



## Playful Activities in the Learning Process



Gema Mercedes Bravo-Velasquez <sup>a</sup>  
Jose Carlos Saldarriaga-Zambrano <sup>b</sup>  
Lucia Lilibeth Figueroa-Moreira <sup>c</sup>  
Johanna Lisbeth Candela-Muñoz <sup>d</sup>  
Orley Benedicto Reyes-Meza <sup>e</sup>

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### Abstract

In the field of education, the benefits of playfulness are widely known in the teaching-learning process, from where they contribute to the integral development of the student. As a problem in the Juan Montalvo Educational Unit No. 41, these activities have not been used as a strategic tool to facilitate the teaching-learning process, the objective of the research is to analyze the playful activities in the teaching-learning process, in its development the playful characterizes, its benefits in the teaching-learning process are identified, and activities are proposed to strengthen the teaching-learning process. This study is based on a qualitative type of research where documentary analysis and interview techniques were used. The study population corresponds to two managers, to whom the interview was applied. It was obtained as a result that playfulness is necessary in the teaching-learning process, having benefits that contribute to creative thinking.

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### Corresponding author:

Gema Mercedes Bravo-Velasquez,

Maestría en Educación Básica, Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí, Extensión Chone, Ecuador.

Email address: [gembravo16@hotmail.com](mailto:gembravo16@hotmail.com)

<sup>a</sup> Maestría en Educación Básica, Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí, Extensión Chone, Ecuador

<sup>b</sup> Maestría en Educación Básica, Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí, Extensión Chone, Ecuador

<sup>c</sup> Maestría en Educación Básica, Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí, Extensión Chone, Ecuador

<sup>d</sup> Maestría en Educación Básica, Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí, Extensión Chone, Ecuador

<sup>e</sup> Maestría en Educación Básica, Universidad Laica Eloy Alfaro de Manabí, Extensión Chone, Ecuador

## 1 Introduction

Playful activity is an attractive and motivating method in the teaching-learning process that tries to capture the attention of students to obtain significant learning (Tarrés & Cullell, 2021). In the Juan Montalvo Educational Unit No. 41, teachers use different teaching-learning strategies, including playful activity, the use of which is limited and there are no specific results that demonstrate the usefulness of this methodology in the classroom within of this institution. Education frames the development of the human being in all its areas of knowledge, it is relevant to implement strategies that are fundamental in the educational process of initial or primary level students since they facilitate the understanding of the topics to be dealt with, helping to develop skills. critical thinking so that they develop their imagination and creativity in solving problems (Asiú Corrales et al., 2021).

Internationally, it is evident that recreation is one of the most significant ways for young children to acquire basic knowledge and skills. Playfulness and spaces that encourage practical play, discovery, and learning must be taken advantage of, elements that comprise the basis of an effective school program (Caicedo Quiroz, 2019). The playful has been a pedagogical resource used in different educational systems around the world, its benefits have been documented in research by Rodríguez-Miranda et al. (2022); Candela Borja & Benavides Bailón, (2020); Ávila-Negrinis et al. (2022), Caicedo Quiroz (2019), among others. In Brazil, it has been integrated into mathematics classes to make them more interactive and attractive for students; in Finland, it has been incorporated into the school curriculum, a country that is known for its focus on learning through play and the development of social and emotional skills. In Japan, the ludic is used in language learning, while in Mexico, for the teaching of history (Caicedo Quiroz, 2019).

All these educational experiences demonstrate the benefits that playfulness offers in learning. This corresponds to the activity that is carried out through play, it is a sudden and pleasant action, where children explore and perform a display to get to know the environment, expressing and representing their inner and outer world according to their own needs and interests (Vargas & Acuña, 2020). In Ecuador, the educational system is regulated by the Organic Law of Intercultural Education, which among its regulations promotes the application of suitable methodologies for teaching performance. Playful games are a successful tool that teachers must apply, considering the planning and learning gaps of the students, and observing their real situation so that the games can be developed in a specific way outside class hours and before the lesson. class certain academic and training objectives, which allow students to consolidate and practice what they have learned in the classroom through playful activities (Luna & Conde, 2021).

In the Juan Montalvo Educational Unit No. 41, teachers have been trained in the application of methodologies for the teaching-learning process, among the occasionally used methodologies are games that are playful, interactive activities that require greater use for their application in the classroom. of classes. Children play from their first years of life to have fun, seek affection, and create solidarity; through it they develop their fantasy, their illusion, their creativity, their physical capacities, motor skills, and tactics that allow them to observe, explore and understand the world around them, release tensions, express their feelings and emotions and learn to live appropriately (Velasquez & Lizarazo, 2020).

