

Research Paper

Scouts' and educational stakeholders' perceptions of integrating scouting methods into formal education

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Abstract

Scouting is a non-formal learning environment which implies a form of learning that is “less organised than formal learning, but still consists of planned activities and educational objectives. It is also seen as being more concerned with action, and learning by doing from experience; and more holistic, with a particular focus on developing social and emotional skills” (Bridwell et.al., 2015: 27). The Scouting Method used relies on the concept of experiential learning or learning by doing and combines it with other educational elements such as the symbolic framework, team or patrol system, gamification elements such as the badge system (Christians 2018) and active learning or personal progression so that each young person is “consciously and actively involved in his or her own development” (WOSM 1998: 47). The present paper aims to explore scouts' and educational stakeholders' (teachers and scout teachers) beliefs and opinions regarding scouting methods and the way these methods could be integrated into the formal learning environment. Qualitative and quantitative methods of analyses were used to examine and interpret the results gathered through an online questionnaire. Results show that all respondents have a positive attitude towards scouting and the methods used within their activities and they would encourage others to join the association. Even school subjects have been identified which could serve as bridging points between non-formal and formal educational situations.

Keywords: scouting; non-formal learning; gamification; teaching methods

Introduction

Scouting is a non-formal learning environment which implies a form of learning that is “less organised than formal learning, but still consists of planned activities and educational objectives. It is also seen as being more concerned with action, and learning by doing from experience; and more holistic, with a particular focus on developing social and emotional skills” (Bridwell et.al., 2015: 27). The Scouting Method used within scouting relies on the concept of experiential learning or learning by doing and combines it with other educational elements such as the symbolic framework, team or patrol system, gamification elements, such as the badge system, (Christians 2018) and active learning or personal progression so that each young person is “consciously and actively involved in his or her own development” (WOSM 1998: 47).

The present paper aims to discuss scouting as a non-formal learning environment and how it can be integrated within the formal institutional education and if there is a need for cooperation between the two. The paper tackles the idea of out of school learning and how can out of school activities, such as scouting (as a type of non-formal education) combined with the opportunities offered by experiential learning, be integrated into institutional educational programs and curricula.

Although mainstream education is provided within traditional educational institutions (schools), nowadays there are plenty of resources teachers and educators can take advantage of in order to extend traditional school boundaries as educational sites. Well-organised school or study trips, thematic camps, open-air, outdoor classes or forest schools, as well as, scouting activities and camps are all based on the concept of learning by doing and

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experiential education and prove to be excellent forms of out of school learning. During such activities and programs participating learners acquire knowledge intuitively, therefore these forms of education offer endless possibilities to connect formal learning with experiential education and learning by doing.

In our rapidly changing world, the requirements and challenges of today's technical development and modernization all call for the need to update institutional, formal education and teaching in terms of its forms, content and methodology. A possible way of development could be the integration of out of school learning into mainstream education thus increasing learner engagement and motivation.

Scouting as a type of non-formal education

Non-formal education according to Coombs and Ahmed (1974, ctd. in La Belle 1982: 161-162) refers to "any organized, systematic, educational activity carried on outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, as well as children."

Compared to formal, institutional education it can be observed that both formal and non-formal education are built upon planned activities organized according to well-defined educational objectives, though the educational setting, the context differs. Non-formal education refers to a form of learning which takes learning outside the formal context (out of school learning) and combines it with organized experiential learning, also present in the literature as 'learning by doing'. This form of teaching and learning is considered to be more holistic as it focuses also on developing social and emotional skills.

Based on the UNESCO's definition, non-formal education is "an organized educational activity outside the established formal system that is intended to serve an identifiable learning clientele with identifiable learning objectives" (ctd. in Birdwell et al., 2015: 29). Moreover, the above definition provided by the UNESCO also states that non-formal education is mostly provided by "youth organizations, especially volunteer-led youth NGOs, which base their educational programmes on equality, diversity and responsible global citizenship" (ctd. in Birdwell et al., 2015: 29).

In the year 2019 the first World Non-Formal Education Forum was held where the six biggest global youth organizations met in order to discuss and share their knowledge, experiences and vision regarding youth education and learning. A result of the above-mentioned forum was the publication of the Joint Position on Non-Formal Education (2019) in which non-formal education is defined as "planned, structured programmes and processes of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competences, outside the formal educational curriculum" (2019: 8). The aforementioned publication also highlights that the three types of education and learning (formal, non-formal and informal) are "complementary, mutually reinforcing and often overlapping elements of a lifelong learning process" (2019: 9), nonetheless they also state that non-formal education contributes to the development of the individual in such a way that it "cannot be replaced by formal or informal education and learning" (2019: 11). Moreover, a list of characteristics of non-formal education is also provided. The list contains characteristics such as: voluntary participation, experiential, progressive and peer-to-peer learning, mentoring, leadership development and the development of personal value system (2019: 12-13).

