

Systematic review of strategies for developing social skills in education

Revisión sistemática de estrategias para desarrollar las habilidades sociales en educación

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Abstract

Social skills are understood as the behaviors that value the person as a social being. Objective. The present systematic review article aims to identify the application of social skills strategies in Scopus, Scielo, Redalyc, DOAJ and Latindex databases, published between the years 2018 to 2020, at the primary education level. Materials and methods. This is a quantitative, descriptive study, with a final sample of 15 articles from the last 3 years in indexed journals. Results. After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, 15 potential articles were selected, which evidenced research conducted in relation to social skills. Conclusion. The development of social skills favors the integral formation of students, being an area of research that requires more attention from researchers, in order to strengthen their immersion as citizens committed to their society.

Keywords: Education, social skills, social interaction and teacher.

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Resumen

Las habilidades sociales son entendidas como los comportamientos que valoran a la persona como ser social. Objetivo. El presente artículo de revisión sistemática tiene por objetivo identificar la aplicación de estrategias de habilidades sociales en las bases de datos Scopus, Scielo, Redalyc, DOAJ y Latindex, publicadas entre los años 2018 al 2020, en el nivel de educación primaria. Materiales y métodos. Se trata de un estudio cuantitativo, descriptivo, con una muestra final de 15 artículos de los últimos 3 años en revistas indexadas. Resultados. Luego de aplicar criterios de inclusión y exclusión se seleccionaron 15 artículos potenciales, los cuales evidenciaron investigaciones realizadas con relación a las habilidades sociales. El desarrollo de las habilidades sociales favorece en la formación integral de los estudiantes, siendo un ámbito de investigación que requiere mayor atención por parte de los investigadores, para fortalecer la inmersión de ellos como ciudadanos comprometidos con su sociedad.

Palabras clave: Educación, habilidades sociales, interacción social y docente.

Introduction

The personality and the way people act are formed from childhood, and achieving an adequate development in them as future citizens will allow building a solid society Samimi, (2021) therefore, in the formation of children's personality it is relevant to attend to the cognitive, physical, mental and emotional development; for which the family and the community play a significant role in their lives. In this sense, the environment in which a child grows is fundamental for his or her adequate development (Aguilar et al., 2021, p. 32).

Thus, social skills are learned as the child interacts with this environment Almaraz et al., (2019). The basis of the vision that they generate of their context is given in the school stage, where they are also acquiring skills such as differentiation of good and bad, what is accepted by society, empathy, assertiveness, demonstration of feelings, among others (Dávila, 2018) It is transcendental the development of these skills so that they are able to generate good relationships with others, avoiding making negative judgments towards the other person.

It is through education that the generations can achieve high intellectual performance, thus demonstrating their personal and professional skills Lestari & Ariesta, (2020), but it is also important to instill in them, good habits and values. For this purpose, the teaching and reinforcement of social skills should be emphasized, with the main objective that students develop appropriate behaviors according to society. However, today many schools prioritize intellectual training and do not emphasize other aspects that

contribute to the integral development of the person Shodiq& Syamsudin, (2019), Firmansyah et al., (2020), such as art, culture, sports, social life, etc., as well as the development of the social skills.

It is important to manage emotions to develop social skills (Samimi et al., 2019) because it allows the student to be able to fearlessly express their feelings and be empathetic with others. Through the implementation of social skills programs, it has been possible to improve respect for the person, assertiveness, communication (Almaraz et al., 2019) and (Fernandez et al., 2020) the decrease of anxiety.

This raises the following question: What strategies have been applied for the development of social skills in elementary school students? One strategy used for the development of social skills in elementary school students is sports games, since they allow them to constantly put into practice their responsibility, their participation in teamwork and communication. Likewise, programs based on physical activities in an inclusive context have improved motor and social skills in students, showing bonds of affection among them.

