

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. NECESSITY OR LUXURY?

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Abstract

Environmental education refers to organized efforts to teach about how natural environments function and, particularly, how human beings can manage their behavior and ecosystems in order to live sustainable. The term is often used to imply education within the school system, from primary to post-secondary. However, is sometimes used more broadly to include all efforts to educate the public and other audiences, including print materials, websites, media campaigns, etc. Related disciplines include outdoor education and experiential education.

Environmental education has been considered an additional or elective subject in many traditional curriculums. Environmental education at the elementary school level, can take the form of science enrichment curriculum, natural history field trips, community service projects, and participation in outdoor science schools. In secondary school, environmental curriculum can be a focused subject within the sciences or is a part of student interest groups or clubs

My article will present a comparative situation between Germany and Romania. In the end, it will be a specific example of the necessity of the environmental education, giving examples of the recycling situation.

Key words: environment, education, necessity, theory-practice.

INTRODUCTION

Environmental education is a necessity of the contemporary society, especially in the education system (Sabo H., 2010). To illustrate this, we took as a comparison of two countries: Germany and Romania, trying to concentrate on the issue of recycling. The recycling issues have to be seen in conjunction with environmental education because we need to educate the public, students, to achieve a properly recycling and finally cooperation in the field. The problems of waste recycling are both a function of the state of deprivation and therefore proper division of roles will be very important (public-private). We have to clarify the role of the state in this context, and creating a circuit for recycling.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The problem of recycling

Environmental courses aims to prepare all those who live in a community, to use nature properly. The students should know a natural

process works, his multiple dimensions, restrictions, and the possibilities of this complex problem and to have a properly pacification.

Schools must recognize that the use of environment is a process that involves many factors: political, economic, and social, and to awake an interest in environmental issues, to be active in environmental protection.

The environmental purposes of the courses in schools will be:

- A greater understanding of the natural environment and that created by humans (technical, cultural);
- To understand that man is part of the environment, but also can be directed to him to amend it;
- A better knowledge on environmental issues, causes, effects, and a solution to this problem;
- To be ready to fight environmental issues.

Starting from 70 years in Germany, it notes a trend in education policy, in an attempt to form and educate every citizen, using a method compatible with environmental protection. Since 1992 true the Rio conference on climate protection, the focus is on education closely linked to the environment.

One of the missions of school students, especially young people, is to be aware of environmental problems, be prepared to respond to environmental issues, promote, and educate in this purpose, beyond the school. Education starts from early ages, and lasts until the end of life. Students must learn that "negotiations" of life are not only short term positive, but also for future generation (education for sustainable development). Becomes important to maintain a balance between what is natural and to protect nature.

The ecological study must include equal exchange between natural, economic, environmental and individual-general-needed necessity. Only in this way, we can use what is naturally given, on long term.

Starting from the word "environmental education", we can found in literature the following theories:

- Education in the spirit of environmental protection is much more than a simply teaching about the environment. The knowledge of environmental protection it is a level of environmental education that requires a cooperative effort with the law, public order, the rules of necessity and life planning.
- Environmental education cannot be limited to only one specialized discipline. Environmental education suggests that the results obtained in various disciplines to be learned (taught), to be understood, and made to work together.
- Environmental education will be able to answer a several questions: what discipline, what intentions, and results may clarify the position of the

humans in environment in the past, present and future?

- Environmental education rises, those who learn an interest in "eco-negotiation" and how they will take a position on the environmental issue.

I will exemplify this problem, the need of environmental education as taking concrete recycling problem both in Romania and in Germany.

Recycling issues

Recycling issues especially from 1996 is seen not only as a simple "meeting" - "collection" of wastes but as also creating a so-called circular process! This is becoming a problem not only to the state but also to private persons, in which a role will have the privatization of these forms of collection and processing. Thus becomes an obligation, but also a necessity to take measures since the phase of production, processing, consumption, etc... because at the end the product will be a waste. State both economically and legally can not remain alone in the traditional hierarchical forms. This is a kind of circuit between the producer and owner of waste in the final. The right of recycling has become a model sample for the cooperation in the policy environment.

Two aspects of cooperation is notable in this regard recycling policy:

- 1 - the state itself

- 2 - sharing cooperation between state and private authorities.

A first concept of cooperation is to establish at the outset the concept of "PRODUCT AND RESPONSIBILITY! This means that from the moment of understanding of a product, then followed the production, consumption, should be borne in mind that waste, rest.

This issue concerns more environmental literature, costs that are required here, and processing.

This is an APPELLATIVE standard!

From this point of view, we must ask us if this characteristic is required and must be applied only those that produces. Policy makers: leadership (government) should set a goal in taking the recycling to be a term known in the Official Gazette – E.g. bottles in Germany, as in beverage, plastic material - see the yellow bag (Figure 1)!



Fig. 1 Recycling bag

From practice we can conclude that a strong position in the negotiations between partners depends of the cooperative methods, they are offered to the two partners, and their willingness to implement them. What I find significant and required especially in Romania, is this rule in the waste and packaging field.

Pack processing is possible by creating a system of collective processing!

Outstanding here is the imposition of a monopoly by creating a price, which is claimed against the pack - see the case in Germany.

It is not enough to establish this system of takeover but we need to make it credible!

Initially, for example in Germany it was created in 2002 that "green point" - recognized for maintaining a healthy ecosystem, but in time it proved insufficient and varied. It was subsequently tried and found a good thing, creating a security that is paid with the purchase and to take the pack with the refund.

The role of responsibilities

As "commitment" to the environment will not only be those agreements, acceptances of the economy or in some branches, which will help enforcement mechanisms for environmental protection and the achievement thereof.