As most definitions on non-formal education specify, non-formal education is mainly provided by youth organizations around the world. In this respect the scouting movement and scouting organizations play a crucial role in organizing and delivering non-formal educational programmes across countries.

According to the UNESCO's definition the Scout Movement is "a voluntary non-political educational movement for young people open to all without distinction of gender, origin, race or creed, in accordance with the purpose, principles and method conceived by the Founder, Baden Powell. The purpose of the Scout Movement is to contribute to the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual potentials as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities."

Being members of the six big youth organizations the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGS) have over million members around the world. Their aim is to train youths who become autonomous, responsible, supportive and committed members of the society. Activities focus upon building and strengthening active citizenship among young people. To achieve these goals gradual self-improvement, learning by doing, and the 'patrol' system are used. The principles of the WOSM include living according to the Scout Oath and Law, as well as to motivate and

inspire, “to build on young people’s capacity for imagination, adventure, creativity and inventiveness” (Lockhart, 2016:19) and the constructive relationship with the natural world.

The Hungarian Scout Association in Romania has grown into the largest Hungarian youth organization in Transylvania. Its activities take place in districts, scout teams, and the smallest unit of a team is the archduke. An archduke has 8 to 12 members. Currently more than 2000 active scouts are members of the alliance, who belong to more than 150 teams across Transylvania.

From a pedagogical point of view, it is important to highlight that the educational principles of scouting are based on pedagogical movements and efforts leading up to experiential pedagogy. The influence and teachings of several scholars can be recognized within the educational principles and aims of the scouting movement (Füle, 2010: 187). According to Solymosi (2016), the responsible editor-in-chief of the Unified Handbook for Youth Education (*Egységes Ifjúságnevelési Kézikönyv*), the values of scouting include the small community (primitive) system (retaining community; living community life and education), the vows and laws (awareness-raising); learning by doing (autonomy), the on-going and stimulating, attractive and useful activities organized mostly in a natural environment and the fostering of the Hungarian culture with special emphasis on our folk traditions (Solymosi, 2016: 2-4; Péterházy, 2010). Péterházy (2010) also highlights that education within scouting is child-centred and age-specific.

In his publication on *The Hungarian Scouting Environment Pedagogy*, Füle (2010: 190) claims that within scouting the value system, the goal system, the requirements system, the activity system, the tools system, the monitoring and evaluation system are in a close unity and this unity is the greatest secret of the “true pedagogy” scouting provides. Moreover, the Scout Method with all its elements is designed in such a way to support and promote the holistic and progressive development of young people. “The fact that all of these elements form a whole and are used as a system is part of what makes Scouting unique” (WOSM 1998: 13).

In spite of the fact that the Joint Position on Non-Formal Education (2019) argued that formal, non-formal and informal learning are “complementary, mutually reinforcing and often overlapping elements of a lifelong learning process” (2019: 9), there are hardly any studies on how these different types of education can be integrated or how they can complement each other.

Birdwell et al. (2015) published a report of the Demos research group in the UK on learning by doing and with the aim to find out “whether non-formal learning is sufficiently embedded into the British education system” (2015: 11). The representative survey was conducted in England, Wales and Scotland with 14–18-year-old young people and teachers. Their results show that state secondary school learners complained about their school not providing opportunities to take part in non-formal learning, while more than half of these learners would prefer participation in such non-formal learning activities to be taken into account at their school leaving exams and final grades. Nine out of ten teachers also agreed that non-formal learning activities could be beneficial for students, most of the teachers (72%) even claiming that non-formal education should be part of the national curriculum. While most teachers would support school and scouting partnerships, they also mentioned lack of time and inspectorate pressures as obstacles that might hinder such collaboration. A publication of the UK Scout Association (*Future Prepared*, 2016), also based on the results of the above-mentioned Demos survey, highlights the importance of collaboration and partnership between schools and scouting even providing some possible models of cooperation.

The Youth Program Review (YPR) Coordinating Team in Australia also published an education proposal (2018) describing how scouting as a non-formal education can complement formal, mainstream education. The educational proposal highlights that scouts showed statistically significant differences from non-scouts in areas such as physical activity, emotional intelligence, curiosity about the world, leadership, responsibility, teamwork, active citizenship, etc. It also states that scouting develops critical and creative thinking, interpersonal skills and independence. Moreover, the publication stresses that scouting focuses on “building good character, by purposefully developing the social, physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual personal growth areas” (2018: 26).

In light of the above it can be said that cooperation between schools and scouting groups might enhance learners’ development and the formal and non-formal learning combined might lead to a great advancement in education. The present paper thus aims to find out whether such collaboration is needed or supported by scout learners, teachers and scout teachers within the Transylvanian Hungarian context.

Aim and research questions

The main goal of the present study was to find out how scouting can be integrated within the formal institutional education and if there is a need for cooperation between the two. Thus, the research relies on the perspective of scouts (young and adults), teachers and scout teachers to explore their attitudes towards scouting activities, the necessity for a greater integration of such activities into the traditional educational system and the possible ways of collaboration.

