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FORMATION OF ECOLOGICAL CULTURE IN PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH AESTHETIC EDUCATION

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Abstract

This article addresses the issue of developing ecological culture among primary school students. It substantiates the growing intensity of environmental problems in the context of globalization and scientific and technological progress, as well as the necessity of forming ecological awareness and responsibility in the younger generation from an early age. The role of primary education in shaping students' initial knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral norms toward nature is revealed.

Keywords

ecological culture, environmental education, ecological awareness, environment, nature conservation, ecological knowledge, practical activity, interdisciplinary integration.

Annotatsiya

Mazkur maqolada boshlang'ich sinf o'quvchilarida ekologik madaniyatni shakllantirish masalasi yoritilgan. Unda globallashuv va fan-texnika taraqqiyoti sharoitida ekologik muammolarning kuchayib borishi, yosh avlodda ekologik ong va mas'uliyatni erta yoshdan shakllantirish zarurati asoslab berilgan. Boshlang'ich ta'lim bosqichining o'quvchilarda tabiatga nisbatan dastlabki bilim, munosabat va xulq-atvor me'yorlarini shakllantirishdagi o'rni ochib berilgan.

Kalit so'zlar

ekologik madaniyat, ekologik tarbiya, ekologik ong, atrof-muhit, tabiatni muhofaza qilish, ekologik bilim, amaliy faoliyat, fanlararo integratsiya.

In today's era of globalization and rapid scientific and technological development, the protection of the environment, the rational use of natural resources, and a conscious approach to ecological problems are becoming increasingly important tasks for humanity. The disruption of the balance between nature and society, environmental crises, pollution of air and water, and the decline of biodiversity clearly show the growing need to develop ecological awareness and culture in the younger generation. These challenges make it essential to instill a sense of responsibility toward nature from an early age. Therefore, environmental education, especially at the primary education level, plays an important pedagogical role. Primary school is a crucial stage in shaping children's worldview, attitudes, and behavior. At this stage, students develop their first understanding of nature and begin to form responsible attitudes toward the

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environment. Through lessons, observations, and simple practical activities, students can gain ecological knowledge and develop care for nature.

The Uzbek people have long had a rich cultural heritage of respecting and protecting nature. In the *Avesta*, land, water, air, and human health are considered sacred, and guidance is given on keeping the environment clean. Great scholars such as Muhammad al-Khwarizmi, Abu Nasr Farabi, Abu Rayhan Beruni, Abu Ali Ibn Sina, and Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur also emphasized the close relationship between humans and nature. Their ideas about ecological balance and respect for nature are closely connected with the foundations of modern environmental education.

The primary school period is a crucial stage in which children begin to understand the world, perceive natural phenomena, and form their initial attitudes and behavioral norms toward the environment. At this age, students actively explore their surroundings, develop curiosity, and build emotional connections with nature. It is precisely during this stage that forming ecological culture—instilling love for nature, a sense of responsibility, and careful attitudes—lays a strong foundation for raising environmentally conscious, responsible, and culturally developed individuals in the future. Ecological knowledge provided through subjects such as *"The World Around Us"* and *"Natural Science"* plays an important role in this process, as it helps develop students' skills of observation, comparison, analysis, and drawing conclusions, enabling them to understand nature as a unified and interconnected system.

From this perspective, the formation of ecological culture in primary school students carries not only educational but also significant воспитательное (character-building) value. It contributes to shaping students' moral qualities, sense of duty, and responsible behavior toward the environment. This process should be organized on the basis of national and universal values and enriched with modern pedagogical approaches, interactive methods, and practical activities. In today's environmental conditions, characterized by global ecological challenges, this issue is especially relevant and has great scientific and practical importance. Ecological culture reflects an individual's conscious, responsible, and careful attitude toward nature. For primary school students, it is primarily expressed through simple but meaningful ideas such as loving nature, understanding the importance of protecting it, maintaining environmental cleanliness, using natural resources carefully, and avoiding harm to living organisms. Gradually, these ideas develop into stable habits and values, forming the basis of ecological awareness. As a result, students begin to demonstrate environmentally responsible behavior in their daily lives, which ultimately contributes to the protection and preservation of the natural environment.

Young children understand natural phenomena more deeply through direct observation and hands-on experience. Therefore, in the educational process, it is highly effective to provide knowledge through real-life examples related to nature and everyday environmental situations. When teachers connect lesson content with students' immediate surroundings, learning becomes more meaningful and memorable. Information given during lessons about protecting the environment, the importance of water and air, the role of plants and animals in life, and the consequences of environmental pollution helps form a positive and responsible attitude toward nature in students. In particular, ecological texts, stories, discussions, and illustrative materials strongly influence children's emotions, develop empathy toward living beings, and encourage them to care for and protect the natural environment.

