

LEVEL 4

SEMESTER 1

MODULE CODE: SSHS4076
THE GREAT OUTDOORS

ASSESSMENT TYPE: ESSAY

ASSESSMENT/COMPONENT: 1

COMPONENT WEIGHTING: 50 %

WORD COUNT: 2000 WORDS

MODULE TUTOR: D. LEONARD

SUBMISSION DETAILS: Essay

Should 'Environmental Education' be an essential component of *all* 'Outdoor Adventure Education' programmes.

Submission Details:

Date: Friday 29th November 2019

Time: 3pm
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School of Sport, Health & Outdoor Education

Assessment Feedback Sheet

Student No./Name: 1900408 / Daniel Hardy

Module: The Great Outdoors

Module Code: SHSS4076

Module assessment: Should 'Environmental Education' be an essential component of *all* outdoor adventure education programmes? (2000 words)

Personal Evaluation – to support your academic progress please complete the section below BEFORE submitting your work.	
What do you consider to be the best aspects of this work?	I feel that the amount of research I undertook during the build up to the essay can be shown clearly throughout my work.
Which aspects do you consider could have been improved in this piece of work?	Looking back, I think I could have included information and research on a few more activity providers. The quality of references used could potentially be better.
What have you found most satisfying whilst undertaking this submission?	Once I started to get into the writing of the essay, I found topic extremely interesting. I feel that my knowledge on outdoor adventure education programmes and environmental education has grown significantly since undertaking the assignment.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	Learning Outcomes	GRADE								%
		Poor < 19%	Weak 20 – 29%	Unsatisfactory 30 – 39%	Satisfactory 40 – 49%	Good 50 – 59%	Very Good 60 – 69%	Excellent 70 – 84%	Exceptional 85 – 100%	
Introduction of the key terms and/or concepts related to the essay title.	3									20%
An in-depth discussion of different types of 'Outdoor Adventure Education' programmes, their delivery and their aims in relation to the integration of environmental education.	All									60%
Structure and organisation of essay including broad reference to appropriate academic literature	All									20%
It is expected that students will present work that is proof read and follows the School Reference Guide and Assessment Checklist . Therefore a range of 0 – 10 marks will be deducted for poor referencing, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and presentation.										

TUTOR COMMENTS:**Submission date:****Return date:**
(at least within 4 weeks)**Tutor:****Mark:**

Should ‘Environmental Education’ be an essential component of *all* ‘Outdoor Adventure Education’ programmes?

Environmental Education is often included in almost all outdoor adventure education programmes. Whether that’s intentionally or unintentionally I believe there is no escape from it, “real canoeing demands a relationship with the earth, with wind on your face, and the life force ever outward with one’s paddle stroke into the lake, river, watershed. Real canoeing involves a feeling of resonance with the earth” (Henderson, 1999, p.439). Within this body of work, I will attempt to present my argument on why environmental education should be an essential component of all Outdoor Adventure Education Programmes. The differences between particular types of outdoor adventure education programmes, consideration as to why people take part in these programmes and the benefits these may or may not bring both to the participants, educators and the environment itself shall all be taken into account “immersion in the natural world that is part of many adventure education programs has great potential to contribute to the environmental education of participants” (Priest, 1999, p.431). Furthermore, close attention to specific activity centres within southwest Wales and the organisations responsible for the impacts we have on the environments that these activity providers work within shall be discussed.

The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (JOPERD) defines Environmental Education as “Education about the total environment including population growth, pollution, resource use and misuse, urban and rural planning and modern technology with its demands upon natural resources”, this definition contains keywords related to the effects outdoor adventure activities can have upon our environment if we as educators and students do not comply with the needs of our planet. In relation to JOPERD, one of the many definitions for Adventure Education according to Hilbert (2013) shows that Adventure Education takes place in or around a ‘Nature Environment’ “The opportunity to challenge oneself through active involvement in/around a nature environment. Focusing on goal achievement, group cooperation, and adapting to uncertainty”. It is clear that both Environmental Education and Outdoor Adventure Education are both directly linked to one another presenting us with the question that needs to be answered, ‘Should Environmental Education be an essential component of all Outdoor Adventure Education programmes.

In some countries, the approach of an outdoor adventurous activity may be purely based on personal development, whereas a deeper look and connection with nature and the environment may be the primary objective in others. Andkjær (2017) explains how in New Zealand the pedagogical focus is for the most part based on personal development, skills and social learning, however, in Scandinavian countries such as Denmark and Sweden the approach to outdoor learning is presented through the concept of Friluftsliv. Translated as 'Nature Free Life' [Friluftsliv] acknowledges the importance of a particular style of relationship with nature as defining of the culture's identity (Loynes, 2007, p.120). Whilst these approaches may be slightly different from one another, the reasons why people take part in these activities and forms of education, for the most part, remain the same. According to Sport England (2015) escaping from modern life, enjoying time with friends and family, experiencing something different to traditional sports and to be close with nature are some of the many reasons why people take part in outdoor activities. These provide great personal benefits and are all positive additions towards healthy wellbeing, "when communities engage with their local green spaces and when green spaces are fully integrated with the built environment, there are direct health and wellbeing benefits for people, wildlife and habitats "(Natural Resources Wales, 2015).

