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The female triad in the development of public preschool education: Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori

Abstract. The relevance of the research is based on the retrospective analysis of the foundational aspects of the public preschool education development. The research problem concerns the determination of how views on teaching and education of preschool children evolved in public institutions across European countries since their establishment (late XIX – mid XX century) and the specification of the contributions made by those pioneers. The aim of the study was to provide a comprehensive historical and pedagogical analysis of the creative activities and conceptual frameworks concerning the preschool education systems established by three founders: the Frenchwoman Pauline Kergomard, the Ukrainian Sophia Rusova and the Italian Maria Montessori. To achieve the stated objective, a complex of methods was implemented: theoretical analysis and synthesis, historical-pedagogical methods (retrospective and chronological-structural), pedagogical historiography, specification, generalization, and systematization. The article studies the main stages of pedagogical activities of each pedagogue of the female triad in the development of public preschool education, as well as the leading principles characterizing their pedagogical concepts. It offers both identical and specific positions regarding the contributions represented by these figures. Key progressive ideas regarding the organization of educational processes for preschool children in the context of modern preschool education have been defined as relevant for implementation. It was clarified that these positions included principles concerning the organization of public preschool education considering national identity, natural inclinations, talents and interests of children, as well as their psychological capabilities while performing different activities. The core role of the female triad's contribution addressed the formation of personality during early childhood and the guidance of this process by the pedagogue. The scientific and practical value of the conducted research lies in deepening educational materials within the educational component

Suggested Citation:

Lokhvytska, L., Martovytska, N., & Sheleh, N. (2024). The female triad in the development of public preschool education: Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori. *Scientia et Societatis*, 3(1), 61-76. doi: 10.69587/ss/1.2024.61

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“History of Preschool Pedagogy” for students majoring in Preschool Education (specialty 012). Additionally, it contributes to the course “Foreign Language for Professional Purposes” for students majoring in pedagogical specialties. This research enhances the understanding of historical developments and theoretical foundations in preschool pedagogy, providing valuable insights and knowledge for researchers and students specializing in pedagogy

Keywords: history of preschool pedagogy; France; Ukraine; Italy; the end of the XIX – middle of the XX century; children of preschool age; formation of preschool theory and practice

INTRODUCTION

To understand the development of preschool education and find effective ways to organize the educational process with preschool children, it is important to refer to historical origins in the context of this phenomenon continuity not in a single country, but in several. This approach will help to identify identical and specific trends in the development of preschool education systems, as well as clarify the main conceptual positions in the views of the founders of public preschool education. The peak of this historical-pedagogical phenomenon, which occurred in European countries, falls between the late XIX century – the mid of the XX century. Specifically, the development of public preschool education in France was inspired by the pedagogical activities and conceptual positions outlined in the works of Pauline Kergomard, in Ukraine by Sophia Rusova and in Italy by Maria Montessori. However, in the resources, these individuals’ achievements are usually presented autonomously, which does not allow for an analysis of the similarities or differences in their views, despite the fact that they were engaged in the same endeavor – they were founders of institutions for preschool children and developed their educational systems. This highlights the necessity for scientific understanding of the historical origins of public preschool education development in three European countries from the perspective of contemporary requirements, explaining the relevance of the initiated research. The focus of the scientific inquiry is on conducting a retrospective study of the pedagogical activities and contributions of this unique triad of women in the development of public preschool education.

Considering the modern challenges in the preschool education system, related to the updating of both its content and methodological support, researchers from different countries have begun to actively study the history of pedagogy to uncover “gems” that may not have been previously studied for ideological reasons (Ivanova, 2019; Raimondo, 2021; Scaglia, 2021). As E. Scaglia (2021) rightly noted, it is important to understand the relation between the “historical genesis” and the current educational system to identify advanced ideas and innovative views and implement them in the education of preschool children. One aspect is the study of the foundation and development of public preschool education in France, a globally progressive country. This is primarily related to Marie Pape-Carpantier (1815-1878) and her successor in preschool education, Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925) (Mutuale & Weigand, 2019; Palluau, 2021). Significant achievements

distinguish both the practical pedagogical activities and the scientific works of the renowned doctor and psychologist Maria Montessori (1870-1952), the founder of preschool institutions in Italy. The pedagogical system she developed holds a significant place in the global practice of preschool education (Hopta, 2020; Romano, 2020). Today, the methods of the Italian educator are used in the preschool education systems of various countries worldwide, including Ukraine.

Valuable for scientific understanding and implementation in the educational process of preschool institutions is the contribution of Sophia Rusova (1856-1940), the founder of public preschool education in Ukraine in the late XIX – early XX centuries. Her pedagogical activities and the formulated principles of preschool education span various periods and directions, including practical work with preschool children, teaching courses for students at the Froebel Women’s Pedagogical Institute and administrative work in the government of the Ukrainian People’s Republic (Dzhus, 2020). A significant part of Sophia Rusova’s work focuses on the theoretical foundation of the Ukrainian national kindergarten, the development of a holistic educational process, and the implementation of comprehensive education tasks for preschool children (Lokhvitska & Konstantinova, 2019).

Thus, it can be asserted that during this historical period, there was a dissemination of pedagogical ideas concerning the need for the development of public preschool education. These ideas subsequently defined the scope of issues for both the theoretical foundations of preschool pedagogy and child psychology, as well as various aspects of practical work in preschool institutions. However, the results of such thematic studies are usually presented separately for each country or in terms of the pedagogical activities and legacies of their representatives. There are only a few studies that provide a comparative analysis highlighting key positions, such as the pedagogical views of Maria Montessori and Sophia Rusova, as conducted by N. Yakobchuk (2023).

Considering the above, the scientific interest lays in understanding the significance and role of the female triad (Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova, and Maria Montessori) in the development of public preschool education in a holistic unity. This was based on identifying common elements in their pedagogical concepts and differences in their interpretations of the essence of preschool children’s education, development and teaching. This shaped

the research question of the presented thematic study. The aim of the article was to conduct a historical-pedagogical analysis of the activities and views on preschool education of the Frenchwoman Pauline Kergomard, the Ukrainian Sophia Rusova, and the Italian Maria Montessori, within a single framework, recognizing them as founders of preschool institutions and pioneers of public preschool education.

The tasks were as follows:

1) To explore the main stages of pedagogical activity and carry out an overview of the leading provisions of the pedagogical concepts of the founders of public preschool education in the late XIX – mid XX centuries: in France – Pauline Kergomard, in Ukraine – Sophia Rusova, and in Italy – Maria Montessori;

2) To outline identical and specific positions in the pedagogical concepts of representatives of the female triad in the development of public preschool education;

3) To define progressive ideas in accordance with modern preschool education, formulate key positions that are appropriate for implementation in the content of the educational component “History of Preschool Pedagogy” for students of the first (bachelor’s) level of education

majoring 012 Preschool education and on the course “Foreign Language for Professional Purposes” for students majoring pedagogical specialties.

The scientific novelty can be met in the presentation of the results regarding the extrapolation of conclusions about the meaning and role of the female triad in the development of public preschool education through the comprehensive prism of consideration: the identical and specific positions of Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori on the upbringing, development and education of preschool children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The scientific search was carried out in accordance with the following main stages. At the *first stage*, the issue of the research was specified in accordance with the scientific problem raised, the chronological boundaries (late of the XIX century – mid of the XX century) and territorial affiliation (France, Ukraine, Italy) were determined; the study of scientific and pedagogical sources (Table 1) from the outlined spectrum of issues and the primary analysis of the collected data was carried out, which made it possible to shape the goal and research tasks.

