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The use of small games in developing motor and skill competencies among primary school students: "A field study of some primary schools in Central Algiers."

Touchen safia
University of Algiers 3, Department of Physical Education and Sports; The Laboratory of Science, Expertise and Technology of Physical and Sports Activities.
touchen.safia20@gmail.com

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Corresponding author:
Touchen safia
E-mail: touchen.safia20@gmail.com

Abstract
This study aims to highlight the role of small games in developing motor and skill competencies among primary school students. For this purpose, a descriptive method was adopted, and the sample consisted of 12 teachers from the central Algiers region. The sample was intentional, and the triadic method was used to find the significant percentages of the data. Additionally, the Chi-square test was used to clarify the statistically significant differences at the alpha significance level of 0.05. The study revealed that small games are frequently used in physical education classes for students. The results confirmed that these games contribute to the development of motor skills and enhance their interaction during the class. Therefore, small games are considered an effective means to improve their motor performance. Based on this, the study recommended increasing the use of small games in physical education and sports classes to enhance motor skills and stimulate greater interaction among students.

1. **Introduction:**

The childhood stage is one of the most important life stages that a person goes thru, as it forms the fundamental pillar for physical, cognitive, psychological, and social development **(Ben Abdul Karim Al-Mustafa Abdul, 2018, p. 241).** And it directly affects his ability to learn and interact with his environment, especially regarding motor and skill abilities, which are considered the cornerstone of physical education**. (Brahimi Issa, Barbakh Rabah, & Chrait, 2020, p. 361)**.

From this perspective, there is an increasing interest in modern educational studies in developing motor and skill competencies among primary school students, (Salim Meguideh. & Hager, 2018, p. 69) .

considers it an essential element in building character and honing the basic skills necessary for physical activity, as Piaget's cognitive development theory **(Piaget, 1970, p. 350).**

confirms that the child learns effectively thru sensory-motor activity and direct interaction with the environment, especially in the concrete operational stage, while **(Mourad & Karoum, Teaching Behaviors Among Physical Education Teachers, 2024, p. 113).**

emphasizes the importance of social interaction and teamwork in enhancing learning and developing skills, while **Gardner's (Gardner, 1983, p. 116)**

theory of multiple intelligences indicates that bodily-kinesthetic intelligence is an integral part of the child's holistic development. Modern motor learning theories ,stress the importance of organizing motor experiences in a way that enables the child to acquire new skills and adapt to the demands of physical activity **(Mansouriya D. , 2010, p. 254).**

. Among the modern educational strategies, small games come as an effective approach, as they provide learning situations based on movement and experimentation, and offer the opportunity to develop motor and skill competencies, in addition to enhancing students' motivation and participation within the classes**. (Mohammed., Jassim, & Obeid, Susan Hudood, p. 69)**

Previous studies have confirmed the importance of this type of games in various educational and sports environments. **(Othman S. b., 2025, p. 99).**

highlighted the effectiveness of educational units based on small games in improving flexibility, response speed, and coordination abilities among elementary school students. Meanwhile, **(Qadri, 2015, p. 239)**

showed an improvement in transition speed and reaction time among first-year middle school students thanks to small games. The study by (Hajaj, Haq, & Abdel, 2021, p. 170), , confirmed that amateur football coaches rely on small games to develop physical and technical elements. Additionally, the study by **(El-Sayed, 2020, p. 10) ,** demonstrated the impact of activities based on small games on the physical and motor abilities of third-grade elementary school students. The **s**tudy **(Abdelsalam, 2019, p. 198)** demonstrated the importance of incorporating small games within educational units to develop motor skills. **Meanwhile, the study by (Qar1) (Qarqour, Al-Eidani, & Baouch, 2018, p. 17)**.

