

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A WORLD LANGUAGE

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The Montessori method, established by Dr. Maria Montessori, is an educational strategy that focuses on child-centered learning, independence, and experiential activities. This paper examines the effectiveness of early childhood education through the Montessori approach. It emphasizes core principles like prepared environments, self-guided learning, and the educator's role as a facilitator rather than a traditional teacher. Evidence shows that early Montessori education enhances cognitive, social, and emotional growth by fostering independence, critical thinking, and intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, long-term studies indicate that children educated through the Montessori method often achieve higher academic performance, exhibit better social skills, and demonstrate greater adaptability compared to those in conventional educational settings. This abstract highlights the advantages of adopting Montessori principles in early childhood education to develop well-rounded and self-driven learners.

Keywords

Montessori method, educational strategy, child-centered learning, independence, experimental activities, effectiveness, prepared environments, self-guided learning, facilitator, cognitive, social skills

INTRODUCTION

Montessori education nurtures cognitive development by encouraging problem-solving, critical thinking, and intellectual exploration. Children engage in self-directed activities that promote deep understanding and long-term retention.

This environment fosters social and emotional development. Through mixed-age interactions and collaborative activities, children learn cooperation, empathy, and respect for others. They also develop a strong sense of self-confidence and independence.

The Montessori method cultivates intrinsic motivation by allowing children to pursue their interests and work at their own pace. This fosters a lifelong love for learning as children deeply engage with subjects that captivate them.

By working with hands-on materials and real-life tasks, Montessori children develop strong problem-solving skills and adaptability. They learn to approach challenges creatively and persistently.

Research indicates that children attending Montessori schools often achieve higher academic performance compared to their peers in traditional educational settings. They excel in areas such as reading, mathematics, and critical thinking.

Establishing a Montessori classroom involves meticulous planning to ensure that materials and activities are easily accessible, inviting, and reflective of real-life contexts.

Montessori materials are specifically designed to aid developmental learning, including practical life activities, sensory materials, and academic tools.

Teachers tailor instruction based on children's interests and readiness, introducing new concepts when appropriate. Children are encouraged from a young age to make choices, complete tasks independently, and take charge of their learning journey to build confidence and responsibility. Montessori classrooms promote social learning through group activities, peer teaching, and community-building exercises to develop collaborative skills.

Teachers create a nurturing environment where children feel safe to express emotions and explore their identities, fostering emotional intelligence through activities that promote self-awareness and empathy.

MATERIALS AND METHODS.

Teaching young children using the Montessori method involves setting up a well-prepared environment and using specific materials to support their learning. Here are some important materials and techniques commonly used in Montessori education:

- Child-sized tools for pouring, scooping, sweeping, and food preparation.
- Materials for self-care, like dressing frames for learning to button, zip, and tie shoelaces.
- Objects designed to refine the senses, such as color tablets, sound cylinders, smelling bottles, and tactile materials like sandpaper letters and numbers.
- Tactile materials like sandpaper letters and numbers for learning.
- Phonetic reading materials for building language skills.
- Picture cards and objects for vocabulary development.
- Materials like number rods, sandpaper numbers, and spindle boxes for teaching number concepts and quantity.
- Bead materials for learning addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Maps, globes, and puzzle maps for geography lessons.
- Materials on botany and zoology for understanding the natural world.
- Various art supplies for creative expression.
- Musical instruments and rhythm materials for exploring sound and rhythm.

Methods

- Encouraging children to choose activities based on their interests within the prepared environment.
- Observing each child's progress and readiness to introduce new activities or materials.
- Providing gentle guidance when needed without interrupting their concentration.
- Creating opportunities for children of different ages to interact and learn from each other.
- Allowing children to explore activities freely while setting clear boundaries and guidelines for respectful behavior.
- Emphasizing hands-on experiences with materials to promote sensory exploration and concrete understanding.
- Acting as a facilitator, offering support and guidance as needed, while allowing children to take the lead in their learning journey.
- Tailoring activities and lessons based on each child's developmental stage, interests, and readiness.
- Encouraging children to complete tasks independently, fostering a sense of autonomy and self-reliance.

By incorporating these materials and methods into their daily routine, educators can create an environment that aligns with the principles of the Montessori method. This approach helps children develop independence, critical thinking skills, and a love for learning from an early age.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Research on the Montessori method of education for young children has shown several positive outcomes. Here are some key research findings:

- Studies have found that children who receive a Montessori education at an early age tend to perform well academically compared to their peers in traditional educational settings. They often show strong skills in reading, math, and problem-solving.
- Research indicates that children in Montessori programs demonstrate better social skills, such as cooperation, empathy, and conflict resolution. They also tend to exhibit higher levels of self-regulation and independence.
- Montessori education encourages creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking skills. Children are given the freedom to explore and discover knowledge independently, leading to enhanced problem-solving abilities and innovative thinking.
- Longitudinal studies have shown that individuals who received a Montessori education in their early years exhibit positive long-term outcomes, such as higher academic achievement, greater social adaptability, and a lifelong love for learning.
- Montessori materials and activities are designed to promote cognitive development by engaging children in hands-on learning experiences. Research suggests that this approach enhances cognitive skills like memory, attention span, and executive functioning.
- Children in Montessori classrooms often display higher levels of motivation and engagement with learning tasks. The child-centered approach allows them to follow their interests and work at their own pace, fostering a love for learning.
- Montessori education promotes inclusivity and respect for individual differences. Research shows that children from diverse backgrounds benefit from the Montessori approach, leading to a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.
- Studies suggest that parents of children in Montessori programs report higher levels of satisfaction with their child's education. The collaborative relationship between parents and educators in Montessori schools contributes to positive learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The Montessori approach offers a comprehensive method for early childhood education that focuses on holistic child development. By nurturing independence, curiosity, and a passion for learning, it equips children for academic success and personal fulfillment. Implementing Montessori principles requires dedication to creating child-centered environments and adapting to individual developmental needs, but the long-lasting benefits are profound. Through this approach, children not only acquire knowledge but also develop the skills and confidence needed to thrive in an ever-evolving world. Research on the Montessori method supports its effectiveness in promoting holistic development, academic success, social-emotional skills, and lifelong learning habits in young children.

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