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DIAGNOSIS OF DEVELOPING ECO-LITERACY IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract. The article examines the features of preschool children eco-literacy developing in conditions of continuous environmental education on the basis of the Kindergarten № 109 in Almaty, using the pre-school group example (children 5 years old). The initial level of preschoolers' eco-literacy was determined, based on the methodology of T. V. Khabarova and N. V. Shafigullina, which made it possible to outline further directions for improving children's eco-literacy in environmental protection activities.

The author reviews scientific and methodological literature on the developing environmental literacy, conducts diagnostics of children in order to determine the development of cognitive level, motivational, value and activity components of environmental culture.

The results are presented in the form of tables reflecting the high, medium and low levels of each component formation, and are accompanied by analytical comments. Based on the data obtained, recommendations are made for further improvement of environmental education in preschool institutions. The author emphasizes the need for active involvement of children in educational, research and practical activities of an ecological orientation, as well as the interaction of all participants in the educational process for the sustainable ecological culture development of preschoolers.

Key words: environmental literacy, children, kindergarten, environmental culture, environmental knowledge, environmental attitude, environmental activities, preschool group

Introduction

In the modern world, when the anthropogenic impact on the environment has reached a critical level, the issues of eco-literacy formation of the population are becoming particularly relevant. The need for respect for nature, the rational use of natural resources and the conservation of biodiversity is becoming a vital need for all mankind. Environmental problems have become one of the leading ones in terms of their social significance and require humanity to take a more reasonable and conscious approach to solving them. One of the ways to improve skills in the field of environmental education is to master environmental knowledge. Ecological culture is a system of knowledge, skills and value orientations that expresses and defines the nature of the relationship between man and nature, the extent and human involvement method in the conservation and development of

the natural environment. It is an important factor determining the state of the environment and the quality of people life [1].

The task of mass environmental education and upbringing is being solved today in Kazakhstan at the state level. Official documents and laws are being adopted justifying the need for environmental education and upbringing [2].

On behalf of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, K.K. Tokayev, the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan has developed a Concept for the development of ecological culture among the population for 2024-2029.

Eco-literacy, which integrates knowledge of ecology and the environment, plays a significant role in children's development, particularly in preschool settings. Child development theories and intelligence research affirm that eco-literacy forms the foundation for naturalistic intelligence (Gauvain, 2020). Eco-literacy helps children understand the connection between humans and nature, fosters environmental responsibility, and encourages sustainable behavior (Hilmi et al., 2020). Conversely, the absence of eco-literacy (Putri et al., 2020) can lead to indifference toward environmental issues, a lack of understanding regarding the consequences of human actions on nature, and difficulties in addressing environmental challenges. Therefore, it is crucial to improve environmental education in preschools to cultivate an eco-literate generation that cares about the environment (Kadarisman & Pursitasari, 2023). Within the scope of preschool education, several key issues related to the development of eco-literacy and naturalistic intelligence can be identified (Srinivasan & Borkar, 2021). An in-depth understanding of this issue is essential to designing effective strategies for promoting eco-literacy in preschool settings [3, p.254].

In the context of global environmental challenges such as climate change, environmental pollution and loss of biodiversity, it is especially important to start fostering a responsible attitude towards nature from an early age.

Currently, preschool pedagogy pays great attention to the environmental education of children. One of the most important conditions for the ecological ideas formation is children's direct observations of objects and phenomena in nature.

Therefore, it is necessary to provide an opportunity to communicate with wildlife and observe plants and animals, which can provide pupils with a wealth of cognitive material, and teachers with opportunities to implement full-fledged environmental education. It is necessary to start environmental education from preschool age, since at this stage the child receives emotional impressions about nature, accumulates ideas about different forms of life, that is, the basic principles of ecological thinking and consciousness are formed, and the initial elements of ecological culture are laid [4].

It is noted the importance of including environmental issues in the content of the preschool curriculum and the formation of tools for the development of environmental awareness in children, including conducting excursions in natural conditions, conducting practical classes on nature and ecology, and developing healthy lifestyle skills [5].

