ABSTRACT
This text discusses the relationship between risk and learning in the practice of the rolling cart, based on an ethnography carried out in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte between 2019 and 2022. The community involved in the activity is characterized by disputes and interests about this practice. Although it is considered risky, different narratives about the risks of this practice emerge in an urban and contemporary context. The analysis presented argues that risk is a social construction, in line with Jean Lave's theories of situated learning and Tim Ingold's ecological approach. According to these theories, the skills necessary to practice rolling cart are developed through a process of education of attention, and not through mental representations that are converted into body movements. Thus, men, women, adults and children participate, constitute and are constituted by the practice, which is polysemic and situated. The theories of Giddens and Douglas are also relevant to the discussion, as they suggest the social construction of risk and the importance of the cultural and social context in which this practice is carried out. In short, the analysis emphasizes the complexity of the relationship between risk and learning in rolling cart practice and the importance of considering the ecological approach to understand the dynamics of this community of practice.

Keywords: learning, risk, rolling cart, toy, community of practice.
Assim, homens, mulheres, adultos e crianças participam, constituem e são constituídos pela prática, que é polisêmica e situada. As teorias de Giddens e Douglas também são relevantes para a discussão, uma vez que sugerem a construção social do risco e a importância do contexto cultural e social em que a prática do rolimã é realizada. Em suma, a análise enfatiza a complexidade da relação entre risco e aprendizagem na prática do rolimã e a importância de considerar a abordagem ecológica para compreender as dinâmicas dessa comunidade de prática.

**Palavras-chave:** aprendizagem, risco, carrinho de rolimã, brinquedo, comunidade de prática.

**RESUMEN**

Este texto discute la relación entre riesgo y aprendizaje en la práctica del carro rolimã, a partir de una etnografía realizada en la región metropolitana de Belo Horizonte entre 2019 y 2022. La comunidad involucrada en la actividad se caracteriza por disputas e intereses en relación a el carro rolimã. Si bien se considera arriesgada, emergen diferentes narrativas sobre los riesgos de esta práctica en un contexto urbano y contemporáneo. El análisis presentado sostiene que el riesgo es una construcción social, en línea con las teorías del aprendizaje situado de Jean Lave y el enfoque ecológico de Tim Ingold. Según estas teorías, las habilidades necesarias para practicar el rollerball se desarrollan a través de un proceso de educación de la atención, y no a través de representaciones mentales que se convierten en movimientos corporales. Así, hombres, mujeres, adultos y niños participan, constituyen y son constituidos por la práctica, que es polisêmica y situada. Las teorías de Giddens y Douglas también son relevantes para la discusión, ya que sugieren la construcción social del riesgo y la importancia del contexto cultural y social en el que se realiza la práctica del rolimã. En resumen, el análisis enfatiza la complejidad de la relación entre riesgo y aprendizaje en la práctica del rolimã y la importancia de considerar el enfoque ecológico para comprender la dinámica de esta comunidad de práctica.

**Palabras clave:** aprendizaje, riesgo, carro rolimã, juguete, comunidad de práctica.

**1 INTRODUCTION**

This article analyzes data from an ethnography conducted between 2019 and 2022 in the Metropolitan Region of Belo Horizonte (RMBH) to investigate the processes of participation and learning in rolling cart practice. I explore the different narratives surrounding the risks associated with this practice in an urban and contemporary context. Jean Lave’s situated learning theory and Tim Ingold’s ecological approach, along with the contributions of Anthony Giddens and Mary Douglas on the social construction of risk, provide valuable tools to examine the relationship between risk and learning in this practice.

My ethnography focused on roller cart events that continue to occur at varying frequencies across three key locations in the city: Pope's Square, Buritis Meeting Point, and
Mineirão Stadium Terrace. Additionally, sporadic events played a role in the research context, though to a lesser extent. This "movement," a term adopted by participants in roller cart associations and teams, has emerged over the past decade through a series of initiatives and events in the RMBH (metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte). For this study, I define "movement" as the events that allowed me to describe a practice with unique characteristics and vocabulary, including its own terminology: "encontro" (meetings), "mundialito" (festival), "rolê" (playful disputes), "corujão" (night events), and "GP" (Gran Prix).

