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RESEARCH ON THE DEMAND AND SUPPORT OF PARENTS OF AUTISTIC CHILDREN FOR PICTURE BOOK TEACHING RESOURCES IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

As the concept of inclusive education continues to advance, the proportion of children with autism receiving education in the general education system is increasing year by year. In this process, parents, as important educational participants, their understanding, acceptance and actual use of teaching resources have become important factors influencing the effectiveness of inclusive education. Picture books, as a rich and vivid educational medium, have been widely used in special education, especially in promoting the cognitive, emotional, language and social interaction skills of children with autism. However, in the context of inclusive education, parents' understanding of picture book teaching resources, their actual needs, and the support system required remain understudied. Therefore, an in-depth exploration of parents' demand for picture book teaching resources can help improve the inclusive education support system and enhance the learning quality and life adaptability of children with autism.

KEYWORDS: Inclusive education, children with autism, parents' demands, picture book teaching resources

1. THE APPLICATION VALUE OF PICTURE BOOKS IN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

1.1 Enhancement of cognitive and language abilities

The picture book is characterized by images, concise text, and content that is close to children's life situations, adapting to the cognitive characteristics of autistic children that are dominated by concrete image thinking. Research shows that the repetitive language, rhythm and rhyming features of picture books help stimulate the language interest of children with autism and improve their language expression and comprehension abilities.

1.2 Promotion of social interaction and emotional regulation

Children with autism often have impairments in interpersonal communication and emotional management. The plots in picture books can simulate real social scenarios and help children understand social rules and communication language, thereby enhancing their social skills. In addition, through the reading and interaction of emotion-themed picture books, children with autism can better recognize and regulate their emotions and enhance their empathy and emotional expression skills [2].

1.3 Development of life skills and behavioral habits

The content of picture books often involves life details such as self-care, safety awareness, rule compliance, etc., which can effectively guide autistic children to acquire basic life skills and improve their ability to live independently and social adaptability [4][5].

2. THE ACTUAL NEEDS OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM FOR PICTURE BOOK TEACHING RESOURCES

2.1 Design and Implementation of the questionnaire

2.1.1 Questionnaire Design

To gain a deeper understanding of the needs of parents of children with autism for picture book teaching resources and support, the subjects of this study were parents of children with autism who participated in inclusive education. The questionnaire design emphasizes the parental perspective and focuses on pain points in actual educational scenarios such as the applicability of picture books, the diversity of teaching methods, and home-school collaboration mechanisms. The open-ended section (Question 18) will provide an important reference for the development of personalized support programs. The questionnaire was designed based on literature research and expert consultation, and was revised in July 2025 to form a structured questionnaire with 18 questions, divided into four dimensions. (See Table 1)

Table 1 Questionnaire Dimensions and Question Correspondence Table

Dimensions	Title
I. Basic Information	Questions 1, 2, 3, 4
Ii. Demand for Picture Book Teaching Resources	Questions 5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Iii. Demand for Picture Book Teaching Support	Questions 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15
4. Scales and Open Recommendations	Questions 16, 17, 18

2.2 Questionnaire Implementation

In early August 2025, questionnaires will be distributed to inclusive education institutions and the autism parents' community through a combination of online and offline methods. After the questionnaires are collected, data cleaning and analysis will be carried out, with a focus on identifying the core demands of parents regarding the types of picture book resources, course formats, and teachers' professional capabilities, ultimately forming research reports to provide empirical evidence for optimizing the picture book teaching system for children with autism.

2.3 Design and Implementation of the interviews

2.3.1 Interview Design

This study uses semi-structured interviews to design interview Outlines around the cognition, access, usage difficulties and support needs of parents of children with autism regarding picture book teaching resources. Based on the previous literature review and questionnaire survey results, the interview outline covers parents' understanding of the picture book resources, actual usage experience, mastery of teaching methods, and expectations for home-school collaborative support, aiming to dig deeper into the qualitative information not covered by the questionnaire and provide a basis for the formulation of subsequent support strategies.

2.3.2 Implementation of the interview

The interviews were conducted in a combination of online and offline formats from mid-June to early July 2025. A total of 102 parents of children with autism who participated in the questionnaire survey were recruited as interviewees. Each interview lasted about 30 to 40 minutes, was fully recorded and transcribed into text, and ultimately 100 valid interview records were obtained for subsequent thematic analysis and qualitative research.

