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**ADULT EDUCATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

**BACHELOR'S WORK**

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**Abstract**

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The aim of the Thesis is primarily a demonstration of the importance of the need to protect the environment througt environmental education of adults, analysis and mapping problems of adult education to environmental protection, its status and possition in the present and the questions of its solution.

Bachelor Thesis highlights the need of education of environmental protection from andragogic perspective, analyzing the possibility of environmental adult education via school, extracurricular and recreational training.

The first part focuses on the representation of people behaviour in the context of ecological problems of the environment, to explain the relationship between human and environment and i tis also dedicating to key words. The second part focuses on objectives, principles, methods of environmental education of adults. The third part of the presentated thesis is devoted to the current asspect of environmental education at colleges and universities in Slovakia and abroad, it shows the possibility of spending sparetime environmentally demonstrate the need of environmental education in the workplace. The last part of the thesis focuses on the institutionalization, legislative provision and protecting the environment, and finally shows the international cooperation in this area.

Key words: Environment, environmental education, training, adult education, values, sustainable development, schol, extraculicular, leisure education, environmental consciousness.

Foreword

The issue of adult education to environmental protection is relatively little elaborated in contemporal literature. Although there are many literature discussing environmental issues, only a small number of monographs, periodicals and books view the andragogic site. For this reason, we consider the elaboration of this topic as crucial and beneficial to society.

The thesis will mainly highlights the importance of the need of environmental protection, we will analyze and map the problems of adult environmental education, its status and position in the present issu and try to find appropriate solution.

The issue of adult education to environmental protection will be analyzed in andragogic terms , we will propose new solutions for the future, indicate the possibility of acquiring knowledge and skills from the field and then we tent to use them in real life.

We hope we can fulfill the vision and expectations of readers of this thesis.

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Introduction

Environmental protection is an issue that affects all of us, so we would not be careless. Nowdays people set the high demands on themselves, their lifestyles, so therefore they burden the planet Earth and cause global environmental problems. The environment we live in people will leave to the future generations, and therefore we should consider how to treat it and realize the need of its protection.

There are several alternatives for solving global environmental problems. From the andragogic aspect the education is the best form to ensure effective and lasting positive change in environmental protection.

The aim of the Thesis is primarily a demonstration of the importance of the need to protect the environment througt environmental education of adults, analysis and mapping problems of adult education to environmental protection, its status and possition in the present and the questions of its solution.

When writing this bachelor thesis we are working with many literature, so we rely on the views of scientists and experts who have years of experience in this field.

In each chapter we will analyze and compare the opinions of environmental experts, and then comment them, so than the reader will have the opportunity to become familiar with a wide range of facts, information and knowledge after reading, which will lead to realize the importance of the problem andthe need of its solution and to critical thinking, and finally to his personal activation. The adult environmental education will be analyzed in andragogic terms, we will propose new solutions for the future, indicate the possibility of acquiring knowledge and skills from the field and then use them in real life.

The first chapter is devoted to theoretical issues of environment and summing up the most basic concepts related to this issue.

In the second chapter the reader will have the opportunity to become familiar with the problems of adult environmental education, which is one of the subsystems of education of adults. In this chapter we will describe objectives, methods, principles of environmental education of adults and suggest necessary professional and personal characteristics of the teacher / lecturer in environmental education.

The third chapter analyzes the current situation of environmental education in the schools (formal) and extracurricular interest education (non-frormal).

The last chapter deals with institutionalization, we show a survey of legislative for the protection of the environment as well as international cooperation in the field of environmental care.

**II. Environmental issues and theoretical approaches**

The entry of mankind into the 21st century deepen and exacerbate global environmental problems. The man by its behaviour continuously contributes to environmental degradation. People, by fulfilling their needs disregard nature. They deforest, drainage basins, use too much heat and energy, manufacture, transportat. And in general they live a very consumeristic lives which destroyes flora, fauna, soil, air, and the whole environment around us.

Human relentless convenience, greed and lack of interest lead to various catastrophic scenarios such as: water pollution, loss of oxygen, global warming, increased waste, animal extinction, and overpopulation, which leads to disruption of ecosystems and explosion population and other global problems. The mankind is close to the situations where it is no longer allowed to do further missteps with impunity. (Ďurčík, 1998)

The place of human beings, unlike the past, has changed a lot because they are not a passive elements of nature, but active creatures that transform the environment for their comfort. Therefore the man should be an active factor. He should take part in the search for ways and approachces how to deal with the global issues. "How should one proceed to understand, consequences of their current and future actions?" (Ďurčík, 1998, 89.) . The decisive factor in resolving current global problems must be the educational process. Although this factor is not new absolutely, i tis still not used sufficiently. (Ďurčík, 1998)

In the last few decades, the environment is the target of all social aspects, although not always with equal prominence. At first it was just about conservation, nowdays the conservation interests are much wider. Today we must protect the conditions of life and human being.

It is not given enough attention to the problem of environmental protection , or people simply do not realize the full significance of alarming signal e.g. damaged environment, endangered species, poor people, illnesses,etc.

We consider this situation to be not acceptable, which is required to repair by environmental education. Therefore, there is an alarming need for environmental education focused on environmental protection for all people, from preschool age to late adulthood. Since this work is written under the auspices of Comenius University, Department of Andragogy, we will focus on education and adult education.

1.1 Definition of key terms

In this bachelor thesis we have addressed the issue of adult education to environmental protection, and therefore it is necessary to use a various technical terms from this field. For better understanding the technical terms are defined and explained. Each of the expressions contains of several definitions from different authors, how we pointed out that a single definition of terms rarely exists.

