learn from real objects [2]. Critical thinking skills are the ability possessed by individuals to analyze and solve problems seen from the gap between reality and truth [3]. The concept of nature-based education, known as back to nature school triggered by Lighthart by showing the education model called this real item [4]. Itchy leaf plants (*Laportea decumana*) is used by the people of Maluku and Papua, including as medicine pain relief, stiffness or aches, headaches, stomachaches, muscle aches, joints and bruises [5]

110 Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative paradigm with a phenomenological approach to understand the experiences and development of students' critical thinking skills. Research focuses on aspects of understanding field phenomena, critical thinking skills and connecting knowledge with everyday life. Data collection techniques are observation, discussion, documentation and critical thinking understanding tests. Data analysis uses qualitative data analysis methods.

111 Result and Discussion

Method implementation Natural Based Learning in the exploration of itchy leaves (*Laportea decumana*) starting with an introduction to plants, including their characteristics, habitat and benefits. Next, students carry out field exploration to carry out observations and documentation. The results of the observations are brought to the class for group discussion and analysis of their findings. After that, process and present the results in the form of a report or presentation. The activity closes with reflection and evaluation to assess understanding and the learning process.



Figure 6: Students are observing itchy leaf plants (*Laportea decumana*)

The challenge faced in implementing this method is differences in exploration abilities, because not all students have the same readiness and courage in making observations in the field. Besides that, the lack of observation and exploration skills is also an obstacle, as can be seen from the way students record data which is still less thorough and less in-depth. Motivation

and focus on learning also varies, with some students appearing less enthusiastic or easily distracted. Then environmental factors such as weather and location conditions influence the effectiveness of learning activities outside the classroom.

Student responses in implementing this method show increased critical thinking through various responses. Cognitive responses can be seen from increased curiosity and the ability to connect knowledge with real experience. The affective response is reflected in the enthusiasm of students who care about the environment and understand the role of each organism in the ecosystem. Psychomotor responses are demonstrated through students' skills in observing, recording and documenting the results of observations. Meanwhile, indicators of increased critical thinking can be seen from students' ability to analyze cause and effect relationships, distinguish facts from assumptions, and compare the effects of itchy leaves with other plants around them.

112 Conclusion

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the application of the method Natural Based Learning in the exploration of Papuan itchy leaves (*Laportea decumana*) effective in improving critical thinking skills. Students become more active in observing, analyzing and drawing conclusions from phenomena they encounter directly. There are challenges faced such as differences in exploration abilities, lack of observation skills, motivation and focus on learning as well as environmental factors. Student responses showed enthusiasm, high curiosity, and great interest in nature-based learning. Sharper critical thinking skills, analyzing cause-effect relationships and comparing phenomena found in the field.

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