2.4 Result Analysis

2.4.1 Analysis of Questionnaire Results

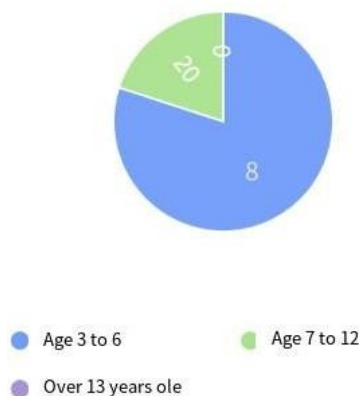
(a) Basic information of parents and children

The survey collected data from 105 parents of children with autism, covering basic information in four aspects: gender, age, stage of inclusive education, and degree of autism.

Gender: Male: (42) Female: (63).

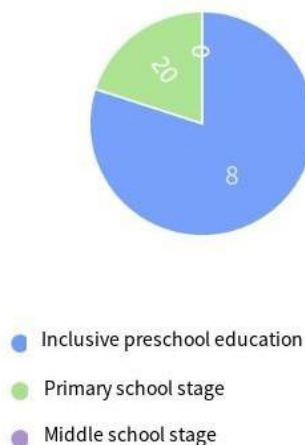
Age : 3-6 years old (84), 7-12 years old (21), over 13 years old (0). (See Figure 1)

Figure 1 Age



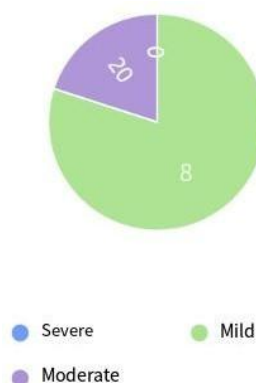
Inclusive education stage : pre-school inclusive education (84), primary school stage (21), secondary school stage (0). (See Figure 2)

Figure 2 Inclusive Education Stage



Degree of autism: mild (84), moderate (21), severe (0). (See Figure 3)

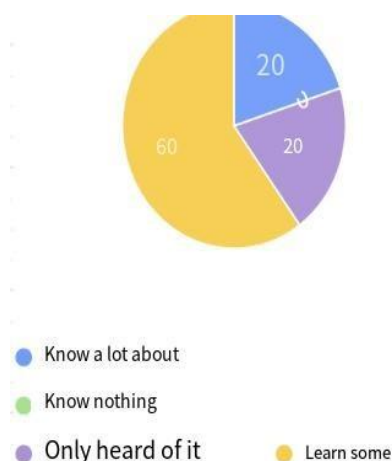
Figure 3 Degree of autism



(b) demand for picture book teaching resources

In terms of understanding of picture book applications, 21 parents (20%) indicated a very good understanding, showing that some parents have a deep understanding of the educational value of picture books; 63 parents (60 percent) said they knew something about it, which constituted the cognitive subject; Another 21 parents (20 percent) were only at the stage of hearing. It is notable that there were no cases of complete ignorance in this survey. This data distribution reflects both the effectiveness of picture book promotion and the need for precise science popularization targeting the "only heard of" group. (See Figure 4)

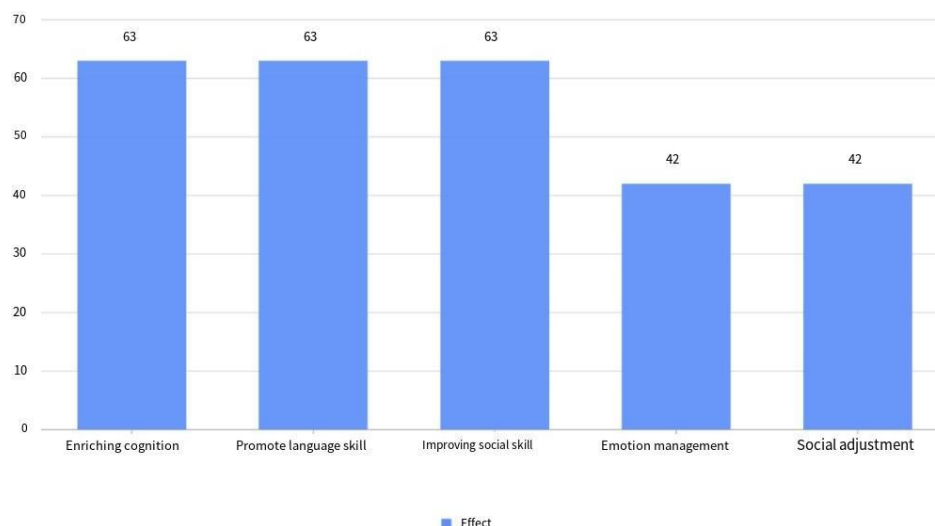
Figure 4 Awareness



In a multiple-choice survey of the role of picture books, 63 students (60%) chose the options of "enriching cognition", "promoting language skills", and "enhancing social skills", indicating that the educational value of picture books in these three areas has been widely recognized. At the same time,

