

# *Research on the Path of Life Education in Primary Schools Based on Embodied Cognition Theory*

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**Abstract:** In recent years, with the rapid development of society and the popularization of information technology, children's activities have undergone significant changes. However, this change has also brought about a series of problems, such as reduced physical fitness and an increase in mental health problems. Embodied Cognition Theory, as an emerging cognitive theory, emphasizes the central role of the body in the cognitive process and believes that cognition is formed through body experience and activities. This theory provides new perspectives and methods in the field of education, especially in life education. Life education aims to help students understand life, understand the meaning and value of life, and cultivate attitudes and behaviors that respect and love life. Introducing embodied cognition theory into primary school life education will help design educational paths that are more in line with children's physical and mental development characteristics and improve educational effects.

## **1. The Connotation of Embodied Cognition Theory**

The theory of embodied cognition can be traced back to the body phenomenology research of French philosopher Merleau-Ponty in the 1950s. He opposed mind-body dualism and advocated that the body is the core of cognition. In the 1970s, psychologist Pavlov further developed the theory of embodied cognition and proposed the concept of "embodied cognition", believing that cognition is based on the body's perception and movement system. Subsequently, Lakoff, Johnson and others confirmed the existence of embodied cognition through a large number of experiments, making it gradually become an important branch of cognitive science.

Embodied cognition theory believes that human cognitive processes not only rely on the brain, but also require the participation of the whole body. Cognition is formed through physical experience and activities, and different states of the body will affect individual cognitive abilities

and results. For example, the concept of "metaphor" in embodied cognition theory points out that the understanding of abstract concepts is often based on concrete physical experience. In addition, this theory also emphasizes the role of the environment in the cognitive process and believes that cognition is the result of the interaction between the individual and the environment [1].

Embodied cognition theory is intrinsically linked to life education. The goal of life education is to help students understand life and understand the meaning and value of life. The embodied cognition theory emphasizes the importance of the body in cognition and believes that cognition is formed through physical experience and activities. This is highly consistent with the concept of life education. In life education, through specific experiential activities, such as observing the growth process of animals and plants, participating in caring for small animals, etc., students can more intuitively feel the wonder and preciousness of life, thus stimulating their awe of life. Therefore, embodied cognition theory provides important theoretical support and practical guidance for life education.

## 2. The Goals and Content of Life Education in Primary Schools

Life education in primary schools aims to help students understand life, understand the meaning and value of life, and cultivate attitudes and behaviors that respect and love life. Its specific contents include the following aspects [2]:

(1) Understand life: Through teaching activities, students can understand the basic characteristics and life cycle of life, and realize the diversity and uniqueness of life.

(2) Respect life: Cultivate students' reverence for life, learn to care for others and other living things, and establish correct values and a sense of social responsibility.

(3) Self-protection: Teach students basic safety knowledge and self-rescue skills to improve their safety awareness and ability to respond to emergencies.

(4) Mental health: Pay attention to the mental health of students, help them establish a positive attitude, and learn to face setbacks and difficulties.

## 3. Analysis of the Current Situation of Life Education in Primary Schools

After investigating the situation of the life education in primary school students in Wuhan, we obtained the following series of data: As show in figure 1-4.

