

Educational games and their relationship to enhancing self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators

الألعاب التربوية وعلاقتها بتعزيز الثقة بالنفس لدى طفل الروضة من وجهة نظر المربين

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Abstract:

The current study aims to identify the nature of the relationship between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators. The Educational Games Scale and the Self-Confidence Scale, developed by Dr. Wasel Al-Harbi and Dr. Abdulaziz Al-Oshi, were applied to a sample of 16 male and female educators. After statistical analysis of the data, the results showed a positive correlation between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the educators' perspective. Moreover, the level of self-confidence in kindergarten children, as perceived by the educators, was found to be high.

Keywords: Educational games, self-confidence, kindergarten child.

ملخص:

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى الكشف عن نوع العلاقة بين الألعاب التربوية وتعزيز الثقة بالنفس لدى أطفال الروضة من وجهة نظر المربين. تم تطبيق مقياسي الألعاب التربوية ومقياس مستوى الثقة بالنفس للدكتورة واصل الحربي والدكتورة عبد العزيز الأشي، على عينة قوامها 16 مربي ومربية. بعد التحليل الإحصائي للبيانات أظهرت النتائج أنه توجد علاقة ارتباطية موجبة بين الألعاب التربوية وتعزيز الثقة بالنفس لدى طفل الروضة من وجهة نظر المربين، ومستوى الثقة بالنفس لدى طفل الروضة من وجهة نظر المربين مرتفع. الكلمات المفتاحية: الألعاب التربوية، الثقة بالنفس، طفل الروضة.

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1. Introduction

Educational games are considered among the most effective tools used to convey new information to children in an engaging and motivating way, helping to facilitate the process of understanding and assimilating learning material. These games rely on motor and sensory activities that stimulate the child's senses in learning new skills. It is also important to highlight the positive psychological impact of these games on the child. Through them, the child learns how to participate in group activities, engage in classroom interaction, express their thoughts, communicate with peers, and build social relationships with others. As a result, the child feels like an important and valued member of their environment, which in turn boosts their self-confidence.

2. Research problem

Play is considered a means for children to relieve stress and frustration caused by their surrounding environment. Once a child spends time playing, either alone or with friends, they feel comforted and happy, which helps restore their emotional balance. Play plays a vital role in shaping a healthy personality, serving both as an outlet for excess energy and a tool for emotional release. It is therefore regarded as an effective method of learning and knowledge acquisition. This perspective was advocated by Rousseau, who emphasized the importance of children playing in nature to satisfy their desire to explore the elements of their environment, encounter various situations, and learn to deal with them independently, thereby acquiring new behaviors.

Similarly, the Montessori method underlined the effectiveness of learning through play by providing a safe environment and sufficient time for children to engage in educational activities. These activities help develop children's intelligence, stimulate their cognitive processes, and increase their capacity for imagination and creativity. This highlights the importance of play in education, making it an integral part of educational curricula in most institutions. Educational games have been incorporated as an effective strategy for learning and acquiring new experiences, capturing children's attention, and helping them remain focused on the teacher for longer periods, thus facilitating comprehension and knowledge retention in the classroom. According to Mari and Balqis (Al-Huwaidi, 2012, pp 27–51). educational games are defined as an activity or set of activities practiced by individuals or groups to achieve specific goals. They categorized these games based on their educational value, such as: **Doll-based games** (e.g. tech dolls, animal figurines), **Motor games** (e.g. races, jumping, wrestling), **Cognitive games** (e.g. problem-solving), **Dramatic games** (e.g. theater, role-playing), **Music and dance games** (e.g. expressive rhythmic dance), **Storytelling and cultural games**.

These activities help children develop social interaction and psychological well-being by engaging with their environment (e.g. building friendships, effective communication, and expressing thoughts and desires). They also foster cognitive development when teachers use storytelling to help children grasp moral lessons, drawing and coloring workshops, colored wooden blocks to learn shapes and colors, and musical games to develop skills such as construction, drawing, and verbal expression. Given the positive results educational games have achieved in the field of education, several studies have addressed this topic. For example, Al-Husseini (2014) aimed to determine the impact of educational games on developing certain learning skills among primary school pupils. The results showed statistically significant differences in learning skills between the control group and the experimental group in the post-test, in favor of the experimental group, and no significant differences based on gender (male/female) within the experimental group in the post-test.

