

The Significance of Play-Based Learning in the Education of Primary Children

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Abstract

A key component of early childhood education is play-based learning, which gives kids an engaging and joyful approach to learn about and explore their surroundings. Play-based learning activities provide kids the chance to participate in practical experiences that foster their creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving abilities, in contrast to conventional teaching techniques that emphasize rote memorization and drilling. In this post, we will go over the advantages of play-based learning for young children, the best kinds of play-based activities, and ways to incorporate play-based learning into the classroom. Furthermore, go over the typical difficulties educators might run into when putting play-based learning into practice and provide strategies to get beyond them. By the time this article ends, want to have shown the value of play-based learning and given educators useful suggestions and methods for adding play-based learning activities to their curricula.

Keyword: Traditional teaching, Problem-solving skills, Early childhood education

1. Introduction

A key component of early childhood education is play-based learning, which gives kids an engaging and joyful approach to learn about and explore their surroundings. Play-based learning activities provide kids the chance to participate in practical experiences that foster their creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving abilities, in contrast to conventional teaching techniques that emphasize rote memorization and drilling. In this post, I'll go over the advantages of play-based learning in early childhood education, the best kinds of play-based exercises, First of all, play is a normal and vital aspect of childhood. Children play all day, doing anything from pretending to be superheroes to constructing with blocks. But play is more than simply an enjoyable past time; it's also an effective instrument for growth and learning. Studies have shown that children's cognitive, social-emotional, linguistic, and physical development may all be significantly impacted by play-based learning (Bergen, 2002; Christie & Roskos, 2013). Children are better able to acquire and retain new knowledge, improve their ability to solve problems, make close connections with their peers, and develop a good self-

image when they participate in play-based learning activities (Bodrova & Leong, 2012; Lillard et al., 2013).

There are several ways to implement play-based learning, such as directed play, unstructured play, and purposeful play-based learning (Bredekamp & Copple, 2014). Without adult supervision or guidance, children are free to pick what they want to play and how they want to play it during free play. Free play gives kids the chance to explore their interests and express their creativity while also helping them to develop their social, linguistic, and emotional management abilities (Bergen, 2002). Play that is more organized and involves adults giving children some direction or instruction is called guided play. Children's learning in certain subjects, like science, math, or reading, may be supported or new ideas can be introduced via guided play (Christie & Roskos, 2013).

Play is a deliberate and purposeful teaching technique when it comes to intentional teaching via play. When adults intentionally educate via play, they actively play with children, using play activities to impart certain ideas or abilities (Bredekamp & Copple, 2014). Because adults may utilize play activities to model language usage and provide kids opportunity to practice their language abilities, intentional teaching via play can be very successful at fostering children's language development (Lillard et al., 2013). Even with the advantages of play-based learning, a lot of early childhood education programs continue to use worksheets and lectures as well as more conventional teaching strategies. These approaches are not developmentally suitable for young children, who learn best via play and hands-on experiences, even if they may work for older kids (Bredekamp & Copple, 2014). Play-based learning is so crucial, and early childhood educators must recognize this and include it in their curricula.

The overall goal of this essay is to provide educators a thorough grasp of the value of play-based learning and useful methods for implementing it into their curricula. Teachers may make learning for young children more interesting, successful, and pleasurable by adopting play-based learning. ways to incorporate play-based learning into the classroom. Furthermore, go over the typical difficulties educators might run into when putting play-based learning into practice and provide strategies to get beyond them. By the time this article ends, I want to have shown the value of play-based learning and given educators useful suggestions and methods for adding play-based learning activities to their curricula.

