

Research on the Effective Strategies of Minnan Puppet Performance Game: Based on the Survey of Q Kindergarten in Quanzhou City, Fujian Province

Zuirong Yang*

Faculty of Education, Fuzhou University of International Studies and Trade, Fuzhou 350202, Fujian, China

**Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

Copyright: © 2025 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

Abstract: As a national intangible cultural heritage, Minnan puppet art is not only an important carrier of the continuous extension of Chinese civilization, but also a witness of the same origin on both sides of the Taiwan Straits. As one of the important activities in the implementation of the garden-based course, the Minnan puppet performance game takes the inheritance of the Minnan puppet art as the core, and promotes the harmonious development of children's body and mind as the starting point and destination. Therefore, this article in the Minnan puppet game characteristics and on the basis of the value, combining the development of the Minnan puppet game, from universities, kindergarten and parents to further explore the Minnan puppet game effective strategy, for Minnan kindergarten reference and ideas, in order to realize the Minnan puppet art in the field of preschool education of creative transformation and innovative development.

Keywords: Minnan puppet art; Minnan puppet performance games; Garden-based course; Cultural inheritance

Online publication: September 17, 2025

1. Concept definition

Southern Fujian Puppet Performance Games refer to gameplay activities conducted in kindergartens in southern Fujian, with the core objective of inheriting the art of southern Fujian puppets. These activities aim to promote the harmonious physical and mental development of young children. Using string puppets and glove puppets made from recycled and handmade materials as media, children manipulate the puppets to perform. These games retain the traditional form of southern Fujian puppet performances behind a curtain and create story themes based on children's favorite stories or life experiences.

2. Characteristics of Minnan puppet performance games

2.1. Folk art adapted for children

“Folk Art Adapted for Children” is a process based on and focused on children to promote their development. In the implementation of Minnan puppet performance games, teachers should consider children’s existing development levels and interests to promote their comprehensive physical and mental development. Teachers eliminate the adult culture from Minnan puppet art and select content that suits children’s physical and mental development characteristics and is educationally meaningful, because human growth is a continuous process of improvement guided by meaning within a cultural environment, such as simplifying the strings on marionettes to facilitate children’s manipulation skills and further promote the development of their fine motor skills in their hands ^[1].

“Folk Art Adapted for Children” returns folk art to the perspective of cultural heritage and children’s lives. Life-orientation is a common feature of kindergarten curricula and Minnan puppet art. When designing and organizing Minnan puppet performance games, teachers should choose both activities that children love and content from Minnan puppet art that is closely connected to children’s actual living conditions and close to their lives. For example, many Minnan puppet theater performances promote moral education, which may be difficult for young children to fully understand. Therefore, teachers and children create stories based on their life experiences as themes for Minnan puppet performance games.

2.2. Localization of educational resources

One soil nurtures one kind of people. Young children learn and develop through their interaction with the environment; thus, their comprehensive development must be achieved in a “local” environment ^[2]. Children learn and develop through interaction with their environment, so their comprehensive development must be achieved in a “local” environment. Kindergartens implement Minnan puppet performance games based on local traditional cultural resources. Before the games begin, kindergartens fully utilize parent and community resources, adopting the approaches of “going out” and “bringing in” to lead children to visit intangible cultural heritage inheritor workshops and puppet museums, watch puppet performances, make puppet costumes, carve puppet heads, etc., allowing children to be influenced by the authentic local cultural environment. Additionally, teachers, parents, and children work together to create a kindergarten environment and regional environment with Minnan puppet characteristics, such as setting up puppet performance stages and decorating puppet-themed walls, to inspire children to “re-express” excellent local traditional culture in an “puppetized” environment.

2.3. Class-based game implementation

Each class has different circumstances, and teachers have different professional qualities and strengths, so the implementation of Minnan puppet performance games fully reflects class-based game implementation. Teachers in each class, based on the interests, needs, and development levels of the children in their class, fully tap into the professional advantages and personal strengths of parents, organize parents and community resources for puppetized environment creation, set up small puppet performance stages, create scripts, make props, record voiceovers, etc., to attract children and parents to actively participate in Minnan puppet performance games.

3. The value of southern Fujian puppet performance games

3.1. Value for children’s development

Traditional culture aligns with children’s developmental characteristics and is acceptable to them. The essence

of cultural confidence being implemented in education is the issue of cultural identity^[3]. Traditional culture is a cultural form that conforms to children's developmental characteristics and is acceptable to them. At the same time, it carries a strong national identity and can cultivate children's preliminary cultural identification. Implementing southern Fujian puppet performance games is an effective way for children to internalize the art of southern Fujian puppets. Through perception, understanding, and manipulative interaction, children acquire knowledge of this art, enhancing their sensitivity to their hometown's traditional culture and stimulating their sense of identity and belonging to the excellent traditional culture of their hometown. This process also inherits the art of southern Fujian puppets.

