

GAMES FOR DEVELOPING MOVEMENT SKILLS

EL JUEGO EN FUNCIÓN DEL DESARROLLO DE LAS ACTIVIDADES MOTRICES

Elizabeth Revé Velázquez. elizabethrevlazquez@ho.rimed.cu. Nursery Care, Banes Holguín, Cuba. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-0794-1551>

Maria Ross Mojarrieta. mross@ho.rimed.cu. Municipal Direction of Education, Banes Holguín, Cuba. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-3505-9191>

Daymarelis Prieto Hernández. daimareisprietohernandez@gmail.com. Science Med School, Banes, Holguín, Cuba. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-2401-800X>

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ABSTRACT

This study proposes the design of movement games to foster the development of basic motor skills in preschool children. To achieve this purpose, the historic-logical and analysis-synthesis methods were applied, along with empirical techniques such as observation and modeling, which allowed the validation of the proposed games for training basic motor skills. The proposal demonstrates that children show greater interest and motivation across different educational areas when engaging with these activities.

KEYWORDS: motor skills; movement games; pedagogical process

RESUMEN

Se propuso la elaboración de juegos de movimientos para ejercitar el desarrollo de las habilidades motrices básicas en los niños y niñas del grado Preescolar. Se utilizaron los métodos: histórico Lógico, análisis y síntesis; entre los empíricos se encuentran: observación, análisis síntesis y la modelación que permitieron corroborar criterios de validez de los juegos de movimientos para

la ejercitación de las habilidades motrices básicas por la autora. Con la propuesta se logra mayor interés y motivación de los niños y niñas en las diferentes esferas educativas.

PALABRAS CLAVE: habilidades motrices; juegos de movimientos; proceso pedagógico

INTRODUCTION

The Revolution, with its advances and transformations in Education, demands the improvement of educational work, focused on the formation of high human qualities, selfless dedication, altruism, responsibility, feelings of identity and unity, thereby enabling individuals to become agents of social change and transformation.

The possibilities for perfecting educational work, with the objective of contributing to the formation of the individual, is a social necessity and constitutes a difficult task due to the large number of conditioning factors of an economic, ideological-political, cultural, demographic nature, and the different contexts in which people simultaneously find themselves.

Pedagogical and psychological sciences are based on a scientific conception of man and education, and with the demands of social practices, they explore the most appropriate ways and forms to organize the system of social influences that affect the formation of new generations.

In this way, Physical Education is considered the primary activity for the preservation of health, physical development, and human well-being. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that social success and work influence the development of motor strength in children, youth, and adults, increase their resistance to difficulties and unfavorable external influences, also improve the body's adaptation, and strengthen health.

Thus, Physical Education takes an essential place in the system of the child's integral and harmonious development from the earliest ages. Precisely at this age, the foundations are laid for good health, correct physical development, and high efficiency for the organism.

Providing children with new movement possibilities and making these more adequate, rational, and efficient has been a constant objective of Physical Education, which has compelled the search for greater pedagogical efficiency in this field. Properly developed basic motor skills are indicators of the effectiveness achieved by physical movements combined with the development of physical capacities.

However, sports practice in schools, due to the methods used which are mainly centered on demonstration and repetition as a means of acquiring techniques, often becomes mere training or mini-entertainment rather than true education, paradoxically proving un motivating for many children who prefer free motor play over rigidly programmed learning sessions.

It has been demonstrated that play, with the child's entry into school through organized physical education, acquires greater significance in the acquisition of new forms of motor activity and for the development of those acquired more or less spontaneously. Also, in this school context, the educational potential of these playful activities for the formation of the individual is exploited.

All games should contribute important constructive elements to the child's personality. It is possible to help the child acquire a certain familiarity with success, develop in him a feeling of attitude and security, and provide opportunities to manifest his talent.

Many authors have researched the importance of play, among whom Fairen & Villarreal (2009) stand out, emphasizing the need not to reject sports for boys and girls but the methods used, therefore highlighting the need to use playful methods for the development of sports activities.

Pérez et al. (2013), propose movement games for independent motor activity in the sixth year of life but refer only to three skills: crawling, jumping, and climbing, not reflecting other skills that children of these ages also develop.

More recent experience by Pérez (2014) in a master's teaching material developed movement games, rhymes, songs, and riddles for exercising basic motor skills in preschool children, supporting the need to use movement games in scheduled physical education activities, independent activities, complementary activities, gymnastics, and recreational activities.