1.1 Play-Based Learning's Significance in Early Childhood Education

According to Bodrova and Leong (2012), play-based learning is an essential part of early childhood education since it fosters children's growth in a variety of areas. Play-based learning offers youngsters the chance to explore their surroundings, engage with others, and hone their social skills—which is one of its main advantages (Bergen, 2002). Children are encouraged to play together, learn to resolve disagreements, and take turns via play-based learning activities—all critical social skills that they will need throughout their lives (Lillard et al., 2013). Play-based learning not only fosters social skills but also helps kids develop cognitive abilities including creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving (Christie & Roskos, 2013). Children may experiment and explore new ideas and concepts as well as utilize their imaginations to create new possibilities when they participate in play-based learning activities (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). As children converse with peers and adults and learn to express themselves via play, play-based learning also gives them the chance to improve their language abilities (Lillard et al., 2013).

Children from underprivileged homes may benefit most from play-based learning since it can help level the playing field by giving them rich and interesting learning experiences (Christie & Roskos, 2013). Children with special needs may also benefit from play-based learning as it gives them the chance to practice new skills in a safe, accepting setting while participating in worthwhile activities (Bredekamp & Copple, 2014). In conclusion, play-based learning is a successful and developmentally appropriate method of teaching young children that supports their learning and growth in a variety of areas. Early childhood educators may support children's cognitive, social-emotional, linguistic, and physical development in a manner that is pleasurable, meaningful, and appropriate to their needs by giving them the chance to participate in play-based learning activities.

1.2 Purpose of Article

This article's goal is to provide a general overview of play-based learning in early childhood education and stress its value in fostering kids' growth and learning in a variety of subject areas. The goal of this article is to provide readers a thorough grasp of play-based learning, including its advantages for kids' linguistic, social, and cognitive development as well as how it may be used to help kids from a variety of backgrounds and needs. Along with emphasizing the value of play-based learning for early childhood educators, this article offers helpful advice for putting play-based learning into practice in the classroom. The ultimate goal of this article is to encourage the adoption of play-based learning as a successful and developmentally

appropriate early childhood education strategy that may help kids succeed in school and throughout their lives.

2. Advantages of Play-Based Education for Young Children

One effective strategy for fostering children's growth in a variety of areas is play-based learning. Children's social and emotional development is one of the main advantages of play-based learning (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). Children may practice critical social skills including collaboration, sharing, and conflict resolution when they participate in play-based learning activities (Lillard et al., 2013). By giving kids the chance to express themselves, process difficult feelings, and build resilience, play-based learning also helps kids' emotional development (Bergen, 2002).

Play-based learning enhances children's cognitive development in addition to their social and emotional growth (Christie & Roskos, 2013). Children may explore and experiment with new ideas and concepts when they participate in play-based learning activities, which can foster the development of their critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). By giving kids the chance to converse with peers and adults and expand their vocabulary and communication abilities, play-based learning also helps kids' language development (Lillard et al., 2013).

Young children from underprivileged homes may benefit most from play-based learning since it can help level the playing field by giving them rich and interesting learning experiences (Christie & Roskos, 2013). Children with special needs may also benefit from play-based learning as it gives them the chance to practice new skills in a safe, accepting setting while participating in worthwhile activities (Bredekamp & Copple, 2014). Furthermore, play-based learning is a successful and developmentally appropriate method of teaching young children that supports their learning and growth in a variety of areas. Early childhood educators may support children's cognitive, social-emotional, linguistic, and physical development in a manner that is pleasurable, meaningful, and appropriate to their needs by giving them the chance to participate in play-based learning activities.

2.1 Cognitive Development

It has been shown that play-based learning helps young children's cognitive development in a variety of ways. Play-based learning gives kids the chance to practice their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, which is one of its main cognitive advantages (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). Children may explore and experiment with new ideas and concepts when they participate in play-based learning activities, which can foster their creativity and mental flexibility (Christie & Roskos, 2013).

Children's attention and memory abilities are also enhanced by play-based learning (Christie & Roskos, 2013). Children have the chance to interact hands-on and experientially with objects and ideas when they participate in play-based learning activities, which may enhance their learning and memory recall (Lillard et al., 2013). By giving kids interesting and exciting learning experiences that hold their attention and help them stay focused, play-based learning may also help kids become more adept at paying attention (Bodrova & Leong, 2012).