The research questions are the following: a) what are scouts' beliefs regarding the importance and usefulness of scouting in general and within the school context? b) What are teachers' beliefs regarding scouting and what ways of collaboration can they imagine between schools and scouting? c) How do teacher scouts make use of the methods and activities used within scouting and what forms of collaboration can they see between schools and scouting?

Research design and Methods

The objective of the study was to investigate scouts', teachers' and scout teachers' beliefs towards scouting and whether they could point out some ways of collaboration between scouting and schools. In order to find answers to the research questions presented above, a questionnaire was distributed among educational stakeholders and scouts. The language of the questionnaire was Hungarian and it was designed using Google Forms and distributed online through Facebook and forwarded to the mailing list of scout leaders, and leaders were asked to share and forward the questionnaire to their scouting group members.

Altogether 93 subjects filled in the questionnaire. The participants' age ranges from 13 to 40+ years old. Most of the participants (31%) are between 16-19 years old (high school students). 24% are older than 40 years old, 20% are between 13-15 years old (primary school students), 12% are between 31-40 years old, 10% are between 20-25 years old (university students), 3% are between 26-30 years old.

According to their gender, respondents were mostly women (71%) and 29% men. The goal of the questionnaire was to reach people across the Transylvanian region. The answers came from the following counties: Satu Mare, Cluj, Covasna, Harghita, Braşov, Sălaj, Hunedoara, Alba, Bihor, Maramureş, Bistriţa-Năsăud and Mureş.

Respondents of the questionnaire are either teachers (19.4%), scouts (63.4%) or scout teachers (members of the Hungarian Scout Association in Romania who also work as teachers in schools, 17.2%).

The questionnaire included four groups of questions. The first group of questions aimed to find out some demographic data about the respondents, namely their gender, age, place of living and to which target group they belong to. The rest of the questions were designed for the different target groups (teachers, scouts and scout teachers).

The scout group received a set of questions comprised of 12 questions. The first two questions asked them about their scout levels and how long they have been a member of the Scout Association. The rest of the questions asked scout participants about the usefulness of scouting and how they can exploit their scouting knowledge in school, and how scouting influences/affects their development. Out of the ten questions two were closed-ended questions (yes or no answers), two were 5-point Likert scale questions and six were open-ended questions.

The section for teachers included 8 questions, out of which four were closed-ended questions and four open-ended questions. The aim of the closed-ended questions was to find out whether teachers have heard about the scouting movement, whether they would join scouting or, whether they would recommend or suggest their students to join such movement. The open-ended questions asked teachers about their opinions and beliefs regarding scouting, and the possible forms of collaboration between school and scouting (school subjects, programs, activities).

Scout teachers' question group involved 12 questions, out of which one closed-ended question to see whether they have tried to use scouting techniques in the traditional school environment. Three questions were 5-point Likert scale questions regarding the role of scouting in students' development, based on The YPR Coordinating Team's (2018) research results. Eight questions were open-ended and asked scout teachers' opinion about the possible collaboration between schools and scouting, the forms of such collaboration, the techniques and activities that can be used in a traditional classroom.

Data collected was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis based on the type of the specific questionnaire items. A quantitative account of demographic data about research participants is provided; moreover, a statistical analysis of the two 5-point Likert scale items was also applied. Answers

received to the open-ended questions were analysed using qualitative content analysis structuring the information and identifying relevant data and patterns.

Results and discussion

The aim of the present paper was to present scouting as a non-formal learning environment based on the methods and techniques used. Experiential learning is based on learning by doing technique which is well organized and applied within scouting. Therefore, the present paper seeks to explore scouts', teachers' and scout teachers' opinions and needs regarding the collaboration and joint-work possibilities of schools and scout groups in Transylvania, Romania. In what follows, data gathered through the online questionnaire will be presented and discussed separately for each target group.

Scouts

The questionnaire was completed by 59 scouts, a number that represents 63.4% of the total number of respondents. Scouts were addressed 12 questions with the aim to find out their beliefs regarding the importance and usefulness of scouting in general and within the school context. However, the first couple of questions intended to find out how long have the respondents been a member of the Scout Association, while the second question asked subjects about their scout level, namely scout, younger explorers, rover, and adult/old scouts, which covers an age range from 13 to 40+ years old. The answers gathered via these two questions allowed us to create three main groups based on the respondents' scout section title. These sub-groups were created in order to find out how different age groups think of the collaboration between schools and scouting, to separate young learners' answers from adults' answers, as in the latter case we can only speak of retrospective views on how they remember the usefulness of scouting in schools. One of the groups include primary school students (N=18), the second group involved young explorers or high school students (N=26) and the last group is the group of rovers, adults and old scouts with 15 respondents.

