

**PEDAGOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES OF USING THE TRADITIONAL
ECOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE OF THE UZBEK PEOPLE IN THE
EDUCATIONAL PROCESS OF GENERAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

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Annotation

This article analyzes the pedagogical opportunities for using the traditional ecological experience of the Uzbek people in the educational process of general secondary schools. The paper examines the essence of the concept of traditional ecological knowledge and experience, its place in the modern system of ecological education, and the methodological ways of integrating into the teaching and upbringing process the culture of attitudes toward nature formed through folklore, customs, crafts, and agricultural traditions. Based on the research findings, a practical model aimed at forming ecological culture in students through interdisciplinary integration, extracurricular educational work, and project-based activities is proposed. The article is of practical importance for general secondary school teachers, methodologists, and researchers in pedagogy.

Keywords

traditional ecological experience, folk pedagogy, ecological education, ecological culture, attitude toward nature, oral folk art, national values, interdisciplinary integration.

Introduction

The intensification of ecological problems on a global scale and the need for the rational use of natural resources set before the modern education system the task of

forming ecological awareness and culture in the younger generation. In this process, it is particularly important not to rely solely on modern natural-scientific knowledge but also to draw on the culture of attitudes toward nature accumulated over many centuries of the people's historical experience, that is, on traditional ecological experience.

Historically, the Uzbek people have engaged in irrigated agriculture, animal husbandry, and crafts, and in the course of these activities countless practical forms of knowledge and skills have developed, such as using water sparingly, preserving soil fertility, and caring for flora and fauna. This knowledge is embodied in folk proverbs, tales, riddles, customs, and rituals, in particular in the traditions of the Navruz holiday, and has been transmitted from generation to generation orally and through practice. In modern school curricula, ecological education is conducted mainly within the subjects of natural science, biology, and geography, predominantly from a theoretical and scientific standpoint. However, the extent to which traditional ecological experience, which rests on a national-cultural foundation and embodies an emotional-value-based approach, is used remains insufficient. This very situation determines the relevance of the present study.

The aim of the study is to substantiate, from a scientific and theoretical standpoint, the pedagogical opportunities for integrating the traditional ecological experience of the Uzbek people into the educational process of general secondary schools and to develop practical ways of doing so.

The following objectives were set for the study:

- to reveal the essence of the concept of traditional ecological experience and to analyze its constituent sources (oral folk art, customs, crafts, and agricultural traditions);
- to determine didactic ways of integrating this experience into school subjects;
- to demonstrate the possibilities of using it in extracurricular educational work;
- to develop practical recommendations and a model.

Literature Review

In studies in the field of folk pedagogy and ethnopedagogy, the educational experience of a people, including its views on the attitude toward nature, occupies an important place. Theorists of ethnopedagogy regard examples of oral folk art – proverbs, sayings, tales, songs, and riddles – as an important educational means of forming moral, aesthetic, and ecological ideas in children.

In foreign studies on the theory of ecological education, the concept of “traditional ecological knowledge” is widely used; it is defined as a system of knowledge, practices, and beliefs formed as a result of the long-term interaction of the population of a particular area with the natural environment and passed down from generation to generation. International experience shows that integrating traditional ecological knowledge into formal education programs is one of the most effective ways of forming ecological awareness in students.

Although the upbringing of children on the basis of national values and folk traditions has been widely covered in national pedagogical science, the specific didactic mechanisms and methodological tools for integrating traditional ecological experience into modern school subjects (biology, geography, natural science, native language and literature) have not been studied sufficiently as a separate and holistic object of research. This gap determines the scientific novelty of the present study.

The category of “pedagogical opportunity,” which underlies the study, refers to the potential of a particular educational means or content to contribute to the development of the student’s personality and to the formation of certain knowledge, skills, and values in him or her. From this standpoint, traditional ecological experience is a source with rich pedagogical potential that not only imparts knowledge but also instills values and exerts an emotional influence.

Research Methodology

The study envisages the use of theoretical analysis methods (systematization of ethnographic and pedagogical literature, comparative-typological analysis, and generalization) as well as practical research methods (content analysis of curricula and textbooks, a questionnaire survey of teachers, pedagogical observation, and experimental work). The methodological basis of the study consists of the ethnopedagogical approach, the integrative approach, and the value-oriented approach.

