

# Research on Strategies for Establishing a Good Teacher-Child Relationship in Kindergarten Game Activities

Yu Chun\*

Gaorihan Post Office, Wengqi Banner, Chifeng 024518, Inner Mongolia, China

*\*Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

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**Abstract:** The teacher-child relationship is a core element of the kindergarten educational ecology, directly affecting young children's physical and mental development, socialization process, and the realization of the educational value of game activities. As the basic form of kindergarten activities, games provide a natural carrier for teacher-child interaction and an important pathway to build a democratic, equal, and harmonious teacher-child relationship. Based on this, this paper takes kindergarten game activities as the entry point, analyzes the existing problems in establishing teacher-child relationships in current game activities, explores the important value of game activities for constructing a good teacher-child relationship, and proposes strategies for establishing teacher-child relationships based on game activities. It aims to provide a reference for kindergarten educational practice and help young children grow up healthy and happy.

**Keywords:** Kindergarten; Game activities; Teacher-child relationship; Establishment strategies

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## 1. Introduction

The Guidelines for Kindergarten Education (Trial) clearly points out that “establishing a good teacher-child relationship and helping young children build a sense of security and trust is an important goal of kindergarten education”. Games are the nature of young children, the main way for them to understand the world, express themselves, and develop abilities, as well as the best scenario for teachers and children to break down barriers and establish emotional bonds. In-game activities, teachers can deeply understand young children's inner world through observing, participating in, and supporting their games; young children can also feel teachers' care and respect in a relaxed atmosphere, thereby establishing a mutually trusting relationship<sup>[1]</sup>. Therefore, exploring strategies for establishing a good teacher-child relationship based on kindergarten game activities is of great significance.

## **2. Existing problems in establishing teacher-child relationships in the current kindergarten game activities**

### **2.1. Unclear teacher role cognition**

In current educational practice, some teachers have cognitive deviations in their role positioning in game activities, mainly manifested in two extreme tendencies. One is the “authority-led” concept: such teachers often regard themselves as controllers and decision-makers of games, excessively interfering in young children’s behaviors, and imposing strict restrictions on game content, form, rules, and the number of participants, while ignoring the core value of children’s own autonomy and interest orientation. The other is the “laissez-faire” mindset: such teachers generally stand by as observers and fail to fulfill their important responsibilities of guidance and support<sup>[2]</sup>. In the context of children’s independent games, if teachers only act as onlookers without observing, guiding, or intervening appropriately, it is easy to lead to a lack of interaction opportunities between teachers and children, alienate the teacher-child relationship, and slow down the development of emotional bonds.

### **2.2. Single form of teacher-child interaction**

Rich interaction forms are the guarantee for establishing a good teacher-child relationship. Currently, the forms of teacher-child interaction in kindergarten game activities are relatively single, failing to meet young children’s emotional and developmental needs. In terms of interaction content, most teacher-child interactions are limited to utilitarian content, such as explaining game rules and maintaining game order, lacking emotional interaction and communication, which makes it difficult to shorten the psychological distance between teachers and children. In terms of interaction methods, teacher-child interaction is mostly “one-way indoctrination” rather than “two-way interaction”. In-game activities, teachers often take the initiative to initiate interactions, and young children respond passively. Young children have few opportunities to take the initiative to interact with teachers and express their own needs and ideas<sup>[3]</sup>.

### **2.3. Inadequate game support**

Game support is an important manifestation of teachers’ performance of their duties and promotion of teacher-child relationships in game activities. Currently, there is an obvious lack of game support from kindergarten teachers. In terms of targeted support, teachers do not pay attention to individual differences among young children and adopt a one-size-fits-all support method. There are significant differences in interests, developmental levels, and game needs among different young children. However, when organizing game activities, teachers mostly provide unified game materials and formulate unified game goals, without personalized guidance for young children. In terms of environmental support, some kindergartens have insufficient game materials and unreasonable game environment creation, which affects the development of teachers’ game support and further impacts the teacher-child relationship<sup>[4]</sup>.

## **3. Important value of game activities for establishing a good teacher-child relationship**

### **3.1. Conducive to building an equal and democratic teacher-child interaction atmosphere**

Game activities provide an opportunity to break the traditional teacher-child relationship and help create an equal and democratic interaction atmosphere. In-game scenarios, teachers are no longer lofty educators, and

young children are not passive recipients of education; the two establish an equal partnership based on common game interests. Young children enjoy full autonomy and the right to expression in games, and can choose game content, gameplay, and game partners according to their own wishes. Teachers join the games as participants and supporters to experience the joy of games with young children<sup>[5]</sup>. This equal interaction makes young children feel respected and valued, thereby allowing them to let go of their psychological defenses and actively communicate with teachers.

