

Research Report on Preschool Children's Family Education Concepts

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Abstract: This study aims to explore the current status and development of preschool children's family education concepts, analyze the popular family education methods available on the market, and provide effective educational strategies for parents by combining traditional Chinese educational thoughts with modern Western educational theories. The study further suggests that parents should follow the natural developmental patterns of children, tailoring their educational approach to each child's growth stage and needs, and employing a variety of educational methods. Additionally, parents should continuously reflect on and adjust their educational strategies to ensure they align with their child's developmental needs. By integrating traditional educational wisdom with modern educational ideas, parents can better support their children's holistic development, laying a solid foundation for their future growth. The study concludes by urging parents to focus on the diversity and flexibility of educational methods, avoid blindly following trends, and help their children grow healthily in a challenging social environment.

Keywords: Preschool children, family education concepts, Montessori, multiple intelligences, individual differences, educational strategies

1. Introduction

The family education of preschool children plays a key role not only in the intellectual development of children but also in laying the foundation for their emotional development, socialization, and future academic success. In recent years, with the rapid development of society and the economy, an increasing number of parents have become aware of the importance of family education and are actively seeking scientific educational methods. However, among various educational concepts, parents often feel confused about their choices. How to find the most appropriate educational methods based on individual differences has become a major challenge. In modern family education practice, traditional educational ideas that were passed down through history are gradually being forgotten, and parents often prefer to adopt current popular Western educational views without realizing the valuable insights contained in these traditional educational philosophies. This study aims to analyze the prevalent educational concepts on the market and integrate excellent historical educational thoughts to help parents form a correct concept of preschool family education. Based on the literature analysis of relevant research on preschool children's family education, this study organizes and summarizes existing preschool family education methods on the market, providing reasonable suggestions for parents to shape correct concepts of preschool family education.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Excellent Historical Family Education Thoughts and Culture in China

Chinese traditional family education has always placed great emphasis on the cultivation of children's personality and moral character. In ancient China, family education was considered a crucial part of a child's growth. For instance, Confucius' idea of "teaching according to ability" emphasized tailoring educational methods based on each child's individuality, capabilities, and characteristics to maximize their potential. Mencius further emphasized moral education, and his Five Virtues of "Ren, Yi, Li, Zhi, and Xin" (benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and trustworthiness) remain central to many family education practices today, focusing on fostering moral education in children.[1][2]

2.2 Excellent Historical Family Education Thoughts and Culture in the West

In modern times, Western educational philosophies have increasingly influenced Chinese family education. The “child-centered” educational philosophy of Maria Montessori and Jean Piaget’s cognitive development theory have greatly changed parents’ perceptions of child education. Montessori believed that the child’s capacity should be developed in a free environment through self-chosen activities and exercises. Piaget’s cognitive development theory introduces four stages in children: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational. Each has different thinking natures. Above concepts have been widely accepted and used in China; however, it still needs to be blended with traditional Chinese family educations in order to get closer to reality for most Chinese families.[3]

2.3 Implications of Excellent Educational Thoughts for Current Family Education

Excellent educational thoughts in history can enlighten modern preschool family education a lot. For example, Confucius’ idea of “teaching according to ability” remains crucial in modern family education. If parents can observe and understand their children’s unique characteristics, they can devise personalized educational plans that respect children’s natural attributes while deeply exploring their potential. Mencius’ moral education philosophy still has practical application value today, particularly in shaping children’s moral character and social responsibility. Montessori’s child-centered educational philosophy contrasts with China’s deeply rooted respect for teachers and authority but does not imply that these concepts cannot be integrated. In modern family education practice, the integration of Chinese traditional cultural emphasis on etiquette and moral education with Montessori’s child-centered approach can create a more comprehensive educational method. [1][3] Piaget’s cognitive development theory provides scientific reference for understanding children’s thinking patterns, guiding parents to avoid imposing adult logic on children and instead, through games and interactive communication, allow children to absorb knowledge by self-exploration.