Environmental education and education of preschool children are understood as a continuous process of upbringing and education, personal development, aimed at forming a system of knowledge, value orientations, and responsible attitude to nature. Systematic and purposeful work on the formation of eco-literacy among preschoolers is an important step towards educating a new generation that will take care of nature and strive to preserve the environment for future generations. The relevance of the eco-literacy development of preschoolers is one of the modern education priorities. Preschool age is the period when children form basic ideas about the world, lay the foundations of their worldview and behavior:

– familiarization with the basics of ecology;

– providing children with basic knowledge about nature and environmental processes;

– development of observation and curiosity;

– developing children's interest in exploring the world around them;

– providing environmentally correct behavior;

– instilling in children the skills of caring for natural resources and the environment;

– involvement of parents and society;

– creating conditions for the active participation of parents in the children environmental education.

In the modern period, one of the priority environmental tasks is the regulation of human interaction with the environment, based on the principles of rational and careful use of natural resources [6].

The solution of this problem is directly related to the development of eco-literacy of the individual. According to the research of scientists (A. S. Beisenova, N. S. Sarybekov, M. N. Sarybekov, S. N. Glazachev, I. D. Zverev, N. M. Mammadov, N. N. Moiseev, etc.), eco-literacy is considered as an integral personal education, including the following interrelated components:

✓ Ecological thinking is the ability to analyze and establish cause—and-effect relationships between environmental processes and problems, as well as to predict the consequences of human activity;

✓ Ecological attitude — emotional and sensory perception of nature and the need for its cognition;

✓ Environmental activity is a practical activity aimed at preserving and improving the state of the natural environment [7, 8].

It should be emphasized that man is an integral part of the biosphere, and it is his activity that largely determines the present and future state of the planet.

The main components of eco-literacy in preschoolers are: cognitive (cognitive), motivational (emotional-value), behavioral (activity). In accordance with this, the education of eco-literacy among preschoolers involves purposeful pedagogical work on the formation of environmental knowledge and ideas in children, respect for natural objects, basic skills of caring for living natural objects and nature-saving behavior [9].

Materials and metods

The research employed the following methods: empirical investigation, diagnostic phase, formative phase, control phase, knowledge assessment tasks, interviews with children, observational methods, parent surveys, and experimental procedures.

To test the formulated hypothesis, an empirical study was conducted on the basis of the kindergarten № 109 in Almaty. The sample included 50 children of the pre-school group (5 years old), divided into experimental and control groups of 25 people each. Additionally, 38 parents of pupils and 12 teachers working in various age groups of preschool organizations participated in the study.

The purpose of the study was effectiveness the Eco-literacy Education Program for preschool children.

The experimental work was organized in accordance with the classical structure of pedagogical research and included three stages: ascertaining, forming and control. Tasks of the ascertaining stage:

✓ identification of the level of eco-literacy formation components in two pre - school groups of 50 people;

✓ the study of teachers and parents' attitude of pupils to the problem of children environmental education in preschool organizations and families.

The formative stage is the implementation of a program to educate the basics of eco-literacy in preschool children. The control stage is the analysis of the results, generalization of the research material and conclusions. At the ascertaining stage of the study, in order to identify the level of developing cognitive component of environmental literacy, children were offered tasks to determine the amount of knowledge and ideas about the animal and plant world, living and inanimate nature, seasonal changes in nature. To identify the motivational (emotional-value) component, a conversation was held with each child, during which a number of questions and problematic situations were proposed, indicating the attitude of children to living objects of nature (the methodology of T. V. Khabarova, N. V. Shafigullina) [5]. Preschool ages range from 2-5 years old — a relatively short period of time, it is during this period that the child's mental, physical and psychological abilities develop intensively. Children aged 4-5 actively use the knowledge gained from their family and environment, rethink it, distinguishing themselves from society and classifying themselves as part of the world as a whole, show great interest in both individual adult activities and the entire lifestyle [8].

