

Chinese Novice Kindergarten Teachers' Difficulties in the Cultivation of Children's Approaches to Learning

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Abstract. Approaches to learning has an important impact on children's lifelong learning and development. Kindergarten teachers should be able to cultivate and support children's approaches to learning, but novice teachers face many difficulties in educational practice. This research adopted interview with 13 kindergarten novice teachers in Chongqing, and aimed to understand the novice teachers' difficulties. Four difficulties for novice teachers were found: the cognitive degree is uneven; the strategic reserve of approaches to learning is insufficient; low professional promotion initiative, and lack of parenting cooperation which failed to form effective joint force on the cultivation of approaches to learning. The reasons mainly included the deviation of professional skill training orientation in normal colleges and universities, the insufficient support for novice teachers in kindergartens, the lack of learning and working ability of novice teachers, and the obstacles of parents' educational concepts and intergenerational education.

Keywords: Approaches to learning; Novice teachers; Kindergarten teachers; Difficulties.

1. Introduction

Approaches to learning is the key indicator to predict children's academic learning outcome. It refers to the psychological tendency, behavioral habits and activity style shown by children in learning and attitude towards things and methods of doing things. It is an important psychological quality formed in early childhood and has an important predictive effect on children's academic achievements. Different from adults' learning, children learn in their daily life and games. Good approaches to learning will affect children's learning and development all the time [1]. Under the influence of the promulgations of the Guide to Learning and Development for 3-6 years old *Children* and the emphasis on approaches to learning, domestic researchers and educators paid more and more attention to the cultivation of approaches to learning [2]. However, for the past few years, some kindergartens and education institutions in China still ignored the importance of approaches to learning. Learning knowledge and skills such as pinyin, literacy, arithmetic are much accounted by teachers and parents. Although all teachers have studied the Guide to Learning and Development for 3-6 years old Children, their understanding of children's approaches to learning is not deep enough. Especially for novice teachers, who are limited by work pressure and their own experience, always pay more attention to class management, how to get along with colleagues and other problems in kindergarten, and improve their own teaching skills. Novice teachers sometimes ignore the cultivation of children's approaches to learning in educational activities. In their professional practice, they are more inclined to the cultivation of children's awareness of rules, self-care ability, listening and expression ability, sociality and other aspects, and lack of understanding and attention to the cultivation of children's approaches to learning [3]. This problem has aroused the author's interest in the research on the dilemma of novice teachers' approaches to learning cultivation.

2. Purpose of study

Through literature review and interviews with novice kindergarten teachers, this study reveals the difficulties faced by novice kindergarten teachers in the cultivation of approaches to learning and explores the influencing factors behind it. Finally, according to the realistic background and the actual situation of teachers, the countermeasures for the cultivation of approaches to learning of kindergarten novice teachers are put forward. This study focused to answer three questions

regarding the novice teachers' difficulties and the causes of difficulties. The questions explored were: 1) what is the difficulties of novice kindergarten teachers on the cultivation of children's approaches to learning?

2) by what reasons cause difficulties for novice teachers?

3. Methods

3.1 Participants

Thirteen participants were selected by Purposive Sampling. All of the participants are female, and they all come from Chongqing (a southeast municipality in China). Ten of participants worked for half year and the other three worked for one year. Seven novice teachers got a three-year degree of preschool education, and six teachers got the bachelor degree. Participants were aged between 21 and 24.

3.2 Research method and Data Analysis

The main purpose of this study was understanding novice teachers' difficulties on cultivation of children's approaches to learning. Thus, one of the most appropriate research methods was focus group, which is commonly conducted in researches that focus on people's own views and understandings [6]. Focus group is also a socially oriented research method, which tries to capture real life data in the social environment. It is flexible and has high face validity. In the focus group research process, semi-structural interviews were conducted with each group members. The theme topic is the approaches to learning, including the definition, cultivation strategies and their difficulties. Focus group interviews were transcribed. Collected data was coded in a qualitative way based on three main research.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Results

The uneven cognition of approaches to learning for individuals. Novice teachers' cognition of approaches to learning determines the quality of children's approaches to learning training in educational activities. The answer of "Do you understand approaches to learning? What do you understand about approaches to learning? What do you think is the significance of the cultivation of approaches to learning for the development of children?" prove the uneven cognition of novice teachers. Their answers were signed: Teacher A: Not really, to be honest. May be to describe a better state of learning, to describe those better grades of children. Teacher B: Habits, behavior habits, study habits and so on. Teacher D: I don't know much about it, but I do know some things, such as perseverance, persistence, learning ability and behavior habits. Some teachers have different level of cognition is because their different personal professional experience. For example; one teacher knows it well Teacher L: When I graduated, I wrote a paper related to approaches to learning, and a little impression. It refers to the tendency of learning, attitude, behavioral habits related psychological behavior characteristics. It should include autonomy, persistence, attention, thinking and creativity, curiosity and interest. However, one teacher said: NO, I never thought about approaches to learning before.