Table 1. Description of the ranking of the studied scientific and pedagogical sources

Territorial affiliation and personality	Source
Pauline Kergomard (France)	Cohen, S. (2006). Childhood at heart. Marie and Pauline: Two pioneers of nursery school. Georgieva-Hristozova, V., & Slavov, I. (2018). Pauline Kergomard as the founder of kindergartens and public pre-school education in France. Kabac, N. (2016). Pauline Kergomard pedagogue and writer: From the foundation of kindergartens to the writing of children’s books. Kergomard, G., Kergomard, A., & Luc, J.-N. (2000). Pauline Kergomard creator of modern kindergarten, private correspondence, reports to ministers. Kergomard, P. (2009). The lesson of things. Chapter XV, excerpt from the book Kindergarten in School (reprint 1886). Kergomard, P. (1886). Nursery education in schools. Kergomard, P. (1928). The child from 2 to 6 years. Practical teaching notes. Moussy, B. (2007). Between Pauline Kergomard and Maria Montessori. Mutuale, A., & Weigand, G. (2019). The great figures of pedagogy. Palluau, N. (2021). The socio-educational destiny of the Kergomard heirs (1914-1983). Plaisance, E. (1996). Pauline Kergomard and nursery school. Plaisance, E. (2001). Pauline Kergomard. Terdjman, E. (1992). The preschool system according to Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925). Vincent-Nkoulou, M. (2007). The creation of the figures of two pedagogues in the history of education: Jean-Frédéric Oberlin and Pauline Kergomard.
Sophia Rusova (Ukraine)	Dzhus, O. (2020). Issues of inclusion and special education in the creative heritage of Sofia Rusova. Lohvitska, L., & Konstantinova, K. (2019). Psychological and pedagogical principles of moral education of preschoolers in the views of S. Rusova. Melenets, L. (2015). Sophia Rusova about the organization of preschool education in rural areas. Rusova S. (1924). Theory and practice of preschool education. Rusova, S.F. (1927). New methods of preschool education. Rusova, S.F. (1996). Selected pedagogical works. Tarapaka, N., & Martin, A. (2015). Views of S.F. Rusova on the problems of moral education of preschool children. Ulyukaeva, I.G. (2016). Concept of preschool education of Sofia Rusova. Ulyukaeva, I.G. (2018). The world process of preschool education development and its influence on the formation of domestic theory and practice (XIX – early XX centuries). Yakobchuk, N. (2023). Pedagogical views of Maria Montessori in Sofia Rusova’s scientific research.

Table 1. Continued

Territorial affiliation and personality	Source
Maria Montessori (Italy)	Frierson, P.R. (2022). The moral philosophy of Maria Montessori. Hopta, S.M. (2020). Pedagogical ideas of Maria Montessori in the context of modern educational space. Montessori, M. (1950). The discovery of the child. Montessori, M. (1957). The child in the family. Montessori, M. (2016). Self-education in teaching schools. Montessori, M. (2017). The mind of the child. Absorbing mind. Moussy, B. (2007). Between Pauline Kergomard and Maria Montessori. Pironi, T. (2011). From Ellen Key to Maria Montessori: The design of new educational spaces for children. Raimondo, R. (2021). Maria Montessori and Anna Freud: Links and influences between pedagogy and psychoanalysis. Romano, A. (2020). Maria Montessori: A complex and multifaceted historiographical subject. Yakobchuk, N. (2023). Pedagogical views of Maria Montessori in Sofia Rusova's scientific research.

Source: developed by the authors

On the *second stage*, a general analysis of the selected historical-pedagogical sources was presented, together with a brief biographical description of the lives and an overview of the key principles of the pedagogical concepts of the public preschool education founders in France – Pauline Kergomard, in Ukraine – Sophia Rusova, and in Italy – Maria Montessori. On the *third stage*, identical and specific positions in the pedagogical concepts of the female triad in the development of public preschool education were identified, and conclusions were formulated based on the results of the study. These conclusions will contribute to a deeper understanding of the educational component “History of Preschool Pedagogy”.

Justification of the applied research methods: *theoretical analysis and synthesis* were employed to study the scholarly sources concerning the research issue, which involves clarifying the historical roots of public preschool education in different countries (France, Ukraine, Italy); *historical-pedagogical methods* (retrospective and chronological-structural) were utilized to comprehend the prevailing views during the studied period regarding the development, upbringing, and education of preschool children; *pedagogical historiography method* was used to interpret the main perspectives of the female triad in the development of public preschool education and the principles outlined in their pedagogical works; *specification and generalization methods* were employed to delineate the fundamental conceptual positions of the pedagogical legacy of Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori from the late XIX – to the mid XX century, *systematization method* – in determining the leading ideas of the pedagogical heritage of the mentioned pedagogues in accordance with modern trends in preschool education and formulating conclusions regarding the importance of their pedagogical activity and isolated conceptual provisions in the context of the public preschool education development and outlining the prospects for further scientific research in the aspect of deepening information on the history of preschool pedagogy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A brief biographical review of Pauline Kergomard's life (1838-1925) and an overview of the main points of her pedagogical concept

Pauline Kergomard (1838-1925) is a progressive activist in the field of public education in France, the founder and theoretician of public preschool education, the main figure in the evolution of the shelter for children. Pauline Recluse was born on April 24, 1838 in Bordeaux in a Protestant family. Her mother died early, so the girl was raised by her father, Jean Recluse, who took the position of inspector in French schools, and her uncle, Jacques Recluse, taught at one of the most prestigious colleges in France at that time in Saint-Foy-la-Grande. Pauline spent most of her childhood in Ortega with her aunt, Zéline Trigant-Markey, and later began her education in Gironde. After she got education, when she turned 18, she became a teacher at the same high school she graduated from (Georgieva-Hristozova & Slavov, 2018).

In 1861, she moves to Paris and marries Jules Duplessis-Kergomard, a penniless man of letters who was disliked by Pauline's family and had “no particular taste for his work” (Plaisance, 1996). In 1879, she became the chief inspector of the so-called asylums for children. Her pedagogical views were formed in the 1880s and 1890s, when the movement for public education of children intensified. She actively made speeches at various conferences, met with the public, put forward various initiatives to struggle with child poverty and improve the position of women. Pauline Kergomard sharply criticized the work of shelters for children at the time and demanded the foundation of a new type of institution for preschool children, which should be based on the principles of respect for the pupil's personality, the development of their independence, creativity, etc. Pauline Kergomard called on city municipalities to provide suitable premises for children, to allocate funds for the maintenance of nursery schools and to improve their quality. She independently supervised the work of nursery schools, conducted classes, organized preparatory courses for pedagogues, noting the importance of psychological support and pedagogical guidance from an adult in the process of development and formation of a child's personality.

Working in the Ministry of Education of France since 1879, thanks to the support of the chief of staff of the Ministry of Public Education, Ferdinand Buisson, the pedagogue for 20 years managed preschool education institutions, which were then called maternal schools. She headed

the commission for the preparation of the project for the reorganization of children's shelters into so-called maternal schools and the commission for development of new programs maternal schools functioning (Cohen, 2006; Mutuale & Weigand, 2019).

1881-1917 – Pauline Kergomard was the chief inspector of kindergartens (maternal schools). She traveled extensively throughout France, providing assistance to ensure their proper functioning.

