

Pope John Paul II State School of Higher Education in Biała Podlaska

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**THE VALUES AND METHODS  
IN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION  
IN THE OPINION OF THE STUDENTS  
AT HIGHER VOCATIONAL STATE  
SCHOOLS IN POLAND**

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in the opinion of the students at higher vocational state schools in Poland”

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*Dedication to all my beloved ones*



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# Introduction

Pro-ecological education related to the process of shaping human attitude towards the environment that surrounds him, is particularly associated with making the pupil aware of the fact that he is part of his own environment, and at the same time man constitutes a cognitive and exploratory entity in his environment, which in turn can be:

1. natural environment in which the man is trying to explore it, discover its natural resources as well as its threats;
2. socio-economic and socio-political environment, which has been associated with the so-called "city" (*polis*) since ancient times;
3. an esthetic and ethical environment connected with moral aspects and defined values<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The concept of the environment is not unequivocal in science, which is why in this publication we rely on, referring to the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition, on the division of the environment proposed by an outstanding educator, Stefan Kunowski (1909-1977), who writes in the work *Fundamentals of Modern Pedagogy*, Warsaw, Salesian Publishing House, 2001, pp. 228-236, that the object of ecology as environmental science is the natural environment itself and its impact on the features of organisms in biology, and on the behaviour and reactions of individuals in psychology or groups in sociology as well as influences on educational development in pedagogy. In terms of content affecting the learner, we distinguish the following environments: 1) the natural environment including both extraterrestrial impacts on organisms (cosmic, nuclear radiation, ionospheres, etc.) along with geographical influences (terrain, soil, climate) and the environment of living nature (microorganisms, insects), flora and fauna); 2) the social environment of people and relations between them (both in family, neighborhood, school, professional, church and wider environment – civic, party, etc.); 3) a cultural environment influenced by material culture (construction, communication, work workshops, etc.) and spiritual culture, which is transmitted not only through upbringing, teaching, schooling, education, pastoral work, but also by indirect means of mass information (books, newspapers, magazines illustrated, cinema, radio, television, Internet, etc.). Among the various environmental influences on the learner, we distinguish, following S. Kunowski in the contour theory, the influence of the spiritual environment in which the highest ideas and values of the tradition of national, European, Christian culture and human relation spread. The spiritual environment, as the deepest creation of the history of life and civilization, takes shapes appropriate to the age of time, most sensitive to changes in fate and prone to mysterious grace. Elusively and creatively, it results from the overconscious, ideological aspirations of ages and culture, from emotional bonds with the ethos (especially groups such as family, school class, school, professional group and workplace, as well as broader social groups such as the Church, nation, state or universal brotherhood) It also includes love of life (bios), love of the family landscape, love of the homeland with all the beauty of the natural environment.

In the present publication, we focus on the latter definition of environment, paying attention to its axiological aspects.

Pro-ecological education can be perceived as a specific direction of education that has also developed its own methodology, and today has become a field of human education based on shaping his attitudes and behaviour. Additionally, this trend encompasses education by providing a human being with knowledge about ecosystems, biosystems and sociosystems, considered not only from axiological and methodological, but mainly from existential perspectives.

On the basis of the collected literature of the subject, which today is perceived as the field of education<sup>2</sup>, it is essential to devote our attention to in the theoretical part of the publication so that we could undertake the analysis of specific data on the basis of the achieved results of our own empirical research. This type of education – like any other- needs to be also associated with values – especially pro-ecological ones that pedagogical axiology deals with.

Studies written by such authors as S. Hessen, B. Suchodolski, B. Nawroczyński, S. Kunowski<sup>3</sup>, Z.K. Mysłakowski, K. Kotłowski or in recent years H. Świda-Zięmba, U. Ostrowska, T. Lewowicki, L. Witkowski, M. Nowak, W. Szczęsny, J. Homplewicz, J. Górniewicz were of great significance for the development of pedagogical axiology in Poland.

