



## ORGANIZATION OF A DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENT IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS BASED ON REGGIO PEDAGOGY

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14772485>

### ARTICLE INFO

Received: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Accepted: 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025

Online: 30<sup>th</sup> January 2025

### KEYWORDS

*Reggio pedagogy, developing environment, preschool education, creative development, cognitive development, children's education, social cooperation.*

### ABSTRACT

*This article analyzes the theoretical and practical aspects of organizing a developing environment in preschool educational institutions based on Reggio pedagogy. Reggio pedagogy is aimed at supporting children's independent activity, ensuring their creative, cognitive and social development. The results of the study showed that the environment increased children's interest in the educational process, creative initiatives and the ability to work in teams. Practical recommendations are given for introducing this approach into the national education system.*

**Introduction.** Preschool education is a key period for a child's personal, social, and intellectual development. At this stage, children actively develop their ability to explore the environment, engage in social interaction, and acquire new knowledge. In such circumstances, creating an environment that guides children's creative, intellectual, and social development is of great importance. This requires an environment that supports children's interests, ensures their active participation, and encourages social interaction and cooperation. The developmental environment based on Reggio pedagogy creates an opportunity for the child to learn independently, taking into account his personal needs. In it, the child is considered an active researcher and the central figure of the educational process. The environment should be designed in accordance with the age characteristics of children and allow them to be involved in creative activities. Such an environment not only increases children's interest in education, but also plays a major role in the formation of their social relationships. Reggio pedagogy is an educational methodology that emerged in the middle of the 20th century in the Italian city of Reggio Emilia, and its main goal is to support the creative, intellectual and social development of children. This pedagogical model sees the child as the central figure of the educational process and pays special attention to his active participation. The problem of organizing a developmental environment in preschool educational institutions is currently relevant. Because in many preschool educational institutions, insufficient attention is paid to an environment that takes into account the interests and personal needs of children and supports their independent activity. Therefore, it is important to create an environment that is conducive to the intellectual and creative development of children and to identify its main elements.



Research on Reggio pedagogy began mainly in Italy, and the theoretical and practical foundations of this methodology were developed by Loris Malaguzzi and his colleagues.

Internationally, many studies have been conducted on Reggio pedagogy, including in Canada, Australia, the USA and European countries, where this methodology is widely used in preschool institutions. They have shown the effectiveness of this methodology in developing children's creative abilities and independently forming their own knowledge. In Uzbekistan, however, limited research has been conducted on creating a developmental environment based on Reggio pedagogy. In most cases, preschool education focuses on the cognitive development of children, but the issue of creating an environment that serves social and creative development is not sufficiently covered. Therefore, it is important to develop scientifically based recommendations on organizing an environment based on the principles of Reggio pedagogy. The main purpose of this study is to develop theoretical and practical directions for organizing a developmental environment in preschool institutions in accordance with the principles of Reggio pedagogy. The main focus is on identifying the main elements of the environment that provide favorable conditions for the creative, intellectual and social development of children. The research will study the pedagogical foundations of a developmental environment, the methods used in its organization, and children's attitude to the educational process. Recommendations will also be developed to increase children's creative potential, support their ability to conduct independent research, and improve their social relationships. An environment based on Reggio pedagogy has a stimulating effect on children's participation in the educational process and provides an approach focused on their individual needs. This research will identify effective methods for organizing a developmental environment and develop proposals for their implementation in educational institutions.

**Methods.** This study aims to study the theoretical and practical aspects of organizing a developing environment in preschool educational institutions based on Reggio pedagogy. The study was conducted using a combination of qualitative and quantitative analyses. In the qualitative research process, face-to-face interviews were conducted with children, educators, and parents, as well as data collection through observation of classes and analysis of documents. Quantitative analysis was carried out by conducting questionnaires and tests to assess the creative and intellectual development of children, as well as to determine the level of their interest in the educational process. The research design included the following main steps: Studying the state of the existing environment in preschool educational institutions. Organizing the process of creating an environment in accordance with the principles of Reggio pedagogy. Assessing the impact of the organized environment on children's development. The study involved 200 children, 50 teachers, and 100 parents from 10 preschool institutions. Participants were selected from urban, rural, and remote areas to determine the impact of regional factors on the problem under study. The following were used as the main sources of data in the study. Teachers: The study interviewed 50 teachers to explore their knowledge and experience of Reggio pedagogy. It was found that 80% of teachers are aware of these principles, and 60% are trying to apply them in practice. The advantages of the environment were noted as developing independence, creative thinking, and interest in learning in children. At the same time, teachers noted the lack of resources and the high time and labor requirements for organizing such an environment as difficulties. The need for seminars and supporting activities



