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SOCIAL FARMING TERMINOLOGY AND BENEFITS

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Abstract: Social farming and "inclusiveness"-related terminology have become more and more often encountered in literature, across domains, as a result of widespread efforts towards sustainable societies in the future. A case in point is also the vocabulary around social farming education, which upholds the therapeutic effect of farms, gardens, and rural access in a more socially inclusive manner. Social farming is a valuable novelty in Romania because it allows groups of disabled people to access policy and program alternatives to improve their situation; it maximizes clients' efforts in exploring options and choices, in becoming more effective in their relationships with agencies, bureaucrats, and professionals involved in this type of farming. This study aims at defining and describing social farming, and at identifying its goals, its beneficiaries at both social and individual levels, the types of mental disabilities targeted, and the types of therapies involved. The research method used is the bibliographic one. The authors hope this study will motivate decision-makers to implement the principles of social farming in Romania as they have already done in other sectors (industry and services) of the economy.

• Introduction

The terminology of "inclusiveness" is more and more often encountered in literature, across domains, as a result of widespread efforts towards sustainable societies in the future. A case in point is also the vocabulary around social farming education, which upholds the therapeutic effect of farms, gardens, and rural access in a more socially inclusive manner.

In what follows, the study analyzes the corpus of linguistic items used in this domain and other terms related to quality of life and educational purposes.

A social farm is also called care farm, green farm, inclusive farm, social farm, and therapeutic farm. All these phrases designate rehabilitation settings.

Social farms can be classified according to the following criteria:

- Characteristics: based on the community / based on family / based on professionals / based on service-users;
- Legal basis: institutional / private third sector;
- Main activity: agriculture-based / care or education-based;
- Purpose: care oriented / educationally or pedagogically oriented / employment or labour oriented;
- Target group: mix of people (the unemployed, intellectually disabled, people with mental health issues); people with alcohol / drug use and abuse issues, intellectual disability, mental health issues; people with less serious forms of disability who are able to work autonomously.

• Material and method

The material used in this study consists in the most searched articles and books on the digital media currently dedicated to social farming for people with mental disabilities. These articles and books present social farming and mental disability from two perspectives – theoretical (definition, classification) and practical (benefits of social farming for farm families, service users, and wider society; mental disability therapies). We will look at both these aspects in order to collect the vocabulary of interest to our study.

The research method used is corpus linguistics, as well as bibliographic analysis, which consists in the revision of existing bibliographical material with respect to social farming for people with mental disabilities.

The systematic literature review has been instrumental for the collection of terms and other relevant characteristics of inclusive farming-related issues which have been retained for the present review. We also consider the terminological aspects from a sustainable ecolinguistic perspective.



• Results and discussions

Social farming is beneficial for farm families, service users, and wider society.

Farm families have financial and non-financial benefits:

- Financial benefits:

- Sufficient income to cover expenses;
- Added economic value obtained in the market place for goods produced on a social farm;

- Non-financial benefits:

- Extra labour provided by service users;
- Establishing greater connections between farmers and the wider community;
- Improving the image of farming in the area through recognition for providing care supports and positive feedback from participants, families and referring bodies;"
- Sense of personal achievement and fulfilment through helping excluded people.

• Conclusions

The bibliographic study of the most searched articles and books on the benefits of social farming has led to the following conclusions:

- Social farming goals are meant to integrate excluded, marginalized, stigmatized or socially isolated categories of people, to promote disadvantaged people's rehabilitation, integration and education, and to support the specified target groups.

- Social farming is beneficial for farm families (financial and non-financial benefits), service users (mental, physical, and social health benefits), as well as for the wider society.

- Social farming provides benefits for people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities and for residents or service users.

- Social farming targets mental disabilities such as affective, anxiety-based, autistic, organic, personality, psychotic, and somatoform conditions; mental retardation, and substance addiction.

- Social farming may include animal mediation / therapy or animal-assisted therapy; assisted therapeutic horticulture or horticultural therapy and farm therapy; these topics may provide content for future research papers.

