

MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR ENGAGING CHILDREN AGE 3–6 IN RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS IN THE CONDITIONS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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For many preschool-aged children, systematic engagement in rhythmic gymnastics represents one of the earliest forms of organized physical activity, combining health-promoting, educational, and aesthetic goals. *Purpose.* The aim of the study is to identify motivational factors that contribute to the involvement of children aged 3–6 in rhythmic gymnastics within the educational process. *Methods.* A combination of general scientific and empirical methods was applied. At the theoretical level, the study employed methods of analysis, synthesis, generalization, and interpretation of scientific literature. The empirical part included a questionnaire survey of parents ($n = 48$), semi-structured interviews with coaches ($n = 3$), and pedagogical observation of children's emotional and motivational responses during training in the beginner groups of the Slavutych Municipal Youth Sports School (until January 2022). The quantitative data obtained were processed using descriptive statistics. *Results.* The findings showed that parents primarily identified external motives for choosing rhythmic gymnastics for their children, such as the combination of physical and aesthetic development, the formation of discipline, and movement culture. At the same time, children were driven by internal motives, including interest in movement, enjoyment of classes, the desire to emulate the coach, or to be part of a group. Children's emotional reactions to training were predominantly positive, as confirmed by both parent responses and observational data. The pedagogical style of the coach, which included individualization, approval, and playful elements, had a significant impact on the sustainability of the child's motivation. *Conclusions.* The results highlight the importance of early identification of motivational resources when working with preschool children, as well as the need for an appropriate pedagogical approach that considers both the child's needs and family values. An optimal combination of external and internal factors enhances the effectiveness of educational and sports engagement and promotes long-term interest in physical activity.

Keywords: motivation, rhythmic gymnastics, preschool age, physical development, emotional engagement, interaction style, educational process.

Ольга Квач. Мотиваційні чинники залучення дітей 3–6 років до художньої гімнастики в умовах освітнього процесу

Анотація. Для багатьох дітей дошкільного віку систематичні заняття художньою гімнастикою є однією з перших форм організованої фізичної активності, яка поєднує оздоровчі, виховні та естетичні цілі. *Мета роботи* – визначити мотиваційні чинники, які сприяють залученню дітей віком 3–6 років до занять художньою гімнастикою в умовах освітнього процесу. *Методи дослідження.* У дослідженні застосовано комплекс загальнонаукових та емпіричних методів. На теоретичному рівні використовувались методи аналізу, синтезу, узагальнення та інтерпретації наукових джерел. Емпірична частина включала анкетування батьків ($n = 48$), напівструктуровані інтерв'ю з тренерами ($n = 3$), а також педагогічне спостереження за емоційно-мотиваційними проявами дітей під час тренувань у початкових групах Комплексної дитячо-юнацької спортивної школи (КДЮСШ) Славутицької міської ради (до січня 2022 року). Отримані кількісні дані оброблено за допомогою методів описової статистики. *Результати дослідження.* Результати показали, що ключовими зовнішніми мотивами вибору художньої гімнастики для дитини батьки називали поєднання фізичного та естетичного розвитку, формування дисципліни та культури рухів. Водночас, у дітей домінували внутрішні мотиви, пов'язані з інтересом до руху, задоволенням від занять, бажанням наслідувати тренера або бути частиною групи. Емоційна реакція дітей на тренування переважно мала позитивне забарвлення, що фіксувалося як у відповідях батьків, так і під час спостережень. Педагогічний стиль тренера, що включав індивідуалізацію, схвалення та ігрові елементи, істотно впливав на стійкість мотивації дитини. *Висновки.* Отримані результати підкреслюють важливість раннього виявлення мотиваційних ресурсів у роботі з дітьми дошкільного віку та необхідність відповідного педагогічного підходу, що враховує як потреби дитини, так і цінності родини. Оптимальне поєднання зовнішніх та внутрішніх чинників сприяє підвищенню ефективності освітньо-спортивного впливу та формуванню тривалої зацікавленості у фізичній активності.

Ключові слова: мотивація, художня гімнастика, дошкільний вік, фізичний розвиток, емоційна залученість, стиль взаємодії, освітній процес.