1881-1886 – held the position of editor of the pedagogical journal "Friend of Childhood" (*"Ami de l'enfance"*).

1886-1892 – elected as a member of the Higher Education Council of France, becoming the first woman to join this council. She was actively involved in reforming orphanages and establishing kindergartens under the new preschool education system.

1887 – Pauline Kergomard organized and patronized the French Union for the Rescue of Children until death, an organization that still exists today.

1897 – she founded a pedagogical union with the support of Ferdinand Buisson, Morris Boucher and other prominent French pedagogues.

1903 – cooperates with the publishing house of the journal for kindergarten teachers "Childhood Education" (*"L'Education enfantine"*).

1911 – organizes the courses for training personnel to work with preschool children; actively participates in the making up of the "New Dictionary of Pedagogy and Primary Education" (*"Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire"*).

Pauline Kergomard's earthly journey ended on February 13, 1925, in Saint-Maurice at the age of 86 (Kabac, 2016). Due to her efforts, the French preschool education system gained worldwide recognition.



Figure 1. Pauline Kergomard's portrait

Source: Geneanet (n.d.)

From 1886 to 1895, she actively worked on publishing her main work, "Preschool Education in Maternal Schools" (*"L'education Maternelle Dans L'école"*), in two volumes, which essentially became a teaching manual for pedagogues in French preschool institutions at that time. This work

summarized numerous articles by Pauline Kergomard that had been published in pedagogical journals. For her active and fruitful pedagogical work, she was awarded the Officer of the Legion of Honor.

However, as noted in the study by E. Plaisance (2001), although Pauline Kergomard's name appears "on the facade of some kindergartens", her pedagogical works and their significance for the development of preschool education remain unresearched. Streets bearing her name exist in Bordeaux, Paris, Lyon, and Dijon, as well as in Ducos (Martinique) and Casablanca. Since 1927, the Pauline Kergomard Prize has been awarded in France to teachers of maternal schools. On March 8, 1985, a commemorative stamp featuring Pauline Kergomard, with a denomination of 1.70 francs, was issued as part of the International Women's Journey. She had a large family – children, two grandchildren, and great-grandchildren – who shared Pauline Kergomard's views and continued her work, popularizing her pedagogical ideas and republishing her works: R. Kergomard (2009), G. Kergomard *et al.* (2000). As emphasized in the scholarly work by N. Palluau (2021), her son Jean Kergomard (1870-1954), grandson Pierre Kergomard (1897-1981), and later great-grandson Jean-René Kergomard (1926-2020) – these three generations of men worked together on improving the state of education through active methods and striving for positive social changes in society.

In Pauline Kergomard's works "Preschool Education in Maternal Schools" (*"L'education Maternelle Dans L'école"*, 1886) and "The Child from 2 to 6. Practical Teaching Notes" (*"L'enfant de 2 à 6 ans. Notes de pédagogie pratique"*, 1928), she addresses both the organization of the educational process in maternal schools and the content and methods of working with preschool children. She developed significant theoretical principles regarding the implementation of multifaceted preschool education, suggested forms for its realization, and outlined the characteristics of structuring the educational process in maternal schools.

Under Pauline Kergomard's guidance, a program for the teaching children in kindergartens was developed (Vincent-Nkoulou, 2007). It was designed for two age groups: junior (2-5 years) and senior (5-7 years). The program provided comprehensive recommendations on organizing children's daily routine (daily schedule, meal planning, room setup, selection of equipment, etc.) and the fundamentals of preschool education (activities for language development, reading, writing, arithmetic, singing, crafts and environmental awareness). Pauline Kergomard developed the content of intellectual education, emphasizing sensory perception as its foundation. She paid particular attention to the development of children's cognitive processes (memory, thinking, attention, etc.), observant skills, and the ability to compare, reflect, and apply acquired knowledge in practice. In education, she considered the cultivation of moral habits and "the contemplation of goodness" to be paramount. She attached significant importance to children's free activities, especially play as a process reflecting their impressions, and manual work. Pauline

Kergomard was one of the first to address the necessity of continuity between the family, preschool institutions and primary schools (Moussy, 2007). She insisted on providing systematic pedagogical and psychological training for future teachers of maternal schools (Terdjman, 1992). In her book "Preschool Education in Maternal Schools" (*L'éducation Maternelle Dans L'école*) (1886) (Fig. 2), Pauline Kergomard addressed various aspects of preschool education.

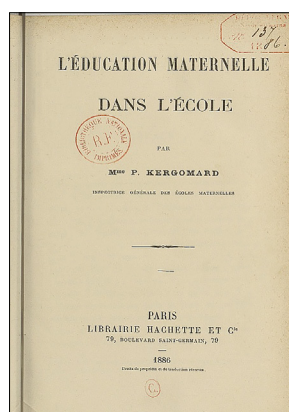


Figure 2. Front page of P. Kergomard's book (1886).
L'éducation Maternelle Dans L'école.

Source: Gallica (n.d.)

This work by Pauline Kergomard effectively presents her pedagogical concept. She places primary emphasis on three aspects of preschool education: physical, intellectual, and moral (Kergomard, 1886). Regarding physical education, she emphasizes the importance of maintaining a child's daily routine in nursery school, conducting hardening procedures, special gymnastic exercises, and respiratory system development exercises, which are urgent tasks for this age group. In intellectual education, Pauline Kergomard prioritized acquainting children with the surrounding world and its understanding. The educator emphasized supporting children's mental activity, which stimulates the development of their curiosity and desire for learning. To achieve this, she proposed the use of "subject lessons", which were pioneered in pedagogical practice by her predecessor, Marie Pape-Carpantier (Cohen, 2006). According to Pauline Kergomard, such "subject lessons" should focus on developing language skills, sensory perceptions, introducing children to nature and the environment, and teaching mathematics, providing children with realistic knowledge. Importantly, she underscored that these "subject lessons" should be integrated. According to her pedagogical concept, such forms of teaching must be methodically organized to stimulate "mental work" in children, encouraging them to seek out new knowledge. Additionally, Pauline Kergomard provided methodological advice regarding the frequency of conducting "subject lessons" – scheduled once a week, with spontaneous sessions initiated by children aimed at satisfying their emerging interests and needs (for example, during walks, observations, etc.). In organizing "subject lessons", educators must thoroughly prepare, consider all

stages of implementation, and provide didactic materials. The main requirement is to consider the psychological characteristics and capabilities of children during each "subject lesson" (Kergomard, 1886).

Regarding moral education, Pauline Kergomard placed special emphasis on fostering moral feelings and habits in children. She noted that this should primarily occur in maternal schools rather than within the family, as children have the opportunity to interact with peers and express feelings of trust, friendliness, and sincerity towards them. She emphasized the importance of instilling in children an awareness of adhering to societal rules and developing independence in decision-making. To achieve this, she recommended methods such as demonstrating and explaining the best moral examples. Pauline Kergomard emphasized that moral education would be successful only if children's life needs were fully met in maternal schools, which included considering their interests, needs and inquiries. According to the educator, every activity of the child should have a clear goal defined by the teacher, based on the children's interests and the support of their attention (Kergomard, 1886). Her pedagogical work "The child from 2 to 6 years old: Practical lesson outlines" (*L'enfant de 2 à 6 ans. Notes de pédagogie pratique*), which had its third edition in 1928 (Fig. 3), encapsulates Pauline Kergomard's views on organizing play activities in maternal schools.

