

The Contribution of Education for Enhancing Natural Resources Better Utilization in Terms of Sustainability

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Abstract

Since natural resources utilization in terms of sustainability is an issue relevant to all disciplines and that among them education plays an important role, the purpose of this paper is to present an analysis of the contribution made by undergraduate higher education in Venezuela for a better understanding and the enhancing of learning on natural resources better utilization. The premise is that education has the mission to prepare professionals to make environmentally sound decisions and to participate responsibly in environmental sustainability. Accordingly, environmental education has to be seen as an axis across the curriculum in all the disciplines and professions. Since the impact of education on the students future behaviour and actions can be determinant, the analysis focus on the objectives, content and duration of the learning units on environmental issues that are found in the curriculum of 15 colleges of education in Venezuelan universities as well as the pedagogical approach suggested. The methodology followed is based on the curriculum content analysis under the Venezuelan Council of Higher Education Guidelines for Curriculum Development, the Ministries of Education and Environmental matters Guidelines for Environmental Education, and the Constructivist Approach in environmental education. The results indicate that natural resources utilization named as environmental education is found across the curriculum and that the learning approach suggested is Constructivist. Those will be presented in a comparative way by indicating national and regional characteristics, number of learning units devoted to environmental education, type of learning objectives suggested to educators, values regarding that matter to ensure that future teachers are well prepared to teach that subject, and sustainability, as well as conclusions and recommendations for improving the curriculum, the enhancing of learning, and for further research in other undergraduate studies in Venezuela and Latin American universities. Also there will be analyzed that the content of this paper is only a piece of a more comprehensive study designed to research and evaluate the quality of environmental education in Venezuelan undergraduate education.

Keywords: Curriculum, education, environmental, Venezuela