

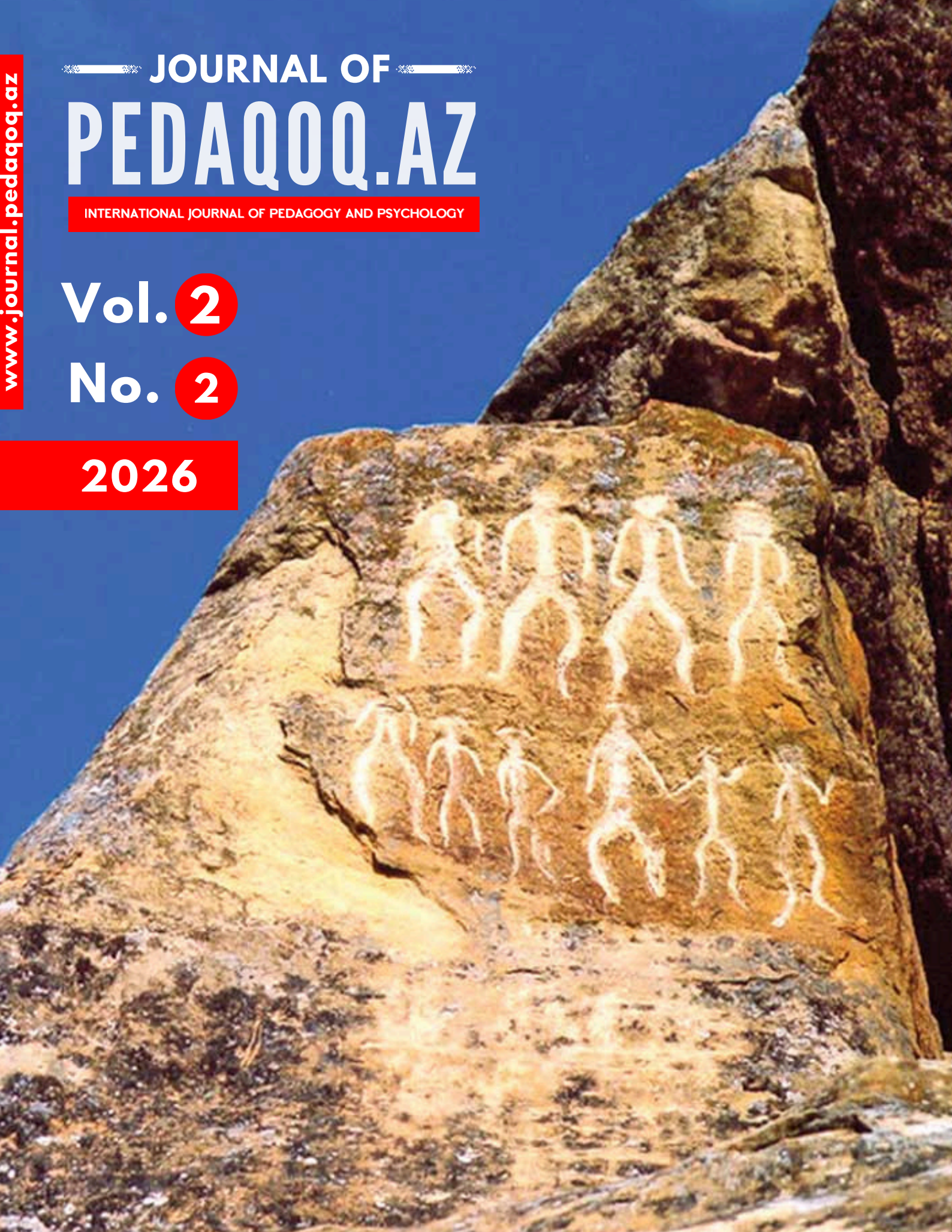
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THE ROLE OF ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN FORMING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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Keywords: ecological education, environmental awareness, primary school children, environmental responsibility, sustainability, pedagogy, ecological upbringing, environmental behavior

Abstract. Environmental problems such as climate change, pollution, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and excessive consumption of natural resources have become some of the most serious global challenges of the XXI century. In this context, ecological education plays a crucial role in preparing younger generations to develop environmentally responsible attitudes and sustainable lifestyles. Primary school age is considered one of the most important stages in the formation of children's ecological consciousness, moral values, and behavioral habits. This article examines the pedagogical significance of ecological education in the development of environmental awareness among primary school children. The study analyzes the psychological and educational foundations of ecological upbringing, the influence of school and family environments, and the role of practical ecological activities in shaping environmentally responsible behavior. Particular attention is paid to the integration of ecological education into the modern educational process and the importance of experiential learning methods. The findings indicate that systematic ecological education contributes significantly to the development of environmental responsibility, social awareness, critical thinking, and sustainable behavioral patterns among children.

Introduction

The modern world is facing numerous environmental challenges that threaten both natural ecosystems and human well-being. Climate change, air and water pollution, deforestation, global warming, and the rapid depletion of natural resources have intensified concerns regarding environmental sustainability. These problems demonstrate that environmental protection is no longer solely the responsibility of governments and international organizations; it has become a shared social responsibility that requires active participation from every individual. In this context, ecological education has emerged as one of the essential components of modern pedagogy. Ecological education aims not only to provide knowledge about nature and environmental problems but also to develop environmental ethics, ecological culture, and responsible behavior among younger generations.

