

B-learning post-graduation course in Environmental Science: a contribution for an environmental citizenship

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Abstract

In the last decades there has been an increase of public awareness in what concerns environmental problems. The role of environmental education is to support changes in behaviour, values, management and policies towards more sustainable production and consumption patterns. B-learning has a role to play in this endeavour, as it allows global access to environmental education, independent of time and place, once the courses are available on the Internet. A simultaneous effort to increase educational course offers in this area has been made. This paper aims to present and evaluate the first edition of the blended learning (b-learning) *MSc* in Environmental Citizenship and Participation. This is the first and only *MSc* offered in distance learning mode in Portugal in this scientific area. The master programme includes environmental and social sciences contents. Also the tools and methodologies to put in practice awareness, educational and public participation processes within environment projects, programs or plans are also given. Evaluation was carried out with the students using three data sources: a questionnaire survey, a personal interviews and assessment materials produced by the students. These data aimed to evaluate course performance in terms of: i) student motivation; ii) student-content interaction; iii) student-student interaction iv) student-teacher interaction; v) learning activities; vi) type of evaluation. The present study indicated – in global terms – that students felt a very high level of motivation and satisfaction with the e-learning post graduation in Environmental Citizenship and Participation. The study also concluded that greater effort in motivating and giving ICT-support to students should be made, in the initial period of a course in e-learning, when e.g. the e-learning community bonds are being formed, in order to reduce the number of students who quit the course. Students concluding this post graduation course successfully acquired the environmental knowledge, participation and environmental action skills for an environmental citizenship and participation.

Keywords: pos-graduation b-learning, environmental science education, learning evaluation