

The State of Theory and Practice in Preparing "Preschool Education" Students for Pedagogical Activities

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Abstract:

The article discusses the current state of preparing students specializing in "Preschool Education" for pedagogical activities, both in theory and practice, and elaborates on the tasks that need to be addressed in this regard.

Working with respondent students, conducting surveys and tests, organizing interviews and question-answer sessions, and analyzing the period before practical trials revealed that the students' preparedness for organizing pedagogical activities in preschool educational institutions is unsatisfactory. Although the majority of students have theoretically mastered the basics of the subject "Pedagogy," they still lack the skills to prepare preschool children for school life, protect them from negative social influences, and provide pedagogical support to families.

The research conducted in this study showed that, in preparing students for pedagogical activities at higher education institutions, more hours should be allocated in the curriculum to practical classes and pedagogical practices.

Keywords: teacher mastery, preschool education, pedagogical skills, thinkers, pedagogical practices.

Introduction

In Uzbekistan, during the years of independence, improving the continuous education system and enhancing the effectiveness of education and upbringing at the level of international standards became one of the priority directions of state policy. The need to meet the social demand for raising

the spiritual development of society necessitates the improvement of the education system. In this regard, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh.M. Mirziyoyev, emphasized the following:

During the ongoing educational reforms in the country, special attention was paid to ensuring that the pressing issue of training qualified personnel receives a positive resolution.

Methods and Review

Currently, practical measures are being taken in higher education institutions to prepare students for pedagogical activities based on this subject.

Preparing "Preschool Education" students for pedagogical activities is a targeted, consistent, systematic, and continuous educational process. In the effective organization of this process, several factors are crucial: pedagogical needs, the material and technical capabilities of educational institutions and their qualified teaching staff, the richness of methodological support, and the organization of educational sessions in accordance with pedagogical requirements.

The theoretical and practical study of the issue showed that higher education institutions have accumulated initial experience in preparing "Preschool Education" students for pedagogical activities. However, there are a number of tasks that still need to be addressed. In our view, they include the following:

- Creating the necessary pedagogical and methodological conditions to effectively teach the subject "Pedagogy" to students in the "Preschool Education" direction.
- Establishing a technological approach to the process of preparing "Preschool Education" students for pedagogical activities.
- Developing skills in students to correctly understand and assess the essence of pedagogical activity, its socio-national significance, and positive outcomes.
- Establishing cooperation between educational institutions and relevant organizations in preparing students for pedagogical activities.

Successfully addressing these tasks will not only ensure high achievement in preparing students for pedagogical activities in higher education institutions but will also help partially or fully solve several issues currently evident in society. At present, higher education institutions are faced with the task of guiding students in organizing pedagogical activities aimed at preparing preschool-aged children for school education, and developing knowledge, skills, and competencies in this area.

Results

During the introductory experimental period, the theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and competencies of students in organizing pedagogical activities in preschool institutions were also studied. The study was conducted through direct and indirect observation of students' activities, surveys and tests, and organizing interviews. The survey helped study students' opinions about the conditions created for the teaching of "Pedagogy" in higher education, while the test assessed their knowledge of the basics of "Pedagogy."

A total of 300 students were involved in the experimental research, and they were randomly divided into experimental (148 students) and control (152 students) groups.

During the introductory experimental period, the respondent-students responded to the survey as follows:

Table 1: Survey Results of Respondent Students (Introductory Experiment)

Question Order	Experimental Group			Control Group		
	Positive	Satisfactory	Negative	Positive	Satisfactory	Negative
1	21.6	46.6	31.7	19	52	29
2	20.2	45.2	34.5	22.4	45.4	32.2
3	18.2	45.9	35.8	16.4	49.3	34.2
4	10.8	43.9	45.2	11.8	46.1	42.1
5	16.9	48.6	34.4	18.4	45.4	36.2
6	16.8	50.7	32.5	16.4	50	33.6
7	15.5	45.9	38.5	20.4	48.6	31
8	17.6	49.3	33.1	19.1	51.3	29.6

The analysis of the survey responses of respondent-students revealed the following:

- Most students are dissatisfied with the organization of "Pedagogy" classes based on traditional approaches, the lack of "live" communication, and the lack of active interaction between students and teachers. The predominant use of narration and oral explanations during classes is also not satisfying for students.
- Overall, students did not evaluate the professional skills of their subject teachers positively. The reason is the teachers' lack of creativity in organizing sessions, not using various forms, methods, and tools of teaching, and not allowing students to be active participants.
- The lack of sufficient visual aids and the scarcity of study resources negatively affect the quality of the didactic support of the classes.
- The organizational-technological aspect of the sessions does not meet the current needs, including those of the students. In most cases, theoretical sessions are organized as lectures, while practical sessions are held as seminars. Students prefer sessions that are based on active discussions and debates and conducted in a dynamic atmosphere.