It is also important to highlight the psychological dimension, which is a core component of personality. In early childhood, children need to have their psychological

needs met, such as feeling loved, protected, and cared for by their parents to ensure healthy psychological development. Feelings of love, safety, and stability foster self-confidence, which in turn leads to emotional balance. Abu Zaid (2021) defined self-confidence as a personality trait reflected in a child's orientation toward themselves and others, their sense of happiness and reassurance, their understanding of their capabilities, and the ability to use them effectively to face life situations (Ahmed, 2021, p. 268). This trait is closely related to the input the child receives from their environment when their psychological needs are met, their psychological development is stable ; when these needs are unmet, it may result in psychological imbalances and disorders.

To prevent such issues, effective methods must be used to foster balanced psychological development, including the use of educational games to enhance self-confidence in preschool children.

Several studies have addressed self-confidence in kindergarten-aged children. For example, Ahmed (2021) aimed to explore the relationship between self-confidence and decision-making ability in early childhood. The results showed that both self-confidence and decision-making ability were above average. Another study by Abdul Latif (2018) aimed to assess the effectiveness of a program based on creative activities to boost self-confidence in kindergarten children. The findings revealed statistically significant differences in all four dimensions of the pictorial self-confidence scale between pre-test and post-test results, in favor of the post-test group attributed to the program's effectiveness.

Based on the foregoing, the importance of addressing the current topic becomes clear, leading us to pose the following research questions :

- Is there a statistically significant correlation between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators?
- What is the level of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators ?

3. Research Hypotheses

- There is a statistically significant correlation between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators.
- The level of self-confidence in kindergarten children, as perceived by educators, is high.

4. Operational Definitions of the Study Variables

4.1. Educational Games :

Educational games are a set of instructional activities based on play, used by the educator to motivate the child to acquire new experiences in a simplified and accessible manner. Operationally, this variable is defined by the score obtained by the kindergarten child on the Educational Games Scale developed by Dr. Al-Harbi and Dr. Al-Oshi (2021), as evaluated from the perspective of educators.

4.2. Self confidence :

Self-confidence is one of the psychological traits characteristic of a well-adjusted personality. Operationally, it is defined by the score obtained by the kindergarten child on the Self-Confidence Level Scale, as perceived and rated by educators, developed by Dr. Al-Harbi and Dr. Al-Oshi (2021).

4.3. Kindergarten Child :

Operationally defined as a child enrolled in kindergarten, aged between 3 and 4 years, attending Maternelle Aela school.

5. Study Objectives

- To examine the relationship between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators.
- To identify the level of self-confidence in kindergarten children.

6. Significance of the Study

- The significance of this study lies in the positive impact that educational games have on the psychological well-being of children during early childhood, particularly in kindergarten.
- It aims to support the development of self-confidence in kindergarten children.
- This study provides valuable insights for educators and specialists in the field of education by guiding them in designing diverse and purposeful educational games that contribute to the psychological well-being of kindergarten children.

7. Previous Studies

7.1. Study by Amir (2023)

Amir (2023) conducted a study aimed at examining the effectiveness of using educational games and their role in developing fundamental motor skills in preschool

children aged 4 to 5 years. The proposed program and fundamental motor skills tests were applied to a sample of 60 boys and girls using the experimental method.

The findings of the study revealed the following :

- There were statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level between the experimental group and the control group in the development of certain locomotor skills in the post-test, in favor of the experimental group.
- There were statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level between the experimental group and the control group in the development of certain manipulative/control skills in the post-test, in favor of the experimental group.
- There were statistically significant differences at the 0.05 significance level between the experimental group and the control group in the development of certain balance and body stability skills in the post-test, in favor of the experimental group.

