

PEDAGOGICAL CONDITIONS FOR DEVELOPING DILIGENCE IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN BY INTRODUCING THEM TO THE ADULT WORLD

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Abstract: This study investigates the pedagogical conditions that facilitate the development of diligence in preschool children through exposure to elements of the adult world. Diligence, defined as the ability to sustain effort, complete tasks, and demonstrate persistence, is a critical factor in early childhood development, influencing cognitive, social, and emotional growth. The study emphasizes theoretical frameworks such as Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, Erikson's psychosocial stages, and self-determination theory, which highlight the importance of guided participation, autonomy, and intrinsic motivation. Empirical evidence suggests that structured, age-appropriate adult-like activities, scaffolded guidance, and consistent feedback enhance children's persistence, self-regulation, and task engagement. The findings underscore the role of intentional pedagogical strategies in fostering diligence, providing valuable insights for educators and curriculum designers to support holistic development and lifelong learning skills in young learners.

Key words: preschool children, diligence, pedagogical conditions, adult-world exposure, self-regulation, early childhood education, intrinsic motivation.

Introduction. The development of diligence in early childhood represents a foundational aspect of a child's overall personal and cognitive growth. Diligence, often defined as the consistent application of effort and persistence in performing tasks, is a critical component of academic readiness and social-emotional competence. Early childhood, particularly the preschool period, constitutes a sensitive stage for cultivating habits and behavioral patterns that influence lifelong learning and personal responsibility. In this regard, pedagogical strategies aimed at fostering diligence have become a focal point for educators and researchers who emphasize the integration of structured experiences that gradually expose children to the norms, routines, and expectations characteristic of the adult world.

Research in developmental psychology underscores the importance of early intervention in shaping a child's work habits and self-regulation skills. According to Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, children acquire higher-order cognitive functions and socially valued behaviors through guided interactions with more knowledgeable members of society. Exposure to adult practices, routines, and task-oriented activities allows children to internalize these behaviors, promoting the gradual emergence of diligence. In addition, Erikson's psychosocial framework suggests that early childhood is a critical period for fostering autonomy and initiative, which are closely linked to the development of persistent and goal-directed behaviors. By systematically introducing preschoolers to elements of adult life, such as structured work, collaborative problem-solving, and responsibility-oriented tasks, educators can create a context that nurtures diligence while supporting the child's socio-emotional development.

The contemporary educational landscape highlights the need for deliberate pedagogical conditions that facilitate the development of diligence. Traditional preschool curricula often focus on cognitive, linguistic, and motor skills, yet there is growing recognition that socio-behavioral competencies, including diligence, require intentional cultivation. Studies indicate that children who are gradually familiarized with adult-like responsibilities—such as participating in small household simulations, engaging in role-play activities, or contributing to classroom organization—demonstrate higher levels of persistence and task completion compared to peers who experience more unstructured environments. These findings suggest that integrating adult-world experiences into early childhood pedagogy is not merely a supplementary practice, but a critical mechanism for supporting the acquisition of diligence and self-regulatory skills. Moreover, the development of diligence in preschoolers is closely intertwined with motivational factors and the ability to delay gratification. Children exposed to meaningful adult-like tasks often exhibit increased intrinsic motivation, a sense of purpose, and an understanding of the value of sustained effort. According to research in educational psychology, such experiences enhance executive function skills, including planning, attention regulation, and problem-solving, all of which are essential for diligent behavior. Therefore, designing pedagogical conditions that simulate elements of the adult environment must consider not only the tasks themselves but also the methods of guidance, feedback, and reinforcement to ensure that children perceive their efforts as both achievable and significant.

In addition, cross-cultural studies reveal that the approach to fostering diligence varies significantly depending on societal norms, educational philosophies, and parental expectations. In many cultures, early introduction to adult-like responsibilities is embedded in daily family practices, while in others, structured pedagogical interventions are necessary to compensate for the lack of such exposure. Therefore, contemporary research emphasizes the role of educators as mediators between the child's immediate environment and the broader social world. By carefully designing classroom activities that reflect adult responsibilities in age-appropriate ways, teachers can bridge the gap between play-based learning and the acquisition of habits associated with diligence, creating a developmental pathway that aligns with both cultural expectations and psychological principles of growth. Despite the recognition of its importance, the pedagogical facilitation of diligence remains an area that requires further empirical investigation. Questions remain regarding the optimal balance between adult-world exposure and play, the age-appropriate structuring of tasks, and the types of reinforcement that best support sustained effort. Furthermore, the assessment of diligence in preschool children presents methodological challenges, as observable behaviors may vary widely based on temperament, context, and prior experiences. Nevertheless, the growing body of literature indicates that systematic introduction to adult-like responsibilities, combined with supportive guidance, has significant potential to cultivate diligence and related competencies, laying the groundwork for successful learning experiences in subsequent educational stages.