Novice teachers should pay more attention to the cultivation of approaches to learning. Novice teachers paid more attention to the cultivation of children's rule consciousness, sociality, self-care ability and habits, and rank the cultivation of children's approaches to learning at the bottom. In the interview, most of the teachers said that they had taken the training and learning of the Guide, but they paid more attention to the relevant contents of the five fields such as literacy, physical health, mathematics, etc. These training course always concludes the approaches to learning but they were not deeply impressed. It can be seen that novice kindergarten teachers lack sensitivity to education

and awareness of active learning, and the cultivation of children's approaches to learning require more recognition by novice teachers.

Novice teachers have a serious lack of strategic reserve for the cultivation of approaches to learning. Children's positive approaches to learning plays an important role in their development, and teachers should provide targeted training strategies for the development of children's approaches to learning, and provide support for children's learning. However, as novice teachers, their lack educational experience hindered them put their initial theoretical knowledge into practice. Therefore, even some the participants realized the importance of approaches to learning, but they cannot teachers do not pay too much attention to the cultivation of children's approaches to learning in practical work, and the cultivation strategies presented are also slightly weak. Some novice teachers had no idea on how to cultivate children's approaches to learning.

Most novice teachers often use example demonstration, oral encouragement and praise, games, providing targeted operating materials and other methods to cultivate children's approaches to learning. Most of the training strategies for novice teachers are in the right direction, but lack of systematicness, comprehensiveness, innovation and pertinence. For example, novice teachers have a non-comprehensive understanding of approaches to learning, their educational activities would only focuses on curiosity, persistence, concentration and other aspects, but lacks further exploration. It can be seen that the novice teachers' insufficient strategies of strategies need more attention.

4.2 Discussion

There are deviations in the orientation of talent training in colleges and universities. Novice teachers' cognition of approaches to learning is directly related to the education they have received in colleges and universities. Colleges and universities at different levels also lay particular emphasis on the training programs for normal university students. Generally speaking, colleges pay more attention to the training of normal university students' skills, but lack of theoretical learning; However, undergraduate and postgraduate students pay more attention to theoretical research, but have less experience in social practice. Novice teachers with a bachelor's degree have a certain understanding of approaches to learning and can identify children's approaches to learning behaviors in educational activities. However, due to their lack of practical experience, they cannot provide timely training strategies for approaches to learning in their work [4].

Insufficient support for novice teachers in kindergartens were common. First, novice teachers were lack of guidance of educational concepts. Educational concept determines educational behavior. On the one hand, the kindergarten level should pay attention to the cultivation of children's approaches to learning and set a good example for teachers. Kindergarten attaches great importance to the cultivation of children's approaches to learning, which has a positive impact on the development of children and can also play an incentive role for teachers. On the contrary, it will hinder the development of children. In the interview, most participants said that kindergartens did not pay enough attention to the cultivation of children's approaches to learning, even never mentioned it.

Second, the pre-service training system for novice teachers is incomplete. Novice teachers were unfamiliar to kindergarten and children, especially in practical fields. Kindergarten should prepare a complete pre-service training course for them to avoid novice teachers' inadaptation. In the study, it was found that kindergartens lack effective pre-job training for novice teachers. On the one hand, the training content is single and the form is superficial. In the interview with novice teachers, teacher G said, "The nature of many trainings we have participated in is not different, and there is no cutting-edge content, let alone content about approaches to learning." Teacher L said, "A lot of training organized by kindergartens is too superficial and does not carry out deeper exploration, sometimes it is more like completing tasks.

Third, novice teachers were lack of initiative to learning and working. On one hand, novice teachers' own learning attitude and experience affect their cognition of approaches to learning and the formation of their educational concepts. In the process of research, it is found that novice

teachers have problems in pre-service learning, post-service learning, and learning approaches. First of all, the pre-employment study in college is slack. When novice teachers, were asked if they had learned anything about approaches to learning in college, some novice teachers said, "I don't know, I don't remember, maybe the teacher talked about it, but I didn't take it seriously." It can be seen from the teachers' answers that novice teachers are slack and lack enthusiasm in college study, thus they miss the opportunity to understand the approaches to learning. Secondly, post-employment learning lacks initiative. Novice teachers lack the concept of lifelong learning and the consciousness of actively absorbing new knowledge in their work. For example, teacher L said, "At work, sometimes I may see approaches to learning in some books, but I have not studied it deliberately." Novice teachers' knowledge reserve is relatively weak. Therefore, as novice teachers, they should be good at active learning and constantly enrich their educational knowledge.

Finally, the learning path is relatively simple. In the interview process with novice teachers, we learned that most of their understanding of approaches to learning only came from the contents of the *Guide* and a few words heard in college class. In addition, it is also learned that almost all novice teachers have not used learning methods such as "approaches to learning knowledge from skilled teachers, consulting academic websites and reading relevant professional books", so that novice teachers have a single and one-sided understanding of approaches to learning due to a single learning approach.

5. Summary

The importance of the approaches to learning is self-evident. In China, from normal colleges to kindergartens, from kindergarten principals to novice teachers, the importance of learning quality still needs to be strengthened. Supporting the development of novice teachers is the basis of supporting the positive development of children. Therefore, a complete pre-service training system should provide comprehensive support for novice teachers. Among them, it is essential for novice teachers to study the connotation of approaches to learning, including the identification ability and training strategy.

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