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# Research on the Implementation Strategy of Kindergarten Music Teaching from the Perspective of Game

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**Abstract:** Curriculum gamification serves as the core orientation of kindergarten education, with its child-centered approach and play-based methodology aligning perfectly with the aesthetic, experiential, and engaging nature of music education in early childhood. This study examines the current challenges in kindergarten music teaching that deviate from gamification principles, grounded in the conceptual framework and requirements of curriculum gamification. By integrating the physical and cognitive development patterns of 3-6-year-old children with the principles of music learning, the research analyzes existing issues. From five dimensions—teaching objectives, content design, implementation pathways, evaluation methods, and environmental setup—the paper explores concrete strategies for implementing curriculum gamification in music education. These strategies enable children to discover the beauty of music and enhance their musical literacy through playful experiences, ultimately achieving an organic integration of music education with the holistic development of young learners.

**Keywords:** Gamification of curriculum; Kindergarten; Music education; Implementation strategies; Early childhood development

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## 1. Introduction

The “Guidelines for Kindergarten Education (Trial)” explicitly states that “kindergarten education should take play as its fundamental activity, embedding education within all activities.” The gamification of curricula has become the core direction of kindergarten education reform, aiming to enable children to acquire knowledge, develop abilities, and cultivate emotions through autonomous, free, and enjoyable play experiences. As a vital component of aesthetic education in kindergartens, music serves as a crucial medium for children to express emotions and explore the world. Given children’s concrete and intuitive thinking patterns, music education in kindergartens cannot be conducted independently without incorporating gamified approaches<sup>[1]</sup>.

Current music education in some kindergartens still exhibits tendencies of “knowledgeization” and “skillification,”

reducing music instruction to mechanical song teaching and rhythm drills while neglecting the role of play as a medium and the central position of children. This approach often leads to a loss of interest in music learning among young learners. To address this, this paper adopts a gamified curriculum perspective to explore teaching strategies tailored to children's cognitive development. By making play the core of music education, we aim to help children learn through play and gain insights through enjoyment, thereby fully realizing the aesthetic and educational value of music education.

## **2. Theoretical basis and practical significance of integrating curriculum gamification with kindergarten music teaching**

### **2.1. Theoretical basis**

Piaget's theory of cognitive development posits that children aged 3-6 are in the preoperational stage, where their thinking is firmly grounded in concrete objects and driven by a strong play instinct. Play serves as a vital pathway for cognitive development in young children, providing a psychological foundation for integrating gamified curricula with music education. Froebel's play theory emphasizes that play is an innate and spontaneous expression of children's inner nature. Education should align with children's natural inclinations, using play to unlock their latent potential. This requires kindergarten music education to abandon rigid teaching methods and instead employ play as a vehicle to meet children's learning needs <sup>[2]</sup>.

Meanwhile, the theory of preschool children's music education emphasizes that the essence of young children's music learning lies in experience and expression, rather than professional musical skill training. The goal of music education should focus on cultivating children's musical perception, aesthetic appreciation, and expressive desire. Gamified teaching methods are the optimal approach to achieve this objective, allowing children to naturally experience and express music through stress-free play.

### **2.2. Practical significance**

The integration of gamified learning into kindergarten music education serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it sparks children's interest in music by transforming abstract melodies and rhythms into engaging game experiences, shifting their approach from passive learning to active participation. Through these fun activities, children accumulate musical knowledge while developing essential skills. Secondly, it fosters holistic development. As gamified music activities are typically group-based and interactive, children not only enhance their musical literacy but also cultivate teamwork, communication, imagination, and creativity—promoting the synergistic growth of musical ability and social skills. Moreover, these playful experiences provide emotional fulfillment, alleviate learning anxiety, and strengthen self-confidence and self-esteem, laying a solid psychological foundation for lifelong learning and development <sup>[3]</sup>.

## **3. Existing problems in kindergarten music teaching from the perspective of curriculum gamification**

### **3.1. Utilitarian teaching objectives deviate from the essence of gamified education**

Some educators overemphasize the mastery of musical skills in music education, setting objectives like "having children learn to sing a specific song" or "mastering a particular rhythm type," while neglecting the core educational values of "experience, exploration, and expression" emphasized in gamified curricula. This utilitarian approach traps music teaching in the trap of "skill training," reducing games to mere tools for skill acquisition rather than platforms for children's self-directed learning. As a result, children struggle to derive emotional fulfillment or develop their abilities through musical activities.

### **3.2. Rigid teaching content with insufficient gamification design**

Current music education in kindergartens predominantly focuses on standardized nursery rhymes and basic percussion rhythms, with content selection lacking both engagement and depth. Teachers often fail to gamify lessons, instead resorting to direct instruction. For example, song teaching involves rote recitation of lyrics without contextualizing them as game scenarios, while rhythm drills require mechanical imitation of percussion without designing them as interactive challenges. This rigid approach and lack of creative adaptation disconnect music education from play, ultimately failing to meet children's needs for gamified learning experiences <sup>[4]</sup>.

