

The Practice of Life Education in Kindergarten in Liupanshui City of Guizhou Province in China

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ABSTRACT. With the development of society and the renewal of educational concept, the concept of life education gradually occupies a dominant position in early childhood education, which mainly comes from Tao Xingzhi's guiding ideology of "education is life, learning by doing". The educational goal of kindergarten is to let early childhood education return to children's life, improve children's quality of life, integrate education into daily life of kindergarten, and comprehensively cultivate children's quality and ability in all aspects. This study focuses on how life education is practiced in kindergartens, and aims to find out specific ways and effective methods for the implementation of life education. Through literature study, observation, interview and qualitative approach, this study selected some kindergarten teachers and children in Liupanshui City of Guizhou Province in China as survey objects. At present, the implementation of "life education" in kindergartens is mainly through the establishment of life-oriented curriculum, which embodies the characteristics of life in terms of curriculum objectives, curriculum content, curriculum implementation mode and other aspects. In addition, life education can be implemented by setting up the living education environment and putting in the life material as Activity Area material. The study found that in the concrete implementation, some kindergarten teachers did not implement the idea of life education, they still adopted the traditional education method. The study also found that private kindergartens did not pay more attention to the practice of life education than public kindergartens. In order to solve these problems, this study put forward the training of young children, changing teachers' educational perspectives, regulating the management of private kindergartens, and changing the ideas and measures of parents.

KEYWORDS: Life education; Kindergarten curriculum; Childhood education

1. Introduction

With the development of early childhood education, its concept is put forward as well as the quality education goal of cultivating "all-round development talents". The educational guiding ideology, which had been dominated by the scientific world outlook, gradually returned to the idea of "life education". Guided by the concept of "life education", preschool education not only takes into account the development of children's knowledge and skills, but also, their emotional, attitude and social development.

Chinese and western educators always pay more attention to the relationship between life and education. As early as in the west in the late 19th century, American educator Dewey (1897) proposed "education is life" "school is society" view of education, Dewey believe that the basic content of children's psychological activity is instinct activities as the core of psychological function and the growth process of constant development, education is to foster the growth of the instinct, the instinct which growth is in the process of life, so education is life. And in China, educator Tao (1922) who inherited and developed Dewey's theory, also put forward a similar view of "life education" on the basis of theory of Dewey, he put forward the view is that life is just education, education by life, education for life, he thought that life contains the meaning of education, children's life process, that is, they affected by the process of education, life is the source of education, should rely on children to experience the life to education of young children, course content should be from the life world status, preschool education can improve their life, the great society of nature can be used as living textbooks for kindergarten courses, and book knowledge is only an auxiliary reference (Tang,2009).

Another educator in China, Chen, also advocated that kindergarten curriculum should be designed according to children's living needs and learning interests. He proposed to encourage children to discover their own world, believing that children's world is what they explore and discover by themselves, and the knowledge they seek is the true knowledge, and the world they discover is their real world (Chen,1989).

Based on the views of the above educators, this study believes that kindergarten's life education is a

practical experiential education that takes children's real life experience as the educational content, and education should be centered on children's life and experience. In China, the *3-6 yYears Old Children's Learning and Development outline* also points out that young children's knowledge comes from life, we should cherish the unique value of the children's life and game, we must try our best to meet the needs of the young children through direct perception, practical operation and personal experience to gain rich experience, through the construction of their inner knowledge for growth and development. Therefore, early childhood education should be closely connected with the reality of life. What educators should do is to try their best to help children return to their own life world. The key to the true implementation of "life education" in kindergarten is to make kindergarten return to children's life and realize the life of kindergarten curriculum. Life is the source of children's happy learning, and the kindergarten curriculum in life should be one that children are familiar with and can arouse their interest (Li, 2015).

In the past, the kindergarten curriculum under the guidance of scientific world outlook was mainly focused on subject courses, and the curriculum content paid attention to the indoctrination of systematic subject knowledge, which made early childhood education become the primary school, it will be far away from the real and natural life of children, and children passively and rigidly accepted the knowledge and views indoctrinated by teachers, then children lost the happiness and natural development. Now kindergartens are guided by the idea of life education, the courses involving the target design, the choice of content, concrete implementation ways and evaluation were done on the close contact with life, make children really in their life world that can give full play to their potential. It can not only satisfy the needs of children's life, but also promote the children's development of intelligence, physical, emotional, social and other aspects. The nature of life is the practice and experience, those contents all can be incorporated into the kindergarten curriculum system which can cause children's interest, can meet the need of children, children want to know, can solve the problem, has education value and can promote children's development. The kindergarten curriculum should not become hidebound template, and should be to create a natural disposition is the dynamic life experience. The *Guidelines for Kindergarten Education (Trial)* stipulates the objectives, contents and implementation principles of kindergarten education, and puts forward that all kinds of educational activities in kindergartens are ways to implement the curriculum, and teachers are not only the implementers of the curriculum, but also the designers of the curriculum(Du,2019).