Introduction

Preschool age, covering the period from three to six years, was considered a key stage in the formation of personality, the development of basic psychomotor skills, and the initial socialization of the child. During this period, the foundation was laid for further physical, emotional, and cognitive development, and therefore – for involvement in organized forms of motor activity, in particular sports. Research in the field of developmental psychology (in particular the works of L. S. Vygotsky [13], G. O. Vaskivska, S. P. Palamar, S. G. Kondratyuk [19]) testified that it was

precisely at the preschool age that intensive accumulation of experience of self-regulation, development of attention, coordination of movements, and initial motivation took place, which became a prerequisite for the formation of a stable interest in sports activity.

One of the forms of involving preschool children in physical activity in the conditions of the educational process was rhythmic gymnastics – a sport that combined the aesthetic component with comprehensive motor training. Classes in rhythmic gymnastics at an early age contributed to the development of flexibility, balance,

coordination, rhythm, as well as formed skills of discipline and group work. However, the effectiveness of involving children in systematic classes depended on a set of motivational factors – both external (influence of parents, teachers, educational environment) and internal (need for recognition, interest in movement, satisfaction from achievements) [8].

The issue of motivation in preschool age was considered in the works of A. Maslow [9], C. Rogers [15], D. McClelland [10], I. I. Bekh [2]. It was indicated that the formation of a stable interest in physical education at an early age was significantly influenced by a positive emotional atmosphere, an individualized approach of the coach, and the recognition of the child's achievements in the form of approval, rewards, or public emphasis on success.

Modern studies complement these conclusions, emphasizing the influence of both the educational environment and family factors. Thus, the results of Au, W. W., et al. [11] confirmed that physically enriched preschool education programs positively affect children's motor behavior and physical fitness level. K. Kippe [6] demonstrated the significance of educators' motivation, since the active participation of teachers increased the level of children's motor activity. Viñuela, Y., et al. [21] proved the effectiveness of active methods in preschool education, which significantly increased learning and motor motivation. Tapia-Serrano, M. Á., et al. [18] outlined different motivational profiles of physical activity depending on socio-demographic characteristics, which is important to consider when organizing classes. Carcamo-Oyarzun, J., et al. [3] showed the connection between motor competence, motivation, and satisfaction in physical education classes, while Verdonshot, A., et al. [20] developed a tool for assessing the opportunities and motivation of teachers to implement motor activity in the educational environment. Huang, W., et al. [5] emphasized the role of family and preschool contexts in shaping children's physical activity, while Sánchez-Miguel, P. A., et al. [16] and Pracht, D. W., Houghton, V., Fogarty, K., Sagas, M. [12] identified the significant influence of parents' behavior and motivation on children's involvement in sports and on the satisfaction from activities.

Given that motivational factors determined not only the initial interest of the child but also the level of further involvement, adaptation to the training process, and the formation of an attitude toward sport as a valuable component of life, there arose a need for an in-depth study of this aspect precisely in the context of preschool rhythmic gymnastics. In addition, the peculiarities of the motivation of children aged 3–6 differed significantly from the motivational structure of schoolchildren, which required distinguishing the corresponding age specificity when analyzing involvement in sports activities.

Within the framework of this study, the practical experience of working with children of the younger age group in the rhythmic gymnastics department of the Complex Children and Youth Sports School of the Slavutych City Council of Vyshhorod District, Kyiv Region, was analyzed. The focus was placed on identifying the leading motives that stimulated the systematic attendance of classes by children aged 3–6 during the period before the beginning of the full-scale war in Ukraine.

The purpose of the work was to establish the main motivational factors that influenced the involvement of preschool children in rhythmic gymnastics in the conditions of the educational process, as well as to analyze the educational environment in which readiness for participation in the training process was formed.

Material and Methods of Research

The study covered 48 children aged 3 to 6 who attended the rhythmic gymnastics section at the rhythmic gymnastics department of the Complex Children and Youth Sports School of the Slavutych City Council of Vyshhorod District, Kyiv Region. The children belonged to the initial preparatory group, whose training process was carried out until January 2022. According to their health status, all participants of the study were medically admitted to rhythmic gymnastics classes.