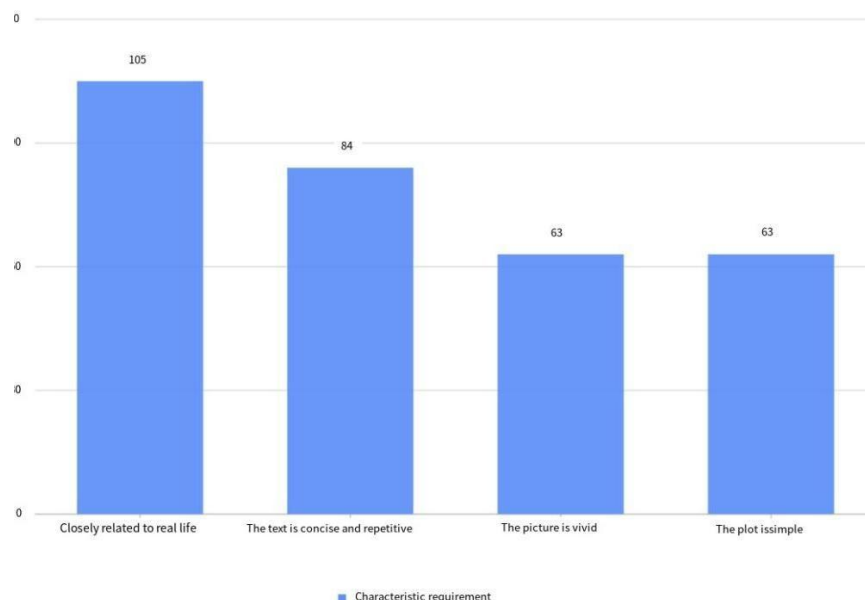
42 students (40 percent) chose the options "emotional management" and "social adaptation", indicating that picture books also have some influence in emotional education and socialization. (See Figure 5)

Figure 5 Function



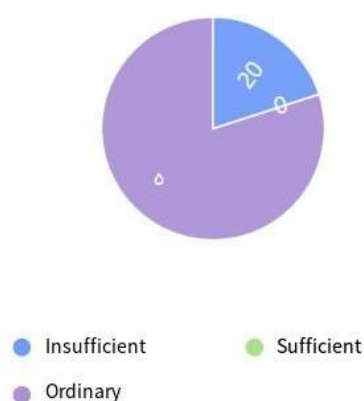
In the multiple-choice survey on the special demands of picture books, 105 students (100%) unanimously chose the option of "close to real life", reflecting that authenticity is the core demand of picture book creation. 84 students (80 percent) approved the feature of "concise and repetitive text", while 63 students (60 percent) chose the options of "vivid pictures" and "simple plot", indicating that picture books have differentiated demands in terms of language design and narrative complexity. When choosing picture books, pay attention to the combination of difficulty for different students' needs. (See Figure 6)

Figure 6 Feature Requirements



In the resource adequacy survey, 84 respondents (80 percent) considered market resources to be at an "average" level, showing maximum satisfaction with resource allocation. However, 21 respondents (20%) thought the resources were "not very abundant", and none chose the "abundant" option, indicating that there is still room for optimization in the current market resource supply. For the 20 percent of those who think resources are insufficient, it is recommended to focus on analyzing their specific demand gaps. (See Figure 7)

Figure 7 Resource adequacy

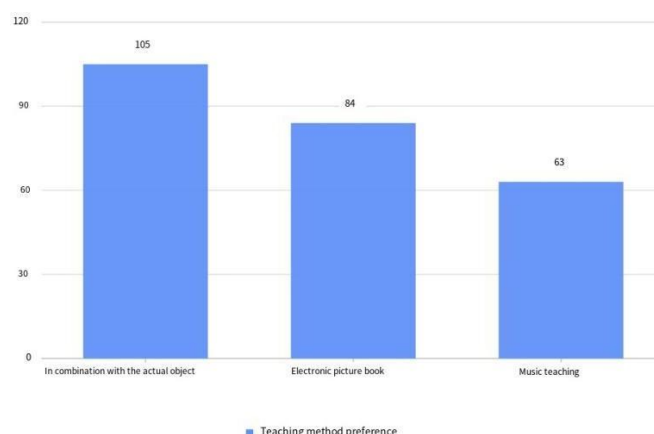


(c) Demand for picture book teaching support

In the curriculum requirements survey, all 105 parents surveyed (100%) supported the school offering a dedicated picture book curriculum and unanimously preferred to arrange two 30-minute sessions per

