

# Evolution of Game in the History of Preschool Education Laws and Regulations in China

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**Abstract:** *In order to analyze the evolution of game in the history of preschool education laws and regulations in China, the laws and regulations concerning games and preschool education promulgated in the history of China from 1903 to now was studied by means of literature review, historical logic and historical analysis, mainly focusing on their social background, political situation, function enlightenment and other aspects. The results showed that during the period of 1903-1922, the new policy of saving the nation through education was put forward and basically copied from Japan. During the kindergarten period from 1922 to 1951, the education of Beiyang warlords worshipped the ancients. After the educational reform in the period of the Republic of China, game had its own position in preschool education. In the early stage of kindergarten development from 1951 to 1966, New China was founded and the pro-Russian ideology was strong. With the help of Russia, games developed more widely in preschool education in China. During the Cultural Revolution period from 1966 to 1976, games were in a backward stage in preschool education. Since 1976, the reform and Opening-up society has developed rapidly. China has introduced many laws and regulations on preschool education. Games completed a transformation in preschool education. These five periods show the evolution of games in China's preschool education laws and regulations from the perspective of time and society. In addition, the analysis results suggested that games helped children's later growth in preschool education in all aspects, and their development was influenced by the ideology, foreign policy, practice and key demands of the ruling party. To sum up, game has undergone a long period of progress in the evolution of preschool education laws and regulations in China. It has a very important positive impact on the later growth of young children so that the society and the government should give adequate support and recognition.*

**Keywords:** *Game; Pre-School Education; Appeal; Impact*

## 1. Introduction

At present, there are relatively few literatures on game research in China's pre-school education laws and regulations, especially at the "research" level [1]. The main idea expressed in the curriculum guidance is to divide children's sports into seven categories such as society and music [2]. There are interrelated contents with games, the previously mentioned project or sport of conservation guidance is changed to a new name "curriculum". This change has epoch-making significance [3], and has laid an important theoretical foundation for the later development of preschool education in China [4]. Accordingly, the image of game as curriculum guidance naturally appears in the seven curricula of kindergarten [5]. From the four conservation projects to the seven curricula, games have made a great leap in the preschool education regulations. In the kindergarten sports guidance document, games and hygiene are also taken as the direction of daily teaching in kindergartens [6], which further highlights the position of games in sports activities [7]. This change has epoch-making significance, and has laid an important theoretical foundation for the later development of China's game in pre-school education. Accordingly, the image of games as curriculum guidance naturally appears in the physical education curriculum [8]. Game has made a great improvement in the laws and regulations of preschool education. During the period of the Cultural Revolution, most preschool schools and institutions of preschool education departments have been abolished, and the new preschool education policy is impossible to be implemented [9]. Only two former cadres of preschool education have been retained in the Department of Primary Education to take charge of preschool education. This practice has led to the paralysis of preschool education in the whole country for a long time. There is no unified arrangement and support for preschool education. The competent educational institutions have not issued any information and documents for preschool education. This situation has caused a very heavy blow to the development of

early childhood education in China, and the existing pre-secondary education system and policies in game schools have been seriously damaged and trampled on [10].

At the same time, no new policy has been formulated, which leads to the fault of pre-school education and game activities in China. Game in preschool education policies and regulations is a game concept that standardizes, institutionalizes and embodies the mainstream value orientation of society [11-13]. It plays a guiding and regulating role in the public's game concept and the game in the field of preschool education practice [15, 16]. At present, relevant specialized and comprehensive researches are insufficient. Pre-school education generally refers to the implementation education for children from birth to six or seven years of age [17-19], while in a narrow sense, the concept of pre-school education and early childhood education is basically the same, which is used to refer to the implementation of pre-school education for children from three to six or seven years of age [20-22].

