

## The environmental education in Calabria, Italy: The formation for teachers in service training

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**Abstract.** The innovation in the Environmental Education field is certainly to impart the understanding of complex relationships between man and environment (Caruso, 1988; Semeraro, 1988; Bardulla, 1980; Aloj, 1990). Surmounting the antagonism in the educative system (between the promoting of environmental conscience and the developing of economic and technologic system) (Ls Ferla, 1989; Leone, 1988; Aloj, 1996), the Environmental Education provides a system of teaching/learning founded upon interteaching activities (Bardulla, 1989). At the moment, the answer on behalf of teachers to this innovation is fragmentary or even absent. In the last few years, awaiting that the new ministerial competitive exams provide a qualified teaching staff in the Environmental Education field, some university researchers (University of Calabria) have started didactic experimentation at the various schools (primary, secondary and training-schools) (Moroni, 1989). These experimentations, in one way, have attested the effectiveness of some modern didactic strategies (planned and made by this pool of researchers), in another way, working near the teachers, they have pointed out the inconveniences, the problems, the difficulties which the teaching category meets, day by day, to programme and to realize whatever activity of Environmental Education (Tonioli, 1990-1997). For these problems the authors have decided to realize a project-idea; the creation of an "University Co-ordinating Network of Environmental Education" able, utilizing specific didactic materials (made and distributed by the same pool of researchers), to form the teachers and to help them in their class-work. To confirm the above-mentioned theory, before proceeding to realize the "University Co-ordinating Network of Environmental Education", the group of researchers has led a study among the teachers supporting the initiative. Coming from a concrete testing of school crisis and from the problems in relation to the formation for teachers in service training, the aim of following work was to create the experimental basis of this new university enterprise.

**The school crisis and the problems of Environmental Formation for teachers in service training.** Lately the school has assumed a trouble list; the primary education agency. Making the seat of socialization, recovery and therapy, the school has lost its cultural role; that seat where to develop the known competencies. The school-teaching, consequently, produces some knowledge which can be used just in the school. They cannot be transformed in ability, implement, competence and behaviour. So, what to do? Certainty, to find a solution, it is necessary to go back and to analyze the reasons of school crisis. Year by year, the school, born like an elite school and, secondly, turned a messes school, remains a completion structure. The school belongs to all people, but, in the same time, it is not for all people. Consequently, it is easy to understand the non-operating of teaching-learning relationship. The school can refind its specific role through the integrated educational projects. These last will must foresee the organization of significative experiences outside the school. These experiences will unwind at the non-school agencies, and they will not

have the school characteristics (a reorientation of traditional disciplines: the Environmental Education). To become part of this educational project, the school has to find a new identity. It will never be possible to talk about the "Transmitted School", but, it will be possible to talk about the "Constructive School". Consequently, it is necessary to have a new figure of teacher, As it is impossible to rely upon the starting formation, the teachers will must direct their attention to the formation in service training. With regard to this assertion, the University, as institution, can do one's best. It can train a teaching staff able to be researchers of themselves. 'This new potentiality will permit the teachers to adopt the new educational models. Certainly, relating to the formation in service training, in order that these new educational models can be adopted, it is important to analyze, throughout these years, the evolution of educational model concept and the evolution of its setting (Caravite, 1990-1997; Tonioli, 1990-1997).

**Materials and Methods.** The following research (the authors have taken up this study, still in a refresher way, in the nineties) has involved three hundred Cosenza's teachers (Galebria — Italy) by a Test concerning the quantity and the quality of Environmental Education activities organized and treated for the teachers formation in service training. The authors have, so, proceeded; 1) they have selected twelve schools (four schools for each school- attendance index level: primary, secondary and training schools); 2) they have selected twenty-five teachers for each school.

**Results.** The research has showed the following results (graphic 1): there is a percentage increase of quantity of formation's activities in the nineties as regards the eighties (this is more evident in the secondary school and in the training-schools as regards the primary schools); 2) although there is the evident above-said percentage increase, in the nineties, so as in the eighties, it is possible to note that the refresher activities are rich in «contents, but, too academic (they are difficult of access), moreover, they don't supply with methodological instruments the category of teachers and, the less, they offer a practical support for a whatever didactic experimentation.