Educational institutions play a particularly important role in shaping children's environmental awareness because habits, values, and attitudes formed during childhood often continue throughout adult life. Primary school age is considered a sensitive period for moral and social development. During this stage, children begin to understand the relationship between humans and nature, develop empathy toward living organisms, and form behavioral patterns influenced by family, school, and society.

Therefore, ecological upbringing at the primary education level has long-term significance for the formation of environmentally conscious citizens. The growing influence of technology and urbanization has also changed children's relationship with nature. Many children spend less time outdoors and have limited direct contact with natural environments.

As a result, schools increasingly carry the responsibility of creating opportunities for environmental exploration, ecological activities, and nature-based learning experiences.

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Main part. Ecological education is a multidisciplinary educational process aimed at developing environmental knowledge, ecological values, and sustainable behavioral habits. From a pedagogical perspective, ecological upbringing combines cognitive, emotional, ethical, and practical dimensions of learning. The cognitive dimension involves providing children with basic information about ecosystems, plants, animals, natural resources, environmental pollution, and sustainability. However, ecological education cannot be limited solely to theoretical knowledge. Modern pedagogical theories emphasize that environmental awareness develops more effectively when knowledge is combined with emotional engagement and practical experience. Psychological studies demonstrate that children develop stronger environmental responsibility when they establish emotional connections with nature. Experiences such as observing plants, caring for animals, planting trees, or participating in recycling activities help children perceive themselves as active participants in environmental protection. Constructivist learning theories also support experiential ecological education. According to these approaches, children learn more effectively through direct interaction with their environment rather than passive memorization of information. Therefore, ecological education should involve active participation, observation, experimentation, and problem-solving activities. Another important theoretical aspect concerns the moral dimension of ecological upbringing. Environmental education contributes to the development of ethical responsibility, empathy, cooperation, and social consciousness. Children gradually learn that their actions influence not only their immediate surroundings but also the broader ecological balance of society and the planet [UNESCO, 2020].

Schools play a central role in shaping children's ecological culture and environmental responsibility. Educational institutions provide structured opportunities for environmental learning and create conditions in which ecological values may become part of children's everyday behavior. One of the primary functions of schools is integrating ecological topics into the curriculum. Subjects such as science, geography, literature, and social studies can incorporate environmental themes and

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sustainability concepts. Interdisciplinary approaches allow children to understand ecological issues from multiple perspectives [Chawla, 2007]. In addition to theoretical instruction, schools should organize practical environmental activities. Activities such as tree planting campaigns, recycling projects, environmental clubs, school gardens, and clean-up events encourage active participation and strengthen ecological awareness. Through such experiences, children learn responsibility, teamwork, and environmental ethics. Teachers also play an important role as behavioral models. Children often imitate adults' attitudes toward nature and environmental protection. Educators who demonstrate environmentally responsible behavior may positively influence students' ecological values and habits.

Modern pedagogy increasingly emphasizes project-based and experiential learning approaches in ecological education. Instead of relying exclusively on traditional lectures, teachers are encouraged to involve students in environmental investigations, observations, collaborative projects, and community-based ecological initiatives. Such methods improve motivation, critical thinking, and long-term retention of environmental knowledge. Furthermore, schools should create environmentally friendly educational environments. Practices such as reducing paper waste, promoting energy conservation, using recycling systems, and maintaining green school spaces help children experience sustainability directly within their daily surroundings [Wilson, 2012].

Although schools play an important educational role, the family remains one of the most influential factors in children's ecological upbringing. Parents significantly shape children's attitudes, habits, and behaviors related to environmental responsibility. Children who observe environmentally conscious behavior at home are more likely to develop sustainable habits themselves. Everyday practices such as saving water and electricity, reducing waste, recycling materials, caring for plants, and respecting animals contribute to the formation of ecological culture during early childhood. Family-based ecological activities strengthen children's emotional relationship with nature. Activities such as visiting parks, gardening, hiking, or

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participating in environmental campaigns encourage children to appreciate natural environments and understand the importance of environmental protection. Parental communication also influences ecological awareness. Discussions about environmental problems, climate change, pollution, and sustainable living help children develop critical thinking regarding ecological issues. When parents explain the consequences of irresponsible environmental behavior, children gradually develop a sense of moral responsibility toward nature. The cooperation between school and family is especially important in ecological education. Educational programs become more effective when ecological values promoted at school are reinforced within the family environment. Therefore, schools should encourage parental involvement in environmental projects and ecological awareness campaigns.

Ecological education is closely connected to the broader concept of sustainable development [Louv, 2005]. Sustainable development refers to meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In this context, education is considered one of the most powerful tools for achieving long-term environmental sustainability.

Children who receive effective ecological education are more likely to become environmentally responsible citizens in adulthood. They develop awareness regarding resource conservation, environmental protection, responsible consumption, and social responsibility [Tilbury, 1995].

Moreover, ecological education contributes not only to environmental protection but also to broader social and ethical development. Environmental activities strengthen cooperation, civic participation, empathy, and global awareness among children. Such competencies are increasingly important in modern societies facing complex environmental and social challenges. The integration of sustainability principles into education also supports critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. Environmental issues often involve interconnected scientific, social, economic, and ethical dimensions. Therefore, ecological education encourages children to analyze problems from multiple perspectives and search for sustainable solutions.

In the digital era, ecological education must also adapt to technological changes. Digital technologies may support environmental learning through documentaries, virtual simulations, interactive applications, and online ecological campaigns. However, educators should maintain balance by ensuring that children continue to experience direct contact with natural environments.

