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A Study on the Mechanism of Aesthetic Perception Construction through Integrating Local Resources into Art Appreciation Education in Rural Kindergartens

Fang Zhao[1], He Jiang[2]*

Early Childhood Education College, Sichuan Preschool Educators College, Sichuan, China

College of Music and Dance, Guangzhou University, Guangdong, China

Corresponding author, E-mail: musicdo@163.com

Abstract:

Against the backdrop of rural revitalization and the heightened emphasis on cultural transmission in the new era of school aesthetic education, local resources hold unique value for preschool aesthetic education in rural areas. However, art appreciation education in rural kindergartens currently faces a widespread dilemma characterized by the "presence of resources yet absence of aesthetic engagement." Local resources often remain at the level of material use and fail to be effectively transformed into children's aesthetic experiences. Grounded in the theoretical perspective of place-based education, this study systematically investigates the current application and associated issues of local resources through curriculum document analysis, classroom observations, and teacher interviews conducted across eight rural kindergartens in six districts/counties of Mianyang City, Sichuan Province. The findings reveal that the core problem in practice is not a scarcity of resources but rather a lack of an effective mechanism for converting lived experiences into aesthetic perception. To address this, the study constructs a "Place-Based Mechanism Model for Aesthetic Perception Construction Based on Local Resources." This model elucidates a continuous and dynamic process through which aesthetic perception is generated and deepened via four interconnected phases: the aesthetic framing of lived experience, integration through multi-sensory participation, motivation via emotional investment, and transformation through reflective expression. The study proposes that art appreciation education in rural kindergartens should undergo a paradigm shift from being "resource-introduction oriented" to becoming "aesthetic-construction oriented." Furthermore, it suggests practical pathways—such as the aesthetic processing of resources, situational integration, interactive guidance, and developmental assessment—to ensure the effective operation of the proposed mechanism. This approach aims to bridge the practical gap between resource availability and aesthetic development, thereby offering theoretical insights and practical guidance for deepening early childhood aesthetic education and promoting cultural heritage in rural contexts.

Keywords:

Local Resources; Rural Kindergarten; Art Appreciation Education; Aesthetic Perception; Place-Based; Construction Mechanism

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1. Introduction

At the strategic intersection of China's nationwide push for rural revitalization and the reform of aesthetic education in the new era, the educational value of local cultural resources has been elevated to an unprecedented height. On one hand, pivotal policy documents such as the *Guidelines on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education in the New Era* mandate that aesthetic education must "organically integrate excellent traditional Chinese culture," facilitating a profound shift from skill acquisition to the cultivation of aesthetic literacy and value orientation (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China [MOE], 2020). On the other hand, the Rural Revitalization Strategy consistently underscores "cultural revitalization" and the fostering of "civilized rural practices," explicitly calling for "promoting the rational utilization of outstanding agricultural cultural heritage" and leveraging the educational system to activate the endogenous potential of local culture (The State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2018, 2023). For rural preschool education, this policy direction implies that aesthetic education practices should not be a mere transplantation of urban models but must be deeply rooted in the local environment children inhabit. The *Guidelines for the Learning and Development of Children Aged 3–6* also advocates to "fully create conditions and opportunities for young children to germinate their feelings and experiences of beauty within nature and socio-cultural life" (MOE, 2012). Local resources, with their inherent ecological authenticity, cultural affinity, and accessibility in daily life, constitute the most promising reservoir of experiences for aesthetic education in rural early childhood settings.

However, a significant gap exists between this ideal and current practices. Substantial research indicates that art appreciation education in rural kindergartens is commonly trapped in a dilemma of being "resource-rich yet aesthetically poor" (Wang, 2020; Lu, 2025). This manifests in several ways: a disconnect between curriculum objectives and the nurturing of core aesthetic competencies; in terms of content, while local materials might be introduced, they are often reduced to low-cost substitutes for simple crafts or are presented in a fragmented, symbolic manner, lacking in-depth exploration of their formal beauty, cultural significance, and emotional value; pedagogically, there is a widespread failure to guide children through the complete aesthetic journey from sensory perception and emotional resonance to meaning-making (Xie & Lin, 2004). Consequently, local resources are physically "present" in the classroom but remain "absent" in the generation of aesthetic experience, failing to be effectively transformed into "significant experience" that supports the construction of children's aesthetic psyche (Dewey, 1934).

