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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN NORWAY AND UKRAINE: A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW

The improvement and global change in education are associated with cross-cultural trends and modern challenges. The comparative analysis of different systems encourages a new viewpoint on practice and educational policy. The research highlights a comparative view of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in two European countries – Norway and Ukraine, both with ancient historical and contemporary relations. This study investigates the impact of philosophical and historical aspects of both countries, as well as various state policies. The theoretical and conceptual framework is focused on the theory of child well-being by Pollard and Lee (2003). The data collection is based on the quantitative (statistics related to Early Childhood Education from both countries) and qualitative approaches (analysis and interpretation of Early Childhood Education normative documents and pedagogical literature from Norway and Ukraine). The study has been conducted per the Norwegian Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH, 2021). The normative documents and pedagogical literature were interpreted with an open, independent, truthful, and critical approach, considering trust, credibility, and authenticity. The analyses, which included normative documentary interpretation and systematic literature search, were systematized into two categories: legislative framework, types of early childhood establishment, didactic approaches to Early Childhood Education in both countries. The results show that Early Childhood Education in Norway and Ukraine depends directly on the impact of national historical traditions and economic circumstances. Personal orientation and social interaction are one of the priorities in Norwegian kindergartens. Children spend a lot of time outside in all types of weather. In addition, there is a focus on collaboration and teamwork. In Ukrainian kindergarten, the educational process has aesthetic, ethical, physical and intellectual approaches. The child's intellectual development is connected to their moral growth. Moreover, positive attitudes and a good climate provide good relationships in kindergarten. In both countries, early childhood educators are open to new projects, innovations, and modern tasks, where personal interaction and the children's mutual development are in priority.

Keywords: Norway, Ukraine, Early Childhood Education, globalisation, cross-cultural approach, multicultural competences.

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Introduction

The comparative studies are the consequence of globalization (Crossley, 2002), multiculturalism and an evidence-based education (Zajda, 2023; Biesta, 2022). Due to this, globally competent teacher (Sjøen, 2021) and multicultural competences (Siripipatthanakul et al, 2023) are in priority and a current educational trend. Cross-cultural studies (Gunnestad et al, 2023; Novoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2010) are an essential component of the comparative approach to understanding the facts and features of education in different countries: originality and specificity (Kominarets, 2017, p. 62).

The research focuses on the comparative analysis of Early Childhood Education in two

European countries: Norway and Ukraine, both with ancient historical and modern relations. This study explores how ECE has been influenced by historical approaches and state policies. That interest comes from two educational approaches: Norwegian and Ukrainian.

In 1999, Norway became a member of the OECD. There is a thematic review of the ECEC and following this, the “integrated responsibility for provision and schooling under the Ministry of Education and Research since 2006” (p. 11). Since 2012, the main governing body that regulates early childhood education has been the Directorate for Education and Training (OECD report, 2015, p. 11; Nygård, 2015). The system of ECE in Ukraine

is closely linked to the main issues of UNESCO and has made a significant commitment to providing all children with affordable opportunities for preschool education through the public system (Putcha, Neuman, Zaplotynska, & Sofiy, 2018, p. 7). The Ukrainian state educational policy intended to expand the possibilities for creating and operating early childhood institutions of different forms of ownership. (Ministry of Education and Science, 2019).

Methodology and Ethical Consideration

The data collection of the study is based on *quantitative* (statistics related to ECE from Norway and Ukraine) and *qualitative* approaches (analysis and interpretation of ECE normative documents and pedagogical literature). The qualitative design is based on content analysis (Bakken & Andersson-Bakken, 2021) with a hermeneutic approach that allows for systemizing and interpreting the results. First, analyzed normative documents (Norway: The Act Relating to Kindergartens (2005) and Framework Plan for Kindergartens (2017); Ukraine (The Law on Preschool Education (2001) and The Basis Component of Early Childhood Education (2012)). After analysis and interpretation of the ECE normative documents were accomplished structured pedagogical literature search (Jesson, Matheson & Lacey, 2011) in the databases Google Scholar, Eric, Oria, and Idunn. As search words,

it used “Early Childhood Education”, “Norway”, “Ukraine”, “kindergarten”, “children’s participation”, and “social interaction”. The inclusion criteria were pedagogical literature in Norwegian, Ukrainian, and English. Twenty-nine literature studies were included in the research.