Another strategy applied in elementary students with autism is music therapy, which evidenced that it improves the ability to understand, respond and interact with their peers (Bharathi, Jayaramayya, et al., 2019, p. 43). Likewise, the teacher can take advantage of developed technology such as the creation of virtual environments to simulate social situations in which values can be taught to the student. This requires competent teachers who know the technological resources and how to use them to improve social skills and learning. On the other hand, it is necessary for the teacher to apply cooperative learning when developing the competency-based curriculum Tello et al., (2015) Gamboa et al., (2019) to encourage interaction among children.

Social skills aim to improve interactions and emotional management. A child who demonstrates being able to establish a dialogue with others, adapts easily to their context and shows appropriate and rational behaviors, will be a more confident child in school and unlikely to develop anxiety or worry, (Samimi et al., 2019, p. 44). There is research where there is evidence that if there is an optimal development of social skills it can be a direct driver to academic success. For this reason, it is important to develop social skills from an early age, to ensure successful children, and that they can perform safely in these highly competitive and challenging contexts.

Materials and methods

The present work performs a systematic bibliographic research, in which the documentary research method was applied with a descriptive approach, performing a comparative analysis of the results obtained. The inclusion criteria for this systematic review were articles published between the years 2018 - 2020 on strategies applied for the better development of social skills in children aged 6 to 12 years. The selected articles were sought to be indexed in the Scopus, DOAJ, Latindex, Redalyc and Scielo databases; in the Spanish, English and Indonesian languages.

Articles were selected with a qualitative, quantitative and mixed approach, with pre-experimental and quasi-experimental designs. Semi-structured qualitative in-depth interviews and focus groups were also conducted to address the research questions. Likewise, descriptors were used in Spanish such as: habilidades sociales, educación primaria, conductas, programas, actividades lúdicas; and in English such as: social skills, Elementary education, appropriate behavior, children, life skills. Emotions, socialization, development

The exclusion criteria were taken into account, those researches of nature such as congress abstracts, letter to the editor, report, systematic review.

In the present review, a total of 15 articles were selected which met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. After the collection, tabulation and codification in an Excel instrument, the results were presented in tables and figures taking into account the frequency of the variables, designed for this research.

Results

From the 15 articles selected for the systematic review, 12 of them were published in English, 2 in Spanish and 1 in Indonesian, where the application of strategies for the development of social skills has occurred with elementary school students. Table 1, shows the number of journals indexed according to the database, where 12 of them were indexed by Scopus, 5 in DOAJ, 4 in Latindex, 2 in Redalyc and 2 in Scielo, in which they develop the application of strategies on social skills in different contexts.

Table 1 Number of journals indexed

Database	No. of journals indexed
Scopus	
DOAJ	5
Latindex	
Redalyc	
Scielo	

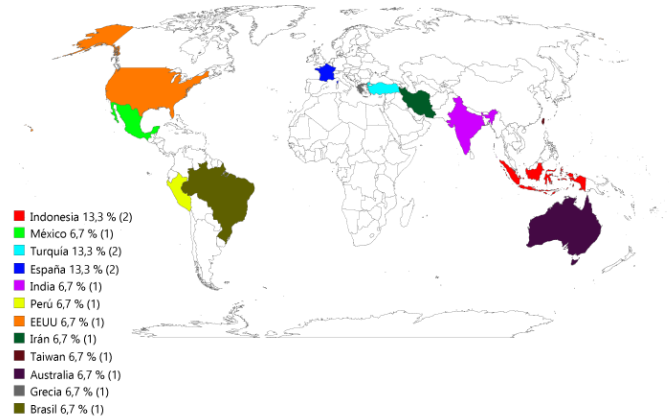
Table 2, shows the year of publication of the selected articles regarding the application of strategies on social skills, where 5 were published in 2020, 8 articles in 2019 and 2 articles in 2018.

Table 2. Year of publication of selected articles

Year of publication	No. of magazines
	5
2019	
2018	

Figure 1 shows that the distribution of articles by country of publication had a maximum of 2 articles published in the following countries: Indonesia, Turkey and Spain; and a single article in Mexico, India, Peru, the United States, Iran, Taiwan, Australia, Greece and Brazil. In most of these investigations, the quasi-experimental design was used.

