

PREPARING TEACHERS FOR ORGANIZING AND CONDUCTING THE TOURIST-EXCURSION ACTIVITIES IN THE NATURE- PROTECTED AREAS OF KHERSON REGION

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Abstract:

One of the challenges of European societies is to build a consciousness of sustainable development. Therefore it is extremely important that modern forms of education and training shall correspond the requirements of building a human culture - this is one of the leading ideas and criteria of the concept of sustainable development. Tourism is one of the greatest achievements of civilized society, an important part of the modern life and culture. Every tourist is a representative of that culture; therefore, our relationship to the natural values should reflect a high cultural level of the environmentally-conscious person.

Our research is aimed at solving practical problems of tourism through training highly qualified specialists in the system of In-Service teacher-training. In order to improve the effectiveness of environmental education of school teachers of biology, ecology and geography, we recommend to introduce the appropriate changes in the In-Service training programs Curriculum for that category of teachers. We also offer introduction of special programs in the variable part of curriculum courses for Post-graduate Education, to train teachers of natural sciences as professionals of tourism, on the basis of nature reserve areas in Southern Ukraine.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the tourist industry in Ukraine ranks only the fifth in importance in the components of budget filling and its share in the coming years should increase significantly with all of objective preconditions have realized : Ukraine's favorable geographical location in the heart of Europe, favorable climate, the presence of significant recreation potential, an extensive network of nature-protected areas with rich flora and fauna.

Kherson region is a unique area, where different natural zones - steppes, seas, forests, marshes, desert, seaside coast are presented. There are two world-class biosphere reserves of the unique plant and animal composition, are included in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites - "Askania Nova" Biosphere Reserve named after E.A. Falz-Fein and the Black Sea Biosphere are among them. In addition the regional natural reserve fund includes Azov-Sivash landscape reserves, national parks of Dzharlygach, Oleshkiv Sands, Lower Dnieper marshes and no more than two dozen of sanctuaries, natural reserves and monuments, game reserves. All of the mentioned above creates positive opportunities for development of tourism and recreation as resource potential in addressing regional development.

Having assessed the value of Kherson region natural reserve fund in a safe and balanced development of economic and ecological systems Ukraine, we need to allocate a special role to the development of "green" tourism and sports, such as: environmental and health, agriculture and agro-tourism, recreational and competitive sports and tourism. Also, it is urgent to single out tourism's educational role in teaching and learning the school youth and adults, providing educational and sightseeing tours, trekking, hiking, expedition and adventure races. By tourism, we understand the theory and practice of various kinds of hikes, trips and excursions aimed at sporting competition, leisure time activities, education and training.

But almost all types of tourism should involve active visiting of natural areas, which increases the threats of anthropogenic pressures on ecosystems. There arises a serious problem of the tourist land and natural reserve fund of Ukraine usage due to the fact that, on the one hand, standards of unmodified by humans nature should be carefully observed, on the other hand, under the current social and economic crisis situation, those objects serve as a potential source of significant financing. Therefore, having considered the principles of ecological and sustainable development, the environmental development with the purpose of tourist and excursion needs should be met and problem of using and restoration the natural and ecosystems has to be considered. It is obvious that ecological systems transformed due to human activities require changing attitudes to natural resources and supporting action from the mankind.

Scientists have expressed different views as for which particular age is the most effective to make impact on trainees as subjects of environmental awareness. We share the opinion of scholars who attribute it to the age of 14-18 and during trainees' professional competencies formation period. That is, the types of values changing attitudes towards nature makes it possible to successfully influence the structure of personality and environmental awareness formation especially at the school age. Therefore, school education, well-trained teachers have the opportunity to make a real impact not only on the quality of environmental knowledge gained by their students, but also on the formation of ecological culture and responsible attitude of the younger generation to the natural resources of the home country.

Analyzing the problems of tourism in Southern Ukraine, we are to define the two among of others:

- the human pressure increase on natural ecosystems against background of the low environmental tourist services consumers' culture, which requires the transformation of humans' behavior and and, above all, consciousness on the side of local population;

- insufficient number of qualified professionals for tourist industry (now in Ukraine there is no proper system of training and retraining the staff for work in tourism, as well as clear and relevant qualifications' framework according the international standards).