While existing research provides a foundation for understanding this issue, it has not fully addressed its critical bottleneck. A considerable volume of literature focuses on the development, categorization, and asserted application value of local resources (e.g., Pan, 2024; Huang, 2025), or offers macro-level instructional strategy suggestions (e.g., Zeng, 2025). Nevertheless, a more fundamental core question that remains insufficiently explored is: **Through what inherent mechanism can local resources, within the specific context of kindergarten teaching, be effectively transformed from a "lived existence" or "material existence" into an "experiential vehicle" that fosters the emergence and development of children's aesthetic perception?** In other words, current research lacks an explanatory middle-ground analysis that connects "resource characteristics," "teaching and learning processes," and "the development of children's aesthetic psychology," bridging the gap between normative advocacy and descriptive strategy.

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Therefore, this study aims to directly address the aforementioned theory-practice disconnect. Adopting a **place-based education** theoretical lens and focusing on the specific field of art appreciation education in rural kindergartens, it investigates the following core research question: What is the dynamic process and intrinsic mechanism through which the integration of local resources into teaching facilitates the construction of children's aesthetic perception? To answer this question, this study will employ a multi-case approach involving curriculum document analysis, classroom observations, and teacher interviews. It seeks to construct a "Place-Based Mechanism Model for Aesthetic Perception Construction Based on Local Resources." The goal is to theoretically deepen the understanding of the processual logic of local aesthetic education and, practically, to provide an operational analytical framework and pathway guidance for overcoming the current impasse.

2. Theoretical Perspectives

2.1 The Educational Nature of Local Resources and the Orientation of Aesthetic Transformation

Within the context of art appreciation education in rural kindergartens, local resources are not neutral teaching materials but experiential carriers deeply embedded in children's daily life experiences and local cultural contexts (Pan, 2024). Compared to decontextualized generic textbook content, local resources, with their distinct geographical specificity, relevance to lived experience, and cultural connotations, provide a more immediate and perceptible foundation for aesthetic objects. Their educational value is not pre-determined by the resources themselves but is gradually generated through children's interactive experiences with them (Bishop & Durksen, 2020).

From the perspective of educational attributes, local resources possess a dual characteristic where material form and cultural meaning are interwoven. On one hand, their form, color, structure, and texture offer children a tangible entry point through their senses into aesthetic experience. On the other hand, their origins, uses, and social functions carry the aesthetic sensibilities and value orientations embedded within local culture (Yang et al., 2025). As Dewey (1934) emphasized, the aesthetic is not a formal judgment separate from experience but a holistic experience generated through the continuous interaction of experience and meaning. Accordingly, local resources can only be transformed into a medium for aesthetic learning when they are situated within specific life contexts and when their formal features and cultural connotations are activated through pedagogical guidance (Zeng, 2025).

Therefore, local resources are not inherently synonymous with educational resources. The key to their integration into the art appreciation curriculum lies in whether an aesthetic transformation is achieved. This aesthetic transformation refers to the process, supported by teachers' professional selection and instructional design, through which a resource shifts from being a "usable material of life" to a "learning object with aesthetic intent," thereby providing the experiential basis for the generation of children's aesthetic perception (Zhang et al., 2024). This understanding provides a theoretical reference for the subsequent analysis of the phenomenon where local resources are "amply used yet aesthetically deficient" in curriculum and teaching practice.

