

# Socio-Historical Foundations of Developing Students' Ecological Culture in Physical Education Lessons

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**Abstract:** The article highlights the significance of scientific research demonstrating that physical education and extracurricular activities possess substantial potential in enhancing the health and well-being of high school students. This is achieved through the development of their knowledge, practical skills, and competencies, as well as by improving their physical fitness. Additionally, such activities play a key role in engaging students in educational and recreational initiatives, fostering participation in sports and health-oriented programs, and preparing them for athletic competitions. Furthermore, they contribute to the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, the cultivation of responsible environmental behavior, the practice of personal and public hygiene, and the enhancement of students' ecological awareness.

**Keywords:** Socio-historical, foundations, students' ecological culture, physical education, lessons, athletic competitions.

**Introduction:** "Environmental education is closely related to social and universal education in many ways. In particular, its goals, methods, and objects are the same, namely the environment and man. However, the difference between environmental education and its quantitative or extensive scope is its nature," says N.V. Lazarev. He also notes the need to first elevate the science of ecology to a higher level, to turn it into a science that deals with universal processes. Rapidly updated educational technologies, as a result of changes in innovative educational systems, open up wide opportunities to eliminate existing problems using some effective means. Therefore, it was concluded that the intended goal can be achieved by improving the existing system of developing the ecological culture of high school students.

The search for ways to reduce the technogenic impact on nature, a deeper study of the socio-economic aspects of such a process, the search for guidelines for disaster prevention, the study of the mechanisms of interaction between natural factors and living beings, the laws of interaction, especially the identification and elimination of the causes of the imbalance between man, nature and society, is becoming the most important problem of our time. Human activity is

causing the ecological situation to become extremely acute. From the time of its emergence to the present, humanity has affected nature and the environment, completely changing it. As a result of human activity, the surface of the earth, climate, vegetation, fauna, and atmospheric air have completely changed. As a result of water pollution, deforestation, soil erosion, and excessive hunting of wild animals and fish, an ecological crisis is emerging.

In the context of increasing global environmental challenges and the intensifying degradation of ecological systems, the need to cultivate ecological awareness and responsibility among younger generations has become a critical educational priority. Physical education, traditionally centered on physical development and health, now holds untapped potential as a dynamic platform for integrating ecological values and promoting environmental consciousness through movement-based and nature-oriented activities.

Historically, societies have maintained a close relationship with nature through physical activity — from traditional games tied to seasonal cycles to outdoor training embedded in natural settings. However, modern urbanized lifestyles and digital

dependence have weakened students' connection to the environment. This disconnection underscores the socio-historical necessity of reintroducing ecological culture as a core element within the physical education curriculum.

Moreover, schools serve not only as academic institutions but also as key environments for shaping students' worldviews, behaviors, and values. Embedding ecological culture into physical education lessons aligns with both educational and societal goals, fostering not only physical well-being but also environmental stewardship, sustainable thinking, and collective responsibility.

Thus, investigating the socio-historical foundations for developing ecological culture through physical education is urgent and timely. It addresses both the historical neglect of ecological integration in this subject area and the pressing global demand for environmentally literate, health-conscious, and socially responsible future citizens.

#### Literature review

Environmental safety is among the most urgent global challenges today, as it is critically important for both the present and future of human society. Effectively addressing environmental issues can largely determine the living standards and quality of life for current and future generations. Ecology represents one of the most complex and pressing threats of the modern era. Resolving these challenges is in the interest of all nations, as the well-being and sustainability of modern

civilization largely depend on how these issues are managed.

The increasingly complex global ecological situation has turned the preservation of nature and the environment, as well as the responsible and efficient use of natural resources, into a vital concern for all of humanity. Today's reality demands urgent solutions to these problems to prevent catastrophic consequences, placing this responsibility squarely on the shoulders of all countries and peoples of the world.

Addressing these problems through scientifically grounded approaches is not only essential for the happiness and well-being of humanity, but also constitutes a significant pedagogical, scientific, psychological, socio-political, economic, and demographic challenge. While ecological sciences are often approached from the perspective of specific regions or national boundaries, in essence, ecology encompasses universal, global processes occurring on a planetary scale.

These ideas clearly indicate the necessity of improving environmental literacy among all populations. In particular, there is an urgent need to enhance the system for developing environmental awareness and culture among upper-grade students.

