



Opportunities and Challenges of New Media for the Emotional Education of Children Aged 4–6 in Underdeveloped Areas

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Abstract. The rapid development of new media technology and its wide use in the field of education have greatly changed the traditional teaching methods in China. It also has a profound impact on children's emotional education. In view of the influence and application of new media on emotional education of children aged 4 to 6 in underdeveloped areas, the characteristics of physical and mental development of children aged 4 to 6 are analyzed. On this basis, the connotation and objectives of emotional education is proposed. Combining with the current situation and characteristics of children's emotional education in underdeveloped areas, the opportunities and challenges brought by new media to emotional education are analyzed. Finally, some measures to improve the quality of emotional education for children aged 4 to 6 in underdeveloped areas by using new media are put forward from the aspects of construction of high-quality new media content, innovation of new media application mode and promotion of parents' participation.

Keywords: New Media · Emotional Education · Children · Underdeveloped Areas · Opportunities and Challenges

1 Introduction

Emotional education is very important in the education of teenagers. By deeply integrating emotional education into the process of youth education, it is possible to promote the all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, beauty and labor in the rich spiritual life and help teenagers establish a correct philosophy, world view and value [1]. Especially for children aged 4 to 6, they are in a sensitive period of rapid physical and mental development and cognitive value of the world. It is the crucial stage to implement emotional education, and it needs appropriate positive guidance to help children at this stage to establish healthy psychology and correct value orientation. While for the most underdeveloped areas, the emotional education of preschool children has the problems of backward educational ideas, insufficient educational resources and single educational means, which have restricted the comprehensive development of children in these areas. With the wide application of new media characterized by digitization, networking and

interactivity in the field of education [2–4], new media has also attracted a lot of attention and played a huge role in the education of preschool children [5, 6]. It is feasible to make full use of the advantages of new media to carry out emotional education for preschool children in underdeveloped areas.

Focused on the application of new media in emotional education of children aged 4 to 6 in underdeveloped areas and based on the analysis of children's physical and mental development at this stage, the opportunities and challenges brought by new media to emotional education are analyzed, and some measures and suggestions to improve the quality of children's emotional education at this stage by using new media are put forward, which have been validated to be useful by practice in Qicai-Space Children's Culture Exchange Centre in Gejiu city Yunnan Province.

2 Physical and Mental Development and Emotional Education for Children

2.1 Characteristics of Physical and Mental Development of Children

At the stage of preschool education, the various organs and systems of children's body are still developing. Because the body tissue development is not mature enough, infants have weak resistance to injury and diseases. The physical development of children aged 4 to 6 in China is shown in Table 1 [7], where H means height, and W means weight.

The children aged 4–6 years are much sensitive to external perception. Their visual and auditory systems begin to develop rapidly and can distinguish common colors, familiar figures and so on. However, the ability to distinguish specific time and three-dimensional space is poor. The cognitive ability of children in preschool education develops rapidly. Their imagination is mainly based on unconscious imagination, which is based on emotional changes or the outside world. The process of imagination mainly depends on the intuitive characteristics and concrete images of things rather than recreation abstract things is weak.

Children's emotions in preschool education stage are unstable with poor ability to control emotions. It has strong irritability to external stimuli, and is easily exposed. The understanding of external things is gradually profound and the emotions are increasingly rich, which is embodied in the high-level emotions of preschool children. They begin to have simple moral cognition and right-wrong consciousness, and can also make simple imitation and moral judgment according to fixed situations.

Table 1. Physical development of children aged 4–6 years

Gender	4–5 years	5–6 years
Boy	H (cm): 92.5–101.1	H (cm): 98.7–107.3
	W (kg): 12.01–14.61	W (kg): 13.50–16.24
Girl	H (cm): 91.7–100.3	H (cm): 97.8–106.3
	W (kg): 11.62–14.08	W (kg): 14.44–15.54

2.2 Objectives of Emotional Education

Emotional education is a concept opposed to cognitive education and is an essential part of the complete educational process. The goals of emotional education generally include three aspects: firstly, to develop social emotions; secondly, to improve the self-regulation of emotions and feelings; and thirdly, to develop a positive emotional experience of the self, the environment and the relationship between the two. For children aged 4–6, the main objectives of emotional education are to initially develop their sense of honor, shame and responsibility, to guide their curiosity and desire for knowledge, to help them develop a correct sense of right and wrong, and to lay the foundation for further development of a correct outlook on life, the world and values. In China, emotional education complements the traditional Chinese virtues and socialist values that have always been advocated. Excellent qualities such as loyalty, hard work, courage, honesty and friendliness are also implanted in children's hearts.

