

THE FORMATION OF STUDENTS' ECOLOGICAL WORLD OUTLOOK

Irina S. Zimina^{1*}, Svetlana A. Mukhina^{2*}, Olga V. Polozova^{3*}, Olga A. Makarova^{4*}, Maria N. Gavrilova^{5*}, Olga A. Yagdarova^{6*} and Viktor M. Sakir^{7*}

¹Senior lecturer, Mari State University, Russia, irinaSBzimina@yandex.ru

²As. Prof., Mari State University, Russia, zaslonka@inbox.ru

³As. Prof., Mari State University, Russia, polozovaolga1@mail.ru

⁴As. Prof., Mari State University, Russia, mbdibg@yandex.ru

⁵Prof., Mari State University, Russia, mashagavriliva@mail.ru

⁶Prof., Mari State University, Russia, berdniko1984@mail.ru

⁷Senior lecturer, Mari State University, Russia, mashagavriliva@gmail.ru

*Corresponding author

Abstract

The era of co-evolutional interaction of a person and the world around requires a new personalized way of axiological perception of nature, the world around and acts as a prerequisite for the mankind's survival and its preservation as a biosphere constituent. The main purpose of young people's ecological worldview formation is to reveal a person's place and role in socio-natural and spiritual contexts of the world around in the process of socialization, education and upbringing. The formation of environmental culture in a modern era is unthinkable without education humanization. The study showed that more than 90% of graduate students prioritize the nature over other things in their life. The determination of a person's place and role in the socio-natural world and an insight into the environment help students unleash their inner potential. The important place among these problems is occupied by the issues of the environmental situation improvement in regions. The level of environmental culture awareness does not determine the degree of its development; without changing the human mind, environmental culture will not be adequately formed. It is important to properly organize the environmental education process itself.

Keywords: ecological worldview, environmental competence and competency, environmental education and upbringing, coevolution, environmental culture

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the environmental situation tension is escalating with every passing day. The level of contamination of surface waters, soils, ambient air remains high. The nature biodiversity and the human lifespan are rapidly decreasing due to contamination of atmosphere, water, food products with toxic substances.

Nowadays, as never before, the destiny of nature is resolved by the level of a person's environmental culture and the society people live in. Therefore, formation of young people's social activism in the sphere of ecology seems to be the most important task of solving environmental problems.

The principle of coevolution, i.e. the correlation in the nature and society interaction, acts a prerequisite for the mankind survival and its preservation as a biosphere constituent. The problems of coevolutional development in psychological and pedagogical sciences are covered in the studies of formation of young people's ecological worldview of personality (A.N. Zakhlebny, I.D. Zverev, E.N. Nikonorova, T.A. Suravegina, E.N. Stepanyan, D.I. Traytak, Yu. L. Ozhegov); formation of environmental consciousness and environmental culture (Mamedov, 2012, Mukhina, Makarova, 2014, Mukhina, 2015 etc). The main purpose is to reveal a person's place and role in socionatural and spiritual contexts of the world around in the process of socialization, education and upbringing. The problem of environmental upbringing and education first and foremost consists in the development of moral and ethical feelings towards the nature, environmental thinking of students, in the formation of environmental knowledge of the naturalistic worldview, reasonable environmental skills. These components constitute the essence of environmental culture. In its turn, formation of environmental culture in a modern era is unthinkable without education humanization and development of children's attitude to the human person as to the supreme value in the world.

At the same time, a number of environmental education problems can nowadays be solved as part of a competency-based approach that implies that education must be focused not only on the acquisition of a definite amount of knowledge by students, but also on the development of personality, cognitive and creative abilities. The purpose of this study was to investigate the problems of formation of young people's ecological worldview during the educational process of the higher educational establishment.

2. OPINION AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate the problem of the young people's ecological world outlook formation during the educational process of the university. The questionnaire survey covering graduate students of the university showed that more than 90% of respondents prioritize the nature over other things in their life. At the same time, 86% of students are not concerned about the environmental conditions in their place of living and its neighborhood. Such distribution of answers can be related both to the environmental situation specificity in each settlement and to professional, educational, age-specific and other interests of students.

The formation of students' scientific worldview implies the development of their interest in the problems of the society and nature interaction. Doing a questionnaire survey, we made an attempt to record the «distribution» of the interest in ecology by the subject scope and the changes that take place in the structure of this interest under the influence of environmental protection policy and other factors. This was achieved through the respondents' choice of 6 environmental topics from 12 offered topics.

