

Article

A Study on the Use of Children's Picture Books in Community Education: An Analysis Based on Typical Cases

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Abstract: This study explores the application of children's picture books in community education, focusing on their role in enhancing cognitive abilities, promoting emotional development, and strengthening family education. Through a combination of theoretical analysis and multiple case studies, the research examines the multifaceted educational value of picture books. Findings reveal that picture books, with their vivid illustrations and engaging narratives, transcend traditional educational functions by fostering parent-child interaction, improving social cohesion, and addressing diverse educational needs within communities. The study also highlights innovative practices, including thematic diversity and digital transformations, which increase the practicality and appeal of picture book education. Suggestions for future development emphasize the importance of broadening thematic content, embracing digital technologies, fostering multi-stakeholder collaborations, and enhancing equity through targeted programs for disadvantaged groups. By integrating theoretical insights and practical applications, this research underscores the potential of children's picture books as dynamic tools for community education, contributing to cultural enrichment and social progress.

Keywords: children's picture books; community education; cognitive abilities; emotional development; family education; parent-child interaction

1. Introduction

1.1. Research Background and Significance

Children's picture books, a unique medium blending text and images, have garnered widespread global attention. Characterized by vivid illustrations, concise text, rich imagination, and emotional expression, they are deeply valued by children, parents, and educators alike. Within modern educational systems, picture books serve not only as critical tools for cultivating early reading abilities but also as comprehensive resources for promoting holistic development in young learners.

Societal progress has ushered in significant changes in family structures, educational methods, and cultural environments. Issues such as children's mental health, emotional development, and social adaptability are receiving growing attention. As the foundational unit of society, the role of communities in education has been redefined and expanded. Community education, distinguished by its openness, diversity, and adaptability, offers children abundant opportunities for learning and development. Integrating children's picture books within community education can address diverse cognitive, emotional, and social needs while introducing innovative approaches to family education and community support systems [1,2].

The application of children's picture books in community education holds profound significance. First, these books convey knowledge intuitively, enabling children to better

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understand the world around them [3]. Second, their emotional narratives provide psychological support, fostering emotional expression and development [4]. Lastly, picture book activities, known for their interactivity and engagement, strengthen familial bonds and enhance community cohesion [5]. Consequently, investigating the methods for incorporating picture books into community education offers valuable insights into enriching educational practices and elevating the quality of community education [6].

1.2. Research Objectives and Questions

This study aims to explore the specific application pathways of children's picture books in community education and their impact on children's development, family education, and community building. By analyzing different cases, the study summarizes the role of children's picture books in enhancing children's cognitive abilities, promoting emotional development, and strengthening social interactions, providing references for the future development of community education.

The main objectives of the study include:

- 1) Exploring the diverse application forms of children's picture books in community education.
- 2) Analyzing the impact of children's picture books on children's cognition, emotion, and social development in community education activities.
- 3) Evaluating the contribution of picture book activities to the quality of family education and community cultural construction.
- 4) Proposing picture book education practice recommendations suitable for different community environments, providing theoretical support and practical guidance for the innovation of future community education models.

To achieve the above research objectives, this study will focus on answering the following research questions:

- 1) How do children's picture books play a role in cognitive, emotional, and social education in community education?
- 2) What are the implementation effects of different types of picture book activities in community education?
- 3) How do picture book activities promote the integration of family education and community culture?
- 4) How can the application strategies of children's picture books in community education be optimized for the future?

Through an in-depth exploration of these questions, this paper aims to provide systematic theoretical support and practical insights for the effective integration of children's picture books and community education.

2. Literature Review

Children's picture books, as a vital educational and cultural medium, have undergone continuous enrichment and innovation in both content and form. Examining their definitions, characteristics, classifications, and development trends enables a deeper understanding of their educational value in fostering children's growth, thereby establishing a theoretical foundation for subsequent research on community education.

2.1. Definition of Children's Picture Books

Children's picture books are specialized reading materials designed for toddlers and preschool children. Primarily using illustrations supplemented by text, they tell rich stories, convey knowledge, and evoke emotions. Through engaging visuals and concise text, picture books capture children's attention, allowing them to understand narratives and draw inspiration in an enjoyable and relaxed atmosphere. Covering a broad range of themes—such as family, friendship, growth, and nature—picture books provide children

with an initial understanding of the world and a foundation for societal adaptation. Consequently, these books serve not only as a source of entertainment but also as a bridge to understanding life and emotions, playing an essential role in early childhood education.