Aims of our study are:

- to determine possible ways of modernizing the environmental education (model) and the usage of tourism for the environmental awareness of children and adolescents through the teacher training in post-graduate education;

- to highlight ways of solving the practical problems of tourism and recreation activities at the territory of Kherson region natural reserve fund (Southern Ukraine).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Having done the investigation on the process of In-Service teacher training an analysis of the training programs; materials, surveys of teachers on the system of environmental education and education of students; teachers' readiness to develop their students' environmental awareness have been performed. During the training courses on the upgrading qualifications the survey by the participants - secondary school teachers of Biology and

Ecology Education in Southern Ukraine (Kherson and Mykolaiv regions) - has been done. There following questions were offered:

1. How do you evaluate your own awareness of environmental issues?
2. How would you assess your students' awareness of environmental issues?
3. Do you think it is necessary to deepen the students' knowledge of ecology?
4. Would you like to participate in the nature protection organization?
5. What's the best equivalent for "ecological culture of an individual"?
6. Are you ready to actively work with students on forming their environmental behavior responsibility?

During our study, we have used the following methods:

- theoretical - foranalysis, synthesis, ordering different views on issues researched with the purpose of the investigation process' scientific justification of the teachers' professional and environmental competency formation;
- empirical - questioning the teachers, students and lecturers surveying, testing aimed at defining the environmental competency's formation criteria and levels with students; analyzing the research and experimental work results' performance;
- observational - observation, self-observation and self-analysis, ranging, testing, interviewing, methods of peer review and independent characteristics' synthesis.

THE MAIN BODY

Among the urgent issues of modern society there is a major problem of increasing the local population's environmental awareness and education. The setting up that problem presupposes an essential step - overcoming the ecological crisis that spreads rapidly to the entire planet and threatens to turn into a global catastrophe. Critical comprehension of the environmental degradation reasons makes grounds for stating that factors which caused an environmental crisis are primarily associated with the sphere of human outlook. Only a profound change in his mind, mastering by him the new methodology of coexistence with nature and will help to stop the destruction of the environment.

Under these conditions education needs modernization, and therefore - new important tasks were posed to teachers, high demands to those professionals whose level allows them to provide a quality education to the school-leavers in accordance with the criteria set out for education and its sustainable development strategy. The main objective of education for sustainable development includes values, human behavior in relation to objects animate and inanimate nature change, i.e. environmental consciousness formation.

The environmental consciousness as a part of the general consciousness has many forms and manifestations, requiring different approaches to its analysis. Such diversity makes it difficult to provide a universal definition of "environmental consciousness" [1].

Having based on the above interpretations Yu.Saunova concluded that the environmental consciousness encompasses several directions:

- the global viewpoint based on materialistic understanding the society and nature unity;
- the ecological one based on the provisions of the crucial mode of material goods production depending on the level of productive forces, nature development and industrial relations character;
- the moral and aesthetic one, characterized by certain moral norms that govern human behavior in communication with nature;
- the judicial one, defining regulations reflecting the interests of society in the environmental legislation [6].
- the structure of ecological consciousness represented by different forms and levels (Table 1).

Table 1. Levels and forms of environmental awareness (after O.Saltovsky) [5]

Levels of environmental awareness	Forms of environmental awareness
1. Everyday environmental consciousness that shows a man's everyday life, its direct interaction with the environment	1. Individual environmental consciousness (may be presented at both - domestic and theoretical-levels) and is distinctive for each individual
2. Specialized (theoretical) environmental consciousness is mostly related to the scientific ecological knowledge reflecting the mass consciousness	2. Collective ecological awareness reflects common, predominating in a particular society or large social group views as for the image of "society-nature" relationship features

Formation of ecological consciousness in the modern era, according to many scientists, covers the four main areas:

- the scientific one is realized through intentions to put into practice the gained theoretical and practical knowledge about existing nature interrelationships by means of avoiding irregularities during the human activities' production cycle;
- the economic area includes realization of economic revenue-producing activities that destroy our environment;
- the cultural one is reflected in the intents to save the environment as part of the cultural environment;
- political area reflects efforts to create conditions for the existence of people, relevant human dignity [7].

The educational process at schools in Ukraine provides not only cognitive education and training at the Biology, Geography and Ecology lessons in high school, but also during the educational tourist excursions according the National Curriculum, programs on Natural Sciences' subjects cycle. During extra-curricular activities like trekking, expedition, adventure racing, environmental actions are the important forms of environmental training and education aimed at attracting younger students to practice healthy lifestyles and environmental activities.

However, we should note that environmental training and education at school is not given enough time. This is due to a small number of hours allocated for study sections in the Biology programs in and absence of "Ecology" as a subject for juniors (students aged 6 - 9 years) and elementary school (students aged 10 - 15 years). For example, the chapter "Man on the Earth" - Grade 5 (6 classes), "The Organisms and Habitat" - Grade 7 (6 lessons). There are no such sections in the Curriculum for the 6th, 8th and 9th grades, forcing teachers to integrate environmental knowledge into content of various, related to those themes lessons.

