

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION VIA TELEVISION: Eskisehir Camlica District Case**

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### **ABSTRACT**

We define an environmentally aware individual as: someone who has knowledge about the ecological principles and relations, who cares about environmental problems and events, who knows the meaning and significance of the social, political and economic aspects of environmental problems, and who can organize their close environment to solve these problems. However, we encountered a target society that was only partially aware of the environmental problems and events. The individuals of this society had very little knowledge regarding ecological principles and their social, political and economic aspects and relationships. A study was conducted on women aged 15 and above who live in the Camlica district of central Eskisehir. These women were unemployed and uneducated housewives. As these women were not aware of environmental problems, they were distant to any solutions. This is the basic cause of their inability to organize their neighborhood.

As a result of the aforementioned study, it can be inferred that education is an inevitable necessity to carry the targeted society to the position of environmentally aware individuals. Television is considered to be a good educational tool regarding education in environmental matters, especially when targeted towards a group with a high ratio of television watching habits as opposed to reading habits. With these considerations, the properties of an environmental education program must be determined. To summarize, an environmental education television program which appeals to the target society in a sequence from simple to complex, general to specific is capable of captivating the interest of the target society for a duration long enough to achieve its objectives. This program must be presented clearly and understandably by an aurally and visually appealing and effective host for the audience to be able to comprehend the program.

**Keywords:** Environmental awareness, distance education, environmental education, environmental education via TV.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Serres states that the world has become "a victim" which was once seen as an enemy in his book "Contract via Nature" and according to him the hope for the future is sustained in this way: In order to preserve the world we should make a decision about the peace among ourselves and in order to preserve ourselves we should make a decision about the peace with the world (Serres, 1992).

In fact the world is not presented to human as an infinite tool that he/she can arbitrarily use and the humanity will reach an end once the world is terminated. Nevertheless the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century should have been awaited until the human can conceive that something is going wrong. So that the 60's were become the time that the human realized the developing pollution and the fact he/she himself/herself has been the cause of the pollution. Briefly the environment where all of the species with him/her exist and sustain all of their activities has been becoming hard to retain life. When it's realized that something should be done the first meeting was organized for the protection of environment. The first declaration which was a consequence of the the meeting realized by UN in 1972 entitled "Human and His Environment" was a call to protect and develop the environment for the benefit of all humanity and future generations. International Program for the Environment has been initialized as an addition to United Nations Environment Program in 1975 designated according to the Stockholm Declaration. Environmental education could be defined as the recognition and discernment of the values, attitudes and concepts about the bio-physiological and social environment of human. In other words the environmental education is a process that grows individuals who are aware of their environment with the knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and experience. Also these individuals should have determination for resolving the present and future problems as persons or people and should be satisfying their needs without harassing the future generations. UNESCO defines the individual who has the awareness of environment as follows:

- Possessing the information on ecological principals and relations
- Being aware of the environmental issues and incidents
- Knowing the social, political and economical meaning of the environmental issues
- Having the information about the possible resolutions for the issues
- Having the capability to organize his/her close vicinity for resolutions (<http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/confintea/pdf/6a.pdf> retrieved on 29. 07. 2009).

When the importance of the problem has been considered in mind it could be said that the environmental education should become a part of a lifelong teaching process. Moreover the anxiety with the protection of environment should become a dominant value of the society. Consequently how is the educational system for making this anxiety as a dominant value with intent of lifelong education realized arises as a question? For the sake of the importance of the issue environmental education programs that have been implemented in all categories of education would become an answer. Hence the individuals who have personal awareness of environment could be raised in the very early stages of age within the process of teaching and learning. By the way the question with the individuals who were left out of conventional education while having a larger population than others who were taught properly is appeared. Distance education would be a choice which is "a system of education model where the students and teachers in different settings realize their learning and teaching process with communication technologies and mail" (Isman, 1998, p.23). Distance education plays an important role in the education of people who have remained outside conventional learning. The utilization of distance education in the environmental education, which is an important issue for the benefit of humanity, is a necessity. Distance education is one of the best ways to resolve the problem provided with its ever developing technology.