Play-based learning also helps children's language and literacy abilities, which is another cognitive advantage (Lillard et al., 2013). Children may converse with peers and adults, expand their vocabulary, and improve their communication skills when they participate in play-based learning activities (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). By giving kids the chance to explore and engage with print and other kinds of text in meaningful and relevant ways, play-based learning may also support the development of young readers (Christie & Roskos, 2013).

Lastly, play-based learning is an effective strategy for fostering young children's cognitive growth. Early childhood educators may help children develop their problem-solving, critical thinking, memory, attention, language, and literacy abilities in a fun, engaging, and developmentally appropriate manner by giving them chances to participate in play-based learning activities.

2.2 Growth in Social-Emotional Domain

There are many ways in which play-based learning has been shown to support young children's social and emotional development. Play-based learning offers youngsters the chance to enhance their social skills, which is one of its main social advantages (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). Children may connect with peers and adults in a cooperative and collaborative manner when they participate in play-based learning activities. This can foster the development of their social skills, empathy, and self-control (Christie & Roskos, 2013). By giving kids the chance

to express and control their emotions in a secure and encouraging setting, play-based learning may also aid in the development of their emotional skills (Lillard et al., 2013). Children may learn to recognize and express their emotions, as well as control their behavior and reactions to various circumstances, via play-based learning activities (Bodrova & Leong, 2012).

Play-based learning also helps youngsters develop their confidence and sense of self, which is a social-emotional advantage (Christie & Roskos, 2013). Children have the chance to succeed, take chances, and solve issues when they participate in play-based learning activities, which may help them feel more competent and confident (Lillard et al., 2013). Moreover, play-based education may support kids' feeling of community and interconnectedness with others (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). Children may learn to work together and communicate successfully in a group context, as well as build connections with peers and adults, via play-based learning activities (Christie & Roskos, 2013). In conclusion, play-based learning is an effective strategy for fostering young children's social and emotional growth. Early childhood educators may support children's development of social competence, empathy, self-regulation, emotional expression, self-esteem, confidence, and feeling of belonging by giving them opportunity to participate in play-based learning activities. This may thus support their general well-being and future success.

2.3 Language Acquisition

It has been shown that play-based learning helps young children improve their language skills in a variety of ways. Play-based learning offers children the chance to participate in rich and diverse language experiences, which is one of its main advantages (Göncü & Gaskins, 2013). Children may use language in meaningful and genuine ways when they participate in play-based learning activities. They can ask questions, tell tales, explain things, and converse with peers and adults (Christie & Roskos, 2013). Children's vocabulary and understanding abilities may also be developed via play-based learning (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). Children may acquire new vocabulary and ideas via play-based learning activities, and they can also develop a better knowledge of language and its applications (Göncü & Gaskins, 2013). Play-based learning also helps youngsters build their phonological awareness and literacy abilities, which is another advantage for language development (Lillard et al., 2013). Children may enhance their understanding of print and its applications, as well as learn to identify and manipulate language sounds, via play-based learning activities (Christie & Roskos, 2013). Additionally, children's multilingual and intercultural competences may be developed via play-

based learning (Göncü & Gaskins, 2013). Children may learn to value diversity and become proficient communicators and interactors across linguistic and cultural divides by engaging in play-based learning activities that combine a variety of languages, cultures, and experiences. In conclusion, play-based learning is an effective strategy for fostering young children's language development. Early childhood educators may support children's development of language skills, vocabulary, comprehension, phonological awareness, literacy, and multilingual/multicultural competence by giving them opportunity to participate in play-based learning activities. They may therefore be better equipped to succeed in school and in life as a result of this.

