

DO WE NEED ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND THINKING WITH LASTING EFFECTS?

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Abstract

Sustainable development is a pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for future generations to come. The term was used by the Brundtland Commission, which coined what has become the most often-quoted definition of sustainable development as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The ecologic concerns and the environment problems go beyond the state borders, just like money and information. The basic ecologic necessities – for example the protection of Earth's atmosphere, ocean and world's forestry – cannot be satisfied any longer by political measures and national laws. They, as I consider, can not be tackled as divergent issues, but ask for conjugate actions on cross-national, European and even world scale

In the article I proposed to present, the research resulted from a case study, related to students and citizens interest in general to environmental education.

This study is based on a standard questionnaire comprising 11 questions and it was developed with the help of the students from, Cluj, Sighet, Bistrita, Zalau, second year students at Geography of Tourism.

The questionnaire was applied to different categories of people: students, doctors, engineers, artisans, domestic individuals, officials, retirees etc.

The results showed that is a great desire to do more for the environment and education but the motivation and involvement is missing. Lacks of financial resources are seen only as a sideline.

Key words: ethics, moral engagement, education, awareness.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental education is a necessity of the modern society, which results also from the carrying out questionnaire questioning (Borries B., 1990). These were made and thought through with the help of the second year students in Geography of Tourism from the extension of the Geography of Tourism Babes-Bolyai University in localities: Cluj, Sighet, Bistrita, Zalau, in the period April to June 2011.

The number of the questioned persons is 433.

If environmental education in Germany is considered an indispensable work, emerged as a subject since 1970, in Romania, unfortunately we are still in the early phase.

But we must also recognize that since the academic year 2009-2010, the "Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Faculty of Psychology and Sciences of Education, Department of Exact Sciences has introduced the optional field discipline Environmental Education.

Implementation of the problem

The purpose of this test, questionnaire it was to see in what measure the population is interested in environmental education, to be introduced as a course even facultative, in universities and schools.

For this, we chose 11 questions that we have developed with the students from the second year at Tourism. In addition, we tried to interrogate different people of different age categories, from four cities: Cluj, Sighetul Marmatiei, Bistrita, Zalau.

We tried through this questionnaire to find out why certain problems in Romania are as they are and who should be their main issue?

That is to discover the essence, if the population is adequately educated enough for the environment? If there is an interest for such lesser-known form of education in Romania? In addition, especially to see which is the main cause of lack of involvement of citizens on environmental issues (Sabo H. and Domocos M., 2009)?

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The idea of carrying out this questionnaire was born under the seminar hour from four campuses: Cluj, Sighet, Bistrita, Zalau, discussing environmental problems, Man-Nature-Environment. Certainly, the interest in this subject was great, considering the fact that the students are from the tourism geography and the interest in nature, the environment is much higher than at other categories of students.

The questions were designed together with students from a wide range of possible topics for discussion on environmental protection. The questions presented in the questionnaire were relatively simple, non-complicated.

The age of the questioned people are between 19 - 65 years and their number is 433 people. The students from Sighet extension question a number of 105 persons, the students from Bistrita extension interviewed 75 peoples and those from Zalau 53 people and from Cluj Napoca 200 peoples.

The categories of persons questioned are diverse. They include students, sales, drivers, engineers, doctors, teachers, sales agents, workers, manufacturers, hairdressers, waiters, managers etc. until retirement.

From the above statement, we can distinguish four broad categories from the questioned people:

- those who study, teach
- qualified individuals with higher education
- unqualified persons or non-educated
- retired, elderly people.

The language used is one easily understood, familiar. This show the same time, indirectly how much such protection and environmental

education needs interdisciplinary (individual, school, political, social) (Sabo H. and Mac I., 2008).

The questionnaire consists of the following questions:

1 - Are you interested in environmental protection?

Yes No

2 - Do you think there are suitably qualified teachers to teach environmental protection?

Yes No

3 - Do you think there is involvement like "own initiative?"

Yes No

4 - How do you find the report, cooperation between the generations?

Low Medium High

5 - You like to get involved in an environmental political party?

Yes No

6 - Do you think you are consistent, or in lack of interest in environmental actions?

Consistent Lack of interest

7 - How do you prefer the ecological courses: theory, theory, and practice?

Theory Theory and Practice

8 - Would you buy a product more expensive but environmentally friendly?

Yes No

9 - Are you willing to separate the waste properly? (Paper, glass, plastic ...?)

Yes No (requires too much time)

10 - Do you think that we will be like the other countries of Western Europe in terms of environmental protection, order, cleanliness?

Yes No

11 - Why?

