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Playful and self-managed learning in the training of Physical Culture professionals

[La lúdica y autogestión del aprendizaje en la formación del profesional de la Cultura Física]

[Aprendizagem lúdica e autogerida na formação de profissionais de Cultura Física]

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Abstract

Introduction: Playful activities and self-management of learning are essential in the training of university students in Physical Culture. Some research highlights its importance as a teaching tool.

Objective: To develop educational activities that promote knowledge through recreational activities and self-management of learning among first-year Physical Education students.

Materials and methods: The sample consisted of 18 students from the Day Course, 2nd year, during the 2023-2024 school year. Five teachers from the Department of Theory and Practice of Physical Education were also used as samples. Theoretical methods used were analysis and synthesis, as well as systemic-structural approaches to structure the actions. The empirical methods used were observation, the techniques employed, surveys and interviews, and the criteria of specialists.

Results: Those obtained are superior to the previous ones, which accounts for the transformations achieved in the students in the fulfillment of their skills to perform practical and theoretical tasks, they acquired a better performance through professional skills to solve teaching and research tasks.

Conclusions: The assessment of the teaching actions by the different specialists agrees that they are adequate for the current context of the university, contribute to the self-preparation of the university student with motivation towards their profession, and allow for the transformation of the student.

Keywords: self-managed learning; recreational activities; physical education; training.

Resumen

Introducción: es transcendental la actividad lúdica y la autogestión del aprendizaje en la formación del estudiante universitario de la Cultura Física, algunas son las investigaciones que destacan su importancia como una herramienta didáctica.

Objetivo: elaborar acciones didácticas que favorezcan el conocimiento desde la actividad lúdica y la autogestión del aprendizaje en los estudiantes de la carrera de Cultura Física de primer año.

Materiales y métodos: se tomó como muestra 18 estudiantes del Curso Diurno, 2.º año, durante el curso escolar 2023 2024. También se utilizó como muestra a cinco profesores del Departamento de Teoría práctica de la Educación Física. Se utilizaron como métodos

teóricos, el análisis y síntesis y el sistémico - estructural para estructurar las acciones y los métodos empíricos: la observación, las técnicas empleadas, encuestas y entrevistas, el criterio de especialistas.

Resultados: los obtenidos son superiores a los anteriores, lo que da cuentas de las transformaciones logradas en los estudiantes en el cumplimiento de sus habilidades para realizar tareas prácticas, teóricas, adquirieron un mejor desempeño a través de las habilidades profesionales para resolver las tareas docentes e investigativas.

Conclusiones: la valoración de las acciones didácticas por los diferentes especialistas coincide que son adecuadas responde al contexto actual de la universidad contribuyen a la auto preparación del estudiante universitario con motivación hacia su profesión, permite la transformación del estudiante.

Palabras clave: autogestión del aprendizaje; actividad lúdica; Cultura Física; formación.

Resumo

Introdução: A atividade lúdica e a autogestão da aprendizagem são transcendentais na formação de estudantes universitários de Cultura Física. Algumas pesquisas destacam sua importância como ferramenta de ensino.

Objetivo: Desenvolver atividades educativas que promovam o conhecimento por meio de atividades lúdicas e autogestão da aprendizagem entre alunos do primeiro ano do curso de Educação Física.

Materiais e métodos: 18 alunos do Curso Diurno, 2º. ano, durante o ano letivo de 2023-2024. Cinco professores do Departamento de Teoria e Prática da Educação Física também foram usados como amostra. Os métodos teóricos utilizados foram a análise e síntese e o sistêmico-estrutural para estruturar as ações e os métodos empíricos: observação, as técnicas utilizadas foram levantamentos e entrevistas, e os critérios de especialistas.

Resultados: Os obtidos são superiores aos anteriores, o que justifica as transformações alcançadas nos alunos no cumprimento de suas habilidades para realizar tarefas práticas e teóricas, adquirindo um melhor desempenho por meio de habilidades profissionais para resolver tarefas de ensino e pesquisa.