indicated the impact of the small games program on improving physical qualities and basic skills among handball players. The study by **(Hicham, 2014, p. 165),** confirmed the significance of mini-games in developing basic skills for cildren during the sensitive growth phase, enhancing their ability to respond quickly and learn motor skills. Despite these studies, the reality of employing small games in Algerian primary schools remains unclear in terms of the degree of usage and its correlation with the development of motor and skill competencies. Additionally, local studies lack a descriptive field analysis that reveals the level of application of this educational approach within the school environment and its connection to student participation and motivation toward physical activity. From here, the research problem emerges in the main question: What is the reality of using small games in physical education classes in primary schools, and what is the relationship between the degree of their employment and the level of motor and skill competencies among students? From this standpoint, the research aims to identify the degree of use of small games in physical education classes, and to study the relationship between their use and the level of motor and skill competencies among students. It also seeks to analyze the extent to which this reflects on the motivation to participate in the class. Additionally, it aims to clarify the operational concepts used; small games are defined terminologically as a set of simple games that aim to stimulate mental and motor abilities, while motor competencies are defined as the basic movements for primary school students, such as running, jumping, throwing, and balancing.

It is measured according to objective indicators, while primary education is defined as the educational institution that organizes the first and second stages of basic education **(Fathi & Zarour Lubna, 2021, p. 228).**

The study is based on descriptive hypotheses that predict a correlation between the degree of using small games and the level of student participation in the classroom, and that practicing small games is related to the level of basic motor and skill competencies. And the use of appropriate educational strategies to integrate small games is linked to the level of motor and skill competencies of the students, in accordance with the descriptive methodology adopted in the research, ensuring the achievement of its objectives and meeting the reviewers' requirements, enhancing the validity of the results derived from the field analysis, and confirming and supporting the findings of previous field studies both locally and internationally (Abdul, 2024, p. 310)**,** In the context of physical education. The importance of precise educational planning and systematic employment of small games as an effective means to develop physical and motor skills in elementary school children, in accordance with the theories of Piaget, Vygotsky, Gardner, and modern motor learning theories.

And aims to identify:

- How small games affect the basic competencies of primary school children
- The extent to which small games contribute to the development of motor skills in children
- Study terms

• Small games:

Terminological definition: It is considered one of the most important training methods in developing tactical performance and increasing its effectiveness, especially offensive tactical principles, and it is the best means for player development **(Gendy, 2011, p. 56)**

• **Motor competencies**: These are some manifestations of motor achievement that appear with the stages of early physical maturation.

- They are forms of movements that are not restricted or defined by any external influences related to tools, time, competition, and performance levels, except for the level of individual abilities, which are considered one of the most important determinants of performance for these general forms of movements. These are the basic movements for elementary school students: "running, jumping, throwing, hopping," as measured by the Robert Johnson scale **(Rateb, 1999, p. 65)**.

Operational definition: These are movements performed by an individual and are considered the fundamental pillar in a person's life across various fields, especially in sports. These skills include walking, running, jumping, and balancing. They are forms and derivatives of natural movement that can

be taught and acquired thru various physical tasks, which challenge the child's abilities and help them gain a good repertoire of motor skills.

- Primary education: It is a public educational institution that organizes the first and second stages of basic education and is almost completely independent from the middle school, except for matters related to educational coordination and financial affairs

(Saber, Foundations of Scientific Research, 2003, p. 54)

2- Field procedures

2-1/ Research Method: The descriptive method was chosen as it is suitable for the research variables.

2-2/Variable Identification: This study includes the following variables:

2-2-1/ Independent variable: Use of small games

2-2-2/ Dependent variable: Development of competencies and cognitive skills among primary school students.

2-3/ Tools of the exploratory study: Questionnaire

2-4/ Scientific conditions for the tool: The term "test reliability" refers to the "degree of confidence," meaning that the test results do not change (i.e., have a constant value) during repetition or retesting. In other words, it provides stability to the results obtained by the researcher if the experiment is repeated on the same group **(Laili, 2005, p. 120)**

. This means that it will yield nearly the same results if it is reapplied multiple times under the same conditions and on the same individuals, thus demonstrating a kind of stability.