2.2. Characteristics of Children's Picture Books

Children's picture books uniquely integrate entertainment, education, and artistry, making them an indispensable medium for early childhood development. Combining imaginative visuals with carefully crafted text, they captivate children's attention and stimulate their learning interests [6]. Unlike traditional text-based materials, picture books emphasize sensory and emotional experiences, incorporating educational content and emotional narratives to inspire thinking, impart knowledge, and cultivate positive habits [7]. Furthermore, their adaptability allows them to cater to varying age groups and developmental needs, establishing their relevance in family and preschool education contexts [8]. Below are five key characteristics of children's picture books, elaborated in detail.

- 1) **Combination of Pictures and Text, Vivid Form:** Picture books seamlessly integrate visuals and text to narrate plots, develop characters, and create immersive atmospheres. This intuitive format provides rich informational input, aiding children's early language and cognitive development.
- 2) **Entertaining and Easy to Accept:** By embedding educational content into lively and engaging storylines, picture books satisfy children's curiosity and playful nature, making the learning process enjoyable and exploratory.
- 3) **Emotional Education, Promoting Growth:** Picture books emphasize emotional narratives, helping children recognize and express feelings. Through warm textual content and vivid illustrations, they contribute to emotional education and personality development.
- 4) **Imagination Stimulation, Inspiring Thinking:** Exaggerated and creative forms in picture books stimulate children's imagination and creativity, fostering the development of a rich psychological world.
- 5) **Strong Adaptability and Wide Audience:** Designed for children of varying ages, picture books also serve as valuable educational tools for parents and educators, highlighting their versatility and broad appeal.

By encapsulating these unique characteristics, children's picture books emerge as powerful resources for nurturing early development, making them essential in both educational and family settings.

2.3. Classification and Development Trend of Children's Picture Books

The classification of children's picture books is primarily based on their functions and content, catering to children's diverse needs in cognition, emotion, aesthetics, and entertainment. Storybooks cultivate children's language skills and moral concepts with engaging plots. Cognitive picture books help children understand the world and learn basic knowledge. Emotional picture books focus on children's psychological growth, conveying love and care. Artistic picture books enhance children's aesthetic abilities through beautiful illustrations. Interactive picture books, on the other hand, enhance the fun of reading through hands-on activities and multisensory experiences. These classifications not only reflect the richness of picture books' functions but also demonstrate their extensive application value in children's education.

2.3.1. Story-Based Picture Books

The main focus is on narrating complete stories with rich plots and distinctive characters that can inspire children's moral judgement and value construction. Examples include *David*, *No*, *The Caterpillar Turns into a Butterfly*, and *Little Blue and Little Yellow* shown in figure 1 [9].



Figure 1. The picture books from left to right are respectively David, No, The Caterpillar Turns into a Butterfly and Little Blue and Little Yellow.

2.3.2. Cognitive Picture Books

Aiming at children's cognitive development, it helps children learn basic knowledge, such as colours, numbers, animals, etc., through visual images. Representative works include *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Are You Looking At?* *Head to Toe*, etc shown in figure 2.

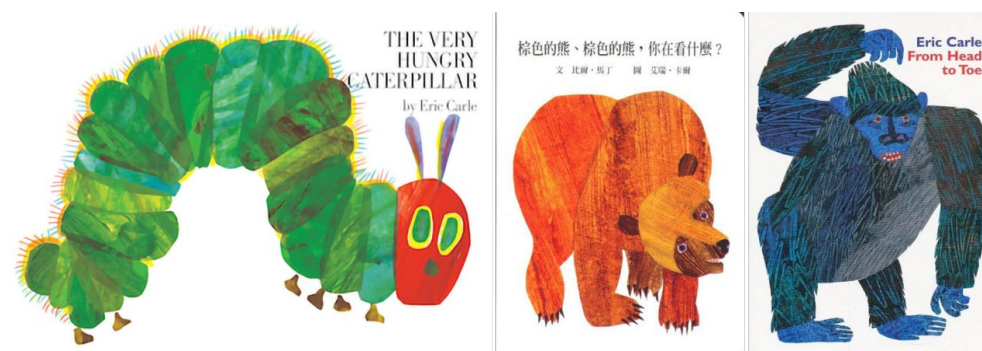


Figure 2. The picture books from left to right are respectively *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Are You Looking At?* *Head to Toe*.

2.3.3. Emotional Picture Books

Focusing on children's emotional needs as the core, conveying love, friendship and courage, and cultivating children's ability to express their emotions, Representative works include *Guess How Much I Love You*, *My Dad*, *Love Tree*, etc shown in figure 3.



