



Received: April 4, 2024
Accepted: June 20, 2024
Available online: June 25, 2024

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION IN UZBEKISTAN AND FINLAND

ABSTRACT

This in-depth research paper explores the beliefs, instructional approaches, and evaluation techniques used in preschool education systems in Uzbekistan and Finland. This study compares and contrasts the methods employed in these two countries by analyzing documents and reviewing relevant literature.

The paper utilizes two methods: document analysis and literature review. Document analysis is a fundamental method in this research, enabling a detailed exploration of the beliefs, instructional strategies, and evaluation techniques in childhood education systems in Uzbekistan and Finland. In addition to document analysis, the research also performs a thorough literature review to gain comprehensive insights into the theoretical foundations, empirical studies, and scholarly discussions concerning childhood education in Uzbekistan and Finland.

The research discusses the different beliefs of Uzbekistan and Finland regarding childhood education. Uzbekistan is beginning to adopt a student-centred approach with influences from organizations like UNESCO, while Finland focuses on holistic development and a play-centric, child-focused method of learning. These findings demonstrate the changing landscape of childhood education in Uzbekistan and the system's core principles.

Furthermore, the study underscores the focus on play-based learning in both countries. Finland encourages child-directed exploration, while Uzbekistan incorporates play activities. Both countries recognize play as crucial for children's social, emotional, and cognitive development.

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O'ZBEKISTON VA FINLANDIYA MAKTABGACHA TA'LIM TIZIMINING QIYOSIY TAHLILI

ANNOTATSIYA

Ushbu maqola O'zbekiston va Finlandiya maktabgacha ta'lim tizimlarida mavjud bo'lgan qonun-qoidalar, ta'lim yondashuvlari va baholash usullarini o'rganishga bag'ishlangan. Tadqiqotning maqsadi mavzuga oid hujjatlarni o'rganish va adabiyotlarni ko'rib chiqish orqali O'zbekiston va Finlandiya o'rtasidagi metodologiyalarda mavjud o'xshash va farqli jihatlarni aniqlashdan iborat.

Ushbu maqolada qo'llaniladigan ikki tadqiqot usuli orqali mazkur mavzuga oid izlanishlar tahlilga tortiladi: (1) hujjatlarni tahlil qilish va (2) adabiyotlarni ko'rib chiqish. Hujjatlarni tahlil qilish ushbu tadqiqotning asosiy metodi bo'lib, O'zbekiston va Finlandiyadagi bolalar ta'limi tizimlarida keng tarqalgan qonun-qoidalar, ta'lim strategiyalari va baholash usullarini chuqur o'rganishga yordam beradi. Hujjatlarni tahlil qilish bilan birgalikda, tadqiqot O'zbekiston va Finlandiyada bolalik davridagi ta'limga oid nazariy asoslar, empirik tadqiqotlar va ilmiy munozaralarga oid nuans tushunchalarga ega bo'lish maqsadida keng qamrovli adabiyotlar ko'rib chiqilgan.

Tadqiqot har ikki xalqning amaldagi qonun-qoidalarini bo'yicha istiqbollarni taqdim etadi. O'zbekiston, misol uchun, YUNESKO bilan o'zaro hamkorlik ta'sirida "talaba-markazda" yondashuviga o'tayotgan bo'lsa-da, Finlandiya yaxlit rivojlanish va "o'yinga yo'naltirilgan", "bolaga yo'naltirilgan" ta'lim metodlarini qo'llab-quvvatlaydi. Xususan, bu kabi izlanishlar O'zbekistonda maktabgacha ta'lim tizimining rivojlanayotgan manzarasi va ayni tizimning asosiy tamoyillarini namoyish etadi.

Bundan tashqari, tadqiqot har ikki mamlakatda

This highlights the significance of play as a tool in various cultural contexts.

Observational evaluations have become common in both countries, allowing educators to gain insight into children's development in various areas. However, there are differences in assessment tools and reliance on tests, with Uzbekistan focusing more on formal assessments compared to Finland's more comprehensive approach.

