

Balancing authority and affinity: Communication strategies in preschool teachers' home cooperation

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Abstract: This study aims to explore how to effectively balance authority and affinity in the communication between preschool teachers and parents, so as to promote good cooperation between family and school. First of all, this paper analyzes the importance of home communication in early childhood education, and the necessity of maintaining the balance between authority and affinity in home communication. Secondly, this paper deeply discusses the influence of multiple factors such as culture, social background, teachers' personal factors, parents' expectations and school environment on home communication and puts forward a series of countermeasures and suggestions. Including continuous improvement of professional knowledge and skills, maintenance of open and friendly communication attitude, implementation of regular parental communication and feedback mechanism, promotion of co-parenting cooperation model with parents, regular self-reflection and communication strategy adjustment. These strategies aim to help preschool teachers and parents establish a cooperative relationship based on trust and respect, and jointly promote the health and all-round development of children.

Keywords: Authority and affinity; Preschool teachers; Home cooperation; Communication strategies

Introduction

According to the 2021 Guizhou Statistical Yearbook, 11,305 kindergartens will achieve a 99.9% enrollment rate for school-age children, signifying the success of universal access in preschool education. This marks a stage of comprehensive popularization and high-quality development, emphasizing the crucial role of home communication.

Balancing teacher authority and affinity in communication with parents is a challenge. Teachers must convey authority based on professional knowledge, experience, and responsibility, avoiding imposition. They also need to exhibit sufficient affinity through friendly, respectful, and effective communication. This balance is crucial for winning parental trust and maintaining the professional status of educators.

Achieving this balance is a challenge that every preschool teacher must face, essential for professional development and the healthy growth of early childhood education. Future studies should systematically explore the relationship between home communication and teacher authority, focusing on how teachers achieve this balance. Introducing more rigorous and objective research methods is crucial for accurate and practical guidance in early childhood education.^[1]

1. Analysis of the reasons

In early childhood education, how teachers balance authority and affinity in home communication is an extremely critical issue. It is not only related to the cooperative relationship between teachers and parents, but also directly affects the effect of children's education.

1.1 Cultural and social background

Cultural and social contexts significantly influence the balance between teacher authority and affinity. In collectivist cultures, teachers hold high authority; in individualistic cultures, emphasis is on a teacher's affinity.

Geert Hofstede's research correlates differences in cultural backgrounds to a model based on four dimensions: individualism versus collectivism, large versus small power distance, strong versus weak uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity versus femininity.

In certain societies, teachers are considered the second "parent," enjoying high social status. In other environments, child-centered education requires teachers to prioritize coordination and communication, necessitating high affinity and communication skills. Teachers need cultural awareness to establish effective cooperative relationships with parents and promote children's healthy growth.

1.2 Teacher factors

Teacher factors significantly impact home-school cooperation. Balancing authority and affinity is key for effective communication. Educators with democratic beliefs foster open relationships and emphasize affinity. In contrast, an authoritarian approach may prioritize professional standing, leading to more formal communication. Effective communication skills, such as clear information delivery and emotional management, are crucial. These factors influence teacher-parent interactions, shaping overall home communication quality. Parental factors, including education and expectations, also play a role. Higher-educated parents tend to cooperate, while conflicts arise with differing expectations. Institutional and environmental factors, such as school policies and culture, shape communication dynamics.^[2] Clear policies support effective communication, while cultural openness encourages collaboration. In kindergarten communication, challenges like conflicts stem from various factors. Balancing teacher authority and affinity is crucial for building trust in the educational environment.

2. Countermeasures and suggestions

In early childhood education, effective teacher-parent communication, balancing professional authority and affinity, is crucial for fostering trust, understanding, and targeted support for children's all-round development.

2.1 Continuous improvement of professional knowledge and skills

Continuous improvement of professional knowledge and skills is vital for preschool teachers to naturally exhibit authority in home communication. This involves participating in vocational training, reading professional literature, and obtaining relevant qualifications. Close communication with peers through activities like case sharing further enhances teachers' knowledge and methods, promoting a solid professional foundation for effective home cooperation.

2.2 Maintain an open and friendly communication attitude

Preschool teachers should maintain an open and friendly attitude, set fixed communication times, and transparently share a child's progress. Sincere and respectful communication, along with receptivity to parents' opinions, helps foster collaboration. Emotional wisdom is essential to understand and respond to parents' emotions, providing support when needed. Accepting parental suggestions and discussing solutions collaboratively strengthens the teacher-parent relationship. Initiatives like inviting parents to participate in activities establish cooperation, fostering mutual respect and support.

2.3 Implement regular parent communication and feedback mechanism

Effective communication involves regular parent communication times and digital tools like the Home Communication APP for real-time updates on children's progress. Encouraging parental feedback through suggestion boxes, questionnaires, or seminars is essential. Teachers should respond promptly and professionally, following up to assess improvements and understand new concerns. Organizing parent workshops facilitates information exchange.

Establishing a regular summary and evaluation mechanism allows teachers to assess the implementation of the system, identify problems, and set improvement goals. This continuous optimization aims to enhance home cooperation and promote children's all-round development.^[3]

2.4 Promote the cooperative mode of co-parenting with parents

Promoting co-parenting involves regular parent education workshops and collaborative discussions on educational topics. Encouraging parent involvement through volunteer service or participation days fosters a close parent-teacher relationship. Jointly designing and implementing projects enhances parental participation in educational activities. Establishing a resource library for parents facilitates the sharing of educational resources. Creating a child's growth file in collaboration with parents helps them understand the child's development.

Regular evaluations enable adjustments to strategies, ensuring sustainability. Semester discussions with parents allow for feedback and collaborative planning, optimizing the co-education model for the common growth of teachers, parents, and children.^[4]

2.5 Regular self-reflection and communication strategy adjustment

Preschool teachers should regularly self-reflect on communication, adjusting strategies for authority and affinity. Scheduled reviews, using recordings or observations, offer an objective perspective. Sharing reflections with team members fosters diverse insights and collective improvement. Teachers devise clear adjustment plans with specific actions and outcomes, using a timetable for systematic self-improvement. This demands awareness, responsibility, and collaborative learning for effective balance in parent communication.

3. Conclusion

In early childhood education, home communication is vital for children's growth but presents challenges due to diverse educational views and cultural backgrounds. Balancing authority and affinity is crucial—authority establishes leadership, while affinity builds trust. A teacher with both gains parent trust, fostering an ideal environment. Implementing comprehensive strategies supports effective cooperation, creating a harmonious home communication system and an all-encompassing educational environment for children.

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