Biologist Grus believed, "It should not be solely attributed to their youth that children play; it should also be recognized that it is through play that children are endowed with the life of childhood." In southern Fujian puppet performance games, children organize peers, discuss performance themes, set performance rules, make puppet props, and recruit more viewers according to their own ideas. Each child has their own role in this game, fully exerting their strengths and promoting the development of autonomous learning abilities.

Play is the primary learning method for young children, and they develop through it. In southern Fujian puppet performance games, children need to use their imagination and creativity to create puppet characters and story lines to drive the game's progression. This is based on their existing aesthetic experience of southern Fujian puppet art and involves expressing and creating beauty. At the same time, children manipulate puppets while engaging in dialogue with the characters, greatly enhancing their language expression abilities and hand-eye coordination. Additionally, through observing characters in the games, children understand their personalities, distinguish right from wrong, and subtly grasp social moral norms, thereby developing good moral qualities.

3.2. Value for teachers' development

Teachers receive limited education on southern Fujian puppet art during pre-service training. Therefore, the implementation of southern Fujian puppet performance games in kindergartens will, to a certain extent, prompt teachers to actively seek out, learn, and absorb the essence of southern Fujian puppet art, extracting content most suitable for children's learning. This process also subtly enhances teachers' traditional cultural literacy, awakens their initial cultural awareness, and strengthens their cultural confidence.

3.3. Value for kindergarten curriculum development

Kindergarten curricula rooted in local culture aim to fill the curriculum with life value, meaning, and realism, returning the curriculum form to its essential life nature. By considering their own realities, the cultural environment of the children, and their physical and mental developmental characteristics, kindergartens combine the regionally distinctive art of southern Fujian puppets to conduct puppet performance games. This allows children to truly comprehend and understand their southern Fujian puppet cultural environment, aligning with children's life development and realizing their respect, liberation, and return to life.

3.4. Value for social development

Southern Fujian culture is an important branch of traditional Chinese culture and a shared root culture across the Taiwan Strait. Southern Fujian puppet art is an outstanding representative of southern Fujian culture. It fully leverages the role of school education in shaping national identity and promoting cultural identity, and it is a crucial means of fostering the consensus of "both sides of the strait are one family" and promoting the

peaceful reunification of the motherland. People increasingly recognize that cultural identity is the foundation for the Chinese nation to settle down and live, and it is also the cultural psychological basis for achieving great rejuvenation.

4. Key points for the implementation of Minnan puppet performance games

4.1. Taking children as the main body and emphasizing their participation

Teachers fully respect children's subject status in games and create spaces for children to make independent choices, freely explore, and self-construct in Minnan puppet performance games. In terms of game theme selection, peer teaming, role assignment, and plot adaptation, children organize the game according to their own ideas, maximizing their autonomy. They are the masters of the game.

4.2. Strong internal and external support

Environment creation: On the one hand, in terms of the overall planning of the kindergarten environment, educators should base themselves on reality to create an integrated, distinctive, and "puppet-oriented" campus environment. On the other hand, in terms of class environment creation, teachers utilize parental resources to create a suitable educational environment for Minnan puppets according to the characteristics and needs of the children in their class, such as puppet-themed walls, class puppet corners, and class puppet performance stages.

Institutional support: To advance the progress of the Minnan puppet kindergarten-based curriculum, the kindergarten has formulated detailed and specific conventional requirements, such as conducting Minnan puppet performance games at least once a week. The kindergarten's systems and conventional requirements strengthen the management of the kindergarten-based curriculum, guiding teachers to closely integrate the development and implementation of Minnan puppet performance games with daily education and teaching work, integrating characteristics into the curriculum and highlighting them in curriculum implementation.

Teacher training: Based on the continuous deepening and development of Minnan puppet performance games, to strengthen the construction of the teaching staff, the kindergarten mainly adopts methods such as inviting intangible cultural heritage inheritors to conduct in-kindergarten training, sending teachers for external learning, and participating in kindergarten-based training to carry out teacher development work, consolidating teachers' learning outcomes and enabling them to grow through training.

Community collaboration: Kindergartens use the methods of "bringing in" and "going out" to shorten the distance between Minnan puppet art and children. For example, during the puppet art festival, they invite troupe members to perform in the kindergarten, visit puppet museums, explore artisan studios, watch puppet performances, and learn puppet making, enabling children to develop a sense of national cultural identity and pride through interaction with puppets.