**• Environmental Science** – The basis of words comes from English word environment - environment, environment. So it can be seen that there is no exact equivalent term in Slovakia. It is a complex environmental science that deals with environmental issues, but also specify the environment of human society, including social environment. It is based on knowledge of science of ecology. These two fields are not identical, as it is often misused in practice. Environmental aspects can be divided into teaching systematically and appropriately. (Kminiak, 2003)

• The Environmental Academy (2000) Environmental Science. Uses knowledge of science of ecology, examines the human impact on ecosystems, deals with pollution prevention, remedy the damage and preventing unwanted interference. Environmental Science also includes conservation, monitoring of environmental media, use of natural resources, energy management, health care, etc. of the human population. It is the science of the human environment, or technology of human environment.

**• Environmental education** - Vincíková (1998) defines environmental education as education of the individual whose value system enables him to act wisely and sensitively to the nature and protect the biodiversity in all its forms. The man should to be willing to take responsibility for their actions and accept humility as a way of life and environment.

• According to Environmental Academy (November 2000) is an environmental education activity involving a wide spectrum of contents, methodological and didactic knowledges of various science and social science disciplines. It is a training of such individual, that value system which allows him to act wisely and sensitively to the biodiversity in all its forms. He would feel with nature and living creatures, and he would willingly accept responsibility for his conduct as a way of life and environment.

• The concept of environmental education is like the previous concept derived from English word environment - environment, environment. Understanding of the concept is broader in the theory of education. The education is a part of human environment. There should be standing constantly developing man at the end of the process of environmental education: a professional clever man with ethical and aesthetic profile, human caring, kind, sensitive, tolerant, responsible, with respect to all life. (Hilbert, In Gullayová, 2007)

• **Education** - is a system of coordinated activities, developing human personality, its capabilities and features to be ready to handle tasks in their individual lives and integrate into society. Education is also the main component of socialization. I tis a deliberate action on the personality of the individual to achieve changes in various components of personality. (Leachate, 2000)

• Education – According to Mužík (2004) iis a organized and deliberate process of knowledge acquisition, creation and development of skills and abilities as well as creating and shaping attitudes and moral traits, realized mainly through schooling. It's set among educators and students, or participants of the education.

• **Ecology,** "Ecology is the science which examine relations between living organisms and their surroundings. It also explore relations between living organisms." (Dvorak et al., 1997, p. 33).

• The Kminiaka (2003) Ecology is biological science which deals with relationships between organisms and the relationships between each organism and environment.

• Environment - "is everything that creates natural conditions for the existence of organisms, including humans." (Kminiak, 2003, p 43).

**II. Environmental adult education as part of the learning environment**

Today, the term "adult education to environmental protection" is replaced by a newer term, environmental adult education.

However, in the literature occurs another term often used as equivalent to the previous mentioned concepts. We are talking about the tem Ecological education. Although the concepts of environmental education/training and environmental ecological education/ training are not full synonyms according to some authors, although this terms are often used as synonyms the literature. Based on this fact we will use tham as a synonyms in this bachelor thesis.

For better understanding we will explain what environmental education means. Ecological Education (Gáborová, 1991) is understood as a deliberate preparing man to the positive transformation of the environment in accordance with the rules of natural and social life.

Ecology is the science exploring the relationships between organisms and their environment. A. Máchal (1996) points out that the problem couses the concept of " environmental education", replacing the formerly used term "education to care for the environment." Ecology is the scientific fields, but environmental education greatly exceeds its framework. Organic modifier in this case receives a new and broader content.

Horná (1996) sees environmental education as the formation of a man to the responsible behaviour to the environment, eco-friendly lifestyle and actions.

 "It's a purposeful social effort to educate citizens with adequate amount of knowledge, attitudes and behaviors aimed to creating and protecting the environment." (Holečko, 1983, p. 62)

**1.2 The objectives of environmental education of adults**

There are many different definition of the main goals of environmental education of adults. However, the objectives of environmental education of adults in the works of various authors differ to some extent, the basic idea remains the same. We will see several different definitions of environmental education goals in this chapter, which are mostly found in the literature.

F. Cube and V. Stroch (1988) suggest that the most fundamental and general objectives of environmental education is education for survival.

According to M. Kminiaka (1997) the education and dissemination of good environmental awareness, should be the creation of positive approachces and interests to ensure a healthy human existence. But this requires further development of knowledge and skills, a system of cognitive and practical skills to create the environment, as well as advanced system of environmental needs, motives and interests.

The aim of environmental education is acquiring comprehensive knowledgeof the environment, which are based on different basic skills and knowledge of the environment. Another of their task is to move the makind towards the harmony of: feeling, thinking and responsible behavior to- the external environment, living organisms, other people and creating one's own positive lifestyle.

The result of the process of environmental education and adult education is defined as environmental knowledge. According toEnvironmental Academy (2000) we learn that this term means knowledges and informations of the current state of nature, on environmental trends and developments, but also the thought, habits and traditions relating to environmental issues. It can be found also other definitions in the literature.

Some authors consider **ecological literacy**/environmental literacy to be a result of adult education, which consist of acquired knowledge and skills, research, critical thinking, problem solving and making decision. A Ecologicclly literate person is able to use gained knowladges to the future study, work, leisure or just applicate it to his daily life.

In connection with this problem it can be also found in the literature the concept of **environmental awareness** by J. Pacl (1983) which he defines as the ability to "encourage individual and collective consciousness of the necessity of protecting the environment." (Pacl et al., 1983, 25). The environmental awareness should be tougtht in a childhood, and than should continuthrougth teenage age, adulthood and seniority. People should incorporate it into all areas of our existence (through the childcourts, schools, parks, housing, recreational facilities, offices) to the human spirit and skill. In it are trapped emotions, normative orientation and structure of values ​​and readiness to conduct, which tend to be the current situation in the environment as unsustainable.

 Z. Gallayová, (2007) alleges that the main purpose of adult education is to teach pupils, students and adults to think, lead to desist from memorizing terms, and lead them to understanding the links between man and his environment. This should be implemented from preschool through, through compulsory education, high school to late adulthood.