The following questions aimed to find out how scouts view the usefulness of scouting, how the knowledge and experience gathered through scouting can be exploited and utilized within the traditional educational system. Answers reveal that 76.3% of the respondents (N=45) agreed that scouting helps them in school achievement.

Answers given to how respondents think scouting could supplement or aid school teaching show that most primary school students believe such collaboration can be helpful as scouting would make learning more playful and enjoyable, would offer more practicality, and there were also answers which suggested that scouting techniques should be integrated in the traditional educational system. Moreover, their answers suggest that scouting teaches young people discipline, respect and problem-solving skills that are useful in all areas of life. Pupils also mentioned school subjects like biology, history or religion in case of which they could make use of their previous knowledge gained through scouting activities.

Young explorers, or high school students also agree that scouting techniques could be used within the school lessons as it could turn a class into a more interactive and playful learning context. They also highlight that scouting helps in learning time management, orientation, preparing scouts for the future. The group of rovers/adults and old scouts see scouting as an example of real-life practicality, hands-on knowledge, and that it helps young people to take on a community role, be responsible and they also say that scouting helps the development of creativity.

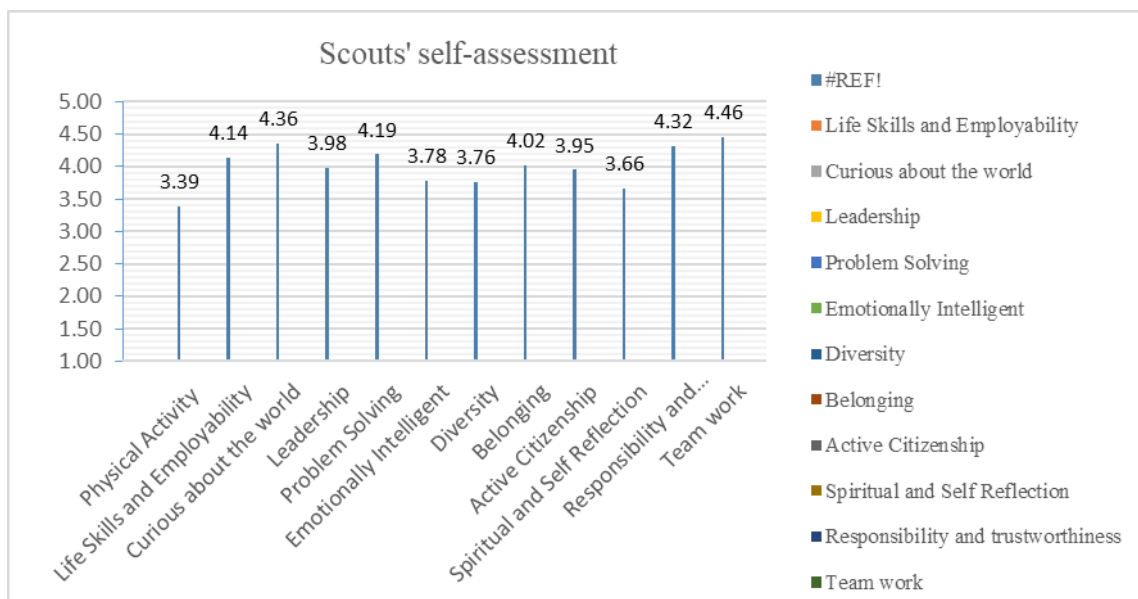
Scout participants also enumerated certain school subjects where they could make use of their previous knowledge or experience gained through scouting. Some of these school subjects are the following: biology, history, ornithology, Hungarian literature/history, natural sciences, first aid, geography, religion and music. They also mentioned some scouting teaching techniques like using games, that they later encountered in the school context as well, and a couple of specific topics, such as the lives of well-known former scouts like Jenő Dsida or Gábor Bethlen, people about whom children are taught in Hungarian literature classes.

Scout participants were also asked to think of and list some of the scout games and activities that they can imagine to be applied within the school context as well. Answers given to this question show that there is a great number of games and activities that subjects believe could be used in the school, such as: PUFF-PUFF, méta (similar to baseball but it has its own kind of bat), cője (singing combined with steps and bending your body), pony, bulldog, colour/number war, ABC, team building games/events, energizing games, self-development tasks, expressing opinions, and other musical/dancing games involving physical/body movement.

Furthermore, a few respondents mentioned learning by doing and experiential learning in general, as ways of teaching that they can imagine being used within the classroom as well. Moreover, 52 scout respondents (88.1%) stated they would like to attend school classes delivered in a similar way to a scouting activity or programme.