In conclusion, this comparative analysis provides insights into the philosophies, instructional approaches, and evaluation methods in education in Uzbekistan and Finland. The study illuminates the similarities and differences, offering insight into preschool education practices.

Key words: Uzbekistan, children's education, Finland, educational philosophy, teaching methods, assessment tools, preschool education, comprehensive approach, cognitive development.

ham o'yinga yo'naltirilgan ta'limga e'tibor qaratilayotganligini ilgari suradi. Finlandiya bolalarga yo'naltirilgan tadqiqotni, O'zbekiston esa bolalarni o'yin faoliyatiga birlashtirish tadqiqot yo'nalishini targ'ib qilayotgan bo'lsa ham, ikki davlat o'yinni bolalarning ijtimoiy, hissiy va kognitiv rivojlanishida har tomonlama muhim deb hisoblaydi. Bu o'yin qiymatini turli xil madaniy sharoitlardagi vosita sifatida nazarda tutadi.

Kuzatuv natijasidagi baholashlar har ikki mamlakatda ham amaliyot sifatida mavjud bo'lib, o'qituvchilarga bolalar rivojlanishini mintaqalar bo'yicha kengroq doirada tushunishga imkoniyat yaratadi. Biroq Finlandiyaning kompleks yondashuvi bilan solishtirganda baholash vositalari va testlarga tayanishdagi tafvutlar O'zbekiston rasmiy baholashga e'tibor qaratayotganida yaqqol namoyon bo'ladi.

Xulosa qilib aytganda, ushbu qiyosiy tahlil O'zbekiston va Finlandiyadagi ta'lim falsafasi, yondashuvlari va baholash usullari borasidagi izlanish natijalarini taqdim etadi.

Kalit so'zlar: O'zbekiston, bolalar ta'limi, Finlandiya, ta'lim falsafasi, o'qitish usullari, baholash vositalari, maktabgacha ta'lim, kompleks yondashuv, kognitiv rivojlanish.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education in preschool is crucial for shaping a child's social and emotional growth. Studies suggest that preschool enhances skills, language proficiency and social competencies, which are essential for future success and well-being [Barnett, 2011]. Language development is an aspect of education with children benefitting from exposure to diverse language environments that improve vocabulary, grammar and comprehension skills [Dickinson & Porche, 2011]. Preschool also lays the groundwork for literacy and numeracy skills setting the stage for accomplishments in the future [Camilli et al., 2010]. Moreover, it provides a platform for children to learn skills like cooperation, sharing and conflict resolution that are vital for their interactions with others. Research indicates that attending high-quality programs increases the likelihood of high school graduation pursuing education and achieving better incomes later in life [Heckman et al., 2010]. Additionally, preschool aids in development by teaching children how to manage their emotions and build resilience, against stressors [Diamond & Lee, 2011]. Engaging in activities and outdoor play at preschools helps improve fine motor skills enhancing overall physical health and well-being according to M.S. Tremblay [Tremblay et al., 2015]. In essence, preschool education provides an environment that supports the growth of children covering cognitive, social, emotional and physical abilities crucial for their future achievements.

Preschool education has undergone changes over time influenced by a variety of socio-cultural factors. In the 1800s, preschool emerged in response to the demands of the Industrial Revolution, which created a need for childcare as more parents entered the workforce. Charitable organizations and religious groups were among the first to establish programs with a focus on offering care and education to children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Throughout the 1900s educational philosophies from figures like Froebel, Montessori and Dewey played a role in shaping preschool education by emphasizing play-based learning and child-centered approaches. The middle of the century witnessed an expansion in education due to research demonstrating its positive impact on children's development leading to initiatives such as Head Start in the United States that received federal funding. Preschool education remains an element in childhood development efforts, emphasising delivering inclusive and high-quality programs promoting children's overall growth and well-being.