"With the advance of educational technologies The tools and the forms which provide<sup>204</sup>

learning and teaching enhanced, diversified and began to correspond the different educational needs in society" (Sharma, 1997, p.5).

Basically speaking the educational media which have been used in distance education system remain three dimensional: Printed material, broadcast and face to face communication (Alkan, 1996, p. 245). Radio, television, teleconference, computer networks, viewdata and teletext remain as the branches of broadcasted distance teaching. Even though new technologies are added to the distance education system everyday television remains important in its privileged position in Turkey. The features that make television exceptional in environmental education can be counted as:

- It is a familiar media for everyone
- It connects motion and movement in one setting
- It makes the complicated and abstract concepts explicable by the way of visual simulation
- It has effectiveness in presenting the unknown and new environments
- It has an option of content repetition
- It can summarize the issues at hand
- It has effectiveness in presentation

Sharma states where the distribution of the printed material is considered then the role of radio and television in spreading the knowledge about environmental issues enhances. In fact very extensive people of the society who have been separated by geographical and economic bounds can be reached with the use of electronic media (Sharma, 1997, p.9). Eventually television is one of the most important electronic means that can be utilized in environmental education where bigger amount of masses considered.

The purpose of this study is developing a proposal for the features of the TV programs that will raise awareness in targeted individuals with greater environmental responsibility. In order to develop this proposal the attitudes towards either watching television and/or environmental issues is determined.

While the questionnaire is being developed the individual with an awareness of environment as recognized and identified by UNESCO became a guideline. Afterwards the facilities and limitations of television as educational media and the features that such television program should hold are determined and then program proposal is developed.

## **PURPOSE**

To determine the necessary properties of an educational television program intended for a targeted audience with significant properties and to induce environmental awareness in the targeted audience. The following research questions were examined. Regarding television;

### **What Are The Traits Of The Targeted Audience?**

#### **A. From the viewpoint of television watching habits;**

- Do the targeted audience own TV sets?
- How many hours do the targeted audience watch television?
- What kinds of programs are viewed most?

- B. From the viewpoint of the level of information about the environmental issues; The level of information about the environmental problems and events
- Why does air pollution occur?
  - What is global warming?
  - What is ground pollution?
  - What is noise pollution?
  - What is water pollution?
  - What is understood by the term "recycling of solid waste"?

#### **Limitations of the Study**

- This particular study was conducted on women in the Camlıca district of central Eskisehir aged 15 and above, whose only responsibilities were being house chores and who never received any formal education.
- The communication is only transmitted via the television program, which has no particular aim of educating people about the environmental issues.
- The references are taken from the sources that are reached through literature review
- Also the answers are taken from the survey that has been realized through field study make another limitation.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This study depicts television usage habits and basic environmental knowledge in a specific setting.

#### **Study scope and sample population**

The scope of this survey is limited to unemployed housewives residing in Camlıca district of central Eskisehir. The survey sample for this study was selected on a basis of general information regarding district residents obtained from local authorities.

#### **Headman and from the District Houses Responsible**

The district was established mainly by workers of the Sumer Bank Cotton Factory during the second half of the 1960's. Immigrants from neighboring cities, towns and villages contributed to the establishment of the district. A second wave of immigration took place in the 1980's, once again sourced by towns and villages of Eskisehir.

The driving force behind immigration has been educational opportunities for children, and the desire to live in a city. Another wave of immigration began in the year 2000. It must be stated that a great amount of immigration was lasting mainly sponsored by the eastern and southeastern regions of Anatolia during this study.

The number of streets within this district at the time of this study was approximately 350. Based on the aforementioned information, 18 streets were chosen as a sample and it has been decided that a 5% sample of the population would be sufficient to represent the field of women aged 15 and above residing in the Camlıca district of Eskisehir. For the determination of the streets included in the sample population, the district was divided into three separate residential units, with 6 streets from each unit providing the sample.

