Games of Childhood: Foundation of Management Skills

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Abstract

Games are the integral part of every child’s life. Even before going to school, one learns how to play. From playing, child begins to learn and live in the society. In this paper the main focus is how the games played during early days teaches the various management skills in interesting way. First part of the paper deals with how games teach the management skills during childhood mainly focusing on small local games. On second part few examples are cited and explained it from perspective of learning management skills. Third part mainly focuses on how relevant are the quality of games one plays in childhood can affect the managerial skills in future. The paper is theoretical and mainly discussed based on experience and from psychological perspective. I hope this paper will help the present generation to remember their olden days and help future generations to develop their managerial skills through playing.

Key words: Games, Management skills, learning

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Introduction

It is said that the child is like wet clay and we can mould it in any way we like. Childhood is the phase when child mind is fed with dynamic information ranging from alphabets to deep social values. It is the phase where child has amazing capacity to learn. Those information and experiences of childhood slowly goes into subconscious mind and it becomes a defined programme of her life, which is reflected in her behaviour. Therefore we can say that the present behaviour, attitude and skill level of a person is contribution of her past knowledge, experiences and the interpretation of those experiences by an individual. Further the interpretation of experiences may be based on her values, religious beliefs, self image and perception. So in this paper we try to search for possibility of using games, which is the major activity of childhood in order to develop various management skills specially, decision making.

Childhood Stage

Childhood age extends from two years to the age of puberty which is normally 14 years for boys and 13 years for girls. The stage can be divided into two parts: Early childhood (2 to 6 years of age) and late childhood (6 years to the age of puberty). From learning point of view in early childhood child can take various information but it is unorganised and reasoning in not well developed. Reasoning and organization of information takes place in late childhood. (Clifford, T.M, Richard, A.K, Weisz, J.R., Schopler, J, 2010). The social interaction also takes place in this stage of a personality development. The early childhood is the age of questioning, imitation and creativity (De souse, A., Raghavan, A., Rajamohan, G., Parameswaran, R.(Eds.), 2012). Late childhood is the stage of gang age and play age. The major developmental task of late childhood is concentrated on learning various skills for approval in group (De souse, A. et al., 2012). So we find that this stage is very important from learning perspective. In early childhood repetition of activity helps child to learn and same strategy is used. Example, Memorising of alphabets, numbers etc. In late childhood also repetition helps but due to development of partial reasoning things becomes easier. The common activity in this both stage of childhood is playing. It includes various creative indoor and outdoor games and activities. The childhood is the foundation of human being from where the journey of life begins.
Management Skill

Online Collins dictionary defines management skill as, “skills regarding the technique, practice, or science of managing a company, business, etc.” The definition highlights mainly on the various skills required to manage business, which skills like planning, strategy formulation, leading, coaching, environmental scanning, team work etc. The most important management skill is decision making. The ability to make correct decision at correct place and in correct time is the core philosophy of management science. According to Stephen P. Robbins, “decision making is defines as the selection of a preferred course of action from two or more alternatives” (tryocity.com, 2013). It is a very long learning process as decision is processed based on lots of experiences and knowledge. Management skill involves decision making in every twist and turns of business operations. Decision making is not just analysing the quantitative figures and choosing the best alternative. It also involves consideration of various qualitative, ethical, human and spiritual factors. So, decision making ability requires time and experience to excel.

Childhood and Childhood Games

In early childhood children are attracted to toys, Dramatization, construction, television etc. Since it is an age of imitation, enquiry and exploration children makes mistakes. The various games are designed for this group by educators.

In late childhood, children are mainly engaged in forming small gangs and they play with the same group. This stage forms sense of social acceptance in the mind of a child. The child also gets interest in reading, drawings and such creative activities. Various skills are learnt by child in late childhood which forms the foundation of the late years of child. So this stage is very crucial from learning point of view also. The games that are played by children in this age are group based. Some examples include football, hide and seek, group war type games.

So, we find that children are engaged or attracted in some form of play and games. Every child plays some games in their childhood either they are from rags or riches. Only difference will be the quality of games they play and the attitude they develop by playing the games.

Childhood games and Management skill development
Various games and activities are designed for the children. Many are indigenous games and some are modified and digitized versions of old games. These games do affect the mind of children in many ways. Taking and example from early childhood game, a child learns how to tangle her fingers in different ways. She comes home and makes other members do the same. If her game is approved i.e. others also do with her then she feels it can be continued further, but if it is not approved by family members then she either stops it or practices alone. This will make an impact in mind of the child about what should be done and what should be avoided. In this age also children are very fast in learning specially that involves physical activities and songs.

In late childhood, scenario becomes little different. The approval of family is not much sought by child. What matters for her is approval of her group and gang. Example, even if a child is stopped by her parents from playing certain games they play with her groups members. This shows she is more inclined towards group than family. It is also the age when children start becoming “naughty” or “bad boy.”

