

The Value and Application of Folk Cultural Resources in Kindergarten Education

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Abstract

The application of folk cultural resources in kindergarten education activities is becoming increasingly common. This study focuses on the practical application of these resources in the kindergarten, analyzes their value, the value of folk culture resources in the kindergarten mainly has rich education resources, build this curriculum, protect the regional resources, germination of children love home emotion, stimulate children's learning enthusiasm, promote children's all-round development in three aspects. The application methods mainly include: the application of folk cultural resources in environmental creation, collective education activities and regional activities. Finally, some suggestions are put forward from the perspective of kindergarten managers, teachers and parents, aiming to provide reference points for further studying the application of folk culture resources in kindergarten education.

Keywords

Folk Cultural Resources; Kindergarten; Value.

1. Introduction

China's vast territory and diverse regional environments create unique resources. The development and construction of kindergarten curriculum resources are crucial aspects of current early childhood education reform, emphasizing the integration of local and school-based curricula. This necessitates the enhancement of curriculum resource development and utilization. Through literature review, the authors found that the current situation of applying folk cultural resources in kindergarten education in China is not optimistic. Issues such as how to select and integrate folk cultural resources into kindergarten activities need exploration. Curriculum resources are explicitly recognized as important in kindergarten curriculum reform. The "Kindergarten Education Guidelines (Trial)" (hereinafter referred to as the "Guidelines") clearly state: "Kindergartens should closely cooperate with families and communities, connect with primary schools, and comprehensively utilize various educational resources to create favorable conditions for children's development. Urban and rural kindergartens should fully utilize local resources to construct curricula suitable for local children. They should fully utilize social resources to help children truly appreciate the richness and excellence of Chinese culture, understand changes and developments in their hometowns, and foster a love for their homeland and country"[1]. The "3-6 Years Old Children's Learning and Development Guidelines" (hereinafter referred to as the "Guidelines") suggest that teachers should "consciously lead children into the beauty of nature and the traditional folk art and local customs activities in the community to receive artistic inspiration"[2]. This shows that both the "Guidelines" and the "Guidelines" encourage educators to actively and reasonably develop and utilize various curriculum resources in children's growth environments.

2. The Value of Folk Cultural Resources in Kindergarten Educational Activities

2.1. Enriching Educational Resources and Constructing School-Based Curricula

The native land nurtures every individual's initial perception of the world. From birth, children first come into contact with the people, objects, and events around them, receiving folk education constantly. As American anthropologist Ruth Benedict said, "From the day he is born, the customs he is born into shape his experiences and behaviors. By the time he can speak, he becomes a small creator of his own culture. As he grows up and participates in cultural activities, the customs of the culture become his customs, the beliefs of the culture become his beliefs, and the impossibilities of the culture become his impossibilities." Thus, folk culture provides fertile ground for children's robust growth. As carriers of native culture, folk cultural resources are crucial for children's development. Reasonable development and utilization of folk cultural resources can transmit hometown culture, help children recognize and appreciate their hometown, cultivate a love for their homeland, and enhance their sense of identity and pride in their culture.

The advantage of folk cultural resources in kindergarten education lies in their familiarity and proximity to children's lives. Folk cultural resources, accessible in children's daily lives, allow teachers to use local materials, saving time and effort compared to sourcing or purchasing resources. Local ethnic culture, folk games, customs, and language provide convenient, ready-to-use educational materials, reducing the need for extensive resource searching or purchasing, thus saving time and resources.

Therefore, kindergarten teachers can enrich and enhance educational resources by tapping into local natural, ethnic, and community folk cultural resources to construct school-based curricula. School-based curricula refer to the unique characteristics of the curriculum presented under the interplay of the unique internal and external conditions of each kindergarten.

2.2. Protecting Local Resources and Fostering Children's Love for Their Hometown

The "Kindergarten Education Guidelines (Trial)" issued by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China clearly state: "The environment is an important educational resource. Effective use and creation of the environment can promote children's development." Here, the natural environment refers to the kindergarten environment. By incorporating local customs, art, and games into classroom activities, through teacher-child interaction and peer exchanges, children can personally experience all that their hometown offers. This enhances their understanding and appreciation of their surroundings, fostering a love and protective sentiment for their hometown, which is beneficial for protecting local resources and nurturing children's love for their hometown.

2.3. Stimulating Children's Learning Enthusiasm and Promoting Comprehensive Development

The rational use of folk cultural resources in kindergarten education can enhance children's hands-on abilities, expression skills, and creativity, helping them discover and appreciate beauty in everyday life, thus fostering aesthetic appreciation. It allows children to further understand various aspects of their hometown, stimulating their love for it. Folk cultural resources are an essential part of kindergarten educational resources.

To attract children's attention, teachers can bring toys children play with at home or homemade toys by parents into the kindergarten. During free-choice activities, children can play with their toys or exchange them with friends. Teachers can guide them appropriately, promoting growth

and emotional exchange among children, making learning fun and stimulating their enthusiasm for learning, helping children grow through play.