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2.2 The Logic of Aesthetic Perception Generation in Young Children from a Place-Based Perspective

The place-based education perspective emphasizes that educational activities should be rooted in the learner's real-life world, treating specific local experiences as the starting point for meaning-making (Gruenewald, 2003). In early childhood art appreciation education, place-based integration is not merely about introducing local materials. It involves constructing aesthetic situations that are highly relevant to children's lived experiences, enabling them to gradually form stable aesthetic perceptions and emotional responses within familiar environments (Zeng, 2025).

Considering the characteristics of young children's aesthetic development, aesthetic perception does not emerge from abstract forms but is gradually formed through concrete experience and situated participation. Rural natural landscapes, artifacts of production and daily life, and folk cultural symbols constitute a significant part of young children's daily experience and also provide a highly accessible contextual foundation for aesthetic learning (Wang, 2022). Place-based art appreciation education precisely involves the reorganization and aesthetic processing of these life experiences, allowing children to "discover beauty in the familiar" and to deepen their understanding of beauty through sustained engagement (Xie & Lin, 2004).

This process emphasizes the continuity between life experience and aesthetic experience. Children are not passive recipients of predetermined aesthetic objects but constantly reconstruct meaning through observation, experience, and expression. In this sense, a place-based approach not only expands the situational dimensions of young children's aesthetic learning but also provides a practical pathway for the generation of aesthetic perception, embedding aesthetic experience within the children's everyday world.

2.3 Analytical Framework for Aesthetic Perception Construction

In art education research, aesthetic perception is generally understood as a holistic experience formed through the interaction of sensory experience, emotional response, and cognitive understanding (Arnheim, 1974). For young children, aesthetic perception is not a singular psychological ability but a comprehensive structure that gradually develops alongside perception, emotion, action, and language. Its formation is highly dependent on the support of specific contexts and the methods of educational guidance (Ojo, 2023).

Synthesizing relevant viewpoints from empiricist aesthetics and sociocultural theory, the generation of aesthetic perception should be seen as a dynamic process wherein children, through situated participation, move from direct perception toward preliminary understanding, continuously integrating their experiences through expressive activities (Dewey, 1938). This process is not linear but unfolds continuously through repeated experiences and guided reflection. In the context of rural kindergarten art appreciation education, aesthetic perception manifests specifically as follows: children's multi-sensory experiences with local resources within a place-based context stimulate aesthetic emotions, and under teacher guidance, these perceptual experiences are gradually transformed into initial aesthetic understanding and expression (Chiu et al., 2024).

Based on the above theoretical stance, this paper defines "aesthetic perception construction" as the key mediating mechanism connecting local resources and young children's aesthetic development. Accordingly, an analytical framework is constructed to examine the generative conditions and operational modes of aesthetic

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experience within curriculum texts, classroom practices, and teachers' pedagogical cognition. Specifically, this framework focuses on three interrelated analytical dimensions: 1) whether local resources are effectively situated within a place-based aesthetic context; 2) whether the teaching process provides children with continuous opportunities for perception and experience; and 3) whether aesthetic learning forms a complete experiential chain constituted by "perception–understanding–expression." This analytical framework will serve as a crucial theoretical tool for the subsequent empirical analysis and discussion of mechanisms, providing the basis for interpreting the place-based mechanism of aesthetic perception construction.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Context and Sample Selection

This study employed a qualitative multi-case study design to investigate the practical application of local resources in art appreciation education within rural Chinese kindergartens. The research was conducted in Sichuan Province, a region characterized by a large rural population and diverse local cultures. Purposeful sampling was used to select eight rural kindergartens across six distinct administrative districts and counties within the Mianyang prefecture-level city: Fucheng District, Youxian District, Anzhou District, Santai County, Yanting County, and the Beichuan Qiang Autonomous County. This sampling strategy aimed to capture a spectrum of kindergarten contexts, varying in geographical location, institutional conditions, and local cultural backgrounds (e.g., Han-majority and Qiang-ethnic-minority settings). The selected sample, while not statistically generalizable, provides a rich, contextualized understanding that reflects the fundamental patterns and variations in art appreciation education practices in the region.