Axiology of pro-ecological education, in addition to its foundations rooted in philosophy, is closely related to eco-philosophy and ecological ethics. Within this area, the following works are of great significance for this publication:

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<sup>2</sup> In contemporary pedagogical fields Agnieszka Gromkowska-Melosik has already distinguished ecological pedagogy in Part III of *Pedagogy*, volume 1, edited by Z. Kwieciński and B. Śliwerski, Warsaw, PWN, 2008, pp. 425-435.

<sup>3</sup> S. Kunowski, *Podstawy współczesne pedagogiki*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Salezjańskie, 2004.

J. W. Czartoszewski's<sup>4</sup>, J. M. Dołęga's<sup>5</sup>, K. Lorenz's, S. Zięba's<sup>6</sup>, W. Tyburski's<sup>7</sup>, A. Papuziński's<sup>8</sup>, Z. Hull's<sup>9</sup>, D. Kiełczewski's, Z. Łepko's<sup>10</sup>, J. Łukomski's<sup>11</sup>, Z. Piątek's, H.

- <sup>4</sup> J. W. Czartoszewski (ed.), *Wychowanie do poszanowania środowiska społeczno-przyrodniczego*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Księży Werbistów Verbinum, 2003; J. W. Czartoszewski, *Edukacja ekologiczna na progu XXI wieku: stan, możliwości, programy*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Księży Werbistów Verbinum, 2001; J. W. Czartoszewski, A. Skowroński (ed.), *Ochrona środowiska społeczno przyrodniczego w filozofii i teologii*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, 2001.
- <sup>5</sup> J. M. Dołęga, *Człowiek w zagrożonym środowisku*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo ATK, 1998; J. M. Dołęga, *Ekologia w teologii i filozofii chrześcijańskiej*, in: A. Papuziński (ed.), *Wprowadzenie do filozoficznych problemów ekologii*, Bydgoszcz, Wydawnictwo Uczelniane Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Bydgoszczy, 1999, pp. 133-165; J. M. Dołęga, *Koncepcja sozologii systemowej*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2001; J. M. Dołęga, *Miejsce problematyki etycznej i ekonomicznej w ekofilozofii*, in: W. Tyburski (ed.), *Ekologia – Ekonomia – Etyka*, Toruń, UMK, 1997; J. M. Dołęga, *Nauki środowiskowe na początku XXI wieku*, „Paedagogia Christiana”. *Edukacja Ekologiczna* nr 2/28 (2011), Toruń, UMK, 2001, pp. 11-38; J. M. Dołęga, *Ochrona środowiska społeczno – przyrodniczego w filozofii i teologii*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo UKSW, 2001; J. M. Dołęga, *Ochrona środowiska w filozofii i teologii*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Akademii Teologii Katolickiej, 1999; J. M. Dołęga, *Troska Jana Pawła II o środowisko*, in: S. Urbański (ed.), *Duchowość współczesnego człowieka w świetle globalizacji i edukacji*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, 2003, pp. 135-147; J. M. Dołęga, *Znaczenie nauk ekologicznych w ochronie środowiska i edukacji ekologicznej*, in: Z. Ciećko, J. M. Dołęga (ed.), *Ochrona środowiska i edukacja ekologiczna w Unii Europejskiej i Polsce*, Olecko, Wydawnictwo Wszechnicy Mazurskiej, 2003, p. 23; J. M. Dołęga, *Znaczenie sozologii ekofilozofii w kształtowaniu świadomości proekologicznej*, „Człowiek i Przyroda” nr 8-9, 1998, p. 219; J. M. Dołęga (ed.), *Podstawy kultury ekologicznej. Bases of ecological culture*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Acta Universitatis Masuriensis, 2002; J. M. Dołęga, J. Sandner (ed.), *Świadomość i edukacja ekologiczna*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo ATK, 1998; J. M. Dołęga, J. W. Czartoszewski (red.), *Edukacja ekologiczna w rodzinie*, Olecko, Wydawnictwo Wszechnicy Mazurskiej Acta Universitatis Masuriensis („Episteme” 9/2000), 2000.
- <sup>6</sup> S. Zięba, *Religia a ekologia*, in: S. Zięba (ed.) *Konferencje ekologiczne, ekologia humanistyczna tom 4*, Lublin, KUL, 1995; S. Zięba, *Życie w aspekcie ekologicznym*, „Człowiek i Przyroda” nr 2, Lublin, KUL, 1995; S. Zięba, *W poszukiwaniu podstaw odpowiedzialności za przyrodę*, „Człowiek i Przyroda” nr 4, Lublin, EkoKUL, 1996; S., Zięba *Natura i człowiek w ekologii humanistycznej*, Lublin, KUL, 1998; S. Zięba, *Historia myśli ekologicznej*, Lublin, KUL, 2004; S. Zięba, *Perspektywy ekologii człowieka*, Lublin, KUL, 2007; S. Zięba, Wróblewski Z. (ed.), *Ekologia a transformacje cywilizacyjne na przełomie wieków*, Lublin, Zakład Ekologii Człowiek KUL, 2000.
- <sup>7</sup> W. Tyburski, *Pojednać się z Ziemią. W kręgu zagadnień humanizmu ekologicznego*, Toruń, IPIR, 1993; W. Tyburski, *Ekologia i bioetyka*, Toruń, Wydawnictwo UMK, 1996; W. Tyburski, *Człowiek – środowisko przyrodnicze w świetle wybranych stanowisk filozoficznych i ekofilozoficznych*, „Paedagogia Christiana”. *Edukacja Ekologiczna* nr 2/28 (2011), Toruń, UMK, 2001, pp. 41-63.
- <sup>8</sup> A. Papuziński (ed.), *Wprowadzenie do filozoficznych problemów ekologii*, Bydgoszcz, Wydawnictwo Uczelniane Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Bydgoszczy, 1999; A. Papuziński, (ed.), *Zrównoważony rozwój. Od utopii do praw człowieka*, Bydgoszcz, Oficyna Wydawnicza Branta, 2005.
- <sup>9</sup> Z. Hull, *Problemy filozofii i ekologii*, in: A. Papuziński (ed.), *Wprowadzenie do filozoficznych problemów ekologii*, Bydgoszcz, Wydawnictwo Uczelniane Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Bydgoszczy, 1999, pp. 67-120; Z. Hull, W. Tulibacki (ed.), *Człowiek wobec świata*, Olsztyn, Wydawnictwo PTF Oddział w Olsztynie, 1996.
- <sup>10</sup> Z. Łepko, *Antropologia kryzysu ekologicznego*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, 2003.
- <sup>11</sup> J. Łukomski, *Elements of ecology and ecoetics*, Kielce, Wydawnictwo Uczelniane Wszechnica Świętokrzyska, 2003, pp. 176-178; J. Łukomski, *Solidarność człowieka z przyrodą*, Radom, Radomskie Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne „AVE”, 1994; J. Łukomski, *Ekologia w gimnazjum, Przewodnik dla nauczycieli*, Kielce, Wydawnictwo JEDNOŚĆ, 2007.

