

## Promoting Indirect Academic Outcomes and Future Aspirations via Food and Garden Activities

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Students face challenge of dissonance between content taught and application to real life which results in students' low motivation to learn, loss of curiosity, withdrawn attention, and may lead to dropping out of school. Food and garden activities offer contextualized hands-on experiences that allow students to use their senses to foster their learning such as tasting, cooking, planning for planting, and caring for plants, which encourages positive indirect academic outcomes. In addition, the activities link to careers in food and agriculture industries. This study compared two groups of middle school students: half of which did not participate or participated in low numbers of food and garden activities (0-4) and another half in high numbers (5-9). There were 112 students who completed the questionnaire at the end of semester. Results indicated that students who participated in the high numbers of food and garden activities reported to have higher intrinsic motivation, autonomy, and competence, as well as feel more engaged in the activities. In terms of future aspirations, the students participating in high numbers of activities also reported to be more engaged in school, more motivated to continue their education, more interested in careers in agriculture, and more inclined to entering careers in agriculture than those participating in low numbers of activities. The results suggested to highly recommend more use of food and garden activities to promote intrinsic motivation, school engagement, future educational motivation, and agricultural career aspirations among middle