Children have an increasing interest in the world around them and independence, continuously overcoming the boundaries of individual experience in a specially created pedagogical space — kindergarten, which helps to acquire the necessary environmental knowledge, skills and abilities that form ecological consciousness and thinking, the need to simultaneously develop the emotional sphere and nature-saving behavior / activity.

The process of forming eco-literacy is a complex and lengthy process that depends on the personal attitude of the family, educators, and society to the environment within the kindergarten and additional educational organizations [9].

It is possible to determine the level of ecological culture, taking into account 3 components of ecological culture: cognitive (ecological knowledge), motivational-value (value of nature and attitude to nature), activity (environmental activity). Monitoring of environmental knowledge was carried out in the following way: the child was asked to look at the picture and tell which object is depicted in the picture, and then answer the questions:

✓ Determine whether the depicted object belongs to living or inanimate nature. List the signs that distinguish living objects from non-living ones.

✓ Name the animals you know and divide them into groups: domestic — wild, herbivorous — predatory.

✓ Explain the conditions in which each animal lives and what kind of food it eats.

✓ Describe how the lifestyle of animals' changes at different times of the year.

✓ Name the conditions necessary for the plant to grow and develop normally.

✓ Determine the current time of the year and list its characteristic features. Explain how summer differs from winter.

✓ Specify which time of the year follows winter/spring/summer/autumn (the sequence of seasons).

The children were asked to answer the following questions to determine the child's attitude to the natural environment (the motivational and value component of ecological culture ("My attitude to nature") and the desire to preserve nature:

Do you like watching animals/birds/fish?
What plants/flowers/trees do you like?
What animals/birds/fish do you like?
Is it necessary to preserve nature?
What is your mood when you see a green tree/flower?
What is your mood when you see a broken tree/flower?
Do you like listening to fairy tales/stories about animals?
Do you like watching flowers grow?

Next, the child's activity in environmental activities was checked, as well as his understanding of the personal and social significance of environmental activities.

Do you like watering flowers?
Does Teba have a pet?
If so, do you like feeding and caring for animals?
Do you feed birds in winter?
Did you make a feeder?
Where should I throw my trash on the street?

Then the number of points for each answer was calculated:

• full answer / like (yes) and explanation — 2 points;
• answer without explanation — 1 point;
• dislike/no answers — 0 points.

The answers were summarized for each section. 3 levels were allocated for each component of ecological culture:

- 36-38 points — high level (A);
- 30-35 points — average level (B);
- 0-29 points — low level (C).

Results

The survey showed that the level of environmental knowledge among 5-year-olds in the preschool group is generally high (36%) and average (40%), which means that most children know the most essential signs of life (movement, nutrition, growth). According to these criteria, children classify most animals and plants as living, name different signs in animals and plants, and characterize groups of living things as a whole. And only 24% of the students have unstable ideas about some features of living and inanimate, they do not consider plants to be living (Table 1).

Table 1. Levels of environmental knowledge of children aged 5 years

The level of environmental knowledge	Number of respondents, (%)
Low	6 — 24 %
Average	10 — 40 %
Tall	9 — 36 %

Next, the scores on the motivational and value component of eco-literacy were calculated. So, 36% of children show strong emotions, joy from communicating with animals and plants, interest in learning about life, empathy for those in trouble, strive to help themselves by being conscious, correctly determine the condition of the object, establish the necessary connections. They strive to satisfy the needs of a living organism and show humane feelings towards living beings. These indicators are inherent in a high level of environmental attitudes. 44% of respondents (average level) show interest, selectivity, situationality: they are only interested in familiar animals, show emotional relationships, and strive to actively express an attitude at the suggestion of an adult. They satisfy their needs in communication with living beings in activities for emotional pleasure. 20% of kindergarten students have weak emotional manifestations or none at all, do not show interest or it is situational, observe at the suggestion of an adult, quickly move from one to another (Table 2).