Figure 3. The picture books from left to right are respectively *Guess How Much I Love You*, *My Dad*, *Love Tree*.

2.3.4. Artistic Picture Books

Focusing on artistic expression, highlighting the beauty and artistry of the images, and guiding children to feel and appreciate art, Representative works include Aphor the Field Mouse, Rainbow-coloured Flowers and Darkness shown in figure 4.

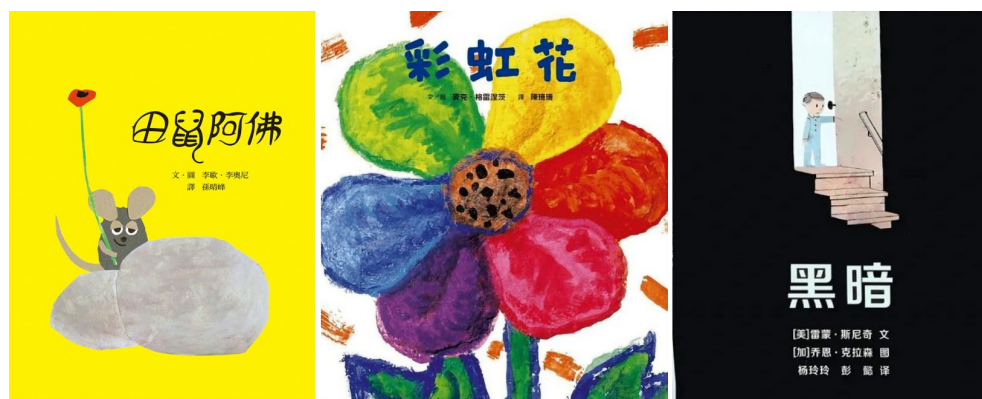


Figure 4. The picture books from left to right are respectively Aphor the Field Mouse, Rainbow-coloured Flowers and Darkness.

2.3.5. Interactive Picture Books

Including flip books, three-dimensional books and other forms, focusing on participation and interaction with children to stimulate reading interest and enhance the sense of experience, such as Don't let the pigeons drive the bus, Dot Dot Dot, Look Inside Series and so on shown in figure 5.



Figure 5. The picture books from left to right are respectively Don't let the pigeons drive the bus, Dot Dot Dot, Look Inside Series.

As a unique form of literature and art, children's picture books meet the diverse needs of children at all stages of development through a rich variety of contents and forms. Whether it is through storytelling picture books that develop language skills and moral values, cognitive picture books that help children learn basic knowledge, or emotional picture books that convey love and care, picture books play an important role in children's development. In addition, art and interactive picture books provide new ways of experience in terms of aesthetics and engagement [10]. With the development of society and technology, the content and form of children's picture books are constantly being innovated, providing children with richer educational resources¹. In the future, children's picture books will continue to play an active role in education, entertainment and cultural heritage, becoming an important tool for children's physical and mental development [6].

2.4. Trends in the Development of Children's Picture Books

The evolution of children's picture books mirrors societal and cultural changes, technological innovations, and the advancement of educational concepts. Modern developments in this field aim to meet the diverse cognitive, emotional, and entertainment needs of contemporary children. Enhanced cross-cultural exchanges, the widespread adoption of digital technology, and an increased emphasis on educational purposes have expanded the significance of children's picture books. They now extend beyond traditional roles to explore new educational meanings and social responsibilities. The following outlines key trends shaping the future of children's picture books:

- 1) **Diversification of Themes:** Thematic content in children's picture books has evolved to reflect shifting societal priorities, extending from traditional moral education and cognitive learning to areas such as mental health, ecological protection, and multiculturalism. For instance, the environmental protection-themed picture book *A Leaf Falling* exemplifies this shift.
- 2) **Cross-Media Integration:** Advances in digital technology have popularized electronic and interactive multimedia picture books, diversifying reading experiences. These innovations provide children with immersive and engaging ways to explore stories, enhancing their overall learning experience.
- 3) **International Exchanges:** High-quality picture books from various countries are increasingly translated and shared globally, fostering cultural exchange and integration. For example, Maurice Sendak's *Beastly Kingdom* has gained worldwide acclaim for its universal themes and captivating storytelling.
- 4) **Strengthening of Educational Functions:** Picture books are being increasingly incorporated into early education curricula, serving as key teaching resources in kindergartens and community education programs. They also provide critical support for family education, enriching both home and school learning environments.
- 5) **Personalization of Creation:** In response to diversified market demands, picture books are increasingly tailored to meet the unique needs of specific groups. Personalized styles and content have led to the emergence of specialized picture books, such as those designed for autistic children, catering to niche audiences while ensuring inclusivity.

