



## **Dance Education in Promoting Children's Sociality and Study on the Role and Mechanism of Emotion Development**

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**Abstract:** As a unique form of education, dance education has a significant impact on children's social and emotional development. Through dance activities, while enjoying the charm of art, children can learn social rules and emotional expression through body language and collective interaction, thus enhancing social communication ability and emotional regulation ability. Dance education not only improves children's physical coordination and creativity, but also promotes the cultivation of empathy and the development of self-cognition through non-verbal emotional communication. This study deeply discusses the mechanism of dance education in children's social and emotional development, and provides a valuable reference for preschool education practice.

**Keywords:** Preschool Dance Education; Early Childhood Development; Social Cultivation; Infant Emotional Development

### **1 Research Background**

Early childhood is a critical period for individual growth. In early childhood, the social and emotional development of children has a profound impact on the subsequent life trajectory. During this period, children begin to form a preliminary interpersonal mode, and through learning emotional management, children can build self-cognition. These basic abilities of children are not only the cornerstone of children's development of healthy psychology, but also the core ability to adapt to future growth.

However, in the process of children's development, they also face many influences of educational environment. For example, with the change of family structure, the only child or small family size reduces the opportunity for children to interact with their peers naturally. Under such structural changes, the development of children's social skills has been greatly affected (Chen Qian.2015). In addition, under the fast-paced lifestyle of the society, as well as the popularity of mobile media and digital media, children's face-to-face communication ability is weakened, affecting their emotional expression and understanding in the process of growth.

Therefore, it is particularly important to explore ways to effectively promote children's social and emotional development. Dance education provides a new perspective for preschool education through children's unique body language, emotional expression and teamwork characteristics. Through dance teaching activities, teachers can make children learn social rules in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, enhance emotional communication, and promote their comprehensive and harmonious development (Ling Yan. 2015).

### **2 Research Significance**

Early childhood is a key stage of personality formation and social development. Dance education can provide rich social opportunities and diverse emotional experiences for children through its unique teaching interaction, action interaction and emotional expression functions. With the help of dance education, children can establish good interpersonal relationships and cultivate positive emotional attitudes. By participating in dance activities, children can learn how to express their emotions and understand the emotional states of others in a pleasant atmosphere, thus cultivating good

interpersonal communication skills (Liu Jie. 2024). Under the dance education that emphasizes teamwork, children can not only learn dance skills, but also participate in the process of sharing and waiting.

As a non-verbal communication method, dance can provide a space for children to safely explore the relationship between themselves and the outside world. In this way, young children can explore their own boundaries through physical movement and understand the connection between the individual and the group, which is important for building a positive self-image and enhancing self-confidence. In this way, dance education is not only the transfer of skills, but more importantly, the creation of a supportive and encouraging environment, so that every child can feel accepted and respected, this positive emotional experience is one of the key factors to promote the healthy development of young children.

Through systematic dance education, they can stimulate their desire to explore and curiosity about the world around them, laying a solid foundation for their all-round development in the future. In the context of rapid changes in today's society, if children have good social and emotional intelligence, they can adapt to changes in the environment more easily and faster, and they can show stronger resilience in the face of growth troubles. Therefore, in-depth research on the role and mechanism of dance education in promoting children's social and emotional development not only has important theoretical research value, but also provides valuable guidance for preschool education practice.

### **3 Overview of Preschool Dance Education**

#### **3.1 Definition and Characteristics of Preschool Dance Education**

Preschool dance education is a series of educational activities designed and implemented for preschool children with dance as the main carrier, whose purpose is to promote children's physical coordination, physical and mental cognitive development and cultivate social emotional skills through dance. This form of education combines play and learning elements so that young children can acquire dance knowledge and physical skills in a relatively relaxed and enjoyable environment, while stimulating their interest in exploring the world around them. Different from traditional subject teaching, preschool dance education emphasizes process experience rather than result orientation, and pays

more attention to each child's external personality development and internal potential mining.

The uniqueness of preschool dance education in early childhood education is reflected in its teaching mode of entertaining. Through gamified and contextualized teaching methods, children can feel the charm of dance in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere and naturally integrate into the dance world, avoiding the boredom and tedium that may appear in traditional subject teaching. In such an edutainment environment, children's physical functions and physical and mental development can be better improved.