7.2. Study by Al-Jubein and Hamadeh (2023)

The study conducted by Al-Jubein and Hamadeh (2023) aimed to explore the role of educational games in developing certain components of creative thinking from the perspective of kindergarten teachers. To achieve this objective, the researchers used the descriptive method and applied a questionnaire consisting of three dimensions to a sample of 60 kindergarten teachers.

The results of the study revealed the following :

- The degree of contribution of educational games to the development of creative thinking components, as perceived by kindergarten teachers, was high both overall and across all dimensions of the questionnaire.
- There were statistically significant differences in the mean responses of the sample on the questionnaire items attributable to the academic qualification variable, in favor of teachers with higher qualifications.

There were statistically significant differences in the mean responses of the sample attributable to the years of experience variable, in favor of teachers with greater teaching experience.

7.3. Study by Al-Harairi (2021)

Al-Harairi (2021) conducted a study aimed at identifying the effect of a program based on educational games on the development of self-concept and self-confidence in preschool children. The researcher employed the experimental method with a sample of 92 boys and girls. The findings of the study were as follows :

- The improvement rate on the self-concept scale for the experimental group was 16.48%, compared to 7.99% for the control group.

The proposed educational games program had a statistically significant positive effect on the experimental group regarding the self-confidence scale variables.

8. Methodological field procedures

8.1. Study Method

Since the current study aims to explore the relationship between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence among kindergarten children from the perspective of educators, the descriptive-analytical method was used. This approach aims to describe and analyze the aspects related to the research problem, based on the data provided by the tools used. These data are then statistically analyzed and interpreted in light of the specific objectives and sample of the study, through which the study hypotheses are either confirmed or refuted.

8.2. Basic Characteristics of the Study Sample

The study scales were applied to a sample consisting of 16 male and female educators at Aela Kindergarten. The completed scales were collected within one week. The characteristics of the study sample are presented in the following tables :

Table 1. Basic Characteristics of the Study Sample According to Gender Variable

Sex	Frequencies	Percentage
Males	03	%18,75
Females	13	%81,25
Total	16	%100

It is clear from Table (01) that the percentage of males is lower than that of females, amounting to 18.75%, while the percentage of females is 81.25%.

Table 2. Basic Characteristics of the Study Sample According to the Age Variable

Age	Frequencies	Percentage
25- 35 years old	10	%62 ,5
36- 50 years odl	06	%37,5
Total	16	%100

It is clear from Table (02) that the percentage of the first age group (25–35) is higher than that of the second age group, amounting to 62.5%.

8.3. Psychometric Characteristics of the Study Tools

The study scales were applied to a sample consisting of 16 male and female educators at Aela Kindergarten. The completed scales were collected within one week. The characteristics of the study sample are presented in the following tables. The current study relied on two scales developed by Dr. Al-Harbi and Al-Ashi in 2021. The first scale measures educational games, while the second scale measures the level of self-confidence.

The Educational Games Scale consists of 32 items distributed across two dimensions : the first dimension includes 17 items related to individual educational games, and the second dimension includes 15 items related to group educational games. A three-point Likert scale was used (Always, Sometimes, Never), scored respectively as 3-2-1.

The Self-Confidence Scale consists of 20 items, also using a three-point Likert scale (Always, Sometimes, Never), with the same scoring system : 3-2-1.

The psychometric properties of both study instruments were verified through a pilot study, by calculating discriminant validity and confirming the reliability of the two scales.

8.3.1. Discriminant Validity of the Study Scale

Table 3. Validity of the Educational Games Scale Using the "t-test" for Two Extreme Groups

Groups	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	df	Sig
Upper Group	03	73,66	3,51	-5,01	04	$\alpha=0,01$
Lower Group	03	85	1,73			

It is evident from Table (03) that there are statistically significant differences at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.01$ between the scores of the upper group and the lower group on the Educational Games Scale. The calculated t-value was (-5.01) with degrees of freedom (4), which indicates that the scale demonstrates validity through the extreme groups comparison method.