State programs in Biology should provide educational trips - one per academic year: "The Diversity of the Native Land Plants", "Studying the Plant Communities" ("The Plants Biology", Grade 6), "The Diversity of the Native Land Animals", "Adaptability of Plants and Animals to Co-Existence in a Natural Grouping" ("The Animals Biology", Grade 7); in grade 10 - "Study of the Local Areas' Biodiversity" and the project performance named "Identification of the Human Impacts on the Ecosystems of Their Native Lands." Students of the 5th grade are offered the passive forms of work - "Observations on the People's Environmental Activities in Their Locaiton."

That is, environmental awareness and behavior of the secondary school students are mainly based on interdisciplinary approach when relevant information is included into the content of different school subjects among which the Natural Sciences and Geography, as well as extracurricular activities are given the priority.

According to a survey (questionnaire) biology teacher - training courses, it was found that the content of ecological education based on knowledge of general, global and regional levels, while information on the nearest natural and man-made environment and everyday

household-level outline zone competence of pupils and students, is virtually absent. Contents of the school environmental education affects a little on shaping the outlook of students on the place and role of Man in nature. Thus, two-thirds of respondents showed a special position 6-11 grade students who perceive a man as a "master", "consumer" of natural resources; indicate that the content of school subjects is dominated by "classical" environmental information compared to the issues relating to human impacts on the environment.

The teachers claim that time allocated for studying the environmental issues is not enough and only that leads to superficial acknowledgements of the existing environmental problems. Because of lack of time the forms and methods applied by teachers are focused mainly on the transfer of expertise, especially in the area of theoretical basics of fundamentals and applied ecology, not on the ability to analyze and use knowledge acquired in life.

There has been also studied the teachers' attitude towards need to develop students' environmental awareness and the level of students' readiness to its formation. For that purpose, we have used written questionnaires forms- surveys for teachers.

Attitudes to the need for teachers' getting prepared to formation the students' environmental awareness is characterized in the study as positive, negative and indifferent.

Positive attitudes are characterized by awareness of the importance of training on students' environmental awareness in order to improve their knowledge, pedagogical skills, professional skills and capabilities. Indifferent attitude is characterized by lack of interest to the training itself, lack of willingness to perform creative work.

Negative attitudes mainly manifest the lack of understanding of the importance of vocational training as preparation for the environmental awareness of students; reaction of irritation to complications at work, unwillingness to analyze own activities and the lack of desire for personal improvement.

The study allowed us to obtain basic data on the level of preparedness of teachers to pupils formation of environmental awareness, develop a model of teacher training.

According to the study from 50 to 55% of teachers have a positive attitude towards environmental awareness of students, 60% are interested in this phenomenon, and 10% found negative.

Table 2. Teachers' distribution according to the activities criterion indicators of their readiness to educational activities aimed at students' environmental awareness

Indicators of the formation the readiness activities criterion	Group sampling	Formation the activities criterion indicators' levels performed by teachers'			
		Low	Average	High	Total
The ability to analyze the environmental situation	Reference group	27%	64%	9%	100%
	Experimental group	28.5%	64%	7.5%	100%
The ability to predict the consequences of actions in nature	Reference group	46%	48%	6%	100%
	Experimental group	45.5%	47%	7.5%	100%
The ability to carry out the environmental and educational activities	Reference group	16%	61%	23%	100%
	Experimental group	18%	53%	29%	100%

The interviewed teachers among the most common methods of ecological education indicate those that contribute to the formation of such skills as information acquisition and

organization; conversation; preparing papers, reports. The less frequently used methods like role-playing, conducting experiments, other methods of providing the choice and decision-making, analysis and evaluation situations, serve to build up environmentally sound behavior skills and requirements for learning from an economic perspective, ways of affecting the general educational intellectual skills improvement, but not practical skills and behavior.

As the result, students' awareness of environmental issues is fragmented, undifferentiated, they are rather more aware of the global environmental issues than of those in their home country areas. That is why a modern teacher should be well-equipped with new technologies and actively use them, seek to educate himself throughout his life, to be able to solve environmental problems and organize educational activities for his students in this field [3].

This practice of environmental education and upbringing does not allow to carry out qualitative impact on the minds of students. However, as noted by O. Anufriyeva, education must respond the interests and demands of society, and therefore one of its main objectives is training for professionals focused on the needs of the present day [8].