Table 2. Levels of environmental relations of children aged 5 years

The level of ecological attitude	Number of respondents, (%)
Low	5 — 20 %
Average	11 — 44 %
Tall	9 — 36 %

The majority of respondents (52%) possess the necessary environmental skills and abilities necessary to solve environmental problems in accordance with their age, participate in environmental activities and have a high level of environmental activity. 28% of preschoolers have insufficient environmental skills necessary for environmental protection activities, rarely participate in environmental activities, and 20% of children do not have sufficient environmental skills necessary for environmental protection activities, do not participate in environmental activities (Table 3).

Table 3. Levels of environmental activity of children aged 5 years

The level of environmental activity	Number of respondents, (%)
Low	5 — 20 %
Average	7 — 28 %
Tall	13 — 52 %

The results of the survey on the level of eco-literacy of preschool children are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Levels of eco-literacy in children aged 5 years

The level of environmental literacy	Number of respondents, (%)
Low	5 — 20 %
Average	11 — 44 %
Tall	9 — 36 %

According to the data obtained, pre-school children have an average and high level of eco-literacy (36%) and (44%), respectively, which is formed in the family, the child's immediate environment, and, of course, in kindergarten. According to the results of the study, an analysis of the experimental work was carried out, all the data obtained were combined in the final table 5 for comparative analysis.

Table 5. The results of the diagnosis of the level of eco-literacy in preschool children

Levels	Cognitive (knowledge)		Motivational (emotional-value)		Behavioral (effective)		Environmental literacy	
	person	%	person	%	person	%	person	%
Tall	9	36	9	36	13	52	9	36
Average	10	40	11	44	7	28	11	44
Low	6	24	5	20	5	20	5	20
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100

Based on these generalized data, a diagram was constructed that clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the pedagogical impact.

The diagram 1. shows comparative indicators of the level of formation of eco-literacy (cognitive, motivational-value, activity) before and after the experiment.

The graph clearly shows the difference between the initial and final results: the indicators of the experimental group increased significantly compared to the control group.

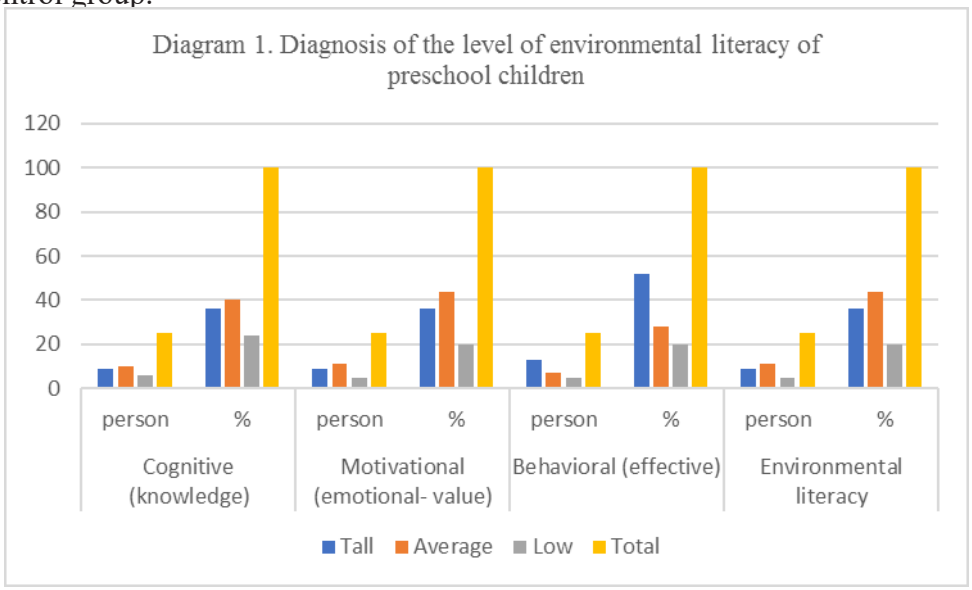

Diagram 1 - Diagnosis of the level of environmental literacy of preschool children

The study used diagnostic tools such as tasks to determine the children's level of knowledge about flora and fauna, seasonal changes in nature, as well as their ability to perceive and analyze environmental problems. There were also conversations with children aimed at identifying their emotional and value-based attitude to nature, which made it possible to assess the motivational component of ecological culture.

