

A Brief Analysis of The Influence of Music Appreciation in Music Education Activities on the Growth of Preschool Children Aged 3-6

Zhang Lu and Yasmin Binti Hussain

Abstract -- Music appreciation is one of the important components of music activities. Preschool children's music appreciation is a kind of aesthetic activity that makes them feel, understand and initially appreciate the works through listening to the music. Music appreciation can not only make children exposed to more excellent works, broaden their music horizon, enrich their music experience, develop their imagination, memory and thinking; but also in the process of music appreciation, cultivate children's auditory sensitivity and good listening habits, cultivate children's stable and lasting interest in music and preliminary aesthetic taste and aesthetic ability. Therefore, music appreciation is a highly educational musical activity that is closely related to other musical activities. Music appreciation is a kind of aesthetic activity for people to feel, understand, appreciate and evaluate music art works, and it is also a kind of cognition and thinking activity for people to understand the world through music. Music appreciation is one of the important components of music activities. Music appreciation of preschool children is a kind of aesthetic activity that allows them to feel, understand and appreciate the works by listening to music. Music appreciation can not only make children contact with more excellent works, broaden their musical horizon, enrich their musical experience, and develop their imagination, memory and thinking; But also in the process of music appreciation, cultivate children's auditory sensitivity and good listening habits, cultivate children's stable and lasting interest in music as well as initial aesthetic taste and aesthetic ability.

Key words -- music education; Music appreciation; Preschool children ages 3-6; Growing up

I. INTRODUCTION

As early as in ancient China, the sage Confucius said, "Prosper in poetry, stand in ceremony, and succeed in music", which shows that music has a unique function for the development of people. Mr. Chen Heqin also said: "We should attach importance to children's music education, use music to enrich children's life, cultivate children's will, cultivate children's emotions." Music appreciation is a kind of aesthetic life for people to feel, understand, appreciate and evaluate music works. It is also a kind of cognition and thinking activity for people to understand the world through music. **Error! Reference source not found.**

Music is an art of expressing emotions and emotions with specific sounds. It is an indispensable spiritual product in human life. Music, through people's hearing, can reach a certain kind of communication in people's emotions and ideological realm, thus acting on people's mind. Love music is the nature of most children, children

because of their age characteristics, they often have the characteristics of joy, emotion exposed, but because of their imperfect language expression ability, they often can not use language to accurately describe some of their inner emotions and experiences. And the stronger emotional contrast in music, vivid description of feelings is the expression of children's inner feelings, so that their emotions have a way to express, so music plays an important role in the process of children's growth and development. **Error! Reference source not found.**

Music appreciation refers to the perception and experience of music works, which is one of the important components of music activities. Music appreciation of preschool children is a kind of aesthetic activity that allows them to feel, understand and initially appreciate music works through listening to music. Music appreciation can not only make children contact with more excellent works, broaden their musical horizon, enrich their musical experience, and develop their imagination, memory and thinking; But also in the process of music appreciation, cultivate children's auditory sensitivity and good listening habits, cultivate children's stable and lasting interest in music as well as initial aesthetic taste and aesthetic ability. Therefore, music appreciation is a musical activity with great educational value which is closely related to other musical activities. Through a series of hearing processes, children can have a positive emotional experience of music, and then get the corresponding aesthetic ability.

The famous American developmental psychologist and Harvard University professor Gardner once said in his book *The Structure of Intelligence*: "Of all the talents that an individual may have, musical talent is the earliest." As we know, the development of children's psychology is a continuous and phased process. Children's music appreciation is inseparable from the perception, memory, imagination, thinking and other musical abilities. These abilities are gradually growing, developing and improving with the growth of children's age.

The particularity of preschool education makes its music curriculum requirements different from the traditional music professional education and the requirements of primary and secondary school music education. The preschool education major aims at the comprehensive music teaching in kindergartens, which mostly takes games as the starting point and encourages children to boldly express their emotions, understanding and imagination in different forms. Respect each child's ideas and creativity from an individual perspective. Therefore, in the preschool education curriculum, music appreciation as a basic course, it is particularly important to integrate creative thinking into the educational concept. **Error! Reference source not found.** In music education activities, children can get certain

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emotional experience and aesthetic experience through listening to music works. In the process of listening, children can feel the rhythm, melody and speed of music works through hearing, and can feel the emotional connotation and ideological value conveyed by music works. In the process of learning music, children can not only get the perception and experience of music works, but also improve their ability to appreciate beauty. By appreciating different types of music, children can get different degrees of aesthetic experience and emotional experience, so as to improve their ability to feel and understand beauty. In kindergarten music education activities, by appreciating different types of music, children can get different degrees of aesthetic experience and emotional experience. In the process of appreciation, children can also understand the content and emotion expressed by music works through their own observation and thinking, and deepen their understanding and cognition of the content of music works through repeated listening and analysis of music works.