5. Strategies for effectively conducting Minnan puppet performance games

5.1. Universities

Universities in the Minnan region are the primary source of kindergarten teachers. Therefore, universities should organically combine the cultivation of high-quality kindergarten teachers with the cultivation of professionals in ethnic education to promote the development of preschool education in the Minnan region and the inheritance and development of Minnan traditional culture. Universities should incorporate Minnan puppet art courses

into the curriculum of preschool education majors, with frontline kindergarten teachers and inheritors of the puppet intangible cultural heritage serving as instructors. This will inevitably encourage kindergarten teachers to consciously promote and disseminate Minnan puppet art in educational activities and conduct Minnan puppet performance games.

5.2. Kindergartens

Strengthen kindergarten-based curriculum management: As curriculum action researchers, teachers need to fully participate and engage in curriculum implementation, reflecting and learning from continuous curriculum practice, observation, and communication to improve their professional quality and enhance their curriculum practice experience.

Establish a kindergarten visit system: Kindergartens should establish a corresponding visit system and encourage parents to visit the kindergarten more often. On the one hand, this will enable parents to better understand the kindergarten's philosophy of Minnan puppet art education and deepen their understanding of Minnan puppet performance games. On the other hand, parents can better understand their children's existing development level and provide more effective and feasible suggestions for improving activities during game participation, rather than just inviting parents to the kindergarten for major events and having them participate in a perfunctory manner.

Broaden teachers' professional growth paths: The professional competence of kindergarten teachers affects the effectiveness of educational activities. Therefore, teachers should strengthen their professional competence through professional development and practical reflection. First, teachers should re-evaluate their strengths and weaknesses. For example, when teachers realize their lack of knowledge about Minnan puppet art, they can utilize spare time to borrow documents and materials from Minnan local museums and libraries to continuously expand their knowledge. Based on the existing experience in developing kindergarten-based curriculum resources, teachers should enhance their ability to deeply explore Minnan puppet kindergarten-based curriculum resources. Additionally, when organizing Minnan puppet performance games, teachers should also emphasize the importance of reflection, continuously reviewing various game stages and children's existing experience, and strive to improve the suitability, innovation, continuity, and integration of Minnan puppet performance games in analysis and summary to gradually enhance their professional competence.

Strengthen teachers' kindergarten-based teaching and research: The deep exploration of Minnan puppet art in Minnan puppet performance games requires teachers of the teaching and research team to discuss together and make the content of teaching and research specific. For example, how to retain Minnan local cultural symbols on Minnan puppet props? How to use Minnan dialects in Minnan puppet performance games? What kind of theme should be chosen to embody the spiritual connotation of traditional Chinese culture and be close to children's existing life experience? Effective kindergarten-based teaching and research activities can exercise and improve the overall ability of the teacher team, and a high-quality teacher team can promote the continuous in-depth development of kindergarten-based teaching and research.

5.3. Parents

The family is the best place to shape a person, and whether traditional culture can be integrated into family education has a profound impact on individual growth and the inheritance and development of traditional culture. The family should serve as the frontier for inheriting and developing traditional culture and shoulder the task

of transmitting traditional culture. On the one hand, teachers should help parents recognize the importance and possibility of conducting Minnan puppet art education in the family and guide parents to step out of the misconception of traditional concepts and increase their enthusiasm for participating in family traditional culture education. On the other hand, parents can use the Internet to search for information and visit folk museums to deepen their understanding of Minnan puppet culture and create a good material and psychological environment for the family to conduct Minnan puppet performance games.

6. Conclusion

Implementing Minnan puppet performance games in preschool education has a profound impact on children's comprehensive development, teachers' professional growth, and the inheritance of traditional culture. Universities in the Minnan region, inheritors of the intangible cultural heritage of Minnan puppet art, kindergartens, and parents need to cooperate fully to continue exploring effective strategies for carrying out Minnan puppet performance games in kindergartens, in order to realize the continuous development of Minnan puppet art in preschool education.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Reference

- [1] Duan J, 2017, Research on the Cultural Adaptability of Kindergarten Curricula in Western Regions from the Perspective of Regional Culture. *Education Modernization*, 2017(30): 207.
- [2] Hao JY, 2014, Development of Local Resources and Construction of Kindergarten-Based Curricula. *Research on Preschool Education*, 2014(5): 61.
- [3] Peng Q, 2018. On Children's Cultural Identity and Promotion Strategies. *Early Childhood Education*, 2018(Z3): 27.

Publisher's note

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.