



**"KONSTANTIN PRESLAVSKI" UNIVERSITY OF
SHUMEN**

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

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**SOCIAL-ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS OF GLOBAL
SOCIETY**

A B S T R A C T

on

DISSERTATION

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The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, conclusions, recommendations and points of contribution to the dissertation work, literature and appendices, with a total volume of 251 pages, which are distributed as follows: Introduction - 4 pages, First chapter - 141 pages, Second chapter – 80 pages, Third chapter – 3 pages, Conclusion, conclusions, recommendations and contributions to the dissertation work – 5 pages, Literature – 9 pages, Appendices – 7 pages. The literature consists of a total of 199 titles.

The text of the dissertation is illustrated with 12 tables and 12 figures.

The volume of the main text of the dissertation (introduction, three chapters, conclusion and general conclusions to the dissertation) consists of 233 pages.

The dissertation work was discussed and aimed at a public defense at a meeting of the Social Work Department of Shumen "Konstantin Preslavski" University of Shumen on 05/10/2023.

The defense of the dissertation will take place on 21.07.2023 in Building 2, Hall 211 of the Faculty of Education of Shumen "Konstantin Preslavski" University of Shumen, from 11:00 a.m.

The dissertation is devoted to an actual but insufficiently researched problem, the problem of social-ecological problems of the global society.

To the extent that anthropogenic pollution is currently the cause of a number of socio-ecological risks, the establishment of risks in the society-nature relationship is necessary in order to build a reasoned state policy guaranteeing environmental security. The ecological crisis, which is the result of anthropogenic pollution, gives rise to many problems related to human health, the survival of the flora and fauna of the entire planet, and the protection of the environment. That's why, problems related to environmental risks require effective environmental education and upbringing, environmental competence of the whole society, solved problems of sustainable development.

The proposed dissertation is devoted to the main approaches to the problem of environmental literacy, directly related to environmental security.

The structures and functions of socio-ecological systems are examined. Environmental security in the globalizing world and the case "globalization - national security - social ecology" as particularly important for the normal development and existence of each country are presented in accordance with their current state.

Particular attention is paid to the factors that pollute the environment. Man is seen as the main ecological object.

Building individuals with value orientations for understanding the current problems related to society-nature relationships in conditions of globalization is a kind of guarantee for the socio-ecological and national security of any country.

The development has a theoretical-applied nature and is related to the problem of knowledge of environmental security.

Significance of the study

In a situation of global ecological crisis, the Republic of Bulgaria strives to unify its legislation on the problems related to anthropogenic pollution of the biosphere. There are certain problems in the legislative

framework and regulations regarding environmental security and environmental literacy.

The aim of the current dissertation research is based on a systematic analysis of globalization processes, security factors and problems related to anthropogenic pollution and the global environmental crisis to study the environmental literacy of the young generation in higher education and to create a conceptual theoretical model for solving environmental problems, in accordance with the conditions and circumstances in the country and the globalizing world.

The object of the present study is students' literacy in relation to socio-ecological issues.

Subject of the study: The social and ecological problems of the global society.

Hypothesis: Knowledge of the socio-ecological problems of globalization is a guarantee of their solution.

Tasks of the research:

1. To analyze the case "globalization – socio-ecological problems.
2. To define the socio-ecological problems of globalization
3. To explore the key features of globalization.
4. To determine the place, role and tasks of the various institutions and society as a whole to guarantee socio-ecological security .
5. To investigate socio-ecological literacy of students .
6. Development of a model for solving socio-ecological problems in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Research methodology:

Various methods were used to achieve the set goal and to solve the research tasks expedient, adequate to the problem, general and specific methods of scientific knowledge: theoretical analysis, system analysis, study and generalization of practices for collecting and processing information, empirical research, study of documents,

observation, surveys, empirical-didactometric research on social-ecological problems.

The method of personal observation was used to gain immediate insight into the state of the various problems of global society.

The study of documents is aimed at researching the existing legal and other governing normative framework.