When it comes to childhood education in Uzbekistan and Finland, the available literature on education in both countries forms the basis for our comparative study. The landscape of education in Uzbekistan has seen changes over time. Back in the era, preschool education was heavily shaped by principles focusing on communal upbringing and socialization within state-run institutions [Zakhidov, 2018]. These institutions, referred to as "kindergartens" aimed to prepare children for participation in society by emphasizing physical fitness, moral growth and patriotic values [Ibragimov, 2015]. Following independence in 1991, Uzbekistan embarked on reforms that included revisions to its system to align with domestic priorities and global standards [World Bank, 2018]. The government implemented changes to enhance access to childhood education, elevate curriculum standards and encourage engagement [PR-4312, 2019]. Presently, preschool education in Uzbekistan is progressing with initiatives focused on expanding accessibility, enhancing teacher training programs and incorporating teaching methods to cater to the developmental requirements of young children [UNICEF, 2020].

Since the end of 2016, Uzbekistan has implemented changes in its childhood education sector, including introducing comprehensive programs and the establishment of the Ministry of Preschool Education (MOPSE) in 2017. The crucial Presidential Resolution No. PD-2707 focusing on "Enhancement of the preschool education system (2017–2021)" launched a five-year initiative aimed at improving the quality of education to meet global standards [PR-2707, 2016].

Additional reforms were put forth in 2018 through Presidential Resolution No. PR-3651 titled "Measures to boost and develop preschool education" with a focus on increasing both the availability and demand for education [PR-3651, 2018]. This involved encouraging Private Partnership (PPP) models to broaden services and revising fees to make preschool education more accessible in rural areas and for underprivileged families.

In 2019, Uzbekistan reaffirmed its dedication to education by enacting Law No. LRU-595 "On preschool education and upbringing". This law ensures that every child

has access to one year of education before starting the first grade, setting out the fundamental principles and strategies of state policy in early childhood education. The law delineates the roles and responsibilities of institutions, such as the Cabinet of Ministers State Inspectorate, for Education Quality Oversight, the Ministry of Preschool Education, the Ministry of Health and local authorities [LRU-595, 2019].

N.Mamadaminova discusses the differences between how preschool education is viewed internationally. She points out that developed nations place a priority on improving the quality of programs, making curricula more effective and incorporating social activities to nurture children's interpersonal skills areas, where Uzbekistan falls short. The article also suggests encouraging initiatives to engage mothers in their children's education and upbringing as a way to "maintain gender equality in the family and the society" [Mamadaminova, 2021; 210].

The literature highlights a comprehensive and child-focused approach to early childhood education in Finland, known for its impressive educational achievements. The Finnish preschool experience emphasizes play-based learning, teacher expertise and a strong focus on well-being. Through an examination of existing studies, we aim to uncover the intricacies of Finland's effective preschool system.

Finland's preschool education, often called childhood education and care (ECEC), has gained global recognition for its high standards and child-centred philosophy. As noted by B.Ruzzi, every six-year-old has had access to preschool education since 2001 with "98% of Finnish children now attending some form of preschool in schools or daycare centres" [Ruzzi, 2005]. Research indicates that the success of Finland's ECEC system can be attributed to key elements. Firstly, Finnish preschools prioritize play-based learning as essential for children's development [Sajaniemi, 2017]. By engaging in play-based activities children can explore their surroundings and learn in a nurturing environment [Karila et al., 2018]. Finnish preschool teachers are also qualified professionals who undergo specialized training in early childhood education and pedagogy.

A key feature of Finland's childhood education and care (ECEC) system is equal access to high-quality preschool education. Government support ensures that all children can attend preschools regardless of social status [OECD, 2020]. This dedication to fairness helps reduce disparities and fosters social unity [Välijärvi et al., 2019]. Finland's ECEC curriculum also emphasizes nurturing children's social and emotional growth alongside academic skills development [Finnish National Agency for Education, 2020]. Studies show that promoting skills and emotional well-being during early childhood sets a solid groundwork for future academic achievements and overall wellness [Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2000].

