

MASTER THESIS

Can Art in Sustainability Education Challenge Marginalisation?

Conversations with Youths and Practitioners in a European Context.

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Abstract:

Marginalisation is present in youth education for sustainability. Reducing marginalisation in youth education for sustainability is crucial in the field of human ecology since it strives to understand environmental and social justice. This thesis explores the role of art in European youth education for sustainability and the potential of art to transform dominant Western industrial cultural assumptions in European youth education for sustainability to reduce marginalisation. As a theoretical framework, the EcoJustice Education theory is applied. Then a thematic analysis is conducted to analyse the qualitative data acquired through semi-structured interviews and focus groups with sustainability educators, artists, a diversity consultant as well as youth and art teachers. The findings suggest that the role of art is a tool for embodiment, diversity, collectivity, empowerment, process-oriented space, and nature connection. This suggests that the interconnectedness of the themes in transforming youth education for sustainability is crucial. Furthermore, these themes revealed that art in youth sustainability education can transform the dominant cultural assumptions of scientism, ethnocentrism, individualism, top-down approach, progress and result-oriented space, as well as anthropocentrism and human-nature superiority. This research shows that using art as an approach in youth sustainability education transforms the dominant cultural assumptions and thus reduces marginalisation.

Keywords: *Art, Youth, Sustainability Education, EcoJustice Education, Dominant Western Industrial Culture, Marginalisation*

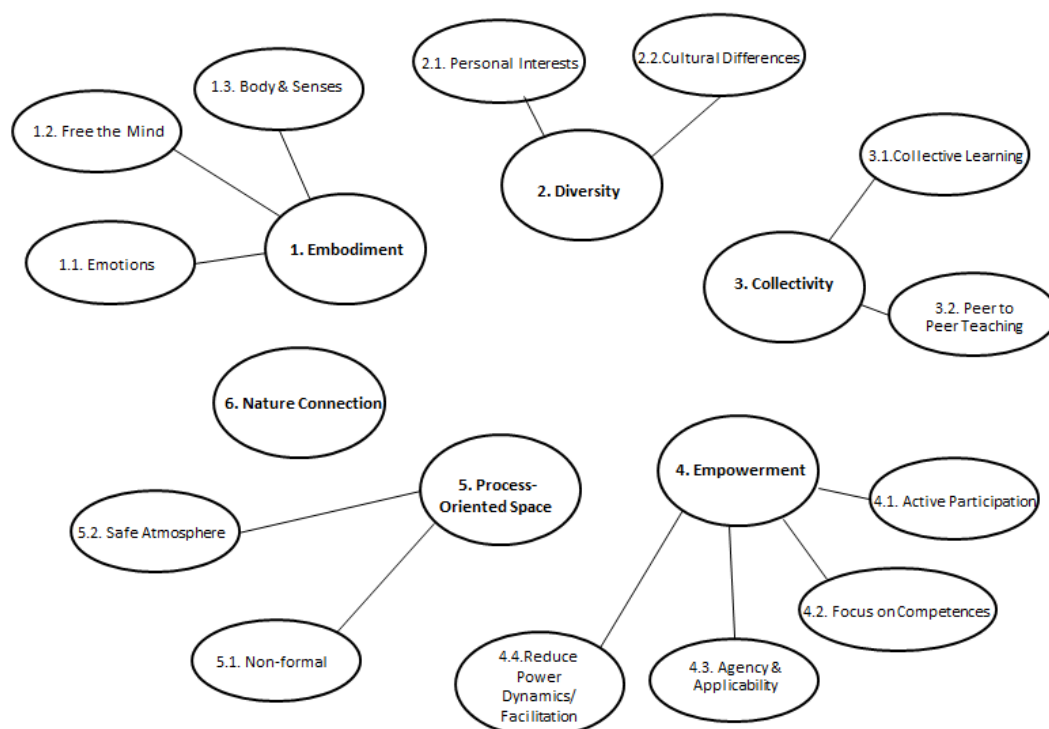


Figure 1: Thematic map, showing the six themes and their codes regarding which role art plays in youth sustainability education.