The research was carried out at both theoretical and empirical levels. At the theoretical level, the study of scientific sources was conducted through analysis, synthesis, classification, and generalization of information from academic articles, professional manuals, monographs, as well as the results of previous empirical studies. The search was conducted in the databases Google Scholar, ERIC, and ScienceDirect. In total, 10 sources were processed, of which 7 were included in the main analytical base, which made it possible to identify modern approaches to the study of motivation in preschool age, the structure of sports involvement, and the psychological and pedagogical factors of early physical activity.

At the empirical level, the method of pedagogical observation, parent questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews with coaches were used. Pedagogical observation was conducted in the format of non-participant recording during three months of active training. The main attention was paid to the emotional expressions of children during the performance of exercises, the level of initiative, the conformity of behavior to the training conditions, as well as the dynamics of involvement under the influence of external factors.

The structure of the questionnaire included 12 questions that made it possible to determine which factors – the training environment, the coach's communication style, competitive elements, or home support – parents considered decisive in shaping their child's motivation for rhythmic gymnastics classes (Table 1).

Each question was accompanied by suggested answer options with the possibility of choosing one or several variants. Quantitative processing of the responses was carried out by counting the frequency of each option chosen and calculating the percentage ratios.

A supplement to the survey was semi-structured interviews with two coaches who conducted the training of children of the specified age category. Their assessments concerned the personal reactions of the children, factors of involvement, typical behavior patterns during classes, as well as the evaluation of the dynamics of interest depending on the structure of the training process.

For the processing of the obtained empirical data, methods of mathematical statistics were used, which made

it possible to establish quantitative relationships between certain groups of factors and the overall level of the child's interest in classes. Frequency counts, calculation of percentage distributions, and construction of generalized distribution tables were applied.

During the implementation of the study, ethical standards were observed in accordance with the provisions of the Declaration of Helsinki of the World Medical Association (WMA, 2013). The parents of the study participants provided written informed consent for the participation of the children in the training process, as well as for the use of the collected information for educational and scientific purposes.

Table 1 – Content of the questionnaire for parents of children aged 3–6 who attended rhythmic gymnastics classes

No	Questionnaire Questions
1	Why did you choose rhythmic gymnastics as an activity for your child?
2	Does your child wake up with the desire to go to gymnastics classes?
3	What does your child like the most in the classes (in your opinion)?
4	Have you noticed the impact of the classes on your child's overall activity at home?
5	Does your child talk at home about the coach or about rhythmic gymnastics classes?
6	How does your child respond to praise from the coach?
7	Does the presence of a peer group in the classes motivate your child?
8	Does your child show initiative to repeat the exercises at home?
9	How important for you is the development of flexibility, discipline, and aesthetics?
10	Does your child pay attention to appearance (uniform, hairstyle) before the class?
11	Does your own motivation influence your child's desire to attend training?
12	Which factor, in your opinion, is the main motivator for your child?

Research Results

According to the results of the survey conducted among the parents of children aged 3–6 who attended rhythmic gymnastics classes at the Complex Children and Youth Sports School of the Slavutych City Council, it was possible to identify quantitatively defined motives that determined the initial involvement of children in this sport. In the first part of the questionnaire, the question was asked: «*Why did you choose rhythmic gymnastics for your child?*», to which respondents could choose one or several answer options.

The most common answer was the statement «*rhythmic gymnastics develops grace, plasticity, and aesthetic taste*» – it was supported by 62.5 % of respondents (30 out of 48 parents). This option reflected the families' deep orientation toward the harmonious physical and visually aesthetic development of the child, which combines external attractiveness with motor coordination. At the same time, in the open responses (within the semi-structured comments), 18 respondents additionally noted such phrases as «*it is a feminine sport*», «*looks beautiful*

in performances», «*eaches control of movements and emotions*».

The second most common motive was the recommendation of other parents or acquaintances who already had positive experience with this coach or section – 20.8 % (10 people) chose the option «*on the advice of friends/acquaintances*». This factor reflected social imitation and trust in previously proven practice. A typical comment was the phrase: «*a friend recommended it to us, her daughter has been attending for the second year and is very satisfied*».

