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USING NATIONAL AND ACTIVE GAMES IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15442616

Annotation. This article explores the role of ethnosports and traditional national games in promoting the physical development of preschool-aged children. Guided by Presidential Decree of Uzbekistan, the study highlights methodological approaches to popularizing national sports and helping young children assimilate cultural values. The essence, benefits, and psychological impact of traditional Uzbek folk games on children's physical growth and moral education are discussed, accompanied by practical examples. The findings emphasize the importance of introducing ethnosport at an early age to support the holistic development of children physically, spiritually, and socially.

Keywords: ethnosport, games, national and action games, national sports

Introduction. In our country, the promotion and popularization of national sports and folk games (ethnosport), as well as the broad involvement of children and adolescents in these activities and the strengthening of international cooperation, have become priority objectives. According to the Presidential Decree No. PQ-5149 dated July 17, 2021, one of the main goals is to popularize and develop ethnosport types by the year 2025. This includes preparing educational and promotional materials on the essence of national sports and folk games for the preschool education system, as well as regularly incorporating their physical, intellectual, and moral-ethical value into physical education classes at all levels of education.

Values reflect the faith, honor, and conscience of an entire people and nation. Therefore, during each historical era, the preservation, development, and transmission of these values to future generations has been a sacred duty entrusted to responsible individuals, including scholars, intellectuals, and researchers.

The purpose of traditional Uzbek national movement games is to raise a physically strong and courageous younger generation, just like our heroic ancestors. Through mastering these traditional games, children are supported in their physical, moral, and spiritual development. At the same time, these games help to increase children's interest in and respect for the history, culture, and traditions of Uzbekistan.

Purpose of the Research: The aim of the research is to apply ethno-sports and national traditional games to support the physical development of preschool-aged children and to help them understand national values.

Research Objectives: To highlight the methodological basis of using ethno-sports and national traditional games in the physical development of preschool-aged children.

Research Methods: Studying and analyzing historical sources, observation, analysis, and synthesis.

Discussion

Ethnosport: The essence and features of traditional folk games. "What is a game?" or "Do you know what a game is?" or "What games do you like?" — Though such questions may seem simple or even odd, everyone interprets "game" in their own way. To answer these, we first refer to dictionaries published in Uzbek. A game is a type of activity not for the outcome but for

the process itself. In the history of human society, games were often intertwined with magic, religious rituals, sports, military and other exercises, and art (especially performance arts). Games also play a significant role in children's upbringing, education, and psychological preparation for future life.

In the "Russian-Uzbek Dictionary," the word igra (game) is defined as:

Playing – children's games, ball games, chess.

Frolic – shimmer, sparkle.

Movement – rustling, chewing, wave.

Exercise – playing instruments.

Acting – performance by actors or actresses.

Covert actions – deception, trickery.

A game is a concept that includes historical, social, and philosophical meanings and represents a complex activity composed of various movements. It is one of the distinct forms of human behavior. "Game" can describe anything from a baby's rattle movements to physical activities in sports such as basketball, gymnastics, wrestling, etc.

As a cultural component, games develop alongside every culture in society and are a valuable tool for educating children and teenagers. Games always serve a purpose and represent a wide range of guided and themed activities. Game-based activities often intersect with labor early in childhood. Games are emotional activities; therefore, they require serious attention in child and youth education. A wide variety of traditional games are popular among children and teenagers. A key feature of folk games is that the game's content is vividly expressed through movement (running, jumping, throwing, etc.).

These movements are usually motivated by the storyline (theme, idea), and the goal is to overcome challenges and obstacles to achieve the game's objective. As children grow and develop, the content of games also changes. While early-stage games are simple, they gradually become richer and more complex. Traditional games are deeply connected to labor, lifestyle, and the environment. This is especially evident among different Uzbek communities. For example, everywhere people throw objects into the distance or at targets, but mountain communities throw stones, while those in flatlands use clumps of soil, mud, or sticks ("Throw the Stick," "Aim Well," "Sharpshooters," and other games).

Folk games have always played an important role in human life and have served as a key tool in the education and upbringing of children and youth. At each stage of societal development, these games have fulfilled specific purposes and tasks aligned with the interests of that society. Uzbek folk games are so numerous that games in one village may differ significantly from those in another. According to historical sources, the national sports and games of the Uzbek people prepared individuals for active and productive labor. Experts estimate that the total number of national Uzbek games is not less than 3,000–5,000. Alongside recreational games, various professions also had their own distinctive games. For instance, researchers suggest that the game of "Uloq" (Kok-boru) was widespread among herders. Other games played among herders include "Ko'pkari," "Junto'p," "Chimto'p," and "Podachi." Games like "Chovgan" and "Chimto'p," played by Eastern peoples including Uzbek herders, are the basis of today's globally popular sport "field hockey."

