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IMPACT OF MOTOR LEARNING BASED ON TEAM SPORTS IN DEVELOPING SPORTS SKILLS AMONG A SAMPLE OF CHILDREN AGED 8 TO 10 YEARS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Abstract:

This study looks at how team sports-based motor learning affects the development of sports skills in elementary school students between the ages of 8 and 10. An experimental group that received motor training and played team sports, as well as a control group that did not receive the same instruction, were included in the study's quasi-experimental design. Forty youngsters were chosen at random to make up the sample. Tests measuring running speed, jump height, and throwing accuracy were used to evaluate sports skills both before and after the intervention. Following the training, the experimental group's post-test scores significantly improved as compared to their pre-test results, demonstrating observable improvements. These results demonstrate how well-suited training regimens are for this age range. The study highlights how crucial it is to modify educational curriculum to accommodate children's developmental needs. Each age stage is characterized by a natural development of some capabilities and can also develop these capabilities through training and practice. (Salih and Ahmed 2020, 13)

Keywords: Motor learning, team sports, sports skills, children.

Section One: Research Overview

Introduction

Since motor learning improves children's physical, psychological, and social abilities, it is regarded as one of the essential components in enhancing their motor skills. Team sports-based educational initiatives have garnered more attention recently as a successful way to enhance motor learning (Al-Azri, 2020, p. 45). Additionally, by giving kids the chance to use their motor abilities in a variety of social settings, these games promote collaboration and social engagement while also aiding in the development of emotional intelligence (Al-Obaidi, 2019, p. 78).

The purpose of this study is to investigate how team sports can be used as an instructional tool and to enhance physical education programs for students in primary schools who are between the ages of 8 and 10, which is a crucial time for rapid development and skill acquisition.

Research Problem

The impact of motor learning based on team sports on improving sports skills in elementary school students, especially those between the ages of 8 and 10, is the research problem. According to research, this age group's social and motor skills noticeably improved. For instance, Jasim's (2020) research showed that team-game-based programs enhanced motor skills like running and jumping, whereas Abdulaziz's (2019) study emphasized how these activities helped kids build their social skills and cooperation.

Consequently, the following is the definition of the main research question: What effect does team sports-based motor learning have on enhancing sports skills in a sample of elementary school-aged children between the ages of 8 and 10?

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Research Hypotheses

• The average assessments of the experimental group in the pre- and post-tests on the sports skills measure differ statistically significantly at the 5% significance level. • In the post-test on the sports skills index, the average ratings of the experimental and control groups differ statistically significantly at the 5% significance level.

Significance of the Research

• This research contributes to expanding the body of knowledge on motor learning, especially within educational contexts involving primary school children.
• It paves the way for future literature addressing the effects of motor learning in other domains, such as psychological and social development, thereby encouraging further field research. • The study provides guidance for teachers and educators on how to incorporate team sports into educational curricula, contributing to improved quality of physical education and enhancing children's school experiences. • By strengthening children's motor and social skills, the research supports overall student performance in sports activities, boosting their self-confidence and readiness to participate in physical exercise.

Research Objectives

• To evaluate the impact of motor learning based on team sports on improving sports skills among primary school children. • To analyze the statistical differences in average sports skills scores between the experimental and control groups in the post-test, to assess the effectiveness of the educational programs in enhancing children's sports abilities.

Research Delimitations

• **Temporal delimitation:** The study was limited to one academic semester during the 2024–2025 school year.
• **Spatial delimitation:** The study was conducted at a primary school in Kirkuk Governorate.
• **Human delimitation:** The sample consisted of primary school children aged between 8 and 10 years.
• **Topical delimitation:** The study relied on specific evaluation tools and measurement scales to assess sports skills and examine the effect of motor learning based on team sports on improving those skills.