Conclusões: A avaliação das ações docentes pelos diferentes especialistas concorda que elas são adequadas ao contexto atual da universidade, contribuem para a autopreparação do estudante universitário com motivação para sua profissão e permitem a transformação do aluno.

Palavras-chave: autogestão da aprendizagem; atividade recreativa; Cultura Física; treinamento.

Introduction

Today, Cuban universities aim to train professionals who acquire knowledge and values to understand reality and develop creativity. This corresponds to the global demands set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which emphasizes transformative actions aimed at integrating content throughout the teaching and learning process.

Therefore, for Barroso (2022), initial training is the main way to obtain knowledge to develop their education, their vocational orientation as educators, it is where pedagogical, theoretical and practical skills are acquired.

This is where the professor aims to train new professionals through the teaching-learning process, with a mode of action consistent with the current contexts of society and the university.

Learning any subject is enriched by the information provided, but a commitment to learning and ensuring successful learning is essential, especially when it comes to learning subjects for one's future career.

Therefore, for Ramos *et al.* (2020), learning is conceived as a process through which not only knowledge but also skills, behaviors, and values are acquired or modified. All this achievement and progress is an effect of the study, experience, instruction, reasoning, and observation that occur in the classroom during the teaching and learning process.

In this sense, Lorente points out three main beliefs applicable to the educational goals of the university: 1) understanding that teaching is not transferring knowledge, but creating the possibilities for its production or construction, 2) a person learns when he is motivated, participating and creating his knowledge and 3) we live in a constantly changing world, so autonomous learning is necessary.

Self-management of learning in higher education is therefore of vital importance and has special significance for the future professional of Physical Culture from the subject of Rhythmic and Playful Education, where playful activities constitute a dynamic element of the teaching-learning process in any of the spheres of action and to reinforce the pedagogical mode of action.

For González Cruz (as cited in González Cruz and González Cruz 2021): "knowledge self-management should be based on elements that allow for deeper searches of content in different sources of information" (p. 119)

The development of knowledge self-management requires fostering students' interest in learning about new scientific events or phenomena, including those not covered in textbooks, and an inclination to examine, explore, and manipulate information.

For Carmona *et al.* (2024): self-management of learning is the action of systematically activating and maintaining meta-cognitive, motivational, affective and behavioral processes, in order to achieve learning objectives in a particular context.

According to Barroso and Pérez (2022a): playfulness, which can be seen as a process of orientation in the life of the human being, linked to their personal relationships, to learning and teaching, to motivation, to their performance in professional life.

For Barroso *et al.* (2022): "Play allows the acquisition of knowledge, the improvement of pedagogical and communicative skills, in a space of development, teaching and learning."

The bibliographic review carried out allows us to verify that different national and international authors have addressed the subject related to self-management of learning, among which Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2007); Villalón and Yamiz (2011), Muñoz (2016) stand out, who have offered interesting criteria that have served as a basis for the theoretical foundation of this research. Other researchers such as Andreu (2012), Garzón (2013), Mataran (2015), González (2021) have referred to the need to continue perfecting didactic management in order to elevate the role of the university student in the learning process.

Self-managed learning involves four distinct phases: planning, monitoring, control, and evaluation; during which the individual must identify their own learning needs, establish their own learning objectives, and search for resources.

In relation to the Physical Culture career, there are not many studies related to recreational activity, scarce research can be cited developed by Barrios (2009); Granados (2011); Pérez (2011); Barroso (2022) who show how this element becomes a fundamental pedagogical tool for today's teacher, allowing them to innovate and carry out a comprehensive and constant training proposal for the student.

However, the fields of action from which these studies are carried out do not warn of consistent theoretical inquiries that reveal the essentiality of self-management of learning and play from the classes of Rhythmic and Playful Education in the initial training of the Physical Culture professional, it is seen that the subject in particular, has not been sufficiently addressed, which specifies the need to develop research on this subject, which reveals the self-management of learning from playful knowledge in students of the Physical Culture career.