Educational regulations are a collection of legally enforceable behavioral standards that govern people's educational activities. They primarily consist of normative documents such as education-related laws, decrees, rules, and regulations. It is a reflection of the educational aspirations of a certain social governing class. It is a standard of educational conduct that has been developed or recognized by the state via legal processes and is guaranteed to be executed by the use of coercive force by the state. Preschool education rules, as the embodiment of educational regulations, are the collection of numerous normative documents pertaining to preschool education that have been developed by state administrative authorities. Preschool education rules, like education laws, are required, normative, and guiding. Behavior serves as a universally obligatory standard. The natural starting point for game research is a knowledge of game connotation. Preschool education rules' normative and required qualities serve as a basic normative and guiding force for game ideas and activities. From 1904 until the present, the meaning of games in my country's preschool education legislation has evolved from "sports" to "curriculum activities," "sports activities," and finally "basic activities." The course demonstrates the traits ranging from imitation to local investigation, from exterior conduct to inward spirit. To enhance the scientific nature of regulation formulation and to ensure that the full value of games is realized, education departments should focus on clarifying fundamental issues when drafting regulations and provisions on games, developing game guidelines, and valuing traditional games; practitioners should gain a thorough understanding of the connotation of games and provide clarification. The link between games and courses is centered on the game spirit's permeation.

To sum up, the evolution of games in the history of preschool education laws and regulations in China was discussed. The results suggested that the five periods of 1903-1922, 1922-1951, 1951-1966, 1966-1976, 1976-present showed the evolution of games in the laws and regulations of preschool education in China. The results also showed that games played an important role in helping children's later growth in preschool education. The development of games in preschool education was influenced by the ideology, foreign policy, practice and key demands of the ruling party. The innovation of this paper lies in the study of pre-school education laws and regulations and games in China from a historical perspective, which is very comprehensive and novel. There are still some shortcomings in the process of this study, but the results of this study still provide some guidance for future research, so it is a valuable research topic.

## **2. Research Method and Content**

### **2.1 Research Method**

The evolution of games in the laws and regulations of preschool education in China was explored by using the method of historical research. The so-called historical research method is the general name of the research methods which take history as the object. It also includes many research methods such as literature method, historical analysis method, and historical logic method and so on. As far as this paper is concerned, literature research method, historical analysis method and comparative analysis method were mainly used.

### **2.2 Research Content and Significance**

A wide range of normative documents on preschool education promulgated in China since 1903 were collected, and with the development of time as the vertical axis and the evolution of the preschool education system as the breakthrough point, the general situation of the evolution of games in the preschool education laws and regulations of China was analyzed and combed; the main preschool

education laws and regulations promulgated in China since 1903 as the main analyzing texts, and other important documents of preschool education as an assistant analyzing texts, it was analyzed from three dimensions: the connotation of games, the value of games, and the essence of games, and the characteristics of the evolution of games in preschool education laws and regulations in China were explored. Based on the background of the times and using John W. Kinden's multi-source theory for reference, the analytical framework of this study was constructed, and the process of game evolution in Chinese preschool education laws and regulations and the main driving forces for its evolution were analyzed. On the basis of the above analysis, the practical enlightenment of this study on the healthy development of preschool education in China was summarized from the perspectives of learning from other countries' beneficial experience, system learning and concept renewal, preschool education legislation system construction and game concept implementation.

**Research significance:** To enable more people to have a more comprehensive and correct understanding of the laws of China's pre-school education system, to provide a relatively unique research vision and direction for later researchers, and to contribute their meager strength to the very important cause of pre-school education.

### **2.3 Research Process**

**During the period of Mongolian nursing home (1903-1922):** under the special policy of Mongolian nursing home, games became the first of the four conservation projects. Comparing with the games that became the first in the fourth projects of conservation guidance in the late Qing Dynasty, there are only some linguistic differences between the two, and their contents and functions have not changed. The main conservation activities of Mongolian nursing home are still games, handicraft, conversation and singing. Compared with the Mongolian nursing home project in the late Qing Dynasty, the essence of Mongolian nursing home is still the same as before. It is precisely because there is no real change in the game during the period of Mongolian nursing home, it is believed that game is the first to appear in the regulations of preschool education in the four projects of conservation.

**Kindergarten period (1922-1951):** The kindergarten curriculum guidance mentioned here is Kindergarten Curriculum Guidance issued by the national education authority in 1932. The main idea expressed in Kindergarten Curriculum Guidance is to classify children's sports into seven categories: society, music, games, knowledge, stories, singing, learning and so on. There are interrelated contents with games: in the Kindergarten Curriculum Guidance, a new name "curriculum" has been changed from the previously mentioned project or movement of conservation guidance, which has epoch-making significance and laid an important theoretical foundation for the later development of preschool education in China. Accordingly, the image of games as curriculum guidance naturally appears in seven kindergarten courses. From the first of the four conservation projects to the seven curricula, game has made a qualitative leap in the pre-school education regulations.