Moreover, Finnish preschools value participation, with educators and families working together to enhance children's learning journeys [Sajaniemi & Karila, 2017]. The involvement of parents in activities boosts children's sense of belonging and reinforces learning experiences both at home and in school environments [Pakarinen et al., 2020].

In general, the literature emphasizes the all-encompassing nature of Finland's

early childhood education system, which is based on play-centered teaching methods, well-qualified educators, fair access for all, a well-rounded curriculum and strong connections with families. Despite existing research, there is a gap in understanding the comparison between education in Uzbekistan and Finland. While studies may examine aspects of these systems individually, there is a noticeable absence of a comprehensive analysis that combines teaching approaches, evaluation methods and underlying principles in a comparative context. This research aims to fill this void by delving into and contrasting preschool education practices in Uzbekistan and Finland.

The purposes of this research are threefold:

- to examine teaching practices: analyzing the instructional methods employed in preschools in both Uzbekistan and Finland, considering the cultural and historical contexts shaping these practices;

- to investigate assessment methods: exploring the assessment and evaluation strategies used in preschool education in both countries, with a focus on how these approaches contribute to children's developmental progress;

- To understand philosophies of preschool education: delving into the underlying educational philosophies and values that guide preschool education in Uzbekistan and Finland, and how these principles align with or diverge from global best practices.

Through these objectives, this comparative analysis seeks to offer valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers, contributing to the ongoing dialogue on effective early childhood education practices and fostering a cross-cultural understanding of preschool education.

METHODS

Study Design

This study uses a desk research method that compares and contrasts education practices in Uzbekistan and Finland. By conducting this analysis, we can carefully compare aspects of preschool education in these two countries, gaining valuable insights into what they have in common, where they differ and what areas could be enhanced.

Materials

The research uses various types of resources to collect information, such as official papers, educational guidelines, policy analyses, scholarly articles and firsthand observations. Content from government bodies, schools and academic references offer perspectives on teaching methods, evaluation frameworks and educational ideologies across the two nations.

Documents include:

- Concept of development of the system of preschool education in Uzbekistan until 2030 [PR-4312, 2019];

- Early childhood education and care policy in Finland [Finnish National Agency for Education, 2020];

- Uzbekistan: Early childhood care and education (ECCE) programmes [UNESCO, 2006];

- Finland Education Report [Ruzzi, 2005];
- Helsinki’s curriculum for early childhood education 2022 [Helsinki Education Division, 2019];
- Improving pre-primary and general secondary education project [World Bank, 2020];
- On preschool education and upbringing [LRU-595, 2019];
- National core curriculum for early childhood education and care [Finnish National Agency for Education, 2022];
- Position statement: Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8 [NAEYC, 2020];
- On measures for further improvement of the preschool education system for 2017-2021 [PR-2707, 2016];
- On measures to further stimulate and develop the system of preschool education [PR-3651, 2018];
- Starting strong 2020: Key OECD indicators on early childhood education and care [OECD, 2020].

Methods

Desk research: Official documents such as national curriculum frameworks, educational policies, and guidelines for preschool education are analyzed to identify key components of teaching practices, assessment models, and underlying philosophies in Uzbekistan and Finland.

Literature Review: A comprehensive review of existing research literature on preschool education in both countries is conducted to gain insights into current trends, best practices, and theoretical foundations shaping preschool education in Uzbekistan and Finland.

RESULTS

The results of a comparative analysis of preschool education in Uzbekistan and Finland are tabulated below. The comparison is carried out across three main domains: the philosophy of education, teaching approaches and assessment methods. Each domain is represented with the major differences between the two countries as well as similarities.

Table 1.