As such, it was ensured that the demographic information obtained would reflect the district as a whole. For the determination of sample streets in each unit, causal sampling was used. The streets to be surveyed were selected on the basis of geographical distribution. The primary streets were selected from the oldest residential area of the district: Baysallar, Yilmazsoylu, Ozdemirler, Ilke, Coskunay and Tepebasi streets. The streets of residents from the 80's to be surveyed were Cobanlar, Figen, Uzunlar, Sümerler, Topcam and Yesiloba. The streets of eastern immigrants to be surveyed were Ayseli, Yeniköy, Batman, Yelkenli, Şehit Adnan Yüksel and Derepinar.

### **Data and Collection of Data**

The following data was collected for the achieving the research objectives: Information about the television ownership of the targeted audience and viewing habits, most viewed program types, their views on environmental programs, the perceived reason for air pollution, the perceived meaning of global warming, the perceived reason for ground pollution, the perceived definition of noise pollution and of the recycling of solid waste, and the willingness to participate in such a program. A survey was developed while collecting the data. The survey consisted of 31 questions, of which 30 were multiple choice and one were being a question regarding observations. The survey questions regarding television were prepared with assistance from producers and directors of television programs. Environmental questions were prepared with assistance from the teaching staff of the Anadolu University Environmental Engineering department. 100 copies of the survey were prepared. The surveys were distributed on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September, 2006. Due to the fact that some of the participants were illiterate and therefore incapable of reading and understanding the survey, 52 participants were interviewed while the remaining 48 surveys were collected on the same date. The field study came to an end on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

### **Analysis of the Gathered Data**

The surveys were individually analyzed and coded. The number of completed surveys evaluated was 48, while the number of surveys filled based on interviews were 52. The total number of surveys analyzed was 100. The inventory of the surveys was conducted by hand. Due to the specific nature of the research, the expression of the findings as numerical and percentage information were found to be sufficient, with no other statistical analysis performed. Nevertheless, the relationships between different variables were established when deemed necessary.

## **FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION**

In this section, the findings of the survey analysis in accordance with the research objectives are provided.

### **Socio-economic Properties of the Population**

Under this heading sample population is questioned for their age, marital status, house residency, educational status, family origins in city, income levels.

14% of the populations are in between 15-25 years of age, 23% of them are between ages of 25-35, 22% are 35-45 and 37% of them are at the age of 45 and above. 89% of them are married and %11 is singles. Among the population, only 6% of them are living alone in their apartments and %18 of them are living as two people in an apartment. %8 of them is living as three people and the people living as four remain %39. More crowded of the population are 29%.

**Table: 1**  
**Target Population's Level of Literacy**

<b>Illiterates</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>Primary School Graduates</b>	<b>51%</b>
<b>Middle School Graduates</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>High School Graduates</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Higher School Graduates</b>	<b>6%</b>

14% of sample population is illiterates. 51% of them remain primary school graduates. 9% of them are graduates of middle school and 17% of them remain as high school graduates. Most of the high school and higher education graduates are among the ages of 15-25. Most of the illiterates and the primary school graduates are above the age of 45. 60% of the population is Eskisehir natives and the rest 40% is immigrants. 14% of natives had come from the towns and villages of Eskisehir vicinity and 36% of rest had come from neighboring cities and become Eskisehir's street residents.

However there remained some immigrants coming from Kars (4%), Erzurum, Elazig, Malatya, Samsun, Istanbul and Ankara. 4% of them remains as immigrants from Bulgaria. As for the level of income, 79% of them have an income level of 350-1000TL. Most of the contactee's described their income level as minimum wage. %5 of them did not have any income and feed them from the municipalities hash.

The subjects generally live in crowded households with large families. The education level is low, and more than half immigrate from neighborhood cities, towns and villages to settle into the district with low income levels.

**Their Interest Levels Regarding Television, Books, Newspapers and Magazines**

The following findings represent the level of interest of the target population regarding television, books, newspapers and magazines: %99 of the population has TV sets and 25% of them have two or more sets. 56% of the populations have their TV sets in their living rooms and 17% of them have them in their halls. Subjects who have two or more TV sets put them respectively in this order: Primarily living room, the kitchens follow and the rest of them remain in bedrooms.

