

Promoting the Development of Young Children's Social Interaction Skills Through Collaboration Between Home and School

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Abstract

As the development of family education and kindergarten education progresses, the collaboration between the home and the kindergarten has increasingly become a crucial pathway to promoting the social skills of young children. Early childhood is a critical period for laying the foundation for social competencies, which not only influence a child's current mental health and behavioral habits but also have a profound impact on their future development. However, due to issues such as inadequate communication of information and insufficient cooperation mechanisms between families and kindergartens, the development of children's social interaction skills still faces numerous challenges. This paper aims to explore the significant role of home-kindergarten collaboration in the development of children's social interaction skills, to analyze the current situation, and to propose concrete measures, with the hope of providing a reference for educators and parents.

Keywords: Home and Family Education, Early Childhood Society, Interaction Skills

1. Introduction

The development of young children's social interaction skills is not just the responsibility of families or kindergartens alone, but requires the joint efforts of both parties. As a new educational model, home and kindergarten co-education, through close cooperation between families and kindergartens, can promote young children's social interaction skills in a more comprehensive and systematic way. In this process, kindergartens and families each play an irreplaceable role in building a supportive and interactive educational environment by designing activities suitable for young children, providing diversified educational resources, and strengthening communication and cooperation. This paper will focus on this theme and discuss in depth the specific measures of home and family co-education and its positive impact on young children's social interaction skills.

2. The Importance of Young Children's Social Communication Skills

During the formative stages of life, the social interaction skills of young children play an indispensable role in their psychological well-being and emotional growth. This ability is not merely about a child's capacity to engage with others; it is fundamentally the cornerstone upon which they gain a sense of security and belonging in the ever-changing and intricate world. Through exchanges with peers and adults, children gradually learn to articulate their emotions and needs, as well as to listen and empathize with the thoughts and feelings of others. These competencies lay a robust foundation for their future establishment of stable interpersonal relationships. Additionally, the development of young children's social interaction skills significantly propels their cognitive growth. Through interaction with others, they can better acquire new knowledge and explore new things. Both the kindergarten and the home, as two primary environments for a child's growth, should provide ample opportunities for social interaction, such as organizing group activities that encourage children to learn cooperation and sharing through play. Parents should also actively encourage their children to engage with a diverse range of people in their daily lives. Through such concrete methods, the social interaction skills of young children are continually enhanced. The cultivation of social interaction skills also involves the enhancement of self-regulation abilities. Through interactions with peers, children learn to manage their emotions and behaviors and to resolve conflicts. The development of these abilities not only aids children's adaptation in kindergarten but also prepares them well for future social integration. The collaborative parenting model ensures a coherent and consistent educational approach, creating a nurturing environment filled with love and care for the child's growth [1].

3. The Current Situation of Home and Family Co-Education to Promote Young Children's Social Interaction Ability

Home-school collaboration has demonstrated positive effects in fostering the development of young children's social interaction skills; however, the actual outcomes remain uneven. In many households and kindergartens, the concept of home-school collaboration is widely acknowledged, yet numerous challenges persist in its practical implementation. Kindergartens, as pivotal educational institutions, constantly endeavor to design diverse and enriching activities aimed at enhancing social interaction skills among children. Nevertheless, parental involvement often falls short of expectations. Some parents, due to demanding work schedules or a lack of understanding regarding the significance of specific activities, fail to actively participate in their children's kindergarten life, thereby impeding the efficacy of home-school collaboration and restricting the social growth of the child. Inter-family communication serves as the foundation of home-school collaboration, yet many kindergartens and households grapple with issues of information asymmetry. Parents frequently receive only superficial information from the kindergarten, lacking insight into their child's performance and needs within the institution. Concurrently, kindergarten teachers find it challenging to fully comprehend the specific circumstances of each child within their family setting. This lack of seamless information flow significantly undermines educational outcomes. The cultivation of social interaction skills among young children constitutes a comprehensive endeavor requiring concerted efforts from both the home and the school. However, in reality, collaboration between parents and teachers may lack coherence and occasionally even manifest misunderstandings and conflicts. Such discordant relationships are highly detrimental to children's growth. Children require a nurturing, harmonious environment to learn social skills, rather than one fraught with contradictions and stress. Collaboration between kindergartens and households extends beyond mere exchange of information; it necessitates the establishment of a relationship rooted in trust and support. Certain kindergartens have made commendable attempts in this direction, such as periodic parent-teacher conferences and family activities, aimed at fortifying communication and mutual understanding between parents and educators, thereby creating more opportunities for children to interact with others. Nevertheless, these initiatives still warrant further refinement and wider dissemination. In remote or resource-constrained kindergartens, the efficacy of home-school collaboration is even more limited, as parents and educators in these regions often lack professional training and support, significantly impeding the development of children's social interaction capabilities. Thus, the current landscape of home-school collaboration in fostering social interaction skills among young children is marked by both bright spots and areas for improvement.