The test-retest method is considered one of the most valid methods for determining reliability. The researcher calculated the reliability coefficient for each questionnaire using the test-retest method by conducting it on three professors outside the research sample but within the same research community. To eliminate any influences, the time interval between the two tests ("test and retest") was one week. The researcher ensured that the distribution of the questionnaire was under the same conditions and at the same time. After recording the results obtained by the assistance team, the researcher performed statistical analysis and extracted the results using the Pearson correlation coefficient.

Validity of the tool: The validity of the research tool is an important condition that indicates the extent to which the questionnaire achieves its intended objectives, meaning that validity varies according to the purposes it aims to measure and the test conducted to prove them, This means that it measures what it is intended to measure and does not measure something else or in addition to it **(Saber, foundations of Scientific Research, 1993, p. 167).**

Table1: It shows the practical conditions for the

Statistical transactions/ questionnaire	Sample	Stabilité coefficient	Self-honesty	Level of significance	Statistical significance
For tacheras onlay	03	0،99	0،92	0،05	Daal

tool

According to Wajih Mahboub, it is one of the important conditions for a good test, which means "the absence of subjective judgments by the researcher or the availability of objectivity without distinction and subjective interference by the experimenter. The less it is affected by subjective judgments, the greater the value of objectivity **(Mahioob, 1993, p. 255)**, As **(Abdul Yemeni Boudaou, 2011, p. 200),** , the objective test is an abstract and unbiased test as it gives the same results regardless of the examiners, meaning the results remain the same no matter who the examiners are, and the results are not affected by the examiner's subjectivity or personality, **(Boubaoud, 2006, p. 71)**

2-5/ Research Community: The original study community consists of primary school teachers in the central district of Algiers.

2-6/ The sample: A purposive sample of some primary school teachers who teach in the central district of Algiers, consisting of an exploratory sample of 3 teachers and a main sample of 12 teachers.

2-7/ Statistical tools: The statistical methods included percentages as well as the Chi-square test for greater accuracy.

2-8/ Fields: Human field: The study was conducted on primary school teachers, numbering 12.

Temporal scope: The study period extended from October to June 2024.

Spatial domain: The study was conducted in the primary schools of Central Algiers, which number five primary schools.

They are Al-Hurriya School, Al-Manani School, Boumenjel School, Khair Eddine Hassan Khodja School, and Amir Khalid School in Central Algiers.

2-9/ Presentation and analysis of the results

Question No. (1): To what extent are small games used in physical education and sports classes in primary education?

The purpose of the question: to identify the extent of using small games in physical education and sports classes in primary education.

Table No. (2): Shows the extent of the use of small games in physical education and sports classes.

Q.n"1"	fr	pr	The exp	Df	k^2 C	K2 t	sig	The decision
Heavy use	10	%83،33	04	2	13،5	5،99	0،05	Sig
Average usage	01	%8،33	04					
Weak usage	01	%8،33	04					
For the total	12	%100	04					

Analysis of the results:

The table shows that the responses of the sample members (12 in total) were divided into three groups:

The majority of individuals (10 professors, 83.33%) indicated a significant use of small games within the classes.

One individual (8.33%) indicated moderate use.

One individual (8.33%) indicated weak usage.

To confirm the significance of these differences, a Chi-square test was conducted, where the calculated Chi-square value was 13.5 with degrees of freedom, which is significant at the $\alpha = 0.05$ level, indicating that the differences in the levels of using small games are statistically significant

Discussion of the first question:

The study results indicate that the use of small games within physical education and sports classes is done to a large extent, reflecting a genuine trend among teachers toward regularly integrating these activities. These results are consistent with the study by **(Adam, 2025, p. 45)**on the effectiveness of proposed educational units using small games for elementary school students (9-10 years), which showed that the integration of small games effectively contributes to improving the motor skills of students. The results also align with the study b**y (Fattah, 2020, p. 11).** which confirmed that the use of small games and motor education activities enhances motor performance and increases students' motivation to participate.

Therefore, the high rate of use of small games reflects their suitability for primary education and their effectiveness as an encouraging educational tool,

What justifies their widespread adoption in physical education classes.

Question No. (2): What is the role of playing small games in developing motor and skill competencies among primary school students?