About 12.5 % of parents (6 people) indicated that the choice of rhythmic gymnastics was determined by their own childhood experience or an unfulfilled dream. The answer option «*I also wanted to do gymnastics in my childhood*» testified to transgenerational projection of expectations, where the sports choice for the child was defined by the adult's inner nostalgia or the desire to realize what had been unavailable in their own childhood. In three cases, it was noted that the respondent's mother had once practiced artistic gymnastics or ballet.

The least significant were instrumental factors, such as «convenient location of the section» (4.2 %, that is, only 2 people) or «low cost of classes»—this option was not chosen by any respondent, which indicates the predominance of value-based and aesthetic-developmental motives over pragmatic or logistical considerations.

It is important to emphasize that 38 out of 48 parents (79.2 %) chose only one answer option, which indicated

the presence of clear, focused motivation. Only 10 people (20.8 %) chose two options. In no case were more than two reasons indicated, which also confirms the stability of identifying the motive for involving the child in rhythmic gymnastics. Figure 1 shows the frequency distribution of parents' responses regarding the main reasons for involving children in rhythmic gymnastics, among which aesthetic-developmental motives dominate.

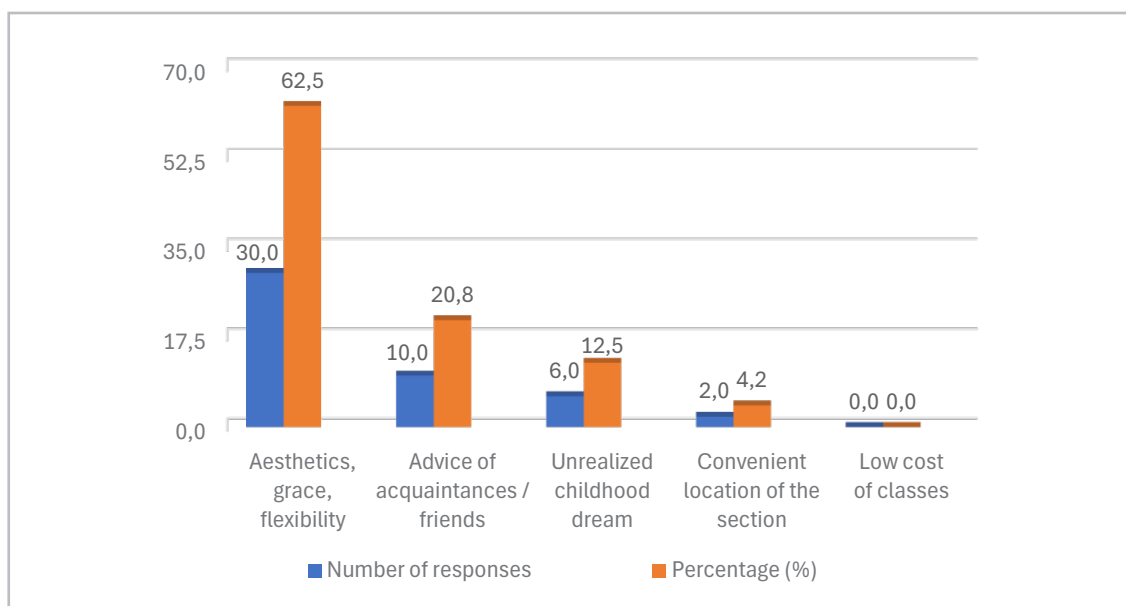


Fig. 1 Distribution of parents' responses to the question about the main reason for choosing rhythmic gymnastics for their child

The data obtained in Fig. 1 indicate the predominance of intrapersonal and cultural-aesthetic motives in the choice of physical activity for preschool children. In the eyes of parents, rhythmic gymnastics was perceived not only as a sport, but also as a form of cultivating taste, self-control, perfection of movements, as well as a way of emotional and social development in a safe environment. This confirms the relevance of the aesthetic-pedagogical approach in shaping motivation for physical activity at early age stages.

The next stage of the study was the examination of children's emotional attitude toward the classes, which was assessed both through parents' responses and by pedagogical observation of children's behavioral reactions during the training process. According to the results of the survey, 81.2 % of respondents (39 people) indicated that their child always goes to training with pleasure, another 14.6 % (7 people) chose the option «sometimes shows desire», and only 4.2 % (2 parents) answered that the child «reluctantly goes to classes». Such results indicate a consistently high level of positive emotional involvement in the training process.