The game promotes communication freely and spontaneously, each one has its own rules, or they are created, it is free and occurs in certain spaces and times. The games appear for a period, disappear and return again according to the seasons, age, and sex (Wilson, 1990; Kangas, 2010; Kangas et al., 2017; Brauner & Ziefle, 2022). Its rules are easy to assimilate and require a minimum of resources. Game-based learning is essential for the healthy development of the person who practices it, from which it can be deduced that children are more sociable, respectful, cooperative, and competent. The game is pleasant, fun, spontaneous, expressive, interactive, and voluntary, and favors movement, creativity, and imagination. In addition, it promotes joy, tranquility and favors the control of emotions. It is a transversal activity that manifests itself throughout life, and that allows the child to express himself naturally, taking a stand on his statements (Luna & Conde, 2021). The objective of this work is to analyze the ludic activities in the teaching-learning process, in its development specific objectives are executed oriented to characterize the ludic, identify the benefits of the ludic in the teaching-learning process, and propose activities based on the ludic to strengthen the teaching-learning process.

## 2 Materials and Methods

This study is based on a qualitative methodology through which the properties and particularities of the ludic in the teaching-learning process are analyzed. Through this approach, the documentary analysis technique is used to carry

out an in-depth exploration of play in order to understand how students experience learning from the development of play activities, and how these experiences influence the quality of the process. educational. It is a highly flexible methodology, ideal for obtaining detailed and rich information on the experience of teachers and students in the use of ludic, which favors the ability to explore the nuances and complexities of the research topic (Haza & Véliz, 2020). For the documentary analysis, a search of specialized information is carried out in databases and digital repositories in which keywords such as Game, didactics; methodology, and strategies, the selected elements correspond to publications in specialized journals carried out between 2017 and 2023. All the selected information that supports the research is duly cited. The interview technique was also used to collect the criteria of the directors of the Juan Montalvo Educational Unit. The selected population corresponded to two managers.

### 3 Results and Discussions

#### *Playful activity*

From the literature, there is a broad foundation of ludic activity, which is defined as any activity or game that is carried out to have fun and enjoy. It can be an individual or group activity and often implies a series of rules and objectives to achieve (Candela Borja & Benavides Bailón, 2020). It is frequently used as a tool to encourage creativity, learning, and personal development. It is considered a fun and effective way to learn, grow and develop both personally and professionally. Whether it's a board game, sport, or recreational activity, play can be a great way to relieve stress and enjoy life.

Playfulness in education is a pedagogical approach that is based on the use of games, and recreational and dynamic activities to improve the teaching-learning process (Rodríguez-Jiménez et al., 2022). This methodology seeks to encourage learning through enjoyment and fun, promoting creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving. This is based on the theory of constructivism, which maintains that learning is an active and constructive process that occurs when the individual builds their own knowledge through interaction with the environment and with other individuals (Maila and Figueroa, 2020). In this sense, play becomes a valuable tool for the teacher, since it allows the student to acquire new knowledge in a playful and meaningful way (Cordoba, 2020).

It can be applied at all educational levels, from kindergarten to university. In early childhood education, for example, playful activities are used to develop motor, cognitive, and socio-affective skills in children, while in secondary and university education, games and dynamics are used to encourage participation and teamwork (Velasquez & Lizarazo, 2020). The research investigations of Rodríguez-Miranda et al. (2022); Candela Borja & Benavides Bailón (2020); Ávila-Negrinis et al. (2022); Caicedo Quiroz (2019), have exposed the main benefits of playfulness, identifying as the main improvement of the emotional climate in the classroom, promoting teamwork, solidarity, and collaboration. In addition, it helps to develop creativity, imagination, and the capacity for innovation in students, since it allows them to experiment with ideas and concepts in a playful way and without fear of failure.

It can also be an effective tool to improve the teaching process of more complex subjects. For example, a role-playing dynamic can be used to explain the concepts of democracy and political power or a board game can be used to teach about the history of humanity. Another benefit of playfulness in education is that it allows students to be more autonomous and responsible for their own learning. (Tarrés & Cullell, 2021). Through playful activities, students can explore and discover new knowledge autonomously, which allows them to learn at their own pace and according to their own needs and interests. However, the application of ludic in the classroom also presents some challenges. One of the main challenges is that teachers must have a deep understanding of the dynamic activities of games and play since they must be able to design and adapt the activities to fit the learning objectives (Asiú Corrales et al., 2021). In addition, teachers must have strong pedagogical skills to guide students through the learning process and ensure that learning objectives are achieved.

#### *Benefits of play in the teaching-learning process*

From the literature, the benefits of playful to the teaching-learning process have been documented, in the investigations of Alvarado et al. (2019); Rabal Alonso et al. (2020); Rodríguez-Miranda et al. (2022); Candela Borja & Benavides Bailón (2020); Ávila-Negrinis et al. (2022); Caicedo Quiroz (2019), among others. Playful is a pedagogical tool that aims to facilitate and improve the teaching-learning process through play and recreational activity. In recent years, it has become increasingly popular in the classroom due to the benefits it offers.