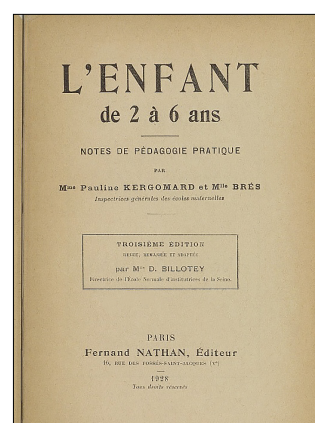


Figure 3. Front page of P. Kergomard's book (1928).
L'enfant de 2 à 6 ans. Notes de pédagogie pratique.

Source: Gallica (n.d.)

Pauline Kergomard advised for engaging children in various types of games: creative, imitative, free play, as well as games with rules overseen by adults (Kergomard, 1928). The educator emphasized the importance of play activities in shaping the personality of preschoolers and preparing them for life in society. According to her, games develop social interests in children and contribute to their physical, intellectual, and moral development. She placed significant emphasis on cultivating sociability and communication skills during the play. Pauline Kergomard also highlighted the necessity of providing an appropriate play environment with a sufficient variety of toys that stimulate children's

imagination (Kergomard, 1928). In this regard, educators are encouraged to demonstrate creativity and inventiveness by either making toys themselves or providing children with materials that can inspire them to create their own versions, known as material toys. Pauline Kergomard's progressive stance on this matter involved integrating play activities as a mandatory component into the curriculum of maternal schools. She developed both the content and methodology for guiding children through various types of games. Pauline Kergomard's pedagogical ideas gained wide popularity not only in France but also internationally. For instance, Sophia Rusova, the founder of public preschool education in Ukraine, was deeply inspired by the French system of early childhood education, which included Kergomard's concepts.

A brief biographical review of the Sophia Rusova's life (1838-1925) and an overview of the main points of her pedagogical concept

Sophia Lindfors (maiden name) was born on February 18, 1856, in the village of Oleshnia in Chernihiv region, Ukraine, into an aristocratic family. Her father, Fedor Lindfors, was a Swedish officer who served as an adjutant to the governor of Omsk, and her mother, Hanna Jerve, was French. Sophia was the fifth child in the family. However, tragedy struck the Lindfors' family when their older children, Natalia and Volodymyr (Volodia), passed away, preceding Sophia. This deeply affected their mother, who soon died. Following these losses, Sophia and her siblings were raised by their father, Fedor Lindfors, with assistance from her older sister Maria and governesses. When Sophia Lindfors turned 9 years old, her family moved to Kyiv, where she was enrolled to the Fundukleevska Gymnasium and graduated with a gold medal. However, in the winter of 1871, tragedy struck again when her father, Fedor Lindfors, passed away from tuberculosis. This event made Sophia and her sister Maria make decisions about their future lives and occupations. The same year, in autumn (September), they opened one of the first private kindergartens in Kyiv, which accommodated 20 children from the Ukrainian intelligentsia. Despite Sophia Lindfors' dream of studying at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, she was unable to pursue this due to lack of opportunities. Instead, she engaged in self-education, reading pedagogical literature, and traveled to study the experience of organizing kindergartens in other cities. During this time, she met Alexander Rusov, whom she married in 1874, becoming Sophia Rusova.

Sophia became part of the Ukrainian intelligentsia group and, together with her husband, was involved in publishing an uncensored edition of Taras Shevchenko's "Kobzar". In 1877, she was one of the founders of the first public library in Chernihiv. She had to endure investigations, arrests and imprisonment in Lukyanivska Prison for defending the rights of the Ukrainian people during the national revival. Due to this persecution, the Rusov's family was forced to leave Ukraine, briefly settling in Prague. During this time, Sophia Rusova compiled a reader for children, which was later published by the Kyiv publisher

Johanson. She also wrote stories for her three children: Mikhail Rusov, initiator and co-founder of the revolutionary Ukrainian party, co-editor of the foreign journals "Haslo" and "Selyanyn"; Lyubov Rusova-Lindfors, a pianist, doctor, and member of the Ukrainian Public Committee in Prague; and Yuri Rusov, a biologist and ichthyologist. In the 1890s, Sophia Rusova actively pursued literary activities, collaborating with the educational journal "Svitlo", and later with literacy societies in Kharkiv and Kyiv. After receiving permission to return to Ukraine in 1909, she taught in adult Sunday schools, which encouraged Sophia to engage actively in pedagogical work (Ulyukaeva, 2018).

Since 1910, while residing in Kyiv, Rusova became a member of the teaching staff at the private school and the Teachers' Association. During this period, she joined the Froebel Pedagogical Society and began teaching at the Froebel Pedagogical Institute, which started in Kyiv in 1911 and where she worked until 1919. The lectures given by Sophia Rusova to the students were published in the book "Preschool education", released in 1918 in Katerynoslav. This publication essentially presented her concept for establishing Ukrainian national kindergartens. In 1919, another of her books, "In the Kindergarten", was published in Poltava (Rusova, 1996). In 1917, Sophia Rusova became a member of the Central Rada, the first Ukrainian government. At the invitation of the Minister of Education of the Ukrainian People's Republic, Ivan Steshenko, she headed two departments: extracurricular education and preschool education, and became the chairperson of the All-Ukrainian Teachers' Association. During this time, she focused on developing a plan for the development of the preschool education system, including the creation and reorganization of kindergartens, and the establishment of institutions and courses for training educational professionals (Melenets, 2015).

Since 1919, after the establishment of Bolshevik rule, Sophia Rusova evacuated to Kamianets-Podilskyi. There, upon the initiative of Ivan Ohiyenko, the First Ukrainian University was opened, where Sophia Rusova worked as a professor, teaching pedagogy. The same year, she became the head of the cultural sector of the civic-political organization "Union of Ukrainian Women", which cared for orphanages and hospitals. In 1921, Sophia Rusova emigrated first to Lviv and then to Prague, where she continued her active civic work. She was elected as the chairperson of the Ukrainian Women's Council. In 1923, she initiated the establishment of the Ukrainian Higher Pedagogical Institute named after Mykhailo Drahomanov in Prague, which was opened later that year. In the institute, Sophia Rusova worked as a professor, teaching several courses. Her elder son and daughter were also involved in teaching activities there. She continued her work on preschool education, which was reflected in her works "Theory and practice of preschool education" (1924) and "New methods of preschool education" (1927), both published in Prague (Rusova, 1924; 1927). In 1929, Sophia Rusova was awarded a doctorate in sociology at the general assembly of the institute. While in emigration abroad, Rusova consistently

demonstrated active civic engagement. She initiated various campaigns, fundraised for Ukrainians in need, and supported the establishment of childcare facilities. She was a founder of the National Council of Ukrainian Women in Prague. Her portrait is depicted in Figure 4. Sophia Rusova passed away at the age of 83 on February 5, 1940, in Prague, where she was buried at the Olšany Cemetery.



Figure 4. Sophia Rusova's portrait

Source: Pedagogical ideas of Sofia Rusova (2015)

Tribute to Sophia Rusova:

In 1991, on the 135th anniversary of the birth of Sophia Rusova, a commemorative plaque was opened in the village of Oleshnya in the Chernihiv region.

In 2005, the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine introduced the "Sophia Rusova" badge, which is awarded to specialists in the field of pre-school and extra-curricular education.

In 2016, for the 160th anniversary of her birth, the National Bank of Ukraine issued jubilee coin.

In many cities of Ukraine – Kyiv, Poltava, Chernihiv, Rivne, Vinnytsia, Dnipro, etc. there are streets in honor of Sophia Rusova.