As the field of children's picture books continues to advance, innovation in both content and form underscores their growing importance in early education. The diversification of themes and integration of cross-media technologies have made these books more relevant to children's lives, offering rich learning and entertainment opportunities. International exchanges enhance cultural diversity, while the emphasis on educational functions solidifies their role in both family and school settings. Additionally, personalized creations meet the individual developmental needs of children, broadening the scope of their educational impact. Looking ahead, children's picture books are poised to further enrich global education by providing unique insights and fostering children's cognitive and emotional growth on a wider scale.

3. Overview of Community Education

Community education represents a distinctive approach to learning, aiming to foster the holistic development of community members through organized and accessible educational services. It transcends individual knowledge acquisition by emphasizing the cultivation of social responsibility, community cohesion, and the empowerment of diverse groups to realize their potential. With societal advancements, community education has emerged as a crucial component of the modern educational system, offering a versatile platform to address varied learning needs.

3.1. Definition and Characteristics of Community Education

Community education refers to educational programs and services offered to residents within a specific community through institutions such as schools, cultural centers, and volunteer organizations. Its goals extend beyond the mere transfer of knowledge to include enhancing residents' overall quality of life, promoting personal growth, and encouraging social integration. As a form of informal education, it typically encompasses diverse areas such as adult learning, family education, senior citizen education, and youth activities.

This form of education has consistently played a significant role in addressing the varied needs of community members. Unlike traditional school-based education, community education emphasizes adaptability, practicality, and active participation. By focusing on real-life applications and the specific context of a community, it creates meaningful and relevant learning opportunities. Several distinctive features define community education:

First, it is inherently flexible and open. Community education diverges from formal education by prioritizing adaptability and informality. Activities and programs are designed to accommodate the specific needs and contexts of the community, fostering a learner-centered environment that encourages active engagement and autonomy.

Second, it is interdisciplinary in nature. Community education integrates a wide range of topics, including traditional academic subjects such as culture, art, and science, alongside practical themes like health, psychology, and environmental protection. This interdisciplinary approach ensures that community education remains relevant and beneficial to individuals of varying ages, backgrounds, and interests.

Third, it promotes lifelong and practical learning. Closely tied to the daily lives of community members, community education often features activities such as family education workshops, vocational training, and health seminars. These programs equip individuals with essential self-management and problem-solving skills, enabling them to address real-life challenges effectively.

Finally, it fosters social interaction and community cohesion. Community education is not merely about knowledge dissemination; it also serves as a platform for building social connections. By participating in shared educational activities, community members enhance their communication and collaboration skills, creating a sense of unity and mutual understanding.

The characteristics of community education reflect its unique role in serving residents and promoting social development. By employing flexible and diverse methods, community education provides individuals with opportunities for continuous learning and communication, while supporting the overall harmony and sustainability of the community. As societal needs evolve and educational concepts innovate, community education will continue to expand its impact and relevance across broader domains.

3.2. Functions and Roles of Community Education

Community education plays a multifaceted role in modern society, addressing both individual and collective needs while fostering social progress. It serves as a critical bridge between education and life, enriching the quality of individuals and communities. Its primary functions and roles include the following:

First, community education enhances individual quality and capability. By providing opportunities for lifelong learning, it empowers residents to upgrade their knowledge and skills at any stage of life. Young people benefit from comprehensive development opportunities, while older adults engage in social activities that promote physical and mental well-being. For all participants, these educational experiences improve employability and elevate overall quality of life.

Second, community education fosters social harmony and inclusion. It goes beyond knowledge dissemination by creating avenues for mutual understanding and respect

among community members. In multicultural contexts, it acts as a bridge for communication between diverse ethnic groups, cultures, and beliefs, strengthening the fabric of society.

Third, it supports the development of family education. By offering training programs and parent-child activities, community education enhances parents' understanding of children's developmental needs. This improves the quality of family education and fosters the healthy growth of children—both physically and mentally.

Fourth, community education addresses societal challenges. In tackling issues such as poverty, unemployment, loneliness, and mental health, it provides practical solutions. Psychological counseling, vocational training, and social adaptation programs help residents navigate societal changes, enhancing their quality of life and well-being.

Finally, community education promotes sustainable community development. Through activities that raise awareness about environmental protection, public health, and community advancement, it encourages responsible citizenship. Programs like environmental education empower residents to conserve resources and protect ecosystems, contributing to the creation of green and sustainable communities.