The survey method was used to collect empirical information for the research needs. For this purpose, a direct survey with a single-type questionnaire is accepted as appropriate, giving the possibility of comparability of the results obtained from the survey.

The applied nature of the research is determined by the specifics of the socio-ecological problems and the possibilities for their solution.

The dissertation work is an attempt to summarize, systematize and justify appropriate recommendations for solving social-ecological problems and ensuring social-ecological security.

The presented scientific analysis, scientific and applied results, the applied methods and models can serve to create a number of national and departmental documents dealing with this matter. This is especially relevant today, when the global environmental crisis is a fact.

STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The relevance of the topic and its scientific and scientific-applied significance are substantiated in **the introduction**. The object and subject of the research are defined. The purpose and tasks of the dissertation are formulated.

The basis of the research is the premise that socio-ecological problems, regardless of their origin, are a key factor that, among others, affects security in all its manifestations, and only in a stable, financially secure, prosperous and generating security for citizens society can to talk about effectively overcoming these problems. Until now, despite numerous studies, national security has very rarely been placed in the context of environmental pollution.

Social ecology in the globalizing world is a particularly topical problem, because anthropogenic pollution is currently the cause of a number of social-ecological risks. The ecological crisis resulting from anthropogenic pollution causes many problems related to people's health, the survival of the flora and fauna of the entire planet, the protection of the environment and, ultimately, people's lives.

The dissertation research is also relevant for several other reasons:

First of all, people in Bulgaria are not fully aware of the fact that the security of society and their personal security is ultimately not the only duty, responsibility and function of the actions of state structures, but is a complex multiplied effect of everyone's efforts.

Secondly, the dissertation research is centered on a painful problem for the Bulgarian society, namely, the problem of anthropogenic pollution of the environment. Too much is said and written about environmental pollution, about ways to reduce and dispose of waste, but a large part of society does not possess the necessary socio-ecological literacy to solve this problem.

Next, the dissertation research is oriented towards one of the essential elements in solving any problem, namely, its effective management.

The proposed dissertation examines globalization and its key features. Environmental security, problems of socio-ecological policy, globalization and sustainable development of modern society find a place in the present work.

The dissertation research analyzes the management of processes and resources as a theoretical basis for clarifying the problems related to the global environmental crisis. Good global practices and ways to overcome socio-ecological problems are discussed.

A significant place in the dissertation work is devoted to the direct connection between environmental pollution and national security.

In this sense, the dissertation is aimed at an applied field that is currently poorly developed.

The dissertation research is structured in three chapters, which correspond to the stated intention to diagnose the socio-ecological problems of the global society and propose a model for their solution.

In the first chapter *Globalization - nature and characteristics* the problems of globalization, crises in the globalizing world, anthropogenic pollution, ecologically hazardous substances are analyzed. The emerging environmental problems in the process of globalization are analyzed.

Globalization must have *a social dimension* that supports human values and increases the well-being of the people in terms of freedom and security. Without such a social dimension, many will continue to see globalization as a new version of previous forms of domination and exploitation.

Globalization in the context of its *social dimension* can be seen as:

- a process based on universally shared values that requires all actors, including states, international organizations, business, civil society and the media, to assume their responsibility in economic development that is based on respect for human rights;
- global provision of the basic material and other demands guaranteeing human dignity for all enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals;
- a sustainable development trajectory that provides opportunities for all, sustainable livelihoods and employment, promotes gender equality, reduces inequality between countries and peoples, and ensures greater coherence of economic, social and environmental policies;
- more democratic governance that ensures greater voice and participation, as well as accountability, while ensuring full respect for

the powers of the institutions of representative democracy and the rule of law.