### **3.3. The implementation of teaching is formalized, and the gamified experience is superficial**

While some teachers incorporate games into music education, these are often superficially designed games that fail to engage young children as active participants. For example, in music appreciation sessions, simple "music-to-action" games are implemented with pre-set movements by teachers, leaving little room for children's self-expression. Similarly, in instrumental activities, teacher-led "instrument games" restrict children's exploration of instrument timbres and playing techniques. Such token gamification keeps children in a passive role, depriving them of authentic play experiences and significantly diminishing the effectiveness of music education.

### **3.4. Monotonous teaching evaluation, neglecting process performance in gamification**

Current music education assessments in kindergartens predominantly rely on outcome-based evaluations, where teachers focus solely on whether children complete tasks like singing songs or rhythm percussion, while neglecting the process-oriented evaluation emphasized by gamified curricula. The assessment content concentrates on musical skills, overlooking children's engagement, exploratory curiosity, collaborative abilities, and expressive skills during gamified music activities. The evaluation methods are predominantly teacher-centered, lacking self-assessment, peer evaluation, and process observation records. Such a singular evaluation approach fails to comprehensively reflect children's musical learning status and provides no effective basis for optimizing gamified music teaching <sup>[5]</sup>.

### **3.5. The teaching environment is monotonous and lacks game-based support conditions**

A well-designed gamified environment is essential for effective music education, yet many kindergartens fall short in this regard. First, physical constraints limit activities to standard classrooms, with no dedicated music play areas that hinder children's free movement and group interaction. Second, materials are often limited to fixed percussion instruments and teaching aids, lacking engaging, age-appropriate games. Moreover, these materials lack an age-specific tiered design to meet children's exploratory needs. Lastly, the psychological environment lacks inclusivity, as some teachers over-intervene in children's individualized play, discouraging bold exploration and free expression.

## **4. Implementation strategies of music teaching in kindergartens from the perspective of curriculum gamification**

### **4.1. Anchoring game-based educational objectives to achieve dual integration of "skills" and "experiences"**

Music teaching from the perspective of game-based curriculum should abandon utilitarian goal setting, establish a game-based teaching goal system of "experience first, skill second", and combine the promotion of music literacy with children's emotional experience and ability development.

For younger preschoolers, the program emphasizes musical perception and play-based learning, enabling children to explore pitch variations, dynamics, and tempo through engaging music games while developing listening skills and enjoying the process. Middle-grade children focus on musical expression and exploratory play, encouraging them to articulate their understanding through body language, instruments, and verbal communication, while experimenting with

independent gameplay. Older preschoolers engage in collaborative music creation and group play, where they compose simple rhythms and adapt lyrics during collective activities, fostering teamwork and independent creativity.

The core of gamification should be emphasized in all age groups, allowing young children to naturally accumulate musical experience through stress-free play, avoiding the sole focus on musical skills as the teaching objective.

#### **4.2. Developing game-based teaching content to achieve diverse integration of “classics” and “life”**

The teaching content is the core of gamified music teaching. Teachers should combine the age characteristics, life experience and music interest of children to screen and transform the music teaching content, and realize the multi-integration of classical music content and life content, so that the content is closer to children and more gamified.

The program features three key approaches: First, transforming classic content into gamified experiences by converting traditional nursery rhymes, ethnic melodies, and simple world-famous tunes into children’s favorite games. For example, “Little Stars” becomes a “Starry Night” physical game, “Happy Sheep” turns into a “Dragon and Lion Dance” folk music game, and “Pulling the Radish” evolves into a collaborative musical performance game. Second, exploring everyday life through musical play by adapting children’s daily routines and objects into game-based activities. For instance, rhythm games are designed around “washing hands, eating, and walking,” while sound imitation games use “cars, birds, and raindrops” to help children discover “music in every corner of life.” Third, implementing tiered content design tailored to children’s developmental stages. In rhythm games, younger classes play “Clapping Rhythm Imitation,” middle classes engage in “Instrumental Rhythm Percussion,” and older classes create “Self-Composed Rhythms,” ensuring every child gains a sense of achievement through play.

#### **4.3. Innovating game-based implementation approaches to create an autonomous, interactive, and creative teaching process**

The core of gamification in curriculum is to make children the main body of activities. Teachers need to change their teaching role from “transmitter” to “game guide, supporter and collaborator”, innovate the implementation path of gamification, and create a “self-directed, interactive and creative” music teaching process, so that children can learn through playing and understand through fun.