To the question «Does your child talk at home about the coach or about rhythmic gymnastics classes»? 77.1 % of parents (37 people) answered affirmatively, 16.7 % (8 people) indicated that such conversations occur rarely,

and only 6.2 % (3 people) reported the absence of the child's interest in discussing the classes at home. Such verbal reproduction of sports experience indicates the emotional significance of the classes for the child and the desire to reinforce the positive experience through communication with a close adult.

Regarding the question about the child's initiative in repeating gymnastic elements at home, 66.7 % of parents (32 people) noted that the child «regularly reproduces exercises, shows new movements», 20.8 % (10 people) – «sometimes repeats something from training», and only 12.5 % (6 people) – «shows no interest in repeating». Thus, more than two-thirds of the sample demonstrated self-motivated activity outside the training space, which is an indirect indicator of the child's internal interest.

The results of pedagogical observation confirmed the above-mentioned trends. In 43 out of 48 cases, children entered the gym willingly, with positive emotions, actively responded to organizational moments (greetings, warm-up, play exercises), and demonstrated readiness to engage in new motor patterns. In 5 cases, during the first three classes, slight manifestations of anxiety or insecurity were observed, which gradually disappeared under the conditions of stable support from the coach and an emotionally comfortable environment.

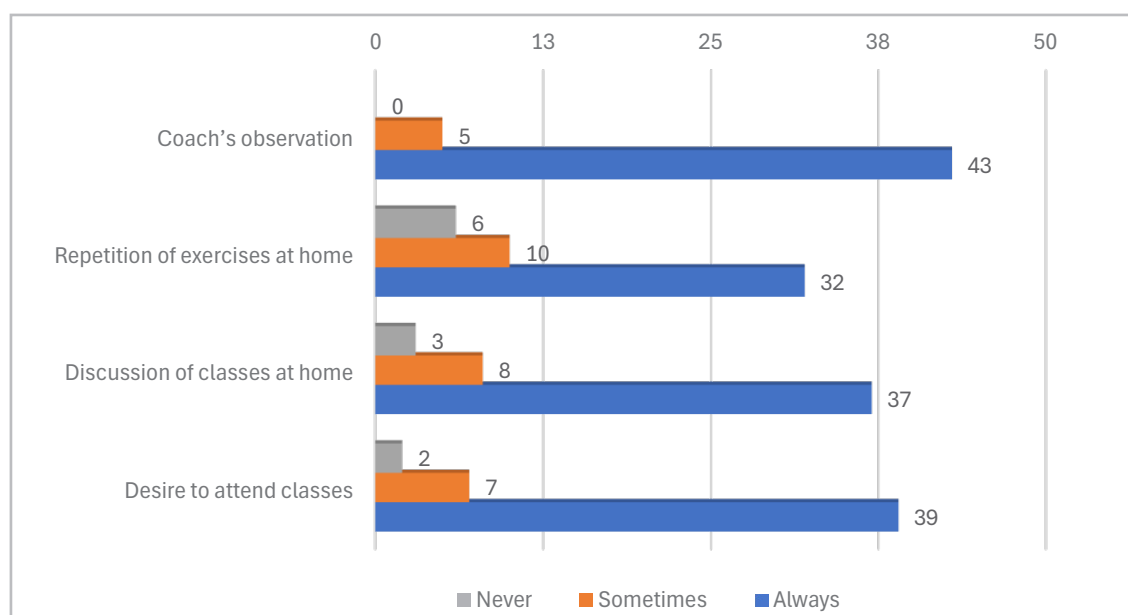


Fig. 2 Frequency of manifestations of the child's positive emotional response to participation in classes

According to the combined data of the parental survey and the pedagogical observation presented in Figure 2, a high level of positive emotional involvement of children in rhythmic gymnastics classes was recorded. This indicates the effectiveness of the methodological techniques used in the preparatory group, in particular the importance of emotional support, play-based forms, and a non-coercive pace of introducing motor loads.

