

Holistic Education and Success in The Conservation of Local Orchid Species
in The World's Tropical Countries

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The World's tropics are endowed with rich natural resources in terms of fauna and flora and these of course include countless orchid species found in its natural forests.

However in most tropical countries the indigenous inhabitants themselves do not have sufficient perspective, do not have sufficient inner strength, and do not have sufficient wherewithal to preserve their own local environments and natural resources in a sustainable manner.

This includes the inability of these indigenous people to participate in, or work together toward the propagation of wild orchid species for satisfy demand even in their own local community.

Basically indigenous people lack the inner strength to fight against the lure and the influence of material products that now pervade all communities.

When looking at natural resources in their communities such as wild orchid species indigenous people take the view that these natural products are something that they can gain materially from or profit from. They do not naturally take the view that such resources found in their community need to be preserved. Only after they have educated themselves for years and years through internal reflection and have now become adults do they come to the realization that the preservation of the natural resources in their community is important.

Therefore the conclusion that I have arrived at is that any success at wild orchid species conservation needs the active promotion of the conservation of indigenous social cultures within peoples' mindset. This first step will create an important base in people's souls to build a balance between conservation of societal values and proper development that can be woven into peoples' lives.

And the possibility that such a process might be possible is seen from changing mindsets of indigenous people in tropical countries. Initially people place importance in exploitation for their own benefit, but with age and after deep reflection within themselves or a process that we might call meditation, eventually within their subconscious they become interested in achieving a proper balance in their lives and then they begin to assist the communities they live in to preserve local cultures and that also includes the conservation wild orchid species found in their communities. This process of internal reflection brings these elder citizens a sense of happiness and they are continually challenged to find ways to make their dreams possible.

In my case even though I have passed the formal retirement age I do feel deeply within myself that retirement is something fictional imposed upon us by the rules of society. And I have strived to continue my work on the conservation of arts and cultures in local communities, and have used this concept to

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encourage indigenous people to devote their labor and promote their values for the benefit of their own communities, and I have done so with much happiness to the point of even finding such activities relaxing.

Such elder citizens can be successful in energizing others to change the course of community development to promote “conservation” within each community based on the ideals these citizens hold dear within their hearts.

The energy that propels ideas of conservation and the energy that makes people work toward these ideas exist in peoples’ souls.

Therefore thoughts on conservation of wild orchid species in the forests in various communities or thoughts of conservation of any other life forms that can be taken from nature versus bending to external market driven requirements of people outside such communities can only be understood by indigenous people through a process that can be referred to as “Holistic Education”, meaning promoting and allowing the natural process of learning of young people to take its course.

During such formative years these young people can observe the reality of their own experiences as they occur based on the natural instincts of human beings which are closely associated with nature.

The process being described here is based on the reality within everyone’s soul and the older generations ought to refrain from using their influence to interfere in this learning process, but ought to allow the realities find their ways in the thoughts and minds of young people freely and openly.

Otherwise any thoughts of changing the trajectory of conservation activities toward true sustainable conservation is bound to fail.

Experience of the author

- (1) 91 years old.
- (2) Being a guest speaker of WOC since 1963 in Singapore.
- (3) Being a guest speaker at European Orchid Congress since the 3th EOC in London in 1973
- (4) Being the Founder of Asia Pacific Orchid Conference in 1984.
- (5) Chairman of 9th WOC in Bangkok Thailand 1978.
- (6) Silver Medal Award and Gold Medal Award of AOS.
- (7) Veitch Memorial Gold Medal Award of RHS.
- (8) Gold Medal Award of South East Asia Orchid Society of Singapore.