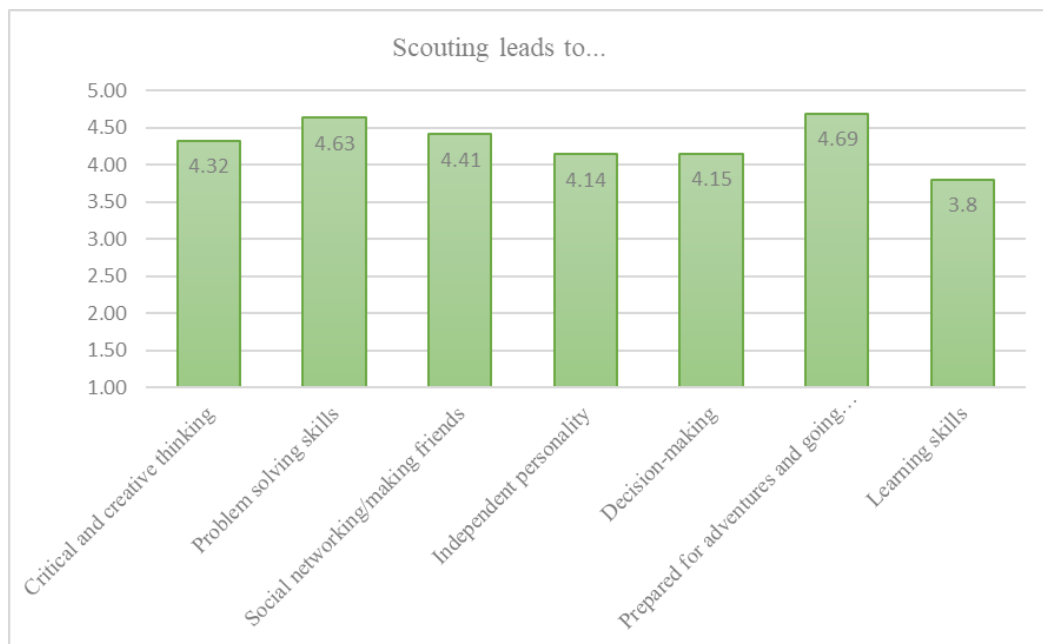
The last two questions for this target group focused on scouts' development and aimed to find out participants' views and opinions regarding their skills, knowledge and experience and whether they see themselves as performing or being better in some areas compared to their non-scout classmates. Question 11 included twelve 5-point Likert scale statements (1= least true, 5= totally true) based on the findings of a study conducted in Australia (The YPR Coordinating Team, 2018: 25-26). The 12 statements referred to participants' personal development and they had to assess to what extent they are better than their peers in areas such as: physical activity, life skills and employability, curiosity about the world, leadership and problem-solving skills, emotional intelligence, sense of belonging, active citizenship, self-reflection, teamwork etc.

Figure 1. Scouts' self-assessment on their stage of development compared to their non-scout peers



As it can be seen in Figure 1 above, in all areas listed, participants believe they are somewhat better than their peers as all answers are above the average, exceed 3 points. If we look closely to the mean values of the scores given to each statement separately, we can see that the highest score was given for teamwork (4.46), but curiosity about the world (4.36) and sense of responsibility (4.32) also scored high. The lowest mean value was given to physical activity (3.39), so according to the answers it can be concluded that while participants believe they are better in teamwork and have more sense of responsibility due to their scouting experience, they don't really feel that scouting increased their physical fitness even though many of the scouting activities involve physical exercise, running, hiking or walking.

The last question also included seven 5-point Likert scale statements asking participants to give their opinion about the extent to which scouting develops or results in the following: critical and creative thinking, problem solving skills, social networking/making friends, independent personality, decision-making, adventure and trip preparedness, learning skills.

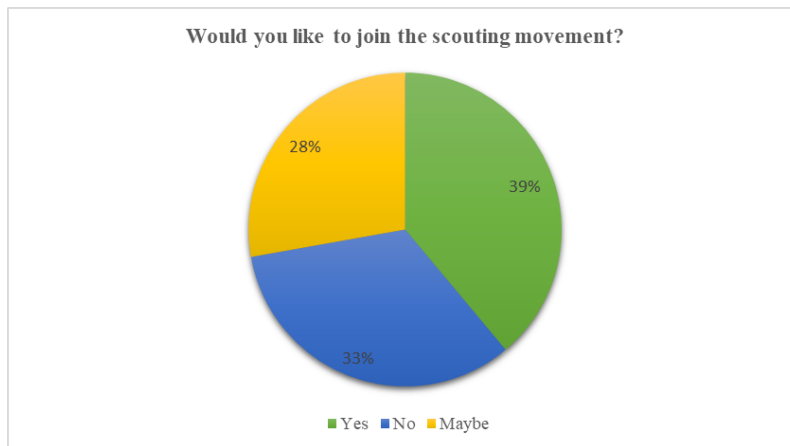
Figure 2. Participants' beliefs regarding the outcomes of scouting

Looking at Figure 2 above, it can be observed that all mean values are above 3 points, therefore it can be inferred that scouting helps in the development of all 7 areas, however the highest score was given to being prepared/ready for adventures and going on trips (4.69) followed by problem solving skills (4.63). The lowest score was given to learning skills (3.8), making us assume that although scouting uses and presents a lot of alternative learning techniques and games, it is possible that participants do not consider such activities as learning, therefore they claim scouting does not enhance their learning skills. Such low scores given for developing learning skills might suggest that participants learn intuitively and pick up knowledge, however it also makes us think of how to increase participants' awareness about this learning process and development.