2.3 Crucial Period for Emotional Education

At each special time in a child's development, there is a special ability to feel, which makes him sensitive to certain things in the environment. This ability is called the sensitive period by Montessori. During this sensitive period, children have a great sense of a certain kind of knowledge or skill, and teaching them during this period can improve their mental development very quickly.

Therefore, it is important to catch the sensitive period of children aged 4–6 years and adopt corresponding educational methods for emotional education according to different sensitive periods, to enhance the quality and effectiveness of emotional education. For example, during the sensitive period of social interest development, children begin to actively understand their basic rights and those of others, and are willing to work together to establish and follow rules and develop a sense of cooperation.

2.4 Current Situation and Characteristics of Emotional Education for Children in Underdeveloped Areas

2.4.1 Backward Concept of Emotional Education

Due to the disparity in the level of economic development and living standards in underdeveloped regions, parents want their children to enter the more developed big cities to study, work and live as a way to change their destiny, and therefore tend to put the focus of education mainly on exam-oriented education. For children aged 4–6 years, educators and parents expect them to master basic knowledge such as simple number counting, recognition and writing of simple Chinese characters, independent reading of picture books, etc. Little time is devoted to the development of children's emotional education during this period.

2.4.2 Insufficient Resources of Emotional Education

Emotional education resources include teacher resources and content resources. Due to the poor economic conditions and employment opportunities in underdeveloped areas,

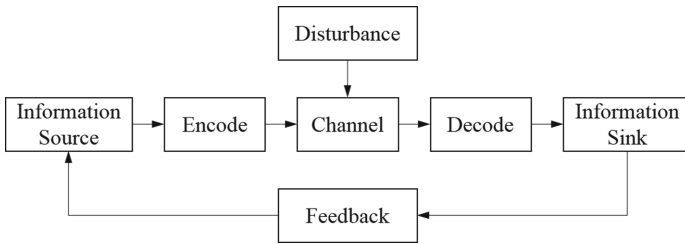


Fig. 1. Shannon-Weaver model of communication

it is difficult to attract college graduates specializing in preschool education to work and develop. This has led to a serious shortage of quality teachers who understand the laws of emotional education for preschool children and have advanced methods of teaching emotions. In addition, due to the limitation of the development level of information and transportation in underdeveloped areas, there is a relative lack of resources dedicated to preschool children's emotional education, making it difficult to provide emotional education resources.

2.4.3 Single Means for Emotional Education

Emotional education is the psychological guidance and spiritual inculcation of human beings, acting at the level of their consciousness. Ideally, emotional education should be infiltrative. To achieve this effect, it is necessary to have the right teaching tools as a bridge to achieve the purpose of emotional education. In underdeveloped regions, due to the limitations of emotional education concepts and educational resources, educational tools are usually based on indoctrination, didacticism, boring forms and low participation of children, which often makes it difficult to arouse empathy and resonance in children.

3 Opportunities and Challenges from New Media

3.1 New Model of Educational Communication in New Media Era

As a form of interpersonal communication, educational communication follows the general rules of interpersonal communication activities. The Shannon-Weaver model is one of the most representative models, as shown in Fig. 1.

New media is the sum of media that perform a communication function based on computer information processing technology and the internet. In the new media-based educational communication model, educators and parents are no longer transcribers of teaching content, but instead become helpers, guides and facilitators of learning, as shown in Fig. 2.