Despite the contributions offered, there are still shortcomings that do not guarantee that boys and girls perform basic motor skills with joy, enthusiasm, and motivation. Therefore, it is proposed to develop movement games that foster the development of basic motor skills through play, as it is the leading activity at this stage. This research aims to offer a solution to the following problem: How to exercise the development of basic motor skills in children at early ages? To solve the stated problem, the following objective is formulated: to develop movement games to promote the development of basic motor skills in early childhood.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methods used in this work are as follows: the historical-logical method to understand how certain phenomena have developed over time and the laws or regularities that explain their evolution. It allowed recognizing that these activities—rolling, crawling, and striking—have been fundamental in the motor development of these early stages of life. Its practice justifies that play is not only a recreational activity but a scientifically based strategy that responds to the logic of child development. The analysis-synthesis method, with the objective of interpreting the phenomenon under study in its parts and interaction as a whole, to determine the essential aspects in the literature consulted regarding the exercise of basic motor activities through movement games in young children, draw conclusions, and offer arguments that support

the problem, its description, as well as the development of the movement games.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The preschool grade is the period of life when the world of human reality opens up to the child. Greater communication with adults is observed, primarily in their play; they have surpassed the simple manipulation of objects and have increased relationships and communication with adults.

At this grade, children are characterized by the systematic performance of varied motor actions, enriched by their own initiative and a higher level of independence. Basic motor skills contribute to creating a positive personality in children; they assimilate knowledge, relationships, and personality variations through teaching. They achieve a level of development in language, drawing, and movements.

Firstly, there is the game in which the child imitates the adult, his social functions, and relationships towards objects and other people through the mediation of the role the child interprets. The child's behavior, his attitude towards objects and playmates (who perform the functions of other people) are mediated by the image of the adult that serves as his guide.

It is important to highlight how children through these motor skills acquire knowledge to apply later. All this undoubtedly results in a better prepared social lens to face the social tasks that correspond to them in future times. Through physical activity and play, children develop positive qualities that will determine the traits of their personality.

The motor development of the child from 0 to 6 years cannot be understood as something that conditions him, but as something that the child will produce through his desire to act on the environment and to become increasingly competent (Martínez, 2000). The aim of motor development is to achieve mastery and control of one's own body, to obtain all its possibilities for action.

This development is manifested through motor action, which consists of movements oriented towards relationships with the world surrounding the child and plays a primary role in all his progress and perfection, from primary reflex movements to the coordination of large muscle groups involved in postural control mechanisms, balance, and locomotion.

Motor improvement is subject to the four laws of development: Cephalocaudal Law, Proximodistal Law, Law from General to Specific, and Law of Flexor-Extensor Development (Losada, 2009); and development, in turn, has a series of characteristics that distinguish him, causing both he and his motor perfection to depend on maturation and learning, because when learning in movement coordination occurs, the nervous system and muscular system must have achieved an adequate level of maturation.

At six years old, that spontaneity, which the child has displayed until this age, fades. Now what he seeks is to demonstrate his skills, measures himself, asserts himself, in short, to affirm himself; at this point, the acquisition or formation process of basic motor skills comes to an end, as basic motor skills lay the groundwork for more complex and complementary movements, so we are already talking about sports skills. Motor activity, as noted by Backes, Porta & de Anglat (2015), is a fundamental part of human development in the first stages of life due to the capacity to produce coordinated and voluntary muscle movements in children. This is how the foundations are established for acquiring the child's language and cognitive development; it also allows spontaneity and creativity in his developmental stages, in addition to optimizing social skills.

Despite the existence of numerous theorists researching the importance of motor education, in the school environment it is not interwoven and articulated with educational and curricular processes. An impediment to school growth, bodily development, motor expression, body awareness, and the development of motor and coordinative capacities is often established.

As recommended by Peña, Toro, Osses, Pachón & Hernández (2018), emphasis should be placed on working on basic movement patterns from the initial ages through school Physical Education; these patterns are executed at relevant and predetermined times, in school environments without neglecting other academic areas, since all are important and have the same value in the children integral formation. This activity gives the socio-affective relationships they have with their peers, thus forming creative, social, and active students.

Torres & Sáenz (2019) emphasize emotion and the physical, an inseparable link, which helps the body and mind achieve greater psychomotor development not only in children but in all biological stages of the life cycle. However, to be able to work on the emotional aspect, Bernate (2021) relates that the best way to introduce the child to emotionality in motor education work is achieved by developing self-esteem and self-recognition, fundamental aspects to initiate the motor development process.

