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FORMATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CULTURE IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

Abstract. The article emphasizes the need for formation of the environmental culture in preschool children, which is the initial stage of formation of the human personality. It is during this period that the foundations of interaction with the nature are laid, with the help of adults, a child begins to realize it as a common value for all people.

The role of the educator in formation of the environmental culture in preschool children is revealed. It is emphasized that the main priority in the educational process of a preschool educational institution should be ensuring the proper environmental culture. The educator must organize the educational process in such a way that it becomes environmentally favorable for children. The main task that the teacher should implement in the process of environmental education of preschool children is characterized. The task of the educator is to educate the younger generation in the tradition of the harmonious coexistence with nature, rational use and reproduction of its resources, in the psychological readiness to protect natural values.

In the course of the research, we specified the concept of "environmental culture". Features of the formation of the environmental culture in preschool children are distinguished and described.

It was found that the basis of the environmental culture includes elementary knowledge about nature: orientation in the nearest natural environment; awareness of the vital needs of living beings in the conditions of existence; familiarization with the elementary information about the interrelationships of living nature, its importance in human life. Children's knowledge of nature occurs during vigorous activities, when they master the skills of caring for its objects, preserving and creating conditions for their normal coexistence. In order to educate children in the humane attitude towards nature, not only knowledge is important, but also the education of humane feelings, positive experience in communicating with nature.

Key words: children of preschool age, environmental education, environmental culture, environmental consciousness, environmental attitude.

Statement of the problem. A person enters into a certain relationship with nature. He/she adapts to the natural environment, changing himself/herself under its influence, and, of course, transforms this natural environment with his/her activities. Therefore, the problem of the relationship between man and nature is not new, it has always existed. But now, at the present time, the environmental problem of the interaction of man and nature, as well as the interaction of human society on the environment, has become very acute and has taken huge scale.

The planet can be saved only by the activities of people, which are based on the deep understanding of the laws of nature, taking into account the numerous interactions in natural communities, and realizing that man is only a part of nature. This means that the environmental problem appears today not only as a problem of preserving the environment from pollution and other negative effects of human economic activity on Earth. It grows into a problem of preventing the natural impact of

people on nature, consciously, purposefully, systematically developing interaction with it. To realize this, an exceptional role is played by environmental education (instilling the moral, humane attitude towards nature).

Preschool childhood is the initial stage of formation of a human personality. Formation of the environmental culture is the most important task of a preschool institution at present. The components of a preschooler's environmental culture are knowledge about nature and its environmental orientation, the ability to use it in real life, in behavior, in various activities (in games, work, in everyday life).

The self-worth of preschool childhood is obvious: the first seven years of a child's life are a period of rapid growth and intensive development. It is during this period that the foundations of interaction with nature are laid, with the help of adults, a child begins to realize it as a common value for all people. This determines the relevance of the problem under consideration. Thus, the contradiction between the requirements of children's educational institution and the society with the insufficient level of the environmental culture in preschool children.

Analysis of the latest research and publications proves that at the current stage psychologists pay attention to the study of certain aspects of the outlined problem, in particular, formation of the environmental culture in preschool children.

The psychological-pedagogical foundations of formation of the initial ecological ideas in preschool children are the ideas of leading scientists, including: N. Hlukhova, N. Kondratieva, N. Lysenko, Z. Plokhii, V. Skrebets, V. Fokina, N. Yarysheva, etc.

Analysis of the modern scientific research by H. Bielienka, N. Horopakha, N. Lysenko, Z. Plokhii, O. Polovina, N. Yarysheva, etc. convincingly shows that formation of the environmental worldview is formed gradually during a person's life. The beginning of this process falls on the period of preschool childhood, when the foundations of world understanding, environmental awareness and practical interaction with nature are laid in the process of educational activity [1; 3].

The ideas of O. Zaporozhets, L. Lupiiko, V. Marshytska, M. Poddiakova, etc., about the correspondence to the age characteristics of preschoolers, their visual representation, effectiveness and systematization of knowledge, are the psychological foundations of formation of the initial environmental ideas in preschool children [2].

The purpose of the article consists of the theoretically substantiation of the formation of the environmental culture in preschool children in the process of familiarization with the surrounding environment.

Presentation of the main material. Analyzing the content of the education of the environmental concept, it is possible to distinguish such concepts as: environmental culture, environmental consciousness, environmental attitude, etc. In different literature, authors give different definitions of these concepts.

V. Krysachenko, for example, gives the following definition of eco-culture: "Environmental culture is defined as one of the forms of culture, as a person's ability to feel the living being of the world, to adapt it to himself/herself, to harmonize the own needs and the structure of the natural environment" [6].

