

RELEVANT ASPECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN THE VISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATORS OF A HOSPITAL

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ABSTRACT

Within hospitals, environmental education can motivate reflections and actions, institutional and professional, more responsible towards the environment, reducing potential environmental impacts of their activities. This manuscript aims to discuss relevant aspects of environmental education in these hospital institutions, based on the vision of its environmental educators. The research used descriptive-exploratory qualitative approach, carried out between August 2011 and January 2012, in a hospital group in southern Brazil. Data collection was based on semi-structured interview, involved nine individuals, and closed by empirical saturation. The data subjected to content Analysis, resulting in four categories. The first referred to the discussion of the relationship between consumption and the environment; the second discussed the issue of waste of health services; the third dealt with of educational awareness activities, based on art and lived, and the fourth, debated about the need for permanent and continuous actions of environmental education in hospitals. It is recommended that the search for alternatives to the confrontation of the responsibility of health institutions in the current environmental crisis should be based on a solid environmental education, awareness and reflective; acknowledged by an institutional policy that supports political, administrative, financial, and human actions.

Keywords: : Environment. Environmental Education. Nursing. Hospitals.

INTRODUCTION

We live in a time when two crises, public health and the environment, are converging with one another, increasing the destructive power of each. The joint effects of climate change, chemical contamination, and unsustainable use of environmental resources, aggravate the health problems throughout the world; topping up the pressure on health systems with capacities already quite scarce. At the same time, and paradoxically, the sector itself contributes to worsen the problems of environmental health, being a significant source of environmental damage, because of the products and technologies that employs, which consumes resources, the waste it generates and the structures that constructs and uses. Therefore, collaborates, albeit unintentionally, to worsen the environmental crisis, both in earlier steps, such as during and after the provision of health care⁽¹⁾.

Hospitals and healthcare workers can act to promote balance and environmental health, to adopt more sustainable practices in environmental and economic terms. However, "feel and live" with ecological problems does not guarantee, by

itself, a redirect of practices or an act more responsible towards the environment, whether in society or in the institutions of work. The confrontation of similar challenges and demands needs a broad process of environmental education (EE), focusing on different spaces and people, integrating various knowledge, through approaches too.

For this reason, studies that seek to investigate the EE process in health institutions can contribute to the spread of social practices more concerned with the environmental balance and planetary sustainability. This manuscript originates in dissertation⁽²⁾ guided by the following research question: "how does the EE in a hospital institution from the viewpoint of the workers directly involved in your planning and achieve?", and whose overall goal was "to describe how occur the EE in a hospital institution from the viewpoint of the workers directly involved in your plan and execute". One of the specific goals of this dissertation was to discussing relevant aspects of EE in hospitals, which are discussed in this article.

In this sense, the article in question intends to discuss relevant aspects of EE in health

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institutions, based on the viewpoint of its environmental educators, to encourage the development of new meanings (differentiated, plural and complex) to think about the relation human-society-nature in health institutions.

METHODOLOGY

The study guided by qualitative descriptive-exploratory approach. The individuals surveyed were workers from a hospital group in southern Brazil, involved in organization and/or running of EE activities (such as: seminars, lectures, meetings, technical visits and discussed, circus and theatre activities, exhibitions photographic, moments of local formations, etc.); which included members of the EE Core and key informants shown by them, totaling nine individuals (nurses, psychologists, technicians in work safety, technical education).

The survey and analysis of the data were between August 2011 and January 2012. The collection was based on semi-structured interview, ended by empirical saturation. The interviews structured and carried out in place holder, recorded digitally, and later transcribed; being guided by the following key issues: 1) Which means the environment for you? 2) What do you think about environmental issues? 3) In your opinion, how workers perceive and act in front of current environmental problems in the workplace? 4) What do you think when we talk about EE? 5) What do you think about the development of EE in hospitals? 6) As you see EE in this institution? 7) What do you think about the planning and organization of EE of this institution? 8) In your opinion, what effect the EE developed in this institution brings to the workers? 9) What does a nucleus of EE in a hospital?

Data analysis was based on content analysis and carried out with the help of Atlas.TI software®; resulting in four thematic axes. One of these axes discussed relevant aspects of EE in hospitals, based on the viewpoint of environmental educators, resulting in four categories, showed in sequence.