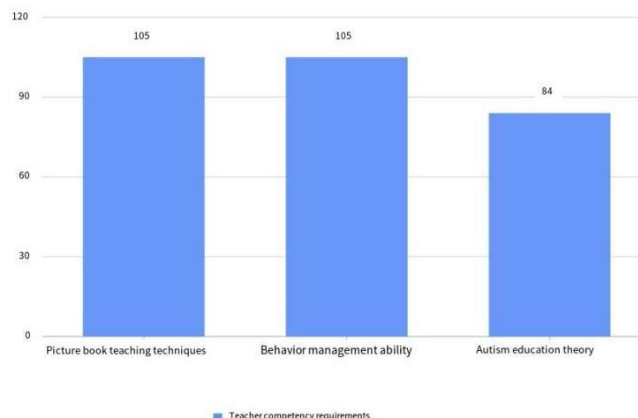
week. This result reflects parents' strong expectations for systematic picture book teaching and suggests prioritizing the implementation of this class hour plan in curriculum planning. In the survey of teaching method preferences, all 105 surveyed teachers (100%) chose to combine physical teaching, electronic picture books (84, 80%) and music teaching (63, 60%) ranked second and third respectively. This step-up distribution suggests that physical teaching is the basic consensus, while multimedia and interdisciplinary approaches are forming a characteristic supplement. It is recommended to moderately integrate electronic and musical elements to enhance classroom vitality while maintaining the core teaching methods. (See Figure 8)

Figure 8 Teaching Method Preferences



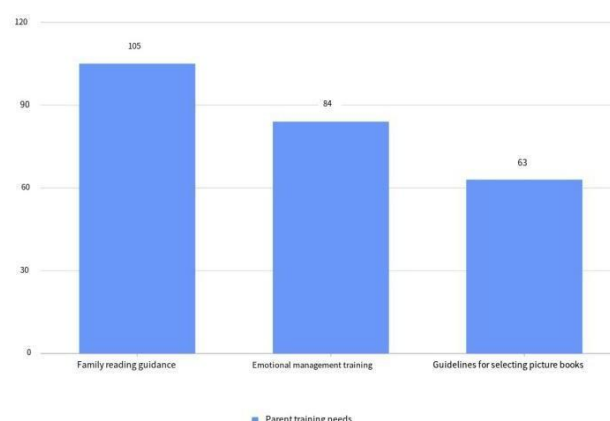
In the survey of teacher competency requirements, both picture book teaching skills and behavioral management skills were agreed upon by all 105 respondents (100%), demonstrating the fundamental status of these two abilities; At the same time, the theory of autism education was chosen by 84 people (80%). This competency structure indicates that teachers generally attach great importance to the basic skills of teaching implementation and classroom management, while the professional demands for special education theory have not reached a consensus among all, but have formed a mainstream perception that a training system of "full coverage of basic abilities + modularization of special education theory" should be constructed in teacher training. (See Figure 9)

Figure 9 Teacher Competency Requirements



In a multiple-choice survey of parents' training needs, family reading guidance was approved by all 105 surveyed parents (100%), followed by emotional management training (84, 80%) and picture book selection guidance (63, 60%). The data suggest that there is a general consensus among parents on the development of reading ability, while the training needs for psychological support and resource screening ability show a gradient distribution. It is recommended to gradually expand the professional dimension [3][9] of parent education while ensuring the quality of basic reading guidance. (See Figure 10)