Active games are divided into team games and individual games. Games played in groups carry moral significance. In individual games, a child learns to adapt to situations and choose an appropriate strategy (A.K. Ataev, 1990). Typically, healthy children who believe in their abilities and strength participate in games. Children's age and physical fitness were often not considered; instead, players were selected based on their build, as physical development was key. Children's games can be divided into two categories: physical

games and verbal/spiritual games. In physical games, an object (toy) or word (song) plays a leading role, guiding the activity. For example, in the game "Chillak," the stick and bundle are the main tools; in "Hide the Pit," the pit governs the movements. In games like "White Poplar or Blue Poplar?", "Rich Lady," or "Are You a Guest?", the guiding element is a word or song. In the preschool years, a child's physical growth accelerates. Year by year, their height and weight increase, and their motor skills develop significantly. Their speech becomes fluent, memory improves, and independent thinking progresses.

Children start performing tasks on their own and become more curious. To increase children's interest in physical education and sports, and to strengthen their physical condition, the following are essential: encouraging children to go from walking to running, maintaining balance, jumping with both feet, overcoming obstacles, and rewarding their efforts. It is important to organize age-appropriate sports competitions, play creative games requiring physical activity, engage them in cheerful folk games, and regularly conduct hardening activities. Environments must be created that promote free movement, independent performance of exercises, participation in outdoor and indoor sports games, and ensure favorable conditions for timely physical activities. All of these help ensure children grow into physically developed individuals.

"I play and do exercises through games" Preschool-aged children are highly interested in games because they love to play independently and perform voluntary exercises. Young children tend to move more slowly, have short attention spans, and exhibit a high tendency to imitate. Therefore, lessons for them are selected in the form of game-based exercises. Active games are an important part of a comprehensive educational process. The movement activities at their core contribute positively to physical development, motor skill formation, physical qualities, and the functional efficiency of the body while enhancing joyful emotions and health. Active games, as a main tool and method of physical education, help effectively fulfill all these tasks.

The health benefits achieved through active games are closely tied to the positive emotions that arise during play and have a strong impact on the child's psyche. Emotional excitement motivates children to strive for a common goal, helps them understand tasks better, ensures coordination of movements, orient themselves in space and within the game's conditions, and complete tasks quickly. The child's strong desire and joyful aspiration to achieve the goal strengthens their willpower to overcome challenges.

Below are examples of active games for children aged 5–7:

"The Sharp Shooter"

Two parallel lines are drawn at a distance of 10–15 meters from each other. A circle with a diameter of 2 meters is drawn between them. One child (the shooter) stands inside the circle holding a ball. The other players run back and forth from one line to the other. The shooter tries to hit them with the ball. Whoever gets hit becomes the new shooter. Game rules: At the beginning of the game, one child is chosen as the shooter. The last child to sit down after the teacher says "Sit!" becomes the shooter. If a running player catches the ball thrown by the shooter, it doesn't count.

"Out of the Circle"

Several children can take part in this game. Small circles are drawn on the ground, spaced 40–50 cm apart along a large circle. The players sit in these small circles. One child stands and hops on one foot around the sitting players, trying to push someone out of their circle. If any part of a sitting player's foot leaves their circle, they are out of the game. Game rules: Sitting players can occasionally touch the ground with their hands. The standing player should not push the others forcefully. The hopping player may switch the hopping

leg.

"The Forest Keeper"

A large circle with a diameter of 8–10 meters is drawn on the ground, representing a forest. A square is drawn in the center of the circle, representing the forest keeper's home. One child stands inside the square and is chosen as the forest keeper. The other children play the role of swans. The swans try to fly into the forest and rescue the child from the square. The forest keeper tries to catch or touch them. The swan who manages to rescue the child becomes the next forest keeper, and the game restarts. Game rules: Swans are not allowed to enter the forest keeper's home (the square). Caught swans are out of the game. The forest keeper cannot leave the forest (circle) but must move constantly within it.

"Rabbit Morning"

Several players act as rabbits, and one of them is the Trainer (head rabbit). Small circles are drawn in the center of the play area to represent the rabbits' homes. The trainer does not have a home. The trainer gives commands like: "Everyone stand up!" (the rabbits follow the instructions with movements) "Everyone washes up, does gymnastics, makes the bed, eats breakfast, goes for a walk!". When the trainer says, "Go out to the yard to play," the rabbits run around outside their homes. Then suddenly the trainer says: "Night!" – all the rabbits must quickly return to their homes. The last one to return loses. Game rules: All actions must follow the trainer's instructions. While running in the yard, children must be at least 10 steps away from their homes.

Conclusion

Each generation inherits a legacy from its ancestors, and it is recommended that children be taught the nation's traditional games from early childhood. Introducing children to folk games from preschool age helps them experience unique (positive) emotions and promotes independent development. Promoting types of ethnosport lays the foundation for increasing children's interest in national sports from an early age.

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