Preschool education institutions operating under the Sophia Rusova are named after her.

In 2009, a foundation named after Sophia Rusova was established, which takes care of the memorial complex opened in the village of Oleshnya in the Chernihiv region, to which her great-granddaughter Iryna Mykhaylevich-Tkachenko joined.

The foundations of Sophia Rusova's pedagogical concept are presented in her work "Preschool education", which is included in a collection of selected works (Rusova, 1996). These were lectures on pedagogy and psychology that she delivered to students at the Fröbel Pedagogical Institute. The scholar characterized the main principles of national upbringing for developing personalities: consideration of children's individual characteristics, adaptation to the nature of the pupil, reliance on the specificity of the country and nation, and conformity to the socio-cultural demands of the time. She emphasized the cultivation of mental traits and personal morality, and advocated for the

unity of family and societal preschool education (Ulyukayeva, 2016). According to Sophia Rusova, the implementation of these principles should be ensured by specially trained educational professionals.

Sophia Rusova also drew upon the study of pedagogical and psychological works by renowned educators of the past and her contemporaries. She paid particular attention to the work of the Italian scholar Maria Montessori, positively evaluating the principles of her work with preschool children. Rusova appreciated Montessori's didactic materials and her recognition of the child as a unique and individual personality, emphasizing the importance of psychological and pedagogical support from educators in child development (Yakobchuk, 2023). In Sophia Rusova's writings, she also explored the history of the spread of kindergartens (maternal schools) in France. Thus, her reference to the progressive experience of establishing institutions for public preschool education in France as exemplary practices also influenced the early stages of developing Ukraine's own national preschool education system in the late XIX – early XX centuries. You can see the cover of Sophia Rusova's book "Theory and practice of preschool education" ("Теорія і практика дошкільного виховання") (Rusova, 1924) on Figure 5.



Figure 5. Front page of S. Rusova's book (1924).
Theory and Practice of Preschool Education.

Source: S. Rusova (1924)

The book "Theory and practice of preschool education" ("Теорія і практика дошкільного виховання") (1924), published in Prague, is also a manual for the course students. It covers the aspects of their professional training for working with preschool children. It is noted that every kindergarten teacher should be familiar with the psychological principles of pupils' development, be able to conduct a psychological analysis of a child's development, determine temperament, systematize and summarize the results obtained during observation. She presents her views on the child as a personality developing in accordance with their natural talents, characterizes the mechanism of imitation typical of preschoolers, emphasizes the sensitivity of the development of cognitive mental processes (perception,

memory, imagination, speech, etc.) at this age; analyses the specifics of sensory development and insists on taking into account the typical and individual characteristics of children. At the same time, the scientist emphasized that the main thing in organizing the educational process with preschoolers should be a manifestation of love for them, care and concern for the growth and education of decent citizens of their country (Rusova, 1924).

Sophia Rusova's work includes a description of the program of work with children, the forms, methods, and means of its implementation. She suggested organizing various types of activities with children, including play. It is the leading activity of preschool age that is closely connected with others and has the greatest impact on mental development. In addition to play as a means of education, she insisted on the use of manual labour, nature (including the seasons), and "technology" in the process of physical and mental education. She advised teaching children to read and write from the age of 6, and to count from the age of 5. The specifics of working with gifted, unbalanced, or backward children were not ignored (Dzhus, 2020). A prominent place in Sophia Rusova's conception is given to such types of work with children as conducting observations in nature and excursions, using the literature, retelling and reading, communicating in kindergarten in children's native language, and engaging in children's creativity (drawing, modelling, singing, dramatizing, etc.). This formed the basis for familiarizing preschoolers with the environment and using "subject lectures" (classes) for this purpose, which are described in the book "New methods of preschool education" ("Нові методи дошкільного виховання") published in Prague in 1927 (Rusova, 1927). The cover of the first edition is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Front page of the S.F. Rusova's book (1927).
New methods of preschool education.

Source: S. Rusova (1927)

In this work, she considered the education processes (physical, mental, moral, aesthetic, and labour), training, and development of children in an integrated manner. Sophia Rusova provided methodological recommendations for organizing each direction of education. She especially emphasized on the fostering of preschoolers' "virtues and

cultural habits" (Rusova, 1927). The means of their education included Ukrainian folk culture, which contributes to the development of a sense of belonging to their nation and high morality, the development of freedom of self-expression (Tarapaka & Martin, 2015). In preschool age, a person's moral character and moral qualities develop, which influence other aspects of development. The family environment and the environment where the child lives have a significant impact on the process of child's socialization (Lokhvitska & Konstantinova, 2019). Thus, Sophia Rusova's work outlines the content of kindergarten work and, above all, the content of the educational process with preschool children. She emphasized the development of children's interest and curiosity for new knowledge, the desire to develop skills in understanding the surrounding reality.

A brief biographical review of Maria Montessori's life (1870-1952) and an overview of the main points of her pedagogical concept

Maria Montessori was born on August 31, 1870, in the small Italian town of Chiaravalle and was the only child in the family. Her father, Alessandro Montessori, was a high-ranking government official, and her mother, Renilda Stoppani, descended from one of the oldest families in Italy, distinguished for its literacy and learnedness. On her mother's side, Maria was the niece of Antonio Stoppani, a well-known Italian geologist, paleontologist, and naturalist whose works are still being studied nowadays. Unlike her father, a Catholic who was against women getting educated, Maria's mother supported her desire to study and helped her in this.

In 1876, Maria began studying at the municipal elementary school of Rio Ponte and immediately showed great academic ability and interest in the educational process. She had an aptitude for the natural and mathematical sciences, which determined the choice of an educational institution for her further education. In 1884, at the age of 14, Maria studied in Rome at the public school for women, Regia Scuola Tecnica Michelangelo Buonarroti (now Regio Istituto Tecnico Leonardo da Vinci). There, she studied Italian, history, geography, natural sciences, as well as accounting, arithmetic, algebra, and geometry. She was one of the best students. Two years later (in 1886), at the age of 16, after graduating from this educational institution, Maria continued her studies at the Regio Istituto Tecnico Leonardo da Vinci with the intention of becoming an engineer, although only young men could be accepted to study there. She also did well at this institute, especially excelling in mathematics. She graduated in 1890 at the age of 20, and got a certificate from the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics.

In 1890, Maria decided to enter the University of Rome to study medicine. At the time, this was almost unachievable aim, as only men were allowed to pursue higher education, especially medical studies. At first, she got enrolled in a course of studying natural sciences, then, in 1892, Maria entered the medical faculty. To do this, she sought permission from Pope Leo XII, justifying her desire to become a student of the medical faculty and later work as a doctor. She proved this by her significant academic success and

persistent laboratory research, which she conducted even at night, as attending classes with men was perceived aggressively by both students and the exclusively male faculty.

Maria was particularly interested in the experimental hygiene classes conducted by Angelo Celli, which later allowed her to conclude that epidemics among children were caused not only by a lack of medical care, but primarily by their social conditions. In 1895, she was able to gain clinical experience as a physician's assistant and was granted the right to join the Lancisian Society, which united doctors and professors of Rome's hospitals. From that time on, she actively studied psychiatry and paediatrics, working in a paediatric consultation and emergency service, and became a specialist in paediatric medicine. In 1896, Maria Montessori successfully passed her final exams and became the third Italian woman to graduate from the Faculty of Medicine with a degree in neuropsychiatry and the first woman in Italy to receive a doctorate in medicine. During her studies, she attended courses in experimental engineering and conducted experimental research in the laboratory, as well as observations in the asylum rooms of the Santa Maria della Pietà Hospital in Monte Mario (Rome). In 1897, Maria Montessori's thesis "*Sulle Cosidette Allucinazioni Antagonistiche*" was published in the journal *Policlinico*. This is when her professional career began.

