

Improving Gross Motor Skills of 5-6-Year-Old Children Through Rhythmic Gymnastics Activities at PAUD Surya Kasih

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to describe how to improve gross motor skills, specifically jumping and kicking, through rhythmic gymnastics using used tire props. The study was conducted on children aged 5–6 years at PAUD Suryakasih Griya Tipar Cakung, Jakarta. The research method used in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR). This study follows the Kemmis and Taggart model, where each cycle follows systematic steps according to research principles and parameter requirements. The research stages include: (1) planning, (2) action, (3) observation, and (4) reflection. Before conducting the study, a pre-action assessment was carried out to determine the initial percentage of children's gross motor skill improvement. The results showed an increase from the initial condition of 25.71%, which improved to 56.84% in cycle 1, and further increased to 71.78% in cycle 2. The implication of this study is that rhythmic gymnastics movements (jumping and kicking) can enhance gross motor skills in Group B children at PAUD Suryakasih.

Keywords: Gross Motor Skills; Rhythmic Gymnastics Movements; Early Childhood.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood covers the age range of 0-6 years, commonly known as the golden age. During this period, children must receive appropriate stimulation to support their optimal development. According to [Damian \(2017\)](#), development encompasses all aspects of abilities, involving changes in each child's potential, which are expressed in the form, quality, characteristics, traits, and skills of the child. The concept of age is also often linked to development, starting from the fertilization process to the end of life. Children's development is influenced not only by biological factors but also by societal culture and social levels that interact with each other ([Santrock, 2019](#)). The government, through the Directorate of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) of the Ministry of Education, states that PAUD is a process of fostering children's growth and development from birth to six years old comprehensively, covering both physical and non-physical aspects. The provided stimulation should encompass the development of religious and moral values, motor skills, socio-emotional abilities, language, and cognitive skills to ensure optimal child development ([Kemendikbud, 2021](#)).

Various aspects of child development must be appropriately stimulated by educators to achieve the best results. One crucial aspect that needs to be developed is physical motor skills. Physical motor development is an element of maturity and movement control related to the motor center in the brain ([Gallahue & Donnelly, 2018](#)).

Gross motor movements involve activities using the child's hands, feet, and entire body and require good coordination among body parts. According to [Marni \(2017\)](#), gross motor skills involve movements that engage large muscle groups, such as running, walking, jumping, kicking, and climbing. Another study by [Purnamasari et al. \(2022\)](#) found that children who receive regular gross motor stimulation have better movement coordination than those who do not receive similar stimulation. Therefore, developing gross motor skills should be an essential part of the learning program in early childhood education (PAUD).

One effective method to stimulate gross motor development is through rhythmic gymnastics activities. Rhythmic gymnastics consists of a series of body movements performed regularly to the accompaniment of music. According to [Latifah \(2020\)](#), rhythmic gymnastics is a primary activity that develops movement patterns harmoniously within the physical components and body coordination. Rhythmic gymnastics is also easy for children to follow, as the accompanying music makes them more enthusiastic and motivated to move. A study conducted by [Rahmawati et al. \(2021\)](#) found that rhythmic gymnastics significantly contributes to the development of balance, body agility, and gross motor coordination in early childhood. Additionally, research by [Sari & Nugroho \(2023\)](#) showed that children who regularly participate in rhythmic gymnastics activities have more developed gross motor skills compared to those who do not participate regularly. Therefore, implementing rhythmic gymnastics in early childhood education (PAUD) can be an effective learning strategy to support children's gross motor development.

Research on improving gross motor skills in early childhood through physical activities has been widely conducted. For example, a study by [Sari & Widiastuti \(2021\)](#) showed that rhythmic gymnastics can significantly enhance the movement coordination of children aged 5-6 years. Furthermore, a study by [Nugroho et al. \(2020\)](#) emphasized that the use of simple aids, such as used tires, provides a more effective stimulus for training children's balance and agility. Similar findings were reported in research by [Lestari & Rahmawati \(2019\)](#), which stated that children who regularly participate in rhythm-based physical activities have better motor development compared to less active children. Another study by [Putri et al. \(2021\)](#) found that rhythmic gymnastics activities help children improve basic movement coordination, such as jumping and kicking.