By meeting the diverse learning needs of residents and providing flexible, impactful educational programs, community education contributes significantly to individual growth, social cohesion, and sustainable development. Its importance continues to grow in modern society, offering valuable services and support to an expanding range of groups in the future.

4. Methodology and Procedures

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods to ensure the scientific rigor of the data and the comprehensiveness of the results. By integrating literature analysis, case studies, and questionnaires, the research delves deeply into the practical application of children's picture books in community education and their impacts.

4.1. Research Design and Methodology

4.1.1. Research Design

As an exploratory study, this research aims to systematically investigate the pathways through which children's picture books can be effectively integrated into community education. The research design comprises three distinct stages:

1) Theoretical Research Stage

During this initial stage, extensive literature analysis was conducted to consolidate the theoretical underpinnings and practical advancements in the domains of children's picture books and community education. This phase focused on clarifying the educational functions and practical value of picture books, thereby establishing a robust theoretical foundation for subsequent stages of the study.

2) Case Study Stage

Three representative cases of children's picture book activities were selected from communities characterized by varying socio-economic backgrounds. Detailed observations of the implementation processes were conducted, encompassing activity design, participant feedback, and educational outcomes. This stage sought to examine the adaptability and distinctive features of picture book-based educational practices in diverse community settings.

3) Comprehensive Analysis Stage

As shown in figure 6, the research followed a systematic design process, utilizing data from questionnaires and case studies. This stage analyzed the applications and impacts of children's picture book activities on children, families, and communities. Based on these findings, targeted recommendations were formulated to optimize the integration of picture books into community education practices, providing valuable references for



Figure 6. Research design steps.

4.1.2. Research Methods

To ensure the scientific rigor and comprehensiveness of the findings, this study integrates multiple research methods, each contributing a unique perspective to the analysis:

1) Literature Analysis Method

This method involves collecting and synthesizing research findings on children's picture books and community education from both domestic and international sources. The development and current status of these fields are examined, along with scholarly perspectives and methodologies. This approach helps to clarify research problems and directions while drawing interdisciplinary theoretical support from fields such as pedagogy and psychology, thereby establishing a solid foundation for the study.

2) Case Study Method

Three representative cases of community picture book education were selected based on criteria such as geographical representation, activity characteristics, and audience diversity. Through participatory observation and detailed recording, the study analyzes the activities' backgrounds, implementation processes, and outcomes. This method highlights practical experiences and identifies shortcomings in picture book education across different community contexts.

3) Questionnaire Survey Method

Questionnaires were designed for key participant groups, including children, parents, and community workers. These questionnaires addressed participants' activity experiences, educational outcomes, and suggestions for improvement. Quantitative analysis of the responses was conducted to evaluate the impact and applicability of picture book education within community practices, providing robust data to support the study's conclusions.

4.2. Case Selection Criteria

In this study, the criteria for selecting cases aim to ensure the research is scientific, representative, and practical. By setting multi-dimensional screening conditions, typical cases that can comprehensively reflect the current status and characteristics of community education in children's picture book practices are selected. The research focuses on regional representativeness, activity uniqueness, audience diversity, and data availability. It considers the implementation of community picture book activities in different socio-economic backgrounds and emphasizes the innovation and educational impact of the activities. Additionally, the selected cases must have sufficient records and data support to allow for systematic analysis. These criteria provide a scientific basis for subsequent research and ensure that case analysis can demonstrate the diverse practices and profound impact of children's picture books in community education.

The criteria for selecting cases for this study are shown in table 1:

Table 1. Picture book selection criteria.

| Case Selection Criteria | Explicit description |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Geographical representation | Communities with different socio-economic backgrounds are selected, including urban, mixed-urban and rural communities. |

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Activity Characteristics | The cases should be innovative or highly participatory in children's picture book education practices, such as thematic activities, novel forms of implementation, and so on. |
| Audience diversity | Ensure that the participants of the case activities cover children of different age groups and their parents to analyse their adaptability to different groups. |
| Data availability | Cases need to have sufficient implementation records, feedback data and related information to ensure the comprehensiveness and scientificity of the analyses. |

5. Typical Applications of Children's Picture Books in Community Education

5.1. Case 1: Picture Book Theme Activities to Enhance Children's Reading Interest and Cognitive Ability

In recent years, the significance of early reading for children has been increasingly emphasized, aligning with evolving educational concepts. Picture books, valued for their vivid content and engaging illustrations, have become a cornerstone of children's early reading experiences. Despite this, many communities, particularly those in economically disadvantaged areas, face challenges such as limited access to reading resources and low parental awareness of early education. These factors contribute to children's disinterest in reading and hinder their cognitive development. To address these issues, a community education center initiated a reading activity centered on picture books, aiming to boost children's reading interest and cognitive abilities through enjoyable and interactive approaches.