The philosophy of education	
Uzbekistan	Finland
■ cooperation with makhalla ■ focus on national values and traditions	■ diversity of families ■ focus on “educare”
■ the intrinsic value of childhood ■ cooperation with family ■ growth as a human being ■ respect to the rights of the child ■ holistic development ■ healthy and sustainable way of living ■ the importance of play ■ equity, equality and diversity	

Education philosophy serves as a comprehensive framework that guides and influences the beliefs, principles and practices shaping an individual's or institution's educational approach. It delves into inquiries regarding the essence, objective and aims of education along with the techniques and approaches used to foster learning and growth. Within this framework lie considerations such as the educator's role, knowledge nature, curriculum significance, socialization importance and the interplay between education and society. This philosophy acts as a cornerstone for decision-making processes' curriculum design, teaching methods and interactions within environments. It molds the atmosphere and trajectory of the educational journey. Table 1 shows that the principles guiding the educational process in preschool organizations of Uzbekistan and Finland are almost identical, with minor differences caused by different cultural backgrounds.

Table 2.

Teaching approaches		
Direction	Uzbekistan	Finland
Methods of teaching	A competency-based approach to teaching	The involvement of children in selecting teaching methods
	■ supervised and free play ■ exploration ■ physical activity ■ drama ■ improvisation ■ art	
Content of learning		■ aesthetic orientation ■ religious-philosophical orientation
	■ healthy lifestyle and physical activity ■ socio-emotional development ■ language skills, including reading and writing ■ creativity and cognitive skills	

In Table 2, it can be seen that teaching approaches are studied from two main directions including methods and content of teaching. As for the methods, the same activities are largely used in Uzbekistan and Finland. However, we have found out that in Finnish preschools children are highly encouraged to guide their learning paths by giving them freedom of choice. In contrast, preschool educators in Uzbekistan tend to have full control of the learning process.

In terms of the content, the educational programs in Uzbekistan and Finland similarly include physical, socio-emotional, linguistic, creative and cognitive components. In Finland, however, the programs are also oriented toward aesthetic and religious-philosophical development, which is not evident in Uzbekistan.

Table 3.

Assessment	
Uzbekistan	Finland
■ development map ■ school readiness map	■ action plan's evaluation tables ■ group portfolio ■ child's individual early childhood education plan

■ observation
■ parent-teacher communication

According to Table 3, Uzbekistan and Finland employ distinct assessment tools, except for observation and parent-teacher communication. These distinctions might result from different teaching approaches and methods used in the two countries.

DISCUSSION

The comparison of education in Uzbekistan and Finland highlights both differences and similarities between the two systems, giving a better understanding of areas where improvements can be made and collaboration opportunities exist. This study looks at each system’s strengths and challenges by exploring aspects such as curriculum structures, teaching methods and support systems.

While analyzing the educational philosophies in the preschool settings of Uzbekistan and Finland, we mainly relied on the governmental documents that regulate this sector. The comparison of both countries revealed several similarities. For example, the philosophies of preschool education in Uzbekistan and Finland embrace a profound appreciation for the intrinsic value of childhood, recognizing it as a precious stage deserving of nurturing, exploration, and joy. Central to this philosophy is the belief that cooperation with families is paramount, fostering strong partnerships between educators and caregivers to support the holistic development of each child. It prioritizes the notion that every child is unique on a journey of growth as a human being, deserving of respect for their inherent rights and dignity. Embracing holistic development, preschool education endeavors to cultivate academic skills, social-emotional well-being, physical health, and creativity, aiming to prepare children for a lifetime of learning and contribution to society. Moreover, it advocates for a healthy and sustainable way of living, instilling in children an understanding of environmental stewardship and interconnectedness with the world around them. Central to the philosophy is the recognition of play as a fundamental and invaluable aspect of learning, providing opportunities for exploration, imagination, problem-solving, and social interaction. Furthermore, preschool education is committed to equity, equality, and diversity principles, ensuring that all children have access to high-quality education regardless of background, ability, or circumstance, and celebrating the richness of cultural, linguistic, and experiential diversity within the learning community.

Although the similarities between the two countries significantly overweight the differences, it is essential to explore the causes, nature and consequences of these distinctions. In Uzbekistan’s childhood education system, a unique aspect is the collaboration among caregivers, families and the makhalla community. This cooperative method reflects rooted cultural beliefs that emphasize the well-being of everyone in the community. Families play a role as primary caregivers and educators for children and their active participation in preschool education is greatly valued. Preschools work closely with families to promote communication, engage them in school events and involve them in decisions regarding their child’s education.

