



THE CURRENT STATUS OF CONTENTS AND FORMS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION GAMES FOR 5-6-YEAR-OLD CHILDREN IN DONG THAP PROVINCE, VIETNAM

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Abstract:

The article is written to provide accurate, scientific, and comprehensive information on the present status of contents and forms of how physical development activities are organized for kindergartners in Dong Thap province, Vietnam. According to surveys of kindergarten teachers and administrators, it is figured out that gross motor games are the most regularly employed for physical training among preschoolers. The games are frequently conducted inside schoolyards and guided by teachers in 21 to 30 minutes.

Keywords: contents, forms, gross motor games, physical development, preschoolers, 5-6 years old, Dong Thap province

1. Introduction

Activities in general, and gross motor games in particular, play a key role in early education and are regarded as effective training methods to increase children's involvement. Gross motor games in physical education (PE), also called PE games, are usually well-organized, with a modern or folk style and catchy names to interest kids. The games aim to encourage youngsters to coordinate their motor manipulations to overcome challenges, thereby promoting physical development. Although it is a game, it also has a set of rules that clearly describe the objectives, required actions, and scoring rules, making PE games competitive and interesting for participants. Through game-based learning, students are believed to have more fun and practice their skills more effectively in PE classes.

In the education program at kindergarten age, gross motor games are widely used to get more young learners involved because they are favored by children. Therefore, PE games tend to be employed not only as a teaching means but also as a decent form of

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physical training for students nowadays. Moreover, the motor games are flexible to be held everywhere at any time, so it appears less restrictive than other activities.

To fully understand the present situation and thus identify appropriate PE activities for preschoolers, the authors opted to perform this study with the following topic: "The Current Status of Contents and Forms of Gross Motor Games for 5-6-year-old Children in Dong Thap Province, Vietnam".

The purpose of this article is to assess the current contents of PE games and forms of organizing those activities for kindergarten children in Dong Thap province, with the goal of selecting gross motor games that are most suitable for the young kids and feasible with the current condition of the area.

Research methods: Material references, surveys, interviews, pedagogical observation, and statistical and mathematic analysis.

In surveys, participants are expected to respond using the Likert scale (from 1 to 5), which has the following rules: 1.00 - 1.80: Level 1 (Never); 1.81 - 2.60: Level 2 (Occasionally); 2.61 - 3.40: Level 3 (Usually); 3.41 - 4.20: Level 4 (Regularly); 4.21 - 5.00: Level 5 (Always).

Participants: 09 administrators and 03 PE experts, 326 preschool teachers in Cao Tuong City, Dong Thap province.

2. Results and discussions

2.1. Contents of PE games for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

Initially, 326 PE teachers working at preschool schools were asked how frequently they employ each type of PE games in their classes. Their responses were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The frequency of each content of PE games used at kindergartens in Dong Thap province

Content	Survey results (n = 326)		
	\bar{X}	S	Level
Free play	2.58	0.53	Occasionally
Play with available toys (slides, seesaws, escalators, etc.)	2.59	0.52	Occasionally
Play gross motor games (running, skipping, etc.)	3.93	0.50	Regularly
Play sports (soccer, tennis, badminton, shuttlecock kicking, cycling, etc.)	2.95	0.77	Usually
Play folk games (dragon snake, hopscotch, etc.)	2.96	0.72	Usually

As shown in Table 1, the content that is performed regularly in PE classes is playing gross motor games (average = 3.93); 02 other contents, free play and playing with available resources, are conducted occasionally (average = 2.58 - 2.59); and 02 left ones, playing sports and playing folk games, are used frequently (average = 2.95 - 2.96).

Gross motor games, which are consistently held, have a clear content with the particular goals of improving physical strength and assisting students in relieving stress after academic sessions.

Free play and playing with available things, on the other hand, are only done on occasions since they have very few specific contents and purposes for developing the physical traits of students. In free play, students are free to engage in whatever activity they like. However, because it is either unstructured or mainly spontaneous, it cannot effectively help young learners acquire proper physical growth. Furthermore, building games using available materials may quickly tire pupils if the supplies are restricted or not diversified.

Playing sports and folk games, which are commonly utilized, are physical activities that many students enjoy since they are simple, easy to perform, and various. Students who participate in their favorite sports are more likely to participate in physical activities. However, due to the current lack of quantity and quality of equipment, sports fields, and competent trainers, the two contents have yet to be implemented on a regular basis.