Figure 10 Parental Training Needs

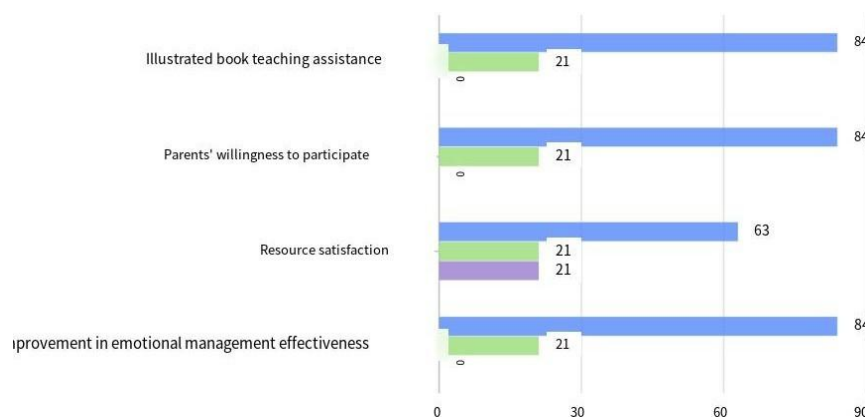


(d) Teaching effectiveness and expectations (proportional conversion of the average score of the scale questions)

In the assessment of teaching effectiveness and expectations, the helpfulness of picture book teaching received positive evaluations (average score 3.8) from 84 respondents (80%), and parents' willingness to participate showed a high average of 4.4, with 63 (60%) showing a strong willingness to participate. Notably, resource satisfaction (40 percent fully satisfied) contrasted significantly with the

improvement in emotional management (80 percent approved). The data suggest that picture book teaching has an advantage in the dimension of emotional development, but there is room for improvement in resource supply. It is suggested that a "home-school resource co-construction mechanism" be established to coordinate the matching degree between teaching expectations and actual support. (See Figure 11)

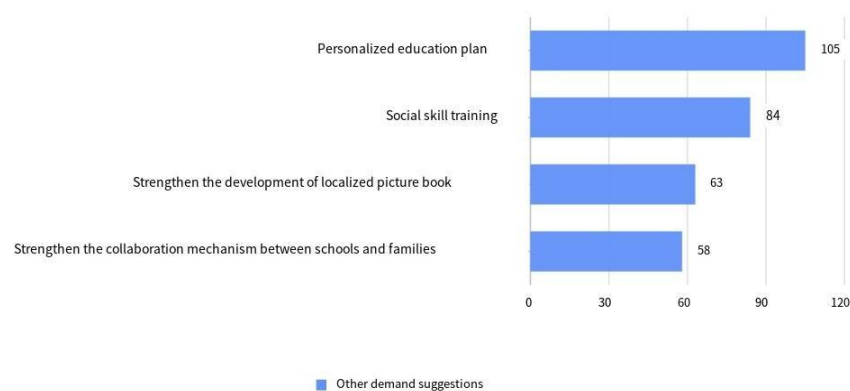
Figure 11 Teaching effects and expectations



(e) Other requirements suggested (multiple choice)

In other demand surveys, the personalized education program was chosen by all 105 respondents (100%), and 84 people (80%) also expressed their demand for social skills training. Open suggestions indicated that parents generally called for greater localization of picture book development (63 mentioned) and deeper home-school collaboration mechanisms (58 mentioned). (See Figure 12)

Figure 12 Other Requirements Recommendations



2.5 Analysis of Interview Results

2.5.1 Demand for access to high-quality picture book resources

Most parents have a common problem of insufficient awareness of special education picture books and lack access to them and selection criteria. The research found that books with strong classics, themes close to children's lives, and clear and concise content are more suitable for children with autism to learn and use. But in actual family education, parents often have difficulty identifying and obtaining appropriate picture book resources due to a lack of information, showing a strong need for resource guidance.

2.5.2 The need for training in picture book teaching methods

It is difficult to meet parents' educational needs by merely providing picture book materials. What is more important is to enable parents to master scientific and effective picture book teaching methods. For example, how to use questioning, retelling, role-playing and other methods to stimulate children's interest, how to conduct social training in the context of picture books, etc., all require training and guidance from teachers or professionals.

2.5.3 Reliance on the family education support system

Currently, inclusive education emphasizes the synergy between families and schools, but in reality, many parents face the predicament of being isolated and helpless during the process of family intervention. The lack of professional support, psychological counseling and community resource connection leads to anxiety and powerlessness among parents in educating children with autism. Therefore, building a complete family support network and enhancing parents' confidence and ability have become urgent issues to be addressed.

3. EXISTING PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

3.1 resource supply and lack of awareness problem

3.1.1. Structural shortage of picture book resources

Eighty percent of parents in the questionnaire thought the market resources were only at "average" level, twenty percent clearly said they were "not very sufficient", and none chose the "sufficient" option. The interview results revealed a general lack of access and selection criteria for special education picture books among parents, especially a strong demand for high-quality picture books that are "classic, have themes close to life, and have concise content."