 Continuity of many factors (love, worship, friendship to nature, and knowladges about environment) should lead to an individual **environmental behavior**, which, according to Environmental Academy (2000), which can be is described as positive behavior in everyday situations, which does not destroy environment. The nature does not determine what is in harmony with the environment and what is harmful to environment, it is the result of cultural conventions. only other members of a cultural circle can confirm whether the behavior of individuals is nature-friendly or not.

The optimal relationship to the environment should be producesed via environmental education in the families, schools and further refresher training. (Kminiak, 1997). Bringing up in the family should provide to a child foundation to develop moral and ethical relationship to nature and to prepare the child to learn the values ​​of nature and the natural desire to protect her. The school should provide education on the formal level, througt the use of appropriate teaching methods, procedures, forms and principles to leave at the man long-term effect and lead him to the further knowledge and training in this area. The lifelong learning in this area may include a variety of environmental courses, projects, environmental minima after-school programs, field trips etc.

**2.2 Principles of environmental education of adults**

There are often used concepts as teaching principles and didactic principles in the literature. speaking about the environmental adult education. Principles are the most general, or the most basic requirements that are applied to all aspects of the teaching process. The principles of environmental education are the pedagogical- psychological principles that underlie the content, methods and forms of environmental education.

To achieve the highest educational success, according to E. Petláka (1997) it is important to follow these principles:

• **The principle of awareness and activity** - pupils, students and adult students should access to learning consciously and have an active attitude, which helps them to gain new knowledge, skills and habits. Based on this principle, they should be able to create a positive attitude toward learning.

• **The principle of tablature** - expresses the requirement that pupil acquires new knowledge, competencies, skills and habits by using particular senses. The choice of the types of illustration depends on the students age, the nature of the curriculum subject, and finally on stage of school subject.

• **The principle of proportionality** – During the realization of subjects, it is very important to heed the request, that the content, scope of the curriculum and methods were communicated adequately to students with regard to their biological and psychological abilities. This process is called the transformation of knowledge of the disciplines dealing with environmental content in education. This principle can be realized by adequately trained teacher, or graduate of Andragogy with using documents such as curriculum. The curriculum is according to B. Slováková (2000), a document that defines the scope and content of education. It specifies the study subjects according to their sequence of classes, number of lectures, seminars, or trainings. The structure of objects is carried out in accordance to the set goals of education. The curriculum depends on form, method, means the overall ideological orientation of teaching, school goals and concept of learning objects. According to the curriculum, the study curriculum is divided into classes, classes, groups, levels and subjects.

• Another **principle** is **sustainability** - expresses the requirement that the educated pupils remember the knowladge and would be able to use it effectitively when necessary. Motivation, adequate systematic interpretation of the curriculum, creative work, verification of knowledge is very important by improving the durability of knowledge in memory.

• **The principle of consistency** - expresses the requirement of logically organized training system curriculum. Teacher/trainer teachces and controls the study process, so the students acquire subject matter in a coherent logical system.

The primary and secondary schools currently provide environmental education not in the subject, but environmental kowladge ans skills are given in many different subject, this is called environmental minimum. Its aim is to develop a personal website, which empower it to protect the environment. Therefore the preparation of future teachers should be large, deep and sophisticated, because i tis very imprrtant for ecological and environmental educational needs of each department.We can observe the transform of environmental sciences in the content of education in the curriculum of courses in the curriculum subjects.

**3.2 The personality of the teacher / lecturer of environmental education of adults**

The teachers personality has a special impact on children, pupils, students and the teacher or adult, while education in schol. The experience from schools shows that new methodologies are not enough in environmental education, but also the ethical approach should be managed to reach a new value system, giving priority to moral values ​​and health.

What should be the teacher / lecturer who will successfully shape and cultivate human relationship to the environment, educate and educate environmentally literate person who understands and respects the laws of nature, civilization and culture with a certain level of ethical and aesthetic profile like? The answer to this question is looking for Horká (2001), when professional competence- ability to successfully complete the implementation of the profession, includs knowledge, skills, attitudes, values ​​and personal characteristics. Lectors increasing responsibility is related to the promotion of other values, ​​than those,which are characteristic for the consum public.

His mission is to help students to clarify, to understand, to need, to honor, love and create values. In its discretion should not be lack of the ofunderstanding and respecting the history and present, he should organize his own work, organizing projects, invent new solutions and take responsibility. A teacher or lecturer should be able to speak several languages, to establish and maintain relationships, work in teams, resolve conflicts and to adapt to various changes.

 The personal characteristics of the teacher / lecturer of environmental education should not miss features such as: kindness, sensitivity, tolerance, responsibility, empathy and interest in the subject, not just the workplace but also in his personal life. The teachers teaching environmentally oriented subjects, whether in formal or informal learning should be a idol for their students. He should be able to enforce his views, to correctly interpret ecological behavior , give practical advises, which are easily applicable to everyday life, and finally he should increase student motivation for learning and require environmental actionfrom student not only in the classroom but also beyond.

**4.2 Methods in environmental education of adults**

The teaching methods of adults have an irreplaceable use nn the process of environmental education. Methods are certain procedures that teacher uses, and also serve as a means of stimulating adult learner and leads him to a destination, which makes learning process more efficient.

In the book by J. Mužík (1998) we read that the teacher in adult education follows several tasks:

• setting achievable, sustainable and award-winning goal

• seeking to equal and possibly personal approach to each participant

• to facilitate understanding of learning content.

 Lecturer in adult education is still integrating element between the participant and teaching material.

The education of adults is not the creation of new attitudes towards the environment, but rather to influence and remaking gained attitudes to reality, where the ecological principles was not grounded. From the psychological site, this is a very difficult process. The environmental adult education lacks of systematic and formal attitude and also the duty of the school operation. Due to the variability of the adult population, needs and requirements of the educational activity, it is very important to use a variety of methods in the education of adults.(Gallayová, 2007).