However, analysis of the current state of the theory and practice in teacher education has proved its growing interest in the problem of subjective individual teacher. In modern pedagogy the question of identity formation teacher is studied in detail; ways of its professional orientation improvement have been explored, the conditions of professionally significant qualities' formation have been defined (A. Abdulina, O. Bida, T. Derkach, V. Slastyonin) studied the problem of teachers' professional readiness to implement the teaching activities functions (M. Dyachenko, A. Linenko); several authors have singled out its psychological (V. Dorokhina, A. Proskura) motivation (Thomas, E.), professional and moral components. The majority of researchers believe in possibility to influence the formation of the teacher's personality and his willingness to educational activities. The results of new research done by scientists, educators, philosophers, psychologists is reflected in a series of books on pedagogy, psychology, ecology that recently appeared (A. Alekseyuk, I. Malafiyik, A. Savchenko, I. Podlasiy, M. Fitsula, O. Plakhotnik). The approaches to the to possible leverage on the quality of educational process during the In-Service teacher-training were sought by authors to be identified from the various positions. Thus, O. Lavrynenko considers the humanization aimed at teacher identity formation, capable of realization the main goal of education - all-round development of human beings and the highest value of society to be an important principle for the In-Service teacher-training conditions updates [2].

Changing paradigms in the learner-centered education and activity require from a teacher not only to increase the volume and quality of knowledge, improve his In-Service training, but also demands the presence of ideological orientations to ensure his social activities in the environmental field. All mentioned above factors need correction of the outlooks, content and system of professional and educational training of teachers.

The most favorable, in our opinion, are the conditions for the of teachers' professional competency development and formation in the ecological system of Post-graduate education are:

- ° applying the principle of interdisciplinarity and strengthening the integration of theoretical knowledge gained by teachers during their professional training by adding an environmental component to Humanities, Natural Sciences disciplines, In-Service training and thus, giving new contents to them;
- ° development of original programs by teachers independently and providing active search and processing of information;
- ° organization of schools practice during In-Service teacher-training aimed to acknowledge educators with perspective ideas of their colleagues;
- ° introduction of a complex course design;

- involvement of teachers in realistic environmental projects development, tourism and public environmental movement, participation in conferences and seminars;

- implementation of active learning methods such as business games, training, giving the experience and skills communication, nomination and discussion of hypothesis, the ability to solve various problem situations;

- involvement of teachers in the usage of modern information technology (the ability to carry out the selection of relevant information from a large body of factual material, structuring information, identification of principle);

- activation of the teacher's personal attitude based on the new knowledge and skills obtained in subjective way.

The results of the analysis of teacher training programs in Post-graduate education let us conclude that there is a discrepancy between the attention paid to issues of environmental science in the ecological education of students and the level of In-Service training teachers to implement the main objectives of environmental education and upbringing. The structure of the curriculum of subjects of different blocks are inconsistent, contradictory. They have no systematic approach to environmental teacher training at primary and high school. Thus, the application of humanitarian disciplines unit consists of the only option for all professions and specialities. In this case, ecological education elements are introduced into the structure of content, bypassing the purpose of professional (teacher) training. There is not much better matter with special disciplines' content. Despite the fact that their incorporation in the curriculum is determined by objectives of the In-Service teacher-training on specific school subjects (Biology, Physics, History, those studied with junior students etc.), the contents of these disciplines primarily reflects the logic of the relevant science, almost without considering the fact that teachers will have to adjust it, introducing to the educational content of school subjects, adapted for students of a certain age and focused on achieving educational, developmental and educational learning goals.

We support A. Mironov's proposals [4] in order to overcome conceptual and methodological differences in the teachers' perceptions of environmental training organization - appropriately to the specifics of the interdisciplinarian complex programs on environmental education of students, elements they need. There could be informational, value-motivation and activity components of ecological competency development in the content, stimulating teachers' willingness to collaborate on the teaching materials design.

So, meeting the needs of today educational establishment called to prepare a competent, highly professional specialist capable to responsibly apply environmental problems and environmental expertise in professional and social situations. Under condition that greening, modernization and intensification of the educational process are realized, the educational and cultural environment of the In-Service teacher-training institutions will enable teachers to develop their professional competency and thus, enhance positions for an important task fulfillment - that of training teachers in efficient ways towards their students' environmental awareness rise.