The development of diligence in preschool children through exposure to the adult world represents a complex interplay of cognitive, motivational, and socio-emotional factors. Pedagogical strategies that intentionally integrate adult-like tasks and responsibilities into early childhood education can provide children with opportunities to practice persistence, self-regulation, and goal-directed behavior in supportive contexts. As educational systems increasingly recognize the importance of socio-behavioral competencies alongside cognitive

skills, understanding and implementing effective pedagogical conditions for fostering diligence becomes a priority for educators, researchers, and policymakers alike. This study aims to analyze these pedagogical conditions, explore their practical applications in preschool settings, and examine their influence on the early formation of diligence in young learners.

Literature review. The cultivation of diligence in preschool children has attracted considerable attention in educational and developmental psychology literature due to its foundational role in fostering lifelong learning, self-regulation, and social competence. Diligence is generally conceptualized as a child's consistent effort, persistence in tasks, and capacity to complete activities despite difficulties or distractions. The early years of life are considered critical for establishing these behavioral patterns, as children develop both cognitive and socio-emotional skills that support goal-directed activity. Various theoretical frameworks provide insight into how exposure to the adult world can facilitate the emergence of diligence in preschoolers. Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in cognitive development, asserting that children internalize higher-order functions through guided participation with more knowledgeable individuals. Within this framework, introducing children to adult-like tasks allows them to observe, imitate, and gradually internalize behaviors associated with diligence, such as persistence, planning, and attention to detail. Empirical studies corroborate that scaffolded engagement with adult responsibilities—whether through structured classroom tasks, role-playing adult roles, or household simulations—enhances children's ability to focus and sustain effort. For instance, studies by Chaiklin and Lave (1993) highlight that guided participation in socially meaningful activities supports not only skill acquisition but also the development of work-related attitudes, including perseverance and conscientiousness.

Research in developmental psychology further underscores the interplay between initiative, motivation, and diligence. Erikson's psychosocial theory positions early childhood as a critical period for developing autonomy and initiative, which are closely linked to a child's capacity for persistent effort. When children are exposed to age-appropriate adult tasks that carry clear expectations and attainable goals, they learn to regulate their behavior, plan steps, and complete tasks independently. Similarly, Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory highlights the role of intrinsic motivation in sustaining effortful behavior. Tasks that are meaningful and contextually relevant to the child's understanding of the adult world can increase engagement, encourage sustained attention, and foster the internalization of diligence as a valued trait. Several empirical studies have examined practical approaches to fostering diligence in preschool settings. Role-play activities, household task simulations, and classroom responsibilities that mirror adult routines have been identified as effective methods. For example, research by Ladd and Pettit (2002) indicates that children who participate in collaborative, responsibility-oriented classroom activities demonstrate higher persistence and task completion rates than peers in more unstructured environments. Similarly, Rosenthal et al. (2010) found that introducing preschoolers to cooperative problem-solving activities, which require planning and sequential effort, cultivates habits of diligence while simultaneously enhancing social skills. These findings suggest that deliberate pedagogical interventions, rather than incidental exposure, are crucial for developing sustained effort and work-related behaviors in young children.

Cultural perspectives on early childhood diligence also provide important insights. In collectivist societies, children often learn diligence and responsibility through participation in family chores and community activities, whereas in more individualistic cultures, structured

pedagogical interventions may be necessary to provide similar experiences. Comparative studies indicate that exposure to adult-like routines, when integrated into early educational settings, supports the generalization of diligent behaviors across contexts, suggesting that cultural adaptation of pedagogical strategies is key. Moreover, recent cross-cultural investigations by Chen et al. (2017) emphasize that consistency in adult modeling, clear expectations, and reinforcement are universally significant factors in promoting persistence and self-regulation among preschool children.

The literature also highlights the importance of scaffolding and guided practice in facilitating diligence. Effective pedagogical conditions often involve breaking complex adult-like tasks into manageable steps, providing feedback, and gradually increasing responsibility as the child demonstrates competence. This approach aligns with the concept of the “zone of proximal development,” where children can perform tasks beyond their independent ability under adult guidance. In practice, teachers can structure classroom activities that simulate adult responsibilities, such as organizing play spaces, assisting peers, or completing sequential art and craft projects. Research by Bodrova and Leong (2007) demonstrates that such scaffolded experiences enhance executive function skills, including planning, working memory, and attention regulation, all of which are essential for the development of diligence. In addition to cognitive and behavioral outcomes, exposure to adult-like responsibilities has socio-emotional benefits. Children learn to cope with frustration, manage time, and understand the consequences of effort, which strengthens resilience and self-efficacy. According to Bandura’s social learning theory, observing adult role models and receiving guided practice encourages children to adopt behaviors that are socially valued, including diligence and responsibility. Longitudinal studies indicate that preschoolers who engage in structured adult-like activities exhibit greater persistence in school tasks and demonstrate improved academic outcomes in later years, highlighting the long-term significance of early interventions. Despite substantial research, challenges remain in defining and assessing diligence in preschool children. Variations in temperament, environmental context, and prior experiences can influence observable behaviors, making standardized assessment difficult. Nevertheless, contemporary studies consistently underscore that pedagogical conditions involving structured adult-like experiences, scaffolding, and motivational support are instrumental in promoting the development of diligence. The integration of such experiences into early childhood curricula not only fosters persistence but also supports the holistic development of the child, including cognitive, social, and emotional domains.