The ethnopedagogical approach makes it possible to study the educational experience of the people in organic connection with the modern education system, while the integrative approach serves to develop mechanisms for incorporating traditional ecological knowledge into the content of different subjects.

Research Results and Discussion

The Concept of Traditional Ecological Experience and Its Sources

Traditional ecological experience is a set of knowledge, skills, values, and beliefs accumulated over the many centuries of a people's historical development in the course of its interaction with the natural environment and transmitted from generation to generation orally and through practice. The traditional ecological experience of the Uzbek people is embodied in the following main sources:

- oral folk art – proverbs and sayings (for example, words of wisdom promoting a thrifty attitude toward water and soil), tales, legends, and riddles;
- calendar and ritual traditions – spring nature festivals associated with the Navruz holiday, such as tree planting, the beautification of courtyards and surroundings, and the “tulip festival” (lola sayli);
- the culture of agriculture and irrigation – rules for using water in turn and economically, seasonal knowledge related to sowing and harvesting, and methods of maintaining soil fertility;

- craft traditions – the experience of using natural raw materials (clay, wool, silk, wood) rationally and without waste;
- traditions of family upbringing – adults teaching the younger generation, through personal example, to care for plants and animals and to respect water and bread.

All of these sources, taken together in harmony, constitute a rich pedagogical resource that serves to form in the student a culture of a conscious, responsible, and respectful attitude toward nature.

Opportunities for Integrating Traditional Ecological Experience into School Subjects

One of the most effective ways of using traditional ecological experience in the educational process is to incorporate it into the content of various school subjects on the basis of interdisciplinary integration:

- in the subjects “Science” and “Biology” – studying folk knowledge about local flora and fauna and traditional practices of maintaining natural balance by comparing them with scientific concepts;
- in the subject “Geography” – analyzing the history of the use of the region’s water resources and the geographical and economic significance of traditional irrigation systems (for example, the system of irrigation canals and drainage ditches);
- in the subject “Native Language and Literature” – harmonizing artistic-aesthetic and ecological education through the analysis of examples of oral folk art on the theme of nature;
- in the subject “Technology” – developing skills in the rational use of natural materials in the process of studying traditional craft techniques;
- in the subject “History” – studying the historical development of the use of natural resources in the region and the experience of ancestors in maintaining ecological balance.

Such integration not only broadens students' ecological knowledge but also develops their ability to feel the connection among subjects and to understand the continuity between national heritage and modern science.

Opportunities for Use in Extracurricular and Educational Work

Extracurricular educational activity creates broad opportunities for instilling traditional ecological experience in a practical way:

- organizing a “Green Classroom” or ecological clubs, in which students engage directly in practical activities such as planting trees and caring for the school garden;
- organizing ecological and educational events (tree-planting ceremonies, ecological matinees) on the occasion of Navruz and other national holidays;
- inviting mahalla elders and farmers and craftspeople with many years of experience to the school and holding meetings for the exchange of practical experience in the format of “Master’s Lesson”;
- organizing research and project work with students, such as “The Ecology of My Neighborhood” and “What Do My Grandparents Say About Nature?”;
- arranging excursions to museums and ethnographic exhibitions in order to create an opportunity to observe directly the way of life of the people and a lifestyle in harmony with nature.

Such events form ecological culture in students not only at the level of theoretical knowledge but also at the level of practical skills and feelings, since in folk pedagogy knowledge is often acquired through practical activity and personal experience.

Requirements for the Teacher’s Professional Preparation

The effective use of traditional ecological experience depends largely on the teacher’s level of professional preparation. In this regard, the following conditions are of great importance:

- teachers’ completion of professional development courses on ethnopedagogy and local ecological knowledge;
- establishing the activity of methodological associations among subject teachers that ensure interdisciplinary integration;
- including local ethnographic and ecological materials in educational and methodological complexes and strengthening the regional component;
- providing teachers with methodological guidelines on combining traditional ecological experience with modern pedagogical technologies (the project method and interactive methods).

