

## Investigating The Role of Traditional Children's Games in Teaching Ten Universal Values in Turkey

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### Abstract

*Statement of the Problem:* Children are constantly stimulated in different developmental areas through playing games with other children or adults. Play can provide a context wherein children achieve deep learning through the integration of intellectual, physical, moral, and spiritual values and commit themselves to learning, developing, and growing. While playing games, children learn a wide range of social skills. In addition to being contexts in which most learning related to children's lives occurs, games also provide children with contexts to learn about their own cultures and cultural values. Whereas values may show cultural differences, they can also be shared universally. Examining the role of children's games played in Turkey is significant in teaching universal values (achievement, benevolence, conformity, hedonism, power, security, self-direction, stimulation, tradition, and universalism).

*Purpose of the Study:* This study was designed to determine the roles of traditional children's games played in Turkey in teaching ten universal values.

*Method:* This study was designed as a qualitative study based on content analysis using a deductive analysis method. Pre-defined categories were identified, and these categories were identified in the texts describing the games. The present study's evaluation includes 421 games found among the traditional games played in Turkey and analysed in previous scientific studies.

*Findings:* The analysis revealed that all games included the value of Hedonism. Almost all games emphasized achievement as well in the form of achieving pre-defined competitive tasks masterly before rival(s) could

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achieve them. In third place, the value of power was emphasized in the games, and this value always occurred along with achievement. According to the analysis, power was related to the winner's earning the right to seize the belongings of others or impose a sanction to the loser(s) after success in the game. The remaining seven values (benevolence, conformity, security, self-direction, stimulation, tradition and universalism) were almost never emphasized in the games.

*Conclusion and Recommendations:* Traditional children's games at present seem to be a missed opportunity in terms of values education. Games that encourage children to acquire more positive values should be designed.

*Keywords:* Turkey, tradition, children's games, universal values, values education, content analysis

## Introduction

Playing games is an important characteristic of children's behaviour (Fromberg & Bergen, 2006; Mayall, 2002) and is a natural learning tool for them (Anning & Edwards, 2006). Play can provide a context wherein children achieve deep learning through the integration of intellectual, physical, moral, and spiritual values (Kolb, 1984) and can give them the opportunity to commit themselves to learning, development, and growth (Kolb & Kolb, 2010). The entertaining interactions that children have with other children or adults while playing games constantly stimulate them in different developmental areas. For example, games have important contributions to children's cognitive development (Piaget, 1962; Vygotsky, 1966, 1997) and psychosocial development (Elkind, 2007; Erikson, 1950). As Vygotsky (1978, p.102) notes, "a child in play acts 'as though he were a head taller than himself' ... play contains all developmental tendencies in a condensed form and is itself a major source of development". Because playing games is a key defining feature and an expression of spirit in childhood (Fromberg & Bergen, 2006; Mayall, 2002), a form of play exists for virtually every aspect of children's development (Moyles, 1989). Playing games is crucial to children's development and quality of life (Foley, 2008).

According to Singer, Golinkoff, and Hirsh-Pasek (2006), playing is learning. Some of the primary characteristics of playing games are entertainment and having a good time (Smith & Pellegrini, 2013). Therefore, games are a very important tool to enable learning in an 'interesting' or novel way. While playing games, children learn a wide range of social skills such as sharing, understanding other perspectives, and taking turns (DeVries, 2006). In addition to being contexts in which most of children's life-related learning can occur, games also provide children with contexts to learn about their own cultures. In other words, games can be effective and important tools for children's cultural learning. This is because a large proportion of people's interactions with one another are affected by the cultural contexts in which they live (Neuliep, 2012). This is related to individuals' thinking, feeling, behaving, and forming their own realities through their own cultures (Shweder, 1991). Culture provides individuals with information about their identity and what is meaningful, whereas it also presents them with the necessary symbols to interact socially and

manage their environment. In essence, people use culture to make sense of the world (Kim & Park, 2006). That is why people sharing the same culture tend to have more similar attitudes, values, thoughts, and behaviours compared to those with different cultures.