**Early development of kindergartens (1951-1966):** In the Kindergarten Sports Guidance Document, games and health, life and dancing are also taken as the guiding direction of daily teaching in kindergartens, which also highlights the position of games in sports activities. This change has epoch-making significance, and has laid an important theoretical foundation for the later development of China's game in pre-school education.

**Stagnation of kindergarten development (1966-1976):** During the period of the Cultural Revolution, the vast majority of kindergarten schools and institutions of kindergarten education departments were abolished, and the new preschool education policy was impossible. In 1962 before the Cultural Revolution, the Department of Early Childhood Education under the Ministry of Education, which was responsible for all kindergartens and preschool education, was banned. Only one staff member was retained to take charge of the daily work of early childhood education. Only two former cadres of early childhood education were retained in the Department of Primary Education to take charge of early childhood education. For a long time, preschool education in China has been paralyzed by this practice. There is no unified arrangement and support, nor any information and documents issued by the competent educational authorities for preschool education.

**New period of kindergarten development (1976-present):** Following the improvement and innovation of preschool education in the new era, in order to implement the guiding ideology of National Outline for Educational Development and Several Opinions on the Development of Preschool Education in a more comprehensive way, and to promote preschool education in China to a higher level and a more comprehensive development, in 2013, China's educational authorities have issued the

Measures for the Study and Development of Early Childhood (referred to as Measures below). Although the document does not clearly state that preschool education should be based on games, the positive role of games in preschool education can be affirmed and supported by the state from the text description and anticipated level. The first page of the Measures explains that one of the requirements for preschool education is to "support the reasonable learning methods and characteristics of preschool education", which is explained specifically. Therefore, this also explains the further improvement of the core idea and concept of preschool education of "taking games as basic activities and combining them with other activities" in the Measures. In February 2016, the educational authorities promulgated Article 18 of the Early Childhood Curriculum System, which further explains and explains this idea. Based on the above research, it is believed that there are two levels of game in the development of preschool education. The first step is the activity at the behavioral level, and then the game slowly becomes one of the main basic activities of preschool education.

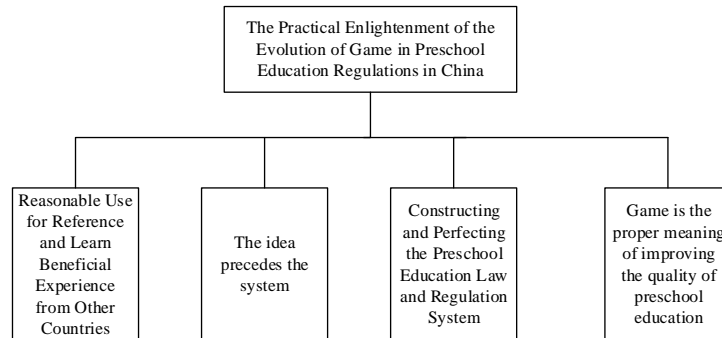


Figure. 1: The practical enlightenment of the evolution of game in preschool education regulations in China

In a word, it can be found from Figure 1 that China's preschool education belongs to a country which started relatively late, no matter from the enlightenment date or the starting mode of educational modernization. History also shows the reality: in the Opium War, British imperialism used advanced weapons and equipment to open up the door to China. In order to realize the mission of saving the nation from extinction and striving for survival, China's education has also been forced to take the step of modernization. In the exchange of education and culture between China and foreign countries, China, as a "backward" party, has never been able to get rid of learning, imitating or even copying the educational experience of other advanced countries. Taking the game evolution in the preschool education laws and regulations as an example, the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China imitated the Japanese statute, westernized in the middle and late Republic of China, and learned from the Soviet Union in an all-round way from the founding of the People's Republic to the early stage of reform and opening up. Even with the deepening of reform and opening up, China's comprehensive national strength has been significantly enhanced and the backward "hats" have been removed, the evolution of the game is still deeply influenced by the ideas and practices of preschool education in various countries. Therefore, it can be said that the historical facts of the evolution of games in China's pre-school education laws and regulations are also the history of learning from the experience of other countries.