The purpose of the question: To determine the role of practicing small games in improving fine and skillful motor skills in children.

Table No. (3): It illustrates the role of practicing small games in developing motor and skill competencies among primary school students.

Q.n"2"	Fr	pr	The exp	Df	k^2 C	K2 t	sig	sig	The Decision
Heavy use	8	%66،66	04	04 01-03-	2	6،5	5،99	0،05	sig
Average usage	3	%30	04						
Weak usage	1	%8،33	04						
For the total	12	%100	04						

Analysis of the results:

The table shows that the majority of the sample members (8 teachers, 66.66%) confirmed that practicing small games always contributes to the development of motor and skill competencies among students, while 3 teachers (25%) indicated that it sometimes has an effect, and only one individual (8.33%) saw that it never has an effect.

The results showed statistically significant differences at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, where the calculated chi-squared value was 6.5, which is greater than the tabulated value of 5.99, indicating the validity of the hypothesis that small games play an important role in developing motor and skill competencies in children

Discussion of the second question:

The study results confirm that playing small games is an effective means of developing motor skills and neuromuscular coordination among primary school students, as evidenced by the high percentage of responses in the "always" option. This is attributed to the fact that small games provide a stimulating and enjoyable learning environment, helping children improve their basic motor skills and develop individual and collective abilities.

These results are consistent with the study by **(Hicham, 2014, p. 78)**

University in Mostaganem, which confirmed that small games significantly contributed to enhancing motor and skill competencies among primary school students, supporting their integration into daily educational programs for physical education classes.

Question No. (3): What is the role of using appropriate educational strategies to integrate small games in enhancing motor and skill competencies among primary school students?

The objective of the question: To determine the extent to which the use of appropriate educational strategies to integrate small games contributes to the development of motor and skill competencies in children.

Table No. (4): Represents the role of integrating small games strategies in developing motor and skill competencies.

Q.n"2"	Fr	pr	The exp	Df	k^2 C	K2 t	sig	sig	The decision
Heavy use	09	%75	04	05 02- 03-	2	9‹5	5‹99	0 ,05	sig
Average usage	02	%16‹66	04						
Weak usage	01	%8‹33	04						
For the total	12	%100	04						

Analysis of the results:

The table shows that the majority of the sample (9 teachers, 75%) believe that using appropriate educational strategies to integrate small games always contributes to enhancing motor and skill competencies among primary school students. While 2 teachers (16.66%) saw that it sometimes has an effect, one individual (8.33%) considered its effect to be rare. The results showed

statistically significant differences at the significance level $\alpha = 0.05$, where the calculated chi-squared value was 9.5, greater than the tabulated value of 5.99, indicating the validity of the hypothesis that strategies for integrating small games enhance the development of motor and skill competencies in children.

Discussion of the third question:

The results showed that employing appropriate educational strategies to integrate small games significantly

enhances motor and skill competencies, indicating the importance of systematic planning and suitable educational strategies when incorporating small games into the lesson. This aligns with what **(Abdel Haq Chleghm & Said Hajjaj, 2021)** indicated regarding the development of physical and technical-tactical aspects for children, and the study **(Slim & Imane Hajar, 2018)** which demonstrated that integrating small games enhances cognitive-motor abilities, a fundamental aspect of building motor competence. This conclusion reinforces modern educational theories, aligning with the Active Learning Theory as discussed by **(Brown & Green, 2016, p. 42)**, in the book "Active Learning in Physical Education,"

which posits that active participation enhances children's motor and cognitive skills and encourages physical activity. It also aligns with the Play-Based Learning Theory according to **(Pyle & Laura, 2018, p. 57)**, in the book "Play and Motor Development in Children," which emphasizes that organized play provides a stimulating and safe learning environment that allows children to develop motor, social, and cognitive skills. Additionally, it aligns with the Constructivist Learning Theory as discussed by Bianca and **(Piaget, 1970)**, in the book "Constructivist Approaches in Physical Education," which underscores the importance of involving the child in building their skills thru experience and practical practice

4/ General discussion:

The results of the current study showed that the use of small games in physical education and sports classes among primary school students is done to a large extent, as most teachers confirmed their constant or frequent reliance on these games. This reflects a practical trend and underscores the importance of employing this method within the classes. The results of the second question indicated that the practice of small games clearly contributes to the development of basic motor and skill competencies in children, as a high percentage of responses indicated "always" compared to other options. This suggests a tangible positive effect of these games on motor performance. This finding aligns with previous studies, such as the study by **(Hicham, 2014),** which confirmed the effectiveness of small games in developing basic skills among youth, and the study by **(Adam, 2025),** which highlighted the improvement of motor abilities and increased motivation of students thru the integration of small games. Additionally, the study by **(Fattah, 2020)** confirmed the role of small games in developing motor performance among third-grade primary school students.

Based on this, it can be concluded that practicing small games and using appropriate educational strategies to integrate them represent an effective

educational means for developing motor and skill competencies among elementary school students. This approach combines the theoretical aspect supported by previous studies and educational theories with the practical reality within the classroom, ensuring that the practice aligns with the characteristics of children's motor, psychological, and social development. It also enhances their effectiveness as a successful educational tool in developing motor and skill performance among children in elementary education.

5/Recommendations:

Based on the study's results, it is recommended to intensify the use of small games within physical education classes regularly and systematically, due to their effective role in developing basic motor and skill competencies among primary school students, and to motivate their drive for active participation in the classes. Training teachers on appropriate educational strategies to integrate small games is essential to ensure their systematic use, taking into account the physical, cognitive, and psychological characteristics of children. This includes diversifying physical activities to match the varying ability levels of students and focusing on developing basic movements such as running, jumping, throwing, and balancing, which achieves comprehensive development of motor skills. It is also recommended to regularly monitor students' performance thru accurate records to measure the development of motor and skill-related abilities, and to make continuous adjustments to programs and activities based on observed results. It is also important to encourage teamwork and social interaction during games, as this contributes to enhancing social skills and cooperation among children, in addition to improving motor efficiency. It is also recommended to provide an inspiring and safe school environment, equipped with appropriate spaces and tools for physical activities, while adhering to safety standards to avoid injuries. Finally, it is preferable to conduct periodic follow-up studies to evaluate the long-term impact of integrating small games, whether in terms of improving motor and skill performance or increasing students' motivation to participate in physical activity, ensuring the sustainability of the educational benefits of these games within educational programs Based on the study results regarding the use of small games in physical education classes and their impact on motor and skill competencies among primary school students, it is recommended to intensify the integration of small games regularly and systematically within the classes, as they are an effective means to develop basic motor and skill competencies and to motivate students to participate actively. This aligns

with **(Piaget, 1970)**assertion that effective learning is achieved thru sensory-motor activity and direct interaction with the environment, and **(Vygotsky's, 1978)**,emphasis on the importance of social interaction and teamwork in enhancing learning. It is also recommended to organize training courses for teachers to train them on appropriate educational strategies for integrating small games in a systematic manner that considers the physical, cognitive, and psychological development
characteristics of children. Additionally, it is advised to diversify physical activities to suit different ability levels and focus on basic movements such as running, jumping, throwing, and balancing, ensuring the comprehensive development of motor skills and reflecting (**Gardner, 1983)**, principles of multiple intelligences regarding bodily-kinesthetic intelligence as part of the child's overall development Regularly monitoring and evaluating students' performance is essential, thru accurate records to measure the development of motor and skill-related abilities and adjusting activities according to the results. Encouraging teamwork and social interaction during games enhances social skills and cooperation among students, in line with the principles of Active Learning Theory, which emphasizes the importance of active participation in building motor and cognitive skills. A stimulating and safe school environment should also be provided, equipped with appropriate spaces and tools for practicing physical activities, while adhering to safety standards to avoid injuries. Finally, it is recommended to conduct follow-up studies to assess the long-term impact of integrating small games on improving motor and skill performance and developing students' motivation to participate in physical activity, ensuring the sustainability of the educational benefits of these games and supporting the application of modern educational theories in practical implementation within primary schools.

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