The project approved by the Committee of ethics in research with Humans hospital group studied (opinion No. 11-127/2011, 0156.0.243.164-11-CAAE), fulfilling the specific

legislation for this purpose. All respondents took part in the study by reading, accepted, and signing an informed consent, adopted the use of the letter "E", followed by a number (1, 2 ...), for their IDs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this research highlight relevant aspects of EE, reflected when on the projection of activities and actions of this kind within the hospital. Obviously, the considerations of the next categories do not realize the breadth of the subject, given the impossibility of treating the subject so vast and yet so booked, in a restricted space like a scientific article. Stand for, however, a contribution to the discussion and reflection.

Environmental education: "a way of thinking on the issue of consumption".

This category puts EE to question and reflect on the model adopted by humanity, centered on consumerism (often alienated) and on the idea of "to be". These questions not limited to the world of work, but extend to the private life of everyone.

It is an EE that interrogates the limits of an unsustainable society that consumes in excess and at the expense of environmental degradation. A society which finds the consumption with liberation, happiness, and social representation; where people seek new channels for identification and satisfaction, turning the consumer goods in synonyms. The relationship between EE and consumption displayed in the testimonials:

[...] I cannot look at EE as what we do to protect the endangered pet [...] While we do not change the way you view and relate to the question of consumption, I do not see [...] (E1).

[...] We were talking about consumption, that people do not send fix your television [...] people there said, "Gee is the environmental responsibility", but when you are going to take care of them, I am sure they are going to put their TV off and go buy another [...] (E5).

This consumerism, while a cultural standard, meaning, satisfaction and recognition to individuals from the consumption of goods and services; which associated with well-being and success. Therefore, preventing planetary collapse needs a transformation of these dominant cultural

patterns⁽³⁾.

The environment for an extended period, was looked at as a useful and inexhaustible stock of resources for human exploration. However, when you consider that people and societies are an integral part of the biosphere, it becomes urgent to need to contemplate and properly manage the capital exosystemic. When it is desirable to ask whether humanity has the understanding, wisdom, and maturity to be the guardian of this planet, instead of treating it as an inexhaustible material reserve⁽⁴⁾.

At this point, it is important to recognize that the human behaviors, crucial to the cultural identities and to the modern economic systems, are not fully controlled by the individual choices; to the extent that systematically reinforced by this cultural paradigm of consumerism. The men carved on systems that shape and hold your way to be at a level invisible — after all, standards, symbols, values, and cultural traditions that go with the growth of a person become "natural" for her —; associating the way use your leisure time, how often they update the wardrobe and even how to educate their children, with the purchase of goods and services. However, although they seem natural, these patterns are neither sustainable nor innate manifestations of human nature, but seized patterns, stimulated and reproduced⁽³⁾.

For the respondents, think in terms of consumption is an obligation of individuals and Governments; being indispensable to the claims EE in the workspaces. Faced with this logic, EE sets out to explore the extent of consumption while social and cultural practice complex, in the opportunity to awaken the "responsible consumer" of every being; that to manipulate (at all) by advertising and who are aware of your impact on the environment. Accordingly, governmental actions will also need to give an incentive for more sustainable economies rather than an instigation to consumption as a means of economic growth.

Therefore, the EE must overcome the desire and concern only with the preservation of the natural and confront the man with the (unquestionable redundantly) that he is inserted into something bigger, in an intricate web of relationships, in which consumption, as presented today, competes for the imbalance. When

speaking about consumption, the goal is to not only get people to consume less, but also inspire them and motivate them to forge efforts toward social change; mobilizing empathy, love, and link to this end⁽⁵⁾. When speaking, the intent is (also) see:

[...] EE is there: the awakening as we handled, how much we are puppets, how much we consume without conscience, we eat the wrong thing, we buy what you do not need, so my idea is that environmental education wake that somehow in some more in other less [...] (E1).

This statement makes an invitation to reflect on the way the media, advertising, business, and the State, acting on world culture, promoting, encouraging, and perpetuating economic interests, by showing the consumption of goods and services as the "great" human need, answer their existential demands. This cultural influence competes for the praise of an individualistic identity, since similar satisfaction regarded as something done, especially in the sphere of private and family field, under the false appearance of purely personal decision.

Faced with so many advertisements professing the consume as a synonym for happiness, illustrates the need and the challenge to make a critical reading of the media to not achieve sustainable practices. Acquire immunity against your power of persuasion is, undoubtedly, an extraordinary step towards planetary sustainability.

Environmental education: "It is very confused with the issue of waste".

This category puts it, in the hospitals, EE has linked to qualification around the proper waste segregation; particularly, because of regulations needing this type of training and the need of correct disposal, moved (mainly) by the existence of checks and the environmental costs of the inadequacies.

