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Aquatic Therapy as a Psychomotor Intervention for Children with Physical Disabilities

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Abstract

Aquatic therapy offers a unique environment for children with physical disabilities to explore movement beyond the limitations experienced on land. The buoyancy, resistance, and hydrostatic pressure of water provide natural support and challenge, promoting postural control, coordination, and overall motor skills. This study focuses on the psychomotor and psychosocial benefits of aquatic interventions, integrating principles from motor learning and body-oriented therapy. A 12-week individualized aquatic therapy program was implemented, focusing on strengthening the core, enhancing lower limb coordination, and facilitating functional movement patterns. Motor outcomes were assessed through standardized tests of gross motor function before and after the intervention. Results demonstrated measurable improvements in trunk stability, movement fluidity, and task endurance, indicating that the aquatic environment effectively supports neuromuscular activation and controlled movement execution. These findings confirm the therapeutic potential of water-based interventions as a complementary approach in pediatric rehabilitation for children with physical disabilities.

Keywords: psychomotor development, adapted physical activity, inclusion, rehabilitation, motor learning