After analyzing the children's emotional attitude toward the classes, attention was focused on the style of pedagogical interaction as a key factor influencing the stability of motivation and the quality of involvement in the training process. The study of this aspect was carried out by combining questionnaire data obtained from parents with a qualitative analysis of coaches' responses during semi-structured interviews. The obtained results indicate a significant influence of the coach's communication style and methodological techniques on maintaining the child's interest in rhythmic gymnastics.

To the questionnaire question «How does your child respond to praise from the coach?» 79.2 % of parents (38 people) answered that «the reaction is positive, emotional uplift is observed», another 16.7 % (8 people) noted «the reaction is calm, but self-confidence increases», and only 4.1 % (2 people) reported «no noticeable reaction». These responses indicate the importance of positive

feedback for forming in the child not only self-confidence but also internal satisfaction from participating in the class.

The results were even more pronounced for the question «Does the coach's communication style (tone, support, praise, freedom of action) matter to your child?» The vast majority of parents – 85.4 % (41 people) – confirmed that «yes, the coach's style influences the child's mood and activity». Another 10.4 % (5 people) indicated that «partly – on some days a difference is noticeable», and only 4.2 % (2 people) considered that «the child does not care how exactly the coach behaves».

In the coaches' responses, it was confirmed that children are sensitive to changes in the emotional climate of the class, particularly to the tone of voice, the sequence of instructions, the recognition of efforts, and the possibility of creative improvisation. According to one coach, «at the age of 3–6, it is important for children that every movement is noticed and approved, and that the atmosphere of the class is not tense or demanding». It was also noted that the best results were shown by children who received individualized praise, even in a small form – through a smile, a nonverbal gesture, or personalized address.

The summarized data are presented in Table 2, which illustrates the generalized responses of parents regarding the influence of the style of pedagogical interaction on the child's motivation.

Table 2 – Parents' responses regarding the influence of the style of pedagogical interaction on the child's motivation

Question	Answer option 1	Answer option 2	Answer option 3
Child's reaction to the coach's praise	Positive reaction, emotional uplift (38 persons, 79.2 %)	Calm reaction, increased self-confidence (8 persons, 16.7 %)	No noticeable reaction (2 persons, 4.1 %)
Influence of the coach's interaction style (tone, support, freedom of action)	Yes, the coach's style influences the child's mood and activity (41 persons, 85.4 %)	Partly – on some days a difference is noticeable (5 persons, 10.4 %)	It does not matter how the coach behaves (2 persons, 4.2 %)

The data presented in Table 2 demonstrate consistency in parents' responses regarding children's sensitivity to the style of pedagogical interaction. The absolute majority of respondents indicated a positive reaction of the child to the coach's approval, which testifies to the high motivational significance of feedback. In addition, the perception of the coach's emotional tone, support, and freedom of action proved to be an important factor directly correlated with children's activity and involvement. The distribution of responses also confirms that only a small part of parents considered the coach's style as a neutral or secondary factor. This allows us to conclude about the leading role of the pedagogical approach as an environmental resource of motivational influence at an early age.

The generalization of the results of the survey, pedagogical observation, and expert assessments of the coaches made it possible to identify that children's motivational involvement in rhythmic gymnastics classes was formed on the basis of a combination of external and internal factors, the effects of which in most cases were complementary. According to the responses to the final questionnaire question «Which factor, in your opinion, is the main motivator for your child?», 33.3 % of parents (16 people) indicated «emotional satisfaction from the

very process of movement», another 25 % (12 people) chose the option «parental approval and support at home», and 20.8 % (10 people) – «the atmosphere of play and collective activity».

Another 14.6 % of respondents (7 people) indicated «the coach's positive attitude / the desire to please the adult» as the determining motive. The remaining 6.3 % (3 people) chose the option «imitation of other children / the desire not to fall behind in the group». Thus, in three out of four responses, parents actually recorded internal motivation as dominant or as one formed through a supportive environment.

These data are fully consistent with theoretical conceptions of the motivational structure of preschool age, according to which play, emotional, and social components dominate. At the same time, as the coaches' interpretations indicated, the ability to create a context of play, provide space for motor improvisation, and at the same time ensure the recognition of the child as a subject of physical activity proved to be decisive in maintaining sustained interest in classes.