Additionally, the concept of makhalla, representing a knit neighborhood community, reinforces the idea of shared responsibility for child rearing and education. Members of the makhalla community, including elders, neighbors and leaders, actively support families and preschools by providing resources, knowledge and assistance to improve childhood education quality and meet various needs within the community.

Another notable aspect is the emphasis on traditions in upbringing practices within Uzbekistan's preschools. There is a focus on imparting national values to young children from an early age. This approach highlights the significance of identity, heritage preservation and patriotism, in shaping children's development. Preschool education in Uzbekistan acts as a foundation for passing down and safeguarding the array of Uzbek traditions, practices, language and historical heritage. Young children are immersed in tales, music, performances and ceremonies that honor the richness and harmony of the country.

In the context of philosophy in preschool institutions in Finland, it is essential to highlight the importance placed on embracing and celebrating the diverse backgrounds of families. This principle is deeply embedded in the culture for various reasons. Firstly, it demonstrates Finland's dedication to promoting fairness and equality in education ensuring that every child and family, irrespective of their upbringing, feels appreciated and respected within the setting. By embracing diversity, Finnish preschools cultivate environments where children are encouraged to understand and respect differences, laying a solid foundation for a more unified and accepting society.

Moreover, acknowledging the diversity of families enhances the learning experiences of all children. Interacting with peers from cultural, linguistic and familial backgrounds exposes children to a variety of perspectives, traditions and ways of life. This exposure nurtures empathy, understanding and global awareness from an age. Such interactions not foster social cohesion but also promote cognitive development as children learn to navigate through the complexities of the world around them.

Additionally, apart from recognizing family diversity, preschool education in Finland differs from that in Uzbekistan through its implementation of "educare". This concept emphasizes an approach that combines care with education to provide a nurturing and stimulating environment for young children's holistic development.

It emphasizes combining nurturing, education and fun with a focus on the child's health, social connections and initial educational encounters. Educare considers the child's emotional, mental and social requirements by encouraging harmony between personal needs and group interactions. This method strives to establish a base for continuous learning and supports the holistic growth of young children during their formative years.

Turning to the second research question related to teaching approaches, we delved into what makes up the content and the teaching methods commonly employed by preschool educators and caregivers in Finland and Uzbekistan. Our findings indicate that the educational content in both countries is quite similar with variations in learning approaches. Specifically, topics such as promoting a healthy lifestyle, physical activities, social-emotional development, language proficiency, creativity

and cognitive skills are parts of the official curricula in both Uzbekistan and Finland. These shared elements likely stem from the universal principles of child development.

On the other hand, Finland's preschool system incorporates aesthetic and religious philosophical elements that are not typically present in Uzbekistan. The aesthetic aspect focuses on experiences, creativity and appreciation of beauty across different domains like arts, nature and design. This perspective acknowledges the importance of aesthetics, in nurturing children's growth by sparking their curiosity, imagination and emotional intelligence. A core tenet of preschool education is the belief that children learn best through play and exploration. Aesthetic encounters are seamlessly woven into the curriculum to enrich children's routines. Children are encouraged to interact with their environment through activities like painting, music, storytelling and outdoor adventures. The Finnish education system is well known for its approach and respect for cultural diversity while also valuing equality. It acknowledges the significance of incorporating philosophical perspectives in preschool education for various reasons. Introducing children to diverse beliefs promotes understanding and respect for different cultures, fostering inclusivity and tolerance in a culturally diverse society like Finland. Moreover, integrating elements of children's religious or philosophical backgrounds into preschool education helps strengthen their sense of identity and connection. It allows them to explore their heritage within the Finnish societal context. Additionally, teachings on morals and ethics in religious and philosophical beliefs can help instill values, such as kindness, empathy, integrity and accountability from a young age setting the stage for positive social development.