Therefore, these components should be a fundamental part so that parents and professors see the importance and relevance as a pillar in the training process and the emotional, social, cultural, didactic, and methodological benefits this implies in children formative process (Bernate, Fonseca & Betancourt, 2020).

Consequently, it is relevant to mention what is described by Aristizabal, Ramos & Chirino (2018), who state that motor activity should begin to be developed while the child is having fun. In this way, the child will perfect his motor skills, get more involved with socialization, and aid his creativity. That is, play as a fundamental axis develops motor activity and socialization in the child, brings benefits to improve his creativity, skills, and physical-cognitive qualities, body recognition, and memory. Similarly, motor education is the form of the complete being, as it associates action awareness, the subject relationship and interaction with the environment, not only physical but social and communal.

On the one hand, Garófano & Guirado (2017) mention that motor activity is important not only because it allows students' motor development but also because through it the child expresses and communicates his emotions and gets knowledge belonging to the cycle, with movement being a determining factor in learning as it is considered a motivating agent capable of driving the child to action, which together with play takes a relevant place in the child's daily life.

Specifically, motor activity is one of the principles for taking the motivation provided by the practice of activities and the attitudes that the Physical Education professor expresses to their students, as this determines whether children adopt positive and participatory attitudes to find motivation and improve their basic motor skills. Similarly, Urrutia Garmendia & Arruza (2017) express in their contributions to motor activity for the child, mentioning the motivation they have when being active; they mention how the student can be motivated not only through active movement but also when he questions, when he helps, when he begins to recognize and experiment with his environment. Consequently, the child tends to feel a desire to get more, managing to analyze in depth and questioning the purpose of each activity.

On the other hand, it is found that play is a strategy or resource for motor development, which Physical Education professors use to begin developing children's motor skills, as this is how they begin recognition and experimentation of themselves based on their environment, enriching their imagination and social interactions. It not only focuses on these points but also on establishing confidence in themselves and those around them.

When developing movement games, the following elements should be considered:

- ✓ They should be carried out in a playful manner, to develop or perfect basic motor skills and coordinative capacities.

- ✓ During their execution, they provide children with pleasure, joy; they show themselves active, manifest initiatives, demonstrate their spontaneity, and satisfy their need for movement, which influences them very positively.

Proposal of games for developing motor activities

Game 1: «Creeping and rolling, my ball goes for a walk»

Objective: To crawl a distance of 8 m and roll balls.

Materials: Balls, baskets, and cards.

Organization: By teams.

Development: The area is prepared where mats will be placed, height markers with a rope at a height of 3 m, baskets with balls, and cards with numbers. The professor will motivate the children with a video where Chuncha invites the neighbors to go camping, but first they will have to do exercises to prepare their bodies since they will have competitions at the camp. The professor insists that the children pay attention because later she will ask them some questions.

Why does Chuncha insist that her neighbors do exercises?

What happened to Pancho?

What did Chuncha say to him?

Why did Pancho understand that he had to do exercises?

What happened after Pancho got in shape?

Well, today I invite you to play a nice game.

The children are divided into two teams with an equal number of boys and girls.

The first children from each team will start crawling on the mats at the professor's command, they will go under the rope without lifting their bodies, then they will choose from the basket a ball identified with a number, they will go rolling the ball and place it in the basket that has the same number as the ball.

Rule: The team that finishes first wins.

Conclusions: Each child will be given a rag ball made by the community mothers.

Game 2: «Hitting and throwing, my ball advances»

Objective: To hit objects at a distance of 4 to 5 meters and to throw.

Materials: Balls and ball catchers.

Organization: By teams.

Development: The area is prepared where the children will be placed, two lines will be formed, and upon hearing the cue, the first child in each line will hit towards the ball catcher, and if he gets the ball inside, he scores a goal.

Rule: Each time a goal is scored, the team gets an additional point.

Variant: The game can be played by hitting with the hands.

Conclusions: Children will be encouraged with a printed photo of Messi.

Game 3: «If you hit, you win»

Objective: To hit the ball with the hands in different directions.

Materials: Balls and balloons.

Organization: In teams.

Development: The area is prepared where balloons are placed in different directions. The children listen to the rhyme:

My ball I hit

Softly, softly without stopping

And I invite you, little friend

To come play with me.

The children are invited to play with the balls, motivated by a paper balloon, which has grown tired of traveling through the air and now wants them to teach it to move in another way.