Ingold (2015) explores the concept of "movement" as the process through which we experience the world. Like pilgrims, we exist in a constant, intricate movement that leaves behind traces, paths, and stories that intersect, connect us, and shape the fabric of a world inherently inhabited (Ingold, 2015). Therefore, in this work, the term "movement" refers to the journeys and shared memories of people who engage in a widespread and multifaceted practice, established in various locations with diverse interpretations and meanings.

As I delved deeper into the ethnography, the initial impression of a cohesive rolling cart movement in RMBH fractured. I initially perceived a group united by a common purpose, but dynamics of relationships revealed conflicts. Controversy, alliances, negotiations, and even boycott attempts emerged as I observed. This complexity arises from the very nature of the practice. Different groups formed, each with distinct objectives and rules. Situated learning theory (Lave, 2015) illuminates this by highlighting the social and cultural context in shaping knowledge and experience. Similarly, the ecological approach (Ingold, 2000) emphasizes rolling cart as a practice embedded in intricate relationships between participants and their environment.

Social constructions of risk further illuminate this practice. Practitioners sometimes associate the risks of roller carting with broader social ideas (Giddens, 1999) like notions of parenthood. However, experience with the practice, not age alone, guides what's considered acceptable or risky for children. This reveals symbolic boundaries specific to the perceived risk category (Douglas, 2013).

2 THE ROLLER CART MOVEMENT

The RMBH boasts a rich history of roller cart racing, sparked by a collaborative group
led by Daniel\(^1\) in 2012. Their project, the "Mundialito de Rolimã do Abacate"\(^2\), ignited an annual tradition, though specific dates varied. This event initially featured a championship focused on both speed and style, held on Rua Magi Salomon in the Salgado Filho neighborhood. Speed races were divided into categories: "mirim" (exclusively for children), "roliminhas" (for cis and trans women), and "sangue nu zoio" (open to anyone seeking high speeds). The style competition judged the creativity and design of carts, costumes, and overall presentation. In the years that followed, organizers implemented pre-competition workshops called "oficinas" (workshops) where instructors guided adults and children in building their own carts.

In 2013, upon discovering the "Mundialito de Rolimã do Abacate," Tarcísio began practicing roller cart on Tuesdays at the Terrace of the Mineirão Stadium, inviting his friends to join. He soon learned about another Sunday roller cart group at Mineirão, primarily consisting of the family of a man named Augusto. Tarcísio and Augusto joined forces to create "Rolimã das Gerais," which hosted weekly Tuesday night rolling cart gatherings at Mineirão. This group became the most consistent and enduring in RMBH. Word-of-mouth promotion and participants' social media networks fueled its growth. The meetings spawned several RMBH teams and two major associations that organize roller cart events, each with distinct goals.

Tarcísio and Augusto took initiative to publicize Mineirão meetings, amateur championships, and traveling events within the RMBH area. They created a Facebook page to spread the word, along with promotional actions. In 2018, they further expanded their online presence by forming a WhatsApp group with over 70 members. While most members primarily follow event information, a core group of administrators and veterans in the "movement" actively communicate through text messages, audio messages, photos, and videos. They don't just organize events – they also reflect on past experiences, engage in friendly competition through narrative disputes about their performances, and share jokes to keep things lighthearted. This core group actively promotes rolling cart through gatherings and playful events that encourage participation from children and newcomers.

In 2017, a dissident group called "Rolimã BH Minas" broke away from "Rolimã das Gerais." This new group took charge of organizing its own events, including the annual "GP's of
Morro do Cavalo Doido” held in Brumadinho (RMBH). They established an independent agenda while continuing to spread the word through social media. Some teams and riders switched allegiance to this splinter group, while others maintained ties to both. The breakaway also sparked the formation of new teams that joined "Rolimã BH Minas," like “Águias do Rolimã”, “Mavericks”, “RZO”, “Loucomotiva”, and “Nine” teams. This influx brought the network's total membership to over a hundred people from various cities and states, expanding beyond the RMBH. This group enforces stricter content guidelines, allowing only discussions directly related to rolling cart, with a focus on organizing training sessions and championships. "Rolimã BH Minas" fosters a more extensive exchange with people from other parts of the country and prioritizes the competitive aspect of the practice, actively promoting championships. Most of their events, characterized as "rolês" and "GPs", take place in secluded locations with long, steep slopes, attracting riders with more experience.

