

Curriculum Design of Early Childhood Education in a Multicultural Background

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Abstract: The purpose of early childhood education curriculum design in a multicultural background is to provide children with a tolerant and open learning atmosphere and promote their full development in cognition and emotion. Curriculum design should fully consider cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness, attach importance to the individualization and differentiation of teaching, and highlight cross-cultural communication and interaction. Through cultural integration as the theme unit, multi-sensory experience as the learning method, digital multilingual resource integration as the means, and family and community cooperation as the education model, children can get a full range of educational experience in a multicultural background. In addition, curriculum design should focus on the global perspective, and improve children's cultural identity and global perspective on the premise of paying attention to the presentation of local cultural characteristics.

Keywords: Multicultural; Early Childhood Education; Curriculum Design

Introduction

In the context of deepening globalization, early childhood education has gradually shown diversified and global characteristics. Educational courses in a multicultural context focus on both the development of academic ability and the shaping of children's cultural identity. Designing early childhood education curriculum in a multicultural environment can not only help children understand the differences between different cultures, but also promote the cultivation of children's cross-cultural communication ability and tolerance. With the increasing cultural diversity, how to effectively integrate cultural sensitivity, differentiated teaching and global vision into early childhood education has become an important topic in current educational research.

1. Overview of early childhood education curriculum in a multicultural context

With the deepening of globalization, early childhood education has gradually shown multicultural characteristics. With the increasing cultural exchanges around the world, the educational environment in which children live is no longer limited to a single cultural background, but has become more diverse, involving cultural differences between various ethnic groups, languages and religions. The purpose of early childhood education curriculum design in a multicultural context is to provide children with an opportunity to understand and respect different cultures, and to promote the healthy and comprehensive growth of children on the basis of cultural diversity. While focusing on knowledge transfer, this curriculum design also focuses on the development of children's social adaptability, cross-cultural communication skills and global vision. In a multicultural context, early childhood education courses face special challenges and opportunities. In this case, educators are required to have a high degree of cultural sensitivity and tolerance, understand and respect the attributes of various cultures, and then design educational plans that can adapt to the laws of children's development and the requirements of multiculturalism. The opening of the curriculum should not only reflect the values, historical backgrounds, lifestyles, etc. of different cultures, but also provide children with enough opportunities to be exposed to and feel the influence of different cultural elements. For example, educators can introduce traditional festivals, folk stories, art forms, etc. from various countries and regions through diversified teaching content, so that children can naturally understand and accept these cultural differences in the interactive learning process. At the same time, the role of teachers in multicultural education is even more important. Teachers should be a cultural bridge and guide, help children maintain an open-minded attitude in a multicultural environment, and learn to appreciate and respect the cultural characteristics of others.

2. Requirements for early childhood education curriculum design under a multicultural background

2.1 Cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness

The early childhood education curriculum design in a multicultural context needs to have a high degree of cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness, which determines that educators must recognize that every child comes from a different cultural background, which will affect their cognitive style, values, behavioral habits and ways of getting along with others. Cultural sensitivity requires educators to be sensitive and respect children's cultural identity, language, religious beliefs and family background to avoid cultural prejudice and discrimination, and at the same time be able to adjust teaching strategies based on children's cultural characteristics. Inclusiveness further requires that the curriculum content and educational environment can accept and respect various cultural differences, rather than attempting to assimilate or erase them. In curriculum design, educators should have a deep understanding of the meaning of multicultural education, not just simply bringing different cultural elements into the classroom, but should achieve this through the creation of diverse learning materials and activities, which will help children understand the uniqueness of various cultures in their experiences and learning. For example, teachers can use various forms of literary works to teach in the classroom, such as fairy tales, folk tales and classic poems from all over the world, so that children can understand the characters and moral concepts in different cultural backgrounds in the form of stories. In addition, various festivals also constitute a key link in multicultural education. Teachers have the ability to help children establish cross-cultural emotional bonds and cultural identity by guiding them to understand and participate in traditional festivals around the world, such as Christmas, Spring Festival and Thanksgiving.

2.2 Personalized and differentiated teaching

Children have individual differences, especially in language ability, cognitive development, emotional expression and family background. Because children are influenced by different cultural backgrounds, they may differ in many aspects such as language learning, problem solving and social skills. Therefore, curriculum design must take these differences into full consideration and adopt personalized and differentiated teaching strategies to ensure that every child can develop on a path that is compatible with their own development. The so-called personalized teaching is to tailor teaching content and methods for each child based on their learning interests, learning methods, learning rhythm, etc. For example, for children who like artistic expression, they can promote their language and cognitive development through various sensory activities such as painting and music; and for children who love to explore and do things, more experimental activities can be designed to stimulate their curiosity and improve their hands-on ability. In addition, personalized teaching also involves the importance of children's interests. Educators should promptly discover the areas of interest of each child and use these interests to design curriculum activities, so that children can get greater learning motivation and sense of achievement from what they are interested in. Differentiated teaching methods require teachers to provide different levels and types of teaching resources and support according to children's cultural background, language skills and cognitive development level. For example, given that children are in a multilingual environment, teachers can use bilingual teaching in the classroom or use language games and image-assisted means to help children understand new concepts.

