

**CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY
EDUCATION IN JUNIOR SECONDARY SCIENCE EDUCATION IN
WESTERN PROVINCE, SRI LANKA**

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Environmental Sustainability (ES) has become an important focus of education in response to growing global environmental concerns and the need to foster environmentally responsible behaviors among students. Science education provides an important context for integrating ES into school learning. Although sustainability themes are included in the Sri Lankan school science curriculum, limited attention has been given to the challenges teachers face in implementing ES-based teaching and learning. Therefore, this study examined teachers' perceptions of the availability of institutional and professional support, and the barriers to effectively integrating ES into science pedagogy in the junior secondary classrooms. A quantitative descriptive survey design was used to collect and analyze data from 328 junior secondary science teachers in government schools in the Western Province. The findings identified several key barriers to integrating ES into science teaching. Only 13% (42) of participating teachers reported receiving training to promote ES through science pedagogy. Among the reported sources of training, 8 teachers identified national-level training, while 14, 17, and 9 teachers reported school-level, provincial-level, and private sector training, respectively. Moreover, 96% of teachers perceived parental involvement in promoting students' ES competencies as poor. These findings highlight the need to expand access to ES-related teacher training, strengthen the quality and availability of professional development opportunities and institutional support, and enhance parental involvement in developing students' ES competencies.

Keywords: Environmental sustainability, Science education, Teacher development