-takes time

-requires the involvement

-requires money

-requires change in attitude and involvement of each

Male/Female, occupation....., age, county.....

The results of this questionnaire are very interesting although they were made in three different centers in various age categories and skills.

It is noted in most cases an almost perfect coincidence in the feedback on.

Thus:

- At the first question - 99,9% responded that they are interested in environmental protection. Therefore, it is notable that in our country over environmental concerns, sustainable development involves various categories of persons and tends to have a magnitude greater than ever. This does not prove a trend, but a necessity of modern society.

- At the second question 80% considered that there are suitably qualified teachers to teach this material and only 20% believed that they do not exist and must be created, qualified. Here comes the need to qualify teachers related to this matter (as in Germany-Ausbildung / Fortbildung), especially to continue their training. I mean to be in step with current market requirements.

- At the third question - 95% believe that such involvement as "own initiative" is lacking because "we can do nothing". This resignation has to be exceeded and to have the each of us the courage to express ourselves freely and openly what "hurts us". It is added and the need to act, to change something, not only to make promises.

- At the fourth question - 97% believed that cooperation between generations is low. Young people are considered mature generation often misunderstood and ignored. I think it is an old problem, in which both sides should give up and work together, because ultimately it is the "new", for our benefit as a whole, not individually.

- At question five - 95% do not want to get involved politically, is remarked in this sense a disappointment of what is happening politically. Not wanting to be politically, but I have to give justice to these people for that, yet policy in Romania is very much reduced, to much political propaganda and too little facts and from these results the disappointment of citizens.

- To question six - 95% believe that they should be consistent in protecting the environment. Here, I believe that the next generation will have lot of work on environmental education of the population. To become aware of the need that each of us must do something-to achieve a change minds, concepts, life policies....

- To question seven - 99.9% want a union of theory with practice, not only to say but also to do something concrete. Without practice, the theory has no value, remains at the stage of writing, unknown or partially known. Because only by doing something we are able to make necessary changes in our country.

- To question eight - 90% want to buy an environmental friendly product even if it is more expensive. Many of them desire to protect their regional products. Unfortunately, in November, the company focuses on trade, except for some regional produce - so unfortunate. In the future, we

will have to protect much more the regional products and to reduce imports of any kind.

- To question nine - 99.9% would agree to separate their garbage (to make selective recycling) but is largely absentee an appropriate administrative organization. If there were an adequate education of the population, coupled with a clarification of a corresponding administrative offer (the existence of waste bin for selective separation), I am sure that people would be willing to do so practically.

- To question number ten - 98% that we will not recently reached other countries in Western Europe on environmental protection. Central reasons are related primarily to lack of education, involvement, political, financial. We are increasingly, but not know how!

- The last question - 97% see these issues as a major cause of need for change in attitude and involvement of everyone. Most consider it very difficult to change, requiring time. Yes, it is true, but we must start somewhere and sometime, otherwise we will remain only in the discussion phase, opportunities, theory ...

As is clear from these tests, the vast majority of those interviewed regardless of age and concerns considered that the main problem encountered in our country would be a lack of education, a need to change mentalities, much more priority than the lack of financial resources!

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

People should be prepared and open to major changes for “a joint voluntary”, “a better future”, preserve and teach some new generation!

However, there is a major problem. It takes cooperation between generations. Precisely because environmental education is primarily a social task; starting from the family bosom, continue and stress in school, but the social system is the same everyday (Sabo H., 2011)!

The school attribute in this is major, because of where we find that conscience, moral education in the family will have to start at school and then through to raise children and adults.

Of course, financial resources are a problem but not decisive. For as long as we do not want to get involved, to do anything for the welfare and environment, our present financial resources will not produce major changes.

In addition, here comes the decisive role of education, interdisciplinary, political involvement, etc...

It was time to stop and see:

- where we got?

- how bad we produced to nature in which we live?

- how we want to live?

CONCLUSIONS

The environmental education should be reformed. The starting points will not only need some professional work, but also the man's possibility to work with nature and to take into account the human needs and desires.

Here comes the "sustainability". In addition to the traditional form that allows observing the "endangered" environment is required in the field a large number of additions.

As long as we all will not change, we become active, and we really want to change something... we fail to change something in the country in education.

A school reform is necessary. A personal involvement even at the political level is essential. Moreover, morality, where there will be formed, educated by properly qualified teachers in this regard.

We can produce and environmental education as long as this is required by society! Nevertheless, this must involve us all, as results from conducting this survey. It is not emancipation but to live with the needs required by the Actual Time. People should be available to do something, but HOW?

The answer we will find in ourselves, in our education in our moral, but also in the social environment Estate School!

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