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PEDAGOGICAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATING ECONOMIC EDUCATION INTO THE MANAGEMENT PROCESS OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

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Abstract: This article examines the theoretical and pedagogical foundations, organisational opportunities, and practical mechanisms for integrating economic education into the management of preschool educational organisations. It substantiates the importance of economic education in developing thrift, diligence, responsibility, respect for property, and the ability to use resources rationally among preschool-aged children. The roles of organisational leaders, teachers, parents, and social partners in organising economic education are analysed. The article proposes an organisational and pedagogical model for integrating economic education into the educational process, together with criteria for evaluating its effectiveness.

Keywords: preschool education, economic education, pedagogical management, economic culture, thrift, rational resource use.

Introduction

Today, the development of the preschool education system requires not only improving the quality of educational services, managing pedagogical processes effectively, and supporting children's holistic development, but also helping them form the social and economic understandings needed in everyday life. Economic relationships are an integral part of human life, and qualities such as thrift, valuing work, using available resources wisely, and taking responsibility for one's actions begin to develop in childhood.

Economic education for preschool-aged children does not mean teaching them complex economic theories or expecting them to solve financial problems independently. Rather, it involves developing initial, age-appropriate understandings of work, needs, objects, value, thrift, waste, and mutual assistance. Everyday examples include taking care of toys, using paper efficiently, not leaving water running unnecessarily, avoiding food waste, and keeping learning materials organised.

The effectiveness of economic education is not determined solely by whether an educator conducts a separate activity. The management system of the preschool organisation, the leader's organisational work, teachers' methodological preparation, the developmental environment, family upbringing, and the culture of resource use need to work in harmony. Integrating economic education into the management process can therefore be regarded as an important area of pedagogical management.

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Preschool Education and Upbringing" establishes the legal foundations for state policy and the educational process in preschool education [1]. Reforms aimed at expanding access to preschool services and improving educational quality also emphasise curricula, methodological support, and the development of teachers' professional capacity [2]. These priorities reinforce the need to organise economic education in ways that fit children's everyday activities and to support it at the management level.

Research Methodology

The study is theoretical and analytical in nature. It employs analysis of pedagogical literature, comparative analysis, pedagogical generalisation, a systems approach, and methodological modelling. Relevant regulatory documents governing preschool education and approaches found in international sources on early childhood education were considered.

The systems approach made it possible to examine economic education not as a collection of isolated activities, but as an interconnected process involving objectives, content, management, pedagogical practice, family cooperation, and the assessment of outcomes. Through methodological modelling, an organisational and pedagogical model was developed that covers planning, implementation, monitoring, and improvement.

The model presented in this article is a theoretical and methodological proposal. No experimental findings or statistical indicators demonstrating its effectiveness are claimed on the basis of the available information.

The Content and Pedagogical Significance of Economic Education

Economic education is a pedagogical process aimed at developing children's initial concepts and behavioural skills related to work, needs, the value of objects, thrift, attitudes towards property, and the rational use of resources. At preschool age, this process takes place primarily through everyday experiences, play, practical tasks, and imitation of adults.

The content of economic education may include the following interconnected areas:

1. Developing thrift

This involves helping children develop habits of using water, electricity, paper, learning materials, and other resources appropriately. Thrift should not be explained merely as saving money; it should also mean valuing available resources and avoiding waste.

2. Developing respect for work

Through age-appropriate tasks such as putting toys away, caring for plants, and organising their own belongings, children learn to value the results of work. Such activities help develop independence, orderliness, and a sense of responsibility towards the group.

3. Developing care for property

Children are taught to handle personal belongings, shared toys, and educational materials carefully. They learn, in age-appropriate ways, to distinguish between "mine" and "shared", to share items with others, and to look after them.

4. Introducing the relationship between needs and available resources

Through educational games, children learn to choose necessary items, use available materials purposefully, and think about why something is needed before selecting it. Children should not be pressured or compared on the basis of their families' financial circumstances.