Definition of Terms

1. **Impact:** *Theoretical definition:* Impact refers to the change that occurs in a person's behavior or performance because of exposure to a particular influence (Al-Abid, 2020, p. 15). *Operational definition:* In this research, impact refers to the quantitative and qualitative changes in sports skills that appear in children because of participating in the motor learning program based on team sports.
2. **Motor Learning:** *Theoretical definition:* Motor learning is defined as the process through which motor skills are acquired and utilized through practice and experience (Al-Hasban, 2019, p. 22). *Operational definition:* In this study, motor learning refers to the instructional exercises that include team sports aimed at enhancing children's motor and sports skills.
3. **Team Sports:** *Theoretical definition:* Team sports are athletic exercises practiced in groups and based on cooperation and competition (Al-Mukhawari, 2018, p. 34). *Operational definition:* In this study, team sports refer to exercises practiced by children in groups—such as football and basketball—that are used as a tool to enhance motor skills within the motor learning program.
4. **Sports Skills:** *Theoretical definition:* Sports skills are the motor abilities required to perform athletic activities effectively and successfully, such as throwing, running, and jumping (Al-Saeed, 2021, p. 45). *Operational definition:* In this research, sports skills refer to the main motor activities measured and evaluated in children—such as throwing, passing, and dribbling—which develop through motor learning based on team sports.

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5. **Children:** *Theoretical definition:* Children are individuals between the ages of 0 and 12, characterized by stages of physical, mental, and psychological development (Al-Ali, 2017, p. 10). *Operational definition:* In the context of this research, children refer to those aged 8 to 10 years, the age group targeted for studying the effects of motor learning on the development of their sports skills.

Previous Literature:

A. Arabic Literature:

Study (Al-Hayek & Hammouda, 2009): This study examined the effect of implementing an educational program that includes basic motor exercises such as walking, throwing, jumping, and running to improve the motor performance of children aged 5–6 years. The study adopted an experimental method and included thirty children who were divided into an experimental and a control group. The *t*-test was used to determine statistical differences. The results showed an improvement in motor performance among the experimental group, indicating the effectiveness of the program.
Study (Azab, 2017): This study was conducted on a sample of twenty pupils aged between 9–10 years during the period from February 16, 2014, to May 18, 2014. The aim was to determine the impact of social variables on educational sports using small games. The researcher used experimental design and analytical statistics. The results showed a positive effect of exercises related to small games on pupils' performance and improvement in physiological measurements such as flexibility and agility.
Study (Mahrous, 2021): The research problem stemmed from the lack of attention to developing basic motor skills and body awareness among kindergarten children, leading to health problems. Amid concerns arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, the researcher developed a program that included traditional children's games to test its effectiveness in developing motor skills and body awareness. The study was applied at the Nasiriyah Elementary School Kindergarten in Assiut on a sample of twenty children (aged 5–6 years). The researcher used an observation checklist to assess technical performance and the Dytakia Index to measure body awareness. The results showed statistically significant differences between the children's pre- and post-application scores in favor of the post-application, indicating the success of the program in achieving its objectives.

B. Foreign Literature:

Study (Molina Fizi & Winarni): This research aimed to improve a physical education learning model based on games to enhance motor skills, cooperation, and discipline among elementary school students. The researchers relied on the ADDIE model (Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation), which was validated by six expert lecturers. The effectiveness was tested on forty-six upper-grade students (aged 10–12 years), and statistical analyses included Aiken's V validity, intraclass correlation coefficients, and paired sample *t*-tests. The results showed that the model was effective in improving motor skills (p-value = 0.000 < 0.05), cooperation (p-value = 0.000 < 0.05), and discipline (p-value = 0.000 < 0.05). The model is available for use by physical education teachers and is expected to contribute to enhancing students' personal values and motivation.
Study (Afonshina & Rozhentsov): This study proposed conducting ground-based training sessions using controlled dynamic lighting, such as a small laser mounted on the athlete's head, ensuring eye safety from direct radiation. These devices create prohibited and permitted zones and display various

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shapes used to simulate training scenarios. They are managed through a software system that directs the lighting devices and tracks the athlete's position on the field. The system automatically adjusts the shapes based on the athlete's movements, enabling training on any smooth surface outside the field. This method contributes to improving motor skills by customizing training tasks and simulating complex gameplay conditions, thereby enhancing training efficiency and making it more realistic.