2.4 Physical Development

It has been shown that play-based learning helps young children's physical development in a variety of ways. Play-based learning offers children chances for physical exercise, which may aid in the development of their gross motor abilities. This is one of the main advantages of play-based learning (Pica, 2012). Children may gain strength, coordination, balance, and agility by participating in active play-based learning activities including running, leaping, climbing, and dancing (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). Children's fine motor abilities may also be developed via play-based learning (Pellegrini, 2012). Children may improve hand-eye coordination, dexterity, and accuracy via play-based learning activities that involve manipulating things, such as constructing with blocks, threading beads, or using scissors (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). Play-based learning also helps children's general health and well-being, which is beneficial for their physical development (Pica, 2012). Children may develop good habits and attitudes toward exercise via play-based learning activities that incorporate physical activity. This can assist to avoid obesity and other health issues (Lillard et al., 2013). Furthermore, play-based education may support kids' growth in their perceptual and sensory abilities (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). Children may improve their senses of touch, smell, taste, sight, and hearing as well as their capacity to absorb and process sensory information via play-based learning activities that include experimenting with materials and sensory experiences, such as paint, sand, or water (Pellegrini, 2012).

Additionally, play-based learning is an effective strategy for encouraging young children's physical development. Through the provision of active and hands-on play-based learning experiences, early childhood educators may facilitate the development of children's gross and

fine motor skills, general health and well-being, as well as their sensory and perceptual abilities. They may therefore be better equipped to succeed in school and in life as a result of this.

3. Play-Based Learning Types

In the early childhood education sector, play-based learning comes in a variety of forms. Among the most well-liked kinds are:

1. Pretend play: During pretend play, kids use their imaginations to play pretend and act out scenarios. It might be as simple as playing "house," "store," or "doctor."
2. Constructive play: In this kind of play, kids use resources to construct or make something. Building using blocks, creating with art supplies, or building with LEGO bricks are a few examples.
3. Exploratory play: In this kind of play, kids explore their surroundings and learn new things. Playing with sand, water, or sensory objects are a few examples.
4. Games with regulations: Children who play games with rules have certain guidelines and rules they must adhere to. Card games, board games, and organized sports are a few examples.
5. Physical play: Playing with their bodies helps kids develop their gross motor skills and their physical abilities. Running, leaping, climbing, and dancing are a few examples.

The cognitive, social-emotional, linguistic, physical, and other components of children's development may all be supported by using these kinds of play-based learning activities. Early childhood educators may contribute to giving kids a well-rounded and interesting learning experience by implementing a range of play-based learning activities into their classrooms. Dramatic play, block play, art play, and outdoor play will all be covered in this article.

3.1 Theatre of the Drama

Children that participate in dramatic play engage in pretend play, when they assume various roles and act out events. As stated on page 173, "dramatic play offers children opportunities to explore, experiment, and make meaning of their social and cultural worlds" (Hughes and MacNaughton 2016). Children utilize their imaginations to develop and act out various situations during dramatic play activities. They often use accessories and costumes to enhance

their play experiences. Children may pretend to be a "restaurant" where they would take orders, prepare food, and serve it to their peers.

Numerous advantages of dramatic play for children's development have been shown by research. Children's social skills, for instance, might benefit from it as they play and learn how to cooperate and bargain with others (Bodrova & Leong, 2012). As kids converse and construct stories around their play settings, it may also aid in the development of their language and literacy abilities (Hirsch-Pasek et al., 2019). Furthermore, as kids experiment with various roles and learn to comprehend and control their own emotions, dramatic play may be a useful tool for fostering kids' emotional development (Rakoczy & Schmidt, 2013). All things considered, integrating dramatic play into early childhood education programs may be a beneficial strategy to support kids' growth in a variety of areas.

3.2 Block Play

Another popular kind of play-based learning in early childhood education is block play. As stated on page 65 by Wood and Attfield (2005), "block play is an important form of play, which can promote children's cognitive, social, and emotional development" Children utilize a variety of sized and shaped blocks to construct their own designs and build constructions during block play activities. As youngsters learn to mentally manipulate and envision items, block play may aid in the development of their spatial reasoning abilities (Wolfgang et al., 2003). As kids learn how to balance and maintain their constructions, it may also aid in the development of their problem-solving abilities (Bodrova & Leong, 2012).