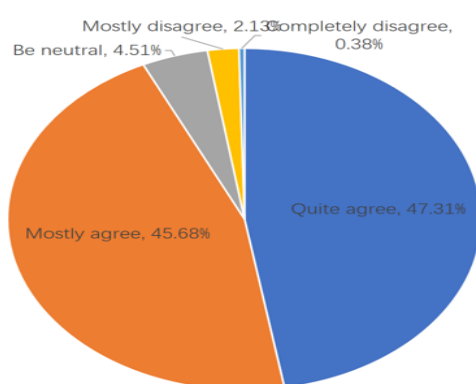


Figure 1. Attitude towards the necessity of life education

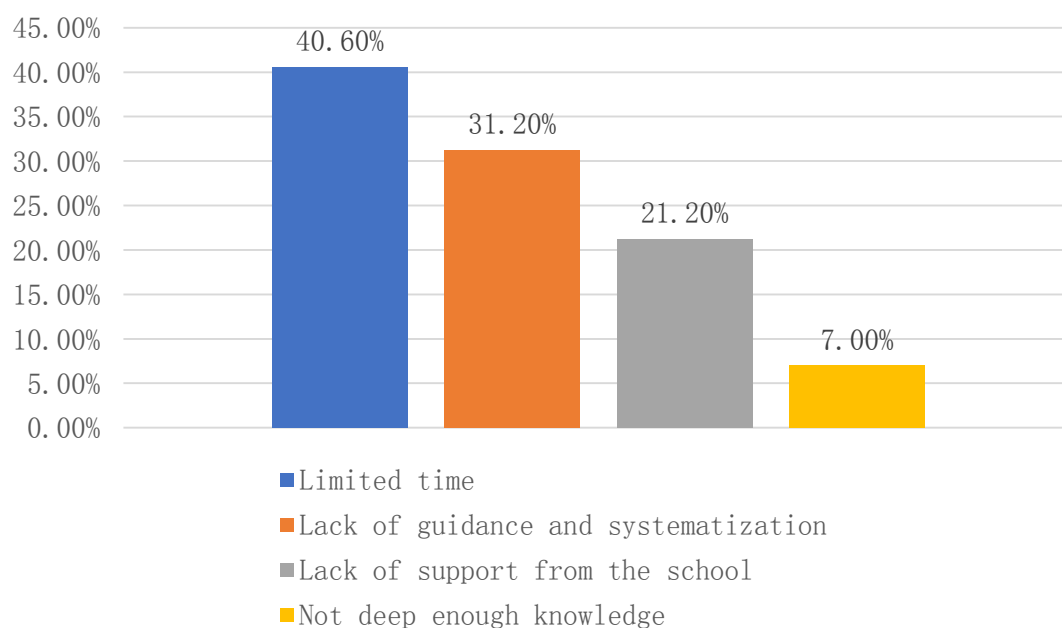


Figure 2. The difficulties that you encountered in the process of life education

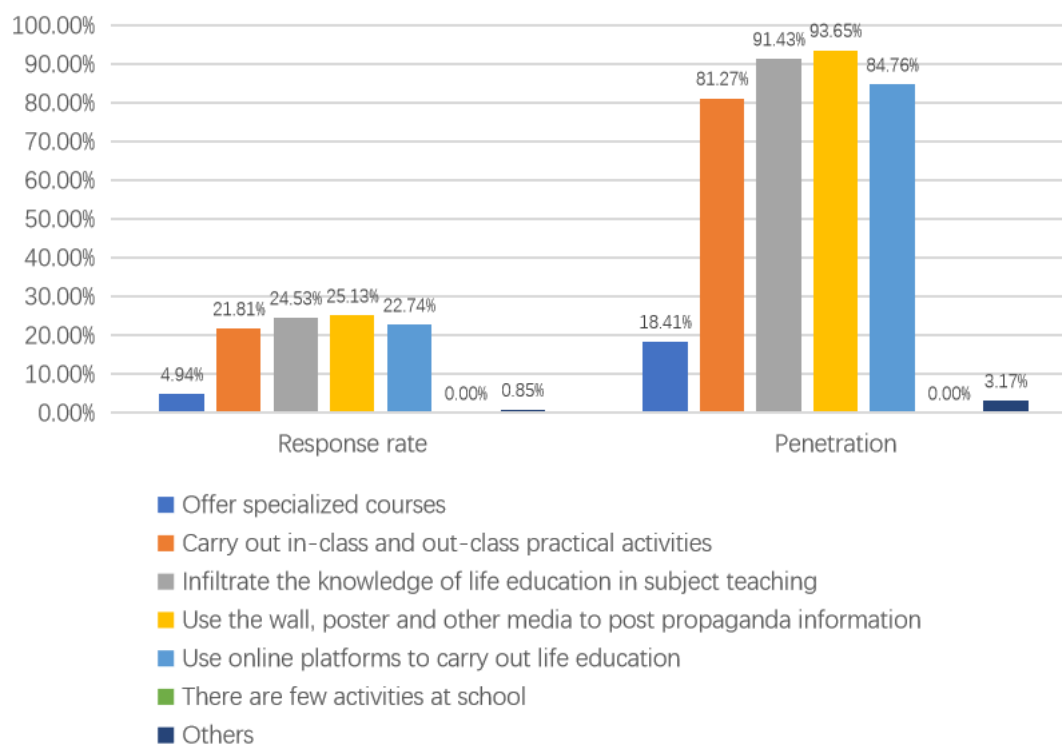


Figure 3. The forms of life education are implemented in schools

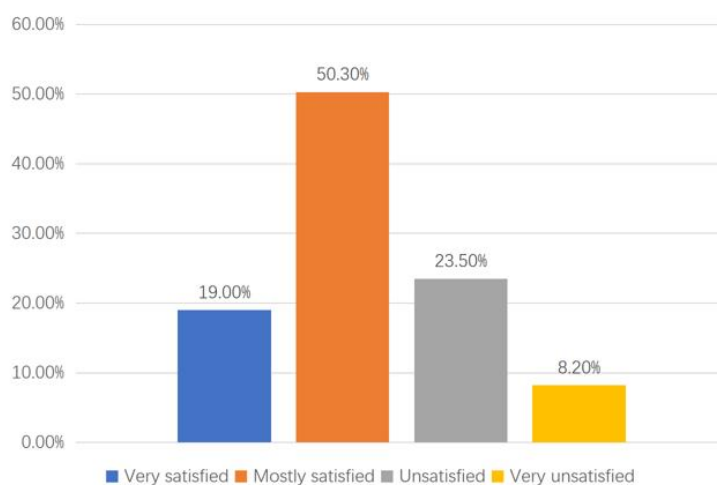


Figure 4. Satisfaction with the implementation of life education in the schools

#### 4. Based on the Theory of Embodied Cognition, Carry out Life Education Suitable for the Age Characteristics of Primary School Students

Embodied cognition theory emphasizes the importance of the body in the cognitive process and believes that cognition is formed through body experiences and activities. This theory provides new paths and methods for primary school life education: (1) Situation creation: By creating situations close to students' lives, students can experience and understand the meaning and value of life in actual situations. (2) Physical involvement: Design various hands-on activities to allow students to learn and master knowledge in personal practice, and enhance their hands-on ability and problem-solving ability [3]. (3) Interaction: Encourage cooperative learning and communication among students, enhance mutual understanding and trust through collective activities, and cultivate team spirit. (4) Perceptual feedback: Give students timely feedback to help them adjust their behaviors and attitudes and develop good self-awareness and self-management abilities [4].

To carry out life education suitable for the age characteristics of primary school students, it needs to be carried out from the following aspects:

(1) Change traditional thinking and pay attention to the life and death education of primary and secondary school students. "The sky has unforeseen circumstances, and people have misfortunes and blessings." Human life is fragile. In the process of growth, people will inevitably face the death of relatives or friends due to birth, old age, illness, death, natural disasters, accidents, etc., and will experience the pain of losing relatives and friends. This pain is not It can be eliminated in a short time, but in serious cases it can give people a sense of despair [5]. The United States attaches great importance to death education for children, helping them to correctly understand death, face death, get out of the shadow of pain, and embark on a healthy path.

Due to the influence of traditional culture, death is regarded as a taboo in our country, and knowledge about death is rarely taught to children. Even some adults cannot accurately grasp some knowledge related to death. At present, only Liaoning City, Shanghai City and other regions and schools in mainland my country have attempted death education, but they are only in their infancy. After experiencing a series of natural and man-made disasters such as the epidemic in recent years, the country should assume its educational responsibilities, pay attention to death education, promote

death education to primary and secondary school campuses and classrooms, strengthen teacher construction, curriculum and content planning in this area, and strengthen Policy intervention uses economic, legal, administrative and other means to promote the promotion of death education.