Study (Sun & Chen, 2024): This study aimed to conduct a systematic review and meta-analysis to determine the impact of sports game interventions on fundamental motor skills in children. The review covered the period from 2001 to 2020 and focused on databases such as Web of Science, EBSCO, Science, PubMed, and Springer. The sample included 1,701 children aged 3–12 years, and the intervention involved sports games. Out of 1,826 initial references, twelve studies involving a total of 1,608 participants were included in the meta-analysis. The findings showed significant improvement in fundamental motor skills in the intervention groups compared to the control groups (standardized mean difference = 0.30, $p < 0.0001$). ("The Effect of Sports Game Intervention on Children's Fundamental Motor ...") The methodological quality of the included studies ranged from acceptable to excellent, with no evidence of publication bias. A 12-week sports game intervention, with sessions lasting 35 minutes, conducted three to four times per week, had the best effect on enhancing children's physical health and fundamental motor skills.

Commentary on Previous Literature:

The shared literature highlights the importance of improving children's motor skills through structured programs, games, and educational strategies, targeting early childhood. While the studies share similar goals, their methodologies vary; some rely on practical applications, while others use meta-analytical approaches. The current research is distinguished by its integration of innovative game-based applications and their effects on motor skills, incorporating modern technologies such as dynamic lighting. The previous literature provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the impact of games and highlights research gaps that the current study aims to address.

Section Two: The Theoretical Framework

First Requirement: Motor Learning

• The Concept of Motor Learning:

Motor learning is a complex process that involves acquiring and improving various motor skills through experience and practice. It requires the interaction of psychological, physical, and social factors. This includes recognizing the movement, understanding how to execute it, and adapting to the mechanical principles that govern it. Moreover, motor learning is not limited to physical performance but also includes the cognitive understanding of the concepts associated with these movements (Al-Hayek, 2009, p. 45).

• Types of Motor Learning:

Motor learning styles refer to the diverse ways in which motor skills can be acquired. There are two main types of motor learning:

1. **Guided Motor Learning:** This style requires direct instruction from a coach or teacher, where clear instructions are given and skills are practiced in an organized manner, which facilitates faster skill acquisition.
2. **Self-Directed Motor Learning:** This style relies on personal experience and learning from mistakes. The learner experiments with movements, evaluates performance, and adjusts behavior based on previous experiences (Mahrous, 2021, p. 78).

• Importance of Motor Learning Based on Team Sports:

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Motor learning through team sports is an effective means of reinforcing social and personal skills. This type of learning provides an educational environment that stimulates interactive learning, helping individuals improve teamwork and cooperation. It also enhances the ability to make quick decisions and adapt behavior based on the demands and variables of the game. Furthermore, it contributes to building positive relationships among individuals, enabling them to better cope with psychological and social pressures (Molina Fizi & Winarni, 2023, p. 112).

The exact choice and replication of exercises and the order of tools and equipment within educational units has contributed to the organization and linking of educational experiences to learners (Salih and Ahmad, 2021).

• Principles of Motor Learning Based on Team Sports:

The principles of motor learning in team sports include focusing on practical experience and interaction among participants. The educational program should be flexible, allowing learners the opportunity to explore new skills and create a learning environment that encourages creativity. Additionally, reinforcing social skills is a fundamental component, as the literature emphasizes the importance of building positive relationships among team members and stimulating enthusiasm and active participation (Afonshina & Rozhentsov, 2016, p. 98).