3.2 Research Design and Data Collection

A convergent parallel mixed-methods design was adopted to triangulate data from multiple sources, thereby enhancing the credibility, validity, and interpretive depth of the findings (Creswell & Clark, 2018). Data collection involved three primary methods conducted concurrently: curriculum document analysis, non-participant classroom observations, and semi-structured interviews.

3.2.1 Curriculum Document Analysis

A total of 64 art course activity plans and 32 corresponding teaching reflection journals from the most recent academic year were systematically collected from the eight participant kindergartens. This documentary corpus was analyzed to examine how local resources were represented across key curriculum components: stated objectives, activity content, implementation guidelines, and evaluation elements. The analysis focused on quantifying the frequency of local resource inclusion, categorizing the types of resources used, and qualitatively assessing the explicit or implicit connections drawn between these resources and stated aesthetic learning goals.

3.2.2 Classroom Observation

Non-participant observations were conducted for at least one art appreciation activity in each of the eight kindergartens. A structured observation protocol was developed to guide the detailed recording of: (a) the

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modalities of teachers' use of local resources (e.g., display, manipulation, discussion); (b) the organizational flow of the classroom activity; and (c) the nature and level of children's engagement. Observations specifically focused on material usage, contextual framing, and the continuity (or discontinuity) of aesthetic guidance throughout the lesson, capturing procedural details often absent from formal curriculum documents.

3.2.3 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 in-service kindergarten teachers (1-2 from each kindergarten) to gain insight into their perspectives and experiences. The interview protocol centered on core themes including: teachers' conceptual understanding of the educational value of local resources; their strategies for integrating these resources into art appreciation teaching; and the principal challenges they encountered in practice. Prompts such as "How do local resources enter your art appreciation lessons?" and "Do you believe they promote children's aesthetic experience development, and how?" were used to elicit detailed narratives.

3.3 Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

Data analysis followed an integrated qualitative and quantitative approach:

Documentary and Observational Data: Curriculum plans and observation notes were subjected to both content analysis and descriptive statistics. An initial coding scheme was deductively derived from the theoretical framework (e.g., codes for "resource type," "aesthetic objective linkage," "contextualization") and then refined inductively through iterative review of the data. Frequencies were calculated for categorical data (e.g., prevalence of resource types).

Interview Data: Interview transcripts were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, identifying themes, reviewing them, defining and naming them, and producing the final analysis. The goal was to identify prevalent patterns in teachers' cognitions and reported practices.

Integration: Data from all three sources were compared and contrasted to cross-validate findings, identify convergences and divergences, and build a comprehensive, nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under study.

The study adhered strictly to standard ethical guidelines for educational research. Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional bodies. All participating teachers provided written informed consent. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed; all data were anonymized during transcription and analysis, and pseudonyms were used in reporting. To ensure coding reliability, two researchers independently coded a subset of the data (approximately 20%). Inter-coder agreement was calculated, and discrepancies were resolved through discussion until consensus was reached; after that, the primary researcher completed coding the remaining dataset.

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4. Findings

4.1 Integration of Local Resources and Presentation of Aesthetic Objectives in Curriculum Documents

Statistical analysis of the 64 art course plans revealed a notably high frequency of local resource inclusion at the content level. Specifically, 52 plans (81.25%) incorporated natural materials, local life elements, or folk cultural symbols in their activity materials or situational setups, indicating a pronounced place-based orientation in resource selection among the sampled rural kindergartens.

However, the connection between these resources and explicitly stated aesthetic learning objectives was considerably more limited. Only 19 plans (29.69%) included objective statements containing aesthetic-oriented phrases such as "feeling beauty," "appreciating beauty," or "aesthetic experience." Within this subset, a mere 11 plans (17.19% of the total sample) provided any brief description linking the formal characteristics, cultural background, or aesthetic value of the local resources to these objectives.