**Table: 2**  
**TV Watching Rates in the Region**

<b>1 hour</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>2 hours</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>4 hours</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>Halfday watching</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Full day watching</b>	<b>21%</b>
<b>Watching none</b>	<b>2%</b>

People who watch the TV half day long set are 26% of rates. Both 2 hour watchers and the people who watch it full day long have a ratio of 21%. 17% of them watch it for 4 hours and 10% of them watch it for 2 hours. Subjects who never watch TV are 2% of the population. The variable of age has been found significant.

For instance young people who are of 15-25 years of age watch TV between 4 hours to all day long. 41% among 45 years of age and above watch it for 1 to 2 hours. With a rate of 57%, news programs are the most watched ones among the program types. TV series and movies have a %50 rate. Women’s programs follow after the latter. The rate for Anadolu University TV Channel TVA is only 7%. When people were asked if they would watch a program regarding environment 94% of the population answered positive and the rest 6% replied negative. Nearly all of the subjects own televisions. More than half of the women surveyed watch television for 4 hours a day, with viewing times spread throughout the day. The primary viewing preferences are the news, TV series’ and movies. Almost all participants stated that they would be willing to watch movies about the environment. Regarding newspapers, books and magazines, almost half of the participants indicated that they never read newspapers, books or magazines. Twenty percent of those indicated that they read religious books and the Koran. As such, the ratio of book reading is merely 25-30%. 37% of the participants who stated that they read newspapers also indicated that they would suffice with merely reading the first page of the newspaper.

As a result, it can be said that more than half of the subject population watch television when their chores are completed, while the ratio of reading newspapers, books or magazines is very low.

### Measured Knowledge Regarding Environmental Pollution

Under this heading the answers regarding the questions concerning the prospective participation of subjects to the programs regarding environment were examined such as:

Air pollution, global warming, ground pollution, noise pollution, water pollution, recycling of solid waste. About air pollution 95% of subjects answered the option about burning of the fuel that causes air pollution regardless of other options.

**Table: 3**  
**Distribution of Answers Concerning the Question**  
**“What is Global Warming?”**

Warming of All Species	4%
Increasing of Average Air Temperature	47%
Boiling of Water	1%
No Answer	49%

49% of test subjects did not answer the question about global warming. 47% of them gave the correct answer by choosing the option “Increasing of Average Air Temperature”. Hence the answers indicate that the half of the population do not have information about global warming.

The question about the ground pollution was answered with the option “meddling of chemical waste to the ground” by 62%. 24% of them thought the food remnants meddling the ground is the correct option. The rate of correct answers for the noise pollution is 91% and %87 replied correctly for the question concerning water pollution.

**Table: 4**  
**Distribution of the Answers Concerning the Question About**

<b>"Recycling of Solid Waste"</b> <b>Could the Solid Waste be Recycle</b>	
<b>Yes:</b>	<b>69%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>38%</b>

69% of the population finds the recycling of solid waste possible. 38% of them of say they are impossible. A question concerning the waste which is recyclable was answered correctly by 80%. 18% of the population finds the plastic material is not recyclable. When it is asked what is the solid waste coming out of the house, 59% answered as food remnants and 60% also stated it is ash. 24% of them answered that solid waste is comprised of packages. The coal was used as fuel in Camlica so far. However the natural gas have been provided by the municipality this year so it is thought that the amount of ashes that comprise solid waste would decrease. Residents state that they could not use natural gas so far due to the financial reasons. 65% of the population finds the recycling process important or very important. %30 finds it useless and time consuming. People who put out the packages separately are 33% and 62% of them does not do it. 9% of them burn their garbage. 2% of them bring their garbage to the detergent seller in the street. 40% of the test subject group thought that recycling solid waste was impossible.

Thirty percent of the group thought that recycling solid waste was unimportant or time consuming. A high ratio of solid waste is given to the employees without doing the decomposition. Eventually, 80% of those admitted to be willing decomposition and they give the solid waste to the garbage man. The ratio of correct answers to incorrect answers regarding air, noise and water pollution is high. The ratio drops too slightly above half regarding ground pollution while the correct knowledge regarding global warming is also about half. %40 of the population

**What are the Suggestions of the Population about the Resolution to the Problems?**

When the people are asked about their opinions regarding the resolution to the given problems most of them omitted the question. Rest of them gave their demands like "our roads should be paved with asphalt" and "our garbage should be taken by the people in charge in exact timing" or "persons who put their garbage outside earlier should be punished."

