

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AIMED AT FOSTERING ECOLOGICAL CULTURE IN OLDER PRESCHOOL CHILDREN THROUGH DEVELOPMENTAL CENTERS

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Abstract: This study is devoted to improving the methodology for developing ecological culture in senior preschool children through the activities of developmental learning centers. The research examines the pedagogical potential of developmental centers in preschool educational institutions for fostering children's conscious attitude toward nature, ecological knowledge, practical skills, and environmental values.

Keywords: developmental centers, ecological culture, environmental education, teaching methodology, innovative technologies, pedagogical experiment, ecological upbringing.

МЕТОДИКА ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ У ДЕТЕЙ СТАРШЕГО ДОШКОЛЬНОГО ВОЗРАСТА В ЦЕНТРОВ РАЗВИТИЯ.

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Аннотация: Данное исследование посвящено совершенствованию методики формирования экологической культуры у детей старшего дошкольного возраста посредством деятельности центров развивающего обучения. В работе рассматривается педагогический потенциал в дошкольных образовательных организациях в контексте воспитания у детей осознанного отношения к природе, а также формирования экологических знаний, практических умений и ценностного отношения к окружающей среде.

Ключевые слова: центры развития, экологическая культура, экологическое образование, методика обучения, инновационные технологии, педагогический эксперимент, экологическое воспитание.

Introduction. Today, environmental protection, the rational use of natural resources, and the cultivation of an ecological culture among the younger generation are among the priorities of state policy. The global nature of environmental issues necessitates fostering a responsible attitude toward nature in children starting from preschool age. Consequently, enhancing the content of environmental education and upbringing within the preschool system—and organizing it based on modern pedagogical approaches—is a pressing scientific and practical issue. The older preschool period represents a crucial stage in a child's personality development; it is during this time that the foundations of love for nature, ecological awareness, ecological culture, and ecological responsibility are established. Children of this age enrich their understanding of the environment through observation, experimentation, play, and practical activities. Therefore, the effective use of developmental centers within preschool educational organizations serves as a vital tool for environmental education. These developmental centers create an educational environment that supports children's independent activity, exploration, experimentation, and creative thinking. Within this context, enriching the activities of developmental centers with environmental education content, as well as developing and implementing methodologies aimed at fostering an environmental culture, is of particular importance. The relevance of this research lies in the need to scientifically substantiate a methodology for fostering environmental culture in older preschool children by effectively utilizing the potential of developmental centers, and to refine its content, forms, and methods. The research findings will serve to enhance the effectiveness of environmental education in preschool institutions, provide methodological support for educators, and foster the development of environmental knowledge, skills, and competencies in children. The issue of fostering an ecological culture within the preschool education system is a significant area of scientific inquiry situated at the intersection of pedagogy, psychology, and ecology. In academic research, ecological culture is interpreted as an integrative quality that encompasses an individual's conscious attitude toward nature, ecological knowledge, practical

skills, and a sense of ecological responsibility. Scholarly works by international researchers extensively cover the theoretical and practical aspects of organizing ecological education for preschool-aged children. Studies emphasize that observation, experimentation, play, project-based activities, and direct interaction with nature serve as vital pedagogical tools for developing children's ecological consciousness. Furthermore, it has been scientifically established that a developmental educational environment fosters independent thinking, an understanding of ecological issues, and a responsible attitude toward nature among children. Research on preschool educational methodology highlights the significant role of developmental centers in the educational process. These centers enable the enhancement of children's cognitive engagement, the development of their creativity, and the organization of practical activities, all while taking into account their age-specific and individual characteristics. Developmental centers—such as "Science and Nature," "Construction/Design," "Art," and "Role-playing Games"—serve as an effective pedagogical environment for enriching the content of environmental education. Research by local scholars also highlights the pedagogical conditions necessary for improving environmental education in preschool institutions and for fostering a love of nature, environmental awareness, and a sense of environmental responsibility in children. An analysis of the literature indicates that the systematic utilization of the potential offered by developmental centers is a key factor in enhancing the effectiveness of environmental education, enabling the comprehensive development of ecological knowledge, practical skills, values, and an ecological culture in children. The research methodology is grounded in competence-based, learner-centered, activity-based, and integrative approaches. During the study, pedagogical conditions conducive to fostering an ecological culture in older preschool children were identified, and a methodological model tailored to the activities of developmental centers was developed.

The research was conducted using the following methods:

- theoretical analysis of scientific-pedagogical and methodological literature;
- studying children's ecological knowledge, skills, and behavior through observation;
- conducting interviews and surveys with educators and parents;
- organizing pedagogical experimental trials;
- implementing didactic games, experiments, observations, and project activities with ecological themes within developmental centers;
- analyzing experimental results using mathematical-statistical methods. The experimental work was organized in three stages. In the first stage, the level of the children's ecological culture was assessed to establish a baseline. In the second stage, the content of environmental education was integrated into the activities of developmental centers, and a specially designed methodology was implemented. In the third stage, the results of the experiment were analyzed, and the outcomes of the experimental and control groups were compared.

Conclusion. The results of this study confirmed the significant pedagogical and methodological potential of fostering an ecological culture in older preschool children through the use of developmental centers. The study revealed that integrating environmental education content with the activities of developmental centers positively influenced the development of children's ecological knowledge, practical skills, value-based attitudes toward nature, and sense of ecological responsibility. The study further established that the effectiveness of fostering an ecological culture was directly linked to the meaningful organization of developmental centers, the use of modern pedagogical technologies and interactive methods, the professional competence of educators, and the establishment of cooperation with parents.

Based on the research results, the following conclusions were drawn:

Developmental centers serve as an effective pedagogical tool for fostering ecological culture in older preschool-age children; Integrating the content of environmental education into the activities of developmental centers consistently

fosters children's ecological knowledge, skills, and competencies; Didactic games, observations, experiments, and project-based activities with an environmental focus play a crucial role in shaping a conscious and responsible attitude toward nature among children; The developed research methodology serves to enhance the effectiveness of environmental education in preschool institutions and is recommended for practical implementation.

In the future, enriching the activities of developmental centers with digital educational resources, the STEAM approach, and environmental projects—as well as further strengthening cooperation between educators and parents—will help increase the effectiveness of fostering ecological culture in preschool-age children. The results of this study serve as a theoretical and practical foundation for further research aimed at improving the content of environmental education in preschool institutions, enriching methodological resources, and developing a sustainable ecological culture among children.

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