Conclusion

Environmental challenges of the modern world demonstrate the urgent need for effective ecological education and environmental upbringing. Primary school years represent a particularly important stage for developing ecological awareness, environmental ethics, and sustainable behavioral habits among children.

Ecological education extends beyond the transmission of environmental knowledge. It contributes to the development of responsibility, empathy, critical thinking, cooperation, and moral consciousness.

Through practical ecological activities and direct interaction with nature, children gradually develop positive attitudes toward environmental protection and sustainability. Schools and families share responsibility for shaping children's ecological culture. Educational institutions should integrate ecological themes into curricula and organize experiential environmental activities, while families should reinforce sustainable habits and environmental values in everyday life.

Ultimately, ecological education plays a vital role in preparing future generations to address environmental challenges responsibly. The formation of environmentally conscious individuals during childhood contributes not only to ecological sustainability but also to the development of healthier, more responsible, and socially aware societies.

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THE IMPACT OF THE FOMO PHENOMENON ON STUDENTS' ATTENTION AND ACADEMIC MOTIVATION IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

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Keywords: FOMO, fear of missing out, students, attention, academic motivation, learning process, digital environment, social media, cognitive influence, educational psychology

Abstract. The article examines the impact of the FOMO phenomenon on students' attention and academic motivation in the learning process. In the context of the rapid spread of digital technologies, social media platforms, and constant online communication, students increasingly experience anxiety related to the possibility of missing important events, information, or social interactions. This psychological state, commonly referred to as Fear of Missing Out, has become a significant factor influencing cognitive and motivational processes in education. The study analyzes the essence of FOMO, its psychological and pedagogical characteristics, and the mechanisms through which it affects concentration, sustained attention, task engagement, and motivation for academic achievement. The author argues that FOMO should be considered not only as a social-media-related behavioral tendency, but also as a factor that may reduce the quality of learning by increasing distractibility, weakening self-regulation, and shifting motivation from intrinsic academic goals toward external digital stimuli. Based on theoretical analysis, it is substantiated that the influence of FOMO on students' learning activity manifests itself in decreased attentional stability, fragmented cognitive processing, lower persistence in academic tasks, and fluctuations in academic motivation. It is concluded that the pedagogical understanding of FOMO is necessary for the development of effective strategies aimed at supporting students' concentration, emotional balance, and motivation in contemporary educational environments.

Introduction

In the modern educational environment, students' learning activities are increasingly shaped by the digital context in which they live and communicate. Mobile devices, social networks, instant messaging applications, and continuous streams of online content create conditions in which students remain permanently connected to the external informational environment. Although digital technologies provide broad educational opportunities, they also generate new psychological and pedagogical challenges. One of the most relevant among them is the phenomenon of Fear of Missing Out, widely known as FOMO. FOMO is commonly understood as a persistent concern that others may be having rewarding experiences from which one is absent, accompanied by a strong desire to remain continually connected with what others are doing. In student life, this condition may be associated with checking messages during lessons, monitoring social media during self-study, experiencing restlessness when disconnected from online spaces, and difficulty maintaining attention on academic tasks.

As a result, FOMO becomes an important variable in the study of students' cognitive activity and academic behavior. The relevance of this issue is determined by the fact that the contemporary educational process requires sustained attention, self-regulation, meaningful motivation, and the ability to manage distractions.

However, under the influence of FOMO, students may experience interruptions in concentration, emotional tension, and reduced commitment to long-term academic goals.

Therefore, the educational significance of FOMO lies not only in its psychological nature but also in its direct impact on the quality of learning. The purpose of this article is to determine the essence and content of the FOMO phenomenon in the educational context and to analyze its impact on students' attention and academic motivation in the learning process.

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Main part. The phenomenon of FOMO has attracted growing attention in psychological and educational studies due to its close connection with digital behavior, anxiety, and self-regulation difficulties. Although initially discussed in the context of social interaction and media use, FOMO is increasingly interpreted as a broader socio-psychological condition that affects the functioning of the individual in various domains, including education. In the learning process, its significance is especially visible because effective learning depends on students' capacity to direct attention, regulate impulses, and maintain motivation in the face of competing stimuli. From a psychological perspective, FOMO is linked to a state of cognitive and emotional preoccupation. Students experiencing FOMO often show a constant orientation toward possible external updates, messages, or events. Such a state creates internal tension and reduces the ability to remain mentally focused on present academic tasks. Attention, which is one of the key cognitive prerequisites for successful learning, becomes unstable under these conditions. Instead of sustained concentration on instructional content, students may shift rapidly between academic and non-academic stimuli, which leads to fragmented information processing. The impact of FOMO on attention may be explained through several interrelated mechanisms. First, it increases distractibility. A student who anticipates notifications or social updates remains in a condition of partial attentional readiness for external stimuli. This weakens deep cognitive involvement in the educational task. Second, FOMO reduces attentional endurance, because the learner's mental resources are divided between the academic activity and the expectation of socially relevant digital input. Third, it contributes to superficial processing of information, since frequent interruption prevents the formation of coherent cognitive structures necessary for understanding and long-term retention.