2.3 Cross-cultural communication and interaction

In today's world where the process of internationalization is accelerating, the era of globalization has put forward higher requirements for children's cross-cultural communication ability. Cross-cultural communication ability is not only an important part of social adaptability, but also related to whether children can form a global vision and establish interpersonal relationships in the future. Therefore, in early childhood education, curriculum design should fully integrate cross-cultural communication and interaction, so that children can feel and learn the integration of different cultures in real interactions. The educational purpose of cross-cultural communication is not only to help children learn to communicate effectively with people from various cultural backgrounds, but more importantly, to enable children to have a sense of diversity and differences in communication. Educators should design a variety of cross-cultural communication activities to urge children

to understand the values, traditional customs and social norms of different cultures. For example, teachers can invite parents or community members from different cultural backgrounds to exchange their own cultural stories and customs or participate in common festivals, which will help children feel the uniqueness of various cultures from their own experience. In addition, children can be encouraged to cooperate with partners from different cultural backgrounds through cooperative projects and group activities to strengthen collective cooperation and cross-cultural communication skills. Through these cross-cultural interactions, children can not only strengthen their understanding and knowledge of other cultures, but also promote their work and adaptation in a diverse society. When designing cross-cultural communication and interaction activities, teachers need to pay attention to children's emotional communication and cultural understanding, create a supportive educational environment, make children feel safe and respected, and be willing to show cultural concepts and experiences.

3. Design methods of early childhood education curriculum under a multicultural background

3.1 Cultural integration theme unit design

Cultural integration theme unit design refers to the organic integration of various cultural elements into a unified learning framework, so that children can not only be exposed to diverse cultural knowledge when learning, but also learn cultural commonalities and differences from them, and develop their tolerance and understanding of diverse cultures. One of the key ways to design a cultural integration theme unit is to conduct comprehensive learning around a certain topic and integrate the perspectives and contexts of various cultures into the theme activities. For example, when constructing a teaching unit with the theme of "festivals and celebrations", teachers can start from the traditional festivals of many countries, and explain by analyzing China's Spring Festival and the United States' Thanksgiving, India's Diwali and other festivals so that children can understand their own traditional festivals while also realizing the cultural significance and social value behind them. Through various forms such as picture books, handicrafts, dance and music, teachers can organize a large number of cross-cultural activities to allow children to not only understand festivals at the knowledge level, but also deepen their understanding of various cultural traditions through personal experience. In addition, the design of cultural integration theme units can also adopt a multidisciplinary integration approach. For example, mathematics, art, science and other subject content are combined to carefully design cross-disciplinary learning tasks so that children can grasp different cultural characteristics and knowledge points in a variety of learning methods. By allowing children to participate in interactive activities such as group discussions, story sharing and role-playing, children can perceive the behavior and emotional reactions of people in different cultural backgrounds through personal experience, and thus better understand the importance of cross-cultural communication.

3.2 Multi-sensory experiential learning activities

Multi-sensory experiential learning activities are teaching methods that use hands-on operations, sensory experiences, and interactions to stimulate children's interest and promote learning. This learning method is particularly important in a multicultural context. It not only helps children to have a deep understanding and absorption of knowledge in multicultural cultures, but also can strengthen their memory and cognition through multi-sensory stimulation, thereby promoting the development of cross-cultural understanding ability. In the specific implementation, teachers can design corresponding sensory experience activities according to different cultural characteristics. For example, in the study of Indian culture, teachers can let children taste traditional Indian food, feel the taste of spices, listen to traditional Indian music, and even imitate Indian dance movements and other physical performances. In this multi-sensory environment, children not only learn Indian cultural content through language, but also experience and understand this culture in all aspects through sensory channels such as seeing, hearing, touching, and smelling. In the process of carrying out multi-sensory experiential learning activities, teachers should pay attention to creating a rich and interactive learning atmosphere, and encourage children to achieve in-depth learning through personal participation and interaction. For example, in discussing traditional costumes of countries around the world, teachers can prepare clothes from various cultures for children to try on, and combine relevant historical stories or folk legends to help children understand the cultural background and symbolic meaning of clothes.