Second Requirement: Sports Skills

• The Concept of Sports Skills:

Sports skills are refined movement patterns acquired through training and repeated practice. These skills represent an integration of an individual's motor and cognitive abilities, reflecting a deep understanding of the specific requirements of each sport. Sports skills include all physical exercises that require coordination between the muscles and the nervous system, such as running, jumping, throwing, and swimming. Mastering these skills is essential for success in various sports (Azab, 2017, p. 145).

• The Importance of Sports Skills:

Sports skills hold significant importance in individuals' lives, as they contribute to enhancing physical fitness and overall health. Regular practice of sports helps improve immunity and reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Sports skills also promote sportsmanship and cooperation among individuals despite differences, reflecting values such as courage and endurance. Furthermore, sports skills contribute to self-development and enhance the ability to cope with various challenges (Mahrous, 2021, p. 201). They are also a fundamental element in improving physical performance and promoting general health (Afonshina & Rozhentsov, 2016).

• Types of Sports Skills:

Sports skills are classified into several types:

- **Basic Skills** such as walking, running, and jumping, which form the foundation of daily motor performance.
- **Compound Skills** that involve basic movements requiring high coordination, such as volleyball skills.
- **Specific Motor Skills** that refer to unique movements like swimming, requiring advanced coordination.
- **Technical Skills** that focus on precise execution and specialized techniques in certain sports, such as gymnastics, which necessitate intensive training (Molina Fizi & Winarni, 2023, p. 156).

• Methods for Improving Sports Skills:

There are various methods for improving sports skills, including the following:

1. **Continuous Training:** Regular and systematic practice and repetition of movements to reinforce learning and improvement.

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2. **Technical Analysis:** Evaluating performance by using technology to identify strengths and weaknesses.
3. **Proper Nutrition:** Enhances energy levels and supports endurance during training and competitions.
4. **Guidance and Coaching:** Coaches play a crucial role in guiding athletes to improve their skills and motivate them to achieve their goals (Afonshina & Rozhentsov, 2016, p. 115) scientifically and practically.

Section Three: Research Methodological Procedures

Research Methodology:

The experimental research methodology was employed in this study, as it helps in examining the effect of motor learning based on team sports games on improving children's athletic skills.

Research Population:

The research population consists of primary school students aged between 8 and 10 years. This population included primary schools in Kirkuk Governorate.

Research Sample:

The research sample consisted of forty children selected from the research population. They were divided into two groups: twenty children in the experimental group who participated in the motor learning program based on team sports games, and twenty children in the control group who continued with traditional training. Participants were randomly selected to ensure representation across the targeted age group, which enhanced the reliability and validity of the study's outcomes.

Research Tool:

Motor Skills Assessment Test for Children (Ages 8–10): Three main aspects of motor performance were assessed in children aged 8 to 10: running speed, jump height, and throwing accuracy. The test included three main components:

- **Running Speed Test:** Measures the time required for a child to run thirty meters.
- **Jump Height Test:** Evaluates the child's ability to jump vertically.
- **Throwing Accuracy Test:** Involves throwing a light ball at a target placed 5–7 meters away.

Children's performance was categorized as follows:

- *"Excellent"* if the child scored excellent in all tests.
- *"Very Good"* if they scored very good in two tests and excellent in one.
- *"Good"* if they scored good in all tests or very good in one.

Training Plan Based on Motor Learning through Team Sports Games:

The training plan based on motor learning through team sports games is an innovative approach aimed at enhancing children's basic motor skills and promoting cooperation and teamwork through interactive exercises. The plan seeks to develop motor abilities through an interactive instructional strategy focused on improving skills such as running, jumping, and throwing, as well as coordinating movements during gameplay.

Each session begins with an introduction to strengthen social bonds, followed by a 10-minute warm-up, then 30 minutes of main exercises in small groups. Games such as basketball and volleyball are used with a focus on specific techniques. The session ends with cooperative games and a cool-down period involving light exercises to ensure recovery.