In fact, a series of specific legislation has forced health services to suit the goal of minimizing environmental damage they caused⁽¹⁾, especially in what refers to the management of waste generated; causing them to adopt correct measures for segregation, storage, and final disposal, addition of the obligation to offer the training of professionals

Nevertheless, for the subject of this research, environmental initiatives nurtured in "regulatory charges" will drive more to the Act of informing and to follow with laws; little stimulating the implementation of a solid institutional and policy management and corporate EE, that is able to promote effective changes in ways of thinking and acting of individuals. This reading shown in statements like:

[...] environmental education [...] is very confused with the issue of waste, [...] so is do the waste management plan, if I have that I am working with environmental education; then, teaching where to put the waste I am doing environmental education (E1).

[...] There has a lot of things to work with environment, waste not only, because sometimes the people focused because I think today is a despair [...] that is the least that is meet the legislation; waste is minimal, but still we did not get that (whispering). [...] (E3).

In fact, the theme emerges residue for society, for managers and workers how the environmental problem "more visible" affronted by the healthcare institutions; still being in the background for interventions: reduced consumption, energy efficiency, building more sustainable buildings, institutional, ecological footprint reduction among others. Is there a plausible justification for which qualifications and trainings in service based exclusively on waste; since this seems to be the major dilemma and (almost) the only legal claim in terms of the environment in health. There is a certain propensity for hospitals to limit the practice of EE needed and necessary training in this topic, the legal situation and to reduce risks of labor accidents and/or financial costs with the final disposal of waste.

The statement in sequence comes this vision:

[...] cared too much about this question, why? Because of the fine, because of financial, cost! [...] Well, the cost of treatment, the cost of accident with perfurocortante [...] (E3),

Of course, companies [which is valid also for hospitals, even if they are not companies] urged to consider the framework of legal charges your operation on the environment. This, because the official environmental agencies regulate, oversee and fine, charging that these institutions an environmental stance geared to the limits of

pollution possible. However, the EE cannot be limit to proper segregation or recycling. Today, when you talk in politics of the 3Rs (reduce, reuse, and recycle), has given great emphasis to reuse and recycle, forgetting the reducing of consumption—the dilemma of modern society⁽⁸⁾.

Obviously, facing a market logic which takes into consideration the preservation of the environment, the State cannot be the least state defended by liberalism; but the State needed the protection of the environment; not exempting the creation of legal instruments define the bases of proper public policies to environmental management. It is known, however, that even before the proposed legislation aimed at, first, sustainability, coming up in private and collective conflicts of interest⁽⁸⁾.

Then, you must take care of waste in the hospital, since this is one of the local dilemmas and there are many difficulties and lack of knowledge in terms of segregation, handling, storage, and disposal suitable^(6, 7,9); but it is not enough to "inform" what goes here or there, which the proper disposal or why do it. Next to the information need associated with the context and the ethical discussion on the need to minimize as much as possible, the environmental impacts of the hospital and demands of health aid. We can start with the report, however, very soon (if it is not possible at that exact moment), the approach must extend to the idea of sustainability and the construction of environmental.

Environmental Education: "the thing about awareness- it is that thing provocative, disturbing".

This category searched awaken, provoke and (re)sensitize the individual to the complexity of the environment, understanding this process as a vital step in the collective awareness and stimulate change. This practice would make a reviving of dream and potential to think and do differently. Similar approach is present in the testimonials:

[...] for people trying to wake up a little, close the gap between what happens out there and what happens to us in our lives [...] (E5).

[...] move with awareness-raising, education, training not even [...] And that is what I believe in EE. It is that thing provocative, disturbing, that

makes you really get out of inertia. If it is just for reproduction, good turn on the TV [...], But if it is to provoke and really upset, I think it would be, I do not think, it is extremely necessary. [...] I have talk about social issues, economic, political, cultural, religious [...] (E6).

In health institutions, a disturbing and provocative style EE tries to fulfill the role of, at first, awakening to the world by entering the be in the world to retrieve the human your human emotion, creativity, and sense of belonging to a whole; restoring a eticidade character and, therefore, liable to the immensity of the planetary web, in your infinite complexity.

Undoubtedly, an EE with such features ressignifica the connection of man with your "home", allowing and promoting the self-knowledge and the opening of dialogue with each other and the environment; leading to reflection about individual and collective choices that contribute to face and minimize the problems contemporary socio-environmental. Understand the attitudes and values related to the environment is what makes the subject feel in the world⁽¹⁰⁾.