B. Kosova (1996) argues that there is no universal method of education. Only a good educator, who knows his students, knows what he wants them to achieve, he is able to be remove or even compile a practice which they will be satisfied with. Educator, or teacher who knows a lot of different methods, can offer to each member a suitable teaching method, which will lead him to the end.

 J. Muzik (1998) defines three basic groups andragogic-teaching methods. One of the group is **theoretical** methods, which are mainly traditional lecture, lecture ex (literal reading teacher), lecture with discussion, exercises and seminars. Another group of methods are the **theoretical-practical** methods, which include guided discussions (Method 66, the debate in plenary session, panel discussion), problematic methods (case studies, role plays, management games), project methods, programm teaching and learning, and diagnostic and classification methods usually transferred via tests. The last group of andragogic teaching methods are **practical** methods, which are in most cases aplicated in practice, in particular problem situations. This group include methods such as mentoring, couching, mentoring, assisting, job rotation, internship, field trip, flying by.

Vincíková (1996) considers the experiential learning methods to be very popular and effective. These methods are focused on the personal development of the individual through emotionally powerful experience, and also supports an increase in the perception of other people's problems in relation to the environment.

The most common methods includes adventure game, often referred as a dramatic learning. Various psychological analysis show that both, not only children, but also older people like to play. We can read that some authors have even considered playing to be the most important teaching and learning methods of environmental education of adults. Learning by the game is helps people to remember more easily and it is also more productive. During the game, the participants have the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to 'practice' which makes their knowledge and skills deeper and more efiecient. This is a kind of training for a good environmental behavior through the game. The game can be realized in the interior but also in the exterior. The game increases the fun of gaining knowledge, enjoyable and effective form helps to manage the challenging content of the curriculum. The popular games are, e.g.: Finding treasure in the forest, memory game protected species, building homes right in the countryside, planting plants etc. Frequently used method of adult education to environmental protection is a method of the workshop. Through personal commitment to a particular environmental project, the adult gains new knowledge and experience in the field of environmental protection, but also his active involvement contributes to positive change in the environment. The famous workshops organized by NGOs are e.g.: Breath of the Earth, The World Is Only One, Living Water, Green School, etc. This educational method has the positive impact on people's moral, professional, aesthetic, social, emotional but also a health site.

Another mentioned method are the experiential methods including drama and role-playing and simulation tasks. B. Kosova (1996), writes that, these methods support warmig-up, relaxation, focusing, development of sensory attention and concentration. Here belong dramatic plays, social dramatic plays, which contains only the initial social situation, and playing roles. The adults learner deepens his ability to establish contacts with the outside world, understands better other people's opinions, increases understanding and empathy, and also learns how to deal in conflict situations. This method is also considered to be very effective, since the participant is actively involved in the process of environmental education, improving their communication skills and drama and also strengthens its environmental consciousness, that it leads to positive environmental behavior. There could also be included artistic expression in the group of experiential education, which teach the individual to perceive and create beauty, increases imagination, empathy, and developing emotional intelligence. (Vincíková, 2001) The adult contributes to the creation and strengthening of cultural values ​​and improves environmental awareness throught the visual art through environmental expression

It is very important synoptic activity in adult environmental education , and therefore it is often used for experimentation, testing or laboratory work also, which allows independent learners to work activlly under the teachers care.

These methods lead to permanent learning of knowledge, skills and habits and also to help the learner to verify his theoretical knowledge and new information which ensures better retention. In this method, it comes to getting into contact with the natural material, which supports the aesthetic sensibilities and survival properties. (Kminiak, 1997) During the implementation of this method, one works independently and creatively, which promotes better retention of knowledge and subsequent application in his personal life. After the realization of this method, the adult person is able to apply to their everyday practice and thus contribute to protecting and enhancing the environment.

The field-observation can also be included among the methods which use self-explanatory operation. It is the observation of natural phenomena directly in nature. There is used an independent work of learners in this method. The adults are learning of the knowledge, skills, that tend to gather opinions and attitudes towards the environment. (Gallayová, 2007)

The categories of theoretical and practical methods can be included problematic teaching, case study. J. Halaj (1978), writes, that it allows the development of active thinking. The problem is raised by the theoretical or practical problems, which solution depends on the student's intellectual abilities, and aims to develop self-reliance and application of knowledge. Such didactic problematic situation can motivate a student attitudes positively and raise it with intense interest and thinking.

S. Vincíková (1998) declares that the goal of case study is to examine the problem of real-life context. These include methods of qualitative research, which details the case. A case study is the active form of learning that leads to independent creative thinking, problem solving cooperations and public defense of his own opinion. This educational method may be transferred by contribution or by an interview.

The last group of educational methods used in environmental education of adults are theoretical methods. This group includes traditional lecture, lecture with discussion, exercises and seminars. In the implementation, it is possible to present a large amounts of information systematiclly in a short time, but on the other hand, the low activity of students can lead to loss of attention of students, and reducing efficiency. During the seminars there can be used the method of brainstorming, sometimes called the "exchange ideas", which is based on the spontaneous production of free creative ideas on the topic. It is anticipated that, in a large number of ideas to at least find a suitable solution. (Vincíková, 1998)

The established theoretical methods of conveying information in the environmental education of adults, according to Kminiaka (1997) is also **dialogue.** It is one of the types of teaching methods, which are further divided into inductive and deductive interview. In adult education is being used deductive interview. One has to learn to listen to the second person, argue, defend his opinion, sort of knowledge and deduce conclusions, but it also lead to a willingness to change opinion, admit error, to give criticism, honestly do. In addition, dialogue enables the teacher the immediate feedback from students and also it is very effective. (Vincíková, 1996)

The other teaching methods are still method of verbal interpretation and method of demonstration. Z. Gallayová (2007) writes, that by the classical teaching of environmental education of adults is used the method of **working with text**, with literature and other informative sources (textbook, workbook, working papers, Atlas, working with television, radio, Internet) lead to the acquisition of new knowledge , stimulates interest, and support the making of overviews of the most important data.