To identify the behavioral component of environmental literacy, the monitoring the children's performance method of tasks on caring for plants and animals, as well as their behavior during environmental activities in a preschool organization, was used. Additionally, a survey of parents was conducted, the purpose of which was to clarify their attitude to environmental education and participation in the process of forming eco-literacy in children. The questionnaires helped to obtain data on how parents perceive the importance of environmental education and how actively they are involved in this process.

The research methods also included experimentation, for example, through planting plants and observing the process of their growth, which allowed children not only to study nature, but also to realize their role in its preservation. At the control stage of the study, diagnostics were carried out in order to assess the

results of work on the formation of eco-literacy in children, as well as to identify changes in children's knowledge and behavior after the implementation of the program. All these materials and methods made it possible to comprehensively evaluate the effectiveness of the eco-literacy education program in preschool children and draw conclusions about its importance for the development of environmental awareness in children.

Discussion

The survey of parents revealed the fact of their weak interest in the issues of children ecological education: in many families there are no animals, children are not involved in work on garden plots, etc.

In order to clarify parents' attitudes to environmental education, its role for children's development, the importance and necessity of implementation in kindergarten and family, several simple questions were compiled and a survey of parents was conducted, in which 50 people participated. The parents' answers to the questionnaire showed the following: all parents consider it necessary to introduce children to nature; Most parents have an understanding of environmental issues, regularly go for a walk in the park with their children on weekends, pay attention to seasonal changes in nature, but only a small percentage of parents (15%) purposefully learn poetry and read stories about nature; they also noted that they had to prepare food and feed birds with their children. in winter.

In general, the parents' responses showed that they do not pay attention to the work of children in nature as an important area of environmental education.

During the conversation with the teachers, the following was revealed: All teachers justify the importance of environmental education in preschool age, while emphasizing not only its importance for intellectual development, but also for the moral development of children.; When asked about the priority forms of work, all the answers were almost the same: classes, observing natural phenomena on a walk, reading short stories, memorizing poems, didactic games and etc.;

When implementing the second task (organization of methodological support for environmental education of preschoolers), two blocks were identified: analysis of modern software and methodological materials on environmental education and thematic planning.

During the formative stage of the study, the teachers of the experimental group noted an increase in the level of environmental knowledge, the children quickly and correctly answered questions, identified the names of plants, talked about ways to care for them, etc.; speech improved, the ability to build a chain of reasoning, explain cause-effect relationships and relationships. This was greatly facilitated by our special work with children in the classroom in subgroups, which provides an opportunity to pay attention to the formation of each child's ability to reason and establish causal relationships.

An analysis of the control diagnosis results allowed us to state the following: in both older groups, there is a positive trend in the level of formation of environmental culture components among preschoolers.

However, a comparative analysis of the results revealed a pronounced positive trend in the level of each component formation of environmental culture in the children of the experimental group compared with the control group children.

There is a pronounced positive trend in the level of eco-literacy among children of the experimental group; observational data from parents and educators, indicating an increase in children's research activity, reasoning skills, and ability to establish cause-effect relationships and dependencies in objects and natural phenomena, putting them into speech form, allow us to conclude that the developed Program for educating the basics of eco-literacy in children is effective. pre-school children.

Conclusion

The formation of eco-literacy among preschoolers is a fundamental task facing modern education. The education of environmentally literate citizens should begin at an early age, when children are particularly susceptible to new knowledge and skills. Environmental education helps not only to develop children's conscious and responsible attitude to nature, but also forms important personal qualities such as caring, respect and responsibility. In the context of global environmental problems, the formation of eco-literacy in children is becoming especially important. This makes it possible to lay the foundations for a responsible attitude towards nature and its conservation. The main goal of developing the basics of eco-literacy among preschoolers is achieved through solving the tasks of teaching the basics of ecology, developing observation and curiosity, forming environmentally correct behavior and involving parents in the parenting process.