In the context of the learning process, attention is not limited to momentary concentration. It also includes selective focus, resistance to distraction, and the capacity to sustain effort over time. These characteristics are essential for reading, listening, note-taking, problem-solving, and reflection. When FOMO interferes with these

functions, the student's academic engagement becomes weakened. Even when the learner appears physically present in the classroom or study environment, cognitive presence may be reduced due to internal distraction and digital preoccupation.

The influence of FOMO is also significant in relation to academic motivation. Academic motivation is generally understood as the system of internal and external factors that stimulate students' learning activity, persistence, and aspiration toward educational success. It includes both intrinsic forms, such as curiosity, self-development, and interest in knowledge, and extrinsic forms, such as grades, approval, or competition. FOMO may affect both types, but most notably it undermines intrinsic academic motivation by redirecting students' attention and emotional investment from learning goals toward the digital and social environment.

Students influenced by FOMO may find academic tasks less emotionally rewarding than online interaction, where immediate feedback, novelty, and social validation are constantly available. As a consequence, studying may be perceived as less attractive and less urgent. This can reduce initiative, persistence, and willingness to invest effort in complex academic tasks. Instead of maintaining a stable orientation toward educational achievement, the student becomes more responsive to short-term digital stimulation. In this sense, FOMO contributes to motivational displacement, where the motivational center shifts away from learning toward the maintenance of online connectedness.

Another important aspect of the relationship between FOMO and academic motivation concerns self-regulation. Motivation in the educational process is closely related to the student's ability to set goals, manage time, prioritize tasks, and delay immediate gratification for long-term achievement. FOMO weakens these regulatory capacities because it strengthens impulsive checking behavior and reinforces dependence on external stimuli. The student may intend to study, but repeated interruptions caused by the need to remain digitally updated lower the consistency of effort and reduce the quality of task completion.

The effect of FOMO on motivation may also manifest through emotional

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discomfort. Students who are unable to check digital platforms during lessons or study sessions may experience anxiety, restlessness, or a feeling of exclusion. These emotional states consume cognitive resources and create a background of tension that interferes with productive learning. In this regard, FOMO should be considered not merely as a behavioral habit but as a factor influencing the emotional climate of academic activity. When the learner experiences tension linked to possible social absence, motivation for learning may decline because the educational task becomes associated with restriction rather than meaningful engagement. It should also be noted that the impact of FOMO is not identical for all students. Individual differences play an important role in the intensity and educational consequences of this phenomenon. Students with lower self-regulation, higher social comparison tendencies, stronger dependence on peer approval, and intensive social media use may be more vulnerable to FOMO-related academic difficulties. At the same time, students with stronger metacognitive skills, clearer academic goals, and better emotional control may be more capable of managing digital distractions and maintaining academic motivation.

In pedagogical terms, the teacher's role in addressing the influence of FOMO is highly significant. The educational environment should not ignore the digital realities of student life. Instead, it is necessary to create conditions that strengthen students' attention and internal motivation while helping them develop responsible digital behavior. This may include teaching time-management strategies, promoting reflective awareness of distraction patterns, organizing learning tasks that require active cognitive engagement, and encouraging students to connect academic goals with personal meaning and self-development. When the educational process is organized in a way that enhances relevance, interactivity, and autonomy, students are more likely to remain cognitively and motivationally involved.

In addition, digital literacy and psycho-pedagogical support are important in reducing the negative influence of FOMO. Students should be guided toward understanding how continuous connectivity affects their concentration, productivity, and emotional state. Awareness itself can serve as a preventive mechanism. If learners

recognize the ways in which FOMO shapes their study habits and weakens academic focus, they may become more capable of regulating their behavior and making conscious choices about device use during educational activities.

From the standpoint of educational effectiveness, the impact of FOMO may be evaluated through a number of indicators. In the cognitive sphere, these include the level of sustained attention, frequency of distraction, depth of information processing, task completion quality, and consistency of cognitive engagement. In the motivational sphere, indicators may include persistence in learning, readiness to complete difficult tasks, interest in academic content, orientation toward educational goals, and balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. A comprehensive analysis of these indicators allows us to conclude that FOMO affects not only situational behavior but also the broader structure of students' academic functioning.

Thus, the analysis of the FOMO phenomenon in the learning process demonstrates that its influence extends beyond digital habits and enters the sphere of cognitive and motivational development. It interferes with attentional stability, weakens self-regulation, reduces meaningful academic engagement, and alters the hierarchy of students' motivational priorities. Therefore, the study of FOMO is essential for understanding modern educational challenges and for designing pedagogical approaches that protect students' concentration and strengthen their motivation for learning.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it should be noted that the influence of the FOMO phenomenon on students' attention and academic motivation represents an important pedagogical and psychological problem in contemporary education. The analysis shows that FOMO negatively affects the stability of attention by increasing distractibility, weakening concentration, and reducing the depth of cognitive processing during academic

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activity. Its impact on academic motivation is expressed in the shift from internally meaningful learning goals toward external digital stimuli, immediate social feedback, and constant online connectedness.

An important factor in this process is the weakening of self-regulation, which reduces students' ability to control impulses, manage time effectively, and maintain persistence in completing educational tasks. The educational significance of this problem is intensified by the digital environment in which students live, where social media and continuous communication create constant conditions for distraction and emotional tension.

Therefore, one of the essential pedagogical tasks is to create learning environments that support attentional discipline, strengthen intrinsic academic motivation, and develop responsible digital behavior among students. Particular importance should be attached to psycho-pedagogical support, digital self-regulation strategies, reflective learning practices, and instructional methods that increase the personal meaningfulness of academic activity. As a result, the FOMO phenomenon should be regarded as a relevant factor influencing the quality of students' learning processes, and its study is necessary for the improvement of educational practice in the modern digital era.