Teachers

In total 18 teacher subjects filled out the questionnaire, that means 19.4% of the total number of respondents. For this target group, the aim was to find out teachers' beliefs and collaboration ideas regarding scouting what ways of collaboration they can imagine. Obviously, such a small number of teacher respondents cannot be considered representative of the entire teacher population in Transylvania, however, we can assume that those who sympathize with the scouting movement responded to the questionnaire. Regarding their teaching experience, subjects ranged from 1 to 43 years of teaching. All teacher respondents, in this case, have previously heard of scouting. In their view, scouting deals with team building, organizing camps, outdoor activities, hiking, teaching discipline, teaching how to love nature, volunteering, sports, organizing entertaining education, and everything connected to man, nature, nurturing traditions, etc. All the teachers who participated in the research had a positive attitude toward scouting, the most often used adjective to describe scouting was "useful" or "the most useful". Besides being useful, scouting was characterised as: imaginative, creative, practical, constructive, developing a sense of responsibility and sense of belonging, teaching members to take care of each other and to work together, a great activity for nature lovers, the best educational activity; teaching children discipline and strengthening their sense of community.

In spite of all the positive views and comments received by participant teachers, surprisingly only 39% of the teachers said they would like to join scouting (see Figure 3) and 33% stated that they wouldn't like to join.

Figure 3. Participant teachers' intentions to join scouting

Teachers' rather negative intentions to join the scouting movement might be due to the fact that teachers are already overwhelmed with numerous teaching and administrative responsibilities and therefore the idea of taking on new activities might have prompted this negativity. Moreover, all 18 respondents would encourage their learners to join and support them in the scouting movement, which could further support our previous assumptions.

The majority of teacher respondents (N=15), 83.3% said that they can see possibilities for collaboration between scouting and schools, while 3 respondents (16.7%) said they cannot see any possibilities for collaboration. Some of teachers' ideas regarding this collaboration involve: handcrafting, summer camps, conflict management sessions, communication activities, scientific experiments, extracurricular activity, community building. The school subjects, teachers listed as involving scouting activities are history, biology, English, physical education, chemistry, geography and the sciences.

Scout teachers

The third target group the research aimed to address was the group of scout teachers. It was important to reach such a target group as they represent a sort of link between the school and the scouting movement. Scout teachers are members of the Hungarian Scout Association and at the same time they are teachers in different schools in Transylvania. The questionnaire was completed by 16 subjects, 17.2% of the total number of respondents. In the case of scout teachers, the scope of the research was to find out they make use of the methods and activities in scouting and what forms of collaboration between schools and scouting they see possible. Similar to the teacher participants, the years of teaching experience ranged between 3 and 30 years, and their scout membership ranged between 1 and 43 years.

Questionnaire data show that all scout teachers had a positive attitude towards collaboration between schools and scouting. Responses also revealed that some scout teachers have already been working on this collaboration to make it happen; others suggest the necessity of such collaboration. Those who already have some collaborative experience say that such collaboration has a good effect on education, that the two forms of education complement each other, some even highlight that only the joint work of the formal and non-formal education can lead to success in education as "the goal is common". One of the respondents said that such collaboration is very important "it matters a lot, that's how I become a scout. I first met scouting at school". Another scout teacher emphasized that "scouting is one of the best educational and teaching activities that should be used in schools as frequently as possible, for me, personally, it is a great help in my job as a teacher". Only one scout teacher complained about the difficulties, and hard times of integrating scouting in traditional education, saying that collaboration is difficult, the school rather tolerates scout activities but it doesn't support collaboration.

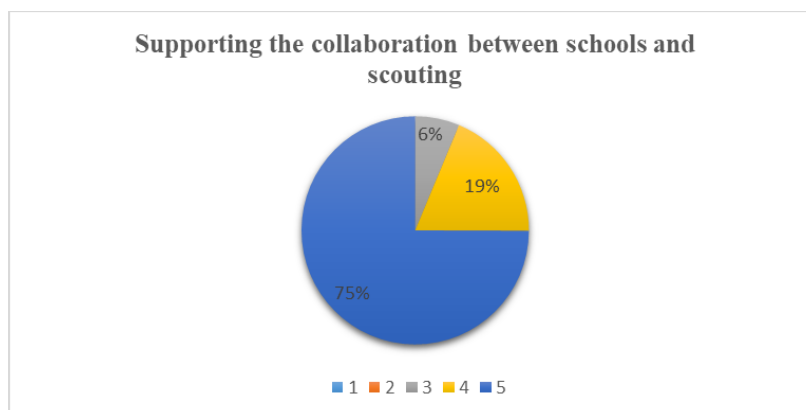
Most of the respondents wrote about founding the school's scout team or organizing scouting activities within the frame of school events or competitions. Scout teachers see the possibility of integrating scouting activities into classes, in school breaks, during the alternative education week (Program Național Școala Altfel), outside of school, during school trips, camps etc. Besides using scouting activities in the outside of school context or as extracurricular activities, teachers believe scouting methods could work within the classroom