3. Methods of Applying Folk Cultural Resources in Kindergarten Education

3.1. Application in Environmental Setup

The environment setup in kindergartens is crucial. From the moment children arrive at the kindergarten in the morning, they engage in various activities. Providing a healthy, comfortable, and aesthetically pleasing environment is the responsibility of kindergarten teachers. The authors observed many drawings and art pieces on the walls, created by children after outings with their parents, indicating the kindergarten's emphasis on environmental setup. Additionally, various plants brought by children from home in the plant corner enhance the visual reinforcement of art activities. Children's artworks and teachers' hand-drawn pieces are displayed throughout the corridors and interactive walls. Outdoor environments, like playgrounds, feature large activity tools and children's handmade items and favorite toys and plants brought from home. Displaying children's works gives them a sense of accomplishment, making them more comfortable and achieving better development in a familiar environment. H Kindergarten's environment is distinctive, created under the leadership of the principal and teachers utilizing folk cultural resources.

3.2. Application in Group Educational Activities

In H Kindergarten's educational activities, the authors found that the kindergarten utilizes local resources for themed activities, exemplified by middle-class activities. They conducted themes like "Understanding Tea" and "Visiting Tea Houses" to teach young children about the tea-making process of the famous Du'an Maojian tea. Activities like "Sui Cultural Music," "Visiting Sandu," "My Sui Friends," "Beautiful Sui Costumes," "Paper Folding," "Stories of Duan Festival and Mao Festival," "March 3," "Buyi June 6," "Beautiful Mang Mountain," "I Love Mang Mountain," "Birds Chirping," "Happy New Year," "Beautiful Slate Street," "Art of Paper Cutting," and "Bridges in My Hometown" help children understand local landscapes, customs, and language, fostering a love for their homeland.

3.3. Application in Area Activities

In area activities, local resources are utilized extensively.

Living Area: Middle and upper classes have "Farmhouses," while lower classes have "Wawa Supermarkets," with vegetables, fruits, and crops for children to explore and play. Teachers also place peanuts, corn, and grains in the living area for children to practice peeling, breaking, and handling, enhancing their understanding of crops and small muscle practice.

Intelligence Area: Adding local materials like walnuts, beans, and soybeans for children to count, pick, and handle, helping them recognize crops and develop intelligence and small muscles through these activities.

Art Area: Providing various local materials such as eggshells, orange peels, shells, bamboo, straw, mud, stones, and sticks for children to create crafts. Folk paper-cutting and carving works are also displayed for children to appreciate, fostering a deeper understanding of local materials and enhancing their creativity and hands-on abilities.

Nature Corner: Seeds brought from home are planted in the plant area, allowing children to plant, observe, and record the growth of plants like amaryllis, scallions, beans, potatoes, corn, and orchids. This fosters responsibility and love for life through observing and recording plant growth and changes in tadpoles.

3.4. Application in Other Activities

Folk resources are also used in outdoor activities and daily routines. Outdoor activity time is significant for children, who are interested in games. Teachers collect local games, document them, and create booklets with game rules, leading children in playing these games during outdoor activities. These games include jumping rubber bands, rolling hoops, hide and seek, and the Lusheng dance. Boys enjoy rolling hoops, made by joining glue or iron pipes with wire, while girls prefer hide and seek, hiding and seeking among friends.

Children's arrival and departure times also incorporate folk cultural resources. Many children speak their native languages, like Miao, Buyi, and Sui, at home with grandparents. Teachers, besides teaching Mandarin during activities, also tell folk tales and stories in native languages, enriching children's language skills and preserving traditional culture.

4. Suggestions for Applying Folk Cultural Resources in Kindergartens

Given the many advantages of using folk cultural resources, the current situation in China is not optimistic. With curriculum reform, utilizing local resources is becoming a trend. The authors offer the following suggestions from the perspectives of kindergarten administrators, teachers, and parents:

4.1. Suitable Planning by Kindergarten Leaders

Kindergarten principals and directors should develop corresponding folk cultural resource activities each semester, utilizing folk festivals to conduct related activities, inviting parents to visit kindergartens, and using various methods to diversify and support the application of folk cultural resources in kindergartens.

4.2. Teachers Should Pay Attention to Folk Cultural Resources

Teachers should focus on discovering and exploring folk cultural resources, noting and summarizing them in educational practice. They should enhance their professional knowledge and skills to ensure effective and diverse applications of folk cultural resources.

4.3. Parents Should Participate in Activities

Parents should actively participate in educational activities, share folk cultural knowledge and resources, and collaborate with kindergartens to support the effective application of folk cultural resources in children's education.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, folk cultural resources are abundant and diverse, closely related to children's lives. Effective application in kindergarten education can enrich educational resources, construct school-based curricula, protect local resources, stimulate children's learning enthusiasm, and promote comprehensive development. It requires suitable planning by kindergarten leaders, attention from teachers, and active participation from parents to fully utilize these resources and achieve better educational outcomes.

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