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METHODOLOGY AND TEACHING TECHNOLOGY

EXISTENTIAL CHOICE OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN A SITUATION OF CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL CONFLICT

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Keywords: existential choice, individual, cultural conflict, historical conflict, identity, freedom, responsibility, existential psychology, literary narrative

Abstract. In conditions of increasing social, cultural, and historical instability, the problem of existential choice of the individual acquires particular psychological significance. Existential choice is understood as an act of taking responsibility for one's own existence in situations of uncertainty, value conflict, and loss of stable meaning frameworks. The aim of this article is to analyze the psychological mechanisms of existential choice in situations of cultural and historical conflict, based on the novel *Ali and Nino* by Kurban Said. The methodological basis of the study is a qualitative theoretical-psychological analysis of the literary narrative, considered as a model of an existential choice situation. The theoretical framework draws on existential psychology (V. Frankl, *Psychotherapy and Existentialism*; I. Yalom, *Existential Psychotherapy*; A. Camus, *Creativity and Freedom*). The analysis identifies key psychological mechanisms of existential choice, including the experience of freedom, existential anxiety, responsibility, and meaning uncertainty, which are amplified in conditions of cultural and historical conflict. The study concludes that literary narrative can be regarded as a productive instrument for psychological comprehension of the processes of existential self-determination.

Introduction

At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, a new direction emerged in philosophy—existentialism. It arose as a response to the crisis of European culture at the turn of the century. Industrialization, urbanization, social inequality, the First World War, and the crisis of humanism compelled humanity to rethink the world and itself. According to the law of cause and effect, in these catastrophic realities, new ways had to be found to address emerging problems across various social and political spheres. A search for a "new Noah's Ark" began in philosophy, politics, sociology, psychology, and literature. New semantic markers were proposed: subjective truth, personal choice, and faith (S. Kierkegaard); reevaluation of values, individual responsibility (Friedrich Nietzsche); borderline situations (Karl Jaspers); being and anxiety (Martin Heidegger); spiritual dimension of personality, attitude toward suffering (Viktor Frankl), among others. At the center of existential philosophy is the concrete existence of the individual.

Main part. Existentialism developed amid disappointment in rationalism, progress, and the positivist faith in science. Europe experienced a spiritual and cultural rupture, demanding a new philosophy—a philosophy of human existence that considers the inner voice of the individual in correlation with external influences at various levels. Existentialism, or the philosophy of existence (Karl Jaspers, *The Spiritual Situation of the Time*), focuses on the uniqueness of human being, the depth of emotional nature, and proclaims the idea of human transcendence of one's own essence. American existential psychologist and psychotherapist Rollo May defines existentialism as a cultural movement "capturing the profound emotional and spiritual dimensions of modern man, portraying the psychological situation in which he finds himself, and expressing the unique psychological difficulties he faces" [6].

The core category of existentialism is existence (S. Kierkegaard), which denotes the inner "being" of the person. It is determined by the individual's own will but has

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roots (e.g., according to Jaspers) in a certain mysterious “transcendence,” i.e., in God. Existence is not known but “illuminated” or “revealed” in “critical moments” (ataraxia, heroic deeds, death, etc.). For existentialists, this category justifies irrationalism and moral relativism [Философский словарь, 1963]. In other words, existence is the inner world filled with choice, doubt, fear, despair, and faith (in the future, in God, in love...). We can consider this definition through a literary text.

The author of *Ali and Nino*, Kurban Said (Lev Abramovich Nussenbaum—Essad Bey, son of Ibrahim), was an extraordinary individual. His biography and work were full of life’s cataclysms stemming from political changes in the early and mid-20th century. His life coincided with pivotal events in Europe: World War I, the October Revolution, exile from Baku to Germany, World War II. The chronotope of his life and work reflects his “split” identity—the changing of names, cultures, and languages—and embodies the existential tonality of the author’s fate. Reality was destructive and harsh, yet it became, in his work, a compensatory factor for everything he lacked—homeland, family, love.

Kurban Said embodied two cultural codes—Western and Eastern. The interplay of two different but interpenetrating cultures in one individual became a creative tandem, demonstrating both attraction and repulsion between East and West.

The novel *Ali and Nino* can be interpreted as an artistic reconstruction of a lost world—Baku at the beginning of the 20th century, a multicultural space where bipolar cultural traditions and ideologies coexisted. The text expresses Kurban Said’s nostalgia for his homeland. Emigration was not a voluntary cultural choice but a consequence of historical catastrophe, the whirlpool of which destroyed the lives of people, families, and nations. The loss of homeland became irreversible, turning nostalgia into a permanent internal state. Nostalgia for Azerbaijan becomes an existential dominant both in the author’s life and in the fate of the novel’s protagonist.

The narrative of *Ali and Nino* is told from the perspective of the protagonist, Ali Shirvanshir. He studies at the classical 6th-grade Baku Russian Imperial Gymnasium, where his class consists of “thirty Muslims, four Armenians, three sectarians, and one

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Russian" [Саид К, 2025]. This fragment shows that Ali identifies himself and others according to religious, national, ethnic, and confessional markers. He belongs to a majority Muslim group and gains exposure to classical European culture through the gymnasium and Russian teachers. Ali lives in two worlds: at home in Asia, at school in Europe.