"Environmental education and training are effective when it will be oriented on all social and professional groups, including children, youth and adults. Each of us is still responsible for his social and professional role. "(Krchňák, 1998, p 39).

2.5 Basic principles of environmental / ecological education in future

According to J. Dlouha (2002) the basic principles of adult education to environmental protection should have the certain traits and appropriate characteristics. The adult education should be constructive and innovative, inspired by the new postmodern thinking, that emphasizes the need for environmental protection and developes the human positive attitude to the nature. The environmental adult education should also be purposeful, which task is to test, criticize and cultivate values, ​​what purpose is to help positive change in behavior, thinking and overall relations of the individual to the environment and thereby contribute to its protection.

The author highlights the importance of learning in economic, ecological, but also at regional, national and global contexts. There is a need, that the environmental adult education should be focused on the process of gaining knowledge and skills, whicha are applicable to everyday practice. They should be also human- the center of attention is a man.

 An important task of environmental education and general adult education is to teach environmentally responsible citizenship, which is generated from the knowledge of geographical, historical, ecological, social and cultural characteristics of the individual's own community and country and the world. I tis also supposed to mindful the need for sustainable development that preserves the possibility meet basic living needs of current and future generations, and yet does not reduce the diversity of nature and conserving the natural functions of ecosystems. The responsible citizen recognizes the diversity of the different worlds, people, cultures, ecosystems. He also understands and actively contributes to the law, justice, peace, democratic process and the protection of the environment in their own residence, across the country on Earth. (Environmental Academy, 2000)

 The environmental education seeks a balance between emotional education and rationality, between object and subject, between material and spiritual, and between economics and ecology.

 Among the important features that should be developed in an adult environmental education are: of criticism, ethical perceptions and thinking man, but it should even lead to an overall positive environmental lifestyle of adult. (Kminiak et al. 2003)

**III. The current state of environmental / ecological education of adults**

It is generally known, that people tend to subjugate nature and also the social surrounding for their needs and interests. "The selfishness is the greatest enemy of the nature and the environment." (Krchňák, 1998, p 33). Unlimited freedom of people leads to ecological evils.„This situation should aim the attention to other values as awareness and to the environmental consciousness of people.

Gáborová M (1991) says that one of the bad condition of nature and the environment is caused by a lack of education. Right now it is time to apply the environmental education directly into practice through education, publications, various environmental educational events and thereby achieve their environmental behavior at the greatest proportion of the population.

The ecological education and training can be implemented in schol, after-school education and the means of interest education in the spare time. In this chapter we will discuss the environmental education and training system in colleges and universities in Slovakia and abroad, the non-formal education with a focus on environmental education in the workplace and in the last row is dedicated to the fulfillment of the individual in the field of environmental education through a community of interest.

**1.3 Environmental education at universities in Slovakia**

The universities, dedicating to environmental education are in very important positio. It is possible to study the ecological and environmental departments at various colleges and universities across the country. Nowdays it is possible to acquire the expertise for the environment the 13 faculties of Slovak universities and colleges. The most comprehensive education in this area provides Comenius University in Bratislava, which has a number of courses dealing with these issues. The following are the Faculty of Ecology and Environmental Sciences at the Mining and Forestry Academy in Banská Štiavnica, Faculty of Science, Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, Chemical Technology and Mechanical Engineering, Slovak Technical University in Bratislava, Faculty of Mining, Ecology, Process Control and Geotechnology and Civil Engineering, Technical University of Kosice, Slovak Agricultural University in Nitra, Technical University in Zvolen and others. The study of these branches is divided into three levels of higher education and those are bachelor, master and doctorate.

Kminiak et al. (2003), in his book expresses the need for Slovakia to develop all activities aimed to environmental education, to ensure coherence between education, which is focused on environmental education with environmental adult education, expand the number of professional and volunteer teachers and event organizers with environmental focus, to support the development of environmental education, propaganda and information through the media. The author also stresses the need to promote the construction of nature trails, information centers providing information on the fauna, flora and overall ecosystem at the site, and ecological stations, further efforts to develop collaboration and draw inspiration from the field of environmental education abroad, develop and implement environmental projects and events aimed to a particular social group and the applied needs of environmental education into the daily lives of people.

The Third Age Universities

A special position in the system of adult education have third age universities. They educate people in a post-productive age. Their fields of study in environmental education focus on landscape ecology and conservation. There are two universities in Slovakia: the Third Age University Comenius University in Bratislava and the University of the Third Age at the Technical University in Zvolen, where he established the Department of UNESCO based in Banská Štiavnica with an environmental focus. (Kminiak et al. 2003)

**2.3 Environmental education at universities and colleges in the Czech Republic**

Nature protection in the Czech Republic in the current concept in itself involves both the protection of biodiversity and geodiversity, landscape character and natural processes. Current conservation in the Czech Republic is based mainly on administrative right approach. The fundamental laws of nature and landscape is the law n.114 / 1992, which defines a number of tools serving the territorial and species protection.

For the demonstration, we have chosen a particular university in the Czech Republic, where i tis possible to study a wide range of environmentally oriented disciplines. The main goal of study environmental science at the University J. E. Purkyne in Usti nad Labem is to train specialist with a comprehensive look at environmental issues, who is able to identify the risks, identify their causes, to decide on issues of creation and environmental protection, to manage activities in the field of conservation. The university of three years studies provides training, education and advocacy to other sectors of the population, organizing specialized and short-term retraining courses and distance learning. The curriculum of environmental science is aimed at deepening the knowledge of scientific disciplines, working with computers in the field of environmental education to protect the environment and economic assessment of the impact on the environment.