(2) Understand the physical and mental development characteristics of primary school students and achieve life education that teaches students in accordance with their aptitude. The object of education is people. Only by having a thorough understanding of primary school students' cognitive level of life and death can the role of education be maximized. Children's cognition of death is divided into three stages: According to a 1948 Hungarian psychologist Maria Nike's investigation of children of different ages' cognition of life and death, the primary school stage belongs to the second and third stages. The second stage is between the ages of 5 and 9. Children at this stage have understood the true meaning of death, that is, death means the end of life. But they may not know that this is something that happens to everyone, especially themselves. What they care about is someone else's death. Where did he go? What else could he become? Why should he die? And because of the death of others, they will feel fear and uneasiness, especially after the death of a loved one. The third stage is between the ages of 9 and 12. Children at this stage already know that death is inevitable in life and happens to everyone, including the fact that they will die one day. They have begun to no longer regard death as an external force, but as an inevitable phenomenon inherent in life. People will slowly grow old, get sick, and eventually die. Research shows that for some children, death is associated with darkness, giving it a mystical quality. At this time, children also begin to take the initiative to avoid death. For example, when they are sick, they will take the initiative to take medicine, and even bear the pain and ask for injections. They will cooperate with their parents in proactive treatment. They will also do their best to avoid the dangers that they can realize in their living environment [6]. Danger. Since children already understand the meaning of death to a greater or lesser extent, parents do not need to be secretive when their children ask about death-related matters. The problem at this stage is how parents can convey the facts of death to their children without harming them. Regarding this, Kubler-Ross believes that some specific concepts of death can be taught to primary school students (7 to 13 years old). Because children of this age have some concept of death, parents can tell them, "This person is dead, his life is gone, his heart is no longer beating, and he is no longer breathing."

How to explain death to a child without hurting him and telling him the truth? Teacher Sun from the Hangzhou Institute of Educational Sciences made a suggestion: start with small animals and life. Teacher Sun said: "Life and death are too complex concepts for primary school students, and they are too scientific to understand. Instead, we can start with small animals, tell them to love small animals, and tell them about the growth conditions of small animals. At the same time, tell them to love life. This is the most important life education. From these perspectives, I think the children will be more accepting and they can also get the correct life education. "So the best principle for explaining death to primary school students is: Tell your children clearly and clearly the facts. Children are quite curious about the issue of death and are interested in learning more about it. However, death has a great influence on the child's psychological or character development, so parents must be cautious when dealing with this issue [7]. The appropriate approach is not to deliberately avoid talking about death in life, nor to suppress the child's grief, allowing the child to naturally express frustration, anger, tears, guilt, resistance and other complexes. Do not prohibit children from doubting, crying, asking questions about death, or from children raising different opinions and questions. Parents respect their children's different views on the meaning of death and life, and do not give children various wrong impressions about death or use fairy tale-like words to express their views on death. That kind of half-truth to explain death.

(3) Scientifically plan the content of life education and improve the curriculum of life education. Death education in primary and secondary schools in the United States has scientific and complete

content. According to these contents and children's physical and mental development characteristics, formal death education courses have been set up, and various forms of educational activities have been actively carried out as assistance. Formal education courses can help teach children systematic, coherent, and complete knowledge about death. Various educational activities can integrate death education into children's daily life, and help children learn about death in a subtle and subtle way. Learn the knowledge of death, understand the essence of life and death education, understand life and death from different angles and levels, and internalize it into your own knowledge system.

At present, our country has established a complete curriculum and content system. Coupled with the constraints of manpower, material resources, and financial resources, it is difficult to develop death education as an independent and formal subject course. The only way is to combine life education with existing formal courses and integrate and penetrate life and death education into it [8]. However, due to the influence of my country's traditional culture and the pressure to enter higher education, it is still difficult to carry out life and death education in this way. From a long-term and effective perspective, our country should establish a complete life and death education system, plan the content of scientific life and death education, and establish formal and independent life and death education courses.