Preschool dance education also emphasizes children's subjectivity and creativity. In preschool dance teaching, children are not only passive recipients, but also active participants and creators. In the process of dance teaching, it can effectively promote the synchronous development of children's various abilities. For example, by imitating the movements of animals or scenes in nature, not only provides the possibility of exercising the flexibility and coordination of the limbs, but also invisibly enhances the children's observation and imagination in daily life (Zhang Leyan. 2022). In addition, some dance categories usually need to be completed with peers, such as arranging group dances, participating in collective performances, etc. These educational experiences help children gradually learn to listen and cooperate in the teaching process, and then cultivate good social skills and team spirit. More importantly, dance, as a way of emotional expression, can allow children to freely show their inner world without language barriers in the early stage of growth, enhance self-awareness, and establish a confident growth environment.

#### **3.2 Content and Form of Preschool Dance Education**

The content of preschool dance education is rich and colorful, covering many levels from simple rhythm training to complex dance creation. Common types of dance classes for young children include folk dance, modern dance, ballet, and improvisation dance. Each dance form has its own unique style and characteristics, which can meet the interests and developmental needs of children of different ages. For example, by teaching traditional dances from different parts of the country, ethnic dance classes can help young children experience the diversity of Chinese culture and enhance their physical coordination and sense of rhythm (Jia Wenbin, Hu Yujia, Zhang Jing, et al. ). In contrast, improvisational dance is more focused on the free expression of emotions and the

cultivation of children's creativity, encouraging children to tell their own stories with their bodies.

In terms of teaching methods, preschool dance education emphasizes that children are the center, and adopts gamification, contextualization and inquiry teaching strategies. Teachers will design teaching content according to children's age characteristics and psychological development level to ensure that each child can actively participate in a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere. In the design of specific activities, it is necessary to follow the principle of simple into complex, starting from basic movements, and gradually transitioning to the study of combined movements and complete dances. In order to meet the learning trend of early childhood and stimulate children's learning interest, preschool teachers are required to integrate music, art and other art forms into dance teaching to create an interdisciplinary learning experience (Lu Ting. 2022). For example, organizing a small musical performance allows children to learn the dance movements that meet the needs of the role in the process of playing the stage role. In this teaching process, the participation of children is improved, and the understanding of the story behind the dance is deepened.

Security is always the primary consideration when it comes to event design principles. The design of all dance movements should take into account the physical development of children to avoid injury caused by overly complex or intense movements. At the same time, the teaching goal should also be inspiring and creative, guide children to find and solve problems in practice, and cultivate their critical thinking ability and problem-solving ability. Teachers need to listen patiently to each child's ideas, give timely feedback and support, and create a learning environment full of love and respect.

### **3.3 The Development Status of Preschool Dance Education**

At present, there are significant differences in the popularity of dance education for children at home and abroad. In some developed countries and regions, such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Japan, children's dance education has been quite mature, not only widely carried out in kindergartens, but also formed a relatively complete curriculum system and evaluation standards. These countries have continuously improved the quality and coverage of dance education through various means such as government funding and training by professional institutions,

so that more children have the opportunity to contact and benefit from dance education. In contrast, the progress in developing countries is relatively slow, although more and more educators realize the importance of dance education, but due to limited resources, insufficient teachers and other reasons, preschool dance education penetration rate is still low.

In the actual teaching process of children's dance education, there are some problems to be solved urgently. Among them, the most prominent is the lack of professional dance teachers and the uneven quality of teaching. Many teachers engaged in early childhood dance education lack systematic professional training and are unable to design and implement the curriculum scientifically and effectively. They carry out early childhood dance teaching courses only after a few months of dance training, or they have never received relevant training in early childhood education and only master dance teaching skills, which makes some existing pre-school dance courses too adult. The neglect of children's physiological and psychological characteristics leads to poor teaching results (Zhang Lin, Sheng Xia.2022). In addition, some parents and society still have a biased cognition of dance education, and regard it simply as an entertainment activity rather than an important educational means, which limits the development space of semester dance education to a certain extent.

## **4 The Influence of Preschool Dance Education on Children's Social Development**

### **4.1 Improved Social Skills**

As an important part of children's growth, dance education has a profound impact on the development of children's social skills during their growth. In dance activities, children are naturally guided to a common space of creation and performance, and in this process, they have to learn to listen to the rhythm of their peers and observe each other's movements, thus promoting the interaction between children virtually.

