

EFFECTS OF PLAY AND MOVEMENT EDUCATION ON MOTOR DEVELOPMENT DURING THE PRESCHOOL PERIOD

OKUL ÖNCESİ DÖNEMDE OYUN VE HAREKET EĞİTİMİNİN MOTOR GELİŞİM ÜZERİNE ETKİLERİ

¹Tonguç VARDAR*

¹Uludağ Üniversitesi, Spor Bilimleri Fakültesi, Antrenörlük Eğitimi Bölümü

* tongucvardar@hotmail.com

ABSTRACT

With the impact of today's fast urbanization, areas that children can play have reduced. A large part of the old children's games played between the neighborhoods have been forgotten. Today's children are growing up with games played on a computer or virtual games offered by other technological tools rather than being physically active. This situation causes a lack of movement in children's lives. Lack of physical activity in children causes various health problems, especially childhood obesity, which is considered to be an epidemic. At the same time, children with sedentary lifestyles have slower development compared to other children in terms of physical and motor skills. Therefore, it is a great necessity for children to include games or other physical activities in their life that involve physical activity. Especially during early childhood, the period when growth and development are rapid, educational games and movement-based learning programs have considerable importance in order to provide movement training, increase physical activity, and support growth and development. In this framework, this study focuses on the benefits of games and movement education on motor development during early childhood.

Keywords: Play, movement education, motor development

ÖZET

Günümüzde hızlı kentleşmenin etkisi ile çocukların oyun oynayabileceği alanlar azalmıştır. Mahalle aralarında oynanan eski çocuk oyunlarının büyük bir bölümü unutulmaya yüz tutmuştur. Günümüz çocukları fiziksel olarak hareketli olabilecekleri oyunlardan ziyade bilgisayar veya diğer teknolojik aletlerin sunduğu sanal oyunlarla büyümektedirler. Bu durum çocukların hayatlarında hareket azlığına neden olmaktadır. Çocuklarda hareket azlığı başta çağımızın hastalığı kabul edilen çocukluk çağı obezitesi olmak üzere çeşitli sağlık sorunlarına neden olmaktadır. Aynı zamanda hareketsiz yaşam tarzına sahip çocukların fiziksel ve motorik özellikler açısından gelişimleri diğer çocuklardan daha yavaş olmaktadır. Dolayısıyla çocukların hayat akışı içerisinde fiziksel aktivite içeren oyunlara veya diğer fiziksel etkinliklere yer verilmesi büyük bir zorunluluk arz etmektedir. Özellikle büyüme ve gelişimin hızlı olduğu dönemlerin başında gelen erken çocukluk döneminde hareket eğitiminin sağlanması, fiziksel etkinliğin artırılması, büyüme ve gelişimin desteklenmesi için eğitsel oyunlar ve hareket eğitimi oldukça önemlidir. Bu çerçevede yapılan bu çalışmada erken çocukluk döneminde oyunların ve hareket eğitiminin motor gelişim üzerine olan yararları üzerinde durulmuştur.

Anahtar kelimeler: Oyun, hareket eğitimi, motor gelişim

JEL CODE: L83

INTRODUCTION

Movements in human life begin in the prenatal period. Reflexive movements are defined as the first movements of a fetus in a mother's womb in the prenatal period. Although these movements are made involuntarily, they form the basis of motor movements. Primitive reflexes that babies voluntarily make, emerge during the first two years after birth. Primitive movements serve as the foundation for basic, voluntary movements of later infancy. Primitive movements generally come from locomotor movements such as controlling the head, neck and body muscles, reaching, grabbing and letting go, crawling and walking. The use of basic mobility skills in infants begins at around 3-4 years of age (Mengütaç, 1999).

During the basic movement period, children try to develop many motor skills, such as running, jumping, throwing, catching and kicking a ball with their feet. Many educators, especially parents, speculate that the basic mobility skills of children develop automatically. However, this is not the case for a large majority of children. For this reason, studies supporting the development of movement should be applied in order to support the basic mobility skills of children. Nonetheless, during the movement activity training applied in early childhood, the developmental characteristics of the child rather than the age should be taken into consideration in the selection of motor activity (Özer & Özer, 2002).