(4) Combined with the national conditions of the country, reasonably learn from the death education models and methods of Western countries. The jade from other mountains can attack rocks. Since life and death education started late in our country and is still in its infancy, it is necessary to reasonably learn from foreign education models and methods in order to avoid misunderstandings during disaster implementation. In primary and secondary schools in the United States, the implementation mode of life and death education can be roughly divided into two types: one is cognitive-informational (didactic): teachers are the main ones, introducing to students the knowledge presented in articles, materials, books or multimedia, etc. The second is personal-emotional (experiential): mainly students, using various experience and emotion sharing methods to explore various emotions and feelings of death and dying.

There are various specific methods for implementing life and death education in primary and secondary schools in the United States. The main ones are: first, the knowledge teaching method, where teachers use a variety of methods to systematically teach students about life and death knowledge; second, the reading appreciation method, which guides students to read and appreciate through various methods. Audiovisual media (such as slides, videos, music, literature, artistic works, newspapers, magazines, etc.) Contents related to life and death are presented, and then discussed and shared. The methods include group discussions in the form of teachers' questions and answers and group discussions among students on related topics; third, simulated imagination methods, including taking turns to act out dramas and situations. Simulation imagination, role playing and other methods; fourth, visit experience method, visit hospitals, nurseries, funeral parlors, funeral wards and other places related to life, old age, illness and death, and take care of dying patients. In addition, there are random teaching methods that use teachable opportunities when death-related events occur, and self-education methods in which students use designated or self-determined assignments to collect, organize, and analyze documents to acquire relevant knowledge.

(5) Implement integrated teaching. To naturally integrate the knowledge of life and death into the relevant units of each subject, this integrated teaching requires careful overall planning in advance and the tacit cooperation of the teachers. Although it is more laborious, it is a very effective teaching method. For example, the classroom can discuss how long the lives of various animals and plants are. One school uses the life course of wheat to conduct "death education." In the hands of a child, a bush of wheat sprouts, grows, bears ears, and withers. When the wheat withers away, the children try to prolong their life by watering and fertilizing it. They failed, but they basically realized that death is an inevitable process. When it comes, we are unable to resist it, so we should

not be too obsessed with the death of our loved ones, but should continue to live our lives and live strong. . Another example is that a teacher uses dialogue among leaves to teach about life and death [9]. Autumn is here, and a yellow leaf asks Grandpa Tree if it can float to the ground without leaving the top of the tree. Grandpa Tree pointed at the seemingly absent "leaf buds" and said that they will grow up. It can be seen that the departure of the old leaf is to make way for the new leaf. Therefore, in a sense, death is a very appropriate thing. Life and death education can also be integrated into humanities teaching. For example, you can use the deeds of heroes such as Wen Tianxiang, Qiu Jin, Tan Sitong, Li Dazhao, Qu Qiubai, Dong Cunrui, Liu Hulan, etc. to educate children about righteousness. Although life is precious, in the face of the interests of the country and the people, everyone must have the courage to sacrifice and regard death as a noble spirit. For children, this is essential and correct life education [10].

(6) Strengthen theoretical research and theoretical guidance on death education. Theoretical research on death education abroad has reached a high level. Although my country has received attention, due to its late start, there is not much theoretical research in this area. Most of them explore the existence and existence of death and life from the perspectives of biology, medicine, etc. The significance and value of death education, or direct reference to the experience of death education in foreign countries and Hong Kong and Taiwan, has not formed its own characteristic theory. There are still many deficiencies in the field of understanding and practice. There is still a need for the goals, content, methods, teaching materials and teaching methods of death education. Conduct comprehensive exploration in theory and practice.

The implementation of death education in primary and secondary schools in our country is still in the preliminary conception and trial stage, and there are still many specific problems that need further research and solution. Therefore, we should promote death education slowly and cautiously and explore a primary school life education system suitable for our country's national conditions.

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