was noted for the effective implementation of Reggio pedagogy in practice. Children: The study assessed children's participation and development in the educational process through observation and testing. According to the results, 75% of children who participated in the developmental environment showed an increase in social and creative activity, which indicates the effectiveness of the environment in developing children's cooperation and creative abilities. It was also found that 65% of children showed a high interest in the educational process in the environment organized based on the Reggio methodology. These results confirm that this methodology plays an important role in arousing children's interest in the educational process and ensuring their active participation. It was observed that the Reggio environment encourages children to conduct independent research and take initiative in the learning process. Parents: The study studied the developmental changes in their children and the attitudes of parents to the environment organized based on the Reggio pedagogy through questionnaires. According to the responses, 82% of 100 parents noted that this environment helped to increase the creative potential of children, which indicates the effectiveness of the environment in developing creative thinking. Also, 70% of parents noted a significant improvement in children's interaction skills. These results confirm that the Reggio environment has a positive effect on strengthening social ties between children and forming teamwork skills. The opinions of parents further confirmed the positive impact of the environment on the development process of children. The data were collected on the basis of analysis, and the main trends indicating the impact of the developing environment were identified. The relationship between the pedagogical environment and children's development indicators was studied through quantitative analysis. The results of the correlation analysis showed that the correlation coefficient between the effectiveness of the environment and children's creative development was 0.84. According to the test results, 68% of children who participated in the Reggio environment performed better on cognitive tests. The methods used in the study demonstrated the effectiveness of the Reggio environment in assessing children's development. The data obtained allowed for a deeper study of the developmental impact of an environment focused on the individual needs of children in the educational process.

**Results.** The Reggio environment is a set of components that support children's creative, intellectual, and social development. The main feature of this environment is that it is organized in a way that supports children's independent activity, with each element serving a specific purpose. In the research process, identifying and analyzing the main components of the Reggio environment is important for ensuring children's active participation in the educational process. This pedagogical approach is aimed at adapting the environment to the interests and needs of children, and its structural organization and the selection of materials and tools used support children's personal development. First of all, the structural organization of the environment is designed taking into account the specific individual interests and abilities of children. For example, the creation of separate sections such as creative zones, research areas, writing and reading corners creates opportunities for children to continuously learn. The flexibility and freedom of each area allows children to choose activities according to their preferences. This develops their independent decision-making, initiative, and independent thinking skills. Such freedom of the environment leads to increased creative and analytical thinking in children. The second important component is the selection of materials and tools.



Colorful and multifunctional materials adapted to the age and level of development of children are of great importance in attracting their attention and increasing their ability to think logically. The use of natural and recycled materials serves to form children's ecological attitude to the environment. This not only develops environmental awareness, but also strengthens their innovative and creative approach. Visual aids and visual elements - pictures, models, and graphics - are included in the research process as an effective means of enriching children's imagination. Such visual elements help children to understand processes of various contents more deeply, conduct comparative analysis, and form their own conclusions. The above components of the environment serve as an important factor in developing children's independence and arousing a lively interest in the learning process. The environment based on Reggio pedagogy not only ensures activity in the educational process, but also helps to develop creative thinking, a critical approach and a responsible attitude towards life in children. As a result of such an approach, children are able to independently form their own knowledge, creating a basis for the comprehensive development of their abilities. Thus, identifying the specific components of the environment in the research process is of great importance in understanding its role in children's education and planning future pedagogical activities. The innovative features of Reggio pedagogy make the educational process effective, meaningful and exciting for both children and teachers. The results of the study showed that the environment organized on the basis of Reggio pedagogy had a significant positive impact on the creative and cognitive development of children.

Creative development: 70% of children demonstrated the ability to come up with new ideas during the process of creating projects. For example, children's imagination and creative approaches increased significantly when creating models from natural materials.

Cognitive development: 65% of children demonstrated a high level of cognitive potential during independent research. For example, children independently understood complex concepts (color mixing, geometry) through games.

The environment encouraged children to actively communicate with each other. In group activities, 75% of children actively participated in solving problems together. Increased social activity is evident from the fact that 68% of children participated in various social role-playing games. For example, in the "shop" game, children played the roles of seller and buyer, developing their communication skills. During the study, parents and educators were asked about their opinions about the environment and children's development. This information allowed us to more accurately assess the effectiveness of the environment. 80% of parents noted that their children were highly interested in the environment. They noted that their children's creative abilities and independence had increased. 70% of parents noted that their children's communication skills had significantly improved. Some reported that their children had also begun to engage in research and projects at home. 85% of teachers noted that the environment organized on the basis of Reggio pedagogy had activated the educational process. They confirmed that the effectiveness of the educational process increased in an environment where children were highly interested. 65% of teachers noted that the ability to interact and work together among children had significantly increased. The results of the study confirmed that the environment based on Reggio pedagogy had a positive effect on children's development. The structure of the environment, the use of visual and natural materials had a



significant impact on children's creative, cognitive and social development. The opinions of parents and teachers showed that this environment increased children's interest and activity in the educational process.

**Discussion.** The results of the study showed that the developmental environment organized on the basis of Reggio pedagogy has a significant impact on the creative, cognitive and social development of children. Children's ability to act independently and self-manage in the educational process has significantly improved. This environment created favorable conditions for children to explore new ideas, take initiative and independently form their own knowledge. The results of the assessment of the impact on creative development showed that children tried to put forward new and innovative ideas in their projects. For example, creative works created from natural materials expanded the scope of children's imagination. As for social development, the level of cooperation between children increased. They learned to express their opinions, listen to others' opinions and make collective decisions during group work. The results of cognitive tests used to assess the impact of the Reggio environment on children also showed positive changes. 68% of children achieved high cognitive performance, which indicates their ability to assimilate new information and solve complex problems. All this confirms the effectiveness of the environment created on the basis of Reggio pedagogy for the education and development of children.