3.2 Opportunities from New Media

3.2.1 Richer Emotional Education Content

Traditional media are limited by the form and carrier of communication. New media relies on modern information technology to disseminate content in the form of video,

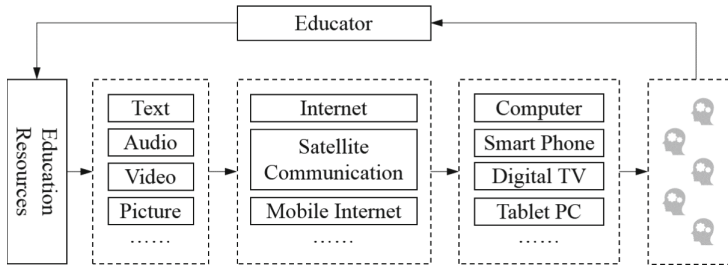


Fig. 2. Education model based on new media

pictures, audio and text through computer networks, satellites and mobile internet, etc. [8, 9]. It is free from the limitations of traditional physical books, newspapers and other traditional communication media, and the content of communication is extremely rich.

3.2.2 More Diversified Resources Forms

Traditional communication media is mainly based on text and pictures, and most of them are static. It is difficult for preschool children to understand these contents. Compared with traditional media, new media has more diverse forms. In addition to text and pictures, it also includes video and audio. So new media can present more tridimensional, live and vivid information, which is easier to be accepted and liked by preschool children [10].

3.2.3 Fewer Time and Space Constraints

New media can be disseminated in real time through mobile internet, satellite, computer networks and other communication media in computers, smart phones, digital TV and other communication carriers, regardless of geographical restrictions, as long as the terminal access to the network, which helps to achieve the “cross-space communication”.

3.3 Challenges from New Media

3.3.1 Unhealthy Content Tends to Deviate from the Purpose of Education

As there are more sources and forms of distribution in new media, content regulation is more difficult compared to traditional media, and it is inevitable that there will be content that is not in line with emotional education, or even contrary to the original intention of emotional education. Firstly, some new media providers, for reasons of commercial interests, fill the new media with a lot of vulgar, lowbrow and flattering content, which will not serve to positively guide children’s values. Secondly, the content of some new media is unscientific, uncritical and unobjective, and even wrong, which will to a certain extent affect the formation of children’s future worldview. Thirdly, some new media are overly entertaining in their content design and production, and do whatever they can to attract children’s attention, resulting in children spending a lot of time on entertainment items such as looking on videos and playing games.

3.3.2 Passive Learning is not Conducive to the Development of Good Study Habits

New media is primarily based on the use of electronic devices such as computers and mobile phones. For every additional hour of electronic screen time from the age of 10 months, the risk of developing attention deficit disorder increases by 10% by the age of 7 years. At the same time, children aged 4–6 years old learn about the world primarily through hands-on experience and exploration, actively engaging their senses and interacting with their surroundings to form experiences and acquire knowledge. If children rely on electronic devices to learn for a long time, their ability to explore and think actively will slowly diminish and they will gradually change from active learning to passive learning [11].

3.3.3 Over-Reliance on New Media Weakens Parent-Child Relationships

Although learning through new media interventions can be fast and efficient in terms of receiving fresh knowledge and culture, the whole learning process is an interaction between human and machine, which, if not managed in time, can directly affect the parent-child relationship between children and parents, leading to a weakening of the parent-child relationship. As mentioned earlier, the process of physical and mental development of children aged 4–6 is accompanied by one or more sensitive periods, and the most effective way to overcome children's sensitive periods is through human companionship. A weakened parent-child relationship in the face of sensitive childhood periods can lead to a weakening of the child's learning ability at this age and a reduction in verbal communication leading to an introverted or withdrawn and timid personality, which can seriously affect the child's physical and mental development.

In addition, long-term use of electronic products, children's outdoor sports time will be shortened, physical exercise will be reduced, physical fitness will decline. Children will suffer from visual impairment, poor sleep quality, limited height and other negative effects.

4 Initiatives to Enhance the Quality of Emotional Education Using New Media

4.1 Main Initiatives

4.1.1 Construct Quality New Media Content

According to the goal of emotional education for children aged 4 to 6, new media content of excellent quality should be built around children's emotional education, making full use of official national media resources and local quality media channels. In the process of building content, full consideration should be given to local media distribution channels and audience reception methods, and strict control should be exercised in terms of content and format. The first is to make full use of the emotional education resources released by the state on open media platforms, such as "The First Class of the School Year"; the second is to make full use of the science and technology education resources released by new media platforms on the internet, such as the "Science and Technology China" platform on the internet; the third is to make full use of the diversified educational

resources provided by commercial education Apps, and select new media resources that are useful for children to perceive the world, understand the world and build a healthy character; the fourth is to fully explore the characteristics of local history, culture, humanity and nature, and build emotional education content focused on “understanding home, loving home and building home”.

