

Educating the Student's Personality Through Outdoor Education Activities



Education

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ABSTRACT

The present article deals with improving the instructive and educative process of extracurricular activities and with molding the latter through the experimental implementation of a certain educational activity program outside that can contribute to the high school student's personality. The analysis of the scientific and methodological literature has emphasized that forming such an education through outside activities is not sufficiently dealt with, still existing educational deficiencies in correlation with heuristic values. In trying to prove the advantages of using the forms of outside activities in educating students, we have applied a set of outdoor activities depending on the major educational objectives and the main components of the extracurricular activities. The scheme of the program presents a structure that includes forms of outdoor activities, motivational strategies, new information and elements regarding the content of the outdoor activities domain accessible to high school students that contribute to the positive influence of the personality traits and to the increase of the formative aspect of these activities. All the elements of this program try firstly to increase the number of the students involved in practicing these type of activities and within this created basis try to influence the student's personality.

INTRODUCTION

One of the constant preoccupations of the human community since the beginning of time is molding the personality and facilitating the adaptation of members in the society, especially the young generations. Forming the modern man presumes his multilateral development from the physical, intellectual, ethical, esthetical, etc. points of view in regard to society's contemporary requests, according to the real aptitudes on which one outlines the coordinates of the human personality. Specifically and significantly human is the fact that the necessity of social intervention within the individual evolution is known at the society's level and its becoming is organized, controlled and institutionalized in particular ways, depending on the society's

characteristics and degree of emancipation . An important particularity of the educational phenomenon, in the actual stage, is the permanent character, its presence in the whole human existence. The object of permanent education is integrating the new social realities in the baggage of knowledge gathered during school. The considerable increase of the role of education in developing young people imposes the accumulation of activities through which the latter can be done. This suggests specializing the content and methodology in concordantly to the proposed objectives.

Holban states quite beautifully that "a same number never comes out twice in the heredity's lottery", each child being unique in his own way (Holban, I (1971).. That is why education must bear in mind the individualization to a instructive and educative level and not the unification of students no matter the way it is done. The alternative pedagogies are the ones that move the center of gravity to what education is concerned, from the teacher, outside the classroom, towards the interior, more precisely to the students, trying to sustain and realize that individualization of students who must be viewed as torches that must be lit up and not viewed as simple vessels that must be filled up. These educational alternatives coexist together with the traditional system of learning in the entire Europe, our country not striking a false note.

Beginning from the presence of these educational alternatives to the level of the Romanian learning system, we have tried, within this paper, to illustrate the defining aspects of outdoor education activities for developing the young people's personalities.

Non formal education through outdoor education activities offers a set of necessary social practices, useful for each youngster or adult, complementing the other forms of education through: capitalizing free time from the educational point of view, promoting life experiences through voluntary participation, being

individual or in group. Non formal education offers youngsters the possibility to choose the dependence activities to what interests and preferences are concerned with an accent on developing the competences of becoming active citizens(Feșteu, D., (1999). In addition, non formal education creates better opportunities of development in regard to organizational skills, self suggestion, time management, critical thinking in reaching decisions or in solving certain problems, ensuring the respect of the man's fundamental rights and equality.

Bearing these arguments in mind, within the non formal educational programs, "outdoor education" represents a learning process that takes place outside. Outdoor education includes environment education, adventure education, camping, outdoor activities therapy and certain aspects from the outdoor recreation. Thus, one considers that practicing outdoor education activities can be a way of educating young people. In this respect there are instruction programs, for example group cooperation activities that cultivate honesty, respect for other members' feelings and rights, concern for others and self discipline.

Outdoor education activities are interactive activities that simulate real situations and involve solving a certain task. "A method of experimental learning that involves using all the senses, generally takes place, but not exclusively, by exhibiting oneself to the natural environment. The outdoor education activities have implications in the physical, psychological and emotional plans. As a consequence the participants assimilate a series of abilities and competences that contribute to the improving of personal performances and the awareness of setbacks that make team work rather difficult contributes to the improving of the team's performances, both within the exercise and real life(Humberstone, B.J. (1997).The main objective of the outdoor education activities is encouraging the development of certain personality traits with a large social acceptance: initiative, perseverance, optimism, will, organizational skills, courage and special organizational aptitudes (Humberstone, B.J., 1997). Furthermore, in analyzing the personality traits, one must bear in mind the dynamics that characterizes them and the sudden or gradual transformations that take place at this level. Plus, one must establish the conditions in which these shifts are producing as well as the psychological and social factors that contribute to the transformations. The dynamic character of the outdoor activities determines differentiate attitudes towards the activity and differentiate relationships between the members of a group ((Moldovan E. 2007). In other words, an individual does not manifest the exact same of behavior or attitude concordantly to the activity that each one has done or to each member of the group. The outdoor activities are appreciated by students and the educational factors to the extent they fulfill certain con-

ditions:

- The follow the expansion of influences in the educative process;
- The capitalize and develop personality traits and aptitudes;
- They organize free time in a pleasant, relaxing manner;
- The forms of organization of these activities have a recreational character, but they follow an educative purpose;
- They have a positive effects on the group work, creating a feeling of safety and trust;
- They lead to personality development by getting in touch with the environment and with different social factors.