Overall, these findings suggest that within the formal curriculum documentation, local resources were predominantly treated as operable teaching materials. Their potential function as vehicles for generating aesthetic experience was not clearly articulated at the level of curriculum aims.

4.2 Typology of Local Resource Utilization in Teaching Practice

Synthesizing data from classroom observations and teacher interviews, the actual utilization of local resources in art teaching practices was categorized into three distinct types, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Distribution of Local Resource Utilization Types in Art Teaching (N=8 kindergartens)

Utilization Type	Number of Kindergartens	Percentage
Material-Substitution Type (used primarily as creative media)	4	50.00%
Context-Supportive Type (used with narration/observation for basic context)	3	37.50%
Aesthetic-Guiding Type (guiding the experience-understanding-expression process)	1	12.50%

The Material-Substitution Type was the most prevalent, employed by half of the kindergartens. Lessons of this type are primarily aimed at "completing artwork using local materials," emphasizing the operational process and the final product. They rarely guided children to attend to the formal features, origins, or inherent aesthetic value of the materials, thus reducing local resources to a function of "low-cost craft supplies."

The Context-Supportive Type involved some effort to familiarize children with the basic background of local resources through teacher narration, observation, or image display. However, related aesthetic activities were often fragmented, lacking a continuous experiential process that moved systematically from perception to understanding and then to expression. Consequently, aesthetic learning failed to form a coherent chain.

Only one kindergarten demonstrated the Aesthetic-Guiding Type, in which teaching was more systematic,

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guiding children through the complete aesthetic process of "perception–understanding–expression," thereby transforming local resources into a meaningful medium that connects lived experience with aesthetic experience. This low proportion indicates that pedagogical models capable of authentically converting local resources into vehicles for aesthetic learning remain exceptional in current practice.

4.3 Teacher Cognitions and Pedagogical Integration of Local Resources

Teacher cognition and professional competency emerged as critical factors influencing the effective aesthetic transformation of local resources. Interview results indicated that a majority of the 12 participating teachers held positive attitudes towards the practical value of local resources. Nine teachers (75.00%) acknowledged their advantages, describing them as "close to children's lives and easily accessible."

Nevertheless, significant gaps were evident in teachers' cultural understanding and pedagogical integration skills. Only four teachers (33.33%) reported being "relatively familiar" with the connotations of local folk art or traditional culture. Seven teachers (58.33%) explicitly stated they were "unsure how to transform local resources into content for art appreciation." Regarding instructional design capability, merely three teachers (25.00%) could articulate a coherent teaching process (e.g., appreciation–experience–expression) centered on local resources. The remaining teachers predominantly relied on personal experience to organize activities, with objectives and aesthetic guidance lacking systematic planning.

This pattern suggests that the problems in applying local resources stem not from teacher attitudes but are significantly constrained by insufficient professional understanding and a lack of methodological support, revealing a pronounced disconnect between "material use" and "aesthetic construction" in teacher practice.

4.4 Representation of the Aesthetic Dimension in Teaching Evaluation

Analysis of the 32 teaching reflection journals further uncovered structural issues at the evaluation level. The evaluative focus in 26 reflections (81.25%) was predominantly on children's participation level, classroom discipline, and the completion status of artworks. Only six reflections (18.75%) made any reference to children's aesthetic feelings, emotional experiences, or changes in expression during the activities. No reflection contained sustained records tracking the development of children's aesthetic perception or cultural understanding over time.

This result indicates that the prevailing evaluation system does not adequately address the aesthetic goals of art appreciation education. The aesthetic experiences and meaning-making processes potentially elicited by local resources lack systematic observation and feedback, making it difficult to form an evidence-based chain that could inform meaningful pedagogical improvement.