3.1.2 parents' perceptions are stratified

In the questionnaire, 20% of parents have only "heard of" the educational value of picture books, and 60% have only a superficial understanding, reflecting the lack of accuracy in popular science. Among the open suggestions, 63 parents called for greater localization of picture book development, indicating insufficient cultural fit of existing resources.

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3.2 Teaching methods and competence gap

3.2.1 Weak family intervention capacity

The interview results indicated that parents generally lacked scientific teaching methods (such as questioning, retelling, role-playing skills, etc.) and needed professional training support. 100% of parents in the questionnaire needed home reading guidance, but the coverage of advanced skills training such as emotion management (80%) and picture book selection (60%) was insufficient.

3.2.2 The professional competence of teachers needs to be improved

Although 100% of the teachers agreed on picture book teaching skills and behavioral management abilities, 20% did not incorporate autism education theory into core needs, reflecting an imbalance in the popularization of special education knowledge.

3.3 support system synergy dilemma

3.3.1 Absence of home-school collaboration mechanism

Among the 58 parents' open suggestions, there is a clear need to deepen home-school collaboration. The questionnaire shows that only 40% are satisfied with the existing resources, exposing the disconnection in resource allocation. At the same time, the interview results highlighted that parents faced "isolation and helplessness" in family intervention, lacking psychological support and community resource connection.

3.3.2 Insufficient personalized support

100% of parents requested personalized education plans, but the existing teaching Settings, such as 30-minute sessions twice a week, did not reflect differentiated adaptation. In addition, there is an implementation gap between social skills training (80% of the demand) and emotional management (80% of the recognized effect).

Overall, the current core contradictions are focused on: the contradiction between the supply of standardized resources and personalized demands, the gap between the popularization of basic

knowledge and the improvement of professional capabilities, the conflict [6] between the blurred boundaries of responsibility between home and school and the absence of system support.

4. OPTIMIZATION PATHS AND COUNTERMEASURES

4.1 Build a multi-level library of picture books

The education department should take the lead in integrating existing excellent picture book resources and categorically build picture book teaching resource libraries for children with autism at different functional levels, covering modules such as cognitive enlightenment, social interaction, emotion management, and life skills, for parents to choose and use [7] as needed. For example, in the short term, a "basic edition" picture book package (including themes on life skills and emotion management) could be jointly developed with publishing institutions to prioritize the majority of parents' demand for "concise and classic" resources.

4.2 Improve the parent training system

"Parent Learning Workshops" can be set up in institutions such as integrated schools and special education resource centers to regularly conduct picture book teaching training (twice a week $\times$ 30 minutes), covering 100% of the basic reading guidance skills needed by parents. The content includes picture book selection criteria, teaching techniques, interaction methods, etc., and guides parents to record their children's reactions in order to adjust strategies and achieve personalized and scientific home teaching. In addition, role-playing workshops can be added for emotion management and graded recommendation courses can be offered for picture book selection.

4.3 Construction of a collaborative support mechanism for teacher professional development

Inclusive education should enhance the professional competence of teachers, incorporate core theoretical modules such as cognitive characteristics of autism spectrum disorder and behavioral intervention strategies into compulsory courses for teachers, and eliminate some blind spots in special education knowledge for teachers through blended online and offline training.

4.4 Promote the construction of a "home-school-community" collaborative support mechanism

Inclusive education should enhance home-school collaboration and establish a stable home visit, feedback and consultation system. At the same time, establish parent-child interaction platforms such as "Picture book reading corners" and "emotion regulation training camps" based on community libraries, rehabilitation centers, etc., to provide emotional support and practical guidance to parents and enhance their educational confidence and coping ability [9].

5. CONCLUSION

Picture books, as an important tool for supporting the development of children with autism in inclusive education, not only stimulate their interest in learning and promote the development of various abilities, but also provide a feasible and effective path for parents to participate in education. In the future, systematic research on parents' needs and the construction of support systems should

be strengthened. Through resource integration, professional training and home-school cooperation, a more solid foundation of family support should be provided for inclusive education to help autistic children better integrate into society and achieve all-round development [8][10].

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Xu Yiting, an undergraduate student in Primary Education at Beijing City University, focuses on elementary Chinese language teaching and moral education. She has gained teaching experience through internships in Haidian District primary schools and has led municipal innovation projects. Xu has received several honors, including the Excellent Award in the National Normal Students' Micro-Lesson Competition.