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**EDUCATION, THE COMPONENT OF QUALITY OF LIFE
AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract

Sustainable development implies economic development, environmental protection and social welfare, resulting an interdependence relation between the three pillars: economic, environmental, social. The society must act on material capital (through economic growth), environmental capital (through conservation, care for nature), human capital (through education, health insurance) in order to development be sustainable. Access to education improves interpersonal relationships and prepares a trained generation. The term quality of life involves describing and assessing living conditions. Human development is the essence of sustainable development. Human development implies the ability of the population to live a long and healthy life, access to education, participation in the social and political life of society. Education, income and health are the components of the human development index. The first part of the article shows the interest given to education in the European strategies on sustainable development. The term quality of life involves describing and assessing living conditions. It can be viewed from an objective point of view (based on statistical indicators provided by specialized institutions) and subjective point of view. The objective assessment presents the quality of life at the society level, it gives us a global picture, while the subjective appreciation is based on the individual's concepts of living conditions. At European level, quality of life is quantified through indicators structured in nine categories. This article analyzes the education component and its role in achieving human development.

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1. Introduction

Development is a multidimensional concept, covering areas such as economic, social, political, cultural, scientific, environmental, human. Development can also be translated through the qualitative increase of life (people get better knowledge).

Economic development means increasing the quality of life as a result of economic growth. The two concepts should be regarded as part to whole. Economic growth is conditional on economic development.

Economic growth and economic development have as a common element the quantitative increase in the production of material goods and services. They differ in qualitative terms. The two concepts have the following common characteristics: they are the result of the general development of society, but also the condition of a new development; aim to improve the overall state of the economy; have the same purpose, the improvement of the human condition, the living standard of the population (Pîrvu, 2017).

Economic growth is an economic concept, while economic development makes the link between economic, social, political, cultural, environmental, scientific, spiritual, human.

The human being is the target of the development process. The need for human development has led to the introduction of the "sustainable" term in economic language. This new development refers to the concepts of economic development (economic growth, livelihood) and adds the dimension of environmental sustainability (rational resource management). Sustainable development is probably the last stage of development.

The human being is a resource maker, a user of technology, which entitles us to place it on the axis of economic growth - economic development - sustainable economic development.

Human development is the essence of sustainable development. Human development implies the possibility for the population to live a long and healthy life, access to education.

Whatever the approach, sustainable development requires simultaneous assurance of economic development, environmental protection and social welfare, resulting in interdependence between the three pillars: social, economic, and environmental (Ion, 2012). A social approach involves eradicating poverty, ensuring good living conditions in terms of education, income, and the environment.

Population should be seen both in numbers, as well as in education and training. Education and training are key components of the social pillar of sustainable development. Access to education improves interpersonal relationships and prepares a trained generation. This article highlights the interest given to the education component in achieving sustainable human development worldwide. The main meetings focusing on sustainability are reviewed.

2. Problem Statement

The Brundthland Report (1987, p.8) specifies the role of the educational system in implementing the new concept of sustainable development: teachers around the world will play a crucial role in the exercise of this report.

Development is the premise of improving the quality of life. In 1990, the concept of "human development" was highlighted in The first UNDP World Report (1990).

Education is a basic dimension of the Human Development Index (HDI) alongside health and income. It was first calculated in 1990 by combining indicators of life expectancy at birth, GDP per capita, and level of education (literacy rate, enrolment rate in school).

According to the specialized literature and the studies carried out, two methods of measuring human development have been highlighted: analytical and synthetic (much more used). Quantification of human development through synthetic indicators takes into account the following elements: longevity, education level, living standards.

Human development is experiencing qualitative progress under the influence of education. Education is the decisive variable of this index. Consequently, it was necessary to rethink. Schooling is monitored from enrolment until reaching a medium level. Progress is recorded if the expected period coincides with the average period.

The human being is the essence of sustainability. Hart has delivered the durability matrix that presents economic, social and environmental sustainability in relation to the survival needs (Hart, 1997, p. 74). The education component contributes to the creation of goods and services (economic sustainability), helps to increase the quality of life (social sustainability). Education is the basis of environmental concern (environmental sustainability).

Poverty alleviation, education and health, gender equality are central concerns related to human development, according to the Millennium Development Goals (2000, p.5): eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; universal access to primary education; promoting gender equality; reducing infant mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV / AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

The transition to the information society is considered a step towards achieving sustainable development worldwide. The information society has an impact on the social pillar of sustainable development (impact on health care through e-health, solidarity and social protection, labour market, education and lifelong learning, these being some of the objectives of sustainable development).

The Declaration of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002 September 4, p.4) reiterated the importance of continuing education and training in achieving sustainable development. It has been reaffirmed the idea that human being is at the heart of the concerns of sustainable development, with the right to freedom, peace, education, adequate living standards, lack of any form of discrimination.