For this purpose, a professional module curriculum of teacher training course in CHEE "Kherson Academy of Continuing Education" is introduced in "Environmental component of Biological Education in the Context of the Concept of Sustainable Development" section (20 hours). There are lectures, seminars and training sessions aimed at raising the professionalism of natural subjects' teachers as they provide theoretical and methodological training on the environmental knowledge, skills formation; changing attitudes and ensuring positive personal towards environmental resources. Teachers are offered lectures and workshops on the following topics: "Quality Greening Education - an instrument of building the society sustainable development", "Development of Teacher's Ecological Culture", "Bioethics as a Form of Students' Ecological Thinking", "Nature-responding and

Ecological Competency of an Individual - the Criteria of Modern Biological Education", "The Integration of Naturalistic and Humanitarian Methods for Forming the Eco-biocenteredness", "Greening Naturalistic Education at the Regional Nature Reserve Fund", "Formation of the Environmental Awareness in School Courses of Natural Objects", "Global and regional environmental problems", "Health Environmental Factors of the Current Population of Ukrainians in the home country".

Deepen your knowledge of the characteristics of ecosystems in which teachers give tours and trips, perhaps in the study courses "The Steppe Ecological Systems' Autaspekts' Characteristics", "Health-Recreational Resources of Kherson", "Teaching and Learning Basis for Creation an Ecological Project," "Environmental Educational Trial Path" "The Biology and Ecology Teaching and Learning Model of Values", "Life Orientations of Individual Students as a Condition for Sustainable Development of Ukrainian Society".

Extremely effective system of training teachers of biology and geography is the course "Teaching and Learning Natural Tour at the Kherson Nature Reserve Fund (autoecological aspect of elements Population ecology and synecology)". Its goal - to solve regional problems of global greening education in accordance with the Concept of Sustainable Development. The program offers a system of mastering the basic units of nature reserve fund Kherson region for solving the practical problems in teaching schools natural subjects at the new level and during training of the heads of educational tour groups and campaigns leaders.

The program allocates 72 hours and consists of two parts: I - biomes based on xerophytes, II - biomes based on hydrophytes. Envisaged system of theoretical classes (lectures, seminars), training systems and preparatory character of practical work in nature, including rules practicing ecologically reasonable behavior. The study of each unit completed a special course of summarizing and control activities.

The work-study program is a special course: training teachers of Biology and Geography to conduct tours for school programs, increased expertise in Biology and Ecology on the basis of local history and plans - summaries for educational and recreational and educational tourism in areas reclaimed objects of nature -reserve fund in Kherson region. Teachers enrolled in the program courses, obtain good knowledge, relevant certificates and are involved in carrying out educational and cognitive, cultural-finding tours for students and adults at the territory of nature- reserve fund in Kherson region. Those special courses are offered to teachers of Biology, Ecology, Geography who have already gained some knowledge of the ecosystems protected areas characteristics because they are easier to prepare as guides for excursion and tourist groups.

This program is used to realize the variable component of syllabus and thematic plan at In-Service teacher-training courses with the Biology, Ecology, Geography teachers.

Qualitative analysis of a survey done with teachers- trainees on the program of courses (an experimental group) and those who have not studied at the courses as trainees (a reference group of teachers) shows that in terms of "ability to carry out the environmental and educational activities" showed that 1 % 6 teachers from reference groups revealed low formation of these skills. In the experimental group the figure was 18%. Differences in the distribution of teachers of thereference and experimental samples at low forming the ability to carry out the environmental and educational activities before and after training was 2% in favor of the former. With the formation of a high level of skill difference in the teachers' distribution f the reference and experimental samples was 6% for the experimental sample. Comparison of differences in changes in distributions of the reference and experimental groups at low and high levels of skill formation to realize their ability to implement environmental awareness of students, leads us to the conclusion that they appeared to be more important for students with low readiness for ecological and educational activities .

CONCLUSION

The main goal of this paper was to identify possible ways of environmental education modernization and the usage of tourism for the environmental awareness of children and adolescents through teacher- training in the Post-graduate Education.

The recommendations for change training curriculum in the Post-graduate education in order to improve the efficiency of the Biology, Ecology and Geography teachers' preparation for realizing the environmental education, students ecological culture formation, introducing special courses to the variable part of the training courses curriculum for teachers as professionals in tourism on objects of nature reserve fund in Kherson region of Ukraine.

Recommendations on the the Biology teachers' learning process organization during training on preparing them for the educational process optimization at school towards better environmental awareness of students in the transition period to sustainable development of society have been offered.

Further study is expected to take place in the direction of effective methods selection in the system of In-Service teacher-training to raise students' environmental awareness.

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