This can be the necessary condition to forge an environmental rationality founded in human behaviors in harmony with nature; on principles of democratic life and cultural values, which result in social, ethical, and transforming practices⁽¹¹⁾. When you consider that there is a crisis of values in the center of the environmental problem, it is a role of education cause and upset the other to be and do different, what you know "is not an easy task; since it is here, a change culturally set up instrumental rationality and transformation of a model of society already entrenched.

Activities such as theatre, photography shows and cartoonists, music, circus activities, drama, movies, arts, experiences with nature, working with sensitive and senses are ways to disarm the people, stir the imagination, sense, and creativity; reinterpret values, concepts, and meanings of the environment for the "I" and "the whole".

This is therefore an EE who makes the listen, understand, feel, and express emotions and feelings for a rescue of the sensitivity and the emotionality of the individual and your sense of belonging to the environment; whose exercise can lead to confrontation of the crisis environmental, social, and environmental integration, stimulation of reflection, dialogue, and knowledge⁽¹⁰⁾. This

experience is useful to convince a skeptical society of the importance of transforming the dominant development model for global sustainability⁽¹²⁾; the critical sense and the exercise of citizenship and social and environmental responsibility⁽¹³⁾; for a closer the world, to be in it and with it. When the human bond of identification with this environment, which integrates, will compelled to take an ethical posture in the face of the Web of life.

There are to consider, however, that this EE should be permanent and associated with the practice, or not achieve success; what concerns the next category.

"Environmental education: it needs to be permanent, it has to work every day, everywhere".

It showed in this category that EE involves a learning that pervades the life of the individual and continues through it. For the respondents, educational actions for leakage to mobilize (within their possibilities), but, given the entrenched logic and alienated from society and risk society, not enough to raise awareness; and with that, do not appear as processors. They merely "fire safety" — the normative and fire inspections, claims of reducing final disposal costs of waste or the reduction of the risk of accidents at work, etc.

The testimonials below are statements that thought:

[...] promote a lecture, a seminar a year does not mean anything! [...] EE needs to be permanent! [...] must work every day, everywhere [...] (E2).

[...] the environment should be solid work [...] the hospital should do [...] if not already within a continuing education, you are putting out fire! [...] (E9).

Without doubt, when one considers that the risks of modernity, including the ecological, laid "between parentheses" — and in some ways not reflected, not seen; left hand, left to the other, placed away from the "I" — means the essentiality of educational activities of constant/permanent character. Only in this condition, EE may instigate, "poke" and provoke daily; what is valid, especially when the educational purposes not achieved or not achieved at once. So, as the surveyed, keep this permanent

process is a responsibility of the institution.

In addition, the mechanisms of modernity of time-space-place distance are very strong, so that sporadic actions and disarticulated, of a whole, despite help, reach individuals very promptly and punctually, not being able to convert into real changes in ways of being and acting (though there are exceptions). This is because they hardly result (for the majority) in identifying themselves with the environmental context or a feeling of belonging to the environment. A differentiated and resensitizing EE is only possible when viewed in this line of permanence, tightly created, and encouraged within the hospital, as part of an institutional policy that ensures an administrative, financial, and legal framework for your execution.

When the health institution embraces and flying this "flag of sustainability" by incorporating sustainable thinking into its own goals, as a knowledge to be built and consolidated locally, and not as mere regulatory apparatus; it becomes possible to adopt a new action spectrum. In the face of a solid institutional policy, there is a greater willingness to design and carry out permanent EE activities⁽¹⁴⁾.

The need for constant EE was expressed at the First Intergovernmental Conference on EE (Tbilisi, 1977) and in EE Treaty for Sustainable Societies and Global Responsibility (1992), recognizing that EE should apply to people of all ages, at all levels and occupational categories, formal and non-formal education, constituting a permanent and general learning⁽¹⁵⁾. The National Environmental Education Policy, in that same direction, preaches to take to the inclusion of EE at all levels and modalities of teaching, with its integration to the subjects, in a transverse continuous and permanent mode. It also proposes the creation, implementation and maintenance of professional training programs and processes on the environmental theme, in public and private institutions⁽¹⁶⁾; including, therefore, the area of health.

In this sense, the hospital must accept your responsibility in front of the environmental problems and face your share of contribution to the current crisis, launching a process of permanent education, systematic and comprehensive, based on reflection about concepts, beliefs, and values, in the search to stimulate and develop environmentally conscious

practices⁽¹⁷⁾. Without doubt, create such spaces for reflection is a crucial step for the change of behavior, for the better understanding of environmental issues and the promotion of a more conscious act on the part of health professionals⁽¹⁸⁾.

