

Uzbekistan's Path to Ecological Enlightenment: Cultural Perspectives

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Abstract: There is an urgent call to embed ecological awareness into educational curricula and enhance the efficacy of environmental education. This article underscores the imperative of refining the theoretical underpinnings of environmental education and training, drawing insights from international best practices while honouring national values and ethos. It advocates for aligning educational strategies with contemporary demands, emphasising the need to cultivate ecological consciousness within the younger generation. By synthesising global expertise with local perspectives, this approach aims to address pressing environmental challenges effectively. The article contends that by integrating ecological principles into educational frameworks, we can nurture environmentally responsible citizens equipped to confront the complex ecological issues of our time. Thus, it calls for a concerted effort to elevate the standards of ecological education, fostering a deep-rooted commitment to sustainable practices and environmental stewardship among learners.

1 INTRODUCTION

The protection of the environment and stabilization of the global ecological situation depend on human consciousness, thinking, intelligence, intellectual potential, and the formation of a high culture and outlook on nature, geoculture, and personal hygiene. Special attention is paid to the issues of revision, environmental education, and environmental enlightenment. Four of the 17 goals outlined in the UN's 'Sustainable Development (Karshiyeva, 2016).

Concepts are dedicated to ecological responsibility, environmental protection, and the rational use of natural resources. One of these goals is 'quality education', which includes the improvement of environmental education. This is an urgent task for the successful implementation of these priorities. International organizations require the development of new, innovative methods for personnel training at the national level and their integration into the continuous education system. This requires a review of the scientific and theoretical foundations of environmental education and training (Uzoqjonova, 2023).

There are leading research centres and institutes in Switzerland, Iceland, the USA, Japan, and South Korea that are conducting research in this area. In conclusion, Plab research is mentioned. In many developed countries, environmental culture

principles are being applied to all aspects of environmental protection, service provision, agriculture, social protection, and sustainable development (Mirzakarimova, 2022).

Therefore, it is vital to enhance environmental education in international education, promote ecological enlightenment and responsibility, and encourage rational use of nature. In Uzbekistan, measures are being taken to improve the stability of nature, ecosystems, and the environment through the development of environmental education and training, scientific research, and national legislation. Additionally, efforts are being made to increase the ecological culture of the population. The 'Concept for the Development of Environmental Education in the Republic of Uzbekistan' (May 27, 2019) aims to establish the main principles of environmental education in the continuous education system and apply them consistently to the educational process. The goal is to enhance the effectiveness of environmental education. This highlights the necessity of enhancing the theoretical underpinnings of ecological education and training, drawing on both international experience and national perspectives, in line with contemporary demands.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The urgency to enhance the theoretical foundations of the ecological education system is increasing. The primary challenge in this process is the development of methodological and pedagogical aspects of environmental education. The Republic of Uzbekistan's environmental education considers the global significance of environmental issues. In recent years, there has been a growing focus on environmental protection, culture, education, and enlightenment as key priorities. Ecological education is particularly important for safeguarding our country's nature, ecosystems, and environment from instability and harm. It also aims to raise environmental awareness among the population, especially young people, and address these critical issues. Therefore, environmental education and upbringing are crucial in addressing these problems.

In 2017-2018, significant changes were made to environmental policy and national education. It is essential to consider the legal, political, and social context when developing ecological education methodology. For example, the 'State Committee for Nature Protection' was renamed the 'State Committee for Ecology and Environmental Protection' by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5024, signed on April 21, 2017. The committee was given various responsibilities related to improving the ecological situation and promoting environmental awareness and culture among the population.

The activities of the committee's 'Sustainable Development Council' were also reviewed. The department of environmental education was assigned the task of reviewing the UN's 'Sustainable Development Concept', taking into account recent educational reforms.

To integrate methods for environmental education into the national education system, it is essential to first identify, analyse, and determine the real conditions and factors that affect them. This section covers the social status of the local population, including employment and social protection, as well as their attitudes towards the environment and natural surroundings. Economic opportunity is linked to the material and financial resources used in education, while the ecological situation is related to the practical application of methods. To maintain the need for certain methods in practice, it is important to ensure that the legal basis of environmental education aligns with the foreign and domestic policies of the state.

3 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Environmental education is gaining importance in Uzbekistan due to the global environmental crisis, pollution, and related issues. The eco-movement needs to become an active cause, with a focus on improving the environmental culture of the population. Administrative means alone cannot solve these problems. To foster an appreciation for the natural world among young people and instil a sense of connection to it is crucial.

As Uzbekistan strives to become a developed nation, rapid reforms, scientific advancements, and innovation are imperative. To accomplish this, it is vital to educate a new generation of skilled professionals who can lead reform efforts proactively and think strategically. As a result, we have implemented reforms at all levels of education, from early childhood to higher education. The significance of education as a primary driver of development is growing in today's world. The level and quality of life of a population are crucial indicators of a country's competitiveness, and societies and civilizations are primarily competing based on social values and educational systems. Therefore, developing a general outlook of society and forming a reasonable attitude towards nature through continuous education is an urgent task. Through ecological education and upbringing, individuals, including young people, gain an understanding of planet Earth as the only known habitat for life in the universe. They acquire knowledge about their living environment, the interconnectedness of the world around us, and the relationship between nature and humanity. This text discusses scientific-theoretical worldviews and ecological systems (ecosystems) in the country and its homeland.