At first she worked as an assistant at a university psychiatric hospital and later started a private practice because she was too concerned about the development of children with disabilities. To this end, she studied in depth the works of French psychiatrists Jean Marc Itard and Edouard Seguin and developed her own method of developing the senses in children with mental retardation. Maria Montessori travelled extensively at this time, speaking and publishing both nationally and internationally. She became known as a champion for women's rights and an advocate for the rights of children with disabilities and healthy children, taking care of their education. In 1898, she presented the results of her first research at a pedagogical congress in Turin. On March 31, 1898, Maria Montessori gave birth to her only son, Mario Montessori (1898-1982). He was the child of her love to Giuseppe Ferruccio Montesano, with whom she began working together at the University Psychiatric Hospital of Rome and who later became one of the directors of the Rome Orthophrenic School. Maria Montessori did not marry because it would have prevented her from pursuing a professional career. Therefore, she gave birth to her son in secret and entrusted him to the Vicovaro family, Vittoria Pasquali, who lived in a small town in Lazio. Later, when the boy was in his teens, Maria reconnected with him.

Due to family pressure, Giuseppe Montesano married another woman, and their personal and professional paths diverged. When Mario Montessori grew up, he joined his mother's research activities. The way of Maria Montessori as an educator began in 1898-1900, as her interests shifted towards education and she completed a philosophy course to deepen her knowledge of education and the development of a person's worldview. In 1900, Maria Montessori

became co-director of the Roman State Orthophrenic School for Children with Special Educational Needs with an attached laboratory, which was opened in Rome by the League of Women of Italy. In just 3 months of the school's operation, significant results were obtained in the developmental indicators of children who passed the exams for admission to a city school. This prompted a study of the factors of low development and healthy children, which led to the conclusion that a special methodology needed to be developed, which would later be called the Montessori "method-scientific pedagogy".

In 1903, Maria Montessori was appointed assistant second class physician at the Executive Headquarters of the Italian Red Cross (Croce Rossa Italiana – C.R.I.), with a military rank similar to that of junior lieutenant of the C.R.I. Territorial Hospitals. In 1904, she was qualified as a teacher and began lecturing on educational anthropology at the University of Rome. She also took up the position of head of the Department of Hygiene at the Royal Women's Teachers' College. She worked until 1908 and had the opportunity to conduct various studies in the field of education and to study methods of working with healthy children, which she would later present as an educational program for kindergartens. In 1910, the lectures given by Maria Montessori were published in a book called *Pedagogical Anthropology*.

In 1906, Montessori was invited to observe the education of a group of children in a new residential building for low-income families in the San Lorenzo district of Rome. And on January 6, 1907, a new type of institution, the *Casa dei Bambini*, was opened for children aged two or three to six or seven (with the support of Italian millionaire Eduardo Talamo). Up to 60 children from poor families with normal development were admitted to the center, with whom Maria Montessori worked according to the method she developed. The second such institution for preschool children was opened on April 7, 1907. Three more similar institutions ("*Casa dei Bambini*") were founded in 1908. Thus, the method of education developed by the German teacher Friedrich Froebel was replaced by that of Montessori, used in orphanages and kindergartens.

In 1909, Maria Montessori published the book "The method of scientific pedagogy applied to the education of children in orphanages" ("*Il metodo della pedagogia scientifica applicato all'educazione infantile nelle case dei bambini*"), in which she described her own observations and methods of working with preschoolers. This book was translated into 20 languages, which contributed to the global spread of her pedagogical views. In the same year, she launched the first teacher training courses based on the method she developed. Such courses were organised in 1910 and 1911 for representatives of different countries. In fact, it can be assumed that at that time she left medical practice to devote herself to educational work, including the development of methods of working with children and teacher training. Thus, in 1915, at the International Exposition held in San Francisco, she triumphantly demonstrated her own method to the American community in a

specially designed classroom “behind glass” that was placed in the exhibition pavilion.

After returning from the United States in 1915, Montessori continued her teaching work in Barcelona, Spain. In 1919, Maria Montessori resigned from her position at the University of Rome to devote herself entirely to the educational work that was of great interest to her. In Barcelona, she implemented an educational programme (the Montessori School) for children aged three to ten, sponsored by the Catalan government. However, in 1924, the new military dictatorship in Barcelona closed the Montessori school and its pedagogy in Spain declined, although Maria stayed there with her son until 1936. Together with him, in 1929, she organised the International Montessori Association (IMA) in Denmark, and set up a special school and college. Due to a difference in political views, the Italian government closed down Montessori institutions in the country in 1936. After the establishment of the Fascist regime, Maria Montessori and her son had to emigrate, first to England and the Netherlands, and then in 1939 to India, where they stayed for seven years. During this time, Maria Montessori's teaching method was further developed. While in India, Maria Montessori studied the peculiarities of development and early childhood education. In 1944, she gave a series of 30 lectures on early childhood, which were published in 1949 in the book “What you should know about your child”.

In 1946, at the age of 76, Maria Montessori returned to Europe and settled in Amsterdam (the Netherlands) with her son. In 1949, she attended the 8th International Montessori Congress in San Remo, Italy, where she demonstrated a model classroom based on her method. In the same year, she founded the first educational course for children from birth to three years, called the Montessori School for Childhood Assistants (“*Scuola assistenti all’infanzia*”). In 1950, she was awarded an honorary doctorate, a professor at the University of Amsterdam. In 1951, she took part in the 9th International Montessori Congress in London. In the same year, Maria Montessori was directly involved in the development and foundation of the UNESCO Institute of Education in Hamburg, which she was entrusted to head. She held her last teaching course at the age of 81 in 1951 in Innsbruck, Austria. Maria Montessori passed away on 6 May 1952. She was buried in the small town of Noordwijk near Amsterdam (Netherlands). A portrait of Maria Montessori is in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Portrait of Maria Montessori

Source: Maria Montessori (2015)

Maria Montessori is recognized around the world. She, like Pauline Kergomard, was awarded the French Legion of Honor and Officer of the Dutch Order of Orange Nassau (Moussy, 2007). She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize three times (in 1949, 1950, and 1951) and received six nominations in total. Montessori schools (kindergartens) function in different countries of the world and Montessori societies have been founded and are active (Denmark, USA, Great Britain, the Netherlands, France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Ukraine, Serbia, Canada, India, China, Japan, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, etc.). Her books are still being published and are popular today: “Self-education in teaching schools” (2016); “The mind of the child. Absorbing mind” (2017).

Since 1952, the International Montessori Association (AMI) was headed by her son Mario, who made an extremely important contribution to the popularization of Montessori pedagogy. After his death (1982), Renilde Montessori, the prominent pedagogue's granddaughter, became the AMI president. Honoring Maria Montessori: In Italy, a postage stamp was issued in 1970 to celebrate the centenary of Maria Montessori, depicting her in a garden with children playing. In 1990, Maria Montessori's portrait was depicted on a 1000 Italian lira banknote that was in circulation before the introduction of the euro (and she was the first and only Italian woman to have a banknote dedicated to her). In 2007, Italy reissued a commemorative postage stamp with a portrait of the world-famous educator in the foreground. The pedagogical views of Maria Montessori are presented in her numerous works, including: M. Montessori, (1950). “The discovery of the child” (“*La scoperta del bambino*”); M. Montessori, (1957). “The child in the family” (“*Il bambino in famiglia*”) (reprint).