II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Music is an intuitive and vivid art form. Appreciating music can enhance preschool children's aesthetic abilities, enabling them to better perceive and understand the emotions, moods, and ideas conveyed in musical works. However, in actual teaching, we have found that there are some issues with preschool children's music appreciation, such as: the content of music appreciation being relatively monotonous, and low levels of autonomy and enthusiasm among young learners. These problems significantly impact the effectiveness of music appreciation for preschool children. In vocal instruction within early childhood education programs, most teachers still adhere to traditional teaching methods, focusing on students' audio-visual practice and singing skills without emphasizing the cultivation of their musical literacy. Even in classes that offer music appreciation, teachers often limit themselves to one or two classic pieces, failing to conduct in-depth teaching research, which results in poor teaching outcomes. Therefore, to strengthen the comprehensive musical literacy education of students, it is essential to integrate music appreciation into vocal courses in early childhood education programs and organize diverse music teaching activities.

In children's music appreciation, it is important to base choices and organization on their interests; select appropriate music genres according to their cognitive development levels; and choose suitable music content based on their ability to accept. At the same time, children will have their own understanding and feelings about the music they listen to. Some children may develop special emotions towards a particular piece of music, while others might reject it. Therefore, when conducting music appreciation, attention should be paid to children's comprehension abilities and emotional experiences. Currently, there are many issues with music appreciation education in kindergartens in China, such as incorrect teaching concepts among teachers, lack of interest in some music education activities, and failure to meet children's psychological needs. Since kindergarten music education is

primarily teacher-led and child-centered, this requires teachers to possess good professional qualities and cultural literacy, which in turn demands that they have certain musical appreciation skills and artistic expression abilities. However, in actual teaching processes, many kindergarten teachers lack the necessary artistic and expressive abilities, have insufficient understanding and knowledge of music education activities, and some even do not know how to conduct music appreciation activities. Therefore, there are certain problems in kindergarten music education:

The professional quality of kindergarten music teachers needs to be improved.

Due to their young age, children have certain limitations in thinking and behavior. When teachers conduct music appreciation lessons for young children, they should create a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment. In guiding children to appreciate music, it is important to respect individual differences and continuously improve and innovate teaching methods, so that children can truly experience the joy of appreciating music. Music appreciation, as an artistic activity, has its unique rules.

Teachers cannot simply copy the teaching models of other subjects when conducting music education activities; otherwise, the effectiveness of music education will be reduced. As is well known, in teaching activities for preschool children, music is also an important skill, and the teacher's own musical literacy is crucial. Only when teachers possess high levels of musical perception, aesthetic ability, and appreciation can they effectively guide children.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Due to the late emergence of music education, even preschool music education, current research in the industry on the impact of music appreciation in the growth process of children aged 3-6 through music education activities is still focused on defining music education and music appreciation, their significance, and influencing factors. A keyword search using CNKI found 45700 journal articles and 8218 academic papers under music education journal articles and 890 academic papers under music appreciation 20 journal articles and 19 academic papers under children aged 3-6 and 2197 journal articles and 1078 academic papers under growth process. Through these keyword searches, it was found that the research is extensive, particularly in the areas of music education and music appreciation, covering various aspects such as art, philosophy, thought, and systems. Therefore, I narrowed down the search scope to music appreciation for preschool children, which yielded 26 journal articles and 20 academic papers. This paper will use these references to explore the impact of music appreciation in the growth process of children aged 3-6 through music education activities, hoping to contribute to this exploration.