Chart 1 was created to help both writers and readers recognize the variations in how frequently each playing content is presented in PE courses in Dong Thap province, Vietnam.

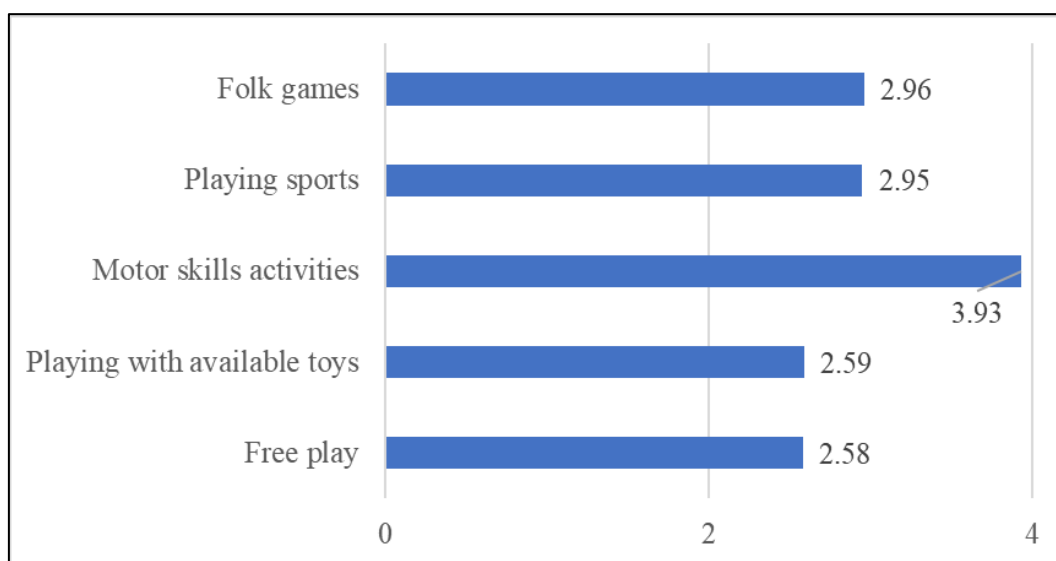


Figure 1: Frequency of use of five different types of PE activities conducted in Dong Thap kindergartens

The foregoing research reveals that the contents of PE games and activities are carried out at various levels. What the writers may deduce is that the types of PE games are organized on a regular basis because they are well-structured, purposeful, and practical to conduct under any circumstances. As a result, it is understood that the sorts of activities that are performed on occasion are since they fail to show clear content and specific goals. Notably, even though some PE contents are highly interesting and helpful

such as folk games and sports games, they might only be performed usually, not regularly, if the material conditions are limited.

2.2. Forms of PE games conducted for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

Another survey was conducted with 326 instructors regarding the organizing forms of PE games for very young learners aged five and six under the area's material conditions. The paper intends to concentrate on four specific aspects: timing, duration, location, and organizational methods.

A. Timing of PE games

Table 2: Survey results on the time of conducting PE games for kindergarten students in Dong Thap province

Timing	Survey results (n = 326)		
	\bar{X}	S	Level
Pre-class (picking-up time, or morning exercise hours)	1.29	0.45	Never
In-class (playing at the corners)	2.32	0.65	Occasionally
Outdoors	4.32	0.47	Always
Afternoon break time, free play	4.19	0.40	Regularly

According to Table 2, it is seen that kindergarten teachers always hold PE games as outdoor activities (average = 4.32). During the afternoon break time, when students are allowed to play with their hobbies, the teachers usually carry out several motor games to get them involved together (average = 4.19). However, activities at the corners do not occur on a regular basis (average = 2.32). Notably, gross motor activities are not performed before class or during morning exercise (average = 1.29).

Teachers differ in their selection of when children should do PE games because of the following reasons. Outdoor and corner play activities are usually planned as this is when the children have digested the food of their morning meals and have completed studying the lessons. As a result, this is the best time to organize physical activities for them. Furthermore, If the outside weather is appropriate in the afternoon, a teacher "regularly" allows them to free play after their snacks.