Over the past decade, alliances, breakups, and disputes have characterized the various associations and events related to rolling cart in RMBH. These tensions and ruptures reveal differing interests and approaches to rolling cart practice among the associations. The "Rolimã das Gerais” group prioritizes meetings, playful events without competition, and promotes a more open approach to newcomers for learning rolling cart. In contrast, the "Rolimã BH Minas" group focuses on organizing championships ("GPs") and informal competitions ("rolês"), emphasizing high-performance riding and restricting participation to more experienced riders.

3 LEARNING FROM RISK

It’s fascinating to observe the social and cultural dynamics that permeate rolling cart practice in RMBH. This phenomenon reveals itself as a means of expression, leisure, and sociability for those involved, helping to uncover important aspects of contemporary urban culture, power relations, and the construction of collective identities in RMBH. Below, I discuss some elements that make up the learning process of rolling cart practice.

3.1 PARTICIPATION AND LEARNING

This complex and polysemic context reveals situations where adults or more experienced...
children drive young children on roller carts. Even infants, like one-year-old Bruno, experience countless downhill rides at Buritis neighborhood meetings. Bruno sits on the lap of his father, Eduardo, the organizer of the event and a member of the "Rolimâ das Gerais" group. These experiences provide learning from rolling cart practice even before children have enough autonomy to operate them themselves (Figure 1).

During one of these meetings at Buritis, Eduardo said: “If Bruno see me sitting in the cart, he come running to sit on my lap”. There are several ways to participate and learn in rolling cart practice that do not necessarily involve directly driving the cart. On his father's lap, Bruno doesn't perform the action autonomously, due to his status as an apprentice, however, by demonstrating a calm expression during the descent, he learns about the sensation of speed, associated with the vibrations of the cart and to the sound of rollers on the asphalt, an essential behavior to learn this practice.

![Figure 1 - Bruno riding a roller cart on his sister and father's lap](source: Field data)

We often associate learning situations with schools, universities, online courses, and workshops. However, Lave and Wenger (1991) propose a different perspective through their "situated learning" theory, which emphasizes that learning happens throughout our lives through social relationships and in various situations. It challenges the traditional view that separates theory and practice. Instead of acquiring abstract knowledge to be applied later, situated learning argues that our skills develop through our daily involvement and participation in various social
Lave and Wenger (1991) introduced the concept of "legitimized peripheral participation" (LPP) to describe how apprentices become involved and engaged in social practices, like rolling cart practice. This concept challenges the idea that learning only happens when you take a leading role. Instead, through LPP, children gradually enter rolling cart practice, starting as observers or assistants before becoming full participants themselves. Welcomed into the existing community, children can experiment and learn by observing, imitating, and interacting with those more experienced.

Considering the periphery of the social scene as a legitimate learning context is closely related to the understanding that people with different skill levels participate, get involved and learn in rolling cart practice. Therefore, it is relevant to explore the relationship between perception and body movement in this specific context.

Considering the periphery of the social scene as a legitimate learning environment aligns with the understanding that participants of all skill levels contribute and learn through rolling cart practice. This context, therefore, compels us to explore the relationship between perception and body movement.

During a meeting of the "Rolimã das Gerais" group, five-year-old Benjamin and eleven-year-old Marcelo set up a downhill duel on the Mineirão stadium esplanade. Despite being younger, Benjamin had several months of experience riding a roller cart, while this was only Marcelo's third event. The collision happened near the final stretch. Marcelo, who was slightly ahead, decided to perform a "zerinho"\(^3\) (stopping maneuver) without looking back. This resulted in a collision with Benjamin, who was following closely behind. Shortly after, Benjamin pointed out to Marcelo the importance of checking behind before performing such maneuvers.