When it comes to teaching methods, some similarities can be observed. Looking at the curriculums and guidelines for preschool educators, both countries value a play-based approach, exploration, physical activity, drama, improvisation and art. Childhood development is a journey marked by exploration, creativity and progress across different areas. Central to this process is a play-based approach that gives children hands-on learning opportunities. By exploring both indoors and outdoors, children engage in experiences and gain foundational knowledge about their surroundings. Physical activities not only enhance macro motor skills but also support overall health and well-being. Additionally, drama and improvisation stimulate thinking and emotional expression as children take on various roles in different scenarios. Artistic activities further contribute to their growth by offering outlets for self-expression, creativity and refinement of motor skills. These elements combine to create an environment where children can flourish promoting overall development while laying the foundation for future learning and success.

An intriguing finding from the analysis was that in Finland children are encouraged to participate in choosing teaching methods – a practice not seen in Uzbekistan. By involving children in decision-making processes, educators empower them to take charge of their learning journey and develop skills, such as critical thinking, problem solving and self-regulation. Additionally, allowing children to participate in choosing teaching approaches fosters a sense of ownership and interest

boosting their motivation and excitement for learning.

One notable aspect of the system in Uzbekistan is its focus on a competency-based approach. This method centers on addressing the needs, interests and capabilities of each child acknowledging that learning is a personal and evolving experience. The emphasis lies on nurturing skills, knowledge and attitudes crucial for children's success in various facets of life. By following a uniform curriculum for all students, educators customize lessons and activities to align with individual competencies and learning preferences. By establishing learning goals and standards, educators can accurately evaluate children's progress and offer tailored assistance when necessary. This approach not only encourages deeper engagement and motivation but also instils a sense of independence, self-assurance and lifelong learning abilities in young learners. In the end, the method of competency-based learning in childhood education provides children with the skills and self-assurance required to navigate the intricacies of their surroundings and succeed in their future pursuits.

Regarding the third research question, we compared the evaluation tools used in the two countries. Evaluating a child's growth in education is essential for monitoring their progress and meeting their specific needs. In Uzbekistan and Finland, two key approaches used are observation and parent-teacher communication.

Observation is a method for assessing a child's development across cognitive, socio-emotional, physical and language areas. Preschool teachers observe children during activities, playtime and interactions with others to understand their behaviors, achievements and engagement levels. By observing a child tackling a puzzle, valuable insights into their problem-solving skills and fine motor abilities can be gained.

Parent-teacher communication also plays a role in evaluating child development by offering different viewpoints and important details about the child's experiences beyond the classroom. Through interactions like meetings or emails, educators collaborate with parents to exchange observations, discuss milestones and address any concerns or successes noticed at home or school. This partnership creates an atmosphere where parents actively participate in their child's learning journey.

In Uzbekistan, preschool teachers also utilize child development maps to track and evaluate children's advancements in areas of their growth. These personalized plans encompass aspects like cognitive abilities, social-emotional growth, physical activities and language proficiency. By using these maps, educators can keep an eye on a child's development in each of these domains, recognize their strengths and areas for improvement and identify any delays in their progress. This approach allows for tailored programs and assistance strategies that address the unique needs of each child. Moreover, the development map plays a role as a means of communication between teachers and parents by facilitating discussions on the child's progress and collaborating on strategies for further growth.

Another evaluation tool used in Uzbekistan's education is the school readiness map. This checklist outlines skills and competencies that children should possess before entering school. It covers areas such as recognizing letters and numbers, dressing independently, handling responsibilities as well as social and emotional

skills. Implementing this readiness checklist helps educators streamline the assessment of children's development progress, and pinpoint areas where they excel or need extra support. Parents are given a picture of their child's development in preschool helping them understand the skills being honed and where additional support might be necessary for a smooth transition to school.

Unlike Uzbekistan, Finland's approach to education involves using evaluation tables for action plans, group portfolios and individual early childhood education plans to effectively nurture children's overall growth. These tools not only aid in ongoing assessment and monitoring but also encourage cooperation among teachers, parents and children to ensure each child receives personalized and top-notch education.