Globalization promotes the scientific and technological process, making the European dimension even more important for the development of knowledge, mobility, competitiveness and innovation. The main goal of the European Union after 2020 will be to transform the economy into *a knowledge economy* in order to become *more competitive , connected and ecological* . This means that efforts to limit resource depletion will continue without stopping the modernization of industrial sectors and more efficient use of material factors to achieve greater productivity. Work will continue to strengthen the stability of the euro and the effective functioning of the single market. Reducing the risk of growing social polarization in regions and dealing with the negative effects of globalization requires that education systems adapt to the needs of the labor market, as well as increase the effectiveness of qualifications and retraining.

However, it is widely accepted that the key features of globalization are:

- the liberalization of international trade;
- the expansion of foreign direct investment;
- the emergence of massive cross-border financial flows.

The result is increased competition in global markets. It is also generally recognized that this is a consequence of the combined effect of two main factors:

- political decisions aimed at reducing national obstacles to international economic transactions;
- the impact of new technologies, especially in the field of information and communications.

The global financial system is invariably rocked by financial crises of increasing frequency and severity. These crises are destructive in their negative consequences. They sweep away the gains of previous years of economic progress and cause severe social consequences, giving rise to unemployment and poverty.

The main principles that should guide the process of globalization are *democracy, social justice, respect for human rights* and *the rule of law*. They must be reflected in the institutions, rules and political system within the countries, ensuring their compliance by all sections of society.

The pressing and measurable goals to be achieved are:

- Ending extreme poverty and hunger.
- Provision of universal primary education.
- Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Reducing infant mortality.
- Improving the protection of maternal health.
- Fighting HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- Ensuring environmental sustainability.
- Creating a global partnership for development.

Objectives closely related to globalization, in respect of which it is particularly necessary to expand efforts at the international level, are:

- education, skills and technological capabilities;
- security and adaptation issues;
- ensuring decent work.

In the global economy and information society of our time, knowledge and information are key to social integration and productivity, and interconnectedness is key to global competition, but in our unequal world, the network economy can include everything that

she considers it valuable, but also to exclude people and parts of the world that do not fit into the prevailing pattern.

Relevant international organizations should come up with Policy Alignment Initiatives (PIAs) on key issues affecting the social dimension of globalization. The task consists in the step-by-step development of a complex policy to achieve in specific areas the necessary balance between economic and social problems and development problems.

Priority issues, which are cross-cutting in nature, should be addressed immediately. They include:

- *the creation of employment and the reduction of poverty;*
- *gender inequality and women's empowerment;*
- *the integration of the informal economy into the mainstream of the real economy;*
- *the protection of fundamental rights in the field of labor, education, food security and settlements.*

The parameters of the environmental crisis are indicated. *The socio-economic crisis* of society in the transitional period is accompanied by a permanent ecological crisis at a different level. At the present moment, *the ecological crisis* of our planet is a reality. The population of all countries of the world is concerned about global environmental pollution. There is no more important problem for humanity than *the global improvement of the ecological situation, from increasing the fight against pollution, reduction and, ultimately, complete elimination of the sources of various pollution and harmful agents.*

Today, more than 95% of the world's population does not understand the consequences of the total ecological catastrophe for themselves and for generations, and does not think about the ways out of the crisis, which includes:

- global depletion of all the planet's resources;

- progressive loss of sustainability of the planet's ecosystems due to their destruction;
- increasing biological and social degradation of people.

Modern global problems of survival and sustainable development of humanity in the Earth's biosphere are directly dependent on the *integration of ecological problems* (environmental protection), *of civilization* in the system of political institutions, legal instruments, economic mechanisms and relations, in the structure of market priorities.

In this chapter, the strategic goals of new development and environmental protection are also presented.

In the second chapter *Man and the global problems of our time* the social dimensions of globalization are considered. *The social dimension of globalization* includes:

- a process of globalization based on universally shared values, requiring states, international organizations, business, civil society and the media to assume their responsibility;
- compliance with the obligations and rights of international law, as economic development is based on compliance with human rights;
- ensuring the basic material and other demands guaranteeing human dignity for all enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- eradication of poverty;
- a sustainable development trajectory that creates and expands opportunities for all for sustainable livelihoods and employment, promotes gender equality and reduces inequality between countries and peoples;
- a more democratic governance of globalization that ensures greater voice and participation, as well as accountability, while

ensuring full respect for the powers of the institutions of representative democracy and the rule of law .