Skolimowski's<sup>12</sup>, W. Sztumski's, K. Waloszczyk's, K. Łastowski's<sup>13</sup>, S. Kozłowski's<sup>14</sup>, J. Jaron's.

It is also associated with theological sciences and ecotheology (M. Ozorowski, M. Wyrostkiewicz<sup>15</sup>). At the same time, the issue of pro-ecological education fits into the much broader context of scientific research referring to the issue of the relations: man – natural environment, especially in sociological research (E. Albińska<sup>16</sup>, T. Wierzbicki, P. T. Gliński, P. Matczak<sup>17</sup>, J. Wódz) as well as psychological research (K. Popielski<sup>18</sup>, A. Biela<sup>19</sup>, R. Kulik, A. Eliaz, K. Wódz)<sup>20</sup>.

However, within the pedagogical approach the issue of pro-ecological education was discussed by: K. Chałas<sup>21</sup>, D. Cichy<sup>22</sup>, S. Dziekoński, L. Domka<sup>23</sup>, K. Gąsecki, W. Hemmerling, A. Kalinowska, L. Kożuchowski, Z. Łomny, W. Sobczyk, L. Tuszyńska, M. Wolny, who pointed at the specificity of educational tasks, as well as the multiplicity of matters regarding human relations with the natural environment<sup>24</sup>.