Self-managed learning, combined with recreational activities, contributes to the acquisition of knowledge during the professional training process. It allows them to acquire pedagogical, theoretical and practical skills, and values—all highly important aspects of quality for professional guidance and communicative education in their future work as professionals.

Therefore, this work takes into account the fulfillment of the following objective: to develop didactic actions that promote playful knowledge in the subject of Playful Rhythmic Education from the self-management of learning in first-year Physical Culture students.

Materials and methods

This research was conducted with a population of 18 students from the Day Course, 2nd year, during the 2023-2024 school year. The sample used is non-probabilistic or directed and also coincides with the population. Five teachers from the Department of Theory and Practice of Physical Education were also used as a sample.

Methods used in the research

The scientific methods used to carry out this research were the following:

Theoretical method: analysis and synthesis: allows for the integration and interrelation of general information extracted from bibliographic sources, the determination of theoretical foundations, and the development of conclusions. Systemic-structural-functional: for the actions and establishing their essential relationship.

Empirical methods: observation: to identify deficiencies that may arise in relation to recreational activities and self-management of learning during the teaching-educational process (in classes)

Techniques used:

- Student surveys: with the aim of verifying the knowledge and mastery that students have regarding the development of recreational activities and self-management of learning.
- Interviews: were conducted to assess students' knowledge of self-management of recreational activities in the Rhythmic and Playful Education subject.

- Specialist criteria: in obtaining value judgments on the feasibility of the proposed actions.

Statistical methods:

Among these, percentage analysis is used as a procedure for processing the information obtained through observation, surveys and interviews, as well as for the preparation of graphs and tables.

The results of the diagnosis are shown below:

Results

The observations were conducted during the 2019-2020 academic year. Twelve classes were observed with the aim of assessing how self-management manifests itself in the teaching-learning process through playful knowledge. The observations represent 42.8% of the total classes taught. Regarding this indicator, 100% of the students reported difficulties in self-management of learning through playful activities. Motivation to complete tasks related to the pursuit of playful knowledge was reflected in 61.11% with low motivation and 38.8% with occasional motivation.

The use of ways to promote self-directed learning through play is limited by 50%, which is never the case, and by other criteria, these ways are sometimes used. 100% of the students reported that the area was in good hygienic condition, as well as appropriate clothing for activities, and no clothing was worn during the activity (Table 1).

Table 1. - Observation

Aspects to observe	Never (%)	Sometimes (%)	Always (%)	Total (%)
Difficulties from the perspective of self-management of learning through playful activities.	———		100%	100%
Motivation to complete tasks related to the search for playful knowledge	61.11%	38.8%	———	100%
Use of ways that promote self-management of learning through play	50%	50%		100%
Good hygienic condition of the area			100%	100%

Interview results

60% of teachers considered the objective of the classes to be correct in correspondence with the recreational activity, however, the orientation towards self-management of learning was carried out very superficially, 40% focused on the fulfillment of the practical part and did not go into depth in the recreational content.

60% of teachers (3) show poor performance in attention to self-management of learning from the subject based on playful activity, due to not being aware of their own shortcomings in terms of the level of methodological preparation. 40% of teachers (2) pay more attention to this aspect. 80% of teachers consider that attention to self-management of learning from playful knowledge is not adequate. The other 20% of teachers (1)

100% of teachers have not been able to identify their methodological deficiencies and only expose administrative causes, ignoring the potential of didactics to optimize the process of developing self-management of learning physical activity (Table 2).

Table 2.- Interview

Questions	Teachers		Total
1	60% (3)	40% (2)	100% (5)
2	60% (3)	40% (2)	100% (5)
3	80% (4)	20% (1)	100% (5)
4	100% (5)		100% (5)

Student survey results

83.33% of the students (15) do not know how to express what self-management of learning is from playful knowledge, only three students for 16.6%, state that for them playful is the game but that it is learned and self-management of learning is one of searching for the necessary information to develop tasks.

