

INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE FORMATION OF ECOLOGICAL CULTURE IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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Abstract: This article explores innovative pedagogical approaches to the formation of ecological culture among preschool children within the framework of the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan. The study emphasizes the importance of integrating ecological education into early childhood learning as a means of nurturing environmental awareness, responsibility, and sustainable thinking. Modern pedagogical technologies — including interactive, project-based, and play-oriented methods — are analyzed as effective tools for forming ecological values in children. The research also identifies the role of teachers in creating an eco-friendly environment and fostering a positive attitude toward nature. The article concludes that the effective use of innovative methods in preschool ecological education contributes to the long-term development of environmentally responsible behavior in future generations.

Keywords: ecological culture, preschool education, innovative pedagogy, sustainable development, environmental awareness, development strategy, ecological values.

Introduction

In the era of rapid globalization and technological progress, environmental problems have become one of the most urgent challenges facing humanity. The Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan (2022–2026) identifies ecological awareness and sustainable development as national priorities. One of the most effective ways to address these issues is through early education — by cultivating ecological culture from the preschool stage.

Preschool age is a critical period for forming a child's worldview, values, and habits. During this stage, children are naturally curious about their environment and highly receptive to new experiences. Therefore, introducing ecological values at this age lays the foundation for responsible and sustainable behavior in adulthood.

Innovative pedagogical approaches in preschool education create new opportunities for developing ecological thinking, environmental sensitivity, and creativity. These approaches encourage active learning, emotional engagement, and meaningful interaction with nature.

The Essence of Ecological Culture in Preschool Education

Ecological culture refers to the system of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors that reflect a person's understanding of the relationship between humans and nature. In preschool education,

it includes awareness of natural phenomena, care for plants and animals, waste management habits, and respect for environmental resources.

Developing ecological culture at an early age helps children form moral and emotional connections with the environment. It also fosters qualities such as empathy, responsibility, and cooperation. Educators play a decisive role in this process by creating conditions where children can observe, explore, and interact with nature through guided activities.

Innovative Pedagogical Approaches

1. Interactive Learning Technologies

The use of interactive methods such as digital storytelling, educational videos, and ecological games enables children to visualize environmental processes and understand ecological relationships. Multimedia learning tools make the educational process engaging and effective.

2. Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Project-based activities such as “My Green Garden,” “Clean Planet,” or “Save the Water” encourage children to explore real-life environmental issues and find creative solutions. Working in groups promotes teamwork, communication skills, and responsibility toward nature.

3. Ecological Play and Experiential Learning

Play is the leading activity in preschool age. Ecological play — such as planting seeds, sorting waste, or role-playing as environmental protectors — helps children learn by doing. This experiential approach strengthens their understanding of cause-and-effect relationships in nature.

4. STEAM Integration (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics)

Integrating STEAM concepts into ecological education allows children to connect scientific exploration with creativity. For instance, they can observe plant growth, design bird feeders, or draw posters about clean air and water. Such activities develop both scientific curiosity and aesthetic appreciation.

5. Outdoor and Nature-Based Learning

Outdoor education, including nature walks, ecological excursions, and garden care, provides children with direct experience of the natural world. Contact with nature enhances sensory development, emotional balance, and environmental responsibility.

The Role of Teachers in Forming Ecological Culture

Teachers act not only as educators but also as role models in demonstrating environmentally responsible behavior. Their professional competence, creativity, and personal ecological culture significantly influence the outcomes of ecological education.

To implement innovative methods effectively, teachers should:

Continuously improve their ecological and methodological knowledge;

Integrate ecological topics into all areas of learning (art, math, language, etc.);

Use child-centered, inquiry-based, and play-based approaches;

Create a safe, green, and inspiring educational environment.

The Development Strategy emphasizes the modernization of preschool education, the digitalization of learning processes, and the introduction of innovative teaching technologies. These measures support the integration of ecological education as a strategic component of sustainable development.

Results and Discussion

Implementation of innovative pedagogical approaches in preschool institutions leads to:

Increased ecological awareness and curiosity among children;

Improved collaboration and communication skills through project work;

Development of critical and creative thinking;

Formation of positive ecological habits such as waste sorting, plant care, and water conservation;

Strengthening the moral and emotional connection between children and nature.

Studies and practical experiences show that children who engage in ecological projects become more empathetic, responsible, and proactive in environmental protection activities. They begin to understand that their small actions can make a big difference in preserving the planet.

Conclusion

Forming ecological culture in preschool children is an essential component of sustainable development and a strategic goal of modern education. Innovative pedagogical approaches — such as interactive learning, ecological play, project-based methods, and outdoor education — create effective pathways for nurturing environmental values in early childhood.

Teachers, as key agents of change, must integrate ecological themes into everyday learning and serve as role models for ecological responsibility. The Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan provides a strong foundation for promoting ecological education through innovative, inclusive, and value-based teaching methods.

By fostering ecological culture from early childhood, society can nurture a generation that not only understands but also actively protects the natural world — ensuring a sustainable and harmonious future for all.

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