This study intends to investigate the implementation and existing problems of life education in kindergartens, analyze the causes of the existing problems, and propose solutions and measures.

2. Methodology

This study mainly adopts qualitative research. The research methods as follows, literature research, observation, interview method and case analysis. By studying the relevant literature, we investigated and understood the relevant policies, documents, conceptual definitions and the research results of other researchers. The research investigated the specific implementation of the kindergarten "life education" and find the problem by observation method. The study randomly selected 5 kindergartens of Liupanshui City in Guizhou Province of China for the field observation, the kindergartens include 3 public kindergartens and 2 private kindergartens. The study also used interview methods to take the survey of 30 teachers in the 5 kindergartens.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Practice of "Life Education"

(1) The Daily Life of Kindergarten Curriculum

Through the survey, the researchers found that in kindergarten, the curriculum's design and concrete implementation mainly to get the goal which to promote children's cognitive, emotional, skills, social, and physical and mental health and so on, it set a subject as the center, surrounding the topic to carry out health, language, society, science, art, five areas of activities or games, for each different age groups, each area has its own specific goals and requirements. According to the specific goals of the five areas, teachers can design appropriate curriculum goals and implementation methods based on the theme and the actual situation of the park and the class. This provides great autonomy and flexibility for teachers to implement life-oriented curriculum.

Table 1 The Theme Activities of Kindergarten

Class level	age	Semester	Theme activities
Junior	3	1	Love kindergarten,A round world
	4	2	I love my home,Little umbrella
Middle	4	1	It's good to grow up,Our body
	5	2	Seven-colored world,Charm and cool capital
Senior	5	1	Facing delicious food,My motherland is so great
	6	2	My skills,Goodbye to my kindergarten

(This content of the table is taken from a Kindergarten of Liupanshui City in Guizhou Province)

From the above table,we can find that these thematic activities are very consistent with young children's age characteristics,and it very close to children's current life,this is the embodiment of the concept of life education. These are in line with the characteristics of children's physical and mental development of life curriculum is also very popular with children.

For example, in the study of Deng (2015), it was found that for kindergartens in communities inhabited by ethnic minorities, the curriculum was more likely to be liked and accepted by children when the life elements of ethnic minorities, such as ethnic languages, ethnic customs and special snacks, were included in the curriculum compilation.

Kindergarten also through some life courses to exercise children's basic labor capacity,help children form a good attitude toward labor.

And here is a case study from observation:

In order to let the children in senior class of kindergarten have a correct cognition of time, the teacher set the theme activity "food's date of birth".The teacher guided with her own example, she said to the children, yesterday she ate a bag of supermarket snacks ,then she had diarrhea, the children began to talk in succession, some said, certainly snacks have bacteria, some said that snacks must be bad, some children raised questions, why snacks are bad?Finally the children all guessed it was the snacks overdue, at this time the teacher confirmed the children's guess, and put forward the question, why snacks expire? This problem has again triggered the discovery of children, some children holding the date on the snack packaging said, you see there are production date on it!So the children picked up the food packaging which the teacher prepared to look, they continued to explore the number on the bag,and want to know what it represents.

In the above case, the teacher created the problem situation with the daily experience in life, which triggered the concept of date for children dynamic thinking and inquiry.In such a course education, children not only know the time, but also learn the common sense of food safety, understand expired food can not be eaten.Such life-oriented courses not only achieve the educational goal of cultivating children's sense of Numbers in the field of science, but also achieve the educational goal of cultivating children's awareness of self-care in the field of health.

For the school, the curriculum setting can be preset, but the kindergarten curriculum is not strictly implemented according to the scheduled curriculum, also it's not fixed, it's more generative.Teachers can generate the curriculum flexibly and freely according to the needs of children at that time and the needs of temporary problem solving.