In particular, Helena Radlinska's (1879-1954) point of view must be presented. The scholar emphasised the role of school education that was particularly responsible for ecological education and ecology.

<sup>12</sup> H. Skolimowski, *Nadzieja matką mądrych. Eseje o ekologii*, Warszawa, Biblioteka Ery Ekologicznej TP Filozofii Ekologicznej, 1993; H. Skolimowski, *Filozofia żyjąca. Ekofilozofia jako drzewo życia*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Pusty Obłok, 1993.

<sup>13</sup> K. Łastowski, *Ekologia a filozofia. Od ekologii jako nauki biologicznej do ekologii jako nauki humanistycznej*, in: A. Papuziński (ed.), *Wprowadzenie do filozoficznych problemów ekologii*, Bydgoszcz, Wydawnictwo Uczelniane Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Bydgoszczy, 1999, pp. 51-56; K. Łastowski, M. Rafiński (ed.), *Idee ekologii w świadomości społecznej*, Poznań – Daszewice, SORUS, 1992, pp. 5-9.

<sup>14</sup> S. Kozłowski, *Rio początek ery ekologicznej. Szczyt Ziemi*, Łódź, Akapit Press, 1993; S. Kozłowski, *W drodze do ekorozwoju*. Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1997.

<sup>15</sup> M. Wyrostkiewicz, *Ekologia ludzka. Osoba i jej środowisko z perspektywy teologiczno-moralnej*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007.

<sup>16</sup> E. Albińska, *Człowiek w środowisku przyrodniczym i społecznym*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo KUL, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> P. Matczak, *Problemy ekologiczne jako problemy społeczne*, Poznań, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza, 2000.

<sup>18</sup> K. Popielski, *Psychologia egzystencji wartości w życiu*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo KUL, 2008.

<sup>19</sup> A. Biela, *Ochrona środowiska naturalnego jako problem psychologiczny*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo KUL, 1986.

<sup>20</sup> D. Kiełczewski, *Ekologia społeczna*, Białystok, Wydawnictwo Ekonomia i Środowisko, 2001, p. 10; J. B. Faliński, *Naukowe podstawy działań na rzecz ochrony przyrody i środowiska*, in: J. B. Faliński, A. Kalinowska, L. Korporowicz, F. Plit, *Nauka i ruchy społeczne w ochronie środowiska naturalnego. Podstawy Ochrony Środowiska*, Warszawa, Wydanie pierwsze, WSiP, 1994, z. 1, p. 25.

<sup>21</sup> K. Chałas, *Szkoła wyższa a optymalizacja reformy edukacji*, in: Karpińska A. (ed.), *Edukacja w dialogu i reformie*, Białystok, Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie Trans Humana, 2002, pp. 325-337; K. Chałas, *Edukacja ekologiczna z doświadczeń szkoły podstawowej w Mielnie*, Lublin, Przedsiębiorstwo Wydawnicze Związku Niewidomych, 1997.

<sup>22</sup> D. Cichy (ed.), *Edukacja środowiskowa wzmocnieniem zrównoważonego rozwoju*, Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, 2005; D. Cichy, *Szkoła wobec wyzwań edukacji biologicznej i środowiskowej w XXI wieku*, Warszawa, Instytut Badań Edukacyjnych, 2003.

<sup>23</sup> L. Domka, *Dialog z naturą w edukacji dla ekorozwoju*, Warszawa-Poznań, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2001; L. Domka, *Education of elementary upbringing and basic teaching students for sustainable development*, „Kultur Ökologie” nr 1, 2003, pp. 23-25.

<sup>24</sup> T. Frąckowiak, *Panorama problemowa książki: „Człowiek, cywilizacja i krzyk okaleczonej ziemi”*, in: T. Frąckowiak (ed.), *Arytmia egzystencji społecznej a wychowanie*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Fundacja Innowacja i Wyższa Szkoła Społeczno-Ekologiczna, 2001, p. 26.