For the role of music appreciation in music education activities during the growth process of preschool children aged 3-6, how children are influenced and develop is one of the key indicators for evaluation. Regarding the impact of music appreciation in music education activities on the growth process of preschool children aged 3-6, the first topic; The Value of Music Education for Preschool Children

Development was born in 2004. Following this, case studies and practical applications emerged in subsequent years, attracting widespread attention and discussion. Currently, there are two different perspectives on the connotation and extension of preschool music education: one views it as preschool early childhood music education oriented towards music value, while the other sees it as preschool early childhood music education oriented towards educational value. The focus of both differs. The former emphasizes the purposefulness of music education itself, advocating the development and improvement of children musical abilities and skills through music education in the form of education; the latter places more emphasis on using music as an educational tool to promote and guide children physical development, enhancing their cognitive and personality abilities, with the aim of achieving overall harmonious development of children.

The development of preschool music education in China is relatively late, with a lack of theoretical experience. In our country, preschool music education mainly relies on an educational model that combines autonomous teaching methods with foreign educational theories. In terms of teaching methods, traditional music education still predominates: teacher-led, where children learn to sing and follow along, focusing on skill training with simple methods. Therefore, in terms of educational quality, there is still room for improvement in the current preschool music education activities.

Although preschool education in our country started later than abroad, research on preschool education has surged in recent years. Our country has conducted studies on music appreciation, preschool children's music, and music education, yielding abundant results. However, most of these studies focus on case studies and predominantly use survey methods, with less attention paid to comprehensive literature reviews and the use of literature analysis. The reason is that overall analysis can be tedious, requiring extensive reading of reference materials and identifying various definitions of concepts. This paper aims to study the impact of music appreciation in music education activities on the growth process of preschool children aged 3-6 through a literature review method, hoping to address the shortcomings in academic research on this topic.

IV. METHOD

To explore the impact of music on preschool children aged 3-6, we adopted a qualitative research method for analysis. This study uses the physiological, psychological, and cognitive development of preschool children aged 3-6 as independent variables, with music appreciation as the dependent variable. A total of three methods were employed to investigate the relationship between music appreciation and the growth process of preschool children aged 3-6. Observation, interviews, and records served as qualitative tools to ensure their effectiveness.

By observing preschool children aged 3-4, 4-5, and 5-6 years old during music appreciation, this study explores the varying levels of interest and acceptance in music among different age groups within a certain period, as well as the various changes that occur after receiving music education for a certain duration. Sixty preschool children were divided

into three groups: 20 children aged 3-4, 20 children aged 4-5, and 20 children aged 5-6. Over a six-month period, the study observed and explored the series of changes these 60 children experienced in physiological, psychological, and cognitive development after receiving music education. This study design involves regular interviews with 60 preschool children conducted by three kindergarten music teachers. The research method aims to understand, analyse, and explore the differences among preschool children at different age stages. Based on the changes observed, heard, and felt by the kindergarten music teachers, this study examines how music education influences the growth of preschool children over six months across three age groups.^{0 below} This study adopts a monthly interview record for each stage, totalling six interviews and six records. Additionally, one child is selected from each stage (ages 3-4, 4-5, 5-6) for individual case analysis.

V. FINDINGS

Childhood is a crucial period for physical and mental development in one's life. During this stage, children, due to their underdeveloped bodies and minds, are easily influenced by the external environment. Moreover, music appreciation activities possess unique aesthetic value and educational significance. Therefore, conducting music appreciation activities in preschool education holds great importance. As an artistic form, music appreciation can enhance children's perception and understanding of musical beauty, while also helping them develop positive character traits.

As children grow older, the increase in opportunities for musical activities and the genuine development of musical abilities allow us to conduct more in-depth and detailed analyses of the musical capabilities of children aged 3 to 6. The general trend in the development of musical abilities during this age range is as follows: At ages 3 to 4, children's desire and ability to express themselves through music significantly increase. At ages 4 to 5, children's sensitivity to music markedly improves, and they can use certain words to describe their emotional responses and understanding of music, indicating that they are becoming "active listeners" who increasingly derive enjoyment from music. At ages 5 to 6, children's singing skills, appreciation levels, and sensitivity continue to improve with age.