The evaluation tables for action plans are components of the Finnish preschool curriculum as they provide a structured way to evaluate and monitor children's progress. These tables outline learning goals and developmental milestones allowing educators to track each child's accomplishments and pinpoint areas needing more attention or enhancement. By assessing children against these set criteria, teachers can adjust their teaching methods to cater effectively to individual needs.

Group portfolios act as a documentation of children's learning experiences and achievements in the preschool environment. These portfolios contain samples of children's work, photos and observations that showcase their growth over time. They not only offer valuable insights into how children learn but also foster collaboration, among teachers, parents and the children themselves.

When stakeholders review group portfolios they can acknowledge accomplishments, pinpoint areas for growth and collaboratively design future learning experiences. In preschool, every child receives a personalized early childhood education plan that caters to their specific needs and interests. These plans are created in partnership with educators, parents and sometimes the child themselves. They establish objectives and methods to enhance the child's learning and progress. The plans take into account aspects like the child's strengths, challenges, cultural heritage and family situation to ensure an inclusive educational approach. By engaging all parties in the planning and execution phases, Finnish preschools aim to offer each child a nurturing environment that fosters their well-being and achievements.

While this analysis offers insights, it is important to note some limitations. One challenge is the language barrier, as certain Finnish preschool education documents were only accessible in Finnish. Moreover, cultural and contextual factors could influence how findings are interpreted and limit their applicability. The unique cultural norms, economic situations and historical backgrounds of Uzbekistan and Finland may affect how preschool education practices are implemented. Therefore, it is crucial to consider these aspects when drawing conclusions or making recommendations based on the study.

So, although comparing education in Uzbekistan and Finland gives valuable insights into their respective strengths and challenges, we must also acknowledge

the constraints imposed by research methods and contexts. In the future, researchers should work towards overcoming these constraints and expanding on the discoveries to better guide policies and practices in the field of childhood education.

CONCLUSION

A comparative analysis of childhood education in Uzbekistan and Finland offers an opportunity to delve into the study's results within the context of their educational philosophies, teaching methodologies and assessment techniques.

Initially, the study highlighted parallels in educational philosophies between Uzbekistan and Finland. While preschool education in Uzbekistan historically leaned towards methods, such as rote learning and academic readiness, there has been a notable shift towards a more student-centric approach. Collaboration with international bodies, such as UNESCO, has facilitated a reevaluation of existing principles, leading to a fresh perspective on child development. Despite acknowledging shared values and principles from the Finnish education system, Uzbekistan also remains steadfast in upholding its traditional beliefs. In contrast, Finland's educational philosophy underscores growth, play-centered learning and child-oriented practices. This reflects a thinking stance that prioritizes creativity, critical thinking and tailored learning experiences aligned with Finnish educational principles.

Furthermore, the study revealed that both countries place importance on incorporating play-based learning approaches. However, the methods of incorporating play-based learning differ between Finland and Uzbekistan. While Finland encourages child-led exploration, Uzbekistan leans towards teacher-directed play activities. However, both educational systems acknowledge the importance of play in enhancing children's emotional and cognitive development. Through play-based learning children actively interact with their surroundings, enhance problem-solving abilities and nurture creativity.

Furthermore, both nations utilize assessments to understand children's behaviors and interactions. These assessments provide educators with insights into children's strengths, interests and developmental progress in various areas, such as cognitive skills, social-emotional well-being and physical development. Both Uzbekistan and Finland value observation as a tool for assessment to customize teaching methods according to each child's unique needs.

Despite these similarities, there are also distinctions in the assessment tools employed in education in the two countries. Notably, Uzbekistan may rely more on tests to evaluate children's academic readiness and accomplishments – reflecting a preference for formalized assessment within its education system. Conversely, Finland leans away from testing in preschool education opting for more comprehensive and child-focused evaluation methods instead.

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