

The Handprint Initiative, Empowering Teachers and Students towards SDGS Actions

Wendy Quetzal Morel Schramm and Pablo Ruz Salmones
Humboldt University/ Grupo Ya Quedó

Abstract

Environmental Education is all about values, attitudes, ethics, and ACTIONS. It is a way of thinking and a way of practice. It is a positive contribution to counteract the “doom and gloom” and “helplessness” that many feels about the enormity of environmental and social problems.

However, it is somewhat worrisome, then, to consider that after some fifty years of development and implementation, there is evidence to suggest that no positive behavior is created. Previous studies shown that students’ attitudes towards the environment are marked by an increasing apathy. The future of our world is uncertain, and Environmental Education plays the most significant role in shaping it.

The Handprint Initiative was born out of the need for a new pedagogical approach to deal with the current global challenges. The main objective is to empower so they become Change-makers for our common future and is based on the Handprint concept, which states that solving all environmental issues is possible by taking individual and collective positive action.

The Handprint Initiative is integrated by three steps:

1. Identify the intention, interest and attitudes in students and teachers.
2. Integration of the Handprint concept towards Sustainable Development Goals and key competences for sustainability (UNESCO, 2017)
3. Evaluate the changes in the interest and attitudes in students and teachers.

To be able to identify the students attitudes we developed a survey based on the instrument design by the ROSE research (Schreiner & Sjøberg, 2004) and adapted by Vázquez & Manassero (2005). This instrument has been tested and adjusted to identify five different attitudes: ecoapathy, pessimism, naturalism, ecocentrism, scientism.

Keywords: Attitudes; ecoapathy; empowerment; global challenges; self-efficacy