#### 2.4 Evolution of Games in Preschool Education Regulations from the Social Perspective

The game evolution process in the period of Mongolian Nursing Home: After the Opium War, the Qing government was in a dilemma. At the beginning of 1901, the late Qing government issued the famous "New Deal" at the end of the Qing Dynasty. One of the key measures was "abolishing imperial examinations, nurturing talents and promoting learning". Under this background, many scholars with the idea of "saving the nation by education", according to the educational reform thought of the Qing government, actively issued their own suggestions. Under such social background, the Qing government transplanted the Japanese preschool education charter wholly, and the position of the game was obviously improved. The regulations of the Mongolian Nursing Home and the Family Education Law were the complete copy of The Japanese Regulations on Preschool Care and Equipment.

Evolution of games in kindergarten: Yuan Shikai's Beiyang government pursued the idea of respecting Confucius and restoring the ancients in education. Under such a social background, the development of games and preschool education is stagnating, and literati groups have been active one after another. In 1922, under the pressure of sociologists, the Beiyang government established the

naivety of preschool education. In 1923, the National Government issued The Declaration of the First National Congress of the Kuomintang, which clearly indicated that "develop children-oriented education with all efforts" so as to make "children-oriented" was an important educational work in the national education reform. It also shows that the learning goal of the National Government in the field of education has become the United States. The Kindergarten Curriculum Standard was officially promulgated in 1932. So far, game has made a breakthrough again in the process of preschool education laws and regulations in China: game has become a real activity belonging to children.

In the early stage of kindergarten development, the game evolution process: 1949, the new China was just established. Under this background, The Kindergarten Curriculum Standard formulated by the Republic of China government cannot adapt to the current situation. Under the pro-Russian background, the Soviet Union's pre-school education ideal entered China through exchanges. The Guidelines for Kindergarten Education issued in 1954 is basically the transplantation of the Soviet Union's Guidelines for the Work of Kindergarten Correctors. Under such a social background, game has undergone an important evolution in China's pre-school education laws and regulations. For example, as far as the types of games are concerned, creative games, regular games, architectural games, teaching games and other forms of games have emerged; as far as the value of games is concerned, the functions of teaching means of games have been emphasized; as far as the relationship between teachers and children in games is concerned, the teachers' leading role has been given full play and teachers' teaching has been emphasized.

The game evolution process of kindergarten development in the new period: after the "Cultural Revolution", China experienced reform and opening up and development. In this period, the main way of preschool education in China is to teach in different subjects. Under the open and free national policy, Chinese and foreign educational thoughts are integrated and developed. Combining with the actual situation and future needs of preschool education in China, a model conforming to the development of preschool education in China was formed. In the process of integrating and learning with each other, preschool schools in China have successively formulated Kindergarten Work Regulations, Kindergarten Education Guidance Outline, Kindergarten Management Regulations, Guidelines on Learning and Development for Children Aged 3-6, etc. As a very important part of preschool education, games have been recognized. So far, games have undergone a perfect transformation in the reform of preschool education for children.

### 2.5 Factors Influencing the Evolution of Game in Preschool Education Regulations in China

The ruling party's ideology: the most important thing is to form an important political consideration for the enactment and promulgation of preschool education laws and regulations based on the ruling party's needs and cognitive decisions; then, the ruling party's personal needs and ideas greatly affect the implementation and nature of the preschool education system; thirdly, the ruling party's ideology is the most important screener and filter for the core of preschool education policies and regulations. Only the preschool education system needed by the ruling party can be implemented and survived. Those who do not meet the interests and needs of the ruling party will be rejected, as shown in Figure 2.

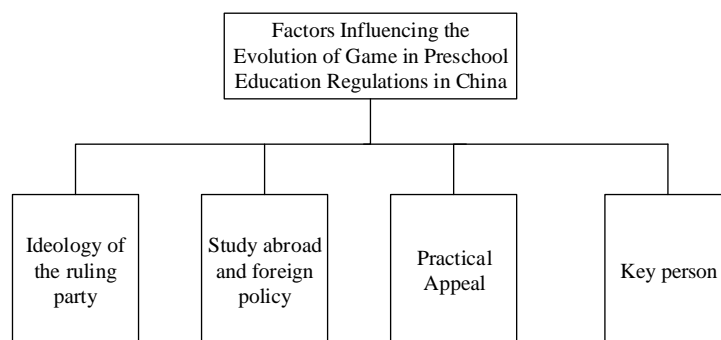


Figure 2: Evolutionary factors affecting game in China's preschool education regulations

Studying abroad and foreign policy: When New China was just established, facing the strategic blockade and economic sanctions of Western countries, China implemented the Soviet-style foreign policy, and strengthened diplomatic exchanges with many African countries, such as the Soviet Union. In such a background, in the level of educational and cultural exchanges, the game in China's preschool education also has a deep shadow of Soviet education.