Practical activity plays a particularly important role in forming ecological culture among primary school students. Simple and age-appropriate activities such as planting trees, watering and caring for flowers, cleaning schoolyards, and participating in small environmental projects

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significantly strengthen students' sense of environmental responsibility. Through such practical engagement, students not only gain theoretical knowledge but also directly experience the importance of preserving nature and avoiding harm to it. This connection between knowledge and real action helps transform ecological awareness into stable habits and responsible behavior. As a result, ecological knowledge becomes closely integrated with daily conduct, leading to the formation of a consistent and sustainable ecological culture.

Game-based learning is also an essential and effective method in organizing environmental education for primary school students. Ecological games, role-playing activities, drawing tasks, quizzes, and creative assignments increase children's interest and make ecological concepts easier to understand and remember. Such activities create a joyful and engaging learning environment, allowing students to actively participate in the learning process. Moreover, they help develop imagination, creativity, teamwork skills, and a positive emotional attitude toward nature. Gradually, these experiences strengthen students' awareness of the importance of environmental protection. In addition, cooperation between school and family plays a vital role in shaping ecological culture. Parents' personal example and their daily attitude toward the environment have a direct and powerful influence on children's behavior and values. If a child observes environmentally responsible actions at home—such as saving water, keeping surroundings clean, and caring for plants—these behaviors become natural habits. When combined with school-based ecological education, such family influence significantly strengthens and consolidates students' ecological knowledge, ensuring its continuity in real life and contributing to the development of a stable ecological mindset and long-term environmentally friendly behavior.

Formation of ecological culture among primary school students is a complex pedagogical process, and eliminating the challenges that arise in this process requires the introduction of a systematic, comprehensive, and consistent approach within the education and upbringing system. First of all, it is necessary to organize environmental education content in accordance with the age and psychological characteristics of children. At the primary school stage, students think concretely and learn best through direct experience; therefore, complex ecological concepts should be explained using simple, clear, and life-based examples. When abstract ideas are connected to familiar situations, students are more likely to understand and accept them consciously. In this way, ecological knowledge is not only acquired as theoretical information but also gradually transformed into practical skills that can be applied in everyday life.

One of the effective solutions for strengthening ecological culture is the implementation of an integrative approach in the educational process. Lessons organized on the basis of interdisciplinary connections significantly enhance environmental education. For example, in reading lessons, analyzing texts about nature helps develop ecological thinking; in mathematics, solving problems with environmental content increases awareness of real-life ecological issues; and in art classes, drawing natural landscapes fosters a deeper appreciation of the environment. Such an approach helps students perceive ecological education not as a separate topic, but as an integral part of the overall learning process. This integration strengthens their holistic understanding of nature and the environment.

Another important solution is strengthening practical activities in the learning process. Involving students in real-life environmental protection activities helps develop a strong sense of ecological responsibility. Activities such as beautifying school grounds, learning waste sorting practices, caring for plants and trees, and participating in environmental campaigns allow students to experience the importance of protecting nature directly. Through such activities, children begin to understand that even small actions can have a significant impact on the

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environment. As a result, theoretical knowledge becomes reinforced through practice, and ecological values turn into stable habits and behavior patterns.

The role of teachers is also extremely important in improving the effectiveness of environmental education. A teacher's ecological literacy, personal example, and attitude toward nature have a strong influence on students. Therefore, continuously improving teachers' knowledge of environmental issues and enhancing their professional skills in modern ecological challenges is considered an important solution. When teachers demonstrate respect and care for nature in their behavior, students naturally adopt these values as part of their own worldview.

In addition, strengthening cooperation between school and family is one of the key factors in forming ecological culture. Involving parents in the educational process, organizing discussions and activities on environmental topics, and encouraging them to practice ecological behavior at home help create a unified educational environment. When children observe that ecological rules learned at school are also followed at home, their environmental behavior becomes more stable and consistent. This continuity between school and family plays a crucial role in shaping long-term ecological habits.

The rational use of information and communication technologies is also considered a modern and effective solution. Multimedia materials, educational videos, animations, and interactive tasks make ecological topics more interesting and understandable for students. Such technologies increase motivation, enhance engagement, and support deeper understanding of environmental issues. They also help visualize complex ecological processes, making learning more effective and meaningful.

In conclusion, solving the challenges related to the formation of ecological culture among primary school students requires continuous, practical, and cooperative approaches. Ensuring the integration of theory and practice in the educational process, along with the joint efforts of teachers and parents, makes it possible to develop ecological awareness and responsibility in children. Such an approach ultimately ensures that the younger generation grows up with a responsible, respectful, and caring attitude toward nature, contributing to the preservation of the environment for the future.

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