Another researcher who connected the issues of pro-ecological education with human development against the background of natural (ecosystem, biosystem), social and cultural (social system)<sup>25</sup> processes is Ryszard Wroczyński (1909-1987).

Other social, pedagogues, especially Mikołaj Winiarski and Wiesław Theiss, also discussed the issues of environmental education.

The works written by K. Denka, K. Chałas, A. Maja or J. Łukomski focus on school education at its various levels.

A great variety of approaches to the issue of human beings has been observed since the 19th century: from German idealism, treating man as an absolute reason, to the formulation of specific sciences, especially humanities, naturalism and evolutionism. They have often resulted in simplified human concepts and, as a consequence, educational, upbringing concepts that are also reflected in pro-ecological education<sup>26</sup>.

Pro-ecological education refers to a man in relation to whom a special value may be the indication of Pope Benedict XVI that "in order to educate, one must know who the human person is and know his nature" (CV 61)<sup>27</sup>. Education always includes a defined and possible state, it stretches between reality and the ideal, and in this field of specific tension there is the human being himself, who is the principle and basis for implementing a specific concept of value through education<sup>28</sup>.

Unfortunately, there is a significant lack of such a perspective of understanding education in many contemporary approaches, in which we can notice the interest of educators in only one of its dimensions, e.g. biological, psychological, social or only cultural, not to mention the spiritual dimension – namely *human spirituality*. Then, education is limited, either to innate (genetic) factors, or to external influences and stimuli of the surrounding environment – falling into the threat of functioning in the aforementioned two-factor approaches to the theory of education.

It would be an overlook of this revolution (called the *revolution of spirit* brought by Christianity) and would ignore this upbringing factor, which is the *personal factor – the spiritual one*<sup>29</sup>.

The aim of encompassing all these elements, without falling into unidimensional approach is to link pro-ecological education with the perspective of general pedagogy in our present work. In this perspective, we want to search for the sense of pro-ecological education and its values and to reflect the directions of its transformation. Such an intention requires taking into account not only the achievements of ecology, but also health education and pro-ecological education.

<sup>25</sup> W. Theiss, *Pedagogika społeczna w koncepcji Ryszarda Wroczyńskiego (1909-1987)*, in: S. Kawula, *Studia z pedagogiki społecznej*, Olsztyn, WSP, 1996, p. 303.

<sup>26</sup> M. Nowak, *Czy wychowanie bez celu?*, „Paedagogia Christiana”, 1/29 (2012), pp. 60-66.

<sup>27</sup> Benedykt XVI, *Encyklika "Caritas in Veritate" – o integralnym rozwoju ludzkim w miłości i prawdzie*, Kraków, 2009, CV, nr 61.

<sup>28</sup> M. Nowak, *Czy wychowanie bez celu?*, „Paedagogia Christiana”, 1/29 (2012), p. 66.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. p. 66; M. Nowak, *Osoba i wartość w pedagogice ogólnej*, in: M. Nowak, P. Magier, I. Szewczak (ed.) *Antropologiczna pedagogika ogólna*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo Gaudium, 2010, pp. 41-55.

Together, they form a view of those disciplines in cooperation with which ecological education is conducted<sup>30</sup>.

Life, history and the world can be used as tools to educate man to values, to harmony, to develop feelings, for virtues, thereby pointing to the need to discover and enrich them through them and in relationships with others, his humanity by dominating the circumstances, tendencies, dispositions so that the harmony of relations between feelings, values and virtues becomes present in his life, his history and his world<sup>31</sup>.

In fact, a person will not become a discoverer of values if he is not firstly sensitive to them or if he does not strive to assimilate them in a continuous effort of upbringing, formation or education<sup>32</sup>. First, however, the experience of oneself and one's own identity enables the acquisition of values in the process of their reception, as well as discovering the external ideal and making it an internal form of oneself, which is described by S. Kunowski as a process of *introception of values*<sup>33</sup>.

On the basis of the above reasons, pro-ecological education should be characterized by special openness to the man himself if he wants to help him solve his problems. Thus, in openness to humans, we want to consider the process of pro-ecological education in its complexity, integrity, openness and dynamics<sup>34</sup>.