4. Measures to Promote Young Children's Social Interaction Ability through Home and Family Co-Education

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities of Kindergartens

(1) Designing Activities Suitable for Young Children's Social Interaction

Designing activities tailored to foster social interaction among young children is not merely an educational component but also a cornerstone in paving the way for their vibrant future. For instance, one could organize a mini market within the kindergarten setting, where children don an array of "workwear," with some assuming the role of shopkeepers and others as customers. Amidst laughter and joy, they learn the basics of buying and selling, as well as how to engage in conversation with others. Such activities not only immerse children in fundamental societal roles but also instill in them the values of respecting others and understanding their needs. For example, a cooperative puzzle activity, which demands that children work harmoniously to piece together a complex jigsaw puzzle. In this process, children learn to listen to their teammates' suggestions, appreciate the power of collective wisdom, and most importantly, experience the sense of accomplishment that comes from joint efforts, a valuable lesson that is difficult to acquire through solitary actions. Moreover, role-playing games prove to be an excellent means of promoting social interaction among young children. For example, a teacher might design a scenario simulating family life, where children assume roles as parents and children. Through such play, children gain a deeper understanding of family roles and responsibilities and learn how to coexist harmoniously with family members in daily life. Social interaction is not confined to face-to-face interactions; modern technology also opens new avenues for children's social engagement. For instance, through online interaction platforms, children can communicate with peers from different regions, even different countries [2]. This cross-cultural exchange greatly broadens their horizons, allowing them to recognize the diversity of the world and humanity from a young age. In essence, activities designed to enhance social interaction among young children should be creative, engaging, and educationally meaningful. Such activities not only facilitate the acquisition of social skills through play but also lay a robust foundation for their growth, enabling them to interact confidently and gracefully with others in the future, thus savoring a rich and multifaceted life.

(2) Providing Diversified Educational Resources

Providing a diverse array of educational resources is essential for fostering the development of young children's social interaction skills. Parents and kindergartens can offer children a wealth of learning materials and activities through various channels and formats, aiding them in cultivating social skills in diverse settings. For instance, kindergartens can establish multiple themed areas, such as a science exploration zone, an art creation area, and a role-playing zone. Each area is equipped with distinct activity materials and tools, allowing children to engage in different activities, interact with peers, and discover their interests and talents. Parents can also prepare a variety of toys and books at home for their children, such as puzzles, building blocks, picture books, and storybooks. These items not only stimulate creativity but also teach children how to express themselves and communicate while sharing with family and friends. When selecting educational resources, it is important to consider not only their educational value but also their ability to spark children's interest and curiosity. For example, interactive digital educational resources, such as children's educational software and interactive games, can enable children to engage in dialogues and cooperation with virtual characters on screens, providing an experience that is both enjoyable and instructive in virtual social interactions. Additionally, parents and teachers can regularly organize outdoor activities, like park picnics and community service, which allow children to connect with nature and society, as well as to practice their social skills in real-world scenarios. During these activities, children can learn to take turns using public facilities, communicate with strangers, and manage conflicts and solve problems, all crucial skills in social interactions. A variety of educational resources not only enrich children's learning experiences but also provide parents and teachers with additional educational tools and methods to better support children's holistic development. Parents and teachers can collaborate to explore and implement the use of these resources, creating a nurturing and supportive environment for children's growth.

