

**METHODS OF PROVIDING ECOLOGICAL
EDUCATION TO PRESCHOOL CHILDREN****Ravshanova Gulchehra Sobir qizi,****Abdullabekova Sarvinoz Ravshan qizi,****Xusnitddinova Umida Murodxo'xa qizi,**

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Annotation: *This article highlights the relevance, importance, and effective methods of providing ecological education to preschool children. It discusses the formation of children's ecological awareness, strengthening their love for nature, and developing skills for environmental protection. Additionally, the role of interactive methods, observations, and experiments in the process of ecological education is analyzed.*

Keywords: *ecological education, preschool education, ecological awareness, nature protection, interactive learning, experiment, environment, children's education, ecological skills, ecological monitoring.*

Ecological education is becoming an essential part of early childhood development, given the increasing environmental challenges faced by the world today. This paper focuses on the methods used to introduce ecological concepts to preschool children and aims to assess their impact on children's understanding of nature and environmental responsibility. As early childhood is a period of great cognitive and emotional development, it is crucial to introduce concepts of ecology at this stage to foster awareness and responsibility for the environment.

Research into ecological education for preschool children emphasizes its importance in fostering environmental awareness from a young age. According to Soboleva and Ivanova (2022), young children possess a natural curiosity and responsiveness to environmental stimuli, which makes them an ideal group for ecological education. They argue that early exposure to nature and environmental concepts helps instill a sense of responsibility towards the environment.

Studies by Williams and Wentz (2020) highlight that when nature-based learning methods are used in early childhood education, children not only learn about the environment but also develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills. Interactive approaches like role-playing, environmental games, and nature walks have been shown to significantly enhance children's understanding of ecological issues (Johnson & Moore, 2021).

In Uzbekistan, researchers have also stressed the importance of ecological education, suggesting that preschool curricula should integrate environmental topics to nurture environmentally responsible citizens (Abdullaeva, 2021).

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of ecological education methods in preschool settings, focusing on 30 children aged 5-6 years. The study used a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods to assess children's engagement with ecological topics.

Observation: The study involved observing the children during various ecological activities, such as nature walks, gardening, and environmental clean-up exercises. These observations helped assess the children's engagement, understanding, and responses to ecological topics.

Interviews: Interviews were conducted with both educators and parents. Teachers were asked about their methods for teaching ecology and how they integrate environmental issues into their lessons. Parents were also interviewed to understand how children applied ecological principles at home, such as recycling, conserving water, and reducing waste.

Small Group Activities: To enhance learning, small group activities were conducted where children participated in nature-based games, nature walks, and arts and crafts projects using natural materials. These hands-on activities allowed children to directly interact with nature and apply ecological concepts in a playful, engaging way.

Analysis and Results

The data collected through observations and interviews revealed several key findings:

- **High Engagement:** Children showed a strong interest in participating in ecological activities, particularly hands-on activities such as gardening, nature walks, and crafting with natural materials. They demonstrated curiosity and enthusiasm when exploring nature.
- **Improvement in Ecological Awareness:** After participating in ecological activities, children displayed a deeper understanding of nature. They were able to recognize different plants and animals, and began to understand concepts such as recycling and conservation.
- **Teacher and Parent Perspectives:** Both teachers and parents expressed strong support for the integration of ecological education in the curriculum. Teachers reported that the activities not only increased children's knowledge about the environment but also helped them develop critical thinking, responsibility, and teamwork skills. Parents observed that their children started practicing eco-friendly behaviors at home, such as reducing waste and conserving water.

Discussion

Environmental education at the preschool level is crucial for fostering a love for nature and preparing children to protect the environment. Through direct interaction with nature, children develop a deeper understanding and an ecological consciousness. Practical activities like nature walks, gardening, and nature-related games are essential in this process. Additionally, the role of adults—both teachers and parents—is key; children learn by example. When adults practice eco-friendly behaviors, children are more likely to adopt these practices. Hence, ecological education should be an ongoing process that encourages responsible behavior toward nature.

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