Block play may be an important tool to enhance children's social and emotional development in addition to its cognitive advantages. Children acquire their social abilities by cooperating and communicating with their classmates while building constructions together (Piaget, 1962). As adolescents face difficulties and disappointments in their construction projects, they also learn how to control their emotions and deal with frustration (Gura & Loudon, 2018). Incorporating block play into early childhood education programs may also be an effective strategy to support children's development in a variety of areas, including social and emotional competence as well as cognitive and spatial thinking abilities.

3.3 A Work of Art

via a variety of artistic mediums, including collage, painting, sketching, and sculpture, children may explore their ideas and express themselves artistically via art play, a sort of play-based learning. It is said on page 80 that "art play can support children's development of fine motor skills, creativity, and self-expression, as well as foster their emotional well-being and positive attitudes toward learning" by Koster and Gullion (2014). Children may learn to use art supplies like pencils, paintbrushes, and scissors via art play, which helps them improve their fine motor abilities (DeLoache et al., 2004). As kids play with various hues, forms, and textures and learn to convey their thoughts and feelings via their artwork, they may also enhance their creative abilities (Eisner, 2002). Children's emotional development may also be aided by art play, as it teaches them how to express and process their emotions via their artwork. A healthy outlet for tension and anxiety, "art play can help children express their emotions in a safe and nonjudgmental way," claims Burton (2010) (p. 121).

Additionally, as art play allows kids to freely explore and experiment with a variety of creative mediums and methods in a fun and lively way, it may help to promote good attitudes toward learning. This may encourage interest and enjoyment throughout the educational process (Graue & Walsh, 1998). Last but not least, art play may be a beneficial addition to early childhood education programs, supporting kids' social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth.

3.4 Play Outside

Another crucial kind of play-based learning that gives kids the chance to explore and learn in natural settings is outdoor play. As stated by Gill (2007), "outdoor play can promote children's physical activity, social interaction, and connection to nature, as well as support their cognitive and emotional development" (p. twenty-two). Children may improve their motor abilities by playing outside and doing things like running, leaping, climbing, and balancing. Children's sensory development is further enhanced by outdoor play, where they may explore and engage with natural elements like water, sand, and soil (Gonzalez-Mena & Eyer, 2015). Playing outside may help children grow cognitively as well since it allows them to use their imagination, creativity, and problem-solving skills in a natural setting. As stated by Burdette and Whitaker (2005), "outdoor play can provide children with opportunities to engage in complex play scenarios, such as building structures or creating imaginary worlds, which can

support their cognitive flexibility, executive function, and creativity" (p. 183). As kids play together and gain experience in resolving problems with their friends, outdoor play may foster social connection and communication. Children may develop a feeling of stewardship and environmental awareness via outdoor play, which also gives them the chance to interact with nature (Moore & Cooper Marcus, 2008).

To sum up, play-based learning that takes place outside is beneficial for kids' physical, mental, social, and emotional growth. It is essential that curricula for early childhood education programs include outdoor play in order to provide kids the chance to learn and explore in natural settings.

4. Difficulties and Resolutions

Implementing play-based learning may be difficult for a variety of reasons, including a lack of resources, time restraints, and instructors' insufficient expertise. To get over these obstacles, there are a few strategies that may be used. Providing teachers with professional development opportunities to educate them on the advantages and techniques of play-based learning is one way to address this issue. Conferences, seminars, and online training courses may all fall under this category (McNay, 2015). With the right information and training, educators may successfully integrate play-based learning into the classroom. Incorporating caregivers and family within the educational process is an additional approach. One way to do this is by offering families books or games that reinforce topics taught in the classroom, as well as other materials and activities to help them learn even after they return home (Bowman et al., 2001). Bridging the gap between the home and school settings may also be accomplished by including families in the educational process.

Setting aside enough time and resources for play-based learning activities is also crucial. This might include planning frequent play-based learning opportunities into the curriculum and providing enough space and equipment for play-based learning activities (Bergen & Cosco, 2015).