Table 1. Participation and Satisfaction Statistics of Home-based Co-education Activities

Communication	Frequency	Children's performance at school, educational suggestions	Parent feedback rate
Parent-teacher conferences	2 times per semester	Activity photos, learning progress	85%
Family WeChat	Daily	Understanding your child's behavior at home and providing personalized guidance	70%
Home Visit	At least 1 time per semester	Social Skills Tips, Home-School Interaction	90%
Education App	Regularly updated	Children's performance at school, educational suggestions	65%

(3) Strengthening Communication and Cooperation with Parents

Parents and kindergartens are the two pillars supporting a child's growth, and only through their close collaboration can they effectively nurture the essential social skills in children. For instance, regularly hosting parent-teacher meetings allows parents to gain insight into their child's performance at school, which is not merely about informing parents but also about fostering trust and cooperation between home and kindergarten. At home, parents can implement the teachers' recommendations by providing their children with more opportunities to interact with others in their daily lives, such as organizing community activities or inviting friends over for playdates. These activities not only enrich the child's social experiences but also enable parents to observe and guide their child's behavior in social settings more effectively. Modern communication technologies have streamlined home-kindergarten communication, with many kindergartens utilizing WeChat groups or specialized educational apps to share photos of children's activities and updates on their learning progress in real-time. This approach not only reassures parents but also motivates them to actively engage in their child's educational journey. Teachers can regularly post tips on nurturing social skills in these platforms, and parents can promptly provide feedback on their child's behavior and any challenges they encounter, allowing both parties to collaboratively explore solutions. Communication is not just about the exchange of information; it is also about emotional connection and deepening understanding. Kindergartens should encourage teachers to engage in individual conversations with parents to gain a deeper understanding of each child's personality and family background. This not only assists teachers in adjusting their educational methods more appropriately but also makes parents feel that the kindergarten cares deeply about and values each child. For example, teachers can conduct regular home visits to have face-to-face interactions with parents, understanding how their child behaves at home, thereby offering more targeted guidance.

and support at school [3]. The participation and satisfaction levels in home-kindergarten collaboration are depicted in Table 1. As shown in Table 1, strengthening home-kindergarten partnerships is not just about caring for the child but also about sharing a mutual responsibility.

(4) Roles and Responsibilities of Parents

(5) Influence of Family Education on Young Children's Social Interaction Skills

The home is the initial setting where a child first encounters society, and the actions and attitudes of parents significantly influence how the child interacts with others. For instance, a household brimming with love and support can instill a sense of security and acceptance in a child, thereby fostering greater confidence in forging connections with the outside world. Conversely, a tense or unaffectionate home environment may result in a child exhibiting reluctance or distrust in social situations. The role of parental modeling is also crucial. Children naturally emulate the behaviors and speech of adults; therefore, parents who exhibit positive social attitudes—such as being helpful, respectful, and adept at communication—will nurture these essential social skills in their children through their daily influence. Conversely, if parents display negativity, selfishness, or indifference in social settings, children may also be affected by these adverse behaviors. Daily interactions within the family are a vital means of cultivating a child's social skills. Parents can use everyday conversations to teach children how to express their thoughts and emotions, while also developing their ability to listen to others. For example, during the evening meal, parents might encourage their child to share amusing anecdotes from kindergarten, as well as listen attentively to their child's feelings and needs. This two-way communication not only strengthens the emotional bond between parent and child but also aids the child in better understanding the emotions and perspectives of others. The family should also provide a variety of social opportunities for the child. Activities like participating in community events or organizing gatherings with other families can enable children to practice their social skills in diverse settings. During these activities, parents can guide their child on how to interact with people of different ages and backgrounds, and how to manage conflict and collaboration, thereby allowing the child to grow continuously through practice. In conclusion, the role of family education in fostering a child's social interaction skills is irreplaceable. The positive attitude, role modeling, and daily interactions of parents form a solid foundation for a child's social development.

