

Knowing the Unknown!

One Day Orientation Program for School Students of Poorna Learning Center, Bangalore



Organized by
TransDisciplinary University, Bangalore (TDU)
74/2, Jarakbande Kaval, Via Yelahanka
Attur P.O. , Bangalore – 560106, Karnataka, India
Ph: 91 80 28568000

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Introduction

Poorna aims at developing intellectual ability, values of compassion, social sensitivity, humility, respect for each other, respect for the earth and all that she offers, adaptability, joyfulness, curiosity for how and why things happen and a quest for excellence in whatever children do.

The students of Poorna had a day out on 8th August 2017, at The TransDisciplinary University, Bangalore (TDU). The focus was to apprise them in basics of biodiversity, conservation and primary health care to organize a one-day orientation program for the school children to incorporate biodiversity and uses of medicinal plants for primary health care.

Session Details:

Dr. M. Abdul Kareem, Associate Professor and Course Coordinator gave an overview of the activities of TDU and briefed the participants on the schedule of the program.

Session 1: Identification and Morphology of flowering plants

This session saw students explore the ethno-medicinal garden. The garden is established under the Centre of Excellence project of Govt of India, which showcases the plant diversity and meant for educating the student community. The garden harbors around 1200 medicinal plants dotted by rare and endangered species. Many of the plants have been assembled under 13 themes representing its usage for primary health care. Ms. Soumyashree N., Research Fellow, TDU taught the basics of taxonomy and morphology to the students as part of the field visit to the garden. They were asked to observe special characters of leaf, flower, branching and smell/aroma. She also explained about historic events associated with some of the plants and plant animal interactions. Students learned to identify the plants through specific characters and appreciate its uniqueness.



Session 2: **Herbarium, Plant Systematics, Anatomy**

Dr. Noorunnissa Begum gave hands on training on plant anatomy. She demonstrated the preparation of anatomy slides by taking sections of a dicot and a monocot stem and staining technique. Students were invited to the stage to observe the specimen through the microscope and examine the xylem, phloem, epidermis, & cortex. The students were then asked to form a group of five each and prepare similar slides. She also played the video on Herbarium techniques and explained the importance of preparation of herbarium by showing few herbarium sheets.



Session 3: **Medicinal plant uses and Vermicomposting**

Post lunch the participants visited Ethnomedicinal nursery at TDU campus, It has over 450 species of medicinal plants, the nursery has mist chambers for propagation and shade houses with misting facility for special indoor plants. Ms. Nandini, Consultant, TDU explained them about the propagation and nursery techniques of some of the medicinal plants which are essential for sustenance of such species. She highlighted that each species has a unique nursery and propagation technique. She also taught how to identify plants by touch, sense of smell. She also showed participants the vermicomposting pit and demonstrated the preparation of compost by using recycle items.



Session 4: **Basics of Biodiversity**

This session focused on the conservation of nature, Mr. Santosh from CCE conducted activity to make students understand how to conserve nature. They conducted simple activity with the help of stick and rope, told students to balance it. With this they conveyed message to protect our environment to avoid natural calamities.



Feedback

Impact assessment questioner was given to the students at the end of the program; students conveyed that all the sessions were more educative. They highlighted the following

- They learnt the method to identify plants by their uniqueness and their medicinal uses.
- They understood fairly well the basics of taxonomy and anatomy and the need for conservation of the threatened species

Follow up:

- They are planning to make more visits with other batch of students
- Develop their school garden with more medicinal plant species.

List of Faculty

1. Dr. M. Abdul Kareem, Associate Professor and Course co-ordinator, TDU
2. Dr. Noorunnissa Begum, Associate Professor, TDU
3. Mr. Santosh, South Head, CEE

4. Ms. Nandini D., Consultant, TDU
5. Ms. Soumyashree N., Research Fellow, TDU
6. Ms. Anu V., Senior Research Fellow, TDU
7. Ms. Amrita G., Research Fellow, TDU

List of Participants

SI. No.	Name of the Participants
1.	Malhar
2.	Chinua
3.	Adya
4.	Sarika
5.	Sahana R.
6.	Saira
7.	Vamshi
8.	Uday
9.	Pruthvi
10.	Madhavan
11.	Dhananjay
12.	Tanish
13.	Saarang
14.	Nikhil

15.	Sidharth
16.	Shravan
17.	Sreeja
18.	Vasantha
19.	Jitya
20.	Lakshmi
21.	Amulya
22.	Mohana
23.	Khushi
24.	Ritika
25.	Tanvi
26.	Nikita