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УДК 37.015**ЕКОЛОГІЧНА ОСВІТА СУЧАСНОЇ ІРЛАНДІЇ: ДОСВІД ДЛЯ УКРАЇНИ**

Анотація. У статті розглянуто актуальні проблеми екології та екологічної освіти й виховання в контексті сучасних глобальних викликів, наголошується на необхідності формування екологічної грамотності, екологічної свідомості та високих моральних цінностей у зростаючій особистості. Шляхом ретроспективного та рефлексивно-аналітичного огляду наукових джерел, застосування компаративістських підходів, досліджуються концептуальні основи та методологічні підходи до реалізації мети та завдань екологічної освіти в українському та ірландському середовищах. У дослідженнях українських науковців підкреслюється важливість системної інтеграції екологічних принципів на всіх рівнях сучасної системи освіти, поєднуючи раціональні та емоційні аспекти взаємодії людини з природою для сприяння сталому розвитку та формування екологічної свідомості.

На відміну від українських наукових розвідок, ірландські дослідники зосереджуються на застосуванні в освітньому процесі інноваційних технологій та реалізації стратегічних державних програм, таких як «Fit for 55» і «Green Deal», які відзначають Ірландію серед світових лідерів у сфері захисту навколишнього середовища. У дослідженні висвітлено основні тенденції цього неоднозначного процесу, вказується на пріоритетність екологічної освіти в національній політичній думці, шляхом інтеграції в шкільні освітні програми, вплив на розвиток емоційного інтелекту й інтелектуального залучення особистості до природи, починаючи вже з раннього дитинства. Такі програми як «Зелена школа», акцентують увагу на практичному навчанні та відповідальному ставленні до управління ресурсами й зменшенню відходів, формування культури сталого розвитку.

Авторка наголошує на пріоритетності в освітньому процесі таких видів навчання, як уроки на відкритому повітрі для підвищення творчого потенціалу, розвитку мовлення та загального благополуччя, що узгоджується з ірландськими освітніми стратегіями. Проте залишаються певні виклики, пов'язані з прогалинами в соціальних дослідженнях екологічної освіти та дебати щодо балансу між утилітарним та емпатійним підходами до екологічного навчання. Аналізуючи ці питання, дослідниця долучається до дискурсу глобальної екологічної освіти та пропонує цінні ідеї для формування цілісної екологічної культури особистості.

Ключові слова: екологія, освіта, екологічна освіта, система екологічної освіти, екологічна культура, Ірландія, Україна.

**ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN MODERN IRELAND:
EXPERIENCE FOR UKRAINE**

Abstract. This article addresses the critical issue of ecology and environmental education within the framework of modern global challenges, emphasizing the urgency of fostering environmental literacy and high moral values among the younger generation. Through a retrospective and reflexive-analytical review of scientific sources, the study explores the conceptual framework and methodological approaches of environmental education in Ukrainian and Irish contexts. Ukrainian research highlights the need for systematic integration of ecological principles across all levels of education, combining rational and emotional dimensions of human interaction with nature to promote sustainable development and environmental consciousness.

In contrast, Irish practices focus on innovative technologies and strategic state programs such as «Fit for 55» and the «Green Deal», positioning Ireland among the global leaders in environmental protection. The study highlights key trends, including the prioritization of environmental education in national policies, integration into school curricula, and the development of emotional and intellectual engagement with nature starting from early childhood. Notable programs such as Green Schools emphasize hands-on learning and practical applications, instilling responsibility for resource management and waste reduction in students and fostering a culture of sustainability.

Moreover, the article underscores the role of outdoor learning in enhancing creativity, speech development, and overall well-being, aligning with Irish educational strategies. However, challenges persist, including gaps in social research on environmental education and debates over the balance between utilitarian and empathetic approaches to ecological learning. By examining these issues, the article contributes to the discourse on global environmental education and offers valuable insights for fostering a holistic environmental culture.



Keywords: ecology, education, environmental education, system of environmental education, environmental culture, Ireland, Ukraine.