Table 4. Validity of the Self-Confidence Scale Using the "t-test" for Two Extreme Groups

Groups	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	df	Sig
Upper Group	03	49,66	1,52	-5,61	04	$\alpha=0,01$
Lower Group	03	56,66				

It is evident from Table (04) that there are statistically significant differences at the significance level of $\alpha = 0.01$ between the scores of the upper group and the lower group on the Self-Confidence Scale. The calculated t-value was (-5.61) with degrees of freedom (4), which indicates that the scale demonstrates validity through the extreme groups comparison method.

8.3.2. Reliability Calculation of the Study Scale

Table 5. Reliability of the Educational Games Scale Using Cronbach's Alpha and Guttman Method

Statistical Methods Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Guttman
Educational Games Scale	0,65	0,63

It is evident from Table (05) that the reliability coefficient using Cronbach's Alpha was 0.65, and using the Guttman method was 0.63. These are considered acceptable correlation coefficients, indicating that the scale has a good level of reliability and can therefore be used in the main study.

Table 6. Reliability of the Self-Confidence Scale Using Cronbach's Alpha and Guttman Method

Statistical Methods Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Guttman
Self-Confidence Scale	0,65	0,62

It is evident from Table (06) that the reliability coefficient using Cronbach's Alpha was 0.65, and using the Guttman method was 0.62. These are considered good correlation coefficients, indicating that the Self-Confidence Scale has an acceptable level of reliability, and therefore, it can be used in the main study.

9. Statistical Methods Used in the Study

9.1. Descriptive Statistics

It included the following methods : percentages, frequencies, arithmetic means, and standard deviations.

9.2. Inferential Statistics

It included the following methods : Cronbach's Alpha formula, Guttman method, t-test, and Pearson correlation coefficient. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the statistical processing of the data.

10. Presentation and Analysis of the Study Results

10.1. Analysis of the First Hypothesis Results

The first hypothesis states: "There is a statistically significant correlation between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators." To test this hypothesis, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used, and the results were as follows :

Table 7. Pearson Correlation Coefficient Calculation for the Study Variables

Variables	Sample	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Decision
The Relationship Between Educational Games and the Enhancement of Self- Confidence in Kindergarten Children	16	0,47	There is a statistically significant positive correlation between educational games and the enhancement of self- confidence in kindergarten children.

Table (07) shows that, after calculating Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) to examine the relationship between the study variables, there is a positive correlation between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators. Therefore, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis has been confirmed.

10.2. Analysis of the Second Hypothesis Results

The second hypothesis states : "The level of self-confidence among kindergarten children is high from the perspective of educators." To test this hypothesis, a one-sample t-test was used, and the results were as follows :

Table 8. One-Sample t-Test Calculation

Sample	Hypothetical Mean	Arithmetic Mean	Standard Deviation	t-Test	Df	Sig
16	40	51	3,82	11,48	15	$\alpha=0,05$

Table (08) shows that the arithmetic mean was 51, which is higher than the hypothetical mean of 40. The t-test value was 11.48 with 15 degrees of freedom at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the level of self-confidence among kindergarten children, from the perspective of educators, is high. Therefore, the second hypothesis is confirmed.

11. Discussion and Interpretation of the Study Results

11.1. Discussion and Interpretation of the First Hypothesis

Following the statistical analysis of the data related to the first hypothesis, which states: "There is a statistically significant correlation between educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in kindergarten children from the perspective of educators," it was found that educational games play an active role in developing children's self-confidence. This is because they include artistic activities that help children express their feelings and emotions, and they also encourage the use of fine motor skills, such as shaping different figures with clay, which gives the child a sense of accomplishment and happiness upon completing the activity. Moreover, since these games are often group-based, they allow the child to communicate with peers and engage in social interaction, enriching their vocabulary and helping them acquire new social skills. The focus on cooperative play fosters a spirit of collaboration and positive competition. Furthermore, taking on leadership roles within a group setting promotes a sense of responsibility and discipline. All of these aspects of educational games contribute significantly to enhancing a child's self-confidence.