3. Analysis of the Current Situation of Preschool Children’s Family Education Concepts

3.1 Popular Preschool Family Education Methods on the Market

3.1.1 Montessori Education Method

The Montessori education method is one of the most widely applied preschool educational philosophies worldwide. It emphasizes the autonomy and independence of children, encouraging them to learn and develop by freely choosing activities. The core of Montessori education is the “child-centered” philosophy, where teachers and parents act more as observers and guides, rather than transmitters of knowledge. Montessori education particularly focuses on sensory training and the development of fine motor skills through the design of rich teaching materials and environments to help children discover and solve problems through exploration.[4][5]

3.1.2 Multiple Intelligences Theory

According to the Multiple Intelligences Theory, proposed by Howard Gardner from Harvard University, insists that there is not just one singular intelligence but a variety of intelligences. Every child differs in certain areas of his or her talents, the theory holds; therefore, education should respect the children’s individual development and provide different learning opportunities for them. This philosophy is followed in family education, which enables the parents to opt for activities and courses depending on the interest and strong points of their child: music, art, sport, etc., thus contributing to all-round development.[6][7]

3.1.3 Forest Kindergarten Education Concept

The concept of Forest Kindergarten education has been widely spread all over the world in recent years. It is an educational philosophy stating that children learn through direct contact with nature, which enhances their spirit of exploration and environmental awareness. Parents and educators encourage children to explore and discover freely through outdoor activities, with respect for their curiosity and initiative. This method befits those families who aim at exposing their children with natural environment, independence development, and problem-solving abilities.[8]

3.1.4 Gamified Learning

Gamified learning is a new concept meant to inspire children’s interest in and active participation in

this process. For preschool kids aged from 3 to 6 years, playing games is the most natural form of learning. Parents can design some challenging yet fun games that would contribute to the acquisition of knowledge and skills by children within a relaxed and pleasant environment. The core of the concept "learning through playing" relies on the gamified type of learning where parents need to observe and further create educational strategies with respect to children's performance and interests in video games.[9]

3.1.5 Family Co-learning Model

In some families, the family co-learning model has become popular, emphasizing that parents and children learn and grow together. Parents are not only educators but also learning partners. By reading together, completing projects together, and participating in educational activities, parents and children can build stronger emotional bonds, while parents also continuously learn and grow in the process. This model not only focuses on children's knowledge acquisition but also on cultivating their interest and motivation for learning, laying the foundation for lifelong learning.[5][10]

3.2 Analysis of the Application of Popular Preschool Family Education Concepts

The major family education concepts currently popular on the market are diverse, each with unique perspectives and methods, but also with their advantages and disadvantages. For example, Song Min (2024) pointed out that the Montessori method emphasizes children's self-initiated learning and development through a carefully constructed learning environment, which strengthens their independence and stimulates curiosity. However, this approach may fail to address the development of children's social skills, especially when the home environment lacks interactive communication, leading to emotional isolation. Zheng Li (2024) argued that the advantage of the Multiple Intelligence Theory lies in promoting personalized education and overall development, but its implementation is challenging and lacks sufficient scientific empirical support. Zhang Yixin and Tian Jing (2022) noted that the Forest Kindergarten concept promotes children's physical health, creativity, environmental awareness, and social skills through education in natural settings, but it faces challenges in safety, academic readiness, and resources, making it difficult to implement on a large scale. Ren Xibin et al. (2024) believed that gamified learning effectively enhances students' motivation and engagement by increasing fun and interactivity, but it may distract attention and increase implementation costs, and it is not suitable for all subjects or courses. Excessive game elements may also lead to insufficient focus on the learning content. Dai Danhong (2024) argued that the family co-learning model strengthens the connection between family and school, improving educational effectiveness and consistency, but it may increase the burden on family members and face challenges such as communication difficulties and differences in family backgrounds.[7-10]

4. How Parents Should Develop the Correct Preschool Family Education Concept

4.1 Follow the Individual Development Laws

In the early stages of individual growth, especially between the ages of three and six, children experience rapid changes in both their psychological and physical characteristics. Influencing their developmental trajectory during this period can be highly effective. Children at this stage are primarily developing intuitive thinking to understand the world around them. According to Piaget, children in this phase tend to be egocentric, which means they often cannot perceive or understand other people's perspectives and instead project their own thoughts and feelings onto others. In this educational stage, parents should be very conscious to avoid imposing adult logic on kids but instead understand how their little minds work. Through guidance from parents, the early growth of children helps them master interpersonal skills and set preliminary norms of social behavior. In the physical development stage, from three to six years, children are refining their fine motor skills and their language development is improving quickly so they can verbalize their opinions and needs. Parents are supposed to establish different linguistic exchange environments and develop more positive interaction in order to promote children's language. As children are becoming self-conscious, their ability to self-decision-making and independent performance appears gradually. Parents should give kids as much freedom to decide whatever they want while still protecting them from danger, enable them to explore the things they do not know all by themselves, which would really be a big help in their development of confidence and being independent.[3]