The study has been carried out in line with the Norwegian Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH, 2021) The interpretation of normative documents and pedagogical literature will be done with an open, independent, truthful, and critical approach, considering trust, credibility, and authenticity.

Results

The analyses, which included both normative documentary interpretation and systematic literature search, were systematized into two categories: *Legislative framework, types of EC establishments, and ECE didactic approaches.*

Legislative Framework, types of EC establishments

The organization of ECE depends on many factors: the historical background, values, economic situation, political reforms, geographical location, population, etc. In this section, the research is focused on the demography, legislative framework, and types of EC establishments in Norway and Ukraine, by giving a general overview (*Table 1*) and presenting more details.

Table 1

GENERAL OVERVIEW

	Norway	Ukraine
Statistics	Population: 5,508,746 Those that have a place in kindergarten: 93,4 % Total children, attending kindergarten: 268 730 Number of kindergartens: 5,420 Age structure: from 0 to 6 years old	Population: 37,754,832 Those that have a place in kindergarten: 88 % Total children, attending kindergarten: 1, 278, 237 Number of kindergartens: 14, 898 Age structure: from 1 to 6 (7) years old
Legislative framework	<i>Authority:</i> Ministry of Education and Research <i>Legislative framework:</i> Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), The Act Relating to Kindergartens (2005), Framework Plan for Kindergartens (2017).	<i>Authority:</i> Ministry of Education and Science <i>Legislative framework:</i> Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), The Law on Preschool Education (2001), The Basis Component of Early Childhood Education (2012)
Types of kindergartens	Ordinary, Family, and Open	Regular, Mixed, Sanatorium, and Special

Norway

Norway is a country in the north of Europe. The current population is 5,508,746 (Worldometers, May 10, 2024). ECE formation in Norway began in the 9th century with two traditions that have characterized the development of kindergartens in Norway: the *social-ethical* and the *educational traditions*. Korsvold (2018) analyses three periods of the formation of ECE in Norway: the period from 1945–1970, which is characterized by housewife ideals and the absence of kindergartens; the 1970s, the labor market challenging the structure of childhood; 1980–2000, flexibility, freedom of choice and children's rights. In the 20th century, the evolution of ECE was a result of the country's development into a democratic society.

The content of ECE in modern Norway is regulated by The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Kindergarten Act (2005), and the Framework Plan for Kindergartens (2017).

The *Kindergarten Act (2005)* contains the following chapters: purpose and content of kindergartens (special purpose; the duty to cooperate with schools in the transition from kindergarten to school); participation by children and parents (the children's right to participate (UN Convention on the Right of the Child); parent's council and coordinating committee); obligation to seek approval and distribution of responsibilities (facilities; the owner of a kindergarten; the municipality, government supervision (advice and guidance, special rules concerning appeal body)); the general responsibilities of the kindergarten authority (approval; family kindergartens; coordinated admission process in the municipality; the right to a place in a kindergarten; the priority in connection with admissions; municipal grants for approved non-municipal kindergartens; requirements for use of public grants and parents' fees in non-municipal kindergartens; parents' fees; supervision); staffing (a headteacher; pedagogical and basic staffing; requirement for Norwegian language skills for employment in kindergartens (with foreign professional qualifications as a headteacher or pedagogical leader); the prohibition of the use of clothing that partly or completely covers the face; a police certificate of conduct); special educational assistance, sign language training, etc. (the right to special educational assistance; cooperation with the child's parents; pedagogical-psychological service; expert assessments; decisions on special educational assistance; rights to transportation for children entitled to special educational assistance; children with disabilities; rights to sign language education; children with a need for alternative and supplementary communication (ASK); etc);

miscellaneous provisions. Entry into force and amendments to other acts (the duty of confidentiality; the duty to provide information to the social services and the municipal health and care service; the duty to provide information to the child welfare service; obtaining information from the National Population Register; health check-ups for children and staff; practice teaching; the application of the Act on Svalbard); the entry into force and amendments to other acts (Kindergarten Act, 2005).