context as well. Half of the respondents claimed that scouting methods can be used and implemented in any school subject, the other half listed particular school subjects such as geography, history, music, physical activities, sports and religion. Some say that with a bit of creativity all scouting methods can be implemented into a school environment, further explaining that scouting methods can be easily implemented and pupils retain information better with those methods than through frontal teaching. Others say that there are some elements of scouting methodology that can be well implemented, or they might just “smuggle” some scouting methodology into their classes. Some teachers reflected on the ways they use the scouting techniques in their classroom environment saying that “I am constantly trying to use the scouting methods at the school as well, I teach a lot by playing, especially with the younger ones, but the older ones also have a need to play games”, or as another teacher says “I often use scout games during any activity, as a relaxation or reward, songs learned in scout activities often help, and measurements or DIY activities used in scout camps can also be used in math lessons”.

Those who have used such methods in their classes have a positive feedback, saying their work has become more colourful and varied, some even say that “learning by doing is the future of education; the era of passing on theories is over”. However, two of the respondents brought up some negative aspects of implementing scouting methods in the traditional classroom – lack of time, laws restrict camping, the burden of paperwork and administrative tasks and wearing the scout uniform is embarrassing.

Question no. 8 asked scout teachers to decide on a scale from 1 to 5 to what extent they would support collaboration between schools and scouting. 75% of scout teachers chose 5, so they would totally support such collaboration, 19% chose 4, saying they would most probably support the joint work of the two forms of education (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Scout teachers’ support of school-scouting collaborations



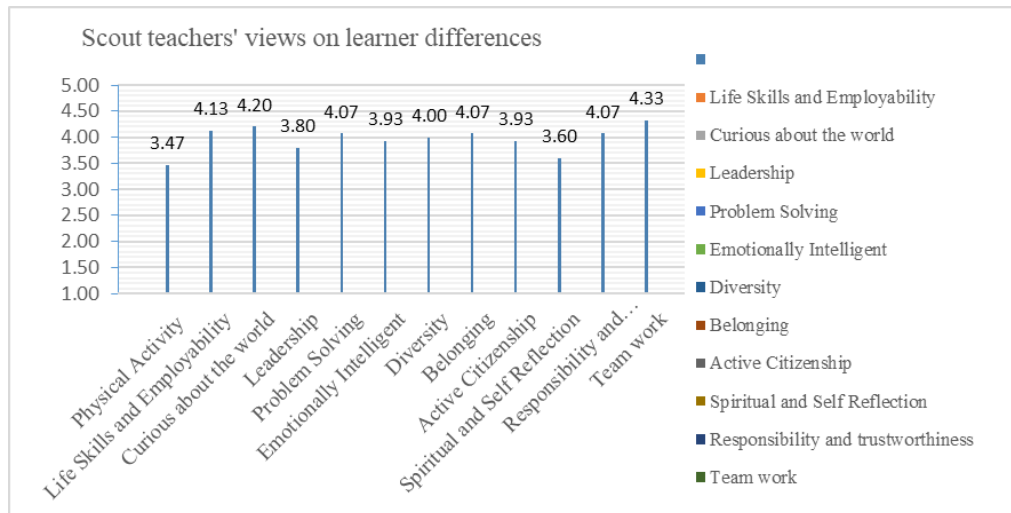
Scout teachers were asked to name some of the scouting methods they use during their school classes. Based on the answers, the following techniques and methods have already been implemented by our subjects: working in small groups, using games, learning by doing, experiential learning, learning outside in the nature, group sessions, playful quizzes, discussion, practice- and action-based learning, using the frame story technique, keeping promises and laws, singing, debates, role-plays and the interdisciplinary approach.

The tenth question asked how scouting movement affects school lessons, in light of certain subjects and classes. To start off, the question first presented the findings of an American study, saying that scouting has improved the performance of scouts in geography, history, reading and math. Some answers provided enumerate school subjects such as history, geography, religion, biology and Hungarian history, while there were some more holistic and elaborate answers explaining that scouting helps the development of students’ sense of responsibility and conscientiousness, also revealing that scout teachers see the difference in attitude of non-scout and scout students, towards learning and community involvement. Others emphasized that learners who regularly participate in scouting activities perform better in all areas, are said to be more reliable and are prone to show more respect as well.