### **3.2. Conducive to deepening the emotional bond between teachers and children**

The construction of teacher-child relationships is inseparable from emotional bonds, and game activities have become an important carrier of this relationship. Young children's emotions are easier to express in game scenarios, often through language and body language to convey their inner feelings. Teachers can perceive their emotional fluctuations through careful observation and provide timely care, which is conducive to deepening the emotional bond. If young children achieve phased goals in games, they will feel proud and a sense of belonging when receiving recognition and praise; when encountering difficulties or negative emotions, they need effective guidance and support from teachers to feel safe and achieve inner stability.

### **3.3. Conducive to improving the effectiveness of teacher-child interaction**

Game-based scenarios build an efficient and natural practice platform for teacher-child interaction, aiming to improve the quality and effect of communication. During games, children are highly motivated and curious, which arouses their learning interest and enhances their trust in teachers' guidance. Compared with the single interaction mode in traditional classrooms, the design integrating specific scenarios is more attractive, which can greatly stimulate young children's willingness to participate and break the limitations brought by formalized interaction. By carefully observing the characteristics of young children's game behaviors, educators can better grasp their developmental needs and internal motivations, and then formulate more targeted teaching plans to help achieve personalized growth goals<sup>[6]</sup>.

## **4. Strategies for establishing a good teacher-child relationship based on kindergarten game activities**

### **4.1. Clarify teachers' role positioning to narrow the distance between teachers and children**

In kindergarten game activities, teachers should correctly grasp the core position of game activities, participate in the process of children's games as supporters, collaborators, and guides, break the constraints of traditional educational concepts, and shorten the psychological and emotional distance between teachers and students.

First, clarify the role of supporters. As supporters of young children's game activities, teachers should establish a comprehensive material and spiritual support system. When preparing resources, they should take into account children's age characteristics, interests, and growth needs, enrich the types of materials and improve their richness, hierarchy, and safety, create a learning environment conducive to independent exploration, reasonably plan indoor and outdoor spatial layouts, and expand multi-dimensional interaction areas. In terms of emotional guidance, they should respect individual differences, accept and recognize their behaviors, provide appropriate guidance rather than direct intervention when they encounter difficulties, give timely and appropriate feedback, stimulate their potential, convey positive beliefs, and strengthen the emotional connection and trust foundation

between teachers and children<sup>[7]</sup>.

Second, implement the positioning of collaborators. As collaborators, teachers should actively participate in children's game scenarios and create a good atmosphere of equal teacher-child interaction. During the game, teachers can integrate into it as participants, strictly abide by the rules and creative directions formulated by young children in advance, share game experiences together, and enhance two-way teacher-child interaction. For example, in role-playing games, teachers should join the performance according to the roles assigned by young children, promote things forward and reach a consensus after listening to their ideas. This way of cooperation not only shows respect for children's dominant position but also shortens the psychological distance between them, thereby improving the effect of emotional connection<sup>[8]</sup>.

Third, play the role of guides. As guides, teachers should grasp the timing and methods of game intervention, and promote children's in-depth exploration and core literacy development on the premise of ensuring their right to independent games. Teachers carefully observe the behavioral characteristics and actual needs of young children; once children are in a state of stagnation, repetition, or conflict, they should change their thinking mode, put forward open-ended questions or heuristic dialogues to guide thinking, and encourage children to solve problems independently instead of providing direct answers<sup>[9]</sup>. For example, when young children feel frustrated due to the collapse of the structure during block building, teachers can ask open-ended questions such as "Why do you think it collapsed?", "Could there be other reasons?", "How do you want to build it with other alternative materials?" to guide young children to use their hands and brains, actively think about the reasons, take the initiative to solve the collapse problem, and actively find ways.

#### **4.2. Enrich forms of teacher-child interaction to form a positive two-way atmosphere**

Building a good teacher-child interaction relationship requires breaking the pattern of traditional one-way interaction, expanding the forms and content of interaction, and creating an immersive interactive environment for two-way communication.

First, enrich interaction content. In choosing interaction content, teachers should balance functional and emotional factors, not only teaching young children skills such as game rules and order maintenance, but also focusing on emotional and spiritual communication between teachers and students. During the activity, teachers should actively listen to children's ideas, pay attention to changes in their emotions, and take the initiative to share their own experiences to enhance mutual understanding. For example, after the game, teachers can organize thematic discussions to allow children to express their views, show respect and support when giving feedback to children, enhance resonance through their own experiences, and gradually shorten the psychological distance between them.