Practical appeal: The influence of practical factors on the evolution of games in the laws and regulations of preschool education in China is reflected in the fact that some prominent problems in the practice of preschool education constitute the triggering mechanism for the opening of the "window of policy", which further promotes the promulgation or change of preschool education laws and regulations, and aggravates the problem of "Primary school" of preschool education, accompanied by the attention paid to children's rights and interests from all walks of life. This has affected the evolution of games in the laws and regulations of pre-school education in China. Therefore, as a realistic force, practical appeal plays an important role in the evolution of the game.

Key person: One of the concepts of "human" involved in the theory is the policy community. Policy community plays a role of "think tank", which is responsible for advising on the establishment or reform of public policy. As far as this study is concerned, their opinions and suggestions constitute the theoretical basis of game evolution.

### 3. Results and Discussion

The role of children's games in preschool education is shown in Figure 3. From the figure, it is seen that games play a very positive role in preschool education of children. Not only can they exercise their bodies and improve their immunity, but also can they make more friends and enrich their cognitive communication. On the other hand, it also greatly improves children's ability to memorize and communicate by hand. The most important thing is that games can greatly improve children's awareness of the world and the environment. These play a very important role in children's subsequent growth. Children's brain is blank that meaningful games have a great influence on their subsequent understanding of the world and their growth.

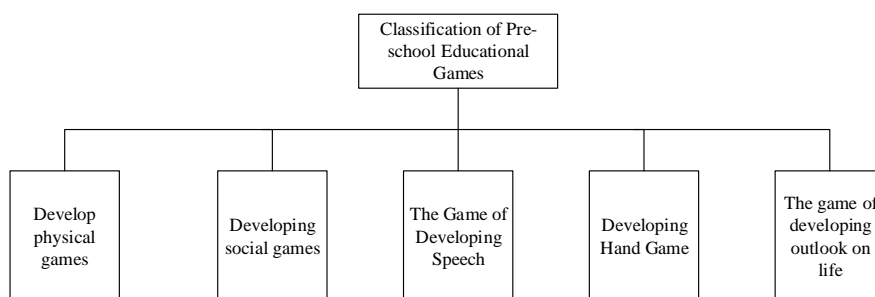


Figure 3: Role of children's games in preschool education for children

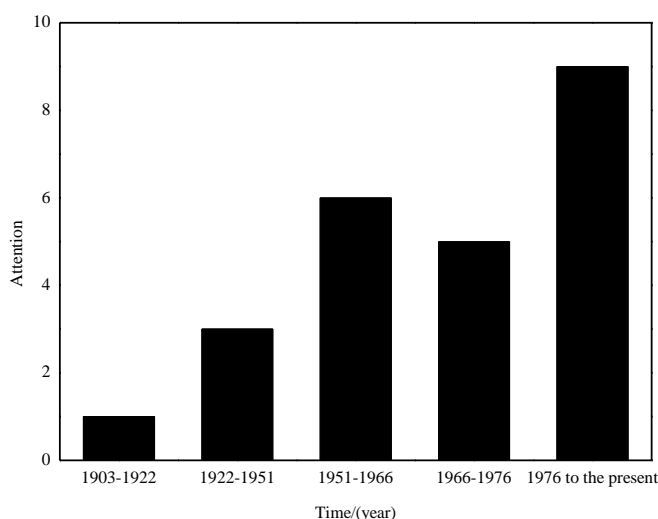


Figure 4: Attention paid to games in the history of preschool education

The attention paid to games in the history of preschool education is shown in Figure 4. From the figure, it is found that the importance of games in the history of preschool education has been increasing gradually with the passage of time since 1903. But in 1966-1967, the country was in the Cultural Revolution. The level of games in preschool education declined, and the status of games in preschool education was greatly improved. The society, government and parents recognized the

positive role of games in preschool education and gave great recognition and support.