The Europe 2020 Strategy complements the ideas of sustainable development through the interest in smart, sustainable, inclusive growth. The objectives of the new strategy are grouped into five areas, designed to update the goals of sustainable development: employment; growth, development, innovation; climate change and energy; education; poverty and exclusion). The strategy is based on three principles (smart, sustainable, inclusive growth), proposes four objectives (economic, general support development, technological, educational, social). The educational objective seeks to increase the level of education, in particular by reducing the dropout rate to less than 10% and by increasing the share of the population aged 30 to 34 with 40% in the tertiary education (EUROPE 2020 A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, 2010, p.9).

The concept of "quality of life" lies at the intersection between the sphere of economics and sociology. The concept is due to the biological evolution of the human being, the technical-scientific progress, the development of the intellectual potential (Hamuranu & Turcanu, 2009).

3. Research Questions

Education is a perpetual activity. It is a resumption of the previous experience, which adds to the previous experience. I wanted to analyze some aspects of education for the period 2007-2017 through the following questions:

- which was the share of people attending a form of education?
- what was the evolution of school abandonment?
- what was the level of digital competence?
- did Europeans know foreign languages?
- were Europeans interested in long life learning?
- what form of education (public or private) did Europeans prefer?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of research is a sum of the economic, social, educational factors. Their interpenetration leads to performance. Positive results support human development. An educated person is able to fold any organizational position. The educational factor has a major role in human resource development. Education is one of the important tools by which society stimulates, guides and controls development processes. The school realizes the mobilization and affirmation of the human energies of society. The quality of the school and the quality of social development are strongly correlated. The aim of the paper is to highlight the role of education in achieving human development

5. Research Methods

Social documents analysis has helped me to capture sociological, economic interferences in order to verify human actions and activities, people and interpersonal relationships. This paper presents a theoretical approach to the concepts of sustainable development, human development, quality of life. At European level, the quality of life is quantified through indicators on following categories: living conditions, productivity, health, education, social relations, security, governance, environmental conditions, satisfaction. The indicators on the education component are analyzed. These indicators quantify the quality of life at European level

6. Findings

An educated, qualified human resource contributes to economic growth and development. The human being is the foundation of the idea of development. The education component consists of four subcategories: educational attainment, self-reported skills, lifelong learning, opportunities of education.

At the level of member states of European Union, the " Educational attainment", indicator increased in 2007-2017. In 2007, 20.5% of Europeans aged 15-64 were enrolled in a tertiary education system. Annually the value of the indicator increased, reaching 27.9% for 2017. From the statistical data provided, we can see that the largest percentage are the persons aged between 25-34.

In 2007, a percentage of 42.2 Europeans aged 15-64 had upper secondary school, post secondary school, with a small increase for 2017, only 42.7%. At this level of education, the highest percentage was recorded in people aged 20-24 years old, 60.2% for 2007, and in 2017 the value reached 62.5%.

The upper secondary, post secondary and tertiary education indicator has also grown in the past 10 years, from 64.5% to 71.9%. Within this indicator, the highest values were recorded by those aged 25-34.

The indicator “Less than primary, primary and secondary education”, unfortunately, records small values. In 2007, only 35.5% of Europeans aged 15-64 had this level, down to 28.1% in 2017. This decline is daunting, against the targets set by the 2020 Strategy on Literacy.

A positive aspect is observed in the "Early leavers" indicator, which showed a decrease among the population aged 18-24 years old. Thus, in 2007, 16.5% of the population left school. The indicator's value for 2017 was 10.9%. 9.2% were employed in 2007, and only 4.8% in 2017. Among those who left school early, 4% were looking for a job in 2017, while 2% did not want to work.

“Self reported skills” category shows (Figure 01) the percentage of the population with digital competences and numbers of foreign languages known. Although in all meetings the importance of the information society was specified, only 59% of Europeans had basic knowledge of digital competences in 2015. The percentage increased to 61% in 2017.

The “Individuals' level of digital skills” highlights a very gratifying aspect of the need for digital competence in the information society.

In the chart below, we see the percentage of Europeans with digital competences in 2015 according to age and level of education. A percentage of 78% of Europeans (16-24 years old) in the low-education category had computer skills in 2015. 84% of those with the same age, with medium education and 94% of those with high education had digital knowledge. As far as the occupation of Europeans with digital competences, 68% were employed and 47% did not have a job.

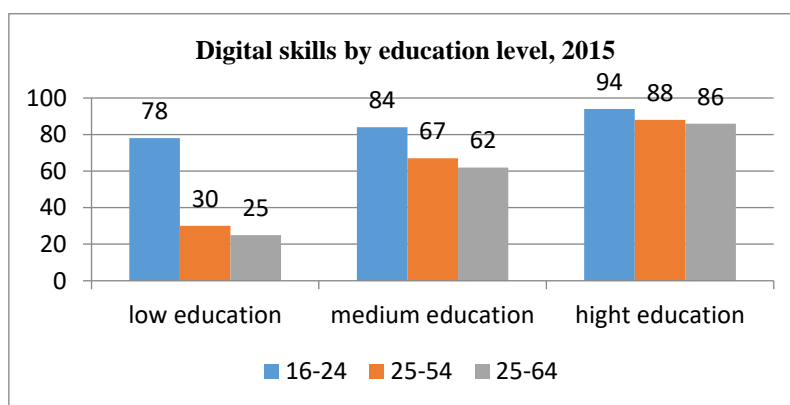


Figure 01. Digital skills by education level, 2015 (Source: www.eurostat.com)

In 2007, 37% of Europeans did not know any foreign language (37.1% were male, 36.9% were female). In the same reference year, 38.4% of population knew a foreign language, 17.6% of Europeans knew two foreign languages, while 7% of population knew three foreign languages.