5. Developing an ecological and economic culture

Using natural and material resources wisely, reducing waste, and understanding opportunities to reuse items form an area where economic education intersects with environmental education.

These areas complement one another. For example, saving paper helps children understand that resources are limited, while also encouraging them to value the results of work and act responsibly towards the environment.

Pedagogical Opportunities for Integrating Economic Education into the Management Process

Management in a preschool educational organisation includes setting educational objectives, planning pedagogical processes, providing methodological support to staff, coordinating resources, and analysing outcomes. Integrating economic education into these processes helps ensure that it is implemented consistently.

1. Opportunities for goal-oriented planning

The head of the organisation can include economic education in the annual work plan, the topics of methodological meetings, and the coordination of teachers' activities. The aim should not be to provide information through a one-off event, but to reinforce thrift, respect for work, and responsibility in everyday activities.

For example, age-appropriate activities can be planned throughout the month around themes such as "Let's Take Care of Our Belongings", "Let's Save Water", and "Valuing the Results of Work". The head oversees whether these activities align with the educational programme and its developmental objectives.

2. Developing teachers' professional competence

Effective economic education requires educators to explain economic concepts simply and through real-life examples appropriate to children's ages. Methodological groups and pedagogical councils can discuss the content of economic education, develop educational games, model problem situations, and consider ways of cooperating with families.

Role-play activities such as "The Shop", "Family Shopping", and "What Can We Save?" can help children practise choosing items, waiting their turn, recognising needs, and following shared rules. These games should prioritise social interaction, responsibility, and sensible choices rather than complex calculations involving money.

3. Creating a developmental environment

The physical and developmental environment of a preschool organisation provides opportunities to incorporate economic education into everyday life. Organising toys, books, stationery, and other materials neatly, establishing rules for their use, and involving children in taking care of them are practical foundations for this process.

The head establishes systems for allocating and storing resources, while educators teach children to use them appropriately. Using both sides of a sheet of paper, planning materials in advance, and considering safe repair or reuse of damaged items can help develop a culture of thrift.

4. Establishing cooperation with families

The effectiveness of economic education depends partly on whether habits developed in preschool are also supported at home. Parent meetings, consultations, practical recommendations, and family activities can help establish a consistent educational approach.

Parents may be encouraged to involve children in age-appropriate household tasks, tidy toys together, avoid wasting food, and use belongings for longer. Families should not be required to disclose their income, expenses, or financial circumstances. Economic education must not become a way of judging children according to their families' financial status.

5. Managing a culture of resource use

The head can link economic education with the organisation's own practices of rational resource use. Saving water and electricity, planning educational materials according to need, maintaining inventory records, and preventing unnecessary expenditure are organisational management responsibilities.

However, the organisation's financial efficiency and children's economic education should not be treated as identical concepts. The former concerns management and the effective use of resources, while the latter is a pedagogical process aimed at shaping children's economic understanding, values, and behaviour. Although related, they have different objectives and assessment criteria.

An Organisational and Pedagogical Model for Integrating Economic Education into Management

Based on the theoretical analysis, it is proposed that the integration of economic education into the management process be organised in the following stages.

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Stage 1. Diagnosis and identification of needs

Children's initial understandings of thrift, work, attitudes towards belongings, and resource use are explored through pedagogical observation and conversations. Teachers' methodological needs and the organisation's available resources are also analysed.

Stage 2. Setting objectives and tasks

Objectives appropriate to different age groups are set based on the identified needs. For example, the younger group may focus on taking care of toys, the middle group on using materials economically, and older and school-preparation groups on understanding simple relationships between needs and choices.

Stage 3. Planning and methodological support

Games, conversations, practical tasks, projects, and family activities with economic content are planned. These activities are aligned with the objectives of the preschool curriculum and integrated with other areas of child development.