**Research Outcomes**

This study was conducted on uneducated, unemployed home-bound females aged 15 and above living in the district of Camlica in central Eskisehir. It indicates that the target population has a social structure in which most of the time available is consumed with house chores and watching television. Moreover the rates of newspaper, book and magazine reading is very low.

The population is also undereducated and has low income levels. Their perception of the environment is limited to the street they live on, and that environmental pollution can be averted by paving asphalt on their street, planting trees, and imposing penalties on neighbors for disposing with garbage at incorrect hours.

The targeted population is knowledgeable about the fundamental problems of air, ground, water or noise pollution. However they do not have the properties of the individual who has environmental awareness. For instance 40% of them think that the recycling of solid waste is impossible. 30% of them find it useless and time consuming. Also they are unable to develop suggestions about the resolutions for the environmental issues. When half of the population was interviewed they stated that the sources of information about the environmental issues are the women's programs and the news from popular press.

In sum the public that will be targeted by TV programs is aware of the environmental problems and events. However they don't have any opinion about the social, political and economical meanings of these problems. They are unable to develop and resolutions for the problems at hand and also they don't have the desire to do anything about these issues by themselves or their close vicinity. The general belief appears to be that the continuation of their lives in a carefree manner lies in the hands of authorities.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION VIA TELEVISION AS A DISTANCE EDUCATION MEDIUM**

The target public that has been determined in their attitudes towards environment and television watching will be targeted by television programs for increasing their sensitivity about the environmental issues. These programs should have certain properties and qualities. However the properties of television as an educational medium primarily examined here.

### **PROPERTIES OF TELEVISION**

Television is generally perceived as a technical or physical instrument, which transfers the message by means of signals. However, in this study, it is discussed as a media, which produces communication products and uses cultural and aesthetic conventions to create a "text". (Fiske, 1996)

It is possible to list the features of television in this aspect such as:

- Television is an electronic device in which people physiologically perceive images as living pictures. As such, it is an easily attainable, easily identifiable device ideal for shared experiences with an audience. Therefore, it does not need a special medium to watch a film; it presents a medium that can be viewed alone or with others.
- A device which can offer moving images.
- Because of being an audio-visual device, it is more effective than individual aural or visual devices.
- Television is a device of 3X4 dimension. The relation between the height and width always requires television graphics in a horizontal format of 3X4 ratio.
- Due to its electronic structure and relatively small dimensions, details cannot always be conveyed to audiences, and therefore television is not suitable for images of great detail.

After classifying some of the properties of television as a medium, it should be noted here that it has some certain facilities in providing education: Since most people have watched television, the medium is familiar. Motion and visuals can be combined<sup>211</sup>

in a single format so that complex or abstract concepts can be illustrated through visual simulation.

### **As for the limitations**

Broadcast quality television is expensive to create. Video production is time consuming and can be technically demanding, often requiring relatively sophisticated production facilities and equipment. Other limitations of television can be counted as it targets average audience and it is difficult to renew or update the content after the production is completed (Willis, <http://www.uidaho.edu/eo/dist5.html>, retrieved on 10.03.2009)

### **The Disposition of the Content**

Generally speaking, the actual educational content is just as important as the arrangement of content. Various guidelines and regulations must be taken into consideration:

- There are benefits to projecting the content from simple to complex. People are less challenged in this order, and educational theorists agree with this notion.
- There are advantages of passing through a concrete life to an abstract one but it can be illustrated in mind life to provide individuals with easy learning. This can be identified through the concrete to the abstract
- Due to human nature, people prefer environments closer to their own, thereby justifying an approach to content organization from close to far most likely.
- Another educational method that facilitates learning is beginning with the subject as a whole, and discussing details later. This technique is also known as "comment theory".
- Research indicates that the human mind primarily perceives similarities. The perception of differences requires effort. As such, a technique organizing from similarities to differences is required in content organization. (Simsek, 2000)

It is very important to determine the structure when preparing an educational television program.