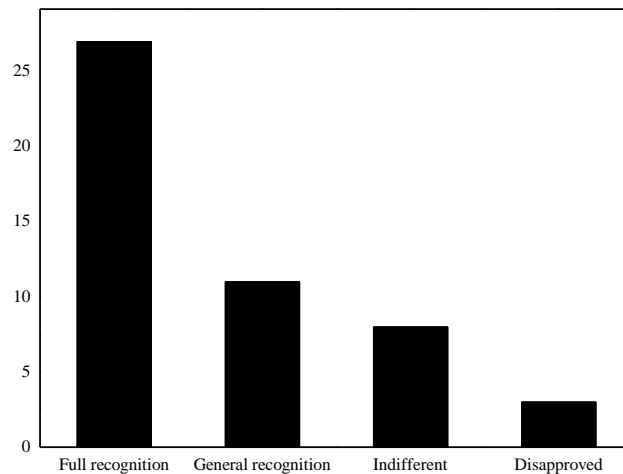


Figure 5: Current parents' recognition of games in preschool education

At present, parents' recognition of games in preschool education is shown in Figure 5. Figure 5 shows that parents' full recognition of the importance of games in the history of preschool education is the largest, accounting for 83% of the total. With the development of society and the level of education, society and government attach great importance to games in preschool education. Only a few disapprove of games in children's early childhood education. As a result, society, government and parents have recognized the positive role of games in early childhood education and have given them great trust.

Table 1 Pre-school educational games and classifications for young children

Classification	Activity games	Creative games	Educational games	Recreational games
	Thematic games	Imitation game	Game of recognizing color, shape and size	Blow bubbles
	Theme-free games	Architectural game	Game of recognizing the number and location of objects	Fly a kite
	Folk games	Story Game	Game of recognizing objects according to sound, shape, action, etc.	
	Running games	Military games	Counting game	

Pre-school educational games and classifications suitable for children are shown in Table 1. From the table it is known that games play a very positive role in pre-school education of children. There are several types of games, such as active games, creative games, educational games and recreational games. These games include running, hide-and-seek, counting, and military affairs, flying kites, blowing bubbles, recognizing colors, shapes and new things. It can not only exercise children's bodies and enable them make more friends, but also greatly improve children's ability in hands-on communication. The most important thing is that games can greatly improve children's awareness of the world and the environment, which is very important for children's follow-up growth.

#### 4. Conclusion and Revelation

##### 4.1 Conclusion

The evolution of games in the history of preschool education laws and regulations in China was mainly studied, and the laws and regulations concerning games and preschool education promulgated in the history of our country from 1903 to now was explored by using comprehensive methods such as literature review, historical logic and historical analysis. The social background and political situation of their existence as well as the situation of games and preschool education were analyzed. In addition, the factors affecting the development of games in preschool education and the role of games in preschool education were analyzed and summarized. During the period of 1903-1922, China was in internal and external diplomatic difficulties and mainly modeled on Japan in terms of education way.

During 1922-1951, the role of games in education was recognized through the development of education in the Republic of China. During the period 1951-1966, under the influence of the Soviet Union's ideology, China's pre-school education has made remarkable progress. Since 1976, the society has been fully open, China's pre-school education has also ushered in a great opportunity for development, and the role of games in pre-school education has been unprecedentedly developed and recognized. In addition, the analysis results show that games help children's later growth in preschool education in all aspects, and their development is influenced by the ruling party's ideology, foreign policy, practice and key appeal.

Therefore, the historical evolution of the laws and regulations of pre-school education in China was studied by consulting the literature, analyzing, and summarizing. The role of games in pre-school education is comprehensive, not only in physical quality, but also in behavioral communication awareness and values. Pre-school education based on game has important research value, and this research is also limited. For example, due to time and resources constraints, as well as incomplete data search in the past, and many data are not authenticity through network search cannot be verified, the results obtained are slightly less convincing. Follow-up research will focus on more extensive data access, which will reduce the interference to the research institute. To sum up, this study has important reference value for later researchers.