Pro-ecological education requires systemic solutions and it cannot be treated as temporary, collective, single activity, or as a cluster of methods or randomly chosen techniques. It also requires an appropriate program and cooperation of the entire class or academic community, as well as specialist teacher's preparation at all levels of education. Constructing and implementing an effective educational system in the field of education is a constant effort of the subjects of this education. This effort is becoming more and more necessary today. In this regard, it is worth recalling the words of Pope Francis, who, referring to the celebration of World Environment Day, promoted by the United Nations, during a general audience in the Vatican on June 5, 2013, appealed not only for respect for the natural environment, but above all for human ecology because the human person himself is at risk today.

This kind of care for the preservation and protection of the natural environment – in a religious context has already been recorded in the *Bible*, in the book of *Genesis*, where in the description of the creation of the world and man, we also find indications of human responsibility for the world. Not surprisingly, it is from the perspective of religion, especially through the teaching of recent popes, that we hear messages touching the problem of “human ecology” as closely related to “environmental ecology”.

We are experiencing a crisis of respect for the natural environment of man, which is currently being analyzed from many different perspectives and seems

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<sup>30</sup> M. Nowak, *Pedagogiczny profil nauk o wychowaniu. Studium z odniesieniami do pedagogiki pielęgniarstwa*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo KUL, 2012, p. 198; T. Hejnicka-Bezwińska, *Pedagogika ogólna*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Akademickie i Profesjonalne, 2008.

<sup>31</sup> M. Nowak, *Czy wychowanie bez celu?*, „Paedagogia Christiana” 1/29 (2012), pp. 56-57.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p. 60.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. p. 60; S. Kunowski, *Wartości w procesie wychowania*, Kraków, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”, 2003, p. 17.

<sup>34</sup> M. Nowak, *Pedagogiczny profil nauk o wychowaniu*, p. 178.

to reflect most clearly visibly in man himself. Due to the fact that the causes of this crisis seem to be deeply rooted and they do not concern only the issues of economics or politics, but above all ethics and anthropology, taking remedial efforts must be associated not only with abandoning extreme pursuit of profit and consumption (often referred to as the first signs "culture of rejection"), but also the pursuit to feel human life, a person as basic values that must be respected and protected, opposed to a culture of waste and rejection, in favor of promoting a culture of solidarity and meeting<sup>35</sup>.

It must be acknowledged that the State Higher Vocation Schools Schools (PWSZ), which were established in Poland after 1996 as a new type of university, give students the possibility to gain B.A. degree<sup>36</sup>. In addition, these educational institutions can significantly contribute to educating and preparing students for responsible entry into the world of professional career, including achieving harmony with the surrounding world and with oneself.

Such a pursuit was perceived as leading criteria a in the selection of these schools for our analysis.

The given issues were first examined by analysing the collected literature of the subject, orienting the analysis on the basic problem of the publication, which was formulated in the form of the question: What values of pro-ecological education are preferred by students of the State Vocational Schools in Poland and what are the challenges in regard to methods currently implemented in conducting pro-ecological education?

In this work, the method of both analysis and synthesis was used to analyze the literature of the subject as well as research results. In connection with the conducted own research, research methods were used, which will be described more precisely in the methodological part of this work (chapter IV).

The theoretical structure of the work as well as the fulfillment if its goals were undertaken on the basis of both the analysis and synthesis of the collected literature of the subject. Moreover, the analysis of existing official documents, such as: the Strategy of Ecological Education, Ecological Policy of Poland or the study of educational standards and study programs implemented and approved at the PWSZ in Poland turned out to be helpful.

However, the basic goal of the current publication was to recognise both the scope and manner of understanding and conveying the value of pro-ecological education at the PWSZ in Poland. Therefore, this publication is of theoretical-research nature and, apart from the theoretical part, it also includes a methodological and empirical part (with the analysis of the results of own empirical research), deepening the analyses conducted in the theoretical part<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.swietostworzenia.pl/2-aktualne/352-papiez-na-swiatowy-dzien-ochrony-srodowiska-ekologia-ludzka-i-ekologia-srodowiska-ida-w-parze>; <http://www.niedziela.pl/artykul/5121/Papiez-Franciszek-wzywa-do-poszanowania>, downloaded on 05th June 2013.

