

ABSTRACT

The study reported in this paper was undertaken during autumn 2007 to assess the status of environmental education and awareness of eight-formers living in chosen localities of a different population range. The main objectives of the study were to determine the depth of pupils' knowledge and awareness of environmental issues and problems and their attitude to the environment. Is there a certain homogeneity of environmental awareness and attitudes among most schoolchildren at village, town and the capital? To test the veracity or otherwise of this widely held assumption. The study comprised a detailed questionnaire of a sample of 324 schoolchildren. The study was designed to assess the general characteristics, environmental knowledge, and behavioural pattern of the sample.

The research finding in the study indicated that positions of pupils result mainly from all-society views and less reverberate their own experiences. Informants can't contextualize agglomerated environmental problems with the others global ones yet and they perceive them separately. Only few informants are able to answer what a global problem means. Also a few of them can concretely enumerate just one of the global problems. Lesser of them have awareness of a sustainable growth. Absolute majority of them identify themselves with responsibility of the nature protection, but their proclamations don't correspond with their practice habits. The study indicated that children have low levels of environmental knowledge though. Just a half of the sample can explain term „environmental science“, only a fifth can differentiate between renewable and unrenovable resources. Sorting of waste is the most widespread and the most important working pursuit by children, though they can't always tell the right container from. In my opinion this statement of fact was caused by deficiency of environmental knowledge, even a basic one, and as much of deficiency of a real experience in nature.

Very low influence of formal education programmes, whether school or extracurricular, was declared by informants. The only question is whether it is actually missing or it's just unperceived. If they admit some influence, they mention family as the most frequently. Differences of environmental knowledge and behavior between children from localities of a different population range was also discovered. Eight-formers living in country-side seem to be less interested in global environmental problems but on the other hand they seem to be more active in practical working, expect sorting waste. A different population range of childrens place of residence shares significant but not decisive part of their environmental knowledge and behavior.