The same content can be reflected to the target society as educational or open edged, effective or passive, structured or non-structured, combined or independent, controversial or impartial by means of the view of the programmer. (Chandler, <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Modules/TF33120/tvstyle.html> retrieved on 03.08.2009).

## **CONCLUSION**

An environmentally aware individual is someone who has knowledge about the ecological principles by their relevancies' and cares about environmental problems and events. Also he/she is someone who knows the meaning and significance of social, political and economic aspects of environmental issues and he/she can organize his/her close environment to solve these problems. However, we encountered a target society that was only partially aware of the environmental problems and events. The individuals of this society had very little knowledge regarding ecological principles<sup>212</sup> and their social, political and economic aspects and relationships. A study was conducted

on women aged 15 and above who live in the Camlica district of central Eskisehir. These women were unemployed and uneducated housewives. As these women were not aware of environmental problems, they stay far from any solutions. This is the basic cause of their inability to organize their neighborhood. Education is an inevitable necessity to carry society to the position of environmentally aware individuals. Television is considered to be a good educational medium regarding education in environmental matters, especially when targeted towards a group with a high ratio of television watching habit as opposed to reading habits. With these considerations, the properties of an environmental education program must be determined. This dilemma can be resolved through two separate approaches: To analyze content and also the structural specialization of programs.

### **Content**

When the superficial level of knowledge of the targeted audience is considered the theme of the programs should be made accordingly. Primarily the audience should be made aware that he/she himself or herself also causes environmental pollution. Hence he/she can realize that he/she can do something and create solutions for the problems at hand by the conviction provided with the programs. These programs must be prepared under three headings. The first section of programs should identify environmental problems. They should provide viewers the required differentiation and reinforce confrontation of the target audience with reality. The second section should be a more educational sequence, providing familiarization with the matters at hand. Lastly, discussions should be featured.

### **Structural Features**

The allocated time is projected to be 5 minutes for the first section, 10 minutes for the second and 5 minutes for the third section.

### **Visual Structure**

In the first section, the use of surreal images with environmental sounds improves the effect on viewers. Experts have confirmed that for the second section, close-up shots are effective. Arranging the content from simple to complex and utilizing three dimensional animations when necessary enhances the experience. Regarding the editing, sufficient time between shots should be provided so the viewer can comprehend the visual material, and fast cuts should be avoided while editing.

### **Audio Structure**

This section pertains to the audio portion of television programs. The most important audio element in such programs is human voice. Therefore, the most effective method of influencing the target audience is the utilization of an aurally appealing voice along with a visually appealing image. In addition, the use of informal, sincere narrative with filler words retained in the text along with long sentences to be slowly narrated should be considered as more effective.

When necessary, music and effects may be used to portray the intended image to the target audience as well as to establish the intended aura and atmosphere on the subject. The use of music and sound effects enhance the perception of realism, and therefore draw more of the attention of the target audience; thereby enhancing learning. Another assumption is that the use of natural atmospheric (environmental) sounds is effective when used with the target audience.

## SUGGESTIONS

An environmental education television program which appeals to the target society in a sequence from simple to complex, general to specific is capable of captivating the interest of the target society for a duration long enough to achieve its objectives. This program must be presented clearly and understandably by an aurally and visually appealing and effective host for the audience to be able to comprehend the program. According to the outcomes of the study television is important and functional in creating an awareness of environment in Turkish society so that it should be utilized in an effective manner. Television is an important medium because it requires low expenditure compared to other media for the educational institutions and individuals and it has a rapid access to the masses when the amount of audiences it reaches considered. Also it has proper structural features and audio-visual properties. So that the television programs which have environmental content may have such properties:

- They can be used in primary and higher education through distance education even they can be utilized as compulsory with law and providing success from the modul would be recognized as a prerequisite.
- They can be sponsored by local authorities and non-governmental organizations and other private institutions.
- A kind of affirmative action in education would be provided by an exchange with a familiar culture.

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