However, this educational process should be related to the real and should be experienced by individuals, approaching it to their day to day; in an attempt to awaken a greater relationship of belonging with "thing" around them and with what, in fact, contribute to be as it is and be as is, in terms of the environment.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The essential rescue of the relation between man and the environment needs involvement from all fields of the society, from schools to businesses, from rural to urban environments, from the individual, in your uniqueness, to the social collective, from private to public, from recreational spaces to work; in search of what today is known as sustainable society.

The findings of this research show that, when it comes to health institutions, the search for alternatives to deal with the current environmental crisis should be structured on a solid and continuous process of EE, based on the concreteness of an institutional policy in this context and in terms of environmental management.

Points, also, that this educational process cannot be solely an instrument to reduce risks arising from occupational accidents by improper waste disposal, or a way to meet the legal requirement and technical measures in force around the environment. It is necessary that this process be more broad, permanent, and interlaced to the practice, which explore the sensitivity and emotion of individuals, through artistic activities and aesthetic experiences with lived; but that also return to inform and clarify doubts, to give knowledge and to reflect the culture of consumption.

This survey also highlights that transformations can be made possible by the provocative actions and significant continuity in terms of EE, which can encourage people not just to think differently, but, thinking different, act different.

ASPECTOS RELEVANTES DA EDUCAÇÃO AMBIENTAL NA VISÃO DE EDUCADORES AMBIENTAIS DE UMA INSTITUIÇÃO HOSPITALAR

RESUMO

No âmbito hospitalar, a educação ambiental pode motivar reflexões e ações, institucionais e profissionais mais responsáveis para com o ambiente, reduzindo possíveis impactos ambientais em suas atividades. Este manuscrito objetivou discutir aspectos relevantes da educação ambiental nessas instituições, com base na visão de seus educadores ambientais. A pesquisa utilizou abordagem qualitativa descritivo-exploratória e foi efetuada entre agosto de 2011 e janeiro de 2012, com um grupo hospitalar do sul do Brasil. A coleta de dados baseou-se em entrevista individual semiestruturada, envolvendo nove indivíduos e foi encerrada por saturação empírica. Os dados foram submetidos à Análise de Conteúdo, originando quatro categorias. A primeira remeteu à discussão da relação entre consumo e meio ambiente; a segunda, abordou a questão dos resíduos dos serviços de saúde; a terceira, tratou das atividades educativas sensibilizadoras, alicerçadas na arte e no vivido, e a quarta, debateu sobre a necessidade de ações permanentes e contínuas de educação ambiental nos hospitais. Recomenda-se que a busca de alternativas para o enfrentamento da parcela de responsabilidade das instituições de saúde na atual crise ambiental passe por uma educação ambiental sólida, sensibilizadora e reflexiva, embasada em uma política institucional, que ofereça suporte político, administrativo, humano e financeiro para as ações.

Palavras-chave: Meio Ambiente. Educação Ambiental. Enfermagem. Hospitais.

ASPECTOS RELEVANTES DE LA EDUCACIÓN AMBIENTAL EN LA VISIÓN DE EDUCADORES AMBIENTALES DE UNA INSTITUCIÓN HOSPITALARIA

RESUMEN

En el ámbito hospitalario, la Educación Ambiental puede fomentar reflexiones y acciones, institucionales y profesionales, más responsables para el ambiente, reduciendo posibles impactos ambientales de sus actividades. Este estudio tiene el objetivo de discutir aspectos relevantes de la Educación Ambiental en estas instituciones, con base en la visión de sus educadores ambientales. La investigación utilizó el abordaje cualitativo descriptivo-exploratorio, y fue efectuada entre agosto de 2011 y enero de 2012, en un grupo hospitalario del sur de Brasil. La recolección de los datos se basó en entrevista individual semiestructurada, involucró a nueve individuos y fue finalizada por saturación empírica. Los datos fueron sometidos al Análisis de Contenido, originando cuatro categorías. La primera remitió a la discusión de la relación entre consumo y medio ambiente; la segunda trató sobre la cuestión de los residuos de los servicios de salud; la tercera sobre las actividades educativas sensibilizadoras, basadas en el arte y en lo vivido, y la cuarta, debatió sobre la necesidad de acciones permanentes y continuas de Educación Ambiental en los hospitales. Se recomienda que la busca de alternativas para el enfrentamiento de la parte de responsabilidad de las instituciones de salud en la actual crisis ambiental, pase por una Educación Ambiental sólida, sensibilizadora y reflexiva; basada en una política institucional, que ofrezca soporte político, administrativo, humano y financiero para las acciones.

Palabras clave: Medio Ambiente. Educación Ambiental. Enfermería. Hospitales.

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