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МЕКТЕПАЛДЫ ТОП БАЛАЛАРЫНДА ЭКОЛОГИЯЛЫҚ САУАТТЫЛЫҚТЫҢ ҚАЛЫПТАСУ ДЕҢГЕЙІН ДИАГНОСТИКАЛАУ

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Аңдатпа. Мақалада Алматы қаласының «№109 бөбекжай-балабақшасы» КМҚК базасында үздіксіз экологиялық тәрбие жағдайында мектеп жасына дейінгі балалардың экологиялық сауаттылығын қалыптастыру ерекшеліктері қарастырылады (5 жас) Т. В.Хабарова мен Н.В. Шафигуллинаның әдістемесіне сүйене отырып, мектеп жасына дейінгі балалардың экологиялық сауаттылығының бастапқы деңгейі анықталды, бұл балалардың экологиялық сауаттылығын арттырудың одан әрі бағыттарын анықтауға мүмкіндік берді.

Автор экологиялық сауаттылықты қалыптастыру мәселелері бойынша ғылыми-әдістемелік әдебиеттерге шолу жасайды, экологиялық мәдениеттің танымдық, мотивациялық-құндылық және белсенділік

компоненттерінің даму деңгейін анықтау мақсатында балаларға диагностика жүргізеді. Нәтижелер әр компоненттің жоғары, орташа және төмен қалыптасу деңгейлерін көрсететін кестелер түрінде ұсынылған және аналитикалық түсініктемелермен бірге жүреді. Алынған мәліметтер негізінде мектепке дейінгі ұйымдағы экологиялық тәрбиені одан әрі жетілдіру бойынша ұсыныстар беріледі.

Автор балаларды экологиялық бағыттағы танымдық-зерттеу және практикалық қызметке белсенді қосу қажеттілігін, сондай-ақ мектеп жасына дейінгі балалардың тұрақты экологиялық мәдениетін дамыту үшін тәрбие процесінің барлық қатысушыларының өзара әрекеттесуін атап көрсетеді.

Тірек сөздер: экологиялық сауаттылық, балалар, балабақша, экологиялық мәдениет, экологиялық білім, экологиялық қатынас, экологиялық қызмет, мектепалды топ

ДИАГНОСТИКА УРОВНЯ СФОРМИРОВАННОСТИ ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ ГРАМОТНОСТИ У ДЕТЕЙ ПРЕДШКОЛЬНОЙ ГРУППЫ

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Аннотация: В статье рассматриваются особенности формирования экологической грамотности детей дошкольного возраста в условиях непрерывного экологического воспитания на базе КГКП «Ясли-сад №109» г. Алматы, на примере предшкольной группы (дети 5 лет).

Уровень экологической грамотности на начальном этапе был оценён с применением методики Т.В. Хабаровой и Н.В. Шафигуллиной, что позволило выделить ключевые направления для дальнейшего повышения экологической грамотности в контексте природоохранной деятельности.

Автор осуществляет обзор научно-методической литературы по вопросам формирования экологической грамотности, проводит диагностику детей с целью определения уровня развития познавательного, мотивационно-ценностного и деятельностного компонентов экологической культуры.

Результаты представлены в виде таблиц, отражающих высокий, средний и низкий уровни сформированности каждого компонента, и сопровождаются аналитическим комментариями.

На основании полученных данных приводятся рекомендации по дальнейшему совершенствованию экологического воспитания в дошкольной организации. Автор подчёркивает необходимость активного включения детей в познавательно-исследовательскую и практическую деятельность

экологической направленности, а также взаимодействия всех участников воспитательного процесса для развития устойчивой экологической культуры дошкольников.

Ключевые слова: экологическая грамотность, дети, детский сад, экологическая культура, экологические знания, экологическое отношение, экологическая деятельность, предшкольная группа

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