VI. DISCUSSION

When children are in the first stage, conditions can be created to allow them to come into contact with various forms of art and works. For example, frequently exposing children to suitable musical pieces in different styles to enrich their experience and appreciation of music. Collaborate with children to decorate and beautify the environment using drawings and handicrafts. Take children to watch or participate in traditional folk arts and local cultural activities, such as shadow puppetry, paper cutting, and clay figure making. If possible, take children to theaters, art galleries, and museums to enjoy performances and artworks. Respect children's interests and unique feelings, understand their behaviors when appreciating. For example: understand and respect children's actions such as dancing

and improvisational imitation when they appreciate art works. When children actively introduce their favourite dances, operas, paintings, or crafts, listen patiently and give positive responses and encouragement. Art is an important form for human beings to feel, express and create beauty. It is also a unique way to express their understanding of the surrounding world and emotional attitudes.

When children are in the second stage, respect their spontaneous expressions and creations, and provide appropriate guidance. For example: encourage children to observe and experience life carefully, accumulating experience and materials for artistic activities. Such as observing the shapes and colors of different tree species. Provide a variety of materials, such as books, photos, paintings, or musical works, allowing children to choose freely and imitate or create in their preferred ways, without excessive demands from adults. Based on the children's life experiences, work together with them to determine the themes for artistic expression, guiding them to imagine around these themes and engage in artistic creation. When children draw, avoid providing model drawings, especially do not require them to follow the model exactly. Affirm the strengths of the children's work and guide them to improve by expressing their own feelings. For example, "Your painting uses so much red, it feels festive like the New Year," "Your voice as the big bad wolf is really good; if you could make your expression even more fierce, it would be even better."

Music not only influences the physical development of young children in early education but also affects their psychological and social development. The impact of music is multifaceted, so we cannot overlook its value in early childhood education. Children's perception and understanding of things differ from those of adults, as do their ways of expressing knowledge and emotions. Children's unique gestures, actions, and language often carry rich imagination and emotion. Adults should fully understand and respect children's artistic expressions, avoiding the use of their own aesthetic standards to judge them. They must not pursue "perfection" at all costs by imposing uniform training, which could stifle the budding imagination and creativity in children.^{0 below}

VII. CONCLUSION

Music education is an essential component of school music education and one of the important avenues for quality-oriented education. It can spark students' interest in learning music, enhance their aesthetic abilities and artistic literacy, allowing them to better perceive the emotions, moods, and ideas contained in musical works. Through appreciating music, students can learn to express their understanding and feelings about musical pieces in their own way. In music education activities, by appreciating different types of music, young children can gain varying degrees of aesthetic and emotional experiences, thereby improving their ability to perceive and understand beauty. To address the aforementioned issues, teachers should take appropriate measures to promote the development of children's music appreciation skills. Possessing certain professional technical abilities does not mean one can fully assume the role of a kindergarten teacher; being able to learn but not teach is

insufficient; it is necessary to master relevant knowledge such as pedagogy, child psychology, music psychology, and music teaching methods; future music educators must be adept at using all advanced teaching tools and apply these excellent methods widely in their teaching work.

First, in music appreciation activities, teachers should employ various teaching methods to spark children's interest in music. During this process, teachers should use multiple teaching tools and methods, such as games and dances. Utilizing diverse teaching methods can help children better experience the emotions and content of musical pieces, thereby stimulating their interest in music. Second, in music appreciation activities, teachers should create a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere based on the age characteristics and developmental needs of children. When conducting music appreciation activities, teachers should use vivid and engaging language and expressive actions to capture children's attention and engage them positively with musical works. Finally, teachers should also use games to enhance children's understanding and appreciation of musical pieces during these activities. Teachers can guide children to feel and understand the emotional content of musical works through various game activities. For example, when conducting the "Little Rabbit Hop" series of activities, children can perform actions. Through action performances, children can better grasp the emotional content embedded in the musical works. This requires kindergarten teachers to start from the psychological needs of children and continuously improve their own qualities and professional skills.

Teachers should actively integrate music appreciation into the education of preschool children and influence them through concrete actions, guiding them in daily life so that they understand music as an art form and incorporate it into their lives. Only then can they develop an interest in music and grow to love it. Educational philosophy is the guiding principle of educational practice. Students, teachers, and schools must first recognize the importance of music appreciation teaching at the level of awareness before they can emphasize it in the teaching process. Schools should prioritize the offering of music appreciation courses; if conditions do not permit dedicated courses, they should focus on integrating music appreciation into various music classes and ensure that the content of music appreciation teaching is reflected in the curriculum. Because young children are so young, their emotional development must go through a process from low to high, and in this process, teachers

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