5. Discussion

Local resources, by virtue of their ecological authenticity, cultural accessibility, and emotional affinity, demonstrate a unique educational potential distinct from standardized teaching materials in fostering young children's aesthetic experiences. As integral components of children's daily lifeworlds, they provide authentic and concrete experiential starting points for aesthetic activities, enabling aesthetic perception to emerge with-

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in familiar contexts. However, related practices also reveal that the educational value of local resources does not automatically manifest when they are introduced into the classroom. In the absence of a clear theoretical direction and a robust operational mechanism, their use often remains at the level of contextual embellishment or material substitution, failing to transform into a sustained experiential force that advances children's aesthetic development.

From the perspectives of aesthetic development and experiential learning, young children's aesthetic perception is not an immediate response triggered directly by external stimuli. Instead, it constitutes a developmental process embedded within specific life situations, formed through the continual integration of perception, action, and emotional experience. Aesthetic meaning is not pre-defined within the material itself but is gradually generated and internalized through the support of the socio-cultural context and teacher-child interactions. Therefore, the educational significance of local resources in rural kindergarten art appreciation education does not lie in their "substitutive use" for classical art or urban cultural materials. Instead, it resides in their capacity to serve as a mediating vehicle, connecting lived experience and cultural understanding, thereby supporting a place-based pathway for the construction of aesthetic perception that begins with children's own experiences and is oriented toward the deepening of aesthetic meaning.

Based on this understanding, this paper proposes a Place-Based Mechanism Model for the Construction of Aesthetic Perception from Local Resources. This model aims to reveal how local resources can be consistently activated and effectively organized within teaching situations to promote the transformation of children's aesthetic experience from a lived to a meaningful level. The model systematically elucidates the intrinsic logic of how local resources impact children's aesthetic development, addressing both the structural elements of place-based aesthetic perception and its operational mechanism.

5.1 A Place-Based Mechanism Model for Aesthetic Perception Construction

In rural kindergarten art appreciation education, local resources do not influence children's aesthetic development directly as static materials. Instead, mediated by the teacher's pedagogical role, they are gradually embedded into children's processes of perception, emotion, and understanding, as illustrated in Figure 1. The generation of place-based aesthetic perception is, in essence, a continuous, transformative process in which lived experience is constantly redefined, deeply experienced, and reflectively comprehended within the instructional context. Its operational mechanism manifests through several interconnected and mutually reinforcing phases.

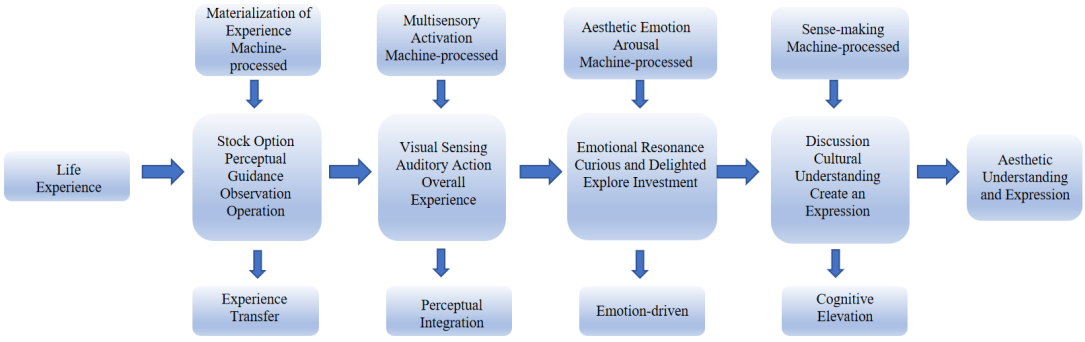


Figure 1. A Place-Based Mechanism Model for Aesthetic Perception Construction Based on Local Resources

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First, the aesthetic framing of lived experience constitutes the starting point of the mechanism.** Children's pre-existing experiences with local elements primarily exist in functional and habitual forms. Without undergoing an aesthetic framing, these experiences lack an aesthetic orientation. Through the teacher's selective focus on and guided attention to local resources, the way children engage with their experiences is shifted, transforming them from the "taken-for-granted background" into "aesthetic objects." In this phase, lived experience ceases to be merely something used or talked about; it becomes an aesthetic presence to be observed, compared, and felt, thereby providing a clear objectual foundation for subsequent aesthetic construction.