INTRODUCTION

The problem formulation. The humanity of the globalised world has entered a critical period in its history – the era of environmental crisis. In this regard, the problem of environmental literacy and high morality of the younger generation requires special attention, which should be addressed through the greening of modern science and education. The particular urgency of this issue is understandable, as is the identification of priority areas aimed at human interaction with the natural environment, optimisation of social and natural relations, and raising the level of environmental culture, the formation of which begins at an early age. The strength of its components (knowledge, beliefs, consciousness, love of nature) determines the further attitude of a person to the environment.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The issue of the peculiarities of environmental education formation is revealed in the scientific works of Y.Boichuk, M. Drobnokhod, L. Lukianova, I. Mazur, Y. Sayenko, S. Sovgir, O. Plakhotnyk, O. Prutsakova, L. Titarenko, T. Churilova. Environmental education is interpreted as an increase in attention to environmental education, which is due to the awareness of the irreversibility of environmental changes in the environment, the destruction of traditional views on the model of society's functioning, and the awareness of the need to form a new worldview that is consonant with the requirements of morality and law regarding the environment (Lukianova, 2006, p. 57). In addition, scientists note that the foundations for the formation of environmental culture should be laid from preschool age, especially at school, since at this age, knowledge of the world around us takes place, which in the future will contribute to the formation of the child's personality, development of the worldview and attitude to the environment.

THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH is specified in the following tasks: to outline the essence of the concepts of «ecology» and «environmental education» in the scientific research of Ukrainian and Irish scientists; to determine the peculiarities of the formation of environmental education in students based on innovative technologies that are a priority in Ireland; to implement the best practices of the country that has been included in the which has the best practices in preserving ecology and the environment on the world stage.

RESEARCH METHODS: reflexive analysis of scientific sources on the research topic, comparison, and correlation.

RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

THE CONCEPT OF ECOLOGY in scientific research is considered in the context of many sciences – philosophy, history, economics, sociology, psychology, pedagogy, etc. Among them, philosophy is the dominant one. According to philosophers, the doctrines of ecology go back to ancient times. Starting with primitive society, where every individual had to have some knowledge of the environment in order to survive. Like other branches of knowledge, ecology has developed continuously but unevenly throughout human history at the global, national and personal levels.

The reflexive and analytical resource of the basic concept made it possible to conduct a comprehensive and diverse analysis of polysemantic initial concepts in determination with scientific approaches adopted in Ukrainian and foreign practices. Thus, the issue of environmental education, its theoretical and methodological provisions are reflected in the scientific works of N. Bibik, L. Bilyk, L. Lukianova, I. Mazur, O. Plakhotnyk, S. Sovgira, L. Titarenko, T.Churilova, etc. Environmental education is recognised by scientists as:

- one of the main factors in the greening of all types of human activity;
- as a new meaning and purpose of the modern educational process - a unique means of preserving and developing a person and continuing human civilisation, a process that is in constant development and is the result of reorientation and coordination of various disciplines (Lukianova 2006, p. 54);
- combining the rational and the emotional in human relations with nature on the basis of the principles of goodness and beauty, reason and consciousness, patriotism and universalism, scientific knowledge and compliance with environmental law.

The most characteristic trends in the development of environmental education in the theory and practice of Ukrainian science at the present stage are:

- promotion the role of environmental education in solving modern environmental problems, as well as in the holistic process of forming a modern personality;
- provisioning the unity of education, upbringing and socially useful activities of children and youth in environmental protection
- strengthening the role of international cooperation in the field of environmental education and upbringing;
- strengthening value aspects of the content of environmental education;
- ecologisation the educational content of subjects of the humanitarian and natural science cycles;
- utilisation elements of the systemic approach, modelling methods and historicism in the process of environmental education;
- differentiation and individualisation of environmental and educational influences on the individual;
- searching new paradigms in environmental education and upbringing;

The transformation of the content of ecology has significantly deepened its role in modern scientific theory and made it possible to determine its status in the global and interdisciplinary context. In order to clarify the essence of the concept, it



is important to consider the point of view of foreign environmental scientists who emphasise the need to form a new culture of attitude to nature, a new consciousness that includes environmental values, norms, morality, etc.