The "*Framework Plan for Kindergartens*" (2017) is a regulation connected to the Kindergarten Act and has the same legal force. The document provides a deep explanation of preschool education in Norway. The content includes: core values (children and childhood; democracy; diversity and mutual respect; equality and equivalence; sustainable development; life management and health; kindergartens with a special purpose); roles and responsibilities (kindergarten owners, leaders); objectives and content (attending to children's needs for care and for play; formation, learning, friendship, and community in the kindergarten; Sami kindergartens); children's participation (the children's right to actively participate in planning and assessing kindergarten activities regularly); co-operation between the home and the kindergarten ("a good dialogue with parents"; activities of the parent council and the coordinating committee); transitions (starts in the kindergarten; transitions inside the kindergarten; the transition between kindergarten and school); kindergarten as a pedagogical undertaking (planning; appreciation; documentation; facilitating the general education offer for children who need extra support); working methods (digital technology in kindergartens); learning areas (communication, language and text; body, movement, food, and health; art, culture and creativity; nature, environment, and technology; quantities, spaces and shapes; ethics, religion, and philosophy).

According to the SSB (2022), 93,4% of all children aged 1–5 attend kindergarten (5,420 kindergartens and 268 730 children).

In Norway, there are three *types of EC establishments*:

Ordinary kindergartens can be public (kommunal barnehage) or *private* (privat barnehage). They offer a half-day or full-day service all year round for children aged 0–6 years. The municipalities (*kommune*) are responsible for the kindergartens offered in Norway.

A *family assistant* works in *private* homes with a maximum of five children. Every week, a qualified kindergarten teacher provides professional support. The municipality checks that the family

kindergarten satisfies the requirements (Forskrift om familiebarnehager, 2005). The number of family kindergartens is decreasing.

The open kindergarten is an educational offer for children (Jansen, Johannessen & Mørreaunet, 2020, p. 12) organized as a part-time center with programs for children together with their parents (*foresatte*). There are nearly 200 open kindergartens in Norway. About half of these are owned by municipalities and 30 % by congregations. Usually, open kindergarten offers their services for about 12 hours a week. The main emphasis of an open kindergarten is on learning, experiences and dissemination, health and family care, and the integration of multicultural children into Norwegian society (Haugset, Gotvassli, Ljunggren & Stene, 2014, p.7).

Ukraine

Ukraine is in Eastern Europe. The current population of modern Ukraine is 37,754,832 (Worldometers, May 10, 2024). The history of the development of ECE was established in the XIX and the first part of the 20th century. In 1938–1939, the pedagogical journal published, entitled “Ukrainian Preschool School”. In conjunction with the Societies of the “Ukrainian Women’s Union” and “Native School”, a system of training for teachers of preschool institutions at a specially organized course was created. In the 20th century, there was an active attempt to find ways to build an effective kindergarten activity. The Institute of Public Education (1920) and The Ukrainian Research Institute of Pedagogy were established together with the preschool education sector (1926) (Shynkar, 2015).

The content of modern ECE is regulated by three fundamental documents: The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), The Law on ECE of Ukraine (The State Law on ECE of Ukraine (July 11, 2001, No. 2628-III). Amended on 9 September 2017, No. 2145-VIII. Original title (*in Ukrainian*): Закон України «Про дошкільну освіту»), and The Basic Component of ECE (The Basic component of ECE (22 May 2012, No. 615). Original title (*in Ukrainian*): Базовий компонент дошкільної освіти).

The Law on ECE of Ukraine (2001) contains following sections: terms (the main tasks of the Ukrainian legislation on preschool education; state policy in the field of ECE; the principles of ECE; the role of the family in early childhood education; language(s) in ECE); institutions of the EC system, their authorities (classification; groups (departments) of a EC institution; the status of the institution); the management of the EC

system (the main tasks of management; the powers of municipalities; the pedagogical council (pedagogical rada) of the institution of preschool education; state supervision in the field of preschool education); organisation of the educational process in kindergarten (the basic components of preschool education; educational programmes; planning the work of a preschool education institution); scientific and methodical support for the early childhood education system (research institutions of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine; methodological rooms (*metodychni kabiny*) of municipalities); participants of the educational process (EC children, parents, directors, deputy directors, teachers, tutors, tutor’s assistants, practical psychologists, social pedagogues, teachers of music, heads of circles, studios, sections); financing and technical base of kindergartens (state and local budgets); international cooperation (grants, projects, educational programs); responsibility in ECE; final provisions.