Second, innovate interaction methods. Teachers should integrate linguistic and non-verbal elements to form a variety of communication systems<sup>[10]</sup>. For example, in verbal communication, teachers should use gentle, friendly, and encouraging expressions to conduct dialogues, avoid using imperative or negative evaluative language, and stimulate children's learning enthusiasm through positive feedback. For example, when a child proposes a new game plan, they can say: "Your idea is very unique, let's think of ways together!", to mobilize the child's enthusiasm. In non-verbal interaction, teachers can express attention and support through eye contact, facial expressions, and gentle touches. If a child performs well, give them a warm smile or a hug; if a child is in a bad mood, use gentle hand touches to soothe their emotions. These non-verbal behaviors help children more intuitively feel teachers' emotional tendencies and deepen the emotional connection between teachers and students<sup>[11]</sup>.

Third, encourage children to take the initiative to initiate interaction. Teachers should create a two-way

communication learning environment, build an immersive, interactive scenario, and adopt positive incentive methods to encourage children to actively communicate with adults and share their experiences or insights. For example, arrange task links that require cooperation to complete during the game to stimulate children's willingness to actively invite teachers to play together; when a child takes the initiative to speak, teachers should respond to their needs promptly, give full attention and support, guide them to experience the significance of cooperation and its social value, and gradually develop the habit of active participation<sup>[12]</sup>.

### **4.3. Establish a home-kindergarten collaboration mechanism to build a good home-teacher-child relationship**

Establishing a high-quality teacher-child relationship not only relies on the active promotion of kindergartens but also requires the cooperation and support of the family education system. Home-kindergarten collaboration can achieve resource sharing and functional complementarity, create a systematic and harmonious growth environment for children, and promote teacher-child interaction in a positive direction. Kindergartens should improve the home-kindergarten co-education mechanism, deepen communication and cooperation between teachers and parents, guide parents to establish scientific parenting concepts, and participate in the planning and implementation of kindergarten educational activities<sup>[13]</sup>.

First, strengthen home-kindergarten communication. Kindergartens should broaden various communication channels, promptly inform parents of children's game participation, teacher-child interaction characteristics, and developmental dynamics in the kindergarten through parent-teacher meetings, home visits, WeChat groups, and telephone interviews, listen to parents' opinions and suggestions, understand children's family behaviors and developmental processes, and provide data support for teachers to formulate personalized education plans. For example, if a child is found to be introverted and timid through a home visit, positive guidance and recognition evaluations can be adopted in games, creating an open and inclusive interactive environment to help the child gradually build confidence and further enhance the teacher-child relationship<sup>[14]</sup>.

Second, carry out diverse home-kindergarten co-education activities. Kindergartens should regularly hold parent open days, parent-child interaction experience activities, and thematic seminars to build a platform for parents to intuitively understand children's game behaviors and teacher-child relationships, enabling them to have a deeper understanding and support for educational and teaching work. In practice, kindergartens can arrange on-site observation sessions during parent open days, allowing parents to carefully observe their children's performance in games and their interaction patterns with teachers, and conduct exchanges after class to jointly explore effective ways to promote children's development and improve teacher-child cooperation.

Third, strengthen educational guidance for parents. Kindergartens can hold relevant lectures, distribute guidance manuals, and display successful cases to guide parents to establish a child-centered concept, master scientific parenting methods, and strive to create a harmonious family interaction environment to support children's social skills. At the same time, attach importance to home-kindergarten co-education, encourage parents to deeply understand and recognize teachers' professional functions, actively participate in various activities organized by the kindergarten, achieve collaborative education, and comprehensively promote the physical and mental health development and the improvement of comprehensive literacy of young children<sup>[15]</sup>.

## **5. Conclusion**

In summary, a good teacher-child relationship is the soul of kindergarten education, and game activities, as the

basic form of kindergarten activities, provide a natural carrier and important pathway for the construction of teacher-child relationships. In carrying out game activities, teachers should pay attention to clarifying their role positioning as supporters, collaborators, and guides, enrich the forms of teacher-child interaction, build a positive interactive relationship between home, teacher, and child, and construct a democratic, equal, and harmonious teacher-child relationship. In future work, kindergarten teachers should continuously optimize game activities, pay attention to young children's individual differences and developmental needs, so that games can truly become a bridge for emotional communication and common growth between teachers and children, thereby promoting the continuous improvement of kindergarten education quality.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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