3.3 Integration of digital multilingual resources

In a multicultural context, integrating digital multilingual resources is an important way to improve the quality of cross-cultural education. Through the integration of multi-language learning resources, children can contact and experience different languages and cultures in an interactive and immersive context, thereby improving children's language ability, cultural cognition and cross-cultural adaptability. In the specific implementation, teachers can use digital platforms and resources, such as multilingual picture books, cross-cultural education software and online cultural exchange platforms to create a learning environment where multiple languages and cultures are integrated. For example, while learning English, teachers can provide children with interactive resources in Chinese, English, French, German and other languages through online learning platforms, which helps children strengthen their language understanding and application through various means such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. In story reading, song learning and other aspects, teachers can also use various language pronunciations, grammar and sentence structures to make children realize the differences and commonalities between various languages and develop their language sensitivity and cross-cultural communication skills. In addition, teachers can invite parents or foreign teachers from different cultural backgrounds to conduct remote cultural lectures and online exchanges and interactions through digital platforms, so that children can directly contact and understand other countries' cultural customs, language expressions, social outlooks, etc. on the Internet. This cross-cultural exchange on digital platforms not only breaks the limitations of time and space, but also brings children more and more diverse cultural learning experiences. The integration of digital multilingual resources can not only promote the development of children's language skills, but also broaden children's international perspectives, helping children to have a deeper understanding and integration into a globalized multicultural society.

3.4 Family-community collaborative education model

The family is the primary environment for children's socialization, and the community is an important stage for children to interact with the outside world. The family-community collaborative education model can effectively integrate multicultural resources, bring children a full range of cultural learning experiences from multiple angles, and promote their full growth in the family and social environment. Specifically, teachers can establish close cooperative relationships with parents, communities, etc., and strengthen children's cross-cultural understanding and social responsibility by jointly planning and participating in various activities. For example, educators can plan family cultural day activities, invite parents from different cultural backgrounds to the school to share their country's traditions, customs and history, and display the country's national costumes. Through contact and participation in traditional food and other activities, children can have a deeper understanding and experience of the diversity of other cultures. Parents can also encourage their children to strengthen their multicultural experience by reading foreign books, watching foreign movies and participating in cultural festivals, and conduct daily family education. Cultural resources in the community also play an important role in children's education. Teachers can organize children to participate in some cross-cultural activities in the community, such as international cultural festivals, ethnic customs exhibitions, etc., which will help children establish a sense of respect and understanding of other cultures in the process of real cultural exchanges. In addition, cultural organizations and foreign cultural institutions in the community can also become external resources for the curriculum, providing more opportunities for cross-cultural learning and helping children to gain a deeper understanding of multiculturalism. Implementing the family-community collaborative education model is not only conducive to children obtaining more culture and information from their families and communities, but also conducive to children cultivating cross-cultural adaptability, social responsibility, and cooperative spirit in a broader social context.

3.5 Display of local characteristics under a global perspective

The design of early childhood education curriculum under a multicultural background should pay attention to both global cultural diversity and local cultural uniqueness. The inheritance and innovation of local culture in the context of globalization is crucial to children's cultural identity and multicultural understanding. Therefore, the design of the curriculum should take into account the global perspective and local characteristics, and fully explore and highlight the value and charm of local culture. In specific practice, teachers can enable children to understand global culture and appreciate the roots of local culture through the presentation of local festivals, traditional arts and folk customs.

For example, in designing a unit with the theme of “hometown culture”, teachers can interpret local history, local folk legends and local specialties to allow children to learn about various cultural characteristics in the world while also learning the unique charm of their hometown culture. By participating in the production of local handicrafts and learning local dances and songs, children can feel and inherit local culture while establishing a sense of pride and identity in their own national culture. At the same time, teachers can also help children understand the position and function of local culture in the global cultural landscape by combining local characteristics with a global perspective. For example, by explaining local history and geographical characteristics, it helps children understand the changes and development of local culture under the background of globalization, and form a global consciousness and local cultural identity. Through this educational model, children can understand the diversity of local cultures from a broad global perspective, enhance cultural confidence, and form a more open and tolerant international perspective.

Conclusion

The curriculum design of early childhood education in a multicultural context must have high cultural sensitivity and inclusiveness, and have both differentiated teaching and cross-cultural interaction. Reasonable curriculum design methods such as cultural integration theme units and multi-sensory experiential learning can help children develop better in a multicultural context. In addition, the family and community cooperative education model is crucial to promoting the all-round development of children. Under the process of globalization, the cultivation of a global perspective and a local characteristic education model lays a solid foundation for future cross-cultural exchanges and understanding in society.

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