A special place is devoted to the "globalization-national-security" case study. *Security* problems are almost always existential, and their solutions are most often political. Speaking about these problems, we must take into account that they can be managed relatively successfully and up to a certain point, only as long as they lead to quantitative changes, and much more difficult when they lead to qualitative changes. A problem of society becomes a problem of security, or as it is said in the Western literature - "it becomes securitized when, as a result, qualitative changes can occur, when society cannot absorb it without structural transformations".

Strategic goals today are the counteraction of organized crime, corruption, as well as reforming the judicial system to achieve and maintain efficiency, accountability and transparency.

It is focused on demographic problems and human needs in the global society. A characteristic of sustainable development is presented. *The concept of sustainable development* is based on five main principles:

- humanity is indeed capable of making development sustainable and long-term, so that it meets the needs of people today without depriving future generations of the opportunity to meet their needs;
- available restrictions in the area of exploitation of natural resources are relative. They are related to the modern level of technology and social organization, and also to the ability of the biosphere to cope with the consequences of human activity;
- it is necessary to satisfy the basic needs of all people and to give everyone the opportunity to realize their hopes for a better life. Poverty, which is a common phenomenon in the world, is one of the main causes of environmental and other catastrophes and therefore must be eliminated;

- it is necessary to reconcile the way of life of the rich with the ecological possibilities of the planet, in particular with the relative consumption of energy;
- population sizes and growth rates must be consistent with the changing productive potential of Earth's global ecosystem.

It is important to recognize that sustainable development is not an unchanging state of harmony, but rather a process of change in which the scale of resource exploitation, the direction of capital investment, the orientation of technical development, and institutional change align with present and future changes.

There are three hierarchically related problems with the solution of which sustainable development is connected:

- a sustainable scale of the economy that would correspond to the ecological system of life support;
- fair distribution of resources and opportunities not only within today's generation, but between today's and future generations, and between humans and other biological species;
- efficient allocation of resources over time, which would adequately account for natural capital.

Sustainable development includes two interrelated concepts:

- concept of needs, including priority ones (necessary for the existence of the poorest strata of the population);
- concept of limitations, determined by the state of technology and the organization of society, accumulated on the ability of the environment to satisfy the present and future needs of humanity.

The main task of sustainable development is the satisfaction of human needs and aspirations. It is important to emphasize that sustainable development requires meeting people's most basic needs

and giving everyone the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life equally for all.

The concept of sustainable development implies sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction, equitable distribution of national wealth, improvement of public health and quality of life, while reducing environmental pollution, preventing future pollution and preserving biological diversity.

The third chapter *A model for solving socio-ecological problems in the Republic of Bulgaria* can be seen as a kind of empirical projection of the theoretical model formulated in the first and second chapters. The data and analyzes from the empirical study are published in it. The conclusions about the socio-ecological literacy of the society derive from them. As a result of the analyzes in this chapter and ultimately from the entire dissertation research, recommendations related to solving the social and environmental problems of the global society are formulated, including in first place in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The aim of the current dissertation research is to create a conceptual theoretical model for solving socio-ecological problems in accordance with the conditions and circumstances based on a systematic analysis of globalization processes, security factors and problems related to anthropogenic environmental pollution in global society.

Study contingent. The contingent of the research is 79 students - bachelors from the specialty «Preschool and elementary school pedagogy», specialty "Social pedagogy" of the Faculty of Pedagogy of the "Konstantin Preslavski" University of Shumen under the teaching 2020/2021, who are studying the discipline «Social Ecology».

The rule of voluntariness was observed when participating in the survey. Their right and research obligation of absolute confidentiality was respected.

Study parameters. To collect the necessary empirical material on the basis of which it is carried out the relevant analysis, in the process of the research work the following methods were used:

1. Theoretical analysis of the literature related to the researched topic.
2. Survey.

I stage. Selection and formulation of the research questions.