The Basic component of ECE (2012) — is the state standard, which is implemented by different programs. Methodological support approved by the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sports of Ukraine (2012, p. 4). The basic component reveals general provisions, content, and structure, as well as invariant and variant components. *Invariant components* include the educational headings of “Child’s Personality”, “Child in Society”, “Child in the Natural Environment”, “Child in the World of Culture”, “Child’s Game”, “Child in the Sensory-Cognitive Space”, “Child’s Speech”. The *Variant component* consists of the educational lines “Computer Grammar”, “Foreign Language”, “Choreography” and “Chess”. For the implementation of educational lines, their programs have been developed like “Confident Start”, “Young Athlete”, “Child”, “English for EC Children”, “Child in the Road” and “Teaching Ukrainian Children in Preschool Institutions of National Communities”.

According to Kozak (2017), in the context of the “New Ukrainian School” educational reform, “it is important to ensure continuity throughout the line of education. The harmonious development of the child’s personality in the period of preschool childhood and the beginning of school life is the basis of the child’s further success in the conditions of continuous education during adulthood” (p. 236).

According to the SSSU in Ukraine, about 88 % of preschool children attend kindergartens (14,898 kindergartens and 1,278,237 children). Despite the large number and variety of types of institutions, the need for accessibility to preschool

education in the country is problematic and urgent. For example, in densely populated areas, there are not enough places for kindergarten. It is worth mentioning that “Ukraine has a bi-sectoral system of early childhood education and care” (Schreyer, Oberhuemer, 2017, p. 2): for children, 2 months — 3 years and 3–6 (7) years.

In Ukraine there are *four types of EC establishments*:

Regular includes three types:

- nurseries for children from two months to three years
- nurseries/kindergartens for children from two months to six (seven) years
- kindergartens for children from three to six (seven) years.

Mixed types include regular classrooms, which are combined with other types of classrooms (*special, inclusive*) for children from two months to six (or seven) years.

Sanatorium-type preschools are for children from two to seven (or eight) years who need medical treatment and rehabilitation.

Special is for children with disabilities aged from two to seven (eight) years (Putcha, Neuman, Zaplotynska, & Sofiy, 2018, p. 8).

ECE didactic approach in both countries

This section presents didactic approaches by first giving a general overview of the content of ECE in Norway and Ukraine (Table 2) and then presenting more details.

Table 2

ECE DIDACTIC APPROACH IN BOTH COUNTRIES

	Norway	Ukraine
Educational traditions / historical approach	<i>Nordic philosophy</i> (nature, equality)	<i>Folk pedagogy</i> (folklore, family pedagogy)
Values	Equality, freedom, democracy, ethics, culture, tolerance.	Equality, freedom, democracy, ethics, culture, tolerance.
Didactic aspects	<p><i>Personal orientation</i> (physical, intellectual, aesthetic, moral, and social development)</p> <p><i>Learning areas:</i> communication, language and text; body, movement, food and health; art, culture and creativity; nature, environment and technology; quantities, spaces and shapes; ethics, religion and philosophy; local community and society (Framework plan for kindergartens, 2017)</p> <p>Norwegian children spend a lot of time outside, regardless of the weather.</p> <p>Children, who need <i>additional support</i> are included in ordinary kindergarten.</p>	<p><i>Harmonious development of the child</i> (aesthetic, ethical, intellectual, physical, and moral)</p> <p><i>Learning components:</i> the invariant: “Child’s Personality”, “Child in Society”, “Child in the Natural Environment”, “Child in the World of Culture”, “Child’s Game”, “Child in the Sensory-Cognitive Space”, “Child’s Speech”; variant: “Computer Grammar”, “Foreign Language”, “Choreography” and “Chess” (The Basic component of preschool education, 2012)</p> <p>Ukrainian children spend time outside, mostly in a “good” weather.</p> <p>Children, who need <i>additional support</i> attend special children’s institutions (<i>sanatoriums</i>).</p>

ECE didactic approach in Norway

ECE in Norway should build a good foundation for further development and learning (Regjeringen. no). The goal is to create a safe arena with qualified and caring adults, where children can play and learn (Drugli, 2017). An important part of ECE is to develop respect and tolerance (Glaser, 2018, s. 11).