It requires knowledge of the track layout, proper braking timing, and maneuver execution. This perception takes time and experience to develop. Reading the environment quickly is crucial: knowing when to approach or maintain distance, and anticipating the actions of others, all contribute to informed decision-making.

Practitioners in rolling cart practice, both experienced and beginners, constantly engage in a process of perceptive action. This perspective emphasizes the link between perception and body movement. As a learner descends a hill in a roller cart, they must actively coordinate their

\(^3\) Native term that designates a maneuver that consists of making a complete or partial spin with the roller cart.
vision to anticipate obstacles, adjust their body posture for balance, and perceive the surrounding environment.

This intimate relationship between perception and body movement is crucial for understanding how children and other beginners learn. They develop the ability to perceive and interact with the elements of rolling cart practice – the cart itself, the asphalt, obstacles, and other participants. This learning process is marked by an "education of attention" (Gibson, 1979, apud Ingold, 2000, p.19). Learners direct their attention to relevant aspects of the environment and adjust their body movements based on these perceptions.

Understanding learning as a social and situated process dismantles the traditional view that splits theory from practice. This approach highlights the crucial role of social, historical, and cultural relationships in shaping individual skills. Recognizing rolling cart practice as a legitimate learning environment allows us to deconstruct narratives that attribute skills to supposed innate "gifts" or "talents." Instead, involvement, engagement, and participation in everyday social practices become central to skill development.

3.2 RISK AS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

Rolling cart practice is inherently tied to the concept of risk. Anthony Giddens explains how broader societal ideas and perceptions of risk influence our everyday behaviors and attitudes. He argues that increased interconnectedness and constant information flow make risk a defining feature of modern societies. Risks today are often global, transcending local and national boundaries, unlike traditional, more localized risks. Furthermore, Giddens (1999) emphasizes that modern individuals constantly assess risks in daily life. This reflexivity stems from the recognition that many decisions have uncertain consequences. As a result, people continuously monitor and evaluate risks, make choices, and take responsibility for the outcomes.

This research revealed interesting connections between contemporary social representations of risk and parental roles in roller cart events. Mothers tended to prioritize safety, expressing more concern during their children's participation. Fathers, on the other hand, often interacted with their children in a more adventurous manner.

At a "Rolimã BH Minas" event on Dos Americanos Street in Belo Horizonte's western Milionários neighborhood, social roles of "father" and "mother" manifested in distinct ways.
Twelve-year-old Ricardo participated in a children's competition, his parents beaming with pride about his past accomplishments. However, their concern for safety was evident due to the lack of a full street closure. Ricardo's father coached him on the track, offering safety advice and suggesting techniques. Meanwhile, his mother kept a watchful eye, rarely taking her gaze off Ricardo even while talking to others. Despite his autonomy in competitions, his mother remained uneasy about cars on the event street. Another mother drew my attention. Her six-year-old son, Joaquim, was there to play and experience rolling carts playfully. As he walked up the street, selecting his starting point, his mother called out, "That's good enough, Joaquim! Don't go higher!" At the bottom, his father awaited him, instructing him on braking and positioning himself to prevent him from going over the curb. Even with the age difference and their approaches (competing vs. playing), similarities emerged in Ricardo and Joaquim's parents' behavior. Mothers prioritized safety, while fathers provided instruction on handling the rolling carts.

This is not about establishing generalizations or reinforcing stereotypes, but the research context helps us understand that the mother's place in practices that involve a prominent risk is associated with constant vigilance and concern, and the father assumes a more incisive and stimulating practice. The behaviors of these families, in different appropriations of the practice, allude to broader social roles, related to the notions of motherhood, fatherhood and risk. Giddens' perspective on risk in the context of reflexive modernity highlights the interconnectedness of societies and the uncertainties and complexities inherent to them (Giddens, 2007). Risk is a central element that individuals must deal with in their daily lives as they navigate an ever-changing social landscape.