Ukrainian scientists express a consensus on the introduction of a system of environmental education, which can be conditionally defined as formal, covering all levels of the general education system in Ukraine, and informal, which is educational in nature and is carried out through the media, public environmental organisations, and parties (L. Lukyanova, Y. Sayenko, S. Sovgir).

In the field of psychology and pedagogy, scientists consider the concept of «ecology» from the point of view of its influence on the development and formation of the individual, on the combination of the rational and the emotional in human relations with nature on the basis of the principles of goodness and beauty, reason and consciousness, patriotism and universalism, scientific knowledge and observance of environmental law. In pedagogy, the process of education and training. In other words, the process of forming ideas about the environment, the specifics of its internal relations, the nature of anthropogenic impact, as well as the principles of harmonious development of humans and the natural environment. (V. Skryabets, G. Filipchuk).

This approach allows scientists to consider the problem in question through the prism of two vectors – the hierarchical relationship between environmental education and environmental upbringing. The first one implies a certain distinction between these concepts. According to the second approach, these concepts are complementary and interdependent. A thorough analysis of this issue has shown that the second approach is more appropriate. It is proved that environmental education is one of the priority areas in the system of education, focused on the harmonious development of a person, his or her civic consciousness and has a deep value meaning. In this context, the experience of Ireland is a relevant one. Today, it is one of the most progressive countries, which in the world ranking for 2023 takes a leading position in protecting the planet's environment. It is carefully updating its policies to keep the land safe and thus making great strides to better preserve traditions and nature. It is a leader in the implementation of the «it for 55» and «Green Deal» programmes to preserve the environment. for future generations, a healthy and balanced nature (Department of Education and Skills, 2013). The roadmap for the formation of environmental education in educational institutions is reflected:

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In state documents on environmental education, which determine its development in the country, priority attention is paid to the formation of environmental education and culture, which include such basic components (leading ideas) as: respectful attitude towards nature, awareness of environmental problems, responsibility for making decisions regarding the environment, creation of conditions for acquiring knowledge on environmental problems, stimulation of active participation of the individual in environmental protection activities and understanding of the need for economical and rational use of natural resources. They are reflected in the educational process of the school;

In the context of implementing the educational process, British educators use a four-component structure when constructing the content of environmental education: knowledge, skills, values and attitudes, activity. The content of environmental education is implemented in the National Curriculum, which is aimed at the formation of such universal human values as: goodness, justice, mercy, humanity, love and respect for all living things, a caring and responsible attitude towards nature, etc.;

in the process of educational work of the school, which is built on the principles of continuity and interdisciplinarity. In accordance with the goal of environmental education, the formation of the environmental culture of schoolchildren should begin in the first grade, with the development of the emotional sphere, the upbringing of a sense of love for nature and their involvement in the study and protection of the immediate natural environment. The ecological training of students continues throughout the entire period of schooling, gradually becoming more complicated. High school students are expected to have a conscious attitude towards the environment, holistic and systematic thinking, broad awareness in the field of ecology, and the ability to apply the acquired knowledge to creatively solve environmental problems at the local and global levels. The second involves the orientation of the content of all general education subjects provided for by the school curriculum to highlight environmental problems and search for ways to solve them, which requires coordination of the efforts of the administration and the teaching staff of the school.

1. At the same time, Ireland is critical of modern research and its implementation in the educational space of educational institutions. This is confirmed by the limited number of published studies and information that study the state of environmental education and its effectiveness/ineffectiveness in the attitude of children to the natural environment. (Department of Education and Skills, 2014).

Let us begin with the fact that in Ireland, as in the European Union in general, in recent years the number of social studies on the effectiveness of environmental education in the relationship of children with the natural environment has



increased significantly. A new argument in the studies is the connection between environmental education in the open air and increased creativity, speech development and an improved sense of well-being among students. There is growing evidence that when environmental education in the open air is properly planned and implemented, it can improve academic standards, as students demonstrate greater motivation in the classroom.

