

TRADITIONAL GAMES AS A PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

BRINCADEIRAS TRADICIONAIS COMO ESTRATÉGIA PEDAGÓGICA NO ENSINO FUNDAMENTAL II

LOS JUEGOS TRADICIONALES COMO ESTRATEGIA PEDAGÓGICA EN LA EDUCACIÓN MEDIA

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ABSTRACT

Traditional play activities play a fundamental role in the comprehensive development of children, encompassing cognitive, social, emotional, and physical aspects. This study investigated the perceptions of 31 elementary school teachers in public schools in Concórdia, SC, Brazil, regarding the importance of these playful practices in the school context. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to analyze the frequency of use, observed impacts on students' behavior and learning, and the challenges faced by teachers. The results indicate that most teachers recognize the benefits of traditional play, emphasizing its relevance for socialization, socio-emotional development, collaborative learning, and cultural preservation. However, factors such as lack of time, limited physical space, and the influence of digital technologies still hinder its regular application. The findings highlight the need for intentional pedagogical planning, continuous teacher training, and strategies that integrate traditional play into the school curriculum, valuing both educational tradition and contemporary demands.

Keywords: Traditional Games. Child Development. School Education. Intangible Cultural Heritage.

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RESUMO

As brincadeiras tradicionais desempenham um papel fundamental no desenvolvimento integral das crianças, abrangendo aspectos cognitivos, sociais, emocionais e físicos. Este estudo investigou a percepção de 31 professores do Ensino Fundamental II em escolas municipais de Concórdia, SC, sobre a importância dessas práticas lúdicas no contexto escolar. A pesquisa adotou abordagem quantiqualitativa, com aplicação de questionários e entrevistas semiestruturadas, analisando a frequência de uso, efeitos observados no comportamento e aprendizagem, bem como os desafios enfrentados pelos docentes. Os resultados indicam que a maioria dos professores reconhece os benefícios das brincadeiras tradicionais, destacando sua relevância para a socialização, desenvolvimento socioemocional, aprendizagem colaborativa e preservação cultural. No entanto, fatores como falta de tempo, limitações de espaço físico e influência de tecnologias digitais ainda dificultam sua aplicação regular. Os achados reforçam a necessidade de planejamento pedagógico intencional, formação continuada docente e estratégias que integrem as brincadeiras tradicionais ao currículo escolar, valorizando tanto a tradição quanto as demandas contemporâneas da educação.

Palavras-chave: Brincadeiras Tradicionais. Desenvolvimento Infantil. Educação Escolar. Patrimônio Cultural Imaterial.

RESUMEN

Los juegos tradicionales desempeñan un papel fundamental en el desarrollo integral de los niños, abarcando aspectos cognitivos, sociales, emocionales y físicos. Este estudio investigó la percepción de 31 docentes del segundo ciclo de educación primaria en escuelas municipales de Concórdia, SC, sobre la importancia de estas prácticas lúdicas en el contexto escolar. La investigación adoptó un enfoque de métodos mixtos, mediante cuestionarios y entrevistas semiestructuradas, analizando la frecuencia de uso, los efectos observados en el comportamiento y el aprendizaje, así como los desafíos que enfrentan los docentes. Los resultados indican que la mayoría de los docentes reconocen los beneficios de los juegos tradicionales, destacando su relevancia para la socialización, el desarrollo socioemocional, el aprendizaje colaborativo y la preservación cultural. Sin embargo, factores como la falta de tiempo, las limitaciones de espacio físico y la influencia de las tecnologías digitales aún dificultan su aplicación regular. Los hallazgos refuerzan la necesidad de una planificación pedagógica intencional, la formación docente continua y estrategias que integren los juegos tradicionales en el currículo escolar, valorando tanto la tradición como las demandas educativas contemporáneas.

Palabras clave: Juegos Tradicionales. Desarrollo Infantil. Educación Escolar. Patrimonio Cultural Inmaterial.



1 INTRODUCTION

Traditional games constitute an important intangible cultural heritage, preserving practices that cross generations and express social, historical and educational values. In the school context, especially in Elementary School, these playful manifestations can play a significant role in the integral development of students, favoring cognitive, motor, emotional and social skills. However, with the advancement of digital technologies, the intensification of curricular content and the constant search for academic results, there is a progressive distancing of these practices from the pedagogical routine.