4.1.2 Innovative New Media Application Models

New media communication methods include broadcast methods, human-computer interaction and human-human real-time interaction. It is important to combine the objectives, educational targets and educational resources of emotional education, while considering the actual situation in less developed areas, to innovate the application mode of new media. Firstly, a combination of online and offline methods should be used. Families with media terminals should use online methods to learn independently, while families without media terminals can concentrate offline. Secondly, a combination of self-study and tutorial methods should be used to allow children to watch new media education content independently, with parents or teachers making positive guidance at the right time to help children understand the new media content and avoid any misunderstanding during the viewing process. Thirdly, the real-time interactivity of new media should be strengthened, through online human-person interaction, or human-computer interaction between media resources and children, to guide children to take the initiative to think and advance their learning progress by answering questions, so as to avoid children falling into purely indoctrination-based education.

4.1.3 Enhancing Parental Involvement

According to the characteristics of physical and mental development of children aged 4 to 6, parents should give effective companionship to children in learning while using new media teaching. During this period, parents can even participate in teaching work.

The knowledge points obtained through new media education can provide parents with opportunities or platforms for their children to practice offline. Apply the knowledge on the line to real life. Parents can also switch roles. Be a stupid father or a stupid mother. Let children act as little teachers. Translate the knowledge learned online into your own language. Let parent-child relationship interact in learning, and emotional education will be deeper and warmer.

4.2 Empirical Verification and Analysis

This paper takes the emotional education of children aged 4–6 years old in Gejiu City, Yunnan Province, as an example. 294 children aged 4–6 years in Gejiu Qicai-Space Children’s Culture Exchange Centre were used as a sample to verify the role of new media in children’s emotional education through a comparative research method. All the children had a comprehensive assessment before they entered the centre, with one part focusing on traditional media (TM) education and the other on new media (NM) education, and the assessment was conducted again after 1 year of study, and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of assessment

Item	Average score (Total: 100)		
	Before	After (TM)	After (NM)
Presentation	60	76	81
Collaborative	60	75	73
Resilience	58	79	89
Emotional control	62	78	86
Responsibility	50	75	88
Sense of right and wrong	73	79	86
Sense of crisis	40	68	84

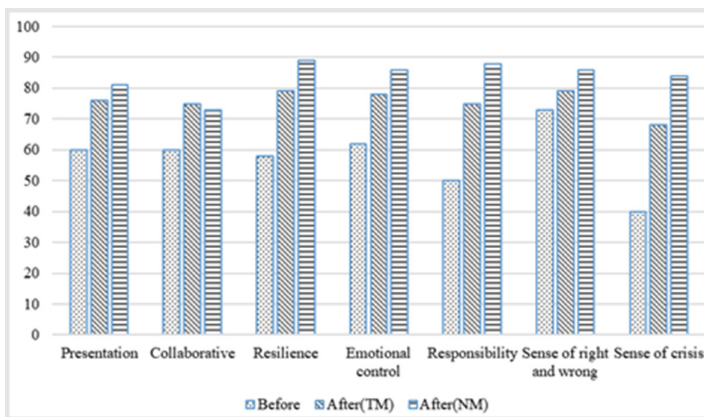


Fig. 3. Comparative analysis

The results of the comparison are shown in Fig. 3. Children who learn using new media outperform those who learn using traditional media on most of the indicators tested, but the advantage is not as pronounced on indicators such as collaboration skills, which require communication.

5 Conclusions

Preschool children’s emotional education is of great significance for children’s physical and mental health. The emotional education of children aged 4 to 6 in underdeveloped areas is inadequate in terms of educational concepts, educational resources and educational means. New media has injected new vitality into the emotional education of children in underdeveloped areas, bringing new opportunities as well as challenges. In order to give full play to the educational advantages of new media, we need to take

effective measures in building high-quality new media content, innovating new media application mode and strengthening parents' participation. In this way, the quality of emotional education for preschool children in underdeveloped areas can be effectively improved.

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