For Mary Douglas, it is also necessary to take into account cultural and symbolic factors in shaping people's understanding and response to risk. Douglas (2013) believes that risk is not an inherent property of an object or situation, but is socially constructed. Risks are identified, defined and evaluated through social processes that involve negotiation, interpretation and contestation. This implies that different groups or societies may perceive and evaluate risks differently based on their cultural backgrounds. Douglas (2013) introduced the concept of cultural categories to understand how societies classify and categorize risks and argues that such categories serve as symbolic boundaries that distinguish between what is considered normal, acceptable and safe, and what is seen as deviant, dangerous or risky. These limits define the
Children's participation in seemingly risky activities like rolling carts often challenges preconceived notions about age limitations. Bárbara, Eduardo's daughter (a member of the "Rolimã das Gerais" group who organizes events at Pope's Square and Buritis Meetings), frequently accompanied his father in his events. Social media posts from the family suggested that, beyond that, Bárbara had many opportunities to practice rolling cart in her daily life. Gomes and Faria (2015), studying football in Brazil, found that when a practice becomes part of a child's daily routine, the frequent and varied exposure shapes their skills and makes them adept practitioners. Bárbara, a four-year-old girl, impressed adults with her independence and daring descents during rolling cart events. While some found her young age inappropriate for the freedom and risk involved, within the rolling cart community, her family and friends supported her participation and set clear boundaries considering her exceptional skills.

Douglas (2002) highlights the role of power dynamics in shaping how we perceive risk. She argues that powerful groups with societal approval hold greater sway in defining what's risky or safe. These power imbalances can influence how risk management practices are assessed and how risk policies are formulated.

Among the three most frequent investigation sites, the Terrace of the Mineirão Stadium offered unique insights into the interplay of power and risk. Managed by a private company through a public concession, the terrace grants free public access for leisure activities, but with limitations. The concessionaire, Minas Arena, dictates the hours and rules of operation. Over nearly a decade of hosting rolling cart events, the space developed its own distinct dynamics.

First, consider the descent. No rule dictates a maximum number of people going down together, though space is limited. Groups of 5 to 10 people form daily, often based on existing friendships or family ties. However, anyone can join and ride with strangers. The descent itself can sometimes bring people together. Sharing a downhill ride fosters a sense of empathy between participants.

The climbs are equally significant. Climbers ascend single file along the left side of the track, ensuring they don't obstruct descending groups. While the descent fosters non-verbal communication, the climb is when the experience comes alive verbally. Excited chatter erupts about the descent, with mutual praise, playful jabs, or even completely unrelated topics filling the air (Figure 2). Climbing is a crucial part of the social aspect at Mineirão, after all, the climb
takes considerably longer than the descent.

Figure 2 - Return of the groups to the top of the Mineirão track

Source: Field data

The introduction of railings in November 2020 severely altered this ritual of ascents and descents. Installed alternately along the track to create a zigzag route, the stadium administration aimed to reduce the speed of rollers, skateboards, bicycles, and other activities, presumably to improve safety (Figure 3). However, this supposedly safety-enhancing, arbitrary decision by the company backfired for rolling cart events. The mandatory zigzag caused by the railings increased unpredictability in the path of the carts, hindering the steady pace of the climb and raising the risk of collisions between participants.

In this context, as alluded to by Douglas (2002), the stadium administrators' pre-conceived notion of security overlapped with a long lasting and local construction of risk management conceived by the users of that public space themselves. According to the author, notions of risk are not only based on objective measurements or scientific assessments, but are deeply influenced by cultural values, social structures and symbolic meanings.
3.3 RISK AS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF ROLLING CART