The management skill learnt by child in her early childhood is imitation and applying it in her life. Another skill she learns through games is physic management. The games that involving this skill are daily morning exercise catch and run etc. The creative skills are learnt by child through games like clay modelling, building blocks, match sticks arrangement etc.

In late childhood children generally learns following. They learn because their gang leaders instruct them to do certain things. In this stage also physical activities are involved and the games like football, tug of war, jumping games and gang war plays are very common.

**Childhood Games: A prospective for Management Skill development.**

The games teaches child in both conscious as well as sub conscious level. Let us go through some games which we played in childhood and its impact on us.

In early childhood:

Building blocks and Match stick arrangement.

It involved just arranging match sticks and building blocks. This made us think our own creative designs or we imitated somebody. The lesson that we learnt was that we
can create something of our own and this concept of creation has remained in our life till today.

Daily exercises in school

Every morning we repeated same exercises and sometimes we felt boring. But today we find we are practising almost same pattern of exercises from our childhood in order to maintain our physic or control our sugar level.

In Late childhood:

Group Matches

Often many group matches were conducted and it was international match for us. Winning and losing of match was very important. The opposite were our rivals and we hated them, though we shook hand before the match. The concept of competition and team building entered in us through such games.

Hide and Seek

In this game all has to hide and one fellow has to search for hidden ones and if the searching one is touched by hiding one even before she is seen then again she has to go for counting or else the first one out has to go for counting. This is very favourite game for children. From this game we learnt alertness, trusting our instincts, keeping knowledge of surroundings and persuading our elders to allow us to hide in some non allowed area.

Looking back to these games we find that something is learnt from it, which made impact in our life. If these games are constructed and planned way then the children can learn management skills which will be very beneficial for the future.

How to go ahead??

The games that are played during this phase are mainly individual and some group games in early childhood and group activities in late childhood. So new games can be designed and taught or old games can be modified if required, where there is scope of improving management skills in the child. Management skills that may be developed using games are: Decision making, Financial Planning, Strategy Formulation, Ethics, Leadership, Coaching and Spiritual skills.
Game Plan

For Early Childhood

In early childhood segment, the children can be taught few vocabularies of management and spirituality. This can be done through some spelling games where the child may be made to tell a word for which she gets a smile from her fellows. They are small and they smile and laugh often and if management can be connected with smile and laugh then it becomes their part of life. The game may be called “Smiley”

Since this is the age of imitation so the games can be created where the children are made to imitate, but keeping in mind about their body language. This will give children, scope to learn proper body language and good tone in her speech. The shy girl can be made confident if proper game can be designed in this stage.

Small dramas can be prepared for them where they are applying management skills and values. This can be based on very simple stories. This will create good impact on a child and in same time learning of management takes place.

In early childhood the main focus can be on building little familiarity about management skills in a child. The small concepts like decisions, timing, peace, good deed etc. can be inculcated in the child. This will make child familiar with management skills as well as human values.

For Late childhood

The stage of late childhood is considered as learning stage and it is possible to inculcate lots of management skills and concepts in child. Due to socialization child learns team building and it can be refined more to learn decision making, leadership and strategy formulation. Generally leader of the gangs are older fellows so they can be trained to teach good ideas to them. The games that may be designed for this group may be:

Decide and See

Here a group can be made and small task can be given to the group. One leader is selected at a time and others are instructed to follow only what leader says. Then task can be carried out. The decisions made by leaders and task accomplished may be evaluated and discussed with group.
Save and be happy

This game can be introducing the concept of money to child and they are encouraged to save for a week. The one saving more would be rewarded with a badge or title. This will encourage child to save the money and will not waste the money. The cautious part is that they should not be encouraged to ask for more pocket money.

Create your dream

The game can be created to develop entrepreneurial quality in the child. The child is encouraged to think how to earn. They may be encouraged to design ideas for building their dreams without money. The focus should be on ideas and not earning the amount. This may encourage child to become a successful entrepreneur.

Organize yourself

The group of children can be given chance to organize small class functions. It may involve some programmes, chart preparation etc. This will tremendously boost child’s managerial skills. Mistakes will be made but in the process many things are learnt by them.

Field Games

The games like football, cricket etc. helps a lot in team building and strategy formulation. The coach of the group can encourage group to perform like professionals so that there is improvement in attitude and thinking process.

If management thinking can be included in the thinking process of child then the level of thinking changes and the same is reflected in the behaviour. This does not mean to kill their childhood but to plan in creative way to not only improve their quality of games but also include some learning factors also.

Conclusion

The childhood stage is the best time to introduce new concept as they are “wet clay” which can be moulded into masterpiece. The inclusion of management skills including spirituality can be really challenging for educators and managers but if it can be done then there will be more effective and welfare focused managers and entrepreneurs. Future can be better if professionals are created not just by information feeding but with
experience, insight and wisdom. The future research can be done in this area which may include designing of new games of children so that they can be caught young and may be moulded into more dynamic, creative and good human being. The small step of developing proper games may bring peace, love, joy and wisdom in future and the world may be far better place than what we have imagined.

References