Due to the limited number of previous studies on the topic of the current research, the researcher found one similar study conducted by Dr. Al-Harbi and Dr. Al-Ashi (2021). This study aimed to examine the relationship between the implementation of educational games and the enhancement of self-confidence in preschool children from the perspective of kindergarten teachers. It employed a descriptive correlational approach, using two scales (Educational Games and Self-Confidence) on a sample of 137 Saudi female teachers. The results revealed that the level of implementation of educational games, in its various dimensions, was rated as moderate by the teachers. Additionally, a positive correlation was found between the Educational Games Scale and the Self-Confidence Enhancement Scale.

In addition, other studies have addressed the role of educational games, such as the study conducted by Sawafteh (2022), which aimed to explore the role of educational games in developing emotional intelligence among kindergarten children in schools located in the

northern governorates of the West Bank, from the perspective of teachers and principals. The findings revealed that educational games play a very significant role. The study also showed that there were no statistically significant differences in the mean responses of the study sample regarding the role of educational games in developing emotional intelligence among kindergarten children in the northern West Bank schools based on the variables of (years of experience, kindergarten location, type of kindergarten, and academic qualification).

The study conducted by Al-Jumaili (2013) aimed to examine the impact of using educational games on the acquisition of certain language skills among kindergarten children. The results showed that the children in the experimental group, who learned language skills through educational games, outperformed those in the control group, who learned without the use of games, in their language skills. This indicates the effectiveness of educational games. Furthermore, these studies collectively highlight the role of educational games in developing various learning skills and enhancing different developmental domains, such as emotional, social, and educational aspects.

11.2. Discussion and Interpretation of the second Hypothesis

After the statistical analysis of the data related to the second hypothesis, which states : "The level of self-confidence among kindergarten children, from the perspective of educators, is high", it became clear that the study sample displays a high level of self-confidence. This can be attributed to the expertise of educators and specialists in effectively and positively implementing the structured educational program and creating a stimulating and supportive learning environment.

In particular, Aela Kindergarten adopts various artistic workshops such as drawing and coloring, which foster creative thinking. The school also integrates foreign educational programs aimed at developing behavioral skills such as their use of Professor Marie-Françoise Mornet's book for children aged 3–4 years. This book includes a variety of exercises and activities covering arithmetic, reading, observation, discovery, and drawing, using techniques like cutting, pasting, and coloring. Moreover, children are given the opportunity to choose the stories they want to hear, which opens up space for dialogue, self-expression, and encourages them to describe their physical appearance in a positive way. These practices aim both to develop the child's senses and to enrich their cognitive resources. These techniques play a significant role in shaping the child's personality and improving their psychological balance by making them feel comfortable and happy during classroom activities thus reinforcing their self-confidence.

The study conducted by Abdel Latif (2018) aimed to measure the effectiveness of a program based on creative activities in enhancing self-confidence among kindergarten children. The key findings revealed statistically significant differences in the illustrated self-

confidence scale across its four dimensions between the pre-test and post-test results, in favor of the post-test. This indicates the effectiveness of the implemented program.

Given the significant role of educational games in fostering self-esteem, numerous studies have addressed this variable. For example, Al-Mutairi's study (2017) aimed to explore the family's role in enhancing a child's self-confidence, as well as the obstacles that families face in fulfilling this role. The key findings of the study showed a high level of agreement among the participants regarding seven major roles the family plays in promoting self-confidence in children, seven obstacles that hinder this role, and fourteen suggestions that could help families fulfill their function in building self-confidence during early childhood. The aforementioned studies emphasized the importance of educational games and confirmed their effective role in developing children's overall intelligence, and more specifically, in enhancing their level of self-confidence.

12. Conclusion :

In light of the current study's emphasis on the importance of using educational games in instructional programs, integrating play-based methods into educational activities has become essential due to their positive impact on the child's behavior and personality. These benefits include enhancing self-confidence, acquiring new skills, and increasing motivation to learn. In this context, a set of recommendations has been proposed, as follows :

- Organizing art workshops and group sensory-motor activities for children in educational institutions, based on cooperative play strategies.
- Encouraging collaboration between families and educators to involve children in individual educational games at home.
- Diversifying the tools and methods used in delivering educational activities.
- Integrating educational games into the content of learning activities to facilitate children's understanding and retention of information.

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