The culture that is shared at the moment indispensably conveys the past and guides the future. Cultural past can be learned through cultural values (Neuliep, 2012). This is because values form the social expectations and rules that enable us to perform behaviours appropriate to the culture in which we live (Neuliep, 2012), and they are the guide that helps us make sense of life (Rokeach, 1973; Westwood & Posner, 1997). Whereas values show cultural differences (Cheng, 1994; Cheng & Schwitzer, 1996; Haque, 2003; Hofstede, 1980; Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961; Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987, 1990; Triandis, 1982, 1995; Whitley & England, 1977), they can also be universally accepted (Schwartz, 1992). Schwartz (1992) mentions ten values that are universally shared: achievement, benevolence, conformity, hedonism, power, security, self-direction, stimulation, tradition, and universalism.

As the early years of childhood are when individuals gain most of the knowledge related to life, these are the years during which they begin to learn about values. Interactions with children help them to form views about what is expected from them culturally (Gutches & Indeck, 2009; Mullen & Yi, 1995; Wang, 2007; Wang & Fivush, 2005). In this way, a variety of the values built in childhood years in a culture are stored in autobiographical memories (Wang, 2008).

While they learn values through games, children have different play experiences depending on their cultural and social contexts. For example, girls' and boys' games may vary (Pellegrini, 2005). This is because games function as a mediator in learning cultural values, as well as help with learning the cultural standards and behavioural practices and expectations of both sexes (Maccoby, 1998). Therefore, games that are suitable for both sexes in the same culture can be formed, whereas there can be special games for each sex with respect to highlighting the differentiation based on gender culturally.

In childhood years, particularly in the process of playing games, children get ready to do any kind of learning. This is because children who activate their learning channels develop their crucial adaptation skills such as creative thinking, problem solving, coping, and social behaviours, which are important for the adaptation of cognitive, affective, and interpersonal processes in games (Russ, 2004). Reviewing studies on teaching games to children, Dansky (1999) found that teaching games to children results in children's playing games more and in enhanced skills and imagination regarding role playing. Therefore, games that are well-designed and played during childhood years can be turned into very important tools for teaching values that are crucial elements of cultural interaction. Whereas the messages towards learning values within games are firstly actualized in children's behaviours through role playing as part of games, these messages then turn into permanent feelings, thoughts, and behaviours that reflect common cultural interactions.

To provide a basis for studies with this purpose, the extent to which traditional Turkish children's games are used in teaching values should be determined. With

this perspective, examining the role of children's games played in Turkey in teaching universal values (achievement, benevolence, conformity, hedonism, power, security, self-direction, stimulation, tradition and universalism) is of great importance. Therefore, this study aims to determine the role of traditional children's games played in Turkey in teaching ten universal values. In addition, it examines how these games involve the ten universal values in terms of gender.

### Method

This study was designed as a qualitative study based on content analysis using the deductive analysis method. Pre-defined categories were identified and these categories were searched in the texts describing the games. In the study, 421 games that are traditionally played in Turkey and included in scientific studies (Basal, 2007, 2010; Ercelik, Doganoglu, Koc, Koklusoy, Cetin, Sayin et al., 2011; Oguz & Ersoy, 2007; Ozbakir, 2009; Yucel & Gundogdu, 2012) were evaluated. These games were qualitatively analysed in terms of their role and value in providing children with education on the ten universal values.

These analyses tried to identify which of Schwartz's (1992) ten universal values (achievement, benevolence, conformity, hedonism, power, security, self-direction, stimulation, tradition and universalism) were emphasized in each game. These ten values were categorised as ten analysis categories. Related concepts were used in the categorisation; all were mentioned in Schwartz's study. These values and their related concepts are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

#### *Ten Universal Values, and the Concepts Related to the Values*

<i>Type of Value</i>	<i>Concepts Related to Values</i>
Achievement	Successful, capable, ambitious, influential, intelligent, self-respect
Benevolence	Helpful, honest, forgiving, loyal, responsible, true friendship, a spiritual life, mature love, meaning in life
Conformity	Politeness, honouring parents and elders, obedient, self-discipline
Hedonism	Pleasure, enjoying life, self-indulgent
Power	Social power, authority, wealth, preserving my public image, social recognition
Security	Clean, national security, social order, family security, reciprocation of favours, healthy, sense of belonging
Self-Direction	Creativity, curious, freedom, choosing own goals, independent, private life
Stimulation	Daring, a varied life, an exciting life
Tradition	Devout, accepting portion in life, humble, moderate, respect for tradition
Universalism	Protecting the environment, a World of beauty, unity with nature, broad-minded, social justice, wisdom, equality, a World at peace, inner harmony