Stage 4. Implementation and cooperation

The head creates the necessary organisational conditions, the educator implements pedagogical activities, and parents help reinforce appropriate habits at home. Where relevant, educational projects can also be organised with the local community and other social partners.

Stage 5. Monitoring and analysis

Children's everyday behaviour, teachers' activities, and the implementation of planned work are observed. Outcomes are compared with the initial situation, and necessary adjustments are identified.

Identifying needs
↓
Goal-oriented planning
↓
Methodological preparation
↓
Pedagogical activities
↓
Family cooperation
↓
Monitoring and improvement

The key feature of this model is that economic education is organised not as a one-off event, but as a continuous process planned by management, implemented by educators, and regularly reviewed.

Criteria for Assessing the Effectiveness of Economic Education

When evaluating the results of integrating economic education into management, it is not sufficient to count the number of activities conducted. Changes in children's everyday behaviour, the quality of the pedagogical process, and the level of cooperation with families should also be considered.

Criterion	Observable indicators	Assessment methods
Knowledge and understanding	The child explains in simple terms why thrift, work, and taking care of belongings matter.	Conversation, questions and answers, scenario-based tasks

Practical behaviour	The child puts toys away, uses materials carefully, and avoids wasting water.	Pedagogical observation, practical situations
Social relationships	The child respects shared belongings and cooperates with others.	Observation of group activities
Pedagogical management	Economic education is included in plans; methodological support and monitoring are organised.	Analysis of plans and methodological documents
Family cooperation	Parents receive guidance and are offered activities that can be carried out at home.	Conversations, feedback, analysis of joint activities

During assessment, children should not be compared harshly with one another or labelled negatively because of their economic behaviour. The focus should be on each child's individual development, the gradual formation of habits, and appropriate pedagogical support.

Discussion

The pedagogical opportunities for integrating economic education into management lie in its close connection with different areas of educational activity. Thrift, diligence, and responsibility can be developed not only during activities specifically devoted to economics, but also through play, learning about nature, visual arts, language development, and everyday self-care routines.

International experience highlights the importance of aligning educational programmes, support for teachers, and mechanisms for ensuring service quality in early childhood education [2]. This approach supports the need to move economic education beyond isolated activities and connect it with the organisation's overall pedagogical strategy.

At the same time, several challenges may arise during integration. These include limiting economic education to money and shopping, insufficient methodological preparation among teachers, differences between family practices and the preschool's approach, and monitoring that measures only the number of formal activities.

To address these challenges, it is necessary to clarify age-appropriate content, develop methodological guidance and practical sessions for teachers, establish regular cooperation with parents, and introduce observation criteria based on children's everyday activities.

Importantly, economic education should not encourage children to place material wealth above human values or develop excessive thrift. Its main purpose is to help children value work, use available resources responsibly, understand needs, cooperate with others, and develop sound behavioural habits.

Conclusion

Integrating economic education into the management process of preschool educational organisations is an important approach to developing children's initial economic understanding, strengthening habits of thrift and responsibility, and ensuring coherence in the pedagogical process.

The theoretical analysis leads to the following conclusions:

1. Economic education for preschool-aged children is not limited to knowledge about money; it also includes valuing work, taking care of belongings, practising thrift, and using resources rationally.

2. To organise economic education effectively, it should be linked to the preschool organisation's planning, methodological support, pedagogical activities, and monitoring processes.

3. Cooperation among the organisation's head, teachers, and parents helps ensure consistent implementation and reinforce everyday habits.

4. Economic education should be delivered through games, practical tasks, conversations, and real-life situations appropriate to children's ages and individual characteristics.

5. Assessment should consider not only the number of activities conducted, but also children's knowledge, everyday behaviour, pedagogical conditions, and cooperation with families.

Thus, integrating economic education into the management process creates organisational and pedagogical conditions for developing thrift, responsibility, respect for work, and a culture of rational resource use in preschool educational organisations. In the future, piloting the proposed model in preschool settings, comparing the results, and determining its practical effectiveness would constitute promising directions for further research.

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