The program targeted children aged 3 to 8 years old and their parents, involving 50 parent-child pairs spanning preschool and lower primary school age groups. The objectives of the activity were threefold: to cultivate children's interest in reading and enhance their language and cognitive skills, to foster parent-child interaction through picture book activities that improve the quality of family education, and to create a supportive community reading environment that provides children with access to high-quality reading materials.

The implementation of the activity occurred in three main stages. During the preparation phase, the Community Education Centre collaborated with art institutions to select classic picture books suitable for various age groups, including *The Hungry Caterpillar* and *From Head to Toe*. The activity venue was transformed into a welcoming reading corner equipped with interactive zones, craft materials, and game props inspired by the selected picture books. Additionally, professional children's reading instructors and art education experts were invited to facilitate the activities.

The activity itself spanned one month and was divided into three parts. The first part, Picture Book Reading and Interaction, involved weekly sessions where instructors used dynamic storytelling techniques—including expressive voice modulation and body movements—to narrate stories. Children were encouraged to observe illustrations and engage with the storyline through guided questions, such as discussing the changes in *The Hungry Caterpillar* based on its diet. The second part, Picture Book Extension Craft Activities, provided hands-on creative opportunities for children. For example, after reading *From Head to Toe*, participants crafted models of body parts from colored paper, learning about human anatomy in the process. The final part, Parent-Child Interaction and Sharing, encouraged families to complete reading record cards documenting their experiences. Parents also shared their insights on integrating picture book reading into their home routines.

Following the activity, community liaison officers gathered feedback through questionnaires and seminars. The program yielded significant positive outcomes. Over 83.2%

of participating families reported heightened interest in picture book reading among children, with many initiating additional reading sessions independently. Cognitive abilities such as language expression and logical thinking showed marked improvement through the observational and interactive discussions facilitated during the activity. Furthermore, parents noted enhanced skills in engaging their children through picture books, strengthening family bonds and enriching the educational atmosphere at home. On a broader scale, the activity fostered a culture of reading within the community, promoting interactions among residents and establishing a collective appreciation for literature.

As shown in figure 7, this picture book-themed activity effectively enhanced children's enthusiasm for reading, improved parental involvement in education, and offered valuable insights for community education practices. Future iterations of this program could expand its scope by incorporating digital picture books and multimedia interactive tools, ensuring a broader reach and accommodating evolving reading preferences.



Figure 7. Community picture book activity, children are creating body parts.

5.2. Case 2: Picture Book Stories for Children's Emotional Education and Social Interaction

In recent years, children's emotional education has garnered significant attention across various sectors of society. With the increasing diversification of family structures, many children face challenges such as insufficient emotional support, weak emotional management, and inadequate social skills. Addressing these issues, a community education center initiated an activity leveraging picture books to foster emotional education. The program aimed to help children recognize emotions, express their feelings, and enhance their social interaction skills through engaging picture book narratives.

This activity targeted children aged 5 to 10 within the community, encompassing 40 participants, including children from single-parent families and left-behind children. The objectives of the program were threefold: first, to guide children in identifying and understanding different emotions while improving their emotional regulation skills; second, to help children develop empathy and strong social skills through role-playing and discussions centered on picture book stories; and third, to create a supportive community environment that prioritizes children's emotional well-being.

The activity unfolded in three stages. During the preparation phase, staff members from the education center curated a selection of picture books known for their relevance to emotional education, such as *Guess How Much I Love You*, *The Love Tree*, and *My Father*. The venue was creatively designed to include interactive elements such as an "Emotion Tree" and a "Mood Corner." Additionally, three volunteers were recruited to assist with the activities shown in figure 8.



Figure 8. Community picture book activity, children are creating body parts.

The development phase spanned three weeks, with sessions held twice a week, and featured three thematic units:

- 1) **Understanding Emotions:** Volunteers guided children through *Guess How Much I Love You*, helping them identify fundamental emotions such as love, joy, and sadness. Children were encouraged to articulate their recent feelings by placing leaves symbolizing different emotions on the “Emotion Tree.”
- 2) **Expressing Emotions:** Following a reading of *The Caring Tree*, children engaged in activities designed to express care and appreciation. They created drawings and participated in role-playing exercises, simulating scenarios such as expressing gratitude to a friend.
- 3) **Building Empathy:** After reading *My Dad*, children discussed the sacrifices made by their parents and learned to consider perspectives different from their own. They created thank-you cards as tokens of appreciation for their families.