## **4.2 Revelation**

### **4.2.1 Consequences for the Determination of Game Requirements in Legislation Governing Early Childhood Education**

(1) Identify and clarify fundamental concerns, as well as enhance concept guidance. It is vital to clarify fundamental concerns concerning games at the macro level in order to provide direction guidance and value control. Among them, it is especially crucial to define "what constitutes a game" as well as to define the legal status of the game in question. Opinions on the fundamental issue of "what is a game?" are relevant to the legal status of games and have a direct impact on the public's perception of games on a practical level as well as the variety and depth of games. As a result, when determining the legal provisions pertaining to games, it is necessary to clarify the positioning of the game, clarify the affiliation of the game, and clarify the game's position in the legal text; in addition, it is necessary to pay attention to the division of game types, not only the types of games at the behavioral level, but also the penetration of the spirit of the game and the enhancement of game attributes in various activities; and finally, it is necessary to pay attention to the division of game types, not only the types.

(2) Create game instructions to guide the application of the practice. It is essential to develop an executable "play guide for preschoolers" that is guided by the notion of regulations. When developing the "Guide to Preschool Children's Play," we should pay particular attention to the relationship between games and children's physical and mental development, the physical and mental development characteristics of children at different ages and levels of play, the types of games and the value of different types of games, implementation points and precautions, and all aspects prior to the games' implementation. Among the particular concerns addressed are resource preparation, the responsibilities of instructors and young children in the play process, common techniques for teachers to watch and direct games, key points and methods of game summary, key points of game assessment, and other related topics.

Preserve traditional games and pass on national culture to future generations. China has a magnificent and bright gaming culture, and the many sorts of traditional games that are played there are magnificent. Traditional folk games, on the other hand, have received insufficient attention in the different pre-kindergarten education standards throughout time. It is essential that we pay more attention to traditional folk games while establishing preschool education legislation in the new millennium, and that we selectively include good traditional folk games into kindergarten instruction. This is the enrichment and growth of the meaning and kind of the game, as well as the inheritance and development of the wonderful traditional culture that has been passed down through generations.

### **4.2.2 Implications for Research and Practice in Preschool Education**

(1) Gain a thorough understanding of the game's meaning and enhance the game's substance and form. Understanding game connotation is intrinsically linked to the structure, kind, and substance of actual game organization. The limitation of the game's meaning unavoidably results in the simplicity of the game's shape, type, and substance in reality. Only by thoroughly understanding the connotation of games, closely connecting them to children's physical and mental development, and simultaneously



considering the developmental and educational value of various types of games, can we flexibly organize and coordinate various types of games, as well as integrate education into various activities. To ensure children's holistic, harmonic, and united growth.

(2) Define the link between the game and the curriculum and maximize the game's educational value. There are two distinct perspectives on the link between games and curriculum: one views games as curriculum material, while the other views games as a vehicle for curriculum implementation. When the game becomes the course's content, it quickly becomes a teaching topic and is endowed with the objectives and duties associated with subject teaching. The game's procedure is seen as a means of teaching this external information and abilities. When the game becomes the method and vehicle for the curriculum, it is possible for it to become unduly "tooled" and, in Dewey's words, the "sugar coating" that is designed to entice youngsters to swallow the bitter fruit of knowledge via the game's "happy" feature. For instance, at a time when the "Curriculum Gasification" project is being promoted further, it is necessary to address implementation issues such as the ambiguous relationship between games and teaching, the improper organization of games, the lack of direction and purpose in the construction of gamified curriculum, and to promote the construction of kindergarten connotation. To increase the game's quality, it is critical to define the game's link to the curriculum and to conduct an in-depth examination of the game's curricular value. Games may be used as course material or as a source of course creation. Games may be used to facilitate course implementation or as an effective means of course assessment.

(3) Capture the game's spiritual core and incorporate its "playability" into everyday life. The spirit of the game is an attitude of initiative and dedication; an attitude that transcends utility and is relaxed and joyful; an attitude of seriousness and unambiguity; an attitude of freedom and delight of creation: in its precise application. Should have the following two considerations in mind: To begin, the primary focus of attention exercise is on young children. Teachers should respect children's needs and interests and provide enough time, space, and opportunities for children to exercise their autonomy via free choice, self-regulation, and growth. Simultaneously, instructors should use supporters, observers, collaborators, and guides to scaffold children's independent growth. Second, concentrate on the activity's procedural experience. Therefore, teachers should foster a relaxed and free psychological atmosphere, provide a "prepared" environment and materials, and ensure adequate time and space for children to engage in autonomous activities in order to maximize support and satisfaction for children's acquisition through direct perception, practical operation, and personal experience.

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