Outdoor adventure centers in the UK such as TYF Adventure provide activities enabling the participant to experience both the thrill and excitement of adventure as well as an insight into nature, ecology and the connection we have with our local environment "Our mission is to inspire long lives of adventure, and promote discovery and care for nature" (TYF Adventure, ND). As well as providing an experience to adventure and to take a closer look at the environment in these coastal areas, companies like TYF have a responsibility to make sure these adventurous activities are delivered to the participants creating the lowest form of human impact possible to the surrounding environment "The Outdoor instructor or teacher should be an ambassador for the natural environment" (Mortlock, 2001). Activities such as Coasteering can disturb local inhabitants including cliff-nesting birds, seals and otters as well as other geological features, for example, the many caves explored during the activity "there is potential for physical damage to the receiving environment and disturbance to faunal species utilising the resources of this area" (National Trust, 2010). When we take the risks of causing damage to the environment

during these adventurous pursuits for granted, I believe we then need to ask ourselves if environmental education should be a key component within outdoor adventure education.

Much of the coastline and wildlife on our coast is protected by law from damage and disturbance, and as coasteering guides we have a responsibility to lead activities on the coast with minimal impact to the environment and with respect for wildlife and other users of the coast (National Coasteering Charter, 2016).

National Coasteering Charter and Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter Group are a few of the many organisations who are important in making sure outdoor adventure education programmes are complying with specific rules and regulations “the aim of the Charter is to ensure that adventurous activities do not negatively impact on Pembrokeshire’s beautiful coastline, local communities and the wide variety of wildlife that call the area ‘home’” (The Pembrokeshire Outdoor Charter Group, 2019). As outdoor instructors, leaders and representatives we should ensure that we are also following these guidelines, this may be whilst we are leading the activity but it can also be shown as we travel to and from the activity destination. Walking, cycling or even running to the destination with the group will help towards minimizing the negative human impacts on the environment “these impacts are often magnified by the fact that participants travel to the activity site and that some of these areas are ecologically sensitive” (Plummer, 2009, p.2).

Problems within our environment are affecting the adventure education activities we participate and facilitate in. Deforestation could effect mountain biking, camping, bushcraft and survival activities through the constant alteration of our landscapes, whilst the continuous melting ice causing the rise in sea levels could stop sea cliff climbing and other water-based activities due to the constant erosion in cliff structures and abnormally high and unsafe water levels. People have been made aware of these issues we create through a variety of platforms, however, little has been done to address them “the global and local environmental crises we currently face are those born of a culture that has lost its sense of connectedness with nature” (Martin, 1999, p.465). As an outdoor practitioner, I believe it is our job to create awareness of these situations and re-establish a sense of compassion our students and participants should have with nature. It is true that in most of the activities we take part in, some form of impact will be made. However,

choosing how we should impact the environment is what we should be teaching our students “Everything man does creates more harm than good. We have to accept that fact and not delude ourselves into thinking something is sustainable. Then you can try to achieve a situation where you are causing the least amount of harm possible” (Chouinard, 2019). The lack of awareness and care for our environment is not something we have only noticed today, similarities can be shown through Kurt Hahn’s sixth decline of modern youth, [The] decline of compassion due to unseemly haste with which modern life is conducted or “Spiritual death” (Colorado Outward Bound School, ND). When considering the addition of environmental education to all outdoor adventure education programmes, I believe that you shouldn’t have to go into too much depth to put a few key points across as some participants may well get distracted from the main activity. However, I believe that raising this awareness and teaching a few simple ideas and behaviours that benefit both the planet and ourselves should be included within the programmes we run.

A lot of pupils who decide to take part in adventurous activities purely do these to feel the thrill and sense of adventure or to learn a specific skill within a sport. These skills and thrills, for the most part, need one's full attention in order to succeed, thus creating a sense of ‘flow’ the physical and mental requirements involved in staying on the rock act as a screen for the stimuli of ordinary life - a screen maintained by the intense and focused concentration (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, p.81). Whilst many would say there is a need for environmental education within outdoor adventure education programmes, some would disagree.

Some adventure activities, such as rock climbing and moving water paddling, involve a strong focus on skills and equipment in order to allow students to participate safely. This can become a deterrent to the successful inclusion of environment content in such activities (Thomas, 2005, p.36)

The addition of environmental education can distract these pupils from what they originally wanted to achieve from an outdoor experience causing both forms of education to ultimately fail, [Environmental Education] neglected to clearly distinguish itself from other groups interested in outdoor experiences (Matre, 2002, p.47). As an educator who would want to achieve the best possible experiences within the same activity, it can sometimes be best to alter the experience in

ways that allow the participant to achieve a sense of adventure and connection with nature to happen at the same time. Thomas (2005) explains how the study of river environments whilst paddling on kayaks became almost impossible to teach as most students were focused on the skill of kayaking. Introducing inflatable rafts allowed the students to successfully take part in the study, as there was less concern with what the individual kayaks were doing and what was ahead on the river.

I strongly believe that the inclusion of environmental education within outdoor adventure education programmes is something that should not be avoided in today's modern society "Issues of sustainability and environmental understanding are seen by several authors as a central responsibility of outdoor education" (Higgins, 1997, p.12). Within this assignment, I have explained how the activities we take part in can cause potential negative effects to the environment, however, with the right practises and awareness for our environment put into place we should be encouraged to take pride in our practice as educators and students as opposed to feeling worried or concerned. As outdoor educators, I feel that even the smallest contributions to environmental learning are imperative to our students, whether that's simply teaching in an outdoors environment or at a higher education standard.

Word Count: 1793

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