Tool Validity:

Expert validity was evaluated as part of the study to ensure the effectiveness of both the test and the training plan. Training tools were reviewed by experts in physical education and motor learning. Questionnaires were distributed containing questions about the appropriateness of the exercises and clarity of

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learning objectives. Feedback was collected to identify strengths and weaknesses. Based on their observations, necessary adjustments were made.

Afterward, a pilot study was conducted on a small group of children to gather data on their performance. Feedback sessions were held with teachers and supervisors to refine and customize the educational tools to meet children's needs.

Training Implementation Procedures:

- **Pre-Test Application:**

  Training implementation began with a pre-test to assess children's level of basic motor skills before the start of the training program. Thirty children from the target age group were selected. The application took two hours, divided into several steps:
  First, a brief introductory round was held to ease the children's anxiety, followed by an explanation and demonstration of the main motor skills to be measured (running, jumping, throwing). Then, the test was conducted, with 15 minutes allocated for each skill. Performance was measured using precise tools such as digital stopwatches and distance markers.

- **Training Execution:**

  After the pre-test phase, the actual training phase commenced and lasted for six weeks, conducted in a large school playground equipped with sports facilities. The venue was prepared with the necessary tools such as balls, walls, and measuring devices. Children were divided into small groups, and each training session lasted 60 minutes, twice a week. Each session started with 10 minutes of warm-up activities, followed by main exercises aimed at improving motor skills such as throwing and hitting using games like basketball and volleyball. The matrix below illustrates this process:

Matrix (1): Training Plan Schedule

Week	Day	Time	Exercises	Notes
1	Tuesday	8:00 – 8:40 AM	Warm-up (10 minutes)	Introduction to training exercises
			Throwing skill improvement (25 min)	Using different balls and teaching techniques
			Basketball drills (25 min)	Promoting teamwork
	Thursday		Warm-up (10 minutes)	Review of previous exercises
2	Tuesday	8:00 – 8:40 AM	Hitting skill improvement (25 min)	Detailed explanation of correct techniques
			Volleyball drills (25 min)	Encouraging healthy competition
			Warm-up (10 minutes)	Tracking children's progress
	Thursday		Throwing skill improvement (25 min)	Applying varied methods
			Basketball drills (25 min)	Reinforcing teamwork skills
			Warm-up (10 minutes)	Enhancing cooperation among children
3	Tuesday	8:00 – 8:40 AM	Hitting skill improvement (25 min)	Giving individual feedback
			Volleyball drills (25 min)	Organizing mini matches
			Warm-up (10 minutes)	Evaluating children's performance
	Thursday		Throwing skill improvement (25 min)	Introducing new challenges
			Basketball drills (25 min)	Applying game strategies

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			Warm-up (10 minutes)	Reviewing and analyzing performance
4	Tuesday	8:00 – 8:40 AM	Hitting skill improvement (25 min)	Individual exercises
			Volleyball drills (25 min)	Enhancing player interaction
			Warm-up (10 minutes)	Continuing performance assessment
	Thursday		Throwing skill improvement (25 min)	Enhancing throwing accuracy
			Basketball drills (25 min)	Focus on defensive skills
			Warm-up (10 minutes)	Preparing children for competitions
5	Tuesday	8:00 – 8:40 AM	Hitting skill improvement (25 min)	Adding extra challenges
			Volleyball drills (25 min)	Organizing competitive matches
			Warm-up (10 minutes)	Reviewing previous week
	Thursday		Throwing skill improvement (25 min)	Integrating previous techniques
			Basketball drills (25 min)	Improving cooperation and coordination
			Hitting skill improvement (25 min)	Providing individual feedback
6	Tuesday	8:00 – 8:40 AM	Warm-up (10 minutes)	Final session and preparation for the test
			Review of all skills (25 minutes)	Repetition of key exercises

Post-Test:

After the completion of the training program, a post-test was conducted to assess improvements in the key motor skills one week after the conclusion of the training. The test lasted for two hours. The same procedures used in the pre-test were followed, including clarification of the measured skills and dividing the children into groups to assess each skill for 15 minutes. The results of the post-test were compared with those of the pre-test to determine the level of improvement. After the test, the data were analyzed, and the results were discussed with the teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the training and its impact on improving the children's motor skills.