Figure 1 *Distribution of articles by country of publication*



Likewise, Table 3 shows that Asia is the continent with the most articles published that develop social skills strategies, with a total of 7 articles. On the other hand, America has a total of 4 articles, Europe with 2 articles and Oceania with one published article.

Table 3 *Distribution of articles by country and continent of publication*

Continent	Country	No. of items
Asia	Indonesia	
Asia	Turkey	
Asia	Iran	1
Asia	Taiwan	1
Asia	India	1
America	Peru	1
America	United States	1
America	Mexico	1
America	Brazil	1
Europa	Greece	1
Europa	Spain	
Oceania	Australia	1

Table 4 shows the strategies applied for the development of social skills in primary education used in each research. From the results, it can be identified that the most used strategy is based on the development of physical activities, as shown in 5 of the articles. On the other hand, different strategies have been applied such as cooperative learning, emotion regulation and music therapy; which have been developed in 2 articles each. Finally, other strategies such as restorative practice, ludic activities, video feedback and video games have been implemented; having one article for each strategy.

Table 4. *Strategies obtained from the selected articles*

Type of Strategy	No. of items	Percentage
Physical Activity	5	
Cooperative Learning		
Emotion regulation		
Music Therapy		
Restorative practice	1	
Recreational Activities	1	
Video feedback	1	
Video games	1	

It can be seen that the strategy based on emotion regulation presents a significant sample of 1234 students explored in the article Effectiveness of a school-based life skills program on emotional regulation and depression among elementary school students: A randomized study, developed in Taiwan, published in 2020.

Table 5 shows the number and characteristics of the sample according to the articles investigated, whose ages range from 6 to 12 years. It can be seen that 2 articles present a sample involving children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

Table 5. *Number and characteristics of the sample of the articles investigated*

N°	Article	Sample	Sample Characteristics
1	Children's social skills through traditional sport games in primary schools	16 students	- Ages 7 to 10 years old
	Effects of an Inclusive Physical Activity Program on the Motor Skills, Social Skills and Attitudes of Students with and without Autism Spectrum Disorder.	27 students	- Ages 7 to 10 years old - 13 children with Autism Spectrum Disorder - 14 children with typical development
	The Effects of an Appropriate Behavior Program on Elementary School Children Social Skills Development in Physical Education	204 students	- Ages 10 to 13 years old - 49 5th graders - 161 6th graders
	The Effect of Educational Board Games Training Programme on the Social Skill Development of the Fourth Graders	40 students	- Ages 7 to 12 years old - 4th grade students
5	Traditional Dances as a Means of Teaching Social Skills to Elementary School Students	132 students	- 48 children in 4th grade - 39 children in 5th grade - 45 children in 6th grade
	Social skills in primary school children	30 students	- Ages 9 to 10 years old - 4th grade students
	The Effectiveness of the NHT Model in Improving Social Skills and Social	22 students	- 4th grade students

Studies Outcomes in Schools	Learning in Primary	15 students	- Ages 11 to 12 years old - 5th grade students
The Effectiveness of Emotion Management Training on Social Skills and the Sense of Competence in School Students		15 students	- Ages 11 to 12 years old - 5th grade students
Effectiveness of a school-based life skills program on emotional regulation and depression among elementary school students: A randomized study.		1 234 students	- Ages 10 to 12 years old - 5th grade students
Music therapy as a therapeutic tool in improving the social skills of autistic children		26 children	- Ages 6 to 12 years old - Children with mild, medium and advanced ASD development.
Effect of music education on the promotion of school performance in children.		40 students	- 6 children 8 years old - 4 children 9 years old - 11 children aged 10 - 9 children 11 years old - 10 children 12 years old - 19 girls and 21 boys
Developing student social skills using restorative practices: a new framework called H.E.A.R.T.		21 students	- Ages 10 to 12 years old

Program of recreational activities for developing social skills	18 students	- Ages 6 to 7 years old - 1st grade students
Effects of Super Skills for Life on the social skills of anxious children through video analysis.	62 children	- Ages 6 to 8 years old
Hall of Heroes: A Digital Game for Social Skills Training with Young Adolescents	29 children	- Ages 9 to 13 years old - 5th and 6th grade students

Finally, Table 6 shows the results with their respective strategies used for the development of social skills in elementary school students. These results, in each of the investigations, have effectively achieved the objectives set for the well-being of the students.