One of the criteria used in grouping the games into the analysis categories was whether each game led to learning or awareness related to a value due to or as a result of its design. Another criteria was the existence of concepts that the players developed about the game and that carry an emphasis on a value (winner vs. loser, rival team, punishment, entertainment, being helpful, favour, visiting neighbours). Below are examples of the meanings of a value sought in the games and using the criteria in putting them into categories:

- While looking for emphasis on *achievement*, it was considered whether there was a winner appointed in the game based on the state of meeting a requirement, such as reading a goal as a game rule or racing to use abilities effectively. For example, *Cul Game* carries the *achievement* value since it divides children into rival groups has them race to throw stones to hit a stone in the centre; it also includes the statement "*The group that hits the stone in the centre more wins the game*" in the text of the game. Similarly, *Cubuk Game* also carries the *achievement* value because it involves competition in the skill of taking one of the sticks that are put on top of each other without moving the other sticks; it includes the statement "*The person who moves the sticks first is out, and the turn is the rival player's. The game continues in this way and the person who takes the highest number of sticks wins the game*" in the text of the game.
- While looking for the emphasis of the value *benevolence*, the analysis considered whether the game encouraged children to give favours and help to others, perform behaviours as a necessity of their social roles and responsibilities for the good of others, or experience their relationships with other people by adding a moral dimension. For example, due to the design in *Yagmur Gelini Game*, children gather around to pray to Allah for rain on a cloudy day. They choose someone among them as the bride of the rain, dress her like a bride and form a bridal procession around the bride. They knock on the door of every house in the neighbourhood with their bride by carrying a stoup, a plate, and plastic bags, and ask for ingredients such as bulgur, tomato sauce, and oil for the common meal to be cooked. People whose doors are knocked on do not turn them down and give them the necessary ingredients for the meal. After all the ingredients are collected, the mother of one of the playing children is asked to cook bulgur pilaf (cracked wheat cooked with tomatoes) with these ingredients for all the children to eat. The mother cooks the pilaf and the children pray to Allah for rain by eating this pilaf. This game carries the value of *benevolence* since the design of this game requires children to establish a spiritual relationship with each other, the individuals whose doors are knocked on perform behaviours of favour and helpfulness towards the children by giving them the ingredients of a meal that they will not eat, and the mother to cook the pilaf and contribute to the game although she will not eat it herself. Another example of a game that carries benevolence is the *Evcilik* game, which includes the statements "All players sit around and some of them feed their baby dolls while some brush the hair of their babies... When they come home, the elder sister brushes her sister's hair, and the rag doll is put to sleep." This is

because the game teaches children acting as elder sisters and mothers the social roles such as caring for younger siblings.

- While looking for the emphasis of the value *conformity*, the analysis considered whether the game encouraged children to behave kindly to others, obey their elders or perform behaviours to honour them, and develop self-discipline. For example, in *Evcilik Game*, some children act as mothers, whereas others act as their children. The children listen to what their mothers say and follow their instructions, and the mothers put them to sleep, brush their hair, and feed them. Since children are encouraged to obey their mothers, this game carries the value of *conformity*. At the same time, there is an exchange of roles in the game, as is understood from the statement "After the game, players move on to another game in which the roles change. *The girl acting as the mother in the previous game becomes the other younger daughter of the house*". In other words, children are asked to perform the roles of both a child and a mother in the game. Since this design encourages children to use their self-regulatory skills, the game carries the value of *conformity*.
- While looking for emphasis on *hedonism*, the analysis considered whether a game entertained children or could meet children's need to have fun. Because all games serve to entertain (Smith and Pellegrini, 2013), they all actually have the value of *hedonism*. However, this is emphasized in a stronger way in some games. For example, the statement in *Kulaktan Kulaga Game* "*Weird and funny utterances that come out due to misunderstandings while whispering is the main element that makes the game attractive. The more people the game is played with, the more mistakes will be made and more entertaining the game will be*" shows that this game in particular carries the value of *hedonism*.
- While looking for the emphasis of the value *power*, the analysis considered whether a game encouraged children to be powerful by giving them the right to impose sanctions on a child or a group of children, by giving them the power to direct them as they desire, or by giving them the right to be more wealthy by seizing others' belongings in the game (e.g. toys) within the game rules. For example, the text of *Tokmak Game* states "*At the end of the game, the winning player can give various punishments to the losing player*", which shows that this game carries the value of *power*. Similarly, the text of the *Egir (Koka) Game* says, "*At the end of the game, the losing player is given one of the two types of punishments: one is getting food from the grocery store or a toy for the winner, and the other is the loser's carrying the winner on his back to a point and then carrying him back to the starting point*", which refers to *power* since it gives the winner power (physical or economic) over the loser.
- While looking for emphasis on the value *security*, the analysis considered if children were encouraged to behave safely in general or if their awareness was raised to notice the importance of belonging to a group. For example, in *Kurt ve Coban Game*, one of the children acts as the wolf and the other as the shepherd, and the rest of the children act as sheep in the shepherd's flock. The goal of the wolf is to take from the shepherd's flock any sheep that leaves the flock or is not well connected to the flock. On the other hand, the goal of the shepherd is to keep his flock away from the wolf, making them stick together to be safe. To protect themselves, the sheep need to be close to