According to the Act relating to kindergartens (2005):

The kindergartens shall meet the children with trust and respect and acknowledge the intrinsic value of childhood. They shall contribute to well-being and joy in play and learning and shall be a challenging and safe place where there is community life and friendship. The kindergarten

shall promote democracy and equality and counteract all forms of discrimination. (2005, § 1).

The Framework Plan for Kindergartens (2017) indicated:

The core values of kindergartens shall be promulgated, practiced and shall manifest in every aspect of a kindergarten's pedagogical practice. Childhood has intrinsic value and kindergartens shall take a holistic approach to children's development (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2017).

A characteristic feature of the program in Norwegian kindergarten is *personal orientation*. The physical, intellectual, aesthetic, moral, and social development of preschool children is realized through the formation and upbringing of the child as a person. The main function is the socialization of the child, which promotes harmonious intellectual, spiritual, and physical development. In Norwegian kindergartens, children spend *a lot of time* outside in all kinds of weather (sun, rain, wind, or snow). They learn to care for plants and animals and to experiment with natural materials.

In kindergartens, the emphasis is placed on giving the children good eating habits and contributing to a healthy and varied diet. Here they create a good atmosphere around meals. During a meal, children interact with adults and with each other (Öhman, 2012). In our view, children benefit from social and linguistic learning and collaboration. A good climate in kindergartens helps to promote good relationships. To develop good relationships between the staff and the children, it is a prerequisite that staff are where the children are and focus on them. That is why in Norwegian kindergarten practice, there is *good interaction* (Öhman, 2012; Givær 2014; Drugli, 2017).

Children's participation has an important place in Norwegian kindergarten. Children must have the opportunity for active participation, planning and assessment. Children should be able to build their understanding, opinions, and experiences in kindergarten (Bae, 2010; Jansen, 2019; Wolf & Svenning, 2018). Aasen, Grindheim & Waters (2009) point out that children's participation helps to develop their "own learning processes and their role as active meaning-makers" (p. 11).

Some children learn Norwegian as a second language. According to SSB (2022), there are 53 651,0 minority children in Norwegian kindergartens. Kindergarten teachers help to integrate children into a Norwegian community. (Sand, 2008; Glaser, 2018; Pesch, 2018; Andersen, Bleka, Gjervan, 2012). This happens through play, learning, music, digital tools, collaboration with parents, etc.

What is interesting about the Norwegian ECE is the approach to children who need *additional support*. Kindergartens adapt their general pedagogical practices to suit children's needs and circumstances, including children who may require additional support for shorter or longer periods. Inclusion in kindergarten is also about facilitating *social participation*. Kindergarten content must be administered in a way that allows different children to participate according to their respective needs and circumstances. Kindergartens must ensure that children receiving special needs support are included in group and mainstream activities (Framework Plan for Kindergartens, 2017, p. 40).

ECE didactic approach in Ukraine

The purpose of Ukrainian kindergartens is to ensure the physical and mental health of children, their comprehensive development, and their acquisition of life experience to promote the formation of the child as a person.

According to the Law on Early Childhood Education of Ukraine (2001), the task is:

"Preservation of physical, mental, and spiritual health of the child; patriotism, respect for family, folk traditions and customs, state language, regional or minority languages, native language, national values of Ukrainian people, self-esteem".

(2001, Art. 7)

The Basic component of Early Childhood Education (2012) emphasizes that:

"The purpose of ECE is to ensure the harmonious development of the child's personality, physical and mental health."

(Ministry of Education and Science, 2012, p. 4)

Methodical support in ECE in Ukraine is provided by the *leader* of the kindergarten and the *methodologist*. Their tasks are to use effective methods for improving pedagogical skills, encourage teachers to improve their professional level, and carry out an independent analysis of their own professional competence) (Shynkar, 2020, p. 205).

According to the educational reform "New Ukrainian School", a basic element of preschool education is the recognition of the value of EC (its special role in the development of personality). Also, the preservation of children's subculture creates favorable conditions for the formation of a child's maturity and basic qualities and the priority for the child to benefit from full-time

living. Respect for the child and ensuring the social and moral development of their personality are also priorities.