Table 6. *Strategies and results according to the research of each article.*

Article	Strategy	Results
Children's social skills Through traditional sport games in primary schools	The physical activity program develops the adapted traditional Indonesian game "Gobak Sodor". Through this game, the following social skills are emphasized: empathy, communication and social interaction, aggression control, openness, peer support, self-understanding and willingness to learn.	Reinforces social skills. Children assume duties and are responsible for fulfilling them, they seek to achieve the objectives of the game. They show solidarity, active communication and seriousness in the game.
Social skills in primary school children	The cooperative learning program based on the development of social skills addressed the following topics: the meaning of social skills,	Decrease in the aggressive behaviors that the children presented before, and

types of social skills, assertiveness, emotional intelligence, active listening, negotiation, communication, personal appearance and self-esteem.

The techniques they used were: debates, brainstorming, socio-dramas, theater, didactic games, feedback, and the modeling technique.

developed respect for others, improvement in the use of language. They learned to solve social problems through assertive communication and encouraged each other.

Effects of an Inclusive Physical Activity Program on the Motor Skills, Social Skills and Attitudes of Students with and without Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The IPA program consisted of physical activities that support motor skill development, perceptual motor development and movement skills.

It used the collaborative learning approach between students with ASD (autism spectrum disorder) and their peers. Activities were implemented in four stages: immersive movements, functional exercises, group activities, and whole-classroom activities.

Children with ASD improved their motor, social and communication skills. Parallel to this, the perception of normally developing children changed with respect to children with ASD, as they now communicate with them and are no longer afraid of them.

The Effects of an Appropriate Behavior Program on Elementary School Children Social Skills Development in Physical Education

The Delfos program is a pedagogical intervention program of physical activities, designed to develop appropriate behaviors when winning, losing, during the game; as well as to maintain assertive social skills through fair play during the physical education class.

It improved students' losing behavior and social skills during the game, allowing for fair play during physical education class.

Music therapy as a therapeutic

The "Orff" method of music therapy was used, which is a "child-centered way of learning,"