Another case that the researchers work on was:

Middle class children were playing sand in the sand area, they need to change the rain shoes, a child faced two pairs of rain shoes on the shelf, muttering, "these two pairs of shoes exactly the same, which pair is mine?"Another kid came up and said, "you're so short, these smaller ones must be yours!"“Teacher, why do I wear small shoes when I am short?”Before the teacher answered, other children gathered around and talked about it. Some said, "because I am tall, my feet are big, so I wear big shoes."Some say, "because I'm fat, I wear big shoes."The teacher found that the children were interested in the size of shoes, and based on this question, he temporarily generated a generative course with the theme of "shoe code".Let the children explore shoe sizes and the relationship between shoes and height, age, and weight.

In this case, the teacher gave the children sufficient space for independent thinking and discussion, and paid full attention to the interests and needs of the children. The children took the initiative to participate in exploration activities, and solved their doubts under the guidance of the teacher, which increased their

knowledge, as well as their perception of Numbers and interest in learning mathematics. This kind of education close to children's life and practical experience is far more vital and influential than the book knowledge of fixed textbooks.

(2) Living Environment of the Kindergarten

The Ministry of Education of China (2001) issued *The Guidance for Kindergarten Education (trial version)*. According to the Guidance, kindergartens should provide healthy and rich living and activity environments for children. To meet their needs of development in various aspects, so that they can obtain beneficial experiences in the happy childhood (Zhang, 2012). Many kindergartens try to practice the principle of "life education" and create a relatively free activity space and an environment close to real life for children.

These living environments are more likely to produce effective educational effects for young children. Wang (2019) through the study of the diet of the kindergarten education activity of study found that if the children's growth process from the most basic diet, based on the life, regression and restore natural life, children will be children put in real life, through the perception and experience and communicate with each other, it is easier to stimulate children's curiosity and thirst for knowledge, in order to gain more effective learning, children not only learn the knowledge of the growth of the food such as fruits and vegetables, they also mastered simple life skills, and by doing things within their power, it made children feel the hard work of food preparation, so as to learn to respect the labor of others and cherish food.

Many public kindergarten in this research have set up a "baby home" which is a kind of virtual reality game area of society in miniature, it has "hospital", "bank", "fast food", "boutique", "the barber shop" and so on, the children can be in the "baby home" role-playing game, they can play doctors, patients, a barber, salesman, such as social role, experience the world of adults in the role play, understand the behavior of the different social profession, grasp the social rules, learn the perspective-taking, empathy, cultivating empathy. The game can also improve their presentation skills and social skills. Some kindergartens, based on the cognitive characteristics of young children, have created a life-learning environment that can influence children, and penetrated the education content in the day life, such as in order to help small children develop rules consciousness and safety consciousness, in the stairs on the right, they put up a row of small footprint, down the stairs on the left labeled as a row of small footprint, let the children according to small footprint up and down the stairs, children in the habit of at the same time also understand the order follow up and down the stairs would not block the crowded corridor. For young children, helping them develop good behavior habits and form social cognition, it is easier for young children to understand and grasp by this kind of life-oriented environmental education than teachers' simple preaching. Some kindergartens also extend the space of education to the outside of the kindergarten, such as taking children to the park near the kindergarten, vegetable base, orchard, martyrs cemetery, supermarket and other field visits to investigate, with intuitive perception to guide children to form a more comprehensive understanding of the society. This is consistent with Tao's idea that "Society is School". Tao believes that "life is everywhere, education is everywhere, and the whole society is the place of life and education. Therefore, society is school. (Tao, 1985)

3.2 Problems in Kindergarten Life Education Practice

Although life education is widely practiced in kindergartens, the following problems still exist in the specific implementation:

(1) Some Teachers Still Adopt the Traditional Subject-Centered Education Mode

Table 2 Interview Result

interview item	teachers in public kindergaten(num)	teachers in private kindergaten(num)	sum	percentage rate	
1 .	Be willing to follow fixed textbooks	6	9	15	50%
	Be willing to develop and design courses by themselves	9	6	15	50%
2 .	Do not understand the meaning of life education	5	8	13	43%
	Understand the meaning of life education	10	7	17	57%
3	Do not know how life education	3	5	8	27%