Ali is an exceptionally positive character: a devoted son, a family-tradition preserver, a true Muslim, passionate patriot of Baku and the steppes, respectful to elders and servants, and proud of his ancestors.

The novel contains many vivid descriptions immersing the reader in Baku's everyday life. Ali recounts: "*Before me rose the Maiden Tower, pressed to the ground and covered with legends and guidebooks. Beyond the fortress began the sea—a faceless, dark, incomprehensible Caspian—and beyond it stretched the desert—jagged stones and low shrubs: quiet, silent, unconquered—the most beautiful landscape in the world*" [Саид К, 2025].

Here, the landscape mirrors both the hero's fate and the fate of the people—alternating between the quiet ordinary life and the destructive waves of history. Life between these two extremes shapes the characters' temperament: tender and poetic internally, resilient and loyal externally.

Ali also describes the arrival of his uncle from Tehran in the port, highlighting his past deeds and external appearance: "*He wore a cloak with a silk lining, a small fur cap, and boots. His thick beard and nails were dyed with henna as a sign of devotion to Imam Hussein... His small eyes looked tired, and his movements were slowed*" [Саид К, 2025].

This depiction illustrates a person deeply rooted in religious tradition yet internally weary. Henna-stained beard and nails symbolize religious devotion and spiritual identity, while his tired eyes and slow movements convey inner fatigue and life experience.

Ali's father holds a special place in his life, guiding him with advice: "*Your Nino is a Christian. Do not allow her to come to us with her faith... Be patient with her. Generally, love for a woman is not encouraged. A man should love the Motherland or war. Believe me: a man must care for a woman, but love must be on the woman's part. Such is the will of Allah*"

[Саид К, 2025].

Ali is a half-European, balancing European and Asian value systems. The character of Nino is omnipresent in Ali's thoughts and surroundings. Numerous epithets demonstrate Ali's pure and steadfast love: *"Georgian women are the most beautiful in the world"*; *"Nino Kipiani—what a beautiful Georgian name!"*; *"Soft oval face, moist lips, and a dreamy gaze behind her Georgian lashes"*; *"My beautiful Nino"* [Саид К, 2025].

Ali Shirvanshir is a reliable friend and loyal companion, supported throughout the novel by Ilyas-bek, Muhamed Geydar, and Seid Mustafa. Friendship in the novel reflects the Eastern aristocratic code of honor: solidarity, mutual support, and fidelity to one's word.

Ali acknowledges the value of his privileged upbringing but is swept by turbulent historical events demanding existential decisions: *"To me, Shirovanshir, a comfortable future was destined—to receive a lavish court title and speak of my tender feelings in the refined language of the classics"* [Саид К, 2025].

During a religious Shiite mourning procession (mukarrama), Ali voluntarily participates, experiencing spiritual identification and emotional immersion through physical pain, demonstrating both cultural and existential engagement. Nino perceives this ritual as formal and even barbaric—a manifestation of cultural conflict between husband and wife.

After Baku's liberation by Enver Pasha, Ali and Nino return home. The final chapters unfold against the dramatic events of 1918–1920 in the Transcaucasus. Defending his hometown from the Red Army, Ali Shirvanshir dies, having ensured Nino and Kukolka's escape to Tiflis via Ilyas-bek.

As I. Yalom notes, "One must confront death, freedom, and isolation directly" [Ялом И., 1999]. Ali experiences freedom, isolation, and death—the final chord of personal and generational tragedy.

A. Camus states that "The spirit is liberated only by thought that leaves it alone with itself, convinced of its own limitation and of the death awaiting it. No doctrine

can seduce it" [Камю А., 1990]. In the novel, historical and social pressures—social, national, political—create internal conflict for Ali. His final choice—to defend Baku—is both fidelity to an ideal and tragic confirmation that history allows little room for harmonious human realization.

Yuval Harari emphasizes that “The most important question for humanity is not ‘What should be forbidden?’ but ‘Who (or what) do we want to become?’” [Харари Ю., 2016]. From an existential perspective, this underscores the significance of conscious self-formation within historical and cultural contexts.

Thus, historical conflict becomes an existential situation in which the characters must define themselves. Ali and Nino’s love represents an intercultural dialogue constantly tested by religious differences, rituals, and divergent value systems. Ali demonstrates existential maturity: he defines himself not by circumstances but by his conscious choice within them.

V. Frankl identifies three paths for humans to make life meaningful: creative work, experiential engagement, and finding meaning in life itself, including suffering [7]. Ali and Nino choose to be together, yet historical bifurcation forces a separation. Nino preserves hope; Ali fulfills his existential choice.

Ali’s death is both a national tragedy and an act of self-determination. He remains true to his inner code, even at the cost of life. Nino’s decision to survive and preserve her child is equally existential. Ali’s death embodies the dual nature of historical tragedy and existential outcome of free choice.

As Camus asserts, “The spirit is freed when one faces one’s limitation and death without hiding behind doctrines or comforting ideologies” [Камю А., 1990]. Ali’s action—staying to defend Baku—is an existential rebellion, not against history but against the futility of capitulation. Through conscious action, he “creates” his fate.

The literary narrative of *Ali and Nino* reveals psychological mechanisms of existential choice—experiences of freedom, responsibility, and meaning uncertainty. The novel serves as a significant psychological resource for understanding existential self-determination in conditions of cultural and historical conflict. Existential choice, in

this context, is an internal self-determination process, intertwined with anxiety, responsibility, and the loss of stable meaning frameworks.