Although lectures and seminars remain the main forms of classes, helping to some extent in gaining theoretical knowledge and practical skills, they do not ensure high effectiveness.

The teaching methods commonly used in classes, such as explanations, oral presentations, narration, and question-answer, are not very effective in fostering creativity and active engagement among students. Teachers should focus more on methods that encourage students to be active, think creatively, and develop independent and free thinking.

The main tools used in classes are the teacher's speech, visual aids, and certain resources, while information technologies are hardly used. This situation leads to a low mastery of the subject by the students.

The "Pedagogy" sessions should instill socio-pedagogical activity in students, but they are often limited to merely conveying theoretical knowledge.

To assess the level of knowledge, skills, and competencies in the basics of "Pedagogy," a test was also conducted during the introductory experimental period. The results of the students' test responses are presented in the following table:

Table 2. Test Results of Respondent Students (Introductory Experiment)

Levels Groups	High		Medium		Low	
	In Numbers	In %	In Numbers	In %	In Numbers	In %
Experimental (n=148)	29	19.6	55	37.2	64	43.2
Control (n=152)	32	21.2	53	34.8	67	44.1

During the introductory experimental period, the practical skills and competencies of respondent-students regarding the organization of pedagogical activities in preschool institutions were also studied. The students' skills and competencies were evaluated through practical assignments (such as creating projects, conducting small-scale research) and solving pedagogical tasks.

The results are presented in the following table:

Table 3. Practical Skills and Competencies of Respondent Students in Organizing Pedagogical Activities (Introductory Experiment)

Levels Groups	High		Medium		Low	
	In Numbers	In %	In Numbers	In %	In Numbers	In %
Experimental (n=148)	22	14,9	40	27	86	58.1
Control (n=152)	26	17,1	34	22,4	92	60,5

The results of the introductory experiment indicate that although measures are being taken in higher education institutions to prepare students for pedagogical activities, there are still tasks that need to be solved. In our view, these tasks include the following:

- Developing modern textbooks for "Pedagogy," particularly new generation textbooks that fully meet the requirements and consider the development directions of Uzbekistan and regional specifics.
- Addressing the underdeveloped learning activity and independent learning skills of students, which are essential for effective pedagogical work in preschool institutions.
- Creating the necessary conditions for students to study the experiences of organizing pedagogical activities in educational institutions in developed foreign countries.

In conducting pedagogical research, measures aimed at positively addressing the problems identified and characteristic of the educational process should be determined. Therefore, attention was also paid to addressing the above-mentioned problems during the introductory experimental period. For this purpose, the following methodological recommendations were developed:

Table 4. Scientific-Methodical Recommendations on Preparing Students for Pedagogical Activities and Ways to Implement Them in Practice

Scientific-Methodical Recommendations	Ways to Implement Them in Practice	Expected Results
Series of Social-Humanitarian Subjects (including "Preschool Pedagogy," "Family Pedagogy," "Pedagogy," "Psychology")	Identifying and integrating topics related to the organization of pedagogical activities in preschool institutions in these subjects	Students' overall pedagogical knowledge will be enriched, their professional skills will improve, and they will be psychologically ready to organize pedagogical activities.
Focusing on developing learning activity and independent learning	Encouraging students to engage in independent	Students' social and learning activity and their skills for

skills in students	learning during classes, solve problematic situations, and promote their personal initiatives	independent learning will develop.
Achieving consistent collaboration between developed foreign countries and the preschool educational institutions in the republic	Establishing educational contracts between higher education and preschool institutions for continuous pedagogical practice	Students' professional knowledge will be enriched, and their skills in effectively organizing pedagogical activities will improve.
Creating the necessary conditions for students to get acquainted with the best practices and methods of organizing pedagogical activities in developed foreign and national preschool institutions	Improving the activities of student clubs, organizing scientific conferences, and studying pedagogical practices through "Internet discussions"	Students' professional knowledge will be enriched, and their skills in creatively approaching pedagogical activities will improve.

Thus, the study of the state of theory and practice in preparing "Preschool Education" students for pedagogical activities showed that there are tasks in this area that still need to be addressed.

Working with respondent-students, conducting surveys and tests among them, organizing interviews, and observing their preparation for organizing pedagogical activities in preschool institutions before experimental research revealed that their level of readiness is not satisfactory. Although most students have thoroughly mastered the theoretical foundations of "Pedagogy," they lack the skills to prepare preschool children for school life, protect them from negative social influences, and provide pedagogical support to families.

In conclusion, preparing future educators for pedagogical work in preschool institutions is one of the most pressing issues today. A preschool educator must possess comprehensive knowledge, skills, and competencies. The experimental research showed that more hours should be allocated in the curriculum for practical sessions and pedagogical practices in the training of students in higher education institutions.

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