.	was implemented				
	Know how life education was implemented	12	10	22	73%

Through interviews on 30 teachers in 5 kindergartens, the research found that 50% teachers prefer to have fixed textbooks distributed by the educational management department, believing that it is convenient to operate, do not need to think about how to teach, but just follow the content of textbooks or texts. This kind of education mode ignores children's cognitive characteristics and real reactions, and is far away from their life world. Children still acquire knowledge by receiving learning mode." Guidelines for kindergarten education" advocates that kindergartens should carry out games and activities with integrated themes. Although some teachers also carry out educational activities according to the theme, they carry out formalization integration rather than connection and integration of educational content, resulting in children's separation of the world cognitive system. Through interviews, this study found that one of the reasons for the above phenomenon is that 43% teachers without deep interpretation and grasp of the kindergarten education guidelines, they also have no correct understanding of the true meaning of "life education", They mix education and life together, believing that living education is the education of kindergarten day. Second, 27% teachers lack educational skills and professional quality, lack of sensitivity to education, and are not good at looking for life materials with educational value from children's daily life in the kindergarten. Habitual thinking and inert thinking habits lead to compliance with teaching materials and texts, and lack of innovative ability for curriculum.

(2) Compared with Public Kindergartens, Private Kindergartens Do Not Practice Life Education Well Development.

Through the investigation of 5 kindergarten schools including 3 public and 2 private, the researchers found that private kindergartens have not really implemented "life education", Instead, they have opened such as "English class", "Chinese learning class", "Mathematical class" These so-called interest classes implement primary school courses in Chinese, maths and English, these teachers in private kindergarten did not have professional primary school teachers' teaching skills, they used rote learning method to let children master abstract knowledge. Through the in-depth interviews, the study found that the reason is that many parents have the concept of "don't let children lose on the starting line". And private kindergartens in order to attract more students, to meet the demand of children's parents, let parents see their children's achievements in the interest class, children show cognitive level and ability above the actual age. For example, children in the middle class learn to add and subtract, while children in the senior class can recite many ancient poems. The children's performance let parents to see the children on the surface the effect of the crash, but in fact children lost in the passive learning interest in things around actively explore actively, lost the inner motive power of learning and lose focus on observation of things, the independent learning orientation of reflection and study. This is bad for the future of entering primary school to form good learning and learning habits.

4. Suggestions

4.1 Provide Training for Preschool Teachers

Education institutions should adopt the view of "go out, please come in" to train the kindergarten teachers, renew their education idea, improve teachers' professional quality, improve their education skills, especially those teachers with the old education concept of philosophy, let the teacher re-locate her role, to transform herself from an instillator of knowledge to be a patient listener, to be a careful observer, to be an assistant timely gives children help. Preschool teachers should have keen observation and strong innovation ability, be good at seizing the opportunity of education from children's daily life and transforming it into curriculum resources with educational value.

4.2 Strengthen the Management of Private Kindergartens

Educational management institutions formulate standardized measures to evaluate and manage the public and the private kindergartens, especially the management of private kindergartens, change the evaluation methods of private kindergartens, and adopt special governance on the tendency of kindergartens become the primary schools. Secondly, the government can provide funds and preferential policies to support the construction of private kindergartens, so as to avoid private kindergartens catering to parents to set primary school curriculum for more students and larger market benefits.

4.3 Change Parental Attitudes

The primary education of many kindergartens is mainly rooted in the deep-rooted educational concept of parents. Many parents believe that the more their children learn, the better development they will have in the future. In order to compete with other private kindergartens for students, many kindergartens set up so-called "special courses" to please parents. Therefore, if we want to change the current situation of private kindergartens separating from children's real life and implementing primary education, we must first change the concept of parents. Therefore, educational institutions or kindergartens can provide free training lectures for parents to popularize relevant knowledge of early childhood education, so that parents can realize the value of kindergarten life education and change their original concepts. The kindergarten can also provide online guidance for parents' parent-child education through WeChat platform. Parents and the kindergarten cooperate with each other to jointly create a living and educational environment conducive to the healthy and happy growth of children.

5. Conclusion

This study focuses on the implementation of the current education concept in Chinese kindergartens. The results show that at present, in China, children's educators attach great importance to the concept of life education. They are guided by the concept of life education, through setting up and implementing the living curriculum, arranging the living environment, putting on the living activities material and so on to carry out the practice of life education. Although there are some problems in the course of life education in practice, such as teachers do not carry out life education well and maintain the old traditional education model, and private kindergartens do not pay enough attention to the practice of life education, deviating from the life of children, there are kindergarten primary tendency. However, we can correct their wrong educational concepts by training, carry out special management on the primary education of private kindergartens, and train and guide parents to set up correct views on children. Use these measures to solve the above problems, so as to achieve the kindergarten to fully implement the goal of life education, let children in a healthy and positive education happy growth!

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