It was found that 15 students, representing 83.33%, do not feel prepared regarding playful content for self-managed learning and do not know why. Only 16.6% (three students) stated that they are prepared. One hundred percent of students stated that there is little research related to playful activities from a self-managed learning perspective. One hundred percent of students stated that they receive very little preparation regarding self-learning through playful activities to solve research or teaching tasks. The importance of play and self-learning as an educational tool in the teaching and learning process is not always understood (Table 3).

Table 3. - Survey results

Questions	Students		Total
1	83.33% (15)	16.6% (3)	100% (18)
2	83.33% (15)	16.6% (3)	100% (18)
3	100% (18)		100% (18)
4	100% (18)		100% (18)
5	100% (18)		

Based on the results obtained in the diagnosis and the logic of the research, educational actions are needed that promote knowledge through play and self-management of learning among first-year Physical Education students.

Educational actions

Action # 1

Topic: Self-management of physical culture students through recreational activities

Objective: to characterize the process of self-management of learning and play.

Aspects to be covered: concepts, principles, methods, and the relationship between self-management and play in professional training.

Action # 2

Topic: Playful activity and its connection with self-management of learning

Objective: To explain how this link is established to achieve student knowledge.

Aspects to be addressed: paths, alternatives, methods, particularities of play and self-management of learning.

Action # 3

Topic: Playful activity and self-management of learning modalities in Higher Education.

Objective: to assess self-management of learning and recreational activities in the professional training process

Procedures: Students divided into four teams will write on a sheet of paper what they understand by recreational activity and self-managed learning, as well as three characteristics and the importance of recreational activity in the educational context. After this, they will read it to exchange ideas about what they have written. Based on

their experiences and exchanges, they will proceed to argue the importance of self-managed learning. The teams that will develop the recreational activity will then be selected, focusing on the content learned in subjects such as Basic Gymnastics, Morphology, and others.

The final reflection will take into account how much learning has been achieved.

Action # 4

Topic: Skill Games: An Alternative for Self-Managed Learning

Objective: To implement recreational activities that promote the development of motor skills to contribute to self-management of learning in students.

Procedures will be divided into four groups and the technique "excellent demonstration of self-learning through playful activity" will be applied.

The proposal consists of proposing a game, the teams will bring the proposal to be carried out and one will be selected, the one considered the most appropriate.

Interdisciplinary relationships and professional skills will be addressed.

To carry it out, the following indicators must be met:

1. Close relationship between the objective and the proposed activity
2. Use of the necessary means
3. Rules of the game.

Evaluation: evaluate the result of the activity and the fulfillment of the proposed objective and the knowledge acquired by the students

Action # 5

Topic: Play. Its importance and application in the classroom.

Name of the game: Pass the ball

Objective: to hit the ball to allow the pass and the shot at goal with the inside of the foot

Materials: balls, goals, flags, chalk

Organization: rows

Development: Two teams are formed which will form four lines in pairs. The students go out at the teacher's signal, passing the ball in a moderate manner up to a distance of ten meters marked by a flag and return in the same way, giving the ball to the next pair, but they have to hit the ball to deliver it.

Rules: always hit or pass with the inside of your foot or pass it

Variation: it can be done with a penalty shot.

Methodological guidelines: ask questions related to the game and the topic in question, use terminology specific to the classes and football.

In their interdisciplinary relationship, language is a function of the correct execution of the explanation and terms learned in basic gymnastics, as well as the importance of play in the teaching-learning process, values, and motivation toward play.

Use questions related to morphology that address the interdisciplinary relationship.

Explain what muscles and joints are involved in movement?