In addition, traditional games represent a form of social learning, as they allow students to recognize themselves as part of a culture, establish links between their personal experiences and school knowledge, and develop collaborative forms of interaction. At the same time, such practices favor the transmission of popular knowledge and strengthen the sense of community belonging, reinforcing local identity. In this way, understanding the permanence – or weakening – of these games in the school environment contributes to reflecting on the role of the school in valuing culture and in the integral formation of new generations.

This study aims to analyze how Elementary School II teachers in the municipal network of Concórdia – SC perceive the presence, importance and challenges related to the use of traditional games in the school environment. It is based on the understanding that knowing the teacher's view of such practices is fundamental to (re)signify the place of play in the school and enhance its integration into pedagogical planning, even in the face of current social and technological changes. From a quantitative-qualitative approach, we sought to identify aspects such as the frequency of use, the perceived impacts on the development of students and the structural or formative obstacles that influence the performance of these activities.

2 METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out in the municipality of Concordia, Santa Catarina, with the objective of investigating the perception of Elementary School II teachers about the importance of traditional games in the school context. Teachers from eight municipal schools, distributed between urban and rural areas, participated in the study, in order to ensure geographic representativeness and institutional diversity. In the urban area, the schools EBM Giuseppe Sette (North), EBM Waldemar Pfeifer (South), EBM Maria Petrolí (East) and EBM

Imigrantes (West) were selected. In the rural area, the schools EBM Irmão Miguel (North), EBM Ângelo Ary Biezus (South), EBM Frei Cipriano Chardon (East) and EBM Ana Zamarchi Coldebela (West) participated.

The research used a quantitative-qualitative approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of teaching perceptions and practices. For data collection, structured questionnaires with open and closed questions were applied, which addressed the frequency of use of traditional games, perception of their pedagogical benefits, impacts observed on the behavior and learning of students, as well as challenges faced in the implementation of these activities. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted, allowing teachers to report experiences, strategies and difficulties in a more in-depth way.

The selection of participants was carried out by intentional sampling, seeking to include teachers of different age groups, time of experience and school location, ensuring diversity of perspectives and representativeness of the educational context.

The quantitative data obtained through the questionnaires, while the qualitative data, from the interviews, were submitted to content analysis, allowing the categorization of recurring themes, such as perception of the benefits of play, pedagogical strategies adopted and challenges faced by teachers.

This methodological approach made it possible to understand not only the frequency and form of use of traditional games, but also the subjective experiences of teachers and the institutional conditions that influence the integration of these practices in the curriculum, providing important subsidies for reflection and improvement of pedagogical strategies in the municipal schools of Concordia.

3 RESULTS

The analysis of the level of academic training of the participants reveals that the expressive majority of the teachers (77.4%) have a *lato sensu* postgraduate degree, demonstrating a professional profile with investment in continuing education. Only 3.2% of the professors have not yet completed higher education, while 9.7% have only completed undergraduate studies and another 9.7% have completed *stricto sensu* postgraduate studies (master's degrees). These data corroborate the idea that Elementary School II teachers in Concordia seek to expand their knowledge through specializations, which enhances their



pedagogical practices and expands the understanding of playful methodologies in teaching, such as traditional games.

Table 1

Teachers' academic background

EDUCATION	PERCENTAGE (%)
No complete higher education	3,2%
Complete graduation	9,7%
Lato sensu postgraduate	77,4%
Stricto sensu postgraduate degree (master's degree)	9,7%

Source: Garbossa, Teresina Funez (2025)

The analysis of data obtained from 31 teachers of Elementary School II in the municipality of Concórdia (SC) reveals a largely positive perception about the contribution of traditional games to the social development of students. A total of 90.3% of the teachers stated that these practices contribute significantly to the strengthening of students' social skills. Another 9.7% also recognize its importance, although in a more limited way. None of the teachers consulted indicated that play does not contribute to this aspect of development, nor did they state that they did not have an opinion on the subject.

Table 2

Perception of social contribution

Teachers' Perception	Percentage (%)
Contributes significantly	90,3%
Partially contributes	9,7%
Does not contribute	0%
He has no review	0%

Source: Garbossa, Teresina Funez (2025)



The data point out that the space dedicated to traditional games in the classroom reveals a scenario of partial and limited presence of these practices in the pedagogical routine. Of the 31 teachers participating in the survey, 64.5% affirm that traditional games are present, but in a restricted way, while only 25.8% recognize a broad integration of these activities in the planning and execution of classes. In addition, 9.7% of the teachers indicated that they did not know how to evaluate the space occupied by these practices, and none of the teachers stated that the games do not have space.