After a theoretical analysis of the curricula and study plans for bachelors, a survey was developed to assess socio-ecological literacy. The survey consists of 12 open-ended questions . The questions are selected on the basis of the studied environmental concepts and problems related to globalization and the socio-ecological problems of society.

II stage. Preparation for data collection.

The author of the study prepares the data collection as initial makes informal contact with the students of the mentioned specialties in the Faculty of Education to gain their trust and cooperation .

III stage. Data collection.

The survey was conducted during 2020/2021

In each nest, individuals were divided by status and filled out questionnaires after giving the necessary instruction.

The research was conducted individually, offering the surveys immediately before working on them, so as to eliminate the preliminary discussion of the questions between the participants .

I V stage. Data analysis and evaluation.

After surveying all persons, the survey cards were subjected to a logical review and control, after which the data were processed.

The results are presented in the Appendix.

CONCLUSION

The "global crisis" seems to be an attribute of modern society, which has accepted and reconciled with the state of society-nature relations, regardless of the fact that these problems are daily present in

the media and global networks, and man is episodically exposed to the negative impact of the polluted environment. This fact determines the relevance of the present study, which, based on theoretical analysis, presents the current problems related to the case study "globalization - socio-ecological problems".

The situation in the country and on a global scale gives me reason to believe that there is no specific normative document that treats the socio-ecological problems of the globalizing world and, in this regard, on the basis of the studies, conclusions and findings from the theoretical analysis allow me to propose *a Methodology for developing a Concept for solving socio-ecological problems in the Republic of Bulgaria.*

The development of the concept is carried out in three main stages :

- first stage – formulation of socio-ecological problems;
- second stage – development of strategic goals;
- third stage – summarizing the materials in a single document.

Each stage ends with a broad discussion organized by the MoEW, MoH and MES, in which representatives of all public layers .

The distribution of duties between the institutions is such as to ensure the availability of more than one option for a given section by independent institutions.

After the mentioned institutions present their developments, a Commission of representatives of the ministries concerned with the problem analyzes them, summarizes them and prepares a working draft, which is offered for wide public discussion.

In the work of all groups, external experts from BAS, VU, SOU, RI of MES are involved.

The final version is proposed as a document to the aforementioned ministries and approved by the Council of Ministers .

Program for increasing the socio-ecological literacy of the population in the Republic of Bulgaria

The current program is based on an ongoing process of researching existing documents, information on the state of socio-ecological literacy and socio-ecological problems of the globalizing world.

The program offers an emphasis on socio-ecological education, such as education for social development, which includes the socio-ecological dimensions of development.

The ***program*** appears an integral part of the process of solving the current case study ***globalization-social-ecological problems*** .

The main objective of ***the Program*** is to support the increase of socio-ecological literacy through all forms of formal and informal education and European education programs.

The main target groups of ***the Program*** are young people of all educational and qualification levels.

1. Basic principles of the program

- Considering the actuality of socio-ecological problems.
- Special attention on the topics :
- global environmental problems;
- the use of resources ;
- environmental security;
- anthropogenic pollution of the biosphere;
- environmental crisis;
- environmental risk.

2. Problems the Program may encounter:

- lack of a system for conducting socio- ecological education and training;
- insufficient number of trained pedagogical personnel;
- lack of study materials;
- insufficient cooperation and support ;
- limited education funding;

- slow change of public attitude ;
- lack of sufficient motivation among learners and trainers.

3. Objectives of the Program

Main goal: Support and stimulation of socio-ecological education in all forms of formal and informal education in the Republic of Bulgaria

Specific objectives:

- To support the creation and distribution of modern educational materials related to the socio-ecological problems of globalization.
- To support partnerships at the national, regional and local level, between representatives of state institutions, local authorities, communities, NGOs, business circles and use the opportunities of EU educational programs.