Conclusion

Kurban Said's novel *Ali and Nino* represents not only a literary depiction of love and historical conflict, but also a profound existential narrative reflecting the psychological and spiritual struggles of an individual living at the intersection of cultures, ideologies, and historical catastrophes. Through the image of Ali Shirvanshir, the novel reveals the complexity of existential self-determination, where personal freedom, responsibility, cultural identity, love, and loyalty become central dimensions of human existence. The existential philosophy reflected in the novel demonstrates that human beings define themselves through conscious choice made under conditions of uncertainty, anxiety, and historical instability. Ali's inner conflict between Eastern and Western value systems, tradition and modernity, personal happiness and patriotic duty illustrates the existential tension between individual desires and external social realities. His final decision to remain in Baku and defend his homeland becomes not merely a patriotic act, but also an existential affirmation of personal authenticity and moral responsibility.

At the same time, the novel emphasizes that existential experience is inseparable from historical and cultural context. The destruction caused by wars, revolutions, exile, and political transformations shapes both the author's worldview and the destiny of the characters. Nostalgia, displacement, loss of homeland, and cultural fragmentation become existential constants that define the psychological atmosphere of the work. Furthermore, *Ali and Nino* demonstrates that intercultural dialogue, despite contradictions and tensions, remains possible through love, empathy, and mutual understanding. The relationship between Ali and Nino symbolizes the encounter of East and West, tradition and modernity, spirituality and rationality. Their love becomes

both a personal and philosophical attempt to overcome cultural boundaries.

Thus, the novel may be interpreted as an important existential text revealing the psychological mechanisms of freedom, responsibility, identity, sacrifice, and self-realization. Kurban Said's work remains highly relevant in the modern world, where individuals continue to search for meaning and selfhood amid social transformations, cultural conflicts, and global uncertainty.

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FARIDJON RAHMONOV. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AS A PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN MODERN SOCIETY (pp. 27-33)

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AS A PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN MODERN SOCIETY

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Abstract. Inclusive education is often narrowly interpreted as the integration of children with disabilities or physical impairments into mainstream educational environments. However, contemporary pedagogical and social approaches emphasize that inclusion is a much broader concept connected with equality, social justice, human dignity, and equal participation in all spheres of life. Inclusive education aims to create conditions in which every individual, regardless of social background, language, religion, ethnicity, gender, physical characteristics, physiological differences, or socio-economic status, has equal access to educational opportunities and social participation. This article examines inclusive education not only as a pedagogical approach for atypical learners but also as a universal social principle that promotes equal opportunities for all individuals in society. The study analyzes the philosophical, psychological, pedagogical, and social foundations of inclusion and highlights the importance of inclusive values in modern educational systems. Particular attention is paid to the role of schools in developing tolerance, empathy, democratic values, and social cohesion among both typical and atypical learners. The findings demonstrate that inclusive education contributes significantly to the development of socially responsible, tolerant, and democratic societies.

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Introduction

Modern societies are characterized by cultural, linguistic, religious, social, and individual diversity. Globalization, migration, technological development, and changing social structures have increased interactions among people with different backgrounds and characteristics. In such conditions, education systems face the important task of ensuring equal opportunities and social participation for all individuals. Traditionally, inclusive education has often been associated primarily with the education of children with disabilities or special educational needs. In many educational discussions, inclusion is interpreted as the placement of atypical learners into mainstream classrooms. Although this aspect remains important, limiting inclusion solely to disability issues significantly narrows its true social and pedagogical meaning. Contemporary approaches emphasize that inclusion is fundamentally a philosophy of equality and human rights. Inclusive education aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination and exclusion, not only those related to physical or intellectual differences. It seeks to create educational and social environments in which every person feels respected, valued, accepted, and capable of participating fully in society. From this perspective, inclusion concerns not only atypical individuals but also typical learners. Inclusive environments teach all children to interact respectfully with people who may differ in language, religion, ethnicity, culture, appearance, social status, or abilities. Consequently, inclusive education contributes to the development of democratic consciousness, social empathy, tolerance, and mutual understanding. This article investigates inclusive education as a broader social and pedagogical principle based on equal opportunities and social justice. The study explores the philosophical foundations of inclusion, the role of schools in fostering inclusive values, and the significance of inclusive education for the development of modern democratic societies.

Main part. Inclusive education is based on the principle that every individual has the right to participate equally in educational and social life regardless of personal

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differences or social circumstances. The philosophy of inclusion rejects discrimination, segregation, and exclusion while promoting equal access, participation, and respect for diversity. The term “inclusion” derives from the idea of belonging. Inclusive environments are designed not merely to place individuals into existing systems but to adapt systems in ways that allow all people to participate meaningfully. Therefore, inclusion differs significantly from integration. Integration often expects individuals to adapt themselves to existing structures, whereas inclusion requires institutions and societies to adapt to human diversity. From a humanistic pedagogical perspective, every child possesses unique characteristics, talents, learning styles, and developmental needs. Inclusive education recognizes diversity as a natural and valuable aspect of human society rather than as a problem requiring separation. Importantly, inclusion is not limited to disability-related issues. Modern inclusive approaches encompass multiple dimensions of diversity, including:

- social and economic background;
- language and cultural identity;
- religion and worldview;
- ethnicity and nationality;
- gender differences;
- physical and physiological characteristics;
- learning styles and psychological differences [Ainscow, 2005].