That the teacher himself or herself is a person who has a deep understanding of national values and treats them with respect is one of the decisive factors for the success of this process.

A Model for Realizing the Pedagogical Opportunities

The stage-by-stage model of integrating traditional ecological experience into the educational process can be organized as follows. At the first stage, traditional ecological knowledge and practices in the region are collected and systematized (ethnographic and pedagogical research). At the second stage, interdisciplinary integrated didactic materials (supplementary texts, tasks, and project topics) are developed on the basis of the collected materials. At the third stage, these materials are applied in lessons and extracurricular activities, and teachers receive the necessary methodological support. At the fourth, final stage, students’ level of ecological culture is assessed (in terms of indicators of knowledge, attitude, and behavior), and the program is improved on the basis of the results.

This model is continuous and cyclical in nature, and it should be repeated in each academic year and enriched on the basis of the accumulated experience. This makes it

possible to turn the use of traditional ecological experience from a one-time event into an integral part of the school's sustainable system of education and upbringing.

Scientific and Practical Significance of the Study

The scientific significance of the study lies in the fact that, for the first time, the traditional ecological experience of the Uzbek people is systematically analyzed in the context of modern school education, and its sources, directions of integration, and implementation model are developed in a holistic manner. This creates a theoretical and methodological basis for scholars who will study the topic further, including researchers in the fields of ethnopedagogy and ecological education.

The practical significance of the study is manifested in the following: first, the proposed directions of integration can be used directly by subject teachers in enriching lesson plans; second, the analysis presented on the regional component serves as a comparative source for specialists who improve educational and methodological complexes; third, the proposed stage-by-stage model can be used by school administrations and methodological associations as a practical guide in drawing up annual work plans on ecological education.

It should be emphasized that the use of traditional ecological experience should be regarded not as an alternative to modern scientific and ecological knowledge but as a means that complements it and creates an emotional-value-based foundation grounded in the national-cultural basis. Only with such an approach is it possible to form in the younger generation a sustainable ecological culture that is both scientifically grounded and close to the national spirit.

Assessment and Monitoring Criteria

To assess the effectiveness of integrating traditional ecological experience into the educational process, it is necessary to develop a system of clear criteria. Such criteria

are usually grouped in three directions: level of knowledge, emotional-value-based attitude, and practical behavior.

–level of knowledge – how deep and systematic the student’s understanding is of regional natural resources, traditional irrigation and care methods, and folk ecological knowledge;

–emotional-value-based attitude – how the student’s sense of respect and responsibility toward nature, the heritage of ancestors, and national traditions has been formed, determined through essays, conversations, and creative work;

–practical behavior – the student’s observable actions, such as the economical use of water and energy in everyday life and activity in events to beautify the school and neighborhood territory.

Conducting regular monitoring in these three directions and recording the results on a semiannual or annual basis in cooperation with class teachers and subject teachers makes it possible to assess objectively the effectiveness of the integration process and, where necessary, to adjust the content of the program. Without such a monitoring system, the use of traditional ecological experience may remain at the level of random, unsystematic events.

Conclusion. The analysis conducted shows that the traditional ecological experience of the Uzbek people has rich and multifaceted pedagogical potential for use in the educational process of general secondary schools. This experience is embodied in such sources as oral folk art, calendar and ritual traditions, the culture of agriculture and crafts, and traditions of family upbringing, and it can be incorporated into the educational process through interdisciplinary integration, extracurricular educational work, and project-based activities.

On the basis of the research results, the following practical recommendations were developed:

- including regional ethnoecological materials in curricula and textbooks;
- improving teachers’ professional preparation in ethnopedagogy;
- systematically organizing traditional ecological and educational events in schools (tree-planting ceremonies associated with Navruz, ecological clubs);
- developing research and project work with students aimed at studying local ecological experience.

Implementing these recommendations will serve to form in the younger generation a sustainable ecological culture that has both a scientific and a national-value-based foundation. In future research, it would be appropriate to study the empirical aspects of this issue on a broad scale, in particular the results of the practical testing of the proposed model in schools in different regions and the dynamics of change in the level of students’ ecological culture.

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