Irish scholars have suggested a distinction between environmental education and other types of education, such as education for sustainable development (ESD) and education for development (ED). The Department of Education and Training (2014) has developed a National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development, which aims to mainstream education for sustainable development into the education system, promote public awareness, capacity building and high standards of environmental management in educational institutions. The author of the programme made a submission as part of the public consultation process on the National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development to consider educational practices that meet the needs of learners and value diverse understandings of the natural environment as central to long-term sustainable development. Education for sustainable development emphasises the need to «change personal/individual and social relationships to local and global ecosystems», as well as consumption and production behaviours.

The Children's Voices project, as future environmentalists and policymakers, is central to current debates and discussions. The strategy recommends that the Department of Education and Skills should promote "greater account being taken of the views of children and young people in the development of new policies and programmes that affect them" (Department of Education and Skills, 2014). In the context of education for sustainable development, a process of consultation with children and young people should take place. Overall, the strategy comprises a diverse range of policy areas, including environmental education, but its position is ancillary and not singled out within the wider agenda. This raises concerns about the status of environmental education at a national level, particularly at a time when awareness of sustainable development issues is increasing in everyday discourse. Overall, there remains a gap in social research on the nature and effectiveness of the different forms of environmental education available in Ireland.

Being outdoors helps children develop a connection with the natural environment, which many believe is crucial to developing sustainable environmental attitudes and behaviors in adulthood. One environmental education teacher working with a government-funded environmental education program said she invites students to visit an education center. She believes this gives children a better opportunity to learn outside of school and in the natural environment. The program involves children participating in a variety of games, treasure hunts, insect hunts, and trash sorting to increase their environmental awareness and care. The teacher says that children remember and learn more through direct contact with nature than from a textbook. Teachers working with a semi-government-funded environmental education program share a similar view. (Dunlap, & Van Liere, Mertig, Jones, 2000).

The Green Schools (GS) program runs throughout the school year(s). This particular environmental education program was mentioned repeatedly in all interview groups. Some educators suggested that the GS program takes a different educational approach compared to other government, semi-government, and non-government programs that we have already discussed. According to one respondent, the focus of the GS is on «children going through the seven steps of environmental behavior» towards environmental management and responsibility in school. This suggests a more rational and focused form of environmental education that operates with programs that take a more experimental approach. On the other hand, another educator stated that the GS program is a success story regarding environmental management, and gave positive feedback for building environmental awareness and responsibility for reducing, reusing, and recycling waste. Parents are positive about the GS program and promoting environmental responsibility. Some of them talk about the enjoyment that children get from participating in the program, for example, one parent comments: «Our boys love recycling». Similarly, another mother believes that her children enjoy learning about waste reduction and food packaging: «Oh, it's great even for the kids, even for their lunches there are certain things, related to the green flag if they bring plastic things and containers, drinks, they know how to recycle, so that's great» the parents emphasize. (Department of Education and Skills, 2014), (Marchenko, 2004).

Teachers who teach environmental education have been critical of the LS program because it promotes a different type of educational experience, embracing what some consider a utilitarian and more managerial notion of the natural environment. The teacher drew a distinction between her work in a state-funded organization and the LS program, stating that «they [LS teachers] don't really do what I do» believing that it is more about «energy, wind power and other things like that, waste recycling». Her work emphasizes first-hand environmental education in nature, without a specific outcome, which she believes differs from the educational approaches of the general secondary education program. Other teachers noted that the program is «somewhat self-interested» in solving environmental problems and «living an easy life on the planet». (Ahmedabad Recommendations, 2007).

This teacher divided environmental education into two parts: first, social responsibility or personal interest, and second, «the search, investigation and study of nature», which includes the concept of empathy or is «valuable to human souls» (ibid.). According to the latter, environmental education should ideally promote a close relationship with the environment, which, in the opinion of this teacher, is separate from the purpose of the general secondary education program.

CONCLUSIONS AND PROSPECTS OF FURTHER RESEARCH

The success of the ES program in Ireland reflects its ability to be integrated into formal education. Interviewees consistently say that the program focuses on specific learning outcomes and orientation towards an environmental management plan. This does not take away from the pleasure of children being actively involved in various projects at school. However, the concept of the natural environment that it demonstrates is different from those promoted by other



programs, as it focuses on environmental problems, management and monitoring of resources. In addition, criticism from environmental educators suggests that the secondary school curriculum offers a different type of environmental education.

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