In the interview applied to two directors of the Juan Montalvo Educational Unit, the main benefits of the application of the ludic within the teaching-learning process were consulted, based on the answers provided by the two interviewees and based on a qualitative analysis. Multiple benefits associated with the application of play in the classroom, these in relation to creativity and imagination, the development of social skills, memory improvement, stress reduction, and improvements in significant learning, criteria that agree with the findings from [Rodríguez-Miranda et al. \(2022\)](#); [Candela Borja & Benavides Bailón \(2020\)](#); [Ávila-Negrinis et al. \(2022\)](#); [Caicedo Quiroz \(2019\)](#), among others.

**Fosters Creativity:** Play and playful activity promotes imagination and creativity, helping students develop their ability to think divergently and find creative solutions to problems. **Develops Social Skills:** Cooperative and competitive games can help students learn teamwork, sharing, following rules, and communicating effectively. **Improves memory:** By combining fun with learning, students can better remember the concepts and information presented to them. **Games can also help students retain information for the long term.** **Reduces stress:** Playfulness reduces anxiety and stress in students, allowing them to relax and be more receptive to learning ([Boysen et al., 2022](#); [Boysen et al., 2023](#); [Parra-González et al., 2021](#)).

**Supports meaningful learning:** Games and playful activities can help students understand concepts in a deeper and more meaningful way. Students can learn more effectively when they are actively involved in the learning process. **Increases motivation:** Playfulness makes learning more attractive and fun, which in turn increases student motivation ([Vargas & Acuña, 2020](#)). Students are more willing to participate in activities that they find interesting and exciting. **Promotes autonomous learning:** By allowing students to take control of their learning through play, they are allowed to make decisions and experiment with different solutions to problems. This can foster independence and autonomous learning. **Develops cognitive skills:** Games and playful activities can help students develop cognitive skills such as attention, perception, memory, reasoning, and problem-solving ([Baş et al., 2016](#); [Awan et al., 2019](#); [López & Caceres, 2010](#)).

#### *Strategies based on ludic activities*

Among the strategies based on recreational activities that can be applied to improve the teaching-learning process, those shown in Figure 1 can be highlighted.

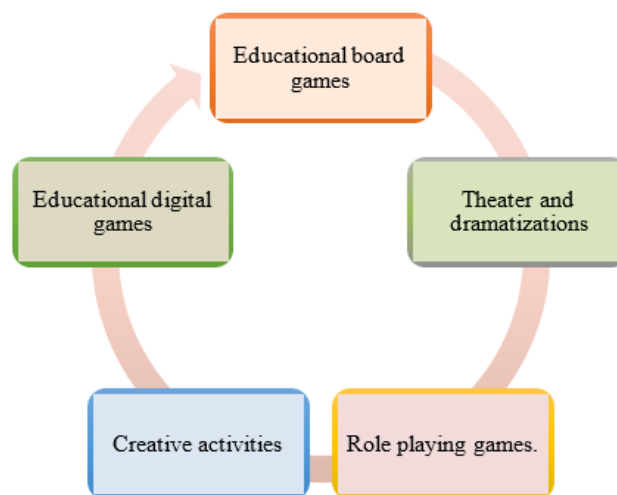


Figure 1. Recreational activities applied to the teaching-learning process.

Resource: [Rodríguez-Miranda et al. \(2022\)](#).

**Educational Board Games:** Board games are excellent learning tools as they encourage social interaction, teamwork, decision-making, and critical thinking. There are a wide variety of educational board games that can be used in the classroom to teach skills such as problem-solving, strategic thinking, reading, writing, and math. **Theater and role play:** Theater and role plays can be used to teach communication and language skills. Students can act out scenes from books

or movies they have read or seen in class, or even create their own plays. This allows them to practice speaking, reading aloud, reading comprehension and character interpretation.

**Role plays:** Role plays are activities that allow students to assume different roles and situations in a safe and controlled environment. These games can be used to teach social and emotional skills, such as empathy, conflict resolution, and decision-making. For example, students can take on the role of historical figures and recreate important events from history. **Creative Activities:** Creative activities, such as painting, drawing, music, and writing, can be used to encourage students' creativity and imagination. These activities can also help students process their emotions and thoughts in creative and healthy ways. **Educational digital games:** Educational digital games are interactive tools that can be used to teach skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, reading, and math. These games can be used on a variety of devices, such as computers, tablets, or even mobile phones, and can be customized to the needs of the students. Furthermore, educational digital games can also be a fun and motivating way to learn (Abbasi et al., 2021; Rivas et al., 2021; Álava et al., 2021).

## 4 Conclusion

Play is an effective pedagogical tool that can significantly improve the teaching-learning process. Among its main benefits, it is identified that it fosters creativity, develops social skills, improves memory, reduces stress, favors meaningful learning, increases motivation, promotes autonomous learning and the development of cognitive skills, and in general the application of methodologies. based on ludic activities offers a more complete and effective learning experience for students.

### *Conflict of interest statement*

The authors declared that they have no competing interests.

### *Statement of authorship*

The authors have a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The authors have approved the final article.

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