<sup>36</sup> *Ustawa z dnia 26 czerwca 1997 r. o wyższych szkołach zawodowych (Dz. U. z 1997 r. Nr 96, poz. 590).*

<sup>37</sup> M. Nowak, *Teorie i koncepcje wychowania*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Akademickie i Profesjonalne, 2008, p. 44.

In the light of the analysis of the collected literature of the subject (in the theoretical part), and then based on the analysis of the collected opinions expressed by students of the State Higher Vocational Schools in Poland, about the values and methods of pro-ecological education, we want to present distinctively appreciated pro-ecological values and indicate their content, sources and methods of conveyance. In this way, we want to determine their conditions, factors that affect the understanding and occurrence of the value of pro-ecological education among students of PWSZ in Poland, during the first-cycle level of education.

When it comes to the theoretical part, the present publication contains three chapters in regard to the analysis of problems of values and methods of pro-ecological education that are connected with educational tasks of the university, particularly focused on the axiology of pro-ecological education.

Chapter I, entitled: *Values and methods of pro-ecological education in the literature of the subject*, discusses the general characteristics of pro-ecological education in the historical aspect, pointing to its genesis and development. In this chapter we present the issues of values and methods of pro-ecological education in individual historical periods and in selected contemporary pedagogical faculties, as well as in Catholic Social Science. At the same time, we introduce basic problems related to the axiology of pro-ecological education and methods of introducing these values in Poland, and then we attempt to determine the importance of pro-ecological education in human life and community having explained the basic concepts in the field of the discussed issues.

In chapter II, entitled: *The process of pro-ecological education*, we present the basics of pro-ecological education (anthropological, ontological, axiological) as well as its biological, psychological, socio-cultural and spiritual dimension. Therefore, in this chapter we present the concept of man and his role in creating the theory of pro-ecological education, as well as the axiology of pro-ecological education. In addition, the analysis of attitudes towards pro-ecological values and an attempt to indicate ways of deriving the goals and principles of this education are discussed. Moreover, we also point to the theoretical proposal of pro-ecological education which is understood as education approaching towards values and taking into account the assumptions of Christian personalism.

Chapter III entitled: *Education towards pro-ecological values and its implementation in vocational colleges in Poland*, focused mainly on the analysis of both pro-ecological education and training process in vocational colleges. We present the existing conditions of the pro-ecological education and training process at the PWSZ, its status and place in the education program. In the present chapter the standards and educational programs are analysed, as well as the content of pro-ecological education at the PWSZ in Poland, which form the basis for the organization of our own research. Most importantly, we undertake the analysis of the value of the ecosystem, the biosystem, the social system and the methodology of pro-ecological education at the PWSZ. Finally, we also study the pro-ecological lifestyle and its subjects attending the PWSZ in Poland.

The second part of the publication – called methodological, includes Chapter IV, entitled: *Methodology of own empirical research*, presents the methodological

procedure applied in our own empirical research, along with a description of the research area and its purpose, formulation of problems and hypotheses, methods, techniques and tools, description of the research sample and organization and the course of empirical own research.

The third part of the publication – called empirical, includes Chapter V, entitled: *Correlation of preferred pro-ecological values with the methods of pro-ecological education of PWSZ students in Poland (in the light of own research)*, presents a diagnosis of opinions regarding the values and methods of pro-ecological education, perception of the value of this education and their presence among students at the State Higher Vocational Schools in Poland. We also present correlations of preferred pro-ecological values in not only school, local, family but also in mass media environments. Furthermore, we discuss the impact of the natural environment on students' opinions regarding pro-ecological values, which will also reflect the basic differences in the understanding of the value of pro-ecological education by students and the influence of the value of pro-ecological education on students' lifestyles.

Finally, we summarise the results of our own empirical research, and come to conclusions and postulates connected with passing on pro-ecological values as well as shaping pro-ecological attitudes (pro-ecological lifestyle), directed at foster children, parents and educators.