**Conclusion.** Today, in Italy, especially in the south of Italy, the Environmental Formation in service training seems to remain static: an isolated episode. Awaiting the birth of real didactic laboratory, the southern teachers, compared with northern teachers, showed to need (so as the results attest), faithfully, a qualified attendance whether in relation to the didactic material that they can use, or in relation to the didactic methodologies that they can apply.

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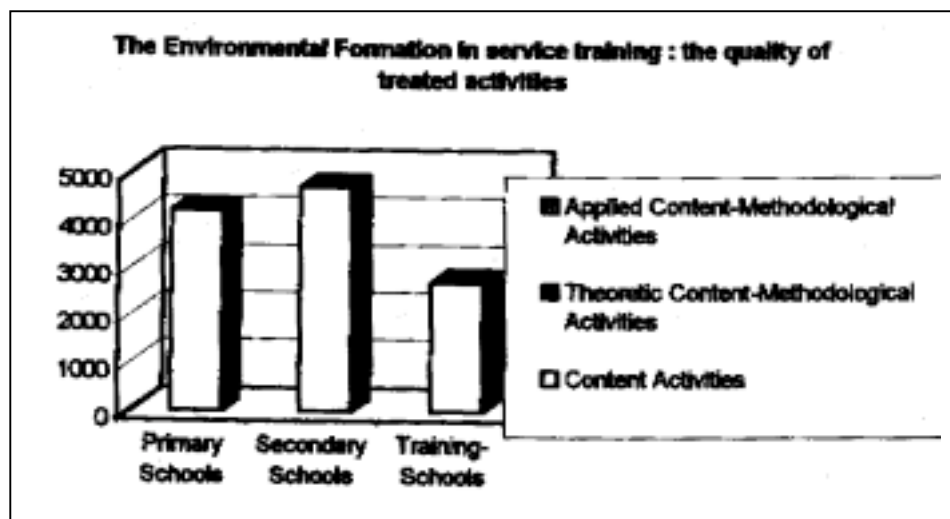
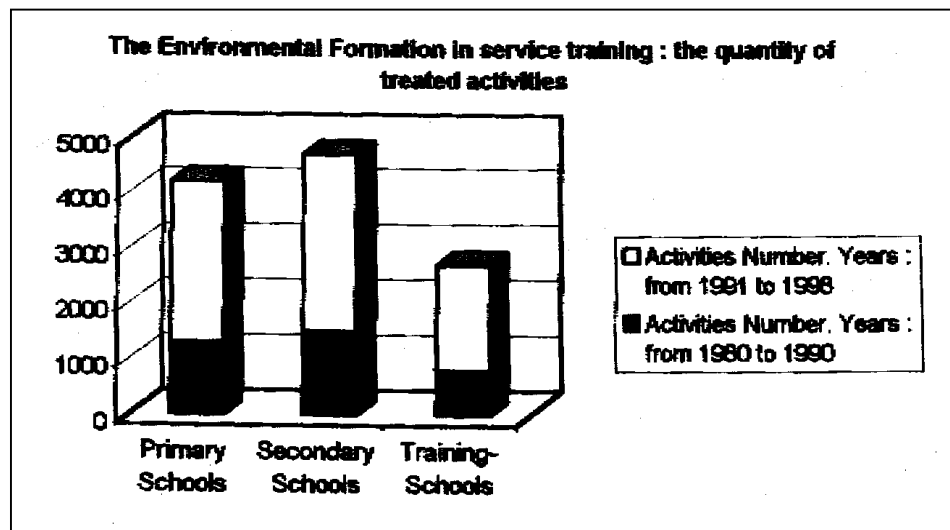
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Graphic 1: The teachers' answers about the quantity and the quality of Environmental Formation in service training activities organized and treated from 1990 to 1998