The final week of the program featured a “Sharing Session on Emotional Growth,” during which children presented their drawings and thank-you cards to their parents and community members. They also shared their emotional experiences in concise statements, fostering a sense of achievement and connection.

The program yielded several notable outcomes. First, it significantly enhanced children’s emotional awareness, enabling them to articulate their feelings more clearly and recognize the emotional states of others. Second, it improved social skills, as children learned to express care and collaborate effectively. Introverted children, in particular, showed increased willingness to interact with peers. Lastly, it strengthened family relationships, with many parents reporting a deeper understanding of their children’s inner worlds and an improvement in parent-child bonds.

Emotional education is a cornerstone of holistic child development, and this activity demonstrated the potential of picture books to support children’s emotional and social growth. Moving forward, the program could incorporate tiered designs to cater to children of different age groups and explore blended approaches that combine online and offline education modes, thereby extending its reach and impact.

5.3. Case 3: Picture Book Reading Facilitates Parent-Child Interaction and Integration of Family Education

Family education serves as a foundational pillar in children’s development, yet many families face challenges such as insufficient parent-child interaction and limited diversity in educational approaches. Parents, constrained by work commitments or a lack of educational knowledge, often struggle to establish effective communication with their children. Meanwhile, the growing emphasis on children’s mental health has spotlighted the need for early emotional connection within family education. Picture books, with their

vivid illustrations, simple language, and meaningful narratives, have become a valuable tool in early childhood education. Numerous studies highlight their role in enhancing children's language and cognitive abilities while fostering emotional understanding and positive values. Building on this, a community center, in collaboration with a local kindergarten and library, launched the "Picture Book Reading for Parent-Child Interaction" program. The initiative aimed to improve the quality of family education while promoting a culture of picture book reading.

The program targeted families with children aged 3 to 6 years old, encompassing participants from diverse educational and socio-economic backgrounds. A total of 47 families participated, including 27 dual-income families, 20 families with full-time parents, and families with grandparents as primary caregivers. Special attention was given to designing content that addressed the varied needs of these groups, ensuring inclusivity and universality.

The program's objectives were to enhance children's language and cognitive skills, foster parent-child emotional communication, promote scientific family education practices, and cultivate a reading culture within the community. These goals were achieved through a three-phase implementation process:

Phase 1: Parent-Child Reading Guidance Workshop

In the initial phase, experts conducted a workshop for parents titled "Illuminating Parent-Child Time with Picture Books." Key components included:

Theoretical Insights: Discussions on the impact of picture book reading on children's development and the importance of family education.

Practical Demonstrations: Experts showcased techniques such as voice modulation and role-playing to make reading more engaging.

Interactive Q&A: Parents engaged with experts on topics like book selection and interactive reading strategies.

The workshop was well-received, with parents expressing enthusiasm about applying the insights gained.

Phase 2: Parent-Child Reading Practice Activities

The second phase consisted of three thematic sessions, each focused on a selected picture book:

- 1) **The Hungry Caterpillar – Cognitive and Hands-On Skills** Parents and children read the story together and created "caterpillar models" using DIY kits. The activity reinforced memory and comprehension through tactile engagement.
- 2) **Guess How Much I Love You – Emotional Expression** Participants explored the themes of love and gratitude. Children expressed their feelings towards loved ones through words and body movements in the "Passing on Love" interactive game.
- 3) **Searching for the Dragon of Sanxingdui – Teamwork and Imagination** This session encouraged collaboration and creativity through role-playing and story-writing. Families explored ancient Chinese culture while enhancing children's imagination and teamwork skills shown in figure 9.



Figure 9. Community picture book activity, children are creating body parts.

Phase 3: Creative Extension Activities

The final phase featured a “Picture Book Story Interpretation Competition.” Families showcased their reading experiences through crafts, scenarios, or storytelling. Outstanding contributions were displayed at the community center, inspiring greater interest in picture book reading.