4. Priorities of the Program

- To build a system of competences among young people, guaranteeing high socio-ecological literacy.
- To promote "Lifelong Learning " opportunities .
- To support the construction of networks for the exchange of information on socio-ecological issues.
- To promote the development and implementation of projects on the problems of socio-ecological literacy.
- To promote the development of Qualification and Retraining Programs .

5. Importance of the program

- The program is a kind of guarantee for increasing the socio-ecological literacy of the population .
- The program requires a change in the DOS for learning content and new curricula.
- The structure and volume of the educational content, in line with the DOS, are supplemented with ideas for curricula and

educational strategies, in line with the Concept of Sustainable Development.

- The program requires consideration of socio-ecological problems in the educational system.

- The program includes indicators for the educational system in higher schools (curriculums, study plans, teaching aids, management of the educational process and quality of education).

- municipalities , civil society organizations , and the media must participate in the implementation of *the Program*.

CONCLUSIONS

1. A model for solving socio-ecological problems has been developed.
2. The essence of the socio-ecological problems in the globalizing world has been revealed and the theory enriched.
3. A conceptual theoretical model has been created for solving socio-ecological problems in accordance with the conditions and circumstances of the country and the globalizing world.
4. Socio-ecological problems in the context of national security are diagnosed.
5. The socio-ecological literacy of undergraduate students was studied.
6. It has been proven that building individuals with value orientations for understanding society-nature relationships in conditions of globalization is a kind of guarantee for the socio-ecological and national security of any country.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. On the basis of the proposed Conceptual Model, proceed with the implementation of the program for increasing socio-ecological literacy.
2. According to the proposed Conceptual model for solving socio-ecological problems, to propose to the relevant the development of the Concept for solving socio-ecological problems by sections, as follows:
 - socio-ecological education - MES;
 - socio-ecological literacy of the population - Ministry of Education, Ministry of Education and Culture
 - socio-ecological security - Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy.

SCIENTIFIC AND SCIENTIFIC-APPLIED CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The dissertation gives reason to assume that the obtained results complement and further develop knowledge on the existing subject. In the most general form, the main scientific and scientific-applied contributions are reduced to:

1. Creating a conceptual theoretical model for solving socio-ecological problems.
2. The parameters of the global socio-ecological crisis and socio-ecological problems in the context of anthropogenic environmental pollution are revealed.
3. On the basis of an analysis of the scientific literature and the normative base, it is concluded that there is no specific normative document that treats the socio-ecological problems of globalization, and in this regard, on the basis of the studies and findings from the theoretical analysis, a Program for increasing social - environmental literacy.
4. A conceptual theoretical model for solving social and environmental problems in the Republic of Bulgaria has been developed.
5. The essence of the socio-ecological problems in the globalizing world has been revealed and the theory enriched.

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I declare that the present dissertation work for the acquisition of the ONS "PhD" on the topic "Social-ecological problems of the global society" is my author's work and in no way infringes the copyrights of others. I have cited the used literature correctly in all places where I have mentioned ideas from it.

I am aware that for using foreign texts without citing their authors, I bear responsibility according to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Bulgaria.

LIST OF SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

1. **Vladimirov-Zhitenski, VI. (2022).** New development. //SocioBrains, Issue 93, May 2022, pp. 7-9, www.sociobrains.com, Publ.: Smart Ideas - Wise Decisions Ltd., Bulgaria, ISSN 2367-5721 (online), 2022.
2. **Vladimirov-Zhitenski, VI. (2021).** Problems Of The Sustainable Development Of The Global World. //SocioBrains, Issue 87, December 2021, pp. 63-69, www.sociobrains.com, Publ.: Smart Ideas - Wise Decisions Ltd., Bulgaria, ISSN 2367-5721 (online), 2021.
3. **Vladimirov- Zhytenski, VI. (2021).** Crises in the global world. //Collection of scientific works of students and doctoral students from the Faculty of Education 2021, Shumen, University Publishing House "Bishop Konstantin Preslavski", 79 pp., 2021, pp. 30 - 34, ISSN 2367-5764.