(6) Strategies for Parents' Participation in Kindergarten Activities

Parents should not only be bystanders, but also active participants. Kindergartens can organize open days for parents on a regular basis, so that parents can personally enter their children's learning and living environments and experience their children's daily activities. Parents' Open Day is not only to show the performance of children, but also to enhance parents' understanding and trust of the kindergarten's educational philosophy, so that they can better continue and support the kindergarten's educational work in the family. Parent-child activities are also an effective way to promote parental participation. Kindergartens can design some interesting parent-child games and handicraft activities, such as parent-child games and handicraft competitions, etc. These activities not only enhance the interaction between parents and children, but also enable children to learn to cooperate and share with others in a happy way. In the process of participating in these activities, parents can not only better understand their children's interests and strengths, but also observe their children's performance in socialization, so as to provide more targeted guidance and support. The establishment of Home-Home Collaborative Groups is also a highlight. Parents, teachers and the kindergarten principal can be invited to participate in such groups to discuss children's problems and progress in socialization on a regular basis [4]. Group members can share and exchange successful experiences at home and in the kindergarten, discuss difficulties and challenges faced, and work together to develop solutions. This kind of cooperation is not only limited to the development of social skills, but also covers the overall development of the child's emotional, behavioral and cognitive aspects. Kindergartens can also utilize modern technological means, such as WeChat groups and educational APPs, to regularly release information and invitations to activities, so that parents can keep abreast of and participate in various kindergarten activities. This approach is not only convenient and quick, but also improves parental participation. For example, kindergartens can post suggested books for parent-child reading in WeChat groups, encouraging parents to read with their children and discuss the storylines and character interactions in the books, thus developing their children's social skills and interest in reading. Good communication between parents and teachers is the basis of parent participation in the program. Kindergartens should encourage teachers and parents to maintain frequent communication. They can set up parent reception days and arrange special time for parents and teachers to have face-to-face communication. The statistical table of parents' participation strategies and satisfaction in kindergarten activities is shown in Table 2. From Table 2, it can be seen that teachers can not only convey their children's social performance to parents in their communication, but also understand parents' confusion and needs in home education, and work together to find solutions to the problems.

Table 2. Statistics of Parents' Participation Strategies and Satisfaction in Kindergarten Activities

Type of activity	Frequency	Number of participants (average)	Parent Feedback Satisfaction
Parents' Open Day	2 times per semester	80 persons	92%
Parent-Child Sports Day	1 time per year	100 people	95%
Parent-Child Handicraft Activity	1 time per month	40 participants	88%
Home-Home Cooperation Group	1 time per month	20 persons	90%
WeChat Group Activity Release	1 time per week	120 persons	85%

(7) Social Interaction Cultivation Methods in the Family

The family serves as a crucial environment for fostering the development of young children's social interaction skills. The active involvement and proper guidance of parents can significantly enhance a child's social progress. Parents can incorporate engaging interactive games into daily routines, allowing children to acquire social competencies through play. For instance, role-playing games are highly effective, enabling parents and children to embody diverse characters. By simulating various social scenarios, these games teach children to articulate their needs and emotions while empathizing with others. This approach not only fosters closer parent-child interactions but also facilitates learning in a joyful and relaxed setting. Emotional support within the family is also indispensable. When children encounter difficulties or setbacks in their social interactions, parents should offer prompt encouragement rather than criticism. By patiently listening to their children's accounts, parents can help them analyze problems and identify appropriate solutions. Such emotional support bolsters children's self-confidence and instills a positive attitude towards challenges. Additionally, parents can utilize family gatherings and social events to provide children with more opportunities for social engagement. Attending birthday parties, family reunions, or community activities exposes children to interactions with people of varying ages and backgrounds. During these events, parents can guide their children in learning to greet others politely, participate in group games, and share food and toys. These practical social experiences enable children to grasp fundamental interpersonal rules and refine their social skills. Daily family life also presents abundant opportunities for social skill development. By involving children in household decisions, such as selecting dinner menus or planning weekend activities, parents can teach them the value of expressing opinions, listening to others' suggestions, and collaborating to reach consensus. Such experiences not only enhance a child's sense of responsibility but also improve their communication and negotiation abilities. The social cultivation methods within the family not only aid in establishing positive relationships within the home but also lay a robust foundation for children's social interactions in kindergarten and beyond [5].

5. Conclusion

Home-home co-education is an effective way to promote the development of young children's social interaction skills. Through close cooperation between kindergartens and families, we can not only provide children with diversified opportunities for social interaction, but also cultivate good social skills in their daily lives. The improvement of young children's social interaction skills not only contributes to their current psychological health development, but also lays a solid foundation for their future interpersonal relationships and social adaptability. Therefore, educators and parents should work together to optimize the model of home and family co-education and create a warm and harmonious social interaction environment for young children.

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