The study of environmental education at universities and colleges in the Czech Republic is mainly focused on the following areas:

• revitalization of the country

• Waste Management,

• Ecology and Environmental Protection

• Engineering Ecology,

• environmental protection in industry, water management,

• environmental analytical chemistry.

What do the university graduates in environmental education need in practice ?

This issue was analyzing J. Dlouha (2002), who came to several conclusions. According to the analysis, which was based on interviews with graduates of ecology as selected representatives of potential employers of graduates ecological and environmental courses from public administration and consulting firms. Several students said that working on the specific positions have felt the lack of certain skills. They Considered to be underdeveloped knowledge of legal matters, and review the functioning of government and its institutions, lack of experience in written communication (eg. writing expert reports, opinions, different decisions) unpreparedness of interpersonal communication in resolving the various conflicts also at defending their own projects and presentations, and finally an interview also highlighted a lack of confidence in solving problems related to the environment.

From this fact, It comes a need for universities to put a greater emphasis on theoretical and scientific knowledge of students, providing training in the legislation at regional, national but also international level, focusing on the development of general knowledge, communication, and also focus on developing basic management knowledge and project management, and teamwork. (Long, 2002)

**3.3 Interest environmental / ecological education**

" The interest environmental education may be characterized as socio-psychological-pedagogical process, built on an active personal subjective relation to environmental issues." (Holečko, 1993, p 10).

It is a process that supports the active participation of man in dealing with issues of environment, which tries to get to know what issues its own microenvironment. The nature of a personal interest in acquiring information, knowledge, skills formation, skills and attitudes, respect for temperament traits of high degree of voluntary, democratic nature and openness of the educational subsystem.

We can also say that "the interest education may be defined as a complex dynamic process, involving cultivation, respective motivating interest in the man's basic existential questions posed by his environment. "(Holečko, 1993, p 10).

**There are a necessary goals in interest environmental education**

• To develop an environmental issues relating to the understanding of the ecological balance and environmental quality in society.

• To highlight a closer approach to solving complex environmental issues and highlight the examples of the work of other developed countries.

• To educate the citizens who have a conscious relationship to nature, they know the relationship of man and nature, and also are aware of the dependence of humans on the environment and the needs of their own contribution to the improvement of his condition.

• To maintain files, accurate and professional information of the environment.

• To enable people to recognize their abilities and skills by solving environmental problems.

• To consider the balance between short-term needs and long-term consequences on the various issues concerning the environment.

• To highlight and reward the work in the field of environmental protection.

(Holečko, 1993)

**The main content of interest environmental education according to M. Holečko (1993) can be divided into:**

• **Informative** – they intermediate some basic knowledge of environmental issues of current, topical issues of the environment in the country to the public, try to organize collective effort to protect the environment at international level and also in the region.

• **Formative** - are aimed to the formation of personal responsibility for environmental management of practical activity, supporting civil initiatives, collaboration with various political parties and mimopolitickými.

**The mission of the environmental / ecological education and adult education**

By Holečko (1993) said that in amateur artistic creation and interpretations included in the interest of artistic activity is hidden a great educational potential, which can be used to carry out the tasks of ecological interest education. We here include eg. :

• **The theatral area** provides opportunities for each sector of activity at a high artistic and aesthetic level. Specific options may be a different areas of interest such as theater drama, drama, puppet shows, children, student and youth theater, poetry, theater and the artistic execution.

• **The area of ​​art**, **photography and film** is another possibility of ecological and aesthetic education. It supports the aesthetic and humanistic perception and behavior in humans, (documentary film, video, photography and exhibitions: PRO EKO, Earth Day, RACIOENERGIA, esoteric, BIOSTYL, the moon, cursed mountain, etc.).

**• The area of ​​music and dance, art activities** also provide opportunities for the author's original artistic statement. There is a wide scale from the folklore, that is associated with life in the nature, to the processing modern popular song. We can raise genuine educational values by this way, which are ​​useful for the formation of a sensitive man's relationship to the environment.

The role and function of a worker in the field of ecological interest education at various levels of management, policy and performance require the need: of preparation of educational workers of central policy documents, investigation, analysis and evaluation of the ecological interest education, providing all-round expert methodological assistance, publication of methodological materials, organization of regional, national, transnational events cooperation with the media and cooperation with organizations providing environmental education at the international level.

**3.5 Differences between theory and practice in environmental education of adults**

J. Gregor (In Holečko, 1993) expressed a very critical oppinion to this subject. He says that the theoretical system of education could be refined anyhow well, but if the company and the competent organizations and institutions are no table to apply it to the practice, it becomes ineffective. "I repeat again, there is a big gap between theory and practice, between the needs and possibilities. If we are talking today about whether we are "environmentally educating" or "ecologically educating", it does not mater."(Gregor, In Holečko, 1993, p. 44) J. Gregor said that is not important, how we gain the information, knowledge, experience and skills, but the essential part is that we are able to acquire and work with them and apply them in practice.