The basic movements that begin to develop in children from the age of two are first practiced in a rough manner. This stage is referred to as the beginning phase, in which children move on to understanding and experimenting. The second phase of the basic movements period is called the first phase. In this period, children start to make movements more cohesively and in a controlled manner. Maturation phase is the final phase of learning and applying basic movements. In this period, children perform basic movements in a mechanically effective, controlled and more coherent manner. These phases, which play an important role in the development of basic mobility skills in children, begin at the age of 2 and continue until the first years of schooling (Muratlı, 2007).

Motor development generally refers to the development of features such as strength, speed and endurance. The learning and development of motor skills is a lifelong process (Mengütay, 1999). The primary factor affecting motor development is maturity. Especially in children, psychomotor development is based on maturation. For example, in order for babies to carry their body weights comfortably, their legs must be strong enough. For this reason, the effort shown in teaching motor skills has no significance unless the child is ready (Hasırcı et al., 2009). Besides, children's motor development processes can be supported by physical activity and games appropriate for their ages and development periods.

Effect of Games on Motor Development

It is known that the use of game activities during the preschool period in an educational environment ensures the versatile development of children. In this context, it can be said that games played during the preschool period are in fact educational tools (Ulutaş, 2011). In addition, game-based educational activities are the sum of planned activities that support the physical development of children. Through play, children will have the opportunity to learn and reinforce the basic skills they will use during adulthood (Ayan & Memiş, 2012).

Disorders that may occur in the perception and integration of movement skills in early childhood effect movement development negatively. Therefore, the correct perception of stimulants, integrating sensory motor knowledge and ensuring muscle-nerve coordination are important issues in terms of movement development of children in this period (Özer & Özer, 2002). In this context, play activities intended for children create an important learning environment. This learning environment provides positive contributions to physical and motor development as well as the mental and spiritual development of children. From this point of view, games should be considered as a phenomenon that provides important contributions to the development of children. A baby's game in the first years of life is concentrated around her own bodylines and the objects in her immediate surroundings. Due to this game, the baby will recognize herself and these first forms of play in her life will play an important role in supporting the psychomotor development. As for pre-school period, children generally enjoy playing games using certain play materials, as well as activities such as running, skipping, throwing and catching (Mengütay, 2005). According to the various studies on play period

(Güven, 2006), which is one of the most colorful periods in a child's life, it has been determined that participation in play activities in pre-school supports the motor development of children (Aytekin, 2001).

Nowadays, children's playing habits consist of computer games. This situation causes children to be separated from children's games, which support their physical and motor development. These conditions today's children are faced with, limit both physical and motor development of children and lead to a variety of health problems, mainly obesity and a sedentary lifestyle. Thus, especially in early childhood, it is a great necessity to steer children towards various educational games in which children can play using physical effort.

Kerkez (2006) stated that pauses or delays in physical and motor development based on environmental conditions in early childhood should be well identified and has also indicated the successful development of games and movement programs for pre-school children will contribute to motor development.

Care such as; the cleanliness of the playing field and the usage of playing tools that children can play with should be ensured in the play activities in order to support the development of children in pre-school early childhood period. In addition, special attention should be given in the appointment of specialist teachers in play activities, which will be implemented especially in pre-school institutions (Aytekin, 2001).

Effect of Movement Education on Motor Development

The development of strength, speed and endurance, which are the leading motor skills necessary for maintaining everyday life, is also the primary purpose of physical education classes included in both pre-school and primary education (Günsel, 2004). Besides, the activities to be implemented in movement training for preschool children should be directed towards the children's large muscle groups and locomotor movements (Timmons et al., 2007).

One of the most distinctive characteristics of children in early childhood is that they are active. Since movement also contributes to other developmental areas of the child, the lack of movement training in early childhood is a very important shortcoming for children. Movement education applied in early childhood contributes to the development of basic mobility skills of children, enhances small and large muscle coordination, improves physical fitness, increases body awareness and establishes the basis of a lifelong work-out routine (Özer and Özer, 2002). In the studies conducted, it has been determined that suitable movement-training programs applied to pre-school children support motor development (Kırıcı, 2008, Çelebi, 2010). It is also stated that children who participate more in physical activity have easier and better motor development compared to other children (Williams et al., 2008).