- (1) Situational Game-Based Instruction: By integrating musical content, educators create engaging, life-related game scenarios that immerse young children in musical activities. For example, when playing “Rhapsody in the Forest,” a “Forest Adventure” game scenario can be designed, where children act as little animals and follow the music’s rhythm through games like “Forest Stroll” and “Animal Party,” experiencing the melody and artistic conception of the music through these immersive experiences.
- (2) Exploratory Game-Based Learning: Provide children with diverse musical materials to encourage self-directed exploration. For example, in instrument activities, introduce everyday items like bell drums, sand hammers, wooden fish, mineral water bottles, paper cups, and bamboo clappers. Let children freely touch, strike, and explore the unique timbres of these materials through games such as “Guess the Instrument” and “Timbre Challenge,” fostering their musical exploration skills.
- (3) Collaborative Game-Based Music Education: Through designing group-oriented and interactive musical games, this approach helps preschoolers develop their musical skills and social competencies. Activities like “Rhythm Relay,” “Group Percussion,” and “Musical Fairy Tale Performances” encourage children to work in teams, divide tasks, and complete challenges together, allowing them to experience the collective magic of music through cooperative play.
- (4) Creative Game-Based Instruction: Design open-ended and creative music games to encourage children’s personalized expression. Activities such as “Lyric Adaptation,” “Rhythm Innovation,” and “Freeform Musical Movement Show” allow children to adapt and express musical content based on their life experiences and imagination, fostering their musical creativity.

#### **4.4. Establishing a gamified evaluation system with a focus on process and developmental assessment**

The music teaching evaluation from the perspective of game-based curriculum should abandon the single mode of “result-oriented evaluation”, construct a game-based evaluation system with “process-oriented evaluation” and “development-oriented evaluation” as the core, reflect the children’s music learning status comprehensively and objectively, and provide the basis for teaching optimization.

In terms of evaluation criteria, the assessment transcends the limitations of musical skills by incorporating five dimensions of game engagement: “exploration initiative,” “creative expression,” “cooperative coordination,” and “emotional experience.” It focuses on children’s process-oriented performance in gamified music activities, such as their active participation in musical games, bold exploration of musical materials, and personalized musical expression.

The evaluation system integrates four approaches: (1) Teacher-guided process observation: Educators document children’s musical play performance through written notes, photos, or videos to create personalized growth portfolios. (2) Self-assessment: Children evaluate their experiences using simple language, gestures, or drawings (e.g., “I loved today’s music game” or “I can play the bell drum now”). (3) Peer evaluation: Children share and assess each other’s play after activities, identifying strengths to develop musical appreciation. (4) Home-school collaboration: Parent groups and parent-child music play sessions help parents understand children’s home-based musical play performance, ensuring seamless integration of home and school evaluations.

In the application of evaluation results, the evaluation results are used as an important basis for optimizing gamified music teaching. For the problems found in the evaluation, such as inappropriate difficulty of the game, lack of interest in the content, low participation of children, etc., the teaching content is adjusted and the game design is optimized in time, so that the evaluation can truly serve the children’s music development and the continuous improvement of teaching.

#### **4.5. Creating a gamified learning environment with dual support of physical and psychological elements**

Music teaching from the perspective of game-based curriculum requires creating a suitable game-based teaching environment, providing support for children’s music game activities from both physical and psychological aspects, and allowing children to boldly explore and freely express themselves in a free, relaxed, and enjoyable environment.

To create a physical environment conducive to musical play, three key measures are implemented: First, establish a dedicated music playroom with functional zones including listening, performance, and creative areas, ensuring ample space for children to engage in musical activities and express themselves freely. Second, diversify gamified musical materials by combining standardized instruments with everyday, fun-filled items, tailored to children’s age groups and regularly updated to maintain their curiosity. Third, cultivate an immersive atmosphere by displaying music charts, setting up themed walls, and hanging playful teaching aids, immersing children in a vibrant musical environment.

In creating a supportive psychological environment, teachers should embrace the child-centered educational philosophy, respecting children’s individuality in expression and play choices. They should wholeheartedly affirm and encourage children’s bold explorations and free expression, even when their expressions don’t meet adult expectations, without arbitrary criticism. Meanwhile, teachers should guide children to respect and accommodate each other in musical play, fostering a relaxed, harmonious, and free collective atmosphere where children feel confident to express themselves, enjoy exploring, and play to their heart’s content.

### **5. Conclusion**

From the perspective of gamified curriculum, kindergarten music education represents a reimagining of traditional pedagogical approaches. At its core, it seeks to reconnect with children’s innate musicality and the fundamental purpose of music education. By establishing play as the cornerstone of instruction, this methodology enables young learners to discover musical beauty, express emotional resonance, and cultivate creative engagement through autonomous, joyful

musical experiences. Rather than abandoning formal music training, it allows musical knowledge and skills to organically develop through playful immersion, ultimately realizing the educational philosophy of “learning through play and teaching through play.”

In kindergarten music education, teachers should consistently uphold the core philosophy of gamified learning, moving beyond utilitarian and formalistic approaches. By focusing on five key areas—defining educational goals through play, developing engaging content, innovating implementation methods, establishing assessment systems, and creating supportive environments—they can explore strategies that align with children’s developmental needs. This approach enables children to enjoy music through play, enhance their skills, and nurture emotional growth, ultimately making music education a vital component of aesthetic education that fosters their holistic, harmonious, and healthy development.

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## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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