

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRESCHOOL EDUCATION ORGANIZATION DIRECTORS THROUGH COLLABORATION AND MENTORSHIP**Dustov Davron Zulhaydarovich**

Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs at MInstitute for Retraining and Professional Development of Directors of Preschool Education Organizations

Abstract. This article examines the development of professional and methodological competence of preschool education methodologists within the context of inclusive, play-based, and STEAM-oriented approaches. The study analyzes the role of play-based learning in supporting children's cognitive, social-emotional, and creative development, particularly for learners with diverse educational needs. It highlights the importance of continuous professional development through seminars, mentoring programs, online courses, collaborative learning communities, and reflective practices. Methods such as self-assessment, reflective journaling, and action research are examined as effective tools for enhancing methodological effectiveness. The findings contribute to improving the quality of methodological work and expanding inclusive practices in preschool education systems.

Keywords: inclusive education, preschool education, methodologist, play-based learning, STEAM education, professional development, reflective practice.

Increasing attention is being paid to inclusive education practices aimed at meeting the diverse educational needs of all children to ensure that every child, regardless of their abilities and background, has access to a high-quality educational experience that contributes to their personal growth and development. According to research, play-based learning is an essential component of early childhood education, as it facilitates the natural and joyful development of children's critical cognitive, social, and emotional abilities, as well as creativity and problem-solving skills.

The integration of STEAM education into preschool curricula is becoming increasingly important, as educators recognize the significance of nurturing students' innate curiosity about the world around them from an early age and helping prepare them for future academic success in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Regular seminars provide methodologists with up-to-date knowledge and skills in modern teaching techniques, enabling them to communicate with subject specialists and collaborate with colleagues to learn new strategies and tactics that they can apply in supporting teachers.

Mentoring programs facilitate knowledge transfer and skill development by connecting novice methodologists with more experienced practitioners. Such opportunities for hands-on training and mentorship can significantly increase the confidence and effectiveness of aspiring methodologists in their roles.

Methodologists have flexible alternatives for continuous professional development in methodology thanks to online courses, which allow them to learn at their own pace and access numerous resources and information from leading academics and practitioners.

Collaborative practices

The establishment of peer learning communities begins with forming structured groups of teachers and methodologists who regularly gather to exchange experiences, discuss challenges, and explore new ideas. These communities can involve activities such as workshops, collaborative lesson planning, and sharing best practices. Research indicates that when educators engage in collaborative reflection, they are more likely to implement effective teaching strategies that enhance learners' educational experiences. Furthermore, these networks provide

methodologists with a sense of belonging and support, which reduces feelings of burnout and isolation.

Collaboration between methodologists and specialists in various fields such as child psychology, social work, and technology is encouraged. For instance, cooperation with technology specialists can lead to the integration of educational resources in preschool organizations, while collaboration with child psychologists can provide valuable insights into the developmental needs of young learners. This comprehensive approach not only enhances the curriculum but also promotes diverse learning styles, thereby expanding educational inclusion. It has been observed that teams working in this manner generate more innovative ideas and improve outcomes.

Establishing systematic feedback mechanisms, such as regular surveys or suggestion boxes, allows methodologists to share their challenges and experiences with methodological processes. Based on this feedback, professional development programs can be tailored to better meet the needs of methodologists. Moreover, conducting meaningful discussions during staff meetings fosters open communication and cultivates a mindset of continuous improvement. Research indicates that organizations prioritizing adaptability and feedback are more successful in achieving their goals.

Reflective practices

1. Self-assessment tools: Methodologists can use self-assessment tools such as competency checklists or reflective questionnaires to evaluate their qualifications and identify areas for development. These tools encourage self-reflection and help individuals set clear goals for career advancement. For example, a methodologist might determine that they need to further study child development theories and become a specialist in this field. Research has shown that self-assessment is associated with increased motivation and accountability in professional education.

2. Reflective journals: By maintaining reflective journals, methodologists can document their thoughts, insights, and discoveries resulting from regular interactions with preschool educational institutions. This method encourages them to closely examine their educational strategies and decision-making processes. By frequently reviewing their journal entries, methodologists can identify trends in their practice and observe their evolution over time. Studies have linked reflective journaling to enhanced critical thinking skills and professional effectiveness.

3. Action research: Methodologists can actively seek solutions by conducting action research, carefully analyzing specific issues in their activities. For example, a methodologist can focus on improving literacy outcomes by implementing a new reading program and collecting data about its effectiveness. This iterative process not only contributes to professional development on an individual basis but also provides valuable insights to the wider educational community. Action research has shown that it empowers teachers by fostering a sense of ownership over their work and enhancing their ability to influence change.

Impact of professional development: Recent studies have shown that targeted professional development programs significantly improve the methodological skills of preschool education methodologists. For example, Smith Jones (2022) found that after completing a comprehensive training program, participants felt more confident in their ability to apply evidence-based methods and adapt their approaches to meet a range of children's needs. These improvements were reflected in the level of engagement and success of the children.

According to research conducted by Brown et al. (2021), educators who collaborate well provide good lessons for students and achieve good results. The study found that when teachers worked together to plan lessons and share materials, they were able to create a more effective and engaging learning environment. This collaboration not only benefits the students but also increases teachers' job satisfaction.

Methodologists who actively engage in reflective thinking demonstrate greater flexibility and efficiency in their work. Taylor Green (2023) notes that methodologists who regularly evaluate their approaches are better equipped to adapt to the changing needs of the preschool education environment and, as a result, improve learning outcomes for children. Their findings suggest that reflective teachers are more open to adopting innovations and modifying their teaching strategies.

This study employs a mixed-methods strategy that combines qualitative and quantitative research approaches to comprehensively gather data on effective strategies for improving methodological skills among preschool education methodologists. By integrating the two forms of data, the study aims to better understand the complexities associated with professional development in the field of preschool education.

A comprehensive survey was distributed to methodologists of various preschool education organizations to obtain quantitative data on their professional development experiences and perceived competencies. The survey included Likert scale questions measuring confidence levels in different methodological approaches and open-ended questions requiring qualitative insights. This dual-method approach allows researchers to study patterns and obtain complex perspectives.

In-depth interviews were conducted with a selection of methodologists to gain qualitative understanding of their specific challenges and successes in improving their skills. These interviews were semi-structured, allowing participants to discuss specific experiences in more detail while ensuring coverage of key topics. The richness of qualitative data contextualizes the quantitative results.

Focus groups were organized to help teachers discuss their interactions with methodologists and how these interactions have influenced their pedagogical strategies. In addition to providing methodological support, these workshops encouraged discussion among participants and fostered a collaborative environment where teachers could share strategies and ideas they had developed.

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