the shepherd and the other sheep in the flock and not leave them. This game's design shows children that belonging to a group and acting as a group helps protect against individuals with bad intentions, and thus, the game carries the value of *security*.

- While looking for emphasis on the value *self-direction*, the analysis considered whether the game rules encouraged children to develop creative ideas or perform independent and free behaviours while making decisions, or whether they were enabled to develop an understanding of a personal space and personal life. For example, due to the design of the *Pasa Game*, children produce independent ideas on building bridges resistant to floods using brushwood. Each child tests the usefulness of his/her idea in the game. For this purpose, children build their own bridges and find out how durable their bridges are against artificially created floods. The child building the most durable bridge is chosen as *Pasa*. Because the design of this game encourages children to think creatively, produce solutions to a problem, and test the usefulness of their ideas, it carries the value of *self-direction*.
- While looking for emphasis on *stimulation*, the analysis considered whether, as a game rule, children are praised for performing brave and assertive behaviours, or whether the desire for a more exciting life is stimulated. For example, in *Tornet Game*, players race as they swing downhill with their wooden cars and use only their hands as breaks. Because the game encourages children to feel excited by doing something dangerous, it carries the value of *stimulation*. Similarly, the design of *Pat Pat Game* includes a challenging activity that is dangerous and triggers the sense of excitement. In the game, the seeds of a plant called *zelzelah* are shot to the opponent with a weapon called *pata* made using a balloon and plastic bottle. The seeds of *zelzelah* shot with *pata* can target opponents up to 15-20 metres away, and can leave temporary or permanent damage. Especially when shot towards the eyes, these seeds have the capability to make the sufferer blind. For this reason, players have to be careful to not to hit their opponents' eyes. With this design, the game carries the value of *stimulation* since it encourages children to perform behaviours that evoke a sense of danger.
- While looking for emphasis on the value *tradition*, the analysis considered whether the game encouraged children to live the traditional rituals unique to cultures, or whether their awareness of the rules valid in human relationships in their own cultures was raised. For example, the design of *Hidirellez Comlegi Game* includes a representation of the activities done on a special day called *Hidirellez* (the day on which the arrival of spring is celebrated) in the Turkish culture. This game is played as though it starts one day before *Hidirellez* and continues on the *Hidirellez* day. Since it gives children consciousness and awareness about this common tradition, it carries the value of *tradition*. Similarly, in *El Sik Selam Ver Kos Game*, children have to shake hands with their friends and say 'Good morning!' to be able to continue the game. In the text of the game, it says, "The player who forgets to greet in encounters is dismissed." Since both the teaching of greeting in the design of the game and the dismissal of the player who forgets to greet other players lead to the awareness of greeting, which is an

important tradition in Turkish society, the game carries the value of *tradition*.

- While looking for emphasis on *universalism*, the analysis considered whether the game enhanced children's awareness of protecting the environment, human rights, social justice, and being reconciled with themselves and the world. Because a sample game having this value could not be encountered, no further explanations are provided.

When the games were put into categories considering the criteria presented above, some of the games were found to have two, three, or four different values, whereas sometimes a game had only one value. For example, *Kaldır Beni Hoppacik Game* is a two-person game. Two friends stand back to back. One of them tries to raise the other by saying "What is it on the floor? The floor is full of beads, What is it on the ceiling? The ceiling is full of beads, Help me get up hoppacik!" The game continues in turns. Because this game does not feature any learning or awareness related to winning, losing, using powers against another person or any of the other values, it is understood that this game only serves as entertainment. Therefore, it was only associated with the value of *hedonism*. On the other hand, *Evcilik Game*, for example, was related to the values of both *benevolence* and *conformity*. Since the design of this game requires players to visit neighbours and serve tea, coffee, and food to visitors, it creates consciousness and awareness on neighbouring relationships as an important tradition of the Turkish society. This game also carries the value of *tradition*. In addition, because all games are intended to entertain, this game is also *hedonistic*.