Second, multisensory engagement facilitates the transformation of experience from scattered perception to integrated encounter.** Once an aesthetic object is established, contact through a single sensory channel is insufficient to support the deepening of aesthetic experience. Through the coordinated participation of multiple channels—such as vision, touch, movement, and language—children's perception of local resources is gradually integrated from fragmented impressions into a more coherent experiential structure. Multisensory engagement here is not merely a teaching technique but an experiential integration mechanism. It transforms the aesthetic object from being "seen" to being "lived through," laying a practical foundation for the generation of emotion and the extension of experience.

Third, emotional investment serves as the intrinsic motivating force sustaining the unfolding of aesthetic experience.** During multisensory engagement, the lived familiarity and cultural affinity of local resources readily evoke positive emotions in children, such as interest, pleasure, and a sense of closeness. These emotions are not incidental by-products of aesthetic activity but are crucial motivational mechanisms that sustain children's continued participation. Emotional investment strengthens children's willingness to return repeatedly to the aesthetic object, allowing the aesthetic experience to extend across time and thereby accumulate the necessary experiential depth for meaning construction.

Fourth, reflective expression catalyzes the transformation of aesthetic experience into meaningful understanding.** Building on sustained engagement and accumulated emotion, teachers guide children in organizing and naming their experiences through reflective, expressive activities such as drawing, storytelling, and discussion. By translating sensory-felt experiences into expressible and communicable forms, children gradually develop a preliminary understanding of the aesthetic object and begin to recognize its cultural significance and aesthetic value. In this phase, aesthetic perception transitions from an immediate experience to a relatively stable comprehension.

In summary, the construction mechanism for place-based aesthetic perception is not a linear procedural checklist but a recursive and progressively deepening structure of experiential transformation that can operate cyclically in teaching practice. Through the aesthetic framing of lived experience, the integration of multisensory engagement, the drive of emotional investment, and the mediation of reflective expression, local resources are transformed from "materials to be used" into "experiential vehicles that foster children's aesthetic development." This addresses the practical issue of introducing local resources into the classroom, yet failing to generate profound aesthetic effects.

5.2 Practice-Oriented Guidelines Informed by the Construction Mechanism

To facilitate the effective translation of the theoretical model into educational practice, it is necessary to

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construct practical pathways aligned with its operational logic. Based on the preceding mechanism analysis, this study proposes a structured path centered on the aesthetic processing of resources as the starting point, the integration of situational experience as the vehicle, interactive guidance and reflective expression as mediators, and developmental assessment as the regulator. This structure aims to ensure the continuity, integrity, and sustainability of the construction of aesthetic perception.

5.2.1. Resource Selection Strategy: Establishing the Starting Point for Experiential Transformation through Aesthetic Processing

At the mechanistic level, resource selection is not merely about gathering materials but is a crucial precondition for the aesthetic framing of lived experience. When selecting local resources, teachers should consider whether they possess clear sensory characteristics, a guideable aesthetic value, and extensible cultural meaning, enabling them to be lifted from the everyday background and become the focus of aesthetic activity.

By aesthetically processing resources such as natural elements, artifacts of production, and local crafts, children's hitherto commonplace lived experiences are transformed into learning objects with an aesthetic orientation. This creates the conditions for subsequent multisensory engagement and emotional investment. Such processing does not prioritize the quantity of resources but emphasizes their potential for generativity in perception, understanding, and cultural meaning.

5.2.2. Situational Creation Strategy: Supporting the Generation of Aesthetic Perception through a Holistic Experiential Structure

Situational creation serves a vital function in transforming aesthetic objects into holistic experiences. By constructing authentic or simulated situations closely related to children's lives, local resources no longer appear as isolated materials but are integrated into aesthetic activities characterized by temporality, emotionality, and interactivity.