 The most important goal in promoting environmental education is to bring this issue to the general public. Therefore it is necessary that the publications of this topic, was not published only in various conferences, annual reports and specialized publications, but also in the completely simple materials that are easily readable and understandable to ordinary people. It should be also supported the editorial activities (issuing simple guidance material, books, magazines). In addition the publishing activity of ecological education is possible in various training for teachers, lecturers, employers for pre-schools, schools, universities, centers and organizations providing leisure-time activities for children, youth and adults, and especially the general public through documentaries, various radio programs, exhibitions, lectures, workshops, etc. as well. (Gregory, 1993)

There is the opportunity to highlight the simplicity of the transformation of environmental awareness in environmental performance through massmedia. It is possible to perform this goal by following this actions in everyday life:

• To Save energy and water (showers are on average 5 min., Turn off water while brushing teeth, washing dishes, utilize rainwater, turn off the light, use saving bulbs , minimize heating

• To Recycle waste (separate plastics, bio-waste, aluminum, produce the least amount of waste)

• To Eliminate purchase of products, that are destroying the environment (plastic bottles, cans, non-organic detergents, fertilizers)

• To Reduce air pollution, water and soil (less driving on motor vehicles, not blow the CFCs into the atmosphere, to protect groundwater)

• To Protect the flora and fauna (to found the nature reserves, planted trees and plants, to protect endangered species, reduce the mass breeding, based organic farm, domestic breeding)

• To Promote healthy lifestyle (healthy diet, use of natural materials in the diet, cosmetics, clothing)

• To Apply the principles of environmental education in the political, economic, social, cultural spheres, and personal life

• Use of renewable energy sources (wind, water, solar power), etc.

**3.6 Training and education to environmental protection in the workplace**

The field of adult education can also include education, which is realized in the workplace and the associated environmental and occupational safety. The workplace is particularly important to ensure the safety of people at work to protect their health and environmental protection.

In the past, during the introduction of industrial production increased industrial accidents, and also environmental pollution. The reason for Occupational Injuries was caused because of limited experience, poor staff training, introduction of new technologies in production and especially the emphasis on productivity instead of the human factor.

Currently, it occurs significant changes in working conditions in many countries, in which companies increasingly take responsibility for the state of health and safety and also environmental protection. The prevention for monitoring the various legal regulations provides active audit institutions

The most important European institutions working in the field of safety and labor protection include:

• The Luxembourg Advisory Committee on Safety and Work - aims to assist the Commission in the preparation and implementation of activities in the field of safety, hygiene and health at work

• European Agency for Safety and Labour Protection - plays the role of European OSH information center, annually organizes thematic conferences, organizing international research papers, published reports, publications, magazines.

• Dublin Foundation, coordinated by a European research in the field of occupational safety and health at work and various other projects (Miklos, 2011, p. 11)

The companies produce cleaner production, ensure the reduction of the quantity of air pollutants, emissions into the atmosphere. Workplaces establishes conditions for waste recycling, saving energy, water, either in production or in the administrative sector workers in their daily lives.

Interestingly, we have chosen an example of one institution, the institution specifically named Joanna Pinewood Education in England, which provides continuing education and teaching different school subjects and foreign languages. The organization, along with its educational mission is to lead the operation as the most economical and most environmentally acceptable. The specific practice enables the hot water is re-ingested into the toilets, space heating is regulated according to need, be introduced, drinking fountains, the introduction of waste separation and also install solar panels.

Professionals and institutions clients are encouraged to save energy (eg turning off the lights in places where not necessary, compliance with the duplex printing, paper documents, etc.) The organization can annually save thousands of gallons of water, large amounts of electricity, gas. For a company that saves money, leading to the creation of more jobs and better evaluation of employees.

**IV. The institutionalization and legislation to ensure protection of the environment**

1.4 Organizations providing care for the environment

To achieve the objectives and tasks of environmental / ecological education should be simultaneously involved in school and extra-curricular area. Their action should be linked with all levels of environmental education: education in the family, and further in various institutions and organizations of interest.

After-school education is organized as an extension of school education, which aims to raise environmental awareness among children, youth and adults. The activities are held after-school education through environmental education centers (CEV), respectively. other organizations and civic associations (SEA, SOP, IUVENTA, Mark Tatras), where one of the goals and objectives is environmental education.

Environmental - educational organizations in Slovakia associated in several institutions. One of the major environmental company - educational organizations (SEVO) Spiral. It is a nationwide network of organizations dedicated to environmental education. Spiral is a non-profit organization founded as an association of legal persons. It currently has nine full members, namely:

Centre for Environmental Activities, Centre for Environmental and Ethical Education resin

Daphne, Tree of Life, Centre for Environmental Education Oak Center for young environmentalists of the Slovak Union of Nature and Landscape, Sosna civic association, club-Kon-tics, Citizen Eco-energy association and freedom of animals.

The role of education is the linking of school and after-school education, organizing camps, conservationists, wildlife, nature schools, short trips, training managers, instructors and other administrators, provide information and publicity materials, organizing training for the needs of local conditions, particularly issues of resource management, energy , raw materials, natural resources etc. This also includes organizing public education such as: the creation and protection of environment, where people spend most free time, the environmental organization of workshops, as well as cultural and educational activities. (Kminiak et al., 2003)

J. Lopušná (1999) says that an appropriate organizational structure for environmental stewardship is the foundation of effective functioning of the Ministry of the Environment. For the solution of environmental problems we have a variety of institutions and bodies at national and regional levels, NGOs, international organizations, as well as providing legal legislation, analyzing, planning, design and evaluation of environmental protection. Their role is also monitoring, evaluation and determination of the statistics information using imaging and management practices.

The central government of the Slovak Republic is the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic, which focuses on the creation and environmental protection. Under the Act no. 222/1996 Z. of. the organization of local government and amending some laws on the performance of local government to set up regional offices (CO) and District Offices (OU), other state administration bodies, municipalities or other entities can exercise local government entrusted only

special law.

**Mission and core activities of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic (Lopušná, 1999):**

1. carries out the state administration in matters of development and environmental protection, including: conservation, air quality planning, waste management, security information system on environment etc.

2. prepares draft of state environmental policy of the Slovak Republic, monitor and coordinate its implementation,

3. developing education and awareness in the creation and protection of the environment and consider legislative proposals and other entities

4. opinions of others and developing goals and measures of central and regional authorities

5. determines the priorities of state environmental policies and criteria of the resulting decision-making on the provision by the State Environmental Fund of the Slovak Republic

6. serves as the capital of state supervision in matters of nature conservation,

7. directs the activities of the organization: the Slovak Environmental Agency, Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute, Slovak Environmental Inspection, National Parks of the Slovak Republic, the Slovak Caves reports, the State Environmental Fund.