If the same game was included in two or more sources, that game was evaluated only once. In some cases, the same name (e.g. *Celik Comak*) referred to many games in different sources. In such cases, the games that were very similar to each other were evaluated only once. However, in the cases where the game names were the same, but there were differences such as ways of playing, rules, and number of players, each of these games was evaluated separately.

To ensure transferability in this study, thick description was used with respect to the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). For this aim, the researchers explained in detail which values of the games were analysed, which sub-concepts a value expressing each analysis category included, the reason for choosing these sub-concepts, how the games were chosen for evaluation, and how the values were sought in the games. In addition to these descriptions, sample game analyses were presented with regard to the process of categorisation.

In order to achieve dependability in the study, the researcher presented the coding to other researchers to check whether they agreed that each coding included the value concerned (Creswell, 2005). The external audit method was used to determine whether the coding was reliable. At every stage of the research, an outside researcher inspected the study. At the same time, two researchers coded the same texts to establish intercoder agreement. The researchers discussed any differences in the codes and reached an agreement.

## Findings

Within the scope of the study, 421 games were evaluated, all of which were included in the sources examined. While these games were evaluated in terms of their emphasis on values, the analysis also considered gender discrimination in the games to gain more detailed information. The findings related to the ten values emphasized in the 421 games and the distribution of these emphases based on gender are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.**

*Distribution 421 Traditional Games Playing in Turkey Based on Values and Gender*

Values	Girl	Boy	Girl and Boy	Total
Achievement	7	103	288	398
Benevolence	1	-----	1	2
Conformity	1	-----	1	2
Hedonism	13	103	305	421
Power	-----	59	76	135
Security	-----	-----	3	3
Self-Direction	-----	-----	1	1
Stimulation	-----	-----	2	2
Tradition	3	-----	2	5
Universalism	-----	-----	-----	-----

Of the 421 games evaluated in the study, 305 were played by both girls and boys, whereas 103 games were played by only boys and 13 games were played by only girls. The analysis found that all the games serve to entertain the children. For this reason, all the games examined in this study were found to have the value of hedonism. Examples of these games include *Zugore Game (Trabzon/Vakfikebir Yildiz Village)* (Basal, 2010, p. 52-53), *Kulaktan Kulaga Game (Amasya/Merzifon)* (Basal, 2010, p. 15) and *Kaldır Beni Hoppacik Game (Sakarya/Pamukova)* (Basal, 2010, p. 85-86).

However, values other than hedonism were also emphasised in some games. One of the most significant findings revealed in this study was that the games mostly taught values of achievement. It was found that in 398 out of 421 games, the value of achievement came to the forefront. In such games, there were defined goals to be achieved, and the aim of the game was to achieve these goals and be the winner of the game. In these games, it was important to apply skills effectively, performing better than rival players and defeating rivals at the end of the game. Such games were played to be successful. *Cul Game (Trabzon/Vakfikebir Yildiz Village)* (Basal, 2010, p. 52) and *Cubuk Game* (Yucel & Gundogdu, 2012, pp. 28-29) are examples of these games.

According to the findings revealed from the analyses, Turkish traditional games' third most frequent value was power. It was found that in 135 out of 421 games, the value of power was emphasised. However, in all of these 135 games, the values of power occurred along with the value of achievement, and as a general rule, after a condition to be achieved was met, rights such as seizing others' belongings, ordering others, and punishing others were earned. It was also found that 59 of the 135 games

in which the value of power was emphasised were unique to boys, and 76 of them were played by both boys and girls. The winner in the games in which the value of power was emphasised earned the right to rule over the losers and could give them punishments that he/she liked, or that were pre-defined. In these games, the winner could also seize the toys or pre-defined belongings of the losers. In this way, the winner either earned the right to rule over others or left the game more powerful in terms of their assets. *Tokmak Game* (Yucel & Gundogdu, 2012, s. 41), *Cemberbaz Game* (Samsun/ Sinop) (Oguz & Ersoy, 2007, s. 37), and *Egir (Koka) Game* (Isparta/Uluborlu) (Ozbakir, 2009, p. 489) were examples of games in which achievement and power were