The article compares the time of organizing PE games for kindergarten children 5 in Dong Thap province through Chart 2.

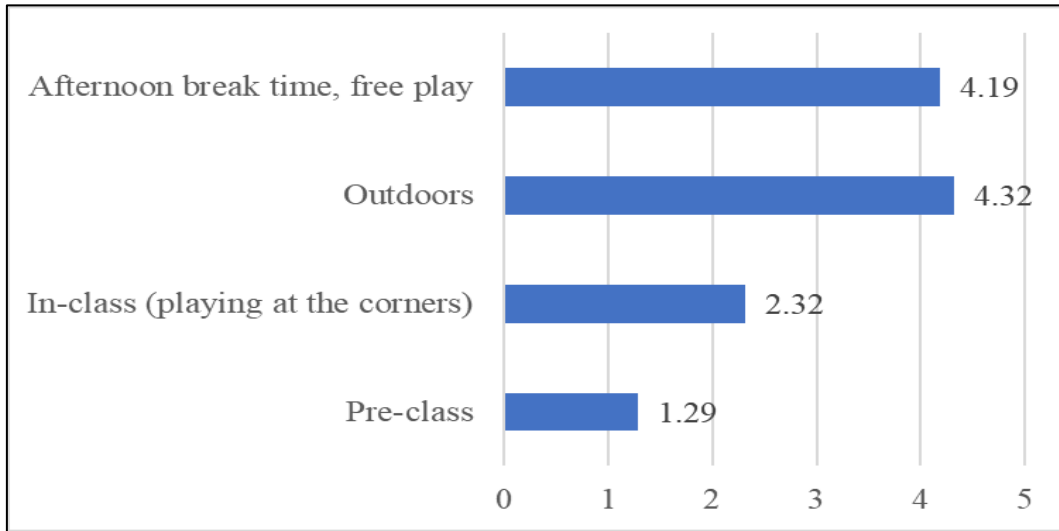


Figure 2: The timing of organizing PE games for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

B. Duration of PE games

Table 3: Survey results on the duration of PE games for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

Duration	Survey results (n = 326)	
	Amount	Percentage (%)
Less than 10 minutes	45	13.80
10 - 20 minutes	89	27.30
21 - 30 minutes	186	57.06
Over 30 minutes	6	1.84
Total	326	100.00

Based on the above table, the most typical duration for holding PE games at Dong Thap kindergartens is about 21 to 30 minutes, which is admitted by more than half of the teachers (57.06%). Furthermore, 27.30 percent of the teachers claim to maintain PE games in 10 to 20 minutes, while 13.80 percent conduct PE activities in less than 10 minutes. However, only a small percentage of teachers (1.84 percent) will play gross motor games for longer than 30 minutes. This suggests that the duration of children's physical activity is quite modest when compared to the entire time students spend at school. It might be because the majority of preschool institutions nowadays prioritize a child's academics and aptitudes above his or her physical development. Furthermore, objective factors such as weather and sports courts could have an impact on the arrangement of physical activities. Furthermore, the regulations on time frames issued by the Board of Education inspectors may hinder schools from adapting flexibly.

Chart 3 depicts the duration of PE games for students aged 5 to 6 years old in Dong Thap province.