In the classroom, children are able to naturally bond with each other by participating in dance exercises and performances together. Teachers often design a variety of tasks that need to be completed by cooperation, such as pair dance steps, group scheduling and other teaching tasks, which require effective communication and coordination between children. In this learning process, children have imperceptibly

mastered how to correctly express their ideas, how to patiently listen to the opinions of others, and more importantly, after the goal of the course is achieved, they can experience the fun and sense of achievement of team cooperation, and through this successful experience, their sense of self-efficacy is enhanced (Chen Zhuo. 2020).

In dance activities, children not only have to cooperate with their peers, but also need to learn how to find their own place in the group and how to deal with conflicts in interpersonal relationships. For example, in the rehearsal process, there may be disagreements between partners, and then children need to use empathy to understand each other's point of view and find ways to solve the problem. Through such experiences, children can develop their communication skills and develop their sense of responsibility and team spirit. In addition, the rotating performances in dance activities also teach young children to respect others and wait patiently, which are very important qualities in social interaction.

#### **4.2 Cultivate the Sense of Rules and Responsibility**

Every activity in the dance class, whether it is formation change or movement coordination, can not be separated from the clear command guidance. In the process of learning dance, children must abide by these rules to help them understand the importance of order and encourage them to form the habit of abiding by rules in daily life. Through repeated practice and practical application, children gradually realize the necessity of rules for collective activities, and this understanding helps them to show higher self-discipline and responsibility in social interactions.

The awareness of rules in dance training is also reflected in the attention to details. When choreographing a dance, the accurate execution of each movement requires children to concentrate on it and do it in strict accordance with the teacher's requirements. Through this pursuit of details, enhance the performance of the dance, so that children learn to be careful and patient. When young children see that their efforts are recognized, they value the rules more and take personal responsibility more actively. In addition, dance performances often require close coordination among course participants, and the mistakes of any one person can affect the overall effect. In this case, young children can learn to take responsibility for their own actions during dance training and understand that everyone's efforts are the key to the success of the team.

Through dance training, children can not only get

physical exercise, but more importantly, gain psychological growth. Every successful performance is the best return for children's persistence and effort (Chen Yaqin. 2021). In the process, they learn how to set goals, how to overcome obstacles, and how to work tirelessly to achieve their goals. These experiences can have a profound impact on the formation of children's sense of responsibility. With the passage of time, children will extend this sense of responsibility to all aspects of life, whether it is to study or treat others, can show a more mature and stable attitude.

#### **4.3 Conflict Resolution and Adaptability**

In the teaching activities of preschool dance education, children will inevitably encounter disagreements or competition for attention, but as long as these conflicts are properly handled, it can provide them with valuable opportunities to learn to solve problems and improve adaptability. Through learning in the dance rehearsal process, young children can learn to listen to others, understand and respect different points of view, which is the first step in conflict resolution.

In the process of dealing with conflicts, children gradually master a variety of solutions, such as compromise, mediation and empathy. The application of these methods is not limited to the dance classroom, but can also be transferred to other scenes in daily life to help young children stay calm when they encounter problems and find solutions rationally. In addition, the role allocation and performance opportunity rotation mechanism in dance teaching activities give children the opportunity to experience different roles and positions, which can better help them understand that everyone's role is equal and important in team cooperation. When young children are able to see problems from multiple perspectives, their problem-solving skills improve, laying the foundation for their future adaptation to situations in more complex social environments.

### **5 The Influence of Preschool Dance Education on Children's Emotional Development**

#### **5.1 Emotion Expression and Recognition**

As a non-verbal emotional expression tool, dance education provides a unique channel for young children to communicate their inner feelings through body movements and facial expressions. In dance activities, young children can explore and understand the nature of these emotions by imitating different emotional states, such as happiness,

sadness, anger, etc. Using this experience, children can intuitively recognize the diversity of emotions and promote their awareness and understanding of their emotional states. For example, in a dance to express happiness, children will feel joy through jumping, rotating and other movements, while in a dance to express sadness, they will learn how to use slow movements and low expressions to convey sadness. Through the body language of dance, children can overcome the limitations of speech and show their inner world in a more intuitive and vivid way. Whether it is joy, sadness, curiosity and fear, they can be released and resonated in the melody and movement of dance (Guo Lina. 2023).