4.2 Tailoring Education to Individual Needs Based on Actual Circumstances

With numerous choices in educational philosophies, many parents are either confused or at a loss for where to begin when trying to choose and apply the best educative approach for their own family. While choosing the proper educational concept for their own situation, parents have to fully consider cultural traditions, economic conditions, and the unique characteristics of their child. Parents can utilize the independent learning strategy advocated by Montessori for an introverted child to build up his self-confidence; for an extroverted child, parents can apply some interactive teaching strategies such as cooperative games or team activities to effectively develop his social skills. Throughout the implementation of an educational philosophy, parents should pay attention to the diversity and continuity of the educational methods. As children face diverse challenges during their growth, a single educational model is insufficient to address all needs. Parents must integrate various educational concepts and apply differentiated educational methods according to different circumstances.

One approach is behavior shaping, which helps children develop good habits. Nie Jincheng (2023) suggests that behavior shaping involves gradually reinforcing small actions that move toward the target behavior, ultimately achieving complex behavioral goals. Positive reinforcement can help children form good behavioral patterns. In emotional education, the “emotional guidance” method can be applied to help children understand and regulate their emotions. Du Hong’s 2020 study highlights that the emotional guidance method helps identify and support an individual’s emotional state, thereby fostering psychological well-being and goal achievement.[6][7]

4.3 Continuous Adjustment and Reflection

The implementation of family education not only involves the selection and application of educational philosophies but also requires ongoing reflection and adjustment throughout the practical process. During the teaching process, parents need to carefully track their child’s psychological and behavioral responses. By closely observing and engaging in interactive dialogues, parents can gain a deeper understanding of the child’s learning needs and challenges. When educational methods do not achieve the expected results, parents should engage in self-examination, investigate the causes, and adjust the educational plan accordingly. If difficulties in social interactions are observed, caregivers should consider whether it is necessary to enhance the child’s social skill development or encourage greater participation in team activities.

Parents, through continuous self-reflection, also undergo a process of ongoing learning. As children gradually approach adulthood, parents must adjust their educational concepts and strategies to meet the changing needs of each developmental stage. By mastering new educational concepts and techniques, parents can more effectively guide their children’s growth. Moreover, solving the problems faced in the process of education requires communication and interaction between parents. The quality of education can be improved significantly by the parents through mutual learning.[10][11]

5. Conclusion

To sums, it means that family education concepts are diversified in this research, offering all kinds of choices to parents yet making them confused. Many parents tend to be easily influenced by the social trend or others' experiences in selecting educational philosophies and then follow popular ideas or fall into biased approaches. Some families overlook the unique personality needs and developmental patterns of the children, and even the adoption of harmful educational methods is found. The research shows that in the choice of the concept of education, parents are often lacking in profound understanding in children's physical and psychological development. They tend to rely too much on a single educational method while neglecting the diversity and flexibility of education. Many parents fail to reflect periodically and make strategic adjustments in guiding their children's growth, thus affecting the outcome of education.

In family education practice, the strategy should be altered according to children's specific circumstances. The parents need to integrate the traditional and the modern understanding of educationally wise conceptions in crafting appropriate strategies that blend into the family characteristics. Children's psychological and physiological growth patterns need to be understood by parents as well as needs and peculiarities peculiar for children of different development levels; only then it becomes possible to apply scientific work methods. When choosing the educational concepts, parents should be open to all possibilities, avoid blind imitation, and one-sided choice. The uniqueness of the family

situation needs to be combined with the child's characteristics and skilfully use diverse methods of education.

In the process of implementing educational activities, parents should reflect profoundly on themselves and make timely adjustments in strategies. It is necessary to carefully observe the behavioral performance of their children, find out emergent problems in a timely manner, and solve them with effective communication. Parents should continue acquiring new educational concepts and methods in order to meet the child's needs at different developmental stages. Family plays a very important role in the growth of any child; it is indispensable to involve the parents. Parents may help the children grow healthily in such a competitive social environment by adopting scientific educational ideas, flexible methods, cultivation of independent thinking, and social responsibility. If the family wants to ensure a better future for its children, it has to engage itself continuously in learning and improving its educational knowledge and abilities. Parents should review and revise their educational philosophies to lay a good foundation for the future development of their children.

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