

Exploration on the infiltration of mental health education in primary school art teaching under the background of "double reduction"

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Abstract: The "double reduction" policy is an important action of the education reform in China, which aims to reduce the schoolwork burden and exam pressure of students in the compulsory education, in the meantime, also requires students to adapt to the new learning habits and lifestyles as soon as possible. As an important course to cultivate students' aesthetic taste and creativity, art teaching has a close relationship with mental health education. By integrating the concept of mental health into art teaching, it can further promote the emotional catharsis of students in artistic expression and the cultivation of self-awareness, so that can help students grow and develop in an all-round way.

1. Introduction

The "double reduction" policy, primarily aimed at students in compulsory education, has had a significant impact on various aspects of education, including art teaching in primary schools. This policy aims to reduce the amount of homework assigned and extracurricular classes, promoting the concept of holistic education and emphasizing the importance of quality education.

Traditionally, art classes have often been relegated to a secondary position within the curriculum, with limited time and resources allocated for their development. However, as an essential discipline within art education, the art curriculum possesses inherent advantages in fostering creativity and practical engagement. Through the process of learning art, students can integrate their mind and body, cultivating their ability to create, discover, and express beauty. Moreover, art education offers a unique opportunity to establish a harmonious psychological environment, contributing to the holistic growth and mental well-being of students.

Given this context, it becomes imperative to explore how to integrate mental health education into art teaching in primary schools, enabling students to achieve comprehensive development. By incorporating mental health principles into art classes, teachers can create a nurturing environment that addresses students' physical and psychological needs. This approach carries significant practical significance and educational value, aligning with the goal of promoting holistic development among students.

2. The impact of the "double reduction" policy on art teaching in primary school

To effectively integrate mental health education into art teaching, several considerations need to be taken into account. First, it is crucial to allocate sufficient class time and appropriate resources for art education, allowing for a more comprehensive exploration of artistic expression and creativity. Additionally, teachers should receive training and support in understanding the concepts and methods of mental health education, enabling them to effectively incorporate these principles into their art lessons.

Furthermore, the art curriculum should be designed to foster self-expression, emotional intelligence, and stress management skills. Students should be encouraged to explore and express their emotions through various art forms, promoting a deeper understanding of themselves and others. Activities such as art therapy and guided artistic reflection can be incorporated to provide students with tools for self-discovery and self-care.

Collaboration between art teachers and mental health professionals can also contribute to the successful integration of mental health education into art teaching. By sharing insights and expertise, teachers can enhance their understanding of students' mental and emotional needs, while mental health professionals can provide guidance and support in addressing specific psychological challenges that may arise during art classes.

Ultimately, the integration of mental health education into art teaching is a powerful means of promoting students' all-round development, ensuring their physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being. Through this approach, primary schools can pave the way for a nurturing and empowering learning environment, fostering creativity, self-expression, and mental resilience among students.^[1]

3. The integration value of mental health education and art education

One of the purposes of the "double reduction" policy is to relieve primary and middle school students from the burdensome academic pressure, allowing them more time and opportunities to engage with nature, experience art, and pursue a more comprehensive and balanced educational development. The integration of art education and mental health education serves the dual function of training students' artistic creation and expression abilities while creating a relaxed and nurturing learning environment that helps eliminate unhealthy psychological factors and effectively prevent mental health problems among primary school students.

As a comprehensive form of education, art education emphasizes the cultivation of individual emotional expression and creativity, aligning closely with the objectives of mental health education. Primary school art teaching offers not only the development of artistic skills but also the cultivation of students' emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and problem-solving abilities through emotional expression and aesthetic experiences. From the students' perspective, the creation and sharing of artistic works enable them to better comprehend and express their emotions, strengthen their self-confidence, and develop positive emotion regulation skills. From the teachers' perspective, by integrating mental health education into art teaching, they can gain a deeper understanding of students' inner worlds, identify and address potential psychological issues in a timely manner^[2].

By organically combining art education and mental health education, schools can provide students with an environment conducive to holistic development, nurturing their inner qualities and self-regulation abilities, and equipping them better to cope with the increasingly complex and changing social demands and personal development challenges. Through comprehensive development of students' physical and mental well-being, we can cultivate a new generation of talent who possesses all-round, proactive, independent, and creative attributes, thus contributing significantly to the nation's development and prosperity.

Additionally, it is important to note that although the "double reduction" policy aims to alleviate

students' academic burden, it is equally vital to ensure that students do not neglect other subjects while focusing on art education. Education authorities should take effective measures to ensure that subject education and art education complement each other, providing a well-rounded and balanced curriculum. Furthermore, teachers involved in art education and mental health education should possess the necessary expertise and skills to ensure the quality and effectiveness of their educational practices^[3].

In conclusion, by integrating art education and mental health education, we can create a more comprehensive and healthy educational environment for students, fostering their creativity, emotional expression abilities, and problem-solving skills. This educational approach helps promote the holistic development of students, enhances their ability to meet societal demands and personal challenges, and contributes to the well-being of both the individual and the society. It is crucial to recognize the significance of art education and mental health education, providing them with the appropriate attention and support, making them integral components of educational reforms.

4. Art teaching cultivates students' emotional expression and self-awareness

Primary school art teaching has great significance in infiltrating mental health education. First, art works can be the window for students to express their emotions. Through the creation of art works, students can express their inner thoughts, feelings, and emotions artistically, so that can reduce psychological pressure and understand themselves better. For example, drawing can help students release negative emotions and develop the ability to experience and express positive emotions.