Thus, in the work “The discovery of the child” (“*La scoperta del bambino*”) (1950) (Fig. 8), Maria Montessori advises providing children with as many materials as possible for examination and discovery of their properties



Figure 8. Title page of the book by M. Montessori (1950).
La scoperta del bambino.

Source: M. Montessori (1950)

In her opinion, children will develop their senses more effectively when they are involved in a variety of activities,

first modeled and then independent, leading to self-development. This can be caring for their surroundings, such as dusting and sweeping, watering flowers, caring for animals, and taking care of the garden (Montessori, 1950). Maria Montessori's development of the teaching method was preceded by long-term observation of children's behavior. She noted that children are able to concentrate on objects and phenomena around them, can repeat activities many times, and show their sensitivity to tidiness in their surroundings. The scientist stated that when children are provided with a free choice of activities, they are more interested in performing practical exercises and using the materials offered to them (Pironi, 2011). In turn, this stimulates the development of self-discipline, which occurs spontaneously at the appropriate stages of personality development. She emphasized that by working independently, children achieve a level of freedom that encourages them to become self-motivated in achieving new levels of awareness of their own activities. Montessori was convinced that recognizing children as individuals and treating them accordingly leads to the realization of the natural potential inherent in each child.

Based on her own observations of children, Maria Montessori introduced a number of practical exercises (such as walking, marching, greetings, polite and gentle movements to attract attention, etc.) that formed the basis of her "scientific method" (Maria Montessori, n.d.). Foremost, she insisted on arranging the educational and developmental environment for children to move around easily; children's tables and chairs should be light enough to be moved. In addition, it is important to place materials on low shelves that are accessible to children so that they can use them whenever they are interested and willing. All materials, toys and tools in autodidactic classrooms should be grouped into different zones (sections), creating a so-called open educational space in which children can move freely, thus ensuring their self-education (Montessori, 2016).

As for the content of the time spent by children in public institutions (baby homes), Maria Montessori established a clear daily routine and defined the types of activities. These include exercises that practice practical life skills: self-care – dressing, undressing, washing hands, cleaning, etc.; conducting an educational process with children aimed at developing speech: conversations, stories, discussions; intellectual tasks that develop children's visual, auditory and tactile perceptions and sensations and develop the ability to assemble, compare, sort objects; planned games that are held outdoors whenever possible; manual labour: clay modelling, children's design, etc. physical development activities: gymnastics, which can be done outdoors, movements with musical accompaniment (songs); observation of wildlife, etc. The teacher's role is to observe the children's independent free activity and guide their innate psychological development at an individual pace and taking into account their individual characteristics. According to Maria Montessori, this is the goal of education – the development of a free and independent personality, as the

child "has to create themselves" (Montessori, 2016). Montessori created didactic material for the development of sensory and speech skills, for teaching children mathematics, writing and reading, and for "space education" (Montessori, 2017). In total, it comprises more than 200 titles in various fields. For example, there were letters cut out of sandpaper and fixed on boards, moving cut-out letters, and cards with pictures and inscriptions. Four- to five-year-olds spontaneously engaged with these materials and quickly learned to write and read. Sometimes it happened even very fast, which was not typical for their age (Raimondo, 2021). Particular attention was paid to the sensory material created by her, which is still used nowadays in preschool education. It includes: a pink tower, a brown ladder, red bars, noise boxes, wooden bars, "golde" beads, metal pots, frames, a series of cards (made of paper, cardboard, fabric), geometric sets, stencils and contours, etc. Maria Montessori promoted the use of "pure categories of perception", avoiding the provision of knowledge about colours, shapes, sizes, spatial arrangement on the examples of natural objects (flowers, fruits, vegetables, etc.) (Romano, 2020).

The work "The child in the family" (*"Il bambino in famiglia"*) (Fig. 9) describes the Montessori method, which was one of her numerous contributions.



Figure 9. Title page of the book by M. Montessori (1957). *Il bambino in famiglia*.

Source: M. Montessori (1957)

The method of teaching preschool children introduced by Maria Montessori focuses on the development of their own initiative and natural abilities, mainly through practical activities – play, which is enjoyable and stimulates the expression of a wide range of emotions (Montessori, 1957). The implementation of this method allowed children to develop at their own pace, and teachers gained new knowledge and experience based on understanding the special characteristics of child development. Thus, the education system, according to her approach, is intended for children aged 1.5 to 12 years. However, the main emphasis was placed on the age of 3 to 7 years (Hopta, 2020). Teachers following the Montessori method started creating special educational environments to meet the psychological needs of children in three developmentally important age

groups: from 1.5 to 2.5 (3) years old, from 2.5 (3) to 6 years old, and from 6 to 12 years old. Children learn about the environment through activities that involve different types of actions: manipulation, exploration, repetition, arranging in a certain order, repetition, concretisation, abstraction, accompanied by communication. In the process of interacting with others, children develop moral behavioural skills and a desire to give help if needed (Frierson, 2022). Teachers had to encourage children in the first two age groups by using playful techniques to use their senses to explore and manipulate materials in their immediate environment. Children of the older (last) age group were already capable of mastering abstract concepts based on their

developed ability to reflect, imagine and create. Thus, Maria Montessori's pedagogical provisions describe the following aspects of childhood education: physical, mental, moral, labour and aesthetic.

Comparative analysis of the main principles of the pedagogical heritage of the preschool education founders in France, Ukraine and Italy: Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova, Maria Montessori

The next objectives of the study were to identify the identical and specific provisions in the pedagogical concepts of the public preschool education founders, as presented in Table 2, and to identify progressive ideas regarding the modern development of the preschool education system.

Table 2. Provisions in the pedagogical concepts of the female triad in the development of public preschool education

Founders of public preschool education	Identical provisions	Specific provisions
Pauline Kergomard	→ respect for the child's personality; → recognition of the child's individuality;	→ Paulina Kergomard developed a programme for children aged 2 to 6 and insisted on including reading, writing, and mathematics into it;
Sophia Rusova	→ free upbringing and giving children freedom; → development of children's independence; → taking into account the essence of the child's development and psychological peculiarities; → development of the child's feelings and perceptions;	→ Sophia Rusova considered the main task of education to be the development of children's national consciousness and the foundations of universal morality; the development of a creative personality capable of making a conscious choice and enriching various aspects of the national potential; → the educational ideal, according to Sophia Rusova's concept, is the upbringing of a harmonious personality based on love and respect for the best examples of national traditions; → developed a programme of work with children based on the principle of seasonality
Maria Montessori	→ creation of a developmental and didactic environment; → substantiation of the comprehensive upbringing of children; → socialisation of children; → management and support of the educational process in the preschool education institution; → psychological and pedagogical training of teachers to work with preschoolers	→ Maria Montessori introduced the method of sensory education for preschool children and developed special teaching materials for this purpose; → - focused on the sensory development, which is the basis of all mental functions; → described the purpose of "space education" of children; → outlined the tasks of work and pedagogy of early childhood (methodological support for the development, education and upbringing of children from birth to three years old)

Source: developed by the authors

According to the description given in Table 2, it can be argued that despite the presence of many provisions that were the same in the concepts of Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori, there are also differences distinguishing their originality and originality. We can state that there are few studies on the comparative analysis of the achievements of these prominent personalities in the development of public preschool education: B. Moussy (2007), N. Yakobchuk (2023). It seems relevant to formulate the main points that should be implemented in the content of the educational component "History of preschool pedagogy" for first (bachelor's) level students of speciality 012 Preschool Education and in the discipline "Foreign Language for Professional Purposes" for students

majoring in pedagogy. In particular, the female triad in the development of public preschool education is united by practical pedagogical work at the national level, participation in the movement for the protection of women's and children's rights, involvement in the creation of institutions for organising the educational process with preschoolers, supporting the ideas of the theory of free education; it is based on the natural development of the child, personal characteristics, respect for children, their early socialisation and development as personalities, and the use of play as a form, method and means of children's activity.