Statistical Treatments:

Means and standard deviations were employed, in addition to the T-test, to compare the differences between the two groups.

Section Four: Presentation and Discussion of Research Results

Verification of Research Hypotheses

First Hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant difference at the 5% significance level between the mean scores of a sample of children aged 8 to 10 years in the experimental group on the sports skills index between the pre-test and the post-test.

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To verify this hypothesis, the mean scores of the experimental group in both the pre-test and the post-test of the sports skills assessment were calculated. The T-test was used to determine the statistical significance of the differences between the two tests, and the appropriate statistical decision was made. The results are presented on the table below:

Table 2: The Difference in Mean Scores of the Experimental Group in the Pre- and Post-Test of the Sports Skills Assessment

Test Type	Sample Size	Mean	Variance	T-Test	Sig	Decision
Pre-Test	20	25.9	2.6	33.21	0.000	Statistically Significant
Post-Test		46.7	2.34			

According to the table, the performance of a sample of twenty children was measured, showing a rise in the mean score from 25.9 in the pre-test to 46.7 in the post-test. The T-test yielded a value of 33.21, indicating a substantial difference between the means with a strong statistical significance (Sig < 0.001). This difference reflects the success of the training program in enhancing sports skills, indicating that the children acquired new abilities. Based on these results, the first hypothesis is confirmed, supporting the continued use of similar training methods to develop sports skills.

Second Hypothesis:

There is a statistically significant difference at the 5% significance level between the mean scores of a sample of children aged 8 to 10 years in the experimental and control groups on the sports skills index in the post-test.

To verify this hypothesis, the mean scores of the experimental and control groups in the post-test of the sports skills assessment were calculated. The T-test was used to determine the statistical significance of the differences between the two groups, and the appropriate statistical decision was made. The results are presented on the table below:

Table 3: The Difference in Mean Scores of the Experimental and Control Groups in the Post-Test of the Sports Skills Assessment

Group	Sample Size	Mean	Variance	T-Test	Fd	Sig	Decision
Experimental	20	46.7	1.03	4.62	18	0.000	Statistically Significant
Control	20	24.96	2.1				

The second hypothesis indicates a statistically significant difference at the 5% level between the mean scores of the experimental group (46.7 with a variance of 1.03) and the control group (24.96 with a variance of 2.1) in the post-test. The T-test yielded a value of 4.62, indicating a substantial difference with strong statistical significance (Sig 0.000). This difference, exceeding twenty points, demonstrates the positive effect of the training program on sports skills, while the control group showed no notable change. The statistical significance is attributed to the true effects of the program, with the low variance in the experimental group indicating consistent and efficient teaching. Based on these results, the second hypothesis is confirmed, highlighting the effectiveness of the program and suggesting the need for its improvement to further enhance skill acquisition among children.

Research Conclusions:

The findings support the effectiveness of the training program in improving sports skills among children. The first hypothesis demonstrated a significant increase in assessments between the pre-test and post-test in the experimental group, indicating tangible progress in performance following the training. The study outcomes reinforce the idea that training programs, when designed specifically for the target age group (8 to 10 years), can effectively enhance motor skills. This highlights the importance of tailoring educational curricula to meet children's specific developmental needs.

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Recommendations:

- Establish periodic training programs to reinforce sports skills among children.
- Tailor educational exercises to suit the ages and individual skill levels of children.
- Implement regular statistical measurement tools to assess performance and improve outcomes.

Suggestions:

- Organize regular workshops to train coaches on effective training methods.
- Arrange local sports competitions to promote competition and improve skills.
- Create awareness programs for parents about the importance of sports and supporting children.

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