Based on the study results, 67% of respondents took an interest in the topic «Nature and society interaction in the modern era» and global environmental issues. The topic «Environmental safety» was chosen by 60% of respondents. It is important to note that this issue is one of the most urgent ones on various international forums. The half of respondents demonstrated an interest in the topics «Nature as a personality development factor» and «Perspective of the person and their life environment interaction». This points to the fact that the determination of a person's place and role in the socio-natural world and an insight into the environment help student unleash the inner potential of their personality, their abilities and talents. The important place among these problems is occupied by the problems of environmental situation improvement in regions.

One of the main trends of environmental education is the environmental worldview formation. More than 80% of respondents answered in the affirmative to the question, «Does the personality development depend on potential interaction in the 'person – nature – social medium' system?». The accentuation of attention on the environmental worldview issue of the person and nature interaction is appropriate as understanding or misunderstanding of such dependence has a significant impact on the environment, environmental and cognitive interests, life orientations, the level of environmental activity, etc.

When analyzing the formedness of students' responsible attitude to nature, their environment-related activities should not be left unnoticed. In this regard, we asked a question about personal participation in practical solution of environmental issues, – 67% of respondents would not refuse to participate. To find out the reasons for

estrangement from environment-related activities, we asked the rest of students, «How can you explain your non-participation in environment-related activities?» The main circumstance was the absence of organizational conditions; about 35% answered, «I would like to be of service in achieving environmental targets but feel the lack of general and specific environmental knowledge»; and a few students consider that «environment-related activities must be carried out but specialists making environmental decisions, and nothing will change if we do participate».

The study of students' subjective attitude dominance showed that from nine components future teachers gave a priority to «labor», «people around», and «my own self». «Nature and animals» were ranked 6th and 7th, and they were preferred to «material values» and «state». Consequently, the social sphere in the students' life dominates over nature; however, they pay little attention to socially significant interests and motives within the state. According to the «EZOP» methodology (Mukhina, etc, 2015). the study showed that second-year students specializing in pedagogy prioritize, with respect to nature, an «aesthetic attitude» (an average number of choices is 4.5), then a «cognitive attitude» (3.5), an «ethical attitude» – 2.2, and the last place is taken by a «pragmatic attitude» – 1.8. By the fourth year of study the basic parameters have been maintained except for a «pragmatic attitude» and an «ethical attitude» which change their rating to 3 and 4, respectively. Predomination of emotionally-aesthetic perception of nature is explained by strong interrelation of their inner world and the state of nature, meeting aesthetic needs in alliance with nature. This leads to low pragmatic orientation, absence of perception of nature as a benefit object. The second place in the rating is taken by an «ethical attitude», i.e. nature is perceived as a protection object, which can arise from environmental education and development of the conviction that practical activities are needed to improve the state of nature.

3. CONCLUSION

The results obtained indicate a discrepancy between rational and psychosocial levels of respondents' environmental consciousness. The lack of mental determination and strong-mindedness manifested itself in a weak motivation for certain actions in the sphere of ecology, despite the fact that more than 90% of students agree with the definition that «environmental culture is environmental erudition, conscientious attitude to nature and practical participation in environmental management improvement». It goes without saying that the level of environmental culture awareness does not determine the degree of its development. Nevertheless, without changing the human mind, environmental culture will not be adequately formed, and it is important to properly organize the environmental education process itself. [The higher educational establishment must create a work system in the area of environmental education of future specialists aimed at the development of environmental consciousness of ecocentric type, which can later contribute to the solution of environmental problems and preservation of biodiversity on the Earth. Among the conditions for the process of environmental competence formation in the system of a teacher's work, a facilitation approach to education can be used, where the teacher is not the only source of knowledge but a guide and adviser. Case study or situation analysis methods should also be used. Of special note are discussions in pairs and groups, as well as methods of creative activity stimulation (brainstorming, decision tree, morphological analysis, interlocutory learning, project and module technologies). Thus, formation of competencies, according to E.Ya. Kogan, is not a change of the subject matter, but a change of learning technologies (Ermakov, 2009). The ecological worldview and environmental competence are of key importance from the perspective of preservation and reproduction of life as an aim of sustainable social-ecological-economic development and biospheric function of the mankind.

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