Such a commitment would be needed in the following areas:

- the automotive industry and other areas closely related to it,
- in chemical industry,
- agricultural industry,
- in electromechanical industry
- the construction industry (of the wastes resulted here)
- in mineral oil field,
- in waste paper field,

- in packaging field,
- in pharmacy, or related to detergents field etc.

Thus:

1 - It is necessary and automatically produces a saving of time (time cost money) automatically requires fewer legal rules that are sometimes hampered by political processes.

2 - It will create comparison - alternative type in some areas.

3 - These commitments will lead to a need to lower administrative organization and control of the state less complicated.

4 - In terms of its political order these commitments offer a system of market coordination, which provides a degree of freedom in the order of law.

5 - Some positive aspects of the possible system of government:

- raising awareness of responsibility for environmental issues,
- raising the degree of cooperation and education by creating a framework of trust

- mobilizing their interests,
- exhibition and a forum for information exchange,
- improve environmental management within an organization,
- making comparisons (before-after)
- a great motivation in the field,
- reduce costs and subsidies,
- a clear definition of goals,
- a better monitoring in the field.

Cooperation in the field of wastes should be based primarily on the basic idea of a relationship = Wirtschaftskreislauf (Sabo H., Domocos M., 2009).

From a legal point of view, if we examine closely we find that the waste problem will leave because of those who produce or possess and will attempt to impose a form, which will have lower costs. In some cases, we will have a mixed form of these. This will automatically lead to lower prices that applied and will automatically involve the quality of recycling.

To this, we add that the problem of the wastes is not a situation at the national level but also an issue at European level. We have to remark here a number of issues beyond national boundaries in the problem of wastes.

Especially in Germany, an important role has the FIGHTING at the start of production from the HOW to do to avoid creating a waste, or a surplus of waste, how to put? = Producers liability!

The producers have to combat the waste from the environment very early to help to avoid the waste that will be designing a product, leading to the creation of a reduced waste and default protection of the environment.

This echo to be there should be a law that would require taking the waste (e.g. in drinks) by a structure of cooperation, make its own rules!

Perspectives

The future development in public - private partnerships regarding the economy of wastes depends on environment policy very divided and discussed in the light spectrum of interests, from household garbage, communal, certain regions, county, cooperation between state and private.

Therefore, the cooperation in the field of wastes is required, more than creating a first increasing and strengthening legislation (the basic rules). Some deficiencies in both European and national level should be "adjusted" more before to have deregulated forms.

This will be the crossing point to another principle "PREVENTION", to which must guide the new generation!

Interesting will be to create a *Bonus-Malus* system with a motivation of the manufacturer, and application of sanctions for the industry to avoid such wastes (its important how is produced)!

CONCLUSIONS

Where is heading this EU policy in this area is still compact. However, is certain that they propose some instruments, mechanisms (e.g., imposing a different tax system for environment-friendly products) design of products after the European model (guidelines), environmental qualification of the technical rules of production, subsidizing of favorable financial environment (Claußen B., 1991).

It remains to be seen if this "European ball" is a key of the political strategies of the products in which the participants (from the producer to consumer) will be able to integrate and if the members of the states will implement these measures. I will show in this regard some images that attempt to clarify the necessity of imposing waste separation, correctly collection, the imposition of conventional signs.....all this being a duty, first and foremost of a study matter less-known in Romania that of Environmental Education (see figure 2-4).



Fig. 2 Plastic wastes collection

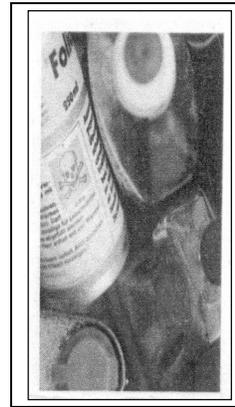


Fig. 3 Special rules for dangerous drugs and hazardous materials recycling

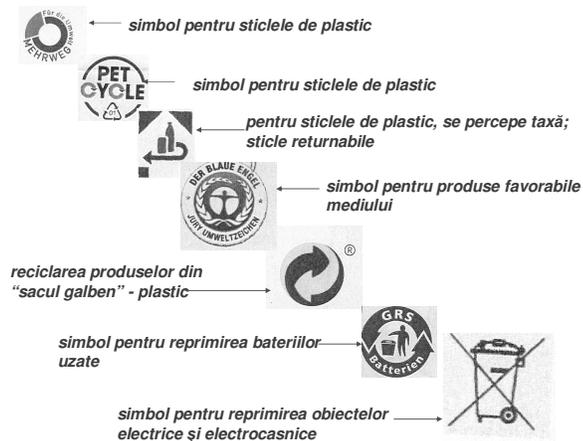


Fig. 4 Conventional signs for different types of wastes

That is why for a clean, healthy environment is required an education of population, people at all levels. Primarily environmental education is a Social Function.

In short:

Only when we live in these practical problems, this fear ... only then we can understand things and will change something!

The student will be closely linked to the teacher, of his personality, and vice versa! This implies a complex process of negotiation, even a psychological; need to done, as we are ourselves!

Firing in this sense an alarm signal to all those responsible for education, children in our study, to take in consideration the environmental education. To work with parents, in this sense, becomes very important!

Politics must undertake in this respect very much, so does the press. We need a dialogue here, but to achieve this we should involve everyone.

Of course, that point would be the school, but if we reduce it only at this level, is insufficient from the start! We cannot "produce ecology" if this will not be asked by the company! In my opinion, esteemed colleagues, I consider that the current system is oriented too much towards the economy. We need changes of mind, Social and Pedagogical. We should not have based on only one side interdisciplinary, but also a moral, Ethics.

At least in Romania we are at beginning. However, we should try harder to begin this long and complex process. I am sure that environmental education will have a great chance in the Romanian school system. In addition, I am sure that if we all contribute just a little, we will succeed!

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