Evaluation: evaluate the result of the activity and the fulfillment of the proposed objective

Discussion

The results obtained are geared toward self-learning through playful activities, with the goal of transforming ideas, concepts, principles, skills, and values from their professional approach to their careers from the first year onward. This way, they learn to value their identity and achieve professional motivation.

The actions were evaluated by a group of selected specialists with more than 15 years of experience in the field.

100% consider it appropriate and feasible. It responds to the current context of the university and maintains a broad profile in the training of Physical Culture students. The theoretical elements are adequate, which contribute to self-management of learning through recreational activities.

For (González and Mataran, 2021).

Self-management of learning constitutes an essential element in the current conception of the university Physical Education class in Cuba. This element has a marked legal basis, as demonstrated by the documents that regulate the direction of the teaching-learning process in the current study plan, as reflected in the Base Document for the elaboration of the Study Plans E (2016).

Development, education, and instruction should be addressed as categories of pedagogy in initial training. This reveals the uniqueness of self-managed learning through play, which contributes to a quality educational process.

Campi *et al.* (2022) Self-management is conceived as a competence that the student of modalities supported by technologies strengthens or enhances in their academic journey

Studies by (González and Mataran, 2021); (Barroso *et al.*, 2022 and 2023) and Campi *et al.* (2022) demonstrate that researchers accept and value self-management of learning and recreational activities as a vital process in the training of university students.

Therefore, it is vitally important and important to consider self-management and recreational activities in the initial training of Physical Education professionals, in order to acquire technological and pedagogical skills. Therefore, actions are proposed to improve the way they operate and motivate them toward the program.

For the authors García, R., Pozo, A., Casa, E., & Anangono, P. (2020):

Playfulness is used as a technique that helps students develop creativity and interest in order to enhance their problem-solving abilities. This means that, by applying this strategy, the student's creative capacity will be developed and the knowledge acquired will be enhanced. It will also help establish communicative relationships.

According to Zúñiga and Daley (2022), the methodological aspects of professional pedagogical training focus on the problematization of the curricular content as an essential link that determines the logic of the training and development of professional pedagogical skills: planning, organizing, directing and controlling the teaching-learning process.

For Barroso and Pérez (2022b): the playful activity in the training of professionals and establishes it as that which must go through the entire learning and teaching process in their professional life.

As a result, changes in the professional training process, play is an appropriate element for self-learning, in university students of Physical Culture for their professional motivation and a better way of acting, which from the proposed actions achieved positive transformations in students by being more independent in their teaching activities, greater motivated.

In assessing student outcomes in relation to play and self-learning during the initial training process, educational guidance, information, and theoretical and practical considerations of play were taken into account.

The overall results are positive, as they achieved improved performance through professional skills to complete teaching and research tasks, which allowed for planned, applied, and evaluative knowledge. Therefore, an improvement in skills for achieving self-knowledge through play in the educational process leads to greater educational communication between students and teachers.

Playfulness and self-management of learning are valued as a necessary element in their training, as they feel more engaged in practical classes, although they are not yet entirely critical of their errors in terms of their skills to develop for self-knowledge, self-management of learning from playfulness to be used in practical activities and in their orientation and communication skills to achieve active and growing learning.

Overall, the results obtained are superior to previous ones, reflecting the transformations achieved in the students' abilities to perform practical and theoretical tasks as future professionals. The initiatives also had an impact on teachers with higher levels of theoretical and methodological training.

Conclusions

The study of the theoretical frameworks for the initial training process for Physical Education professionals allowed us to identify the problems that limit the development of professional skills, the limited knowledge about self-management of learning, and recreational activities for student preparation.

The teaching activities address student and teacher self-preparation, linking self-managed learning with recreational activities, all of which can contribute to improved performance for future Physical Education students.

The assessment of the teaching activities by the different specialists agrees that they are appropriate for the current context of the university, contribute to the self-preparation of university students with motivation towards their profession, and allow for student transformation.

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Conflict of interest:

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Authors' contributions:

The authors have participated in the writing of the work and analysis of the documents.



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