The graphical representation of the cumulative results regarding the motivational factors of children's participation in the training process is presented in Figure 3.

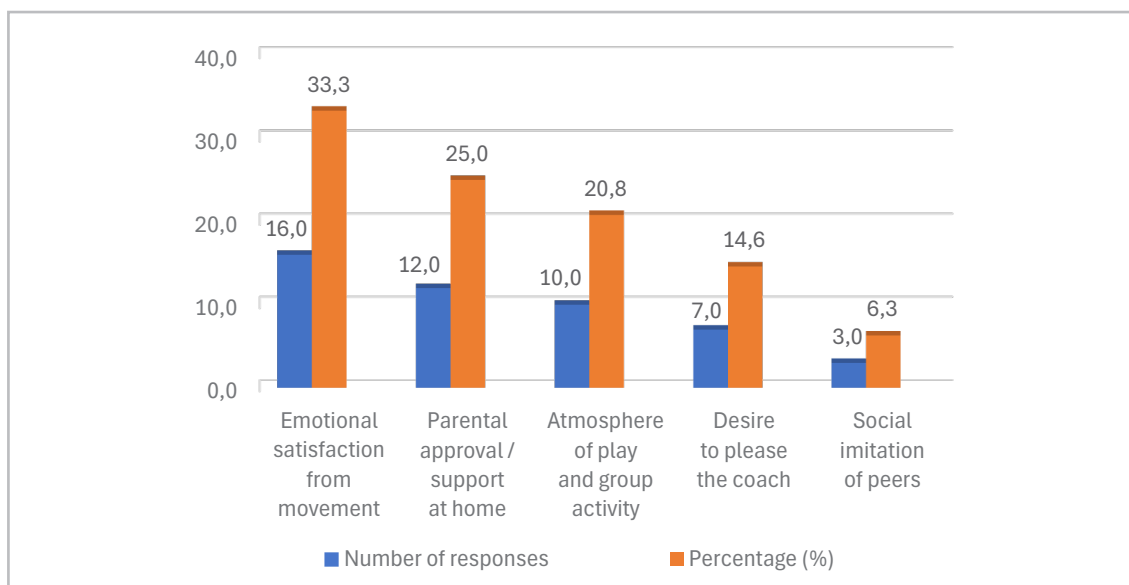


Fig. 3 Cumulative frequency of the most frequently mentioned motivators of the child's participation in the training process (according to parents' assessment)

The data presented in Figure 3 indicate the dominance of emotionally colored and socially supported motivators in the motivational structure of preschool children. The smallest share is represented by external imitation models, while the largest is internal satisfaction from motor activity. This points to a high level of sensory and affective involvement of children in the training process, which is characteristic of this age period and indicates the potential for the formation of stable motivation in the future.

Discussion

The results of the conducted study confirmed the existence of an integral motivational structure that determines the participation of preschool children in systematic rhythmic gymnastics classes. The basis of this structure was formed by both internal and external factors, which were manifested in behavioral expressions, emotional involvement, and reactions to the training process. In their content, the motives identified in children

aged 3–6 differed significantly from the motivational structure of schoolchildren, which is most often described by researchers of physical education. Unlike the cognitively rationalized responses of adolescents, preschoolers were dominated by sensory, emotional, and socially colored components, which corresponds to conceptions about the peculiarities of motivation in preschool age (according to the works of Vygotsky, Elkonin, Montessori, and modern empirical studies [13; 25]).

In contrast to elementary school students, where motives often have a utilitarian or competitive character (for example, achieving results, self-affirmation through comparison), in children aged 3–6 the aesthetic-emotional motive predominates, which was confirmed by the responses of 62.5 % of parents who identified «*flexibility, grace, and beauty*» as the main reason for choosing rhythmic gymnastics for their child. Such a predominance of aesthetic factors indicates the influence of the adult environment on the child's primary motivational orientation, but also demonstrates the high potential of gymnastics as a tool for forming a sense of rhythm, form, proportion, and order in physical development.

The positive attitude of children toward the classes, documented both through the survey and pedagogical observation, confirmed the data on the importance of the emotional background of training. The child's regular desire to participate in training, active repetition of movements at home, as well as the attempt to share impressions after class, indicate that the training process itself is a source of satisfaction rather than merely the fulfillment of an adult's tasks. This distinguishes the motivational mechanism of a preschooler from that of an adolescent, who more often engages in physical activity through the pursuit of competition or social recognition [8; 24].