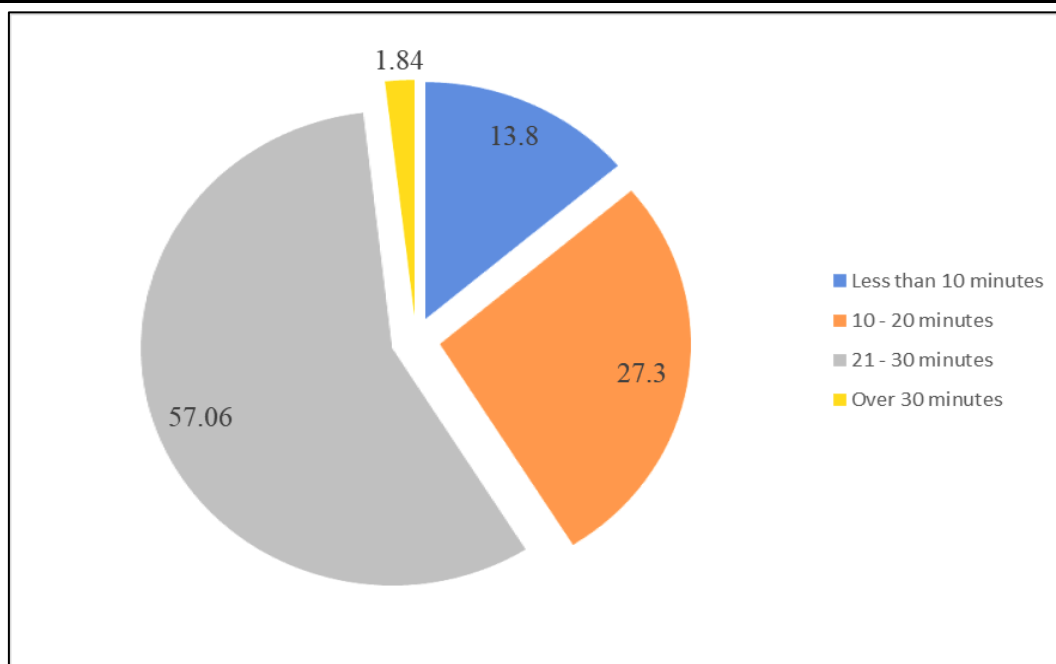


Figure 3: Durations of holding PE games for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

C. Forms of PE games

Table 4: Survey results on the forms of PE games for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

Form	Survey results (n = 326)	
	Number	Percentage (%)
Free play	81	24.85
Games designed by teachers	105	32.21
Individual games	20	6.13
Dual games	16	4.91
Team-based games	71	21.78
Conjunction with students from other classes	33	10.12
Total	326	100.00

Table 4 depicts that playing games arranged by teachers is the most popular approach (32.21%), followed by free play (24.85%), and team-based playing (21.78%). The top three least popular ways are to collaborate with students from other classes (10.12 %), play individually (6.13 percent), and play with another person (4.91 %).

The following are the teachers' explanations for the survey results:

The format of "playing games designed by teachers" is extensively employed since it provides a wide range of attractive games to youngsters.

"Free play" is defined as "free to play with available toys and materials such as slides and ball homes," and is considered a common form. Nonetheless, some teachers argue that kindergarten children are too young to be fully aware of which motor activities are suitable for their growth. As a result, it is considered that enabling toddlers to do anything they want is not a smart strategy to enhance their physical development.

Teachers sometimes urge children to "play in groups" to supervise efficiently, assuring interaction among participants. Individual games are understandably less popular as a result.

Furthermore, many teachers have claimed that preparing activities for their own class is significantly easier to handle than for multiple classes gathered. As a consequence, instead of sharing, each teacher prefers to choose a separate outdoor space for his or her class. In fact, students still get the opportunity to socialize with children from different classes twice a week, notably on weekends and also in extracurricular activities. However, it should be noted that such activities are hampered by the school's financial situation. Congestion may arise if the playground area is restricted but the number of students is huge, making it almost impossible to organize PE activities for all students.

Figure 4 depicts several methods of conducting PE games for pupils aged 5 to 6 in Dong Thap province.

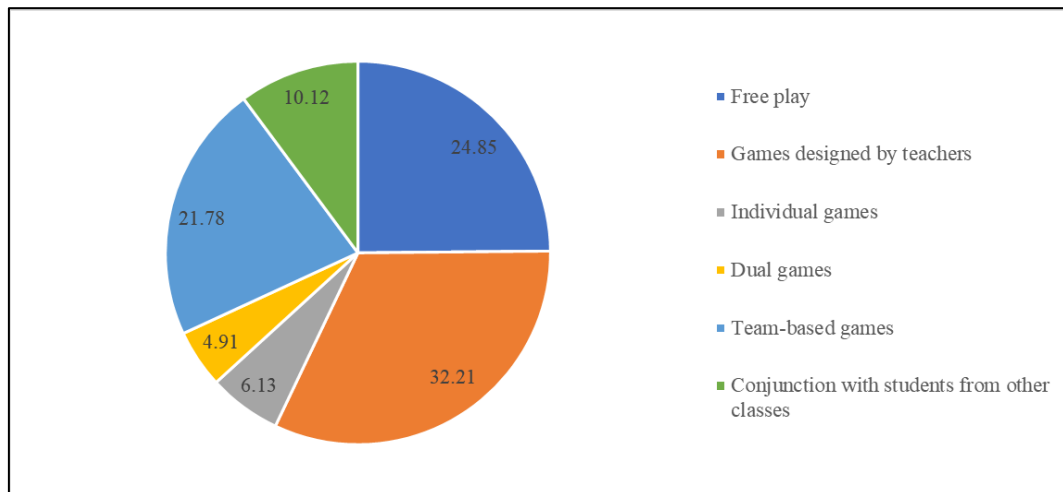


Figure 4: The forms of organizing PE games for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