Lastly, it's critical to identify and resolve any structural obstacles to play-based learning, such as antiquated rules or cultural prejudices. This might include promoting legislative modifications or striving to create a learning environment that is more inclusive and sensitive to cultural differences (Wong, 2015). All parties involved in early childhood education must work

together to adopt play-based learning, including educators, families, and legislators. We can provide kids a solid basis for future academic and social success by putting techniques to overcome obstacles and support play-based learning into practice.

4.1 Common Challenges in Play-Based Learning

Even while play-based learning is a crucial part of early childhood education, putting it into practice may be difficult. One frequent issue is that parents, caregivers, and educators don't always realize how important play-based learning is. Many parents and caregivers place a higher priority on academic skills than play-based learning, which might result in a lack of support for this kind of learning, according to a research by Blakemore and Choudhury (2006). The absence of supplies and equipment required for successful play-based learning is another difficulty. Inadequate resources might make it more difficult to adopt play-based learning as kids might not have access to the materials they need to play in a meaningful way, claim Pyle and Bigelow (2015).

Another issue is the dearth of options for educators to get professional development and training. A research by Barbour and Barbour (2014) found that a large number of instructors lack the expertise needed to successfully integrate play-based learning. This may cause one to become unconfident and reluctant to use this strategy in the classroom. Play-based learning adoption may also be hampered by the need to satisfy academic standards and get kids ready for standardized testing. This pressure may cause academic skills and memorization to take precedence over play-based learning. All things considered, these difficulties may make it more difficult to integrate play-based learning into early childhood education. It is critical that politicians, caregivers, and educators address these issues and seek to provide a setting that encourages play-based learning.

4.2 Ways to Get Past Obstacles

The difficulties that arise with play-based learning in early childhood education may be solved using a variety of approaches. Teaching educators, parents, and caregivers the advantages of play-based learning is one way to address this issue. A 2009 research by Copple and Bredekamp found that disseminating materials and information on the value of play-based learning may boost support for this strategy.

Providing sufficient tools and resources for play-based learning is another way to find a solution. This may include making certain that play-based learning is promoted in classrooms by providing toys and materials that are developmentally appropriate. Educators may also be given chances for professional development so they can learn how to incorporate play-based learning into the classroom.

Overcoming obstacles related to play-based learning also requires cooperation between educators, parents, and caregivers. A research by Clements and Sarama (2008) found that forming partnerships between parents and teachers helps guarantee that kids have access to the materials they need for meaningful play and can assist to boost support for play-based learning. In early childhood education, it is crucial to give priority to play-based learning while making sure that it does not take precedence over academic objectives. In an article published in 2018, the American Academy of Pediatrics said that play-based learning ought to be considered an essential part of early childhood education on par with academic knowledge. All things considered, by putting these strategies into practice, it is feasible to get over the obstacles that play-based learning presents and provide a setting that encourages this crucial early childhood education strategy.

5. Conclusion

Play-based learning is an essential component of early childhood education, to sum up. It offers several advantages for kids' physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development. Play-based learning requires educators to foster a fun atmosphere, support children's interests, lead play-based learning activities, and interact with kids while they're playing. However, there are a number of obstacles that educators may run into when putting play-based learning into practice, including a lack of training, limited time and resources, and pressure to meet academic requirements.

Notwithstanding these obstacles, a number of strategies may be put into practice, including giving teachers the proper training, including parents in the educational process, and making sure that play-based learning is included into the curriculum. It is important to remember that play-based learning is a complimentary approach to early childhood education rather than a replacement for academic learning.

In conclusion, educators must acknowledge the value of play-based learning and the advantages it offers for kids' growth. They need to make an effort to get over the obstacles in their way and put plans in place that will help kids develop in a supportive atmosphere. In the end, a successful implementation of play-based learning will support young children's holistic development and establish a solid basis for their future academic and social success.

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