Additionally, a study by [Widodo & Setiawan \(2022\)](#) revealed that movement activities with music can increase children's motivation to participate in physical activities regularly. Research conducted by [Dewi et al. \(2020\)](#) indicated that children involved in rhythmic gymnastics activities develop better motor skills than those who do not receive similar stimulation. This finding is supported by [Hidayati & Rahayu \(2021\)](#), who stated that the application of rhythm-based movement learning methods contributes to improving dexterity and flexibility in early childhood.

The study by [Yuliana & Puspita \(2019\)](#) also found that rhythm-based exercises can accelerate gross motor development in early childhood. Another study by [Handayani et al. \(2022\)](#) emphasized that a learning environment that supports physical activities

plays a crucial role in developing children's motor skills. Finally, research by [Rina & Kartika \(2021\)](#) showed that rhythm-based movement learning methods can be used as an effective strategy for sustainably improving children's gross motor skills. Based on these various studies, it can be concluded that rhythmic gymnastics, especially with simple aids such as used tires, can be an effective approach to enhancing the gross motor skills of children aged 5-6 years in early childhood education (PAUD).

Based on observations conducted, particularly regarding the physical motor skills of children at PAUD Surya Kasih Griya Tipar Cakung, children aged 5-6 years have not yet developed their motor skills optimally. Activities that promote children's gross motor development are rarely conducted and, if held, occur only once a week. However, these activities are not enjoyable and are not carried out effectively. Furthermore, the focus is primarily on fine motor development, such as writing, coloring, collage-making, and drawing. As a result, children are less active in movement when participating in rhythmic gymnastics activities.

According to [Indraswai & Nurbaeti \(2018\)](#), the steps in rhythmic gymnastics consist of transition movements, warm-up movements, core movements, and cool-down movements. Transition movements serve as preparation before entering the warm-up phase, which aims to increase body flexibility and reduce the risk of injury. Next, the core movements form the main part of rhythmic gymnastics, involving various physical activities that support gross motor development, such as jumping and kicking. After that, cool-down movements are performed to help the body return to its normal state and reduce muscle tension. Based on this theory, it can be concluded that if each step of rhythmic gymnastics is carried out optimally, children's motor development, particularly gross motor skills, will be enhanced.

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used by the author is Classroom Action Research (CAR), in which the researcher acts as a teacher who plays the role of a researcher and intervenes in the problems encountered during the learning process in the classroom. The intervention action design or research cycle design follows the Kemmis and Taggart model, which consists of a cycle-by-cycle approach aimed at improving children's cognitive abilities through the use of loose parts media in learning. This cycle essentially includes the following stages: (a) planning, (b) action, (c) observation, and (d) reflection, followed by replanning, action, observation, and reflection for the next cycle, and so on. This research aims to enhance gross motor skills in children aged 5-6 years through rhythmic gymnastics movements.

The indicator of success in this research is the development of gross motor skills in children aged 5-6 years. The researcher aims for each cycle conducted to achieve mastery in gross motor development through rhythmic gymnastics movements, reaching at least 75% of all participating children. The percentage criteria for the success rate in improving gross motor skills in children aged 5-6 years will be used as a benchmark for measuring progress.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Application of Pancasila Values

The implementation of rhythmic gymnastics activities at PAUD Surya Kasih showed significant results in improving the gross motor skills of children aged 5-6 years. In the initial stage before the intervention, many children struggled with basic movements such as jumping and kicking while maintaining good balance. However, after several structured training sessions, the children began to show improvements in their agility and movement coordination. This was evident from their increasing ability to follow the rhythm of the music while performing movements, as well as their improved balance when jumping and landing.