In the research context presented here, it is evident that learning in rolling cart practice is intrinsically linked to structural relationships, such as the way in which the community welcomes or does not welcome its apprentices, and environmental factors, such as the characteristics of the track (whether steep or gentle) or the size of the cart (whether or not it is appropriate for the driver's size). Furthermore, the constitution of the skills necessary to become an excellent practitioner of roller cart is substantially established by assuming and managing the risks inherent to this practice. In all contexts, from play to competition, and at all levels of learning, from apprentice to veteran, risk is, in different proportions, a common element. At the same time as limiting, risk reveals itself as a primordial element of rolling cart and remains present throughout the individual's trajectory with this practice (Coelho, 2022). In this sense, the possibility of totally or significantly suppressing the risk would be an innocuous or even counterproductive task, as it is avoided, managed and, at the same time, desired by practitioners. This attitude in search of a dose of risk is evident in some reports from the research field.
At a "Rolimã das Gerais" group meeting in Mineirão, Henrique explained that his six-year-old son, Benjamin, had lost interest in riding at Pope's Square. According to Henrique, Benjamin "doesn't find it fun anymore." Pope's Square was where Benjamin began rolling cart practice in 2019, but he has since graduated to tracks with steeper slopes and longer distances. The "fun" Benjamin seeks in rolling comes from pushing his skills with his cart, something the Pope's Square track no longer provides. The thrill of the challenge is inseparable from the desire to practice, and a drastic reduction in risk can lead to a loss of interest (Apter, 2007).

Adult and experienced pilots, alongside children, actively seek out new tracks and challenges. Belo Horizonte's steep topography provides numerous public roads with ideal slopes for pushing roller cart speeds to the limit. Established hills are popular, but the discovery of a new suitable location is always met with excitement. The core reason groups and rolling cart teams hunt for new hills is the thrill of tackling fresh sections, curves, slopes, and speeds, all translating to novel risks. A new track demands new learning. This is most evident in the "track reconnaissance lap" tradition before races. This lap lets drivers scout the new track's characteristics and formulate their race strategies. A new track is an invitation to improvise, conquer the unknown, and experience a fresh dose of risk.

Let's consider the interplay between risk and learning in rolling cart practice. As practitioners constantly adjust their relationship with the cart and environment, they encounter progressively greater risks, leading to a corresponding increase in skill. However, this risk-skill relationship isn't linear. Taking calculated risks prompts a reordering of the subject-object-environment triad, typically enhancing the practitioner's abilities. Yet, with highly successful "education of attention" (Ingold, 2001), skill gains may not be accompanied by escalating challenges, potentially leading to a plateau or even a decrease in risk. To maintain interest and engagement, practitioners actively seek ways to deepen their connections: with other participants (e.g., proposing competitions), with the cart itself (e.g., attempting new maneuvers), or with the environment (e.g., exploring new tracks). It's crucial to remember, though, that this risk-skill relationship doesn't always progress linearly. The line between risk and imminent danger is often blurry. When faced with actual danger, with or without serious consequences, the subject-object-

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4 Henrique, Juliana and Benjamin constitute a family nucleus that is not linked to any rolling cart association, but were introduced into this context through the meetings at Pope’s Square, then at the Buritis neighborhood meetings and, finally, at Mineirão Stadium. Since then, the stadium terrace has become Benjamin and his family's favorite place to practice rolling cart. During fieldwork, the boy was monitored from four to six years old.
environment relationship can regress or even break entirely.

Learning to roll cart requires interest, desire, and a willingness to take risks, even with setbacks. This process can be gradual or more abrupt, but it's through taking calculated risks that practitioners readjust to the inherent dangers of the activity and learn (Coelho, 2022).

4 CONCLUSION

This study explores the connection between risk and learning in rolling cart practice. It focuses on roller cart events established within the last decade in RMBH. Here, we discover a vibrant "movement" characterized by disputes, diverse interests, and multiple interpretations that both constrain and define a community of practice. This community is built by men, women, adults, and children – apprentices and veterans alike – who actively participate in, shape, and are shaped by a multifaceted, dynamic, and inherently situated practice.

Rolling cart mastery is not achieved through accumulating mental plans translated into physical movements. Instead, it's a process of perceptual agency, honed through "education of attention." This learning is fundamentally shaped by the constant process of recognizing, managing, and evaluating risks. While these risks are influenced by broader, global notions, their most immediate impact is felt through local and symbolic interpretations by those who are drawn to, participate in, learn from, and embrace the risks inherent in rolling cart practice.
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