According to Z. Plokhii, environmental culture is aimed at overcoming the own limitations of a person as a natural being in relation to his/her adaptation in the biosphere in conditions of constant competition from certain living forms. Knowledge about nature offered to preschoolers should not represent a number of fragmented facts, but an interdependent, consistent chain of ideas revealing the most important connections and regularities of the natural world [10].

Environmental consciousness is the individual and collective (social) ability to realize the inseparable connection of human being with the nature, the dependence of people's well-being on the integrity of the natural environment, the ability and habit of acting without disrupting connections and cycles in nature [7].

If various and quite important connections that exist in nature are revealed, the theoretical level of the material increases, cognitive tasks become more difficult, and therefore, this contributes to the development of children's cognitive activity. As noted by the researchers [2; 4-7], without knowledge of the environmental relationships, it is difficult to predict the possible consequences of intervention in the natural processes.

A. Liovochkina defines environmental education as a purposeful systematic pedagogical activity aimed at the development of environmental education and upbringing of children; accumulation of the environmental knowledge, formation of the abilities and skills of activity in nature, awakening of high moral and aesthetic feelings, acquisition of high moral personal qualities and firm will in carrying out

environmental work [9].

Environmental education is the purposeful formation of the environmental thinking, environmental, moral, and legal views on nature and the place of man in it by people of different ages. Its goal is formation of a personality capable of freely navigating the environmental protection situation. Educators are faced with the task of educating the younger generation in the tradition of harmonious coexistence with nature, rational use and reproduction of its riches, in the psychological readiness to protect natural values. Environmental education of preschoolers, as is known, is based on children's assimilation of the system of knowledge about nature, about the connections and dependencies existing in it, on awareness of the impact of human activity on nature.

In fact, environmental education has two sides: environmental awareness, environmental behavior. Formation of the basics of the environmental awareness, as already noted, takes place mainly at the lessons on acquaintance with the surrounding world, while environmental behavior is formed over the years, and not so much at the lessons as in unregulated environmental activities.

The psychological aspect is of great importance, which includes the following:

- 1) development of the environmental awareness;
- 2) formation of appropriate (naturally expedient) needs, motives and attitudes of the individual;
- 3) development of the moral, aesthetic feelings, skills and habits;
- 4) education of a strong will.

Preschool age is the most important stage in the formation of a person's environmental worldview; it involves creation of the prerequisites for humane interaction with the natural environment.

Psychologists' research shows that at the stage of preschool childhood, the development of various forms of knowledge of the surrounding world and perception, figurative thinking, and imagination is of particular importance. The ability to see the world in its vivid colors and images in a childlike way is very necessary for people, because such an ability is a necessary component of their creativity. Direct perception of the objects of nature, their diversity, dynamics affect children emotionally, bring them joy, admiration, surprise, thereby improving the aesthetic feelings.

Scientists Bauer M.Y., Kuryk M.I., Lysenko N.V., Plokhii Z.P. testify that formation of the foundations of the environmental culture should be started from an early age of a child. The depth and truth of the environmental education of preschoolers is discussed in M.Y. Bauer's monograph "Methodology of the Environmental Education" [4]. In particular, the author singles out the most important features characteristic of the development of the environmental culture in children, which we aim to form both in ourselves and in our pupils:

- presence of worldview value orientations regarding a positive attitude towards nature;
- nature-appropriate environmental style of thinking and a corresponding attitude towards nature and the own health;
- skills and experience in solving the environmental problems;
- direct participation in the environmental protection activities;
- prediction of the possible negative remote consequences of nature-changing human activity [4, p. 84].

In N. Yarysheva's textbook "Methodology of Children's Acquaintance with the Nature" [12], from the standpoint of the modern pedagogical research, the technology of acquaintance of preschoolers with nature is covered quite widely, as well as various types of creative work on environmental education, the basis of which is the child's knowledge and activities.

Lysenko N.V. draws attention to the essence of the multifaceted value of nature in the educational and methodical guide "Eco-Eye: a Preschooler Explores the Natural World" [8]. The above-mentioned monograph and textbooks will help scientists and practitioners to determine the directions, forms and methods of conducting an experiment on formation of the foundations of the environmental culture in preschool children.

The pedagogical training and educational process should be aimed at formation of such psychological properties of the individual as the need to communicate with nature, interest in exploring its laws, motives for behavior and activities for the protection of nature, conviction in the social conditioning of the relationship of man to nature, in the need to manage natural phenomena.