 Furthermore, the regional state administration carried out on individual sections of the Act pursuant to Annex no. 222/1996 Z. of. Regional Office or if it constitutes a special law. The Regional Office also performs the second level state administration in matters in which the administrative proceedings at first instance held county offices, a special act stipulates otherwise.

District Office - The principal activities of district and regional offices - the environment, government is the protection of air quality, state water authorities, state administration of nature and landscape, government waste management, land use 46 planning, state construction management, EIA environment. (Lopušná, 1999)

**4.3 International cooperation in the field of environmental care**

 United Nations Conference on Environment (Un Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm 1972) and the Stockholm Declaration adopted it and created The United Nations Environment Programme - United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) laid the groundwork for an international legal framework for environmental protection, which includes different areas of human rights over the management of natural resources and pollution prevention for the relationship between economic development and the environment.

WHO - World Health Organization (WHO) is trying to solve state problems and around the world. It is worth mentioning for example. Conference on Tobacco Control (Geneva, 2006) or the International Health Regulations (IHR), preventing any spread of the epidemic (Brussels, 2007). European institutional dimension gained health in relation to the environment in many other conferences. They were created by national action plans for monitoring environmental health, National Environmental Health Action Plan (NEHAP).

The sustainability is key to the development of content and the Treaties of the European Union. In addition, the lower and right units produce their strategic plans in line with the common EU policy. It has been clear for a long time, that global challenges have their roots and possible solutions at local level.

There are a number of initiatives utilizing the effect of citizen solidarity with the smallest legal unit, community: Healthy City Project (WHO, 1988) Local Agenda 21 (Earth Summit, 1992), the Charter of European cities towards sustainable development. Hundreds of European cities follow the recommended European indicators for sustainable development (ECI - European Common Indicarors) dealing with such. mobility and local public passenger transport children to school, the burden of environmental noise and the like. In this way support the mobilization and promotion of public participation in decision making and to lead people orientating to the environment.

The environmental and health organizations and operates many committees from the local level (Agenda 21) for the type of organizations worldwide The United Nations Childrens Found (UNICEF), United Nations Organization for Education Science and Culture and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO ), which is the special programs just blows scientific-research issues of environmental care and education for its protection. Also included are the above-mentioned UN Environment Programme (UNEP), World Health Organization (WHO), the organization used to ascertain food programs of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO), the organization focused on issues of population and human rights UNHCR, UNFPA and others. The result of their activities are different programs, conventions, agreements, contracts, etc., which are financed by private, national and international sources.

As the A. Polášková (2011) says, the knowledge of the laws dealing with environmental protection and health should be included in a general education for everyone in Europe. The disinterest and ignorance are the main causes of under-use legislation enshrined the right of citizens to a healthy environment.

**End**

It is not joyful, but is more or less certain that our generation will not eliminate many of the major mistakes, which people have seriously polluted the environment. However, we can contribute to correcting the fact if we realize what we misguided and that we adopt a new approach to tackling issues of environmental protection if this approach also brings up our followers. The environmental education and training are effective when oriented in all social and professional groups, including children, youth and adults. Each of us still responsible for their social and professional role.

We constantly have to remember that the person, despite of his great technical and spiritual power, remains a biological being, and thus he is limited by a law of nature. The nature is much more complex than the most complicated computer system. Therefore, we can not afford to make any negative interventions. The reason for this state is a failure of adequate education to a comprehensive understanding of the nature and the environment around us.

The main goal of the bachelor thesis was to highlight the importance of the need to protect the environment through adults environmental education, analysis and mapping problems of adult education to environmental protection, its status and position in the present issue and its solution.

The issue of adult environmental education has been analyzed in terms of andragogic perspective. Studying literature helped us to find out the new solutions to environmental education and adult education for the future.

Environmental adult education can bring qualitative changes in society and may contribute to building a new value orientation of people. The use of various forms and methods of education has a major impact on the attitude and behavior of an adult. Adult education for the environment is focused on the personal development of adult and contributes to compliance with the harmonious functioning of nature and sustainable development. It teaches people to respect the environmental values ​​and meaningful use of natural resources while protecting their environment.

The institutions that provide environmental education are using innovative educational approaches, methods, forms, to ensure the most effective environmental education for people.

To increase environmental awareness of the general public i tis neccesary to realize enlightenment through the mass media, educational events and cultural and educational activities and thus contribute to arousing the interest of every individual irrespective of the physiological and socio-cultural dispositions.

The environmental problems can only be alleviated by the will of the people (of course with the deployment of technology and the latest developments in science and research). After all, the small steps and keeping a positive approach may lead to improving the environment.

The implementation of environmental education is very important to ensure not only the need to increase theoretical knowledge, but also appealing to the use of acquired skills and competencies in the personal lives of everyday operations.

We showed the possibility of environmentally oriented fields of study in school, extracurricular and leisure activities in this work. We compared the targeting environmentally oriented disciplines at colleges and universities in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The contents of the work also shows that it is necessary to promote environmental education in the interest of the general public, maintain and improve the state of nature trails and nature reserves, which serve as a motivational incentive for awareness of the beauty of nature.

The educational event should be continually developing a personal and professional characteristics, motivation for environmental responsibility in maintaining the quality of life for local and global level.

The legislation should pay attention to the issue of laws and regulations that promote effective protection and enhancement of the environment. The political system and its various bodies of law should financially support the implementation of environmental events, to oversee the environmental management in the country, promoting the creation of new organizations focused on environmental educational activities and to monitor the system and inspire environmental education abroad.

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