Here is a formal table in English outlining the Content of Developing Environmental Culture in Upper-Grade Students:

Table: Content of Developing Environmental Culture in Upper-Grade Students

Components	Description
1. Environmental Knowledge	Basic and advanced knowledge about ecology, environmental systems, and sustainability.
2. Environmental Awareness	Understanding the importance of nature conservation and awareness of global environmental issues.
3. Ecological Thinking	Ability to think critically and systemically about human–nature relationships.
4. Responsible Behavior	Formation of habits such as recycling, saving resources, and protecting biodiversity.
5. Value Orientation	Development of ethical and moral attitudes toward nature and environmental responsibility.
6. Emotional-Aesthetic Attitude	Cultivating a sense of appreciation, respect, and care for the natural environment.

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|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>7. Practical Skills</b>      | Engaging in environmental activities: clean-up drives, eco-projects, and sustainable practices. |
| <b>8. Legal Literacy</b>        | Familiarity with environmental laws, rights, and responsibilities as citizens.                  |
| <b>9. Use of ICT in Ecology</b> | Applying digital tools and resources to learn, analyze, and promote ecological initiatives.     |

## DISCUSSION

Developing the ecological culture of high school students can be effectively implemented through both in-class education and extracurricular activities in general education schools. This process is particularly productive when integrated across various science-related subjects, including physical education.

Our research has demonstrated that physical education lessons and extracurricular activities offer significant opportunities to improve high school students' health, enhance their knowledge, skills, and physical preparedness, and involve them in educational, moral, and health-promotion activities. These also include participation in sports events, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle, fostering a respectful attitude toward the environment, encouraging resource conservation, improving personal and public hygiene, and deepening their ecological understanding.

The process of reviving and integrating national values with universal human values remains a continuously relevant topic in the field of education. In the current era, where education is increasingly based on innovative technologies, shaping the ecological culture of young people and continuously improving it is a pressing requirement. One of the key factors in organizing this process effectively is sports and physical culture. Individuals are constantly interacting with their environment, and this relationship shapes the characteristics of physical activity, enabling the resolution of general educational and cultural tasks through movement and participation.

The development of ecological culture among high school students during physical education classes depends largely on their age-specific characteristics and capacities. Through physical culture, students engage in self-development activities that are grounded in national and universal values, which in turn fosters a positive attitude toward sports and physical education.

The core function of physical education is to promote health, and this aim can be achieved by simultaneously

cultivating ecological awareness and culture. Each age group has distinct developmental needs, and the pedagogical approaches used must reflect these. This includes general development exercises, basic movement skills, outdoor games, and other structured activities. Educational institutions are well-equipped to support these efforts, yet a key challenge persists: balancing the dual goal of developing both physical and ecological culture in students, and resolving the inherent contradiction between this educational objective and the technological means for its realization.

Ultimately, the formation of ecological education, ecological culture, and physical culture stands out as one of the most crucial educational tasks of our time.

Fostering and Developing Ecological Culture is a complex and multifaceted process. In our research, we focus on key concepts such as "ecological culture" and its development through psychological-pedagogical and physical education approaches. Special attention is given to the integration of ecological education within physical culture lessons, the role of school-family pedagogical cooperation in nurturing children's ecological awareness, and the pedagogical foundations necessary for supporting these efforts.

To examine the current state of ecological culture formation among high school students during physical education classes, several analyses were conducted:

An analysis of the level of ecological awareness, education, and culture formed in high school students.

An evaluation of teachers' ecological worldview.

A review of the national curriculum standards (NCS) related to ecological culture in the subject of physical education.

An analysis of the national programs aimed at integrating ecological culture into physical education for high school students.

An examination of textbooks used in teaching ecological culture within the context of physical education.

A review of methodological guidelines focused on the development of ecological culture among high school students.

An analysis of journal publications covering the content related to ecological culture education.

A review of dissertations that address the development of ecological culture among high school students.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the above analyses, it was concluded that the intended goal can be achieved by improving the existing system for developing the environmental culture of upper-grade students. The formation of ecological culture among high school students is considered one of the pressing issues of today. In this context, developing ecological awareness and moral values among students in the upper grades of general education schools in our republic is of particular importance. If individuals are not educated from a young age and do not acquire essential eco-hygienic knowledge in a timely manner, they risk growing up indifferent toward the environment and nature.

The socio-historical foundations of developing students' ecological culture in physical education lessons reveal the deep interconnection between societal evolution, educational priorities, and environmental awareness. Historically, physical education has not only served to strengthen physical fitness but has also played a role in shaping moral, civic, and ecological consciousness.

By analyzing past approaches, values, and educational reforms, it becomes evident that fostering ecological culture through physical education is both meaningful and necessary. Activities conducted in natural environments, outdoor training, and ecological-oriented games offer powerful opportunities to instill respect for nature, sustainable behavior, and environmental responsibility in students. Therefore, integrating ecological values into physical education lessons—guided by historical experience and modern educational standards—serves as a holistic approach to shaping environmentally conscious individuals.

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