How can the ball be moved without rolling or throwing it, but making it hit the ground?

How can we do it?

What can we use to hit the ball?

How would we do it with our hands?

Well, look, the balloon has brought other friends to play. What are these balloons like?

What color is this balloon?

Well, let's form two teams to carry the balls by hitting them to where the balloon of their team's color is, while listening to the rhyme.

Rule: The team that arrives first and hits the ball correctly wins.

Conclusions: The children are rewarded with a balloon.

Game 4: «The carnival of Vegetables»

Objective: To roll vegetables in pairs in different directions.

Materials: Vegetables made of foam.

Organization: In pairs.

Development: The area where the game will take place is prepared. The children are explained that they will roll the different vegetables at the carnival in different directions, with their head, hands, and knees, but they will do so while listening to the tongue twister:

Rose and Rosita

Play, roll

Laugh, jump without stopping

How happy Rose and Rosita are

They never tire of rolling.

The educator explains that they can choose the boy or girl with whom they want to roll the vegetables, looks if any child has difficulty doing it, provides guidance, always looking within the group for which pair does it best so that the child focuses their attention.

Rule: The pairs that best follow the educator's instructions win.

Conclusions: The children are rewarded with a puzzle made of vegetables.

Game 5: «Taking Elpidio Valdés for a walk»

Objective: To crawl along straight and wavy lines.

Materials: Chalk and animal silhouettes.

Organization: In quartets.

Development: The educator prepares the area where straight and wavy lines will be drawn.

Who remembers the name of this character?

Where have you seen him?

Well, today we are going to show our friend Elpidio how to go through these paths to get to the wilderness faster. We will first go along the straight path and then the wavy path. To go through these paths, we are going to turn into a little animal that is a friend of Palmiche, but that walks by crawling. What is this animal called?

Would you like to walk like the snake?

Would you like to crawl like the snake?

Well, let's crawl like the snake, listening to the rhyme:

There goes the snake

from the hot land,

that when it crawls

you can see its teeth...

Rule: The children who first arrive where the silhouettes of the horse Palmiche are win.

Conclusions: The children are rewarded with a coloring book of Elpidio Valdés characters.

Game 6: «The Amusement Park»

Objective: To roll balls with the foot from different positions (standing and squatting).

Materials: Rag balls, ropes, benches, rods, and bowling pins.

Organization: Dispersed.

Development: The educator motivates them with a conversation: This week we will celebrate Culture Week in our municipality, and many people from other places will come and build an amusement park. Would you like to play in it?

Well, let's close our eyes and imagine we are in the park.

What do you see in the park?

Well, in the park where we will play today there are many balls to play with. What are these balls like?

They need you to take them for a walk around the park.

How can we take them for a walk?

How will we walk them with our foot?

Well, let's play at walking the balls with our foot in different ways at the educator's command; we will roll it with the foot from a standing position and another command from a squatting position, going under objects.

In the area, there will be objects like ropes, high benches at a height of 4 centimeters, a jump rope rod placed at a distance of 6 centimeters, and bowling pins.

Rule: The children who finish first in each of the commands given by the educator win.

Conclusions: The winning children will be rewarded with a rag ball made by the family.

After analyzing the results and applying the post-test for the children, the results are as follows:

- ✓ Spatial orientation: 70% of the children orient themselves adequately in space.
- ✓ Movement coordination: 90% coordinate the movement of their arms and legs according to the educator's command when rolling, crawling, and hitting.

- ✓ They get posture (90%) when performing movement exercises in the skills of rolling, crawling, and hitting.
- ✓ They perform the movement games independently (90%) in the skill of rolling, crawling, and hitting.

Once the created games were put into practice, it was observed that in the ten processes, three were evaluated as Very Good (MB) and the rest as Good (B) for 90%, showing greater development in the skills of rolling, crawling, and hitting in the children, greater use of substitute objects, and motivation for consecutive actions that allow the continuity of the game. Greater interest and motivation were awakened in the children across different educational spheres. In the observed independent and complementary activities, all were evaluated as Good for 100%. An increase in motivation in the development of motor skills is shown.

CONCLUSIONS

Movement games based on basic motor skills enable greater body coordination, security in displacements, and better control of strength in actions for children. The proposal favors the development of laterality, agility, and motor response capacity; furthermore, it stimulates self-confidence and enjoyment of group work. Overall, the results show that play constitutes an effective resource to enhance basic skills and consolidate motor learning in an integral and enjoyable way.

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