Thus, inclusive education aims to create educational systems where no child experiences marginalization or exclusion due to personal or social differences.

One of the central goals of inclusive education is ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals. Equal opportunity does not necessarily mean treating everyone identically. Instead, it involves creating fair conditions that allow every individual to develop their potential and participate fully in society. Educational inequality may emerge from various factors such as poverty, discrimination, linguistic barriers, geographical disadvantages, or social stereotypes. Inclusive education seeks to reduce these inequalities by establishing supportive, accessible, and flexible educational

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environments. For example, children from economically disadvantaged families may require additional academic and psychological support. Students from minority linguistic or cultural backgrounds may need educational approaches that respect and incorporate their identities. Similarly, children with physical or developmental differences may require accessible learning materials and adapted teaching methods. However, inclusive education benefits not only disadvantaged or atypical individuals. Typical learners also gain important social and emotional competencies within inclusive environments. By learning alongside peers from diverse backgrounds, children develop empathy, cooperation skills, tolerance, respect for differences, and democratic attitudes. Inclusive classrooms prepare students for real social life, where individuals inevitably interact with people who differ from themselves in various ways. Therefore, inclusive education contributes to social cohesion and peaceful coexistence within multicultural and diverse societies.

Schools play a fundamental role in shaping inclusive consciousness and social attitudes. Educational institutions are not merely places for academic instruction; they are social environments in which children learn values, communication patterns, and models of social interaction [Slee, 2011]. Inclusive schools create environments where diversity is respected and discrimination is actively challenged. Such schools encourage participation, collaboration, and mutual support among students. Teachers hold particularly important responsibilities in inclusive education. Educators should promote equality, avoid discriminatory attitudes, and ensure that every student feels accepted and valued. Inclusive teachers recognize individual differences not as weaknesses but as natural aspects of human diversity. Modern pedagogical methods increasingly support inclusive learning environments. Cooperative learning, differentiated instruction, student-centered teaching, and collaborative projects help ensure that students with different abilities and backgrounds can participate actively in the educational process.

Additionally, schools should organize activities that strengthen inclusive values and intercultural understanding. Group projects, social campaigns, discussions on

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human rights, multicultural events, and peer-support programs may contribute significantly to reducing prejudice and stereotypes among students. An inclusive school environment also requires institutional support. Educational policies, curricula, teaching materials, school architecture, and assessment systems should all reflect principles of accessibility and equality.

Inclusive education has broader significance beyond the educational sphere because it directly influences social development and democratic culture. Societies that promote inclusion are generally characterized by stronger social cohesion, lower discrimination, and greater respect for human rights. Exclusion and discrimination often contribute to social conflict, inequality, and marginalization. When individuals are denied equal participation due to social origin, religion, ethnicity, language, or physical differences, social fragmentation increases. Inclusive education helps prevent such outcomes by promoting understanding, tolerance, and equal participation from early childhood. Moreover, inclusive societies benefit economically and socially when all individuals are allowed to contribute their talents and abilities. Educational exclusion limits human potential and reduces opportunities for social progress. In contrast, inclusive systems create conditions in which diverse perspectives and experiences enrich society. Inclusive education is also closely related to democratic citizenship. Democratic societies require citizens who respect diversity, protect human rights, and cooperate peacefully with others. Schools therefore serve as important spaces for developing democratic culture through inclusive practices. In the modern globalized world, intercultural communication and social adaptability have become essential competencies. Inclusive educational environments help children develop these skills naturally through everyday interaction with diverse peers [Banks, 2015].

Despite growing recognition of inclusive principles, many educational systems still face significant challenges in implementing effective inclusion. One common problem is the persistence of stereotypes and narrow interpretations of inclusion. In some contexts, inclusion continues to be viewed exclusively through the lens of disability, while broader forms of social exclusion remain insufficiently addressed.

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Another challenge concerns teacher preparation. Many educators may lack adequate training in inclusive pedagogical methods, differentiated instruction, or multicultural education. Without proper professional development, inclusive policies may remain theoretical rather than practical. Material and institutional limitations also create barriers. Schools may lack accessible infrastructure, specialized resources, psychological support services, or flexible curricula necessary for inclusive education. Social attitudes may further complicate implementation. Prejudice, discrimination, and social intolerance sometimes influence school culture and peer relationships. Therefore, inclusive education requires not only educational reforms but also broader cultural and social transformation.

Conclusion

Inclusive education is far more than the integration of individuals with disabilities into mainstream educational environments. It is a comprehensive social and pedagogical philosophy based on equality, respect for diversity, social justice, and human dignity. Modern inclusive approaches emphasize that every individual – regardless of social background, language, religion, ethnicity, physical characteristics, physiological differences, or economic status – deserves equal opportunities for education and participation in society. Inclusive education benefits both atypical and typical individuals. While it supports marginalized groups by reducing barriers and discrimination, it also helps typical learners develop empathy, tolerance, democratic values, and social responsibility. Schools play a vital role in promoting inclusive values and preparing children for life in diverse democratic societies. Through inclusive educational practices, societies may strengthen social cohesion, reduce discrimination, and foster more humane and equitable social relationships. Ultimately, inclusive education should be understood not merely as an educational reform but as a broader social commitment to equal opportunities and human dignity for all members of society.

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