It improved social skills, non-verbal behaviors, and the

<p>tool in improving the social skills of autistic children</p>	<p>involving singing lessons, playing tuned and untuned musical instruments, body movement and dance, communication activities, all while listening to selected music.</p>	<p>ability to understand other children. Also, it was possible to understand that children with ASD have their own musical process.</p>
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<p>Effects of Super Skills for Life on the social skills of anxious children through video analysis.</p>	<p>The present "Super Skills for Life (SSL)" program has video feedback as its main strategy and seeks to improve social competence.</p> <p>The sessions included role-playing, homework, group and individual activities, video analysis and feedback.</p>	<p>The children improved their social and communicative skills such as good vocalization, good conversation management. On the other hand, they reduced discomfort when participating and nervous or anxious behaviors, thus reducing depressive symptoms.</p>
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<p>Program of recreational activities for developing social skills</p>	<p>In this program, sessions were developed in which play activities were included to enhance the infants' social, motor and cognitive skills. For social development, we seek to influence autonomy, self-care and intrapersonal relationships.</p>	<p>Basic skills, advanced skills, expression of feelings and alternative skills to aggression, i.e. their interactions with others, were improved.</p>
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<p>The Effectiveness of the NHT Model in Improving Social Skills</p>	<p>The NHT (Numbered Head Together) model is a cooperative learning strategy that seeks to achieve student participation while improving cognitive and social skills. The sessions are</p>	<p>Improved learning, social skills, use of good judgment and</p>
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<p>and Social Studies Learning Outcomes in Primary Schools</p>	<p>group work. It seeks to create a collective and responsible feeling.</p>	<p>understanding of concepts. Good group work, enthusiasm and active participation were evident.</p>
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<p>Hall of Heroes: A Digital Game for Social Skills Training with Young Adolescents</p>	<p>A video game was developed based on the principles of social skills training and video game-based digital learning. Scenes on impulse control, communication, cooperation, social initiation, empathy and emotion control were developed.</p>	<p>Improved management of social and behavioral skills, emotional and behavioral strengthening.</p>
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<p>The Effect of Educational Board Games Training Programme on the Social Skill Development of the Fourth Graders</p>	<p>The program is composed of games and physical activities, where they perform individual and group activities. During the sessions, 5 games were developed: Dixit, Brick by Brick, Kakuzu, Q-bitz Extreme, Mathdice 8-99.</p>	<p>Improved social skills in their development and performance. There was improvement in linguistic, spatial, reasoning and numerical skills.</p>
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<p>The Effectiveness of Emotion Management Training on Social Skills and the Sense of Competence in School Students</p>	<p>A program based on the principles of emotion regulation given by Gross was carried out.</p>	<p>Emotion management training improves social skills and the feeling of being competent, empowered and effective. It also enabled the child to fearlessly express his or her feelings and understand others.</p>
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<p>Effectiveness of a school-based life skills program on emotional regulation and depression among elementary school students: A randomized study.</p>	<p>The adapted Life Skills Training (LST) program based on emotion regulation and training was implemented.</p> <p>Modules such as: communication skills, social skills, decision making, tobacco information, media understanding, assertiveness, stress management and self-esteem were developed.</p> <p>Techniques such as role play, rapid decision making, debates, among others, were used.</p>	<p>The program helps the child to regulate their emotions and reduce symptoms of depression. It also helped the child's self-esteem, understanding of their emotions and reframed their reactions in a positive way.</p>
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<p>Developing student social skills using restorative practices: a new framework called H.E.A. R.T.</p>	<p>In the present research, we looked for the school to have already implemented Restorative Practice as a basis for coexistence.</p>	<p>Restorative practice directly impacts student behavior and helps them develop social skills based on five pillars: harmony, empathy, awareness of one's own actions, respect for others and reflective thinking.</p>
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<p>Traditional Dances as a Means of Teaching Social Skills to Elementary School Students</p>	<p>The program is based on the practice of Greek folk dances as a physical activity.</p> <p>For the development of the classes, a demonstration of the steps was given by a local dancer, and then one member of each group was assigned to help the rest of their team achieve the dance.</p>	<p>Improved social skills and assertive interactions.</p> <p>Decreased aggressive or inappropriate behaviors.</p>
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<p>Effect of music</p>	<p>The Guri project, a musical program, sought the</p>	<p>Improved social skills and</p>
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education on the promotion of school performance in children. development and social inclusion of children through music. General music concepts were introduced, perceptual and rhythmic activities, improvisation exercises with the instruments and practice. academic competence of the students, both in reading, writing and arithmetic. Likewise, it was considered very important that the exposure time that the children had with respect to music education is of great relevance for the subsequent development of competencies.

Discussion

From the selection of the 15 articles for the elaboration of the systematic review, the information provided in the research of the selected articles between 2018 and 2020 was analyzed objectively. In them, strategies to develop social skills are applied, being physical activities, the one with the highest frequency. The strategies applied in elementary students show as results the improvement in interactions with their classmates, in assertive communication, in the expression of non-verbal behaviors, in the capacity of understanding and respect with other children. It also shows a significant achievement in behavioral skills, as well as in the expression of feelings, understanding of concepts and strengthening of self-esteem. It should be noted that, by allowing a good development of social skills, the growth of the child as a future citizen capable of relating positively with his environment is ensured.

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