However, the following differences in their ideas are noted: Pauline Kergomard focused on working with children from the age of 2; Sophia Rusova insisted on the mandatory

implementation of the principles of nationality, humanism, cultural relevance and the principles of human values; the peculiarities of Montessori's pedagogy are that the didactic material she presented was developed and experimentally tested, which allowed it to be improved; there are elements of "space education" and methodological recommendations for working with children from their birth. In addition, the views of Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori contain a number of requirements for psychological training of preschool teachers, as well as pedagogical principles for organising public preschool education institutions.

Thus, it is possible to make summary generalisations about the contribution of each of the founders of preschool education in their country. Pauline Kergomard is considered in the context of the establishment of public education in France in the late XIX – early XX centuries. She promoted the ideas of public preschool education, emphasised the creation of maternal schools and developed programmes for working with preschool children there (Palluau, 2021). As rightly noted in the study by A. Mutuale & G. Weigand (2019), only a woman with a big heart could love children so much and care about their protection and upbringing; this is what makes her pedagogical heritage valuable.

The prominent role of Sophia Rusova, the founder of the Ukrainian preschool education system, involves both her direct pedagogical engagement with preschool children in pre-school institutions and her management actions to expand public institutional facilities and train professionals to work there (Dzhus, 2020). The fundamentals of the theory of preschool education developed by Sophia Rusova are the basis of modern conceptual provisions in the development of the Ukrainian preschool system, and her methodological guidelines are used to organise the educational process with preschool children (Lokhvytska & Konstantinova, 2019). The contribution of the Italian scientist Maria Montessori convincingly proves the efficiency of the methodology of upbringing children in the orphanages, which was based on a clear organisation of the daily routine, considering the age sensitivity in the implementation of sensory education tasks and teaching children moral behavioural skills, as confirmed by the studies of P. Frieron (2022), R. Raimondo (2021).

In particular, special attention was paid to the development of the senses, training children's fine hand muscles, responding to the touch of various objects, and practicing visual reactions using didactic material specially created by Montessori (Yakobchuk, 2023). The contribution of the female triad – Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori – to the development of public preschool education is invaluable both in terms of defining the scientific foundations of preschool pedagogy and in the practical work of preschool education institutions. Due to their pedagogical activity and publication activity, the fundamental basis of the preschool education system was founded, which was recognised not only in their country of origin, but also in the international educational space.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the conducted historical and pedagogical research contributed to the specification of the problem of the development of public preschool education since its inception in some European countries (France, Italy) and Ukraine in the late XIX – mid XX centuries. In accordance with the objective of the research, the article presents brief biographical information and describes the main provisions of the pedagogical concepts of the founders of public preschool education: in France – Pauline Kergomard, in Ukraine – Sophia Rusova and in Italy – Maria Montessori through a single prism of consideration. Based on the results of the analysis of the studied sources, by means of generalisation and systematisation of the material, it was possible to identify identical and different provisions in their pedagogical concepts; due to this, it was possible to determine those progressive ideas in the context of modern preschool education that should be added to the content of the educational component "History of preschool pedagogy" for first (bachelor's) level students of speciality 012 Preschool Education and in the discipline "Foreign language for professional purposes" for students majoring in pedagogical specialities.

Scientific and practice-oriented findings of represented female triad in the development of public preschool education should be revealed in accordance with the interpretation of the current fundamental and regulatory framework, outlining the areas of preschool education, psychological characteristics of children's development and methodological recommendations for teachers of preschool education institutions. The research initiates the idea of a comparative study of the history of preschool pedagogy and partially of child psychology (preschool psychology) for a holistic understanding of the fundamental views of European preschool professionals in order to prepare new information materials for specialists in this field. Prospects for further thematic work are to clarify the provisions of the pedagogical concepts of the founders of public preschool education in other European countries in the late XIX – early XX centuries and to conduct a comparative analysis to identify common trends and specific features that were typical of each educational system.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The stimulus for the study was a review of the literature and source base of the problem and a theoretical analysis of the historical and pedagogical heritage of the late XIX – mid XX centuries. It was on the basis of the results of scientific research by foreign and Ukrainian colleagues, for which we express our respect (see the list of references below), that the idea arose to conduct our own historical research work to synergise the positions of the outstanding founders of preschool education Pauline Kergomard, Sophia Rusova and Maria Montessori.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

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Жіноча тріада в розвитку суспільної дошкільної освіти: Поліна Кергомар, Софія Русова і Марія Монтезорі

Анотація. Актуальність презентованого дослідження ґрунтується на ретроспективному аналізі засадничих аспектів становлення суспільної дошкільної освіти. Дослідницька проблема стосується визначення, як розвивалися погляди на навчання і виховання дітей дошкільного віку в суспільних інституціях країн Європи з часу їх заснування (кінець XIX – середина XX століття) та конкретизації внеску тих постатей, якими це започатковано. Метою наукового пошуку було висвітлення в єдиній (цілісній) площині історико-педагогічного аналізу творчої діяльності і концептуальних положень щодо системи дошкільної освіти трьох її фундаторок: французьки Поліни Кергомар, українки Софії Русової та італійки Марії Монтезорі. Для реалізації поставленої мети використано комплекс методів: теоретичний аналіз і синтез, історико-педагогічні методи (ретроспективний і хронологічно-структурний), педагогічної історіографії, конкретизація, узагальнення та систематизація. У статті розкриваються основні етапи педагогічної діяльності кожної із педагогинь, які належать до жіночої тріади в розвитку суспільної дошкільної освіти, та провідні положення схарактеризованих ними педагогічних концепцій; окреслені як тотожні, так і відмінні позиції щодо репрезентованого цими постатями внеску. Виокремлено ключові прогресивні ідеї щодо організації освітнього процесу з дітьми дошкільного віку в контексті сучасної дошкільної освіти, які є доречними для імплементації. З'ясовано, що такими були положення стосовно організації суспільної дошкільної освіти із врахуванням національної приналежності, врахування природних нахилів, задатків та інтересів дітей, їхніх психологічних можливостей під час різних форм активності. Чільне місце в доробку жіночої тріади займали питання становлення особистості в період дошкільного дитинства і керівництво цим процесом з боку педагога. Наукова і практична цінність проведеного дослідження полягає в поглибленні навчального матеріалу з освітнього компонента «Історія дошкільної педагогіки» для здобувачів освіти спеціальності 012 Дошкільна освіта та з дисципліни «Іноземна мова за професійним спрямуванням» для студентів педагогічних спеціальностей

Ключові слова: історія дошкільної педагогіки; Франція; Україна; Італія; кінець XXI ст. – середина XX ст.; діти дошкільного віку; становлення теорії і практики дошкільля