There is a system that is adjusted by the organism in the learning of movements. Accordingly, if a movement is repeated a lot, the movement is learned more quickly (Sayın, 2011). This suggests that some motor movements (jumping, throwing, leaping, pushing, pulling, hitting, etc.) should be repeated frequently to support motor development during early childhood, especially during rapid development periods. In the research conducted by Tüfekçioğlu (2008), it was emphasized that pre-school period is the most important period in terms of developing movement skills and ensuring its permanency. The fundamental reason for this is the fact that children in this period are in a developmental stage that will, in turn, guide their

entire life and the appropriate movement training programs applied in this sensitive age have shown to contribute to the development of children.

As a result, we can say that movement training and play activities, which contribute to children's versatile development, play an important role in supporting motor development during early childhood. In this context, the increase of play and movement training activities for children at pre-school institutions, raising awareness for families to direct their children to play and movement training and to allow more children to participate in play and movement training during the pre-school period should be ensured.

REFERENCES

- Ayan, S., & Memiş, U.A. (2012). Erken çocukluk döneminde oyun. *Selçuk Üniversitesi Beden Eğitimi Ve Spor Bilim Dergisi*, 14(2), 143-149.
- Aytekin, H. (2001). *Okul öncesi eğitim programları içinde oyunun çocuğun gelişimine olan etkileri*. Yüksek lisans tezi. Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. Kütahya.
- Çelebi, B. (2010). *Hareket eğitiminin okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarındaki 5-6 yaş grubu çocuklarda fiziksel ve motor gelişime etkisi*. Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Muğla Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. Muğla.
- Günsel, A.M. (2004). *İlköğretimde beden eğitimi uygulamaları*. Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık.
- Güven, G. (2006). *Kütahya'daki okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarında uygulanan oyun ve spor programlarının incelenip değerlendirilmesi*. Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. Kütahya.
- Hasırcı, S., Sevimli, D., & Durusoy, E.A. (2009). *Gelişim ve öğrenme*. Adana: Nobel Kitabevi.
- Kerkez, F. (2006). *Oyun ve egzersizin yuva ve anaokuluna giden 5-6 yaş grubu çocuklarda fiziksel ve motor gelişime etkisinin araştırılması*. Doktora Tezi. Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. Trabzon.
- Kırcı, H.M. (2008). *Okul öncesi eğitim kurumlarındaki 4-6 yaş grubu çocuklarda 8 haftalık hareket eğitiminin motor performanslarına etkisi*. Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Muğla Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü. Muğla.
- Mengütay, S. (1999). *Okul öncesi ve ilkokullarda hareket gelişimi ve spor*. Ankara: Tutubay Yayınları.
- Mengütay, S. (2005). *Çocuklarda hareket gelişimi ve spor*. İstanbul: Morpa Kültür Yayınları.
- Muratlı, S. (2007). *Antrenman bilimi yaklaşımıyla çocuk ve spor*. İkinci baskı. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.
- Özer, D.S., & Özer, M.K. (2002). *Çocuklarda motor gelişim*. İkinci Baskı. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.
- Sayın, M. (2011). *Hareket ve beceri öğretimi*. Ankara: Spor Yayınevi ve Kitabevi.
- Timmons, B.W., Naylor, P.J., & Preiffer, K.A. (2007). Physical activity for preschool children-how much and how? *Appl. Physiol. Nutr. Metab.* 32, 122-134.
- Tüfekçioğlu, E. (2008). Okul öncesi 4-6 yaş çocuklarında algısal motor gelişim programlarının denge ve çabukluk üzerine etkisi. *uluslararası insan bilimleri dergisi*, 5(2), 1-11.
- Ulutaş, A. (2011). Okul öncesi dönemde drama ve oyunun önemi. *Adıyaman Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 4(6), 232-242.
- Williams, H.G., Pfeiffer, K.A., O'Neil, J.R., Dowda, M., McIver, K.L., Brown, W.H., & Pate, R.R. (2008). Motor skill performance and physical activity in preschool Children. *Obesity*, 16, 1421-1426.