



## Research and pedagogical innovation

### Brief description

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One of the projects we are currently developing focuses on children's play, a topic our research group has been pursuing for decades. We are currently analyzing the use of digital devices and their impact on play and learning. The objective of this research is to conduct a systematic review of the effects of play deprivation on children in the lower cycle of primary education in certain learning outcomes (literacy, executive functions, holistic development, etc.) or, more positively, how play can support them.

### How does it work?

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Our research group specializes in research related to children's play. We have signed the following contracts with business entities linked to play and childhood:

- The Use of Digital Devices and Their Impact on Play and Learning. Spanish Toy Manufacturers Association. 2024-2025.
- Current Perspectives on Play in Childhood. Spanish Toy Manufacturers Association. 2024-2025.
- The Contribution of Children's Play to the Development of Skills for Active Social Change. IKEA, Ashoka, and UNICEF. 2018.
- Evolution of the Play Experience in Childhood. Spanish Toy Manufacturers Association. 2017-2018.
- Meaning of Play in Children's Growth. Toy Industries of Europe. 2017-2018.

This project will conduct a systematic review of the use of digital devices and their impact on play and learning to date. This type of study will allow us to identify a significant number of studies related to this topic, which we will critically evaluate. Subsequently, we plan to conduct a statistical meta-analysis using the PRISMA tool, which some members of our research team have been developing over the past few years. This research will allow us to further explore the analysis of children's play, a priority line of research.

### What problem does it solve?

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The value of this research lies in the ability to analyze children's play in its multiple dimensions and perspectives. In the case of the contract we are currently working on, it concerns the use of digital devices and their impact on play and learning. The current position of technology finds both defenders and clear detractors. Defenders advocate the use of digital devices as mediators and facilitators of learning, and they assert the clear need to incorporate these types of tools into education to help students become familiar with them. Meanwhile, detractors of the use of digital devices advocate their elimination from educational settings due to their limited usefulness in meaningful learning. Conducting this type of research will allow for a critical analysis of each approach and the contributions derived from each.

### What future products will it develop?

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The results of the contracts we have been carrying out through the Civic Culture and Educational Policies (CCPE) research group include reports, catalogs, and exhibitions focused on the topic addressed. For example, the exhibition "Imagination at Play," which we held from June 3 to 5, 2024, featured antique children's toys on loan from a private collection. A catalog was created for this project. The contract we are currently underway will seek to produce a report on the topic.

### Competitive advantages compared to other research

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Our main contribution to this type of research is the ability to combine theoretical reflection on the topics we address with the transfer of these results to the public in the form of reports, exhibitions, and catalogs that compile the findings. The experience we have accumulated over the years reaffirms our commitment to this work, as associations and companies continue to request contracts with us to conduct specific research on topics of interest to them.

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*Figure 1: Cover of the exhibition catalogue "Imagination at play"*

## Where has it been developed?

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The Civic Culture and Educational Policies Research Group (CCPE), which develops these resources, is based in the Faculty of Education at the Complutense University. Its origins date back to the 1990s, then under the name of the Quirón Educational Research Group. In 2005, it was recognized as a consolidated research group at the UCM, making it the first such group in the Faculty of Education.

It currently comprises more than a dozen professors, postdoctoral researchers, and predoctoral fellows who participate in various projects and agreements with public and private entities along the group's lines of innovation and research. The group works with similar national and international initiatives and has promoted collaboration agreements with universities around the world. Over the past ten years, its members have carried out academic activities in countries across Europe, Latin America, North America, Asia, and Oceania.

## And moreover...

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The activities and services provided by the Group include:

- Organization of activities linked to the service-learning methodology, including the creation of toy libraries in educational spaces.
- Development of entrepreneurship-related content to enhance graduates' job placement opportunities.
- Conducting studies and reports on the impact of the technological world on the exercise of citizenship and the role of education, with an emphasis on critical media literacy and the potential of digital humanities.
- Development of educational programs, guides, and materials.
- Consulting services for formal and non-formal education institutions and organizations.
- Promotion of inclusive environments through training, diagnostic, and intervention initiatives, such as the one developed in Equatorial Guinea.

## Researcher in charge

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