Within this process, children achieve a continuous and complete experiential structure through multisensory participation, and aesthetic emotions naturally arise through participation, interaction, and resonance. The key to situational creation lies not in the richness of its form but in its capacity to foster the concurrent development of perception, emotion, and understanding, thereby accumulating an experiential foundation for meaning construction.

5.2.3. Interactive Guidance Strategy: Facilitating the Transformation of Experience into Understanding through Reflective Dialogue

Interactive guidance is the core mediating mechanism connecting aesthetic experience with meaningful understanding. Through open-ended questioning, collaborative discussion, and appropriate modeling, teachers guide children to compare, express, and reflect on their own experiences, enabling sensory-felt experiences to become gradually verbalized and conceptualized.

In this process, the goal of interaction is not the transmission of knowledge but the clarification of experience and the generation of meaning. Through sustained teacher-child interaction, children begin to recognize

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the cultural significance and aesthetic value of the object, and aesthetic perception shifts from immediate experience toward a relatively stable understanding.

5.2.4. Progressive Complexity Strategy: Ensuring the Mechanism's Sustained Operation through a Developmental Structure

The construction of place-based aesthetic perception exhibits a distinct developmental character. Teaching practice should, based on children's age characteristics and experiential foundations, progress gradually from singular perception to multidimensional engagement, and further toward cultural understanding and creative expression.

By progressively increasing complexity in content depth, aesthetic demands, and modes of expression, children can continually deepen their aesthetic understanding through repeated experiences, preventing aesthetic activities from remaining at the level of one-off encounters. This strategy provides structural assurance for the mechanism's cyclical operation, enabling the continuous generation and development of aesthetic perception over time.

6. Conclusion

Focusing on how local resources can be transformed into an effective force for promoting aesthetic development in rural kindergarten art appreciation education, this study constructed and elaborated a Place-Based Mechanism Model for Aesthetic Perception Construction Based on Local Resources. The findings indicate that the key constraint on the aesthetic-educational efficacy of local resources in current practice is not a scarcity of resources, but rather the lack of a mechanism-centered, transformative pathway to develop children's aesthetic perception. The study further posits that place-based aesthetic perception is not an instantaneously generated aesthetic experience. Instead, it constitutes a developmental state gradually formed within real-life contexts through the continuous operation of a mechanism involving "the materialization of experience – multisensory engagement – emotional investment – meaning construction." Its generation relies on the synergistic operation of materials, context, mediation, and practical elements, rather than on the instrumental use of local resources. The mechanism-informed practical pathways provide an operable theoretical fulcrum for bridging the practical disjuncture between "resource introduction" and "aesthetic development."

At the theoretical level, this study deepens research on integrating local resources into early childhood art appreciation education from a mechanism-construction perspective, advancing the discussion from experiential description to the explanatory level of aesthetic perception-generation mechanisms. Simultaneously, from a place-based perspective, it expands the situational and processual understanding of how young children's aesthetic perception is generated, thereby enriching the analytical framework for research in preschool aesthetic education. At the practical level, the study suggests that art appreciation education in rural kindergartens should shift from a "material-use orientation" to an "aesthetic-construction orientation." This shift necessitates greater emphasis on teachers' comprehension of the aesthetic value of local culture and their capacity for pedagogical transformation. Furthermore, teaching evaluation should focus on the generative process of children's aesthetic perception and cultural understanding, moving beyond a sole focus on activity outcomes or on the presentation of artwork.

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This study has several limitations. The sample was primarily concentrated in Northern Sichuan; the applicability of its conclusions across different regional and cultural contexts requires further verification. Additionally, the research relied predominantly on qualitative analysis; long-term tracking and quantitative measurement of the developmental effects on children's aesthetic perception remain insufficient. Future research could employ cross-regional comparative studies and longitudinal designs to test further and refine the mechanism underlying the construction of place-based aesthetic perception. It could also explore the development of matching assessment tools and indicator systems.

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