Effectiveness of the Activities

The program achieved significant outcomes:

- 1) Increased Interest in Reading: Children demonstrated heightened enthusiasm for picture books, with many initiating reading sessions and engaging actively with story content.
- 2) Enhanced Parent-Child Relationships: Parents reported stronger emotional connections with their children, gaining insights into their inner worlds through shared activities.
- 3) Improved Parental Education Skills: Parents acquired practical knowledge about children’s psychology and effective educational techniques, integrating picture book reading into daily routines.
- 4) Enriched Community Culture: The program fostered a reading culture, with a 17.4% increase in library book loans and more frequent interactions among residents.

The “Picture Book Reading for Parent-Child Interaction” program successfully bridged gaps in family education, fostering closer relationships and promoting community cohesion. Picture book reading proved to be a practical and engaging educational approach, opening a window into children’s imaginative worlds while strengthening family bonds. The initiative highlighted the critical role of community education in enhancing cultural literacy and social harmony. Future iterations could incorporate more diverse content and integrate digital platforms to expand outreach and accessibility.

6. Conclusion and Outlook

6.1. Research Summary

This study has focused on exploring the application of children’s picture books in community education, systematically analyzing their multifaceted roles in enhancing children’s cognitive abilities, promoting emotional education, and strengthening family education. Through multiple case studies, the research underscores the broad potential of picture books as tools for educational innovation and community development.

Children’s picture books, with their vibrant illustrations, concise narratives, and profound thematic depth, extend beyond traditional teaching resources. They have proven to be invaluable in fostering parent-child interaction, facilitating emotional communication,

and enhancing social cognition. By adapting to the diverse needs of community members, these books serve as critical tools in advancing community education.

The thematic range of picture books has expanded significantly, moving from traditional moral education to encompassing areas such as mental health, environmental awareness, and cultural diversity. This evolution has made picture books highly relevant and appealing for community-based educational programs. Additionally, integrating picture books into carefully designed activities enhances their practicality and encourages deeper engagement among children and their families.

Through case studies, it has been demonstrated that picture books play an essential role in improving parent-child relationships and elevating the quality of family education. Particularly in communities with dual-income families or limited access to educational resources, picture books provide a practical and engaging solution to address the lack of meaningful parent-child interaction. Moreover, their incorporation into community education activities brings a fresh dynamic, making programs more engaging and fostering community cohesion. These findings offer valuable insights for the future design and implementation of community education initiatives.

In conclusion, this research highlights the potential of children's picture books as powerful educational tools, contributing not only to theoretical advancements but also to practical innovations in community education.

6.2. Suggestions for Future Development

Despite the promising findings, there remains significant scope for further development and optimization in the application of picture books within community education. To maximize their impact, the following areas warrant attention:

Future research and practice should explore expanding the thematic scope of picture books. As societal needs evolve, new themes addressing topics such as elderly education, the inclusion of children with disabilities, and multicultural integration should be considered. These themes could enhance the relevance of picture books to a broader spectrum of community members, ensuring that they address diverse educational and social requirements.

Digital transformation offers vast opportunities for enhancing picture book education. The development of electronic picture books and interactive reading platforms can significantly extend the reach and impact of these educational tools. For example, incorporating VR technology could create immersive learning environments, making the reading experience more engaging for children. Additionally, an online picture book resource library could overcome geographic and temporal limitations, ensuring that families from all backgrounds have access to high-quality resources.

The sustainable development of community education requires collaboration among multiple stakeholders. Schools, families, community organizations, and social institutions should work together to design and implement picture book-based education programs. Professional educational organizations and non-profits could contribute customized activity designs, while government funding and corporate sponsorships could ensure the long-term viability of such initiatives.

To evaluate the effectiveness of picture book education, future efforts should move beyond subjective feedback and incorporate scientific assessment methods. By using quantitative metrics, such as children's language development scores and parent-child relationship surveys, and conducting long-term tracking studies, the educational impact of picture book activities can be measured comprehensively. These insights could then inform the refinement of community education strategies.

Promoting the culture of picture book reading is crucial for broadening its societal impact. Organizing events such as picture book reading festivals, parent-child salons, and creative competitions can encourage families to integrate picture books into their daily

routines. Public campaigns and investments in media publicity can also raise awareness of the cultural and educational value of picture books.

Addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups remains a priority in community education. Children from underprivileged backgrounds, including those in low-income families or with special educational needs, should have access to targeted picture book programs. By providing free or subsidized resources and services, community education can bridge the gap in educational opportunities and promote greater equity.

As educational tools with profound cultural and developmental value, children's picture books are poised to play an increasingly vital role in community education. With the advancement of educational concepts and digital technologies, the potential for innovation in picture book education is vast. Through continuous development and collaborative efforts, these programs can become a cornerstone of community cultural enrichment and societal progress.

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