A special role in the formation of children's sustained involvement was played by the coach's pedagogical style. The majority of parents (over 85 %) confirmed that the style of interaction, in particular emotional support, praise, the possibility of self-expression, and the absence of excessive pressure, has a direct impact on the child's motivation. These data correlate with the provisions of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan), which state that the satisfaction of three basic psychological needs – for support, autonomy, and competence – is a prerequisite for the development of intrinsic motivation. The coaches who participated in the interviews confirmed that it was individualized praise and the inclusion of play elements that produced the greatest effect when working with this age group [23].

Special attention should be paid to the identified multicomponent nature of motivation, which was manifested in the responses to the final questionnaire question. Some parents indicated that the main motivator for the child was approval at home (25 %), others – the atmosphere

of collective play (20.8 %) or the desire to please the adult (14.6 %). Only a small part (6.3 %) associated motivation with the imitation of peers. This makes it possible to assert that in preschool age the leading role in maintaining interest in classes is played by communicative interaction with the adult, emotional security, and the structure of the classes, rather than social hierarchy or group status, which are characteristic of middle and high school students [17; 24].

The presented results provide grounds to consider rhythmic gymnastics as an effective means of pedagogical influence in the system of early physical education, provided that key principles are observed: play-based organization of the class, positive reinforcement, gradual complication of material, and a flexible approach to the individual abilities of the child. In addition, the obtained data emphasize the importance of the family environment as a factor of either supporting or, conversely, weakening the child's interest in classes: parents who regularly approved participation in training, showed interest in the process, and encouraged the demonstration of movements at home, in fact performed the function of an additional reinforcing factor [13].

Despite the consistent conclusions obtained, the study has limitations due to the specifics of the sample – only children from one sports school participated, which complicates the extrapolation of the results to broader populations. In addition, the indirect nature of the assessments (through parents and coaches) does not allow for the direct recording of the child's subjective motivation, which is a typical limitation of studies with young children. To increase the validity of further research, it is advisable to apply methods of behavioral mapping, micro-observation, as well as to include evaluations of psychologists or speech therapists working with this group of children [15].

Overall, the obtained results confirm that at the age of 3–6, the formation of motivation for rhythmic gymnastics is a multilevel process that combines emotional, communicative, and sensory aspects. The high level of positive emotional involvement and the persistent desire to repeat motor actions outside the class indicate the appropriateness of using rhythmic gymnastics as a tool not only for physical development but also for the general emotional and personal growth of the child.

Conclusions

A set of factors determining the motivation of children aged 3–6 to participate in rhythmic gymnastics classes in the context of the educational process was identified. The conducted study demonstrated the presence of a stable positive emotional attitude of children toward the training process, which was confirmed both by parents' questionnaire responses and by pedagogical observation data.

The main motivational factors of children's participation in classes were found to be: emotional satisfaction from motor activity, approval and support from parents, a favorable atmosphere of group interaction, a friendly communication style of the coach, and the possibility of self-expression through play. It was established that motivation was formed most effectively under conditions of emotionally supportive and methodologically flexible pedagogical guidance, focused on the individual characteristics of preschool children.

A significant part of parents noted that it is precisely the style of pedagogical interaction – praise, encouragement, the absence of pressure – that significantly influences the child's activity, interest, and regularity of participation in training. This confirms the necessity of consistently applying an individualized approach to education within children's sports sections.

The obtained results confirmed the importance of creating a pedagogical environment in which the child's motivation is formed not through external pressure or the demand for achievement, but through support, involvement, and the play-based organization of motor activity. This is especially relevant for the age category of 3–6 years, where motivational structures are not yet fully formed and largely depend on the adult environment.

Further research should be directed toward expanding the sample, involving different forms of gymnastics classes, as well as applying additional methods of assessing motivation, including behavioral diagnostics and psychological mapping. This will make it possible to deepen the understanding of the processes of motivation formation at the early stages of sports development.

Conflict of interest. The author declares no conflict of interest.

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