The Ukrainian system of ECE is based on the practical mastering of the native language, the provision of cognitive activity, the development of creative abilities in play, respect, principles of family education, folk pedagogy, and national culture (Shynkar, 2015; Sharon & Kolchenko, 2007).

The educational process in kindergartens is carried out in the following directions: aesthetic, ethical, physical, moral, and intellectual. The *intellectual development* of the child is inextricably linked to their *aesthetic* and *moral* development. For this purpose, different methodological approaches are used. Aesthetic development is considered a means of implementing the creative principles established with the child, which helps to create conditions for the formation of positive personality traits. In kindergarten, the implementation of program tasks involves the development of aesthetic perception, emotions, assessment, and artistic skills.

Play is the main activity in Ukrainian kindergarten. According to Volchinsky, Volchinskaya, & Smal (2016) “play develops determination, courage, a culture of behavior, the ability to exercise independence and initiative” (p. 44). In the process of playing, a child actively influences the objects that surround them. It develops the intellectual, emotional, and volitional qualities of the individual.

The modern Ukrainian kindergarten is a positive, dynamic space that optimizes and develops the potential of children. Hence, the *harmonious development* of the child's personality in the period of EC is the basis for their further success. In this case, the child becomes a full partner (Educational program “Child”, 2016). Leaders of EC institutions are actively implementing innovations in management (Omelchenko, 2020, p. 41). In modern Ukraine, “The Association of Preschool Workers” was established and Preschool Education journals are published (ex. “Palette of the Teacher”, “Bumblebee”) (Bogush, 2020, p. 117).

In 2020, Ukraine started the National Survey of the Quality of ECE and used the ECERS method.

Discussion and conclusion

In both countries, EC educators are open to new plans and modern tasks; new clear vectors will help in working with children. Personal interaction, conversation, and discussion predominate

in communication between the teacher and the child. The main goal is the access of every child to quality ECE. In Norway and Ukraine, ECE systems is based on human values: *equality, democracy, ethics, culture, tolerance, and freedom*. The main tasks are to develop communication and aesthetic skills to create a comfortable environment for the development of the child's personality.

The system of ECE in Norway depends on *Nordic philosophy and ideology* (Einarsdottir & Wagner, 2006, p.8). This is due to historical features, traditions, the economic situation, etc. The Norwegian kindergarten dovetailed with ideals of the Nordic state model (Haug & Storø, 2013, p.4): equality, universalism, and independence (Korsvold, 2005).

The main feature of Norway is the decentralization of the system of public ECE. The management of EC institutions is carried out at the local level (Kommune). Decentralization is manifested in the freedom and diversity of methodological approaches to the organization and the improvement of ECE.

Norwegian ECE's goal is “to form” the *child as an individual*. Play is an important element in the Norwegian kindergarten's activities. As an important part of the pedagogical work in the kindergarten, play is involved in the planning in various ways (Gunnestad, 1993, p. 20). Play is also a social aspect, which helps the child in the socialization process.

In Norway, open kindergartens (pedagogical services that are embedded in the local community) can be a good alternative (Kaiser, Skjesol, Sætrum, Adolfsen & Martinussen, 2020, p. 2). for children and parents who do not have the opportunity to pay for a permanent kindergarten place.

The Ukrainian ECE system inherited the best folk pedagogy traditions (H. Skovoroda, K. Ushunskuy, S. Rusova, V. Suhomlunskuy). The purpose is to create a public education system and develop a spiritual, creative personality. In 2017, the reform “New Ukrainian School” provides updated content for ECE (partnership interaction, dialogue, involvement of each child, etc.). The content of the basic component of ECE is built according to the age of the children. The teacher's attention is focused on the main areas of the child's development: physical and mental health. EC institutions guarantee the provision of quality educational services and develop a valued attitude to nature and culture (Kovshar, 2013, p. 290).