The effectiveness of the influence of the environment on a child's personality in a preschool educational institution depends on the ability of the teaching staff to organize a comfortable ecological and developmental environment. In order to form a child's natural and environmental competence, an adult must focus on these problems (global, regional, local), have a formed sense of public responsibility for the state of nature, desire and effective readiness to preserve it.

In the studies of A. Bogush, N. Havrysh, they emphasize that a developmental space should be created in the preschool institution, which promotes the development of children's active existence in the natural environment, with the help of which it is possible to organize various types of activities: educational and cognitive, playful, productive, speech and communicative [5, p. 101]

The developmental environment for formation of the environmental culture in preschool children provides for creation of a complex of conditions necessary for assimilation of the environmental knowledge by children associated with their appropriate behavior. It is thanks to the developmental environment that a child gains the experience of communicating with nature, is faced with the need to observe certain laws of nature, learns to assess the state of the natural environment, to be responsible for the consequences of his/her own actions, that is, the environmental competence is formed by him/her [5, p. 101]

The basis for creating an educational program for preschool children is the Basic Component of Preschool Education. This document outlines optimally necessary, but sufficient knowledge and skills for preschool children in various spheres of social life. The pedagogical process should be aimed at formation of such psychological properties of the individual as the need to communicate with nature, interest in exploring its laws, motives of behavior and nature conservation activities.

The educator implements the following tasks of the environmental education:

- education of the humane attitude towards nature;
- formation of a system of environmental knowledge and ideas about nature;
- development of the ability to see and feel the beauty, attractiveness of each element of the environment, to enjoy and admire them;
- inclusion in the necessary environmentally focused activity.

"Do not harm nature" is an important conclusion that children should reach when communicating with the environment. Solving these tasks will ensure active communication of preschoolers with the natural environment and contribute to their socialization. In each age group, certain program tasks are implemented to acquaint children with nature. They involve the gradual assimilation of natural knowledge. 2- and 3-year-old children are introduced to plants, animals, and phenomena of inanimate nature, are taught to separate them in space, identify and correctly name some signs of plants, imitate the movements and voices of animals. At the same time, children improve their analyzers (visual, auditory), develop interest and attention to what they see, and develop a good attitude towards them [11].

Children of the 4th year of life form ideas about the objects and natural phenomena with which they constantly meet in life, they are lead to establish such connections that children can learn in the process of object-sensory activity in classes, games and reflect them in the form of specific ideas. In the process of assimilation of knowledge, higher forms of cognitive activity are formed in children. Children are taught to observe, to distinguish certain signs of plants and animals, to compare objects, to group them according to the external features. 4-year-old children can approach the establishment of cause-and-effect relationships.

Around the age of 5, children develop the higher form of visual thinking. They can master generalized knowledge. Children are taught to distinguish the peculiarities of the structure of plants and animals and to establish their dependence on living conditions. Before coming to school, children should develop observation, curiosity, love and care for nature, the ability to find beauty in it, interest in agricultural work. [1;2]

Acquaintance with the basics of the environmental culture of the individual in the conditions of the educational institution is impossible without the search and implementation of new pedagogical technologies of education, which provide for the improvement of the educational process by means of children's heuristics, the introduction of new cognitive and creative-exemplary forms of children's vigorous activities, a combination of preschool and family education of worldview values attitude orientations. But in order to educate children in a humane attitude towards nature, not only knowledge is important, but also the education of humane feelings, positive experience in communicating with nature. It is very important to use various forms, technologies, methods and techniques in working with children, to carry them out with the active interaction with children by parents and teachers. To acquaint them with interesting nature, creative, cognitive activities for children, to use more practical classes. And then, through acquaintance with nature, we raise sensual, kind, attentive and caring people, an environmentally literate person.

Thus, the basis of the environmental culture is elementary knowledge about nature: orientation in the nearest natural environment; awareness of the vital needs of living beings in the conditions of existence; acquaintance with the elementary information about the interrelationships of living nature, its

importance in human life. Children's knowledge of nature occurs during vigorous activities, when they master the skills of caring for its objects, preserving and creating conditions for their normal coexistence.

Conclusions. So, it is possible and necessary to instill in children love for the environment, the ability to protect "green friends" and increase wealth from preschool age. That is why environmental education and formation of the environmental culture in preschool children come to the fore. One of the conditions for optimizing the environmental education in a preschool education institution is formation of the foundations of the environmental culture of preschoolers, which involves acquisition of humane feelings towards living organisms, ideas about nature and its components, knowledge about the rules of behavior in the natural environment, the ability to admire nature and feel its beauty.

Prospects for further exploration in this direction. Issues related to the study of the development of the environmental culture at other age stages, in different learning conditions, and determination of teachers' readiness to implement psychological and pedagogical programs for formation of the environmental culture require further study.

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