The last two questions, similar to the scout group, were the 5-point Likert scale statements. Scout teachers had to mark on a scale from 1 to 5 (1= the least true) how they see or experience the difference between scout and non-scout learners in different areas. These areas included things like physical activity, life skills and employability, curiosity about the world, leadership and problem-solving skills, emotional intelligence, sense

of belonging, active citizenship (community service?), self-reflection, teamwork, etc. Scout teachers' responses also reflect that there is a difference between scout and non-scout learners, the lowest mean value is 3.47 given for physical activity, similarly to the results gathered from scouts. Scout teachers' evaluation of scout and non-scout learner differences show similar results to those received from the scouts' self-assessments. The highest mean values were given for teamwork (4.33) and curiosity about the world (4.20), similarly to the scouts' self-assessment results (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5. Scouts teachers' views regarding the developmental difference between their scout and non-scout learners



In case of the next 5-point Likert scale set of statements scout teachers had to express their opinion on a scale from 1 to 5 (1= the least true) regarding the effects of scouting. According to the statements scouting improves/develops learners' critical and creative thinking, problem-solving skills, networking/making friends, independent personality, decision making, adventure and trip preparedness, learning skills.

Figure 6. Scout teachers' beliefs regarding the effects of scouting



Similarly, to the results gathered from scouts, scout teachers believe that scouting improves all areas listed above, however being ready and prepared for adventures and trips received the highest score (4.5), while learning skills is among the lower-ranked areas of development (3.5). It was surprising to find out that while scouts thought to have more developed critical and creative thinking (see Figure 2, score: 4.32), scout teachers gave the lowest scores for creative and critical thinking – 3.18 (see Figure 6). Moreover, social networking skills and problem-solving skills are thought to be enhanced by scouting activities, as well as decision-making and level of independence. It is interesting, and at the same time surprising to read these scores, as it was assumed that scout teachers would be more aware of how scouting activities can develop young people's

learning skills or even their creative and critical thinking. Such results suggest that some awareness raising campaign should be developed in order to increase participants' and educational stakeholders' awareness regarding the educational benefits of scouting.

Conclusions

The aim of the present paper was to present scouting as a type of non-formal learning environment and to find out how scouting can be integrated within the formal institutional education and if there is a need for cooperation between the two. In order to explore the possibilities and participants' willingness in such cooperation a questionnaire was distributed among educational stakeholders and scouts.

The present exploratory research relies on the perspective of scouts (young and adults), teachers and scout teachers to find out their attitudes towards scouting activities, the necessity for the integration of scouting activities into the traditional educational system and the possible ways of collaboration between schools and scout groups. The questionnaire items (questions) were addressed separately to the three target groups. Scouts were asked about their opinions regarding the usefulness of scouting and the employability of their scouting knowledge within the school context. Teachers were asked about their beliefs and opinions regarding scouting and whether they can come up with any possibilities for collaboration between the two types of educations or whether they feel the need for such cooperation at all. Scout teachers were questioned about the ways to integrate and make use of scouting methods and activities in school classes, what forms of collaboration they see, and whether they would support such collaborative work.

Questionnaire results show that all teachers showed a positive attitude towards scouting even if they did not want to join the scout association (due to lack of time and already overwhelming responsibilities and duties). Some school subjects turned out to be great bridging points as all respondents (learners, teachers and scout teachers alike) mentioned these subjects where the implementation of scouting methodology could work. Some of the school subjects all respondents agreed upon were biology, history, geography, religion, and Hungarian literature and history as well.

All target groups agreed that integrating scouting into the mainstream educational system would be beneficial for students. Scouts and scout teachers were asked to evaluate scout learners' development compared to non-scout learners based on some 5-point Likert scale statements. Scouts' self-assessment results and scout teachers' evaluation showed similar tendencies even though the scores were slightly different. Both target groups marked teamwork with the highest scores, meaning that scouting mainly enhances young people's skills of working in teams. The lowest rank was given to physical activity; therefore, in spite of teachers' vision about scouting as camping, sports, nature education etc., scouts did not consider themselves to be in better physical condition than non-scouts. Moreover, a rather surprising result was that, in spite of all the creative activities and enjoyable educational techniques, in spite of all the games and game-like learning activities, neither scouts nor scout teachers thought that scouting improved learners' learning skills. These results call for further research and action. Further research is needed, involving interviews or focus group discussions, in order to get a deeper insight into scouts' and scout teachers' belief set regarding the effects and educational benefits of scouting. Moreover, results call for action. Scout groups need to design and organise awareness raising campaigns so that the educational benefits of scouting activities be more visible or transparent to scout members and the larger community as well.

According to the answers received from all target groups, scout methods should be implemented into classroom teaching and learning as well. Activities and teaching techniques listed by our participants under the scout method were working in small groups, game-based learning, learning by doing, experiential learning, outdoor activities, group sessions, playful quizzes, discussions, practice- and action-based learning, the frame story technique, debates and role-plays. The principles behind the scout method and the teaching techniques it involves can point to some future directions in teaching and learning. Therefore, the present exploratory research is intended to be continued by developing an English foreign language course for a group of disadvantaged learners based on a combination of principles and teaching techniques rooted in the scout method and gamification.

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