The Reggio pedagogy methodology is being effectively used in many countries, including Italy, the USA, Canada and Australia. Experience in these countries shows the importance of this methodology in developing children's personal potential and increasing their interest in the educational process. For example, in Italy, children are involved in independent research, where they have the opportunity to express their ideas through visual communication and creative activities. Compared with practice in Uzbekistan, it is observed that the creation of an environment based on the Reggio methodology is not yet widespread. Although sufficient attention is paid to the creative development of children in preschool institutions in Uzbekistan, the educational process is often based on traditional methods. However, in international practice, environments that support children's independence and interactive teaching methods are prioritized. Similarities include approaches that focus on organizing projects based on children's interests and encouraging social interaction. However, the processes in Uzbekistan are characterized by the fact that natural and recycled materials are used less and children are not sufficiently involved in independent research. This indicates the need to adapt and implement advanced elements of international experience to national conditions. The following limitations were identified in the organization of a developing environment during the research:

**Lack of resources:** It was observed that preschool educational institutions do not have enough modern, multifunctional materials and visual aids for children. For example, it was found that natural and recycled materials are used poorly in 40% of the institutions participating in the study.

**Qualifications of teachers:** 65% of teachers do not have sufficient knowledge of the principles of Reggio pedagogy, which limits their use of innovative approaches in working with children.



Limited space for organizing the environment: It was observed that in some institutions there is no opportunity to create favorable conditions for children to move freely and work.

Based on the results of the research, it is necessary to deepen and expand the areas of future research. In the first direction, it is important to study the effectiveness of the environment created on the basis of Reggio pedagogy for different age groups. Since each age group has its own psychological and educational needs, it is necessary to study the effectiveness of creating an environment that is suitable for the initial social and creative development of 2-3-year-old children, which requires an individual approach, and for the development of deeper analytical and critical thinking skills in 7-8-year-old children. In the second direction, improving the skills of educators is an important task. In order to fully master the theoretical and practical aspects of the Reggio methodology, it is necessary to develop special educational programs. Such programs will help educators develop specific skills in directing children to independent research, creating a creative environment, as well as using innovative approaches in the educational process. In the third direction, the integration of digital technologies into the developing environment is seen as a pressing issue. In the modern educational process, the development of children's ability to communicate with digital tools serves to enrich their social and technical skills. It is also necessary to study in more depth the impact of technologies on the creative environment, their contribution to children's cooperation, independent learning and thinking processes. The fourth direction requires studying the differences in opportunities and resources between preschool educational institutions in urban and rural areas.

Conclusion. The results of the study confirmed that a developing environment organized on the basis of Reggio pedagogy is important for the creative, cognitive and social development of children. Such an environment allows children to be independent, take initiative and express themselves as researchers. In the Reggio pedagogy methodology, the environment is considered an integral part of the educational process and is aimed at organizing activities based on children's interests. This approach stimulates children's participation and activity in the learning process, positively affecting their personal development. The study identified a number of important factors that influence children's participation in the educational process, each of which plays a role in stimulating children's development. The first factor is the structural and visual aspects of the environment, and it was found that the presence of materials and objects that interest children is of great importance in expanding their imagination. The use of natural and recycled materials had a positive effect on creative development. In particular, it was noted that in such an environment, children's creative activity increased by 25%. These results indicate that the inclusion of natural elements in the educational environment increases children's interest and enhances their creative potential. The second key factor is strong social relationships. Group cooperation, team activities and role-playing games were effective in developing social communication and interpersonal skills among children. Children's mutual cooperation had a positive effect on their participation in the educational process and actively involved them in completing tasks in the team. This formation of social relationships not only enhanced children's personal development, but also increased their interest in the learning process.

Improving the skills of educators: It is necessary to organize special trainings for educators that teach the theoretical and practical principles of Reggio pedagogy. This will allow



them to effectively organize the environment and use approaches focused on the development of children.

**Strengthening cooperation with parents:** The participation of parents is important in the development of children. It is recommended that parents prepare advice on home education and support for children based on the principles of Reggio pedagogy.

**Territorial adaptation:** It is advisable to develop models of environments based on Reggio pedagogy adapted to urban and rural conditions and implement them in different regions.

**Deepening research:** It is important to conduct research to study the impact of the Reggio pedagogy environment in other age groups (for example, children aged 2–3 and 7–8).

A developing environment organized on the basis of Reggio pedagogy has a positive effect on the creative, cognitive and social development of children. The widespread introduction of this environment in national preschool educational institutions will further increase children's participation and interest in the educational process, as well as develop their personal potential. By implementing the recommended measures, it is possible to strengthen innovative approaches to the educational process and create a foundation for the all-round development of children.

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