The text covers the emergence, evolutionary development, anthropogenic changes, laws of distribution in space and area, characteristics, wealth, condition, and future prospects of the subject. Additionally, it explores the national, regional, and global relations of nature and society. In addition, it covers practical environmental skills and competencies, as well as understanding and solving problems related to protecting the Earth's surface environment, using its resources rationally, and restoring damaged natural systems. Lastly, it emphasizes the significance of environmental education and upbringing in developing the competence to make sound decisions in one's chosen profession. Environmental security is a critical component of national security, distinct from other security factors due to its covert nature. Therefore,

training qualified environmental personnel in the national education system is one of the most pressing issues of our time. The 1972 Stockholm conference on the environment recommended the creation of an international program of environmental education. Ecological education is based on the 'man-society-nature' relationship and is the foundation for training personnel in environmental protection. The importance of ecological education in implementing the strategy for achieving sustainable development was emphasized at the UN conference 'Rio+20'.

Uzbekistan has also recognized the significance of environmental education and is taking steps to improve it. Environmental education and training started earlier in countries such as Northern Europe and America, where the focus was on monitoring environmental conditions at all stages.

The regulation of integrating environmental protection concerns into all aspects of both internal and external policies of these nations was intensified, and the international community's focus was directed towards ensuring that all human activities in the environment align with the principles of sustainable development. A noteworthy feature of this new approach is that the public is granted extensive rights to access and distribute various environmental information freely.

In the top 20 countries and regions with the highest ecological standards, educational programs aim to cultivate an 'Ecologically cultured person' from pre-school. The primary objective is to instil the first elements of ecological culture in children through environmental education and upbringing. In Western Europe, there is a general effort to provide children with opportunities for ecological education and upbringing from an early age. Additionally, interaction with and care for wild and domestic animals in special farms is promoted.

In Austria, vocational environmental education and training are included in the school curriculum. This includes the organization of special school projects such as 'School garden', 'Environmental history', 'Ecology at school', 'Ecological workshop', and 'Creativity for nature', as well as carrying out nature protection actions like 'Ozone' and 'Alpine activities'. In addition, the development of didactic materials and training manuals, as well as seminars and retraining courses for specialists involved in children's environmental education, should be considered.

Publications on environmental education topics in magazines and newspapers can also be beneficial. It is recommended to create special environmental education programs titled 'Environment, School and

Community' to further promote this cause. A national data bank should be established to address environmental education issues, and coordination functions should be implemented.

Environmental education for children encompasses both school and extracurricular activities. It aims to promote environmental awareness and provide guidance to teachers and professionals who wish to participate in related projects.

In Japan, environmental education programs are implemented at all levels of national vocational training to cultivate individuals with a strong environmental consciousness. The Japanese are not known for their religiosity, and instead of icons, they often use a vase of flowers as an altar of beauty. Ikebana, the art of flower arrangement, is well-known throughout the world. The Japanese attitude towards nature is a unique national psychology based on collective consciousness, which is why environmental education has a long history in Japan.

Environmental education and upbringing in the United States of America are considered to have a different form, direction, and methodological approach. The deep penetration of environmental ethics into all aspects of education and upbringing aims to foster a population that is careful and responsible towards the environment. This is achieved through the involvement of the general public, especially non-governmental organizations.

Environmental education aims to change people's attitudes towards nature, form behavioural and environmental stereotypes, promote economic and social development, and encourage the adoption of new principles of professional ethics by individuals and states. It also aims to promote culture and justice, establish restrictions and prohibitions, and develop laws for the ecosphere.

The qualities defining ecological education are aimed at developing the ecological culture of young people. The focus of this text is on fostering a sense of patriotism and moral values among students towards their home, neighbourhood, and city. It also aims to instil a sense of personal responsibility towards nature and encourage an interest in preserving it through the acquisition of deep knowledge. The ecological values of the Uzbek people, preservation and respect for nature and cultural values, and respect for religious values strengthen these qualities.

4 CONCLUSION

The primary aim of the qualities presented in the context of the global ecological crisis is to promote an ecological worldview based on new ethics and values that are compatible with the level of civilization in the 21st century and the significant anthropogenic effects that threaten nature. In conclusion, the effectiveness of experimental work aimed at developing environmental education skills in students depends on the use of a specific methodology and adherence to its principles. Based on the above considerations, it can be concluded that the aim of ecological education is to prepare individuals with ecological awareness to ensure the safety of life activities. Environmental education is typically the means through which this is achieved and is evaluated by environmental culture.

Only individuals with a high level of ecological spirituality and enlightenment can effectively apply the competencies acquired through ecological education to cultural indicators. Ecological education, upbringing, and practice focus on three areas: protecting ecosystems, using natural resources rationally, and restoring damaged ecosystems.

Drawing on foreign experience, the environmental protection policy in North America and Northern Europe places a high priority on regulating the environment at all phases. Concerns about environmental preservation are incorporated into all facets of both internal and external policy, and the international community is focused on making sure that human activity conforms to the sustainable development principles.

This new strategy is notable for granting the public broad rights to freely access and disseminate a variety of environmental information. Studying the interrelation of environmental education components is part of the process by which ecologists develop their professional competencies. This is important because of the unique qualities of the ecological profession and societal need.

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