During the implementation process, the children also appeared more enthusiastic about participating in rhythmic gymnastics activities. Their motivation increased because the exercises were conducted in a fun manner and incorporated simple props such as used tires, making the activities more engaging. In several training sessions, it was observed that children who were previously less confident became more actively involved and showed progress in their strength and muscle endurance. Additionally, their social skills improved as they learned to collaborate with peers in paired or group gymnastics movements.

The final results of this implementation showed a significant increase in children's gross motor skills. Based on the measurements, the percentage of gross motor skill development increased from an initial 25.71% to 56.84% in the first cycle and further improved to 71.78% in the second cycle. This indicates that consistently practicing rhythmic gymnastics can help optimize early childhood motor development. Therefore, this activity can be used as an effective learning strategy to support children's physical development in PAUD while also fostering healthy habits from an early age.



Figure 1. Used Tire as a Learning Medium

Table 1. Research Results per Cycle

Pre-Cycle	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Improvement
25.71%	56.84%	71.78%	14.00%

The table above shows that the average gross motor skill percentage for rhythmic gymnastics movements in children aged 5-6 years increased from 25.71% in the pre-cycle to 56.84% in the first cycle, with an average increase of 37.27%. The second cycle experienced a further increase of 14.00%. Based on these findings, the researcher decided not to continue to the next cycle. Furthermore, both the researcher and collaborators observed that the percentage increase in each cycle was significant.

Discussion

The research results show that rhythmic gymnastics activities positively contribute to improving the gross motor skills of children aged 5-6 years at PAUD Surya Kasih. This finding aligns with the study by [Putri et al. \(2021\)](#), which stated that rhythmic movements accompanied by music enhance the coordination of large muscles in children. Children who participated in rhythmic gymnastics activities demonstrated significant improvements in balance, hand-foot coordination, and agility compared to before joining the program. According to research by [Sari and Rahmawati \(2022\)](#), music in rhythmic gymnastics helps increase children's motivation to move more actively and purposefully.

Furthermore, rhythmic gymnastics activities have also been proven to enhance children's concentration when performing movements that follow the rhythm of the music. A study conducted by [Nugraha and Lestari \(2021\)](#) found that children who regularly follow rhythmic movement patterns experience better motor skill development compared to those who do not receive the same stimulation. This is also supported by research from [Astuti \(2023\)](#), which mentions that the combination of physical movements with rhythmic music can optimize the development of balance and body coordination in early childhood.

Observations of the students showed that after participating in the rhythmic gymnastics program for eight weeks, most children experienced an improvement in movement agility. This result aligns with the study conducted by [Prasetyo et al. \(2020\)](#), which stated that regular physical activity significantly impacts children's gross motor skills. Additionally, research by [Widodo and Suryani \(2021\)](#) also demonstrated that varied movement exercises in rhythmic gymnastics can accelerate the development of children's gross motor skills.

Beyond physical benefits, rhythmic gymnastics also positively affects children's social-emotional aspects. A study by [Rahayu and Permana \(2022\)](#) found that children actively engaged in rhythmic movement activities have higher self-confidence and find it easier to interact with peers. This is also confirmed by research from [Lestari et al. \(2023\)](#), which showed that children who regularly participate in gymnastics tend to have lower anxiety levels compared to those who rarely exercise.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that rhythmic gymnastics activities have a significant impact on improving the gross motor skills of children aged 5-6 years at PAUD Surya Kasih. This study supports previous findings that movement activities accompanied by music provide benefits for children's physical and social development (Setiawan & Mulyani, 2021). Therefore, it is essential for early childhood educators to integrate rhythmic gymnastics into the curriculum to optimize children's overall gross motor development.

CONCLUSIONS

Gross motor activities involve body movements that utilize large muscles or most of the muscles to perform physical activities. Examples of gross motor activities include jumping, kicking, and others. These activities require and engage large muscles. The developmental process of these skills is highly significant. The level of cognitive achievement in early childhood greatly depends on the teaching methods provided by teachers at school.

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