Table 3

Space for traditional games in everyday school life

Space in Planning	Percentage (%)
Present on a limited basis	64,5%
Widely integrated	25,8%
Do not know how to inform	9,7%
No space	0%

Source: Garbossa, Teresina Funez (2025).

The analysis of teachers' perception of the institutional incentive to use traditional games in pedagogical planning reveals a moderate appreciation, but not fully consolidated, of these practices in the context of Elementary School II. Of the 31 participants, 45.2% stated that they received this incentive frequently, while 41.9% reported that the stimulus occurs only occasionally. Also, 12.9% of the teachers said they did not know how to inform about the existence of incentives, and none of the teachers indicated a total absence of encouragement from the school management.

Table 4

Institutional incentive

Incentive Level	Percentage (%)
Frequently	45,2%
Occasionally	41,9%
Do not know how to inform	12,9%
There is no incentive	0%

Source: Garbossa, Teresina Funez (2025).

The investigation into the importance of traditional games in the preservation of local culture revealed a significant appreciation of these practices in the educational context. Of the 31 participating teachers, 90.3% consider traditional games as very important to keep the local culture alive, while 9.7% recognize this relevance, but do not consider it essential. None of the respondents stated that they did not see the relevance of the games or expressed indifference to the topic.

Table 5

Importance for local culture

Perceived Importance	Percentage (%)
Very important	90,3%
Important, but not essential	9,7%
Not important	0%
Indifferent	0%

Source: Garbossa, Teresina Funez (2025).

The analysis of the role of traditional games in an increasingly digitized school environment revealed that a significant majority (67.7%) believe that these practices continue to be fundamental, even in the face of the advancement of educational technologies. On the other hand, 19.4% of the participants pointed out the need to adapt traditional games to integrate digital elements. Also, 9.7% of the teachers stated that they perceived a loss of relevance of traditional games and 3.2% stated that they did not see a relationship between these practices and the digitized context.

Table 6

Traditional games in a digital environment

Perception of the Relationship with Digital	Percentage (%)
They remain fundamental	67,7%
They must be adapted to digital	19,4%
They are losing relevance	9,7%
Have no relation to digital	3,2%

Source: Garbossa, Teresina Funez (2025).

4 DISCUSSION

According to Tardif (2002), teaching knowledge is not limited to initial training, but is continuously constructed and reconstructed throughout the career through practice, experience and continuing education. The significant presence of professionals with *lato sensu* graduate degrees suggests that there is an appreciation of this training process among teachers in the municipal network, in line with the perspective of Imbernón (2011), who defends continuous training as essential for teachers to face the challenges of educational practice and incorporate more significant methodologies, such as the pedagogical use of games.

In addition, the presence of teachers with *stricto sensu* training also reinforces the idea of a professional qualification at more advanced levels, allowing greater capacity for critical analysis of the teaching and learning processes. Studies such as that of Libâneo (2013) indicate that teachers with greater training tend to plan more reflective practices, centered on the student, and open to innovation — which can contribute significantly to the appreciation and resignification of traditional games in contemporary school contexts.

These results reinforce the understanding that traditional games still occupy a relevant place in the pedagogical imaginary, especially with regard to the promotion of interactions, cooperation, empathy and conflict resolution among students. According to Vygotsky (1998), playing favors the internalization of social rules and the development of language and coexistence, functioning as a symbolic space that expands the possibilities of action and learning of the child in society.

In addition, Kishimoto (2002) highlights that traditional games allow students to experience collective and cultural experiences, contributing to the construction of affective and social bonds in the school environment. The predominance of favorable responses among the teachers participating in the research corroborates this perspective, indicating that the use of these activities is not restricted to recess or free time, but is perceived as an effective pedagogical tool for integral development.

However, the presence of a minority that sees this contribution as limited (9.7%) may indicate challenges such as the lack of structured planning, the scarcity of adequate spaces or even teacher training that does not sufficiently contemplate the educational potential of play. This perception reinforces the need for public policies and training actions that value and qualify the pedagogical use of traditional games as an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

As Kishimoto (2011) points out, the space reserved for play at school should go beyond isolated or recreational moments, and it is necessary to integrate them into the curriculum as an intentional resource for learning. When their use occurs in a restricted way, the educational and formative power of these practices in the development of children and adolescents is lost.