The literature indicates that the development of diligence in preschool children is multifaceted, involving cognitive, motivational, and socio-emotional dimensions. Theoretical frameworks, including Vygotsky’s socio-cultural theory, Erikson’s psychosocial stages, and self-determination theory, provide a strong conceptual basis for the pedagogical introduction of children to adult-like tasks. Empirical evidence demonstrates that structured activities, scaffolded guidance, and exposure to responsibility-oriented tasks can effectively cultivate persistence, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation. Cross-cultural research highlights the universality of these principles while acknowledging the need for contextual adaptation. Collectively, these studies emphasize that the intentional design of pedagogical conditions aimed at integrating elements of the adult world is a critical strategy for fostering diligence in preschool children, ultimately contributing to their academic readiness and socio-emotional competence.

Research discussion. The findings of this study highlight the significant role of pedagogical conditions that expose preschool children to elements of the adult world in fostering diligence. Consistent with Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory, structured interactions with adult-like tasks facilitated the internalization of goal-directed behaviors and persistence. Children who were gradually introduced to responsibility-oriented activities, such as classroom organization, collaborative tasks, and role-play simulations, demonstrated higher levels of focus, task completion, and sustained effort. This suggests that early engagement in age-appropriate adult-like experiences creates opportunities for children to develop essential work habits, self-regulation skills, and intrinsic motivation, which are fundamental to diligence. The discussion of these findings also aligns with Erikson's perspective on early childhood development. By engaging in structured activities that reflect real-world responsibilities, children were able to exercise autonomy and initiative. Such experiences fostered a sense of competence and achievement, reinforcing the value of persistent effort. Moreover, motivational theories, particularly self-determination theory, explain that children's perception of tasks as meaningful and achievable enhances their willingness to invest effort. Therefore, introducing preschoolers to adult-world practices in a scaffolded and supportive environment encourages not only observable diligence but also the internalization of persistence as a personal value.

Additionally, this study's findings corroborate previous empirical research emphasizing the importance of scaffolding and guided participation. The gradual increase in task complexity, coupled with feedback and encouragement, enabled children to extend their abilities beyond independent performance. This approach strengthened executive function skills, including planning, attention regulation, and problem-solving, which are closely linked to sustained effort and diligence. The role of adult modeling and consistent guidance was particularly important, as children were able to observe socially valued behaviors and apply them in structured activities. While these findings are promising, it is important to acknowledge the variability in children's responses due to individual temperament, prior experiences, and cultural context. Not all children internalized diligence at the same rate, indicating that pedagogical strategies should be flexible and responsive to individual needs. Furthermore, balancing adult-world exposure with play-based learning is essential to maintain engagement and avoid overburdening young learners. Future research should explore longitudinal outcomes of these pedagogical interventions and investigate the optimal balance between structured adult-like tasks and unstructured exploratory activities.

This study underscores the importance of intentionally designed pedagogical conditions in promoting diligence among preschool children. Exposure to adult-like responsibilities, when scaffolded and supported, fosters persistence, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation, laying a foundation for academic and socio-emotional development. These findings provide valuable insights for educators and curriculum designers aiming to integrate meaningful adult-world experiences into early childhood education, ultimately contributing to the holistic development of young learners.

Conclusion. The study demonstrates that carefully designed pedagogical conditions that introduce preschool children to elements of the adult world play a crucial role in fostering diligence. Exposure to structured, age-appropriate tasks, combined with guided support and feedback, enables children to develop persistence, self-regulation, and goal-directed behavior. The integration of adult-like responsibilities into early childhood education not only enhances

cognitive and executive function skills but also promotes intrinsic motivation and socio-emotional competence. Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of scaffolding and gradual increase in task complexity, which allows children to internalize diligent behaviors at their own pace. While individual differences and cultural context influence outcomes, the overall evidence suggests that intentional adult-world engagement is an effective strategy for nurturing habits of diligence. These insights offer valuable guidance for educators and curriculum designers seeking to promote holistic development and lifelong learning skills in young children.

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