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ДОШКІЛЬНА ОСВІТА В НОРВЕГІЇ ТА УКРАЇНІ: ПОРІВНЯЛЬНИЙ ОГЛЯД

Удосконалення та глобальні зміни в освіті пов'язані з міжкультурними тенденціями та сучасними викликами. Порівняльний аналіз різних систем спонукає до нового погляду на практику та освітню політику. Дослідження висвітлює порівняльний погляд на дошкільну освіту двох європейських країн — Норвегії та України, які мають давні історичні та сучасні відносини. Стаття досліджує вплив історичних аспектів обох країн, а також різних державних освітніх політик. Теоретична та концептуальна основа зосереджена на теорії дитячого благополуччя Полларда та Лі (2003). Збір даних дослідження ґрунтується на кількісному (статистичні дані щодо дошкільної освіти обох країн) та якісному підходах (аналіз та інтерпретація нормативних документів дошкільної освіти та педагогічної літератури Норвегії та України). Дослідження було проведено згідно з Норвезькими рекомендаціями з дослідницької етики соціальних і гуманітарних наук (НЕС, 2021). Нормативні документи та педагогічна література трактувалися відкрито, незалежно, правдиво та критично, враховуючи довіру, надійність та автентичність. Аналіз, який включав тлумачення нормативних документів та систематичний пошук літератури, було систематизовано за двома категоріями: законодавча база та типи закладів дошкільної освіти; дидактичні підходи щодо дошкільної освіти в обох країнах. Результати показують, що освіта дітей раннього віку в Норвегії та Україні безпосередньо залежить від впливу національних історичних традицій та економічних обставин. Розвиток особистості дитини та її взаємодія з іншими є одним із пріоритетів у норвезьких дитячих садках. Діти проводять багато часу на вулиці в будь-яку погоду. Крім того, велика увага приділяється співпраці та командній роботі. В українському дитячому садку виховний процес має інтелектуальний, естетичний, етичний та фізичний підходи. Інтелектуальний розвиток дитини пов'язаний з її моральним зростанням та зосередженням на позитивній взаємодії. В обох країнах вихователі відкриті для нових проєктів, інновацій та сучасних завдань, де в пріоритеті особиста взаємодія та всебічний розвиток.

Ключові слова: Норвегія, Україна, дошкільна освіта, глобалізація, крос-культурний підхід, полікультурна компетентність.

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IMMERSIVE TECHNOLOGIES AS A MODERN EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY FOR TRAINING FUTURE SPECIALISTS

Immersive technologies, such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR), are revolutionizing modern education by providing interactive, experiential learning environments. This paper examines the impact of these technologies in training specialists across various fields, including healthcare, engineering, pedagogical and vocational education. Immersive tools enhance students' engagement, practical skills, and critical thinking by simulating real-world scenarios in a safe and controlled environment. Furthermore, they offer personalized learning experiences, promote collaboration, and bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Universities worldwide are increasingly adopting immersive technologies to modernize teaching and enhance learning outcomes. These tools provide dynamic, engaging experiences that enable students to interact with complex material beyond the limits of traditional classroom methods. Interactive learning improves focus and increases knowledge retention. The main principles of building an immersive educational environment are highlighted. With the rapid advancement of digital tools, integrating immersive technologies enhances experiential learning, fosters engagement, and bridges theoretical knowledge with practical skills. The study identifies key tasks, including analysing the pedagogical impact, evaluating the effectiveness of these tools, and identifying challenges. Research findings highlight improved learning outcomes, motivation, and critical thinking among students. The article concludes that immersive technologies are essential for modern education, preparing specialists for dynamic, technology-driven work environments. In the context of rapid technological development, these tools offer new educational possibilities by promoting interactive, experiential learning and bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of immersive technologies in improving student engagement, retention, and skill acquisition. Key tasks include identifying pedagogical advantages, assessing challenges, and exploring their practical integration. Research findings demonstrate that immersive environments enhance motivation, problem-solving abilities, and critical thinking. The study concludes that immersive technologies represent an essential component of modern educational strategies, equipping future specialists with the competencies needed in evolving, technology-driven industries.

Keywords: *augmented reality (AR), critical thinking, experiential learning, immersive technologies, mixed reality (MR), motivation, problem-solving, student engagement, virtual reality (VR).*

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Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital tools and the increasing role of technology in all aspects of society have necessitated shifts in educational strategies. Traditional teaching methods often struggle to meet the needs of modern learners, particularly in fields requiring hands-on experience, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills. In response, immersive technologies — such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR) —

are gaining attention as promising educational tools. These technologies enable interactive and experiential learning by immersing students in simulated environments, thereby enhancing engagement and bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

Immersive technologies are highly relevant to modern education, as they align with the demands of dynamic, technology-driven industries. The labor market increasingly values