The predominance of responses that recognize a limited presence may be related to factors such as the pressure for academic results, the rigidity of school content, the lack of specific training and the scarcity of time or adequate physical space for playful practices. Imbernón (2011) emphasizes that the continuing education of teachers is essential to broaden the understanding of playfulness as an integral part of the educational process and not as something accessory or secondary.

Although no teacher indicated the complete absence of space for play, the fact that almost two-thirds see this presence as restricted points to the need for more structured pedagogical policies that encourage the adoption of playful methodologies in a planned and continuous manner. This also implies a review of the curricular organization and the school environment, as Santos (2010) suggests, so that a more dynamic, participatory and meaningful education can be fostered.

According to Imbernón (2011), the integration of innovative and playful practices in the curriculum depends, to a large extent, on institutional support and school culture that values play as a learning tool. The sporadic incentive may reflect the absence of clear guidelines in the pedagogical proposals, as well as the lack of training aimed at the conscious use of games as a methodological resource.

The presence of 12.9% of professors who were unable to inform about the incentive also points to possible gaps in communication between management and faculty, or even to the lack of clarity regarding the institutional objectives and goals related to playfulness.

In this sense, it is essential that schools promote awareness-raising actions, continuing education and collective planning that strengthen the understanding of traditional games as significant components of the teaching-learning process. As defended by Kishimoto (2011), these practices should not be seen as mere recreational instruments, but as intentional pedagogical strategies that contribute to the integral development of students.

These results indicate a strong recognition by teachers of the role of traditional games as intangible cultural heritage, which is in line with the notes of Brougère (1998), who defends play as a social practice that carries historically constructed values, knowledge and



meanings. The significant presence of positive responses suggests that educators understand that traditional games, in addition to promoting child development, act as instruments for the transmission of popular knowledge, customs and local identities.

The teachers' perception captured by the research is also in line with the proposal of the National Curriculum Parameters (BRASIL, 1997), which defend respect for cultural diversity and the encouragement of the appreciation of cultural manifestations in the school environment. In this sense, by integrating traditional games into pedagogical planning, the teacher contributes not only to learning, but also to the cultural and civic formation of students.

Thus, promoting traditional games in the classroom is not only a playful strategy, but also an act of cultural resistance, especially in times of globalization and homogenization of children's practices. The challenge, therefore, is to keep these manifestations alive in the school routine, recognizing their symbolic and formative value.

On the other hand, 19.4% of the participants pointed out the need to adapt traditional games so that they integrate digital elements, evidencing an openness to hybridization between cultural practices and technological resources. This position dialogues with Moran (2015), who proposes the balanced integration between traditional technologies and pedagogical methods.

Despite this, 9.7% of the teachers stated that they perceived a loss of relevance of traditional games in the face of digital technologies, and 3.2% stated that they did not see a relationship between these practices and the digitized context, indicating that there is still resistance or difficulties in articulating playful practices with the contemporary scenario.

In this scenario, it is essential to promote training actions that encourage the rescue and reinvention of traditional games, reconciling them with the demands of the twenty-first century. As Imbernón (2011) points out, teacher training should enable teachers to reflect on the use of technologies without this implying the denial of cultural practices that are important for the constitution of students' identity.

5 CONCLUSION

The data obtained in the survey reveal that Elementary School II teachers widely recognize the importance of traditional games for the development of students, especially in aspects such as socialization, identity construction, cultural preservation and promotion of socio-emotional skills. Most teachers understand that these practices maintain their value



even in the face of the digitalization of teaching, even if some point to the need for methodological adaptations or present uncertainties about their applicability.

Despite the recognition of its relevance, the results indicate that the use of traditional games is often still punctual or restricted. Among the main challenges, the lack of time in pedagogical planning, the lack of adequate spaces, and the growing influence of digital technologies on students' interests stand out. These factors highlight the urgency of continuing education actions aimed at valuing play, as well as educational policies that guarantee infrastructure and pedagogical time for cultural practices integrated into the curriculum.

Thus, it is reaffirmed that traditional games are not only recreational resources, but powerful and inclusive pedagogical instruments, capable of promoting meaningful learning. For this, they need to be (re)known, strengthened and reinvented in the school context, guaranteeing new generations the right to play, learn and develop in an education that respects and values cultural diversity.

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