As an art form, dance itself has strong appeal and expression, which makes it an ideal medium for children's emotional education. In the process of dance creation and performance, children are encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings freely, and teachers can better guide them to establish a positive self-image and enhance self-confidence by adopting this unfettered expression. When young children are able to successfully express their emotions through dance, they feel understood and accepted, and this positive emotional experience is essential for developing healthy emotional attitudes. In the teaching process, teachers can observe the performance of children in the dance, timely find and guide them to correctly deal with bad emotions, such as anxiety, fear, etc., so as to promote the healthy development of children's emotions.

### **5.2 Building Confidence and Self-esteem**

The learning of dance provides a stage for children to show themselves and get a sense of achievement. During dance learning and performance, young children are able to see their own progress and achievements, and this positive feedback greatly enhances their self-confidence. When young children successfully master a new dance move or complete a successful performance, they will feel proud and satisfied, and this emotional reward is an important cornerstone of self-confidence. The affirmation and encouragement of teachers and parents make children convinced that their efforts are valuable, so that they are more actively invested in the subsequent learning.

Cooperation and competition in dance learning also provide opportunities for young children to build self-esteem. In the collective dance, each member has a specific role and responsibility, under this requirement, children need to pay attention to their own performance, but also care about the

effect of the whole team. When young children realize that their contributions are critical to team success, they experience a significant boost in self-esteem. By participating in moderate competition in dance competitions or exhibition activities, children are encouraged to constantly surpass themselves, learn from experience even in the face of failure, and maintain an optimistic attitude. Using the experience of learning and competition, children learn how to face challenges and pressure, and cultivate strong willpower and good psychological quality.

## **6 The Mechanism of Preschool Dance Education in Promoting Children's Social and Emotional Development**

### **6.1 The Interaction of Body Movements and Cognitive Development**

Dance movement learning is a comprehensive promotion process of children's physical coordination, spatial perception and cognitive development. The practice of dance movements requires children to be able to precisely control their limbs, through this training, can exercise muscle strength and flexibility, and promote the coordination between the brain and the body. Children need to constantly adjust the position and strength of various parts of the body to achieve a smooth and natural performance. Through continuous body control training, children's physical coordination and balance can be significantly improved, laying a solid foundation for their future participation in more complex physical activities and other physical movements.

Children need to dance in a limited space, maintain a proper distance from other dancers, and avoid collisions, so that they need to have a strong sense of spatial orientation and direction on the basis of mastering the body. Through repeated practice, children can better understand their relationship with the surrounding environment and improve their sensitivity to spatial layout (Yang Yufeng. 2014). For example, in the arrangement of formation changes, children should learn to quickly adjust the position according to the instruction, through such teaching projects, they can test their reaction speed and exercise their judgment of spatial relations. This ability is a great guide for children to act safely and effectively in daily life, such as crossing the street, sorting things, etc. In the process of learning dance, children need to remember a series of movement sequences, understand the meaning and purpose of each movement, and finally be able to flexibly use these movements for free creation. This

process from imitation to creation greatly promotes the development of young children's memory, understanding and creativity.

## **6.2 The Relationship Between Emotional Experience and Emotional Learning**

Children's emotional memory can be activated through the emotional experience in dance activities. When a young child experiences an emotion during a dance, the emotional experience is encoded and stored by the brain. Later, in similar situations, these emotional memories are called up, helping young children identify and understand their emotional states more quickly. For example, if a young child experiences great joy during a joyful dance activity, he can more quickly recognize the happy emotion in a similar situation in the future and learn how to express it again.

Similarly, emotional expression in dance activities can also promote the development of children's emotional regulation ability. Children adjust their movements and expressions according to the rhythm and emotional color of music, which is actually a process of practicing how to control and manage their emotions. For example, when music suddenly becomes intense, young children need to learn how to quickly change from a state of calm to a state of energy. And vice versa. This practice of emotional regulation helps young children cope better with mood swings in daily life and cultivates their emotional resilience. These emotional experiences are internalized into children's emotional cognition, making dance education an effective way of emotional learning.

## **7 Conclusion**

Dance education plays an important role in promoting children's social and emotional development. Through systematic dance activities, children learn to follow rules and cooperate in group interaction, and enhance their social skills and emotional regulation ability through imitation and expression. As a tool of non-verbal communication, dance allows children to explore the emotions of self and others in performance and creation, and cultivates empathy and responsibility. These experiences optimize children's emotional expression and lay a solid foundation for their all-round development. Therefore, exploring the specific mechanism of dance education in this process has important theoretical and practical value for optimizing educational practice and promoting the healthy growth of children.

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