These activities are quite important in a world dominated by mass media (TV, computer, internet) which contributes to the transformation of our children in less capable people of controlling themselves from the behavioral and emotional points of views, and most of all in less intellectual developed people.

Within this research we have focused on the evaluation of impact regarding outdoor activities that is factors of nervousness, aggression, depression, irritability, sociability, self control, extroverts/introverts.

The experimental hypothesis of this research has been the assumption that the outdoor education activities shall significantly influence the subjects' studied personality traits.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The knowledge tests represent a useful tool, the results being capitalized by an investigation that is a questionnaire used before and after the implementation of the outdoor education program.

It is obvious that each psychological test presumes a certain miscalculation. The fact isn't a notorious one, for practice has proved that there is a balance between the percentage of negative errors and the positive ones, even though, apparently, the positive errors could not harm the subject. Personality tests cannot give evaluations of 100% accuracy; their authors taking into account not only the positive errors but the negative ones as well. Personality tests are one of the most important tools in researching an individual's personality (Horst, H.S. 2001).

One has followed the diversity of the means and ways of self knowledge, as well as the applications of this knowledge in practicing the outdoor education activities. Nevertheless, this has been a premise of forming personality through the structure and content element of these activities.

The research has followed the analysis of the comparative evolution of intensity regarding the personality factors (nervousness, aggression, depression, irritability, sociability, self control, extroverts/introverts) to the experimental group.

The experimental hypothesis of this research has been the assumption that the personality factors (aforementioned) of the group that affect the outdoor education activities shall register benefic and significant alterations. Following the purpose of the experimental argumentation for the efficiency of outdoor education activities on the personality factors, within a year, one has included in the experiment 33 students from the XI-XII grades.

The individual evaluation charts have regarded:

- The students' reactions and behaviors during different outdoor education activities;
- The degree of socializing and cooperation during the activities;
- The individual study, independent work, assimilating information and applying it to class habits;

- The students' adaptation to the requests imposed by the environment;
- Discovering social values by accepting personal mistakes, the mistakes of colleagues and friends;
- Developing certain traits such as: self control, will, good disposition.

The tests are such made as to confirm exactly as possible different structures of personality. This technique is known as "emphasizing characteristics" that is structural personality attributes (Horst, H.S. 2001) in respect to the attitudes of children during certain situations. The subjects have been asked to evaluate the intensity they consider adequate for each question.

RESULTS

For appreciating the value of personality traits one has calculated the general quota by summing up the marked points on each scale. Based on the general quotas of the personality factors one has done the microgram. Then, by arithmetically summing up the correspondent intensity of each scale one has done the dynamics of the personality factor values to the two testings.

**TABLE - 1
THE DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONALITY FACTORS TO THE INITIAL AND FINAL TESTINGS AFTER THE ARITHMETIC MEAN**

	Nervousness	Aggression	Depression
Initial testing	36,46	39,52	41,81
Final testing	27,02	28,15	32,38

**TABLE - 2
THE DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONALITY FACTORS TO THE INITIAL AND FINAL TESTINGS AFTER THE ARITHMETIC MEAN**

	Irritability	Sociability	Self control	Extroverts/introverts
Initial testing	38,45	32,73	31,04	43,25
Final testing	29,05	40,03	40,56	38,00

Since the result distribution is not parametrical, we have calculated the difference between the initial arithmetic mean and the final one expressed numerical and in percentages for the intensity lever of the 7 factors of personality, aforementioned.

The interpretation and analysis of the results:

To the experiment group, to the second testing, the score decreased in comparison to the first testing, in:

- **Nervousness**
- **Aggression**
- **Depression**
- **Irritability**
- **Extroverts/introverts**

To the same group, between the first and second testing the score increased in:

- Sociability
- Self control

CONCLUSIONS

Implementing outdoor education activities to the experimental group and seeing the results regarding the influence on the personality traits allows us to say that the means used have positively and significantly influenced the studied personality traits.

The obtained results prove that, although the students have an own structure of appreciation, the difference between the two testings consists in the very different structure and levels of appreciation, after implementing the outdoor education activities to the experimental group. The final results confirm the hypothesis of certain very different personality traits as structure and balance, depending on the effectuated activities and confirm the utility of outdoor education activities for influencing those personality traits. Effectuating the evaluation of the aforementioned traits depending on the nature and the researched interpersonal relationships, after the experimental group, one can say that these activities are indeed useful in developing the students' personality traits, which confirms once again the experimental hypothesis.

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