The "Lifelong learning" indicator shows “Participation rate in education and training (last 4 weeks)”. In 2007, 8.6% of Europeans aged 18-74 who had less than primary, primary and lower secondary education participated in different forms of education. The indicator increased to 9.3% for 2017.

A percentage of 57.6% of 18-24 years old participated in a form of education in 2017. The gap is very high compared to the percentage of citizens aged 20-34 years old, which only 16.5% participated in a form of education.

A percentage of 16.7% of Europeans with upper secondary and post-secondary education participated in 2007 in education. This indicator rose annually. In 2017, 17.7% of Europeans participated in different forms of education. 10.5% of Europeans with tertiary education attended a form of education in 2007, and in 2017 the indicator reached 12.1%. The graph shows that Europeans aged 18-24 years-old have given the highest interest to continuing education regardless of the level of education in 2017. Citizens aged 20-34 interested in continuous education were those with upper secondary education (Figure 02).

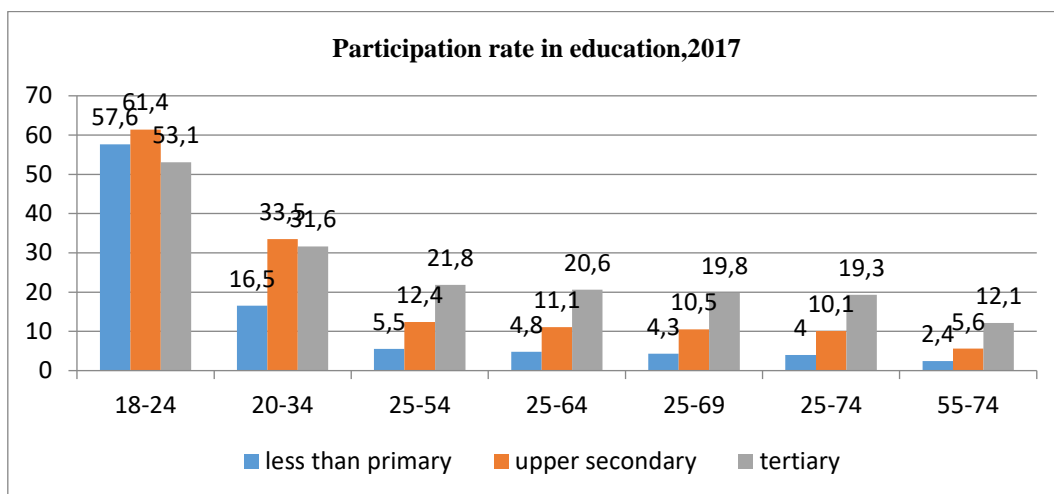


Figure 02. Participation rate in education, 2017 (Source: www.eurostat.com)

“The participation / enrolment in education” indicator shows a decrease in the percentage of enrolled persons in the public education system for 2010-2012, with a decrease from 85.1% to 82.7%. For the same period, interest turned to private education institutions, so 14.9% of Europeans chose these forms of education in 2010. The percentage increased for 2012, reaching 17.3%.

7. Conclusion

The human-being is the target of the development process. The human-being is a material resource maker, a user of technology, which entitles us to place it on the axis of economic growth - economic development - sustainable economic development. Human development is the essence of sustainable development. I wanted to highlight the interest given to the education component in achieving sustainable human development worldwide.

As a result of the educational aspect of the quality of life, positive and negative aspects of society's evolution are observed.

According to the Europe 2020 Strategy, it is desirable to increase the level of education, in particular by reducing the dropout rate to less than 10% and by increasing the share of the population aged between 30 and 34 with 40% in terms of graduating a tertiary education.

Annually, the value of the tertiary education indicator rose. The indicator reached 27.9% in 2017. From the statistical data provided, it is noticeable that the majority of the persons are aged between 25-34 years.

A positive aspect is observed in the indicator "Early leavers", which showed a decrease among the population aged 18-24 years old. Thus, in 2007, 16.5% of the European population left school. In 2017, the indicator "Early leavers" registered the value of 10.9%.

The Individuals' level of digital skills highlights a very gratifying aspect of the need for digital competence in the information society. A percentage of 78% of Europeans (16-24 years old) with the low-education category had computer skills in 2015. 84% of those with the same age, with medium education and 94% of those with high education had digital knowledge.

Europeans aged 18-24 years-old have given the highest interest to continuing education, regardless of their level of education in 2017. Citizens aged 20-34 interested in continuing education were those with upper secondary education.

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