



# Effects of Structured Play Interventions on Self-Esteem, Physical Competence, and Psychological Well-Being in Children

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1 Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The opening paragraph of the introduction effectively establishes childhood as a critical developmental period, yet the argument would be strengthened by explicitly linking developmental sensitivity to the three dependent variables investigated. Elaborating how middle childhood specifically relates to self-esteem formation, perceived competence, and psychological well-being would sharpen theoretical coherence.

The paragraph defining structured play provides a useful conceptual distinction from free play, but operational clarity remains limited. The authors should specify essential defining characteristics such as facilitator guidance, intentional learning goals, structured feedback processes, and progression criteria to enhance replicability and methodological rigor.

The study design paragraph appropriately labels the research as quasi-experimental; however, additional clarification is needed regarding contextual factors such as school-level differences, classroom clustering, and potential contamination between intervention and control groups. These details are essential for evaluating internal validity.

In the participant recruitment paragraph, the manuscript indicates recruitment from primary schools in Tehran but omits important contextual information such as the number of schools involved, recruitment procedures, and socioeconomic characteristics of participants. Including these details would substantially enhance external validity assessment.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

## 1.2 Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

Within the self-esteem discussion, the manuscript describes self-esteem broadly but does not sufficiently justify the chosen age range of 8–11 years. Expanding the discussion to include developmental psychology perspectives explaining why this period represents heightened susceptibility to competence-based self-evaluation would strengthen conceptual justification.

The section addressing physical competence conflates perceived competence with actual motor proficiency. Because the study measures perceived competence using the PSPP-C instrument, the authors should explicitly acknowledge that conclusions relate primarily to perceived rather than objectively assessed competence, thereby avoiding conceptual ambiguity.

The theoretical framework paragraph referencing competence motivation theory and self-determination theory is well constructed but remains largely descriptive. Integrating these theories into a unified explanatory pathway linking structured play participation to psychological outcomes would significantly improve theoretical integration and analytic depth.

The introduction claims that few studies have examined combined psychological and physical outcomes, yet this research gap would be more convincing if supported by brief synthesis comparing representative prior studies rather than general statements about variability in intervention designs.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.