D. Locations to hold PE games

Table 5: Survey results on the common locations to organize PE games for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

Location	Survey results (n = 326)		
	\bar{X}	S	Level
Schoolyards	4.66	0.47	Always
Unoccupied lands	1.09	0.28	Never
Orchards	1.09	0.28	Never
Recreational areas	1.11	0.31	Never
Parks	1.82	0.39	Occasionally
Sports courts	2.77	0.42	Usually

The data in Table 5 shows that PE games for kindergarten children are always organized in the schoolyard (average = 4.66), but never held in empty fields, orchards, and recreational places (average = 1.09 - 1.11). Besides, children occasionally play motor games at parks (average = 1.82), or usually play at sports courts (average = 2.77).

Because of the shortage of standard sporting courts in preschool institutions, most PE games are likely to be played in the schoolyard, according to the data above. The sports courts are primarily used to train gifted youngsters or to host important sports events. In some cases, holding physical activities for children outside of school, such as in parks, is still acceptable. This demonstrates that the quantity and quality of available fields, as well as the safety of courts, have a significant impact on the arrangement of motor activities for youngsters.

Figure 5 illustrates which places the teachers assume are suitable to hold PE games for kindergarten students in Dong Thap province.

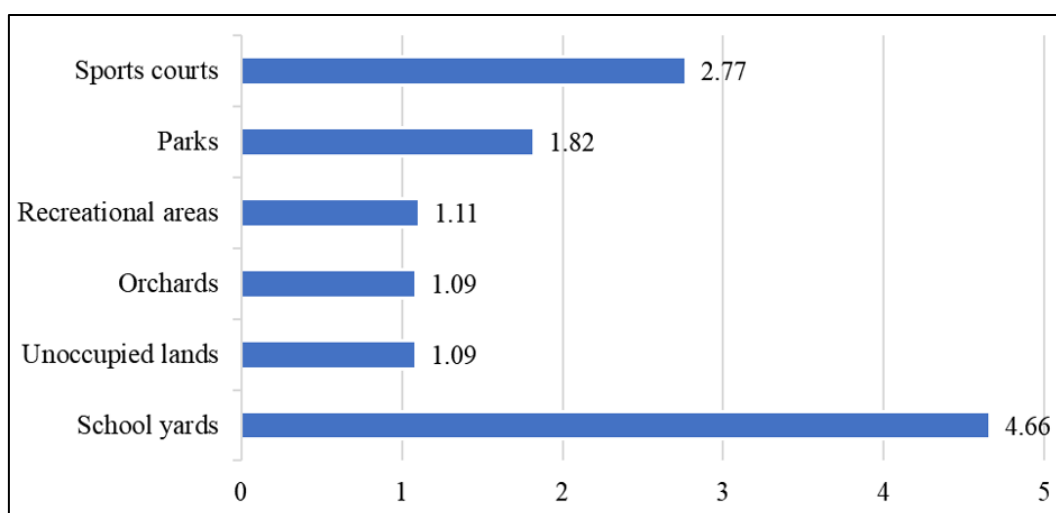


Figure 5: Locations employed to hold PE games for kindergartens in Dong Thap province

3. Conclusion

In terms of content, gross motor games are preferred to perform on a regular basis for kindergarten pupils, while free play and playing with available toys are conducted on occasions.

In terms of forms, outdoor activities are most appreciated. Also, from 10 to 30 minutes is the appropriate duration suggested by teachers; in particular, 57.06% of the teachers voted for "from 21 to 30 minutes", and 27.30% voted for "10 to 20 minutes". Besides, teacher-designed games (32.21%) are the most popular, followed by free play (24.85%) and group play (21.78%), all of which are always conducted in the schoolyard.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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