Teachers start the integrated teaching by combining mental health education, so that students can get more substantial psychological growth experience while creating art. The lesson "Self-made Pigments" in the textbook of Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House which is the volume 2 of the third grade aims to let students explore the extraction and production methods of pigments actively. Due to the different materials collected, many students found it difficult with some methods such as pounding, grinding, sieving, and extrusion. They could not obtain the ideal color effectively, or the color retention of the pigment was not good, so they thought and tried repeatedly. During this period, students often show feelings of loss and anxiety because they have not experienced the success immediately in creation. Therefore, teachers need to pay more attention to the process of students' psychological changes, appease students' emotions, take active encouragement and effective support, provide specific guidance to students, guide students to face difficulties correctly and solve difficulties, and achieve their goals gradually. In the process of completing art homework for primary school students, we should pay more attention to the independence and order for the completion of homework, focus on cultivating students' self-awareness, help students enhance self-confidence, shape the spirit of daring to try, defying difficulties, improving constantly, and reduce impetuosity, anxious, and fragile psychology.^[4]

Secondly, art teaching can cultivate students' self-awareness. Through the process of observing and describing the objective world, students can learn to concentrate and observe carefully, and experience their own subjective initiative in creation. This kind of self-awareness can help them understand their hobbies, strengths, and potentials better, so that can enhance the cultivation of self-confidence and self-esteem. Art teaching can also promote the development of students' ability to communicate and cooperate with others. In the art class, students can establish a good communication and cooperation relationship by displaying their own works, exchanging artistic views, and appreciating each other's works. Through the art class, students can express their emotions and self-awareness, while cultivating communication and cooperation skills, and promote the development of students' mental health comprehensively.

5. The necessity of teacher training and resource support

After the "double reduction", art education should pay more attention to the overall development of students. It should fully combine the psychological characteristics of primary school students, start from students' learning needs, release inner emotions, promote mental development, stimulate students' interest in independent exploration and learning, and improve learning quality effectively. There are many factors involved in mental health education in primary school art courses, and we need to design the course content carefully to integrate art teaching and mental health education effectively.

The implementation methods and strategies of infiltrating mental health education in primary school art teaching are the key to ensuring that students can benefit from it. By setting projects with themes of emotional expression and self-awareness, we can stimulate students' creativity and their desire to express themselves. For example, each semester, a theme can be chosen, and students can be encouraged to express their views and emotions on this theme through various art forms such as painting and sculpture. Students should be guided to express their inner world and emotional experiences through the creation of artwork. Additionally, it is important to provide students with access to different art materials and techniques, allowing them to develop freely and express their emotions and unique personalities. Furthermore, it would be beneficial to offer training courses for teachers to help them understand the concepts and methods of mental health education, and guide them on how to incorporate these principles into their art teaching.

There may be some challenges in the implementation of primary school art teaching to infiltrate mental health education. First, teachers may need more trainings and supports to enhance their expertise and skills in mental health education. The way to solve this problem can be to provide teachers with more theoretical knowledge and practical experience on the integration of mental health education and art education by holding special training courses or seminars. Second, the lack of resources is another challenge. To let primary school art teaching infiltrate mental health education, schools need to provide plentiful art teaching materials, tools, and equipment. In addition, schools can also establish partnerships with community art institutions to share art resources, such as museums and galleries. At the same time, government departments should also provide more financial support to ensure the development of art education in schools. Finally, promoting cooperation and sharing resources among teachers is also one of the solutions. Schools can set up special teaching and research groups or teams to allow teachers to share experience and teaching materials in mental health education and art teaching. In addition, teachers can also learn from each other and promote common development by carrying out exchange activities and participating in professional seminars.

6. Assessment of Implementation effect and improvement

In the process of infiltrating mental health education into primary school art teaching, it is crucial to conduct thorough assessments and make necessary improvements based on the evaluation results. The assessment should encompass a comprehensive analysis of students' attitudes, behaviors, and emotions to gauge the overall impact of integrating mental health education into art classes.

To begin with, teachers can observe and document changes in students' active participation in art teaching. This can include noticing an increase in enthusiasm and engagement during art activities, as well as a higher level of creativity displayed in their artwork. Teachers should also pay attention to any shifts in students' emotional expression, such as an improved ability to convey their feelings and emotions through artistic mediums.

Furthermore, the use of questionnaires can provide valuable insights into students' perspectives. By gathering students' feelings and perceptions regarding the impact of art teaching on their mental health, it becomes possible to identify positive changes or areas that require improvement. The

questionnaires can also help assess the effectiveness of cognitive development, by determining if students are exhibiting enhanced critical thinking skills and increased self-awareness.

In addition to evaluating the students, it is equally important to assess the effectiveness of teachers' implementation of mental health education in art teaching. Establishing teacher training programs can help educators understand the concepts and methodologies of mental health education. These programs can guide teachers in integrating mental health principles into their lesson plans effectively, ensuring they are equipped with the necessary tools to address students' emotional well-being.

The results of the assessments may reveal some challenges or deficiencies. For instance, students may still experience certain psychological pressures or emotional difficulties, indicating that further improvement is needed in the integration of mental health education within art teaching. In such cases, it is crucial to consider optimizing teaching methods and providing additional support.

One approach could involve increasing access to psychological counseling services and implementing appropriate support measures within the school environment. By creating a safe and supportive space, students can receive the assistance they need to overcome emotional obstacles and improve their overall mental well-being.

Furthermore, establishing a dedicated teacher exchange platform can facilitate the sharing of experiences and expertise among educators. Through regular meetings and workshops, teachers can collaborate, discuss challenges, and exchange successful strategies for integrating mental health education into art teaching. This continuous professional development ensures that teachers stay updated with the latest research and best practices to enhance the effectiveness of their teaching methods.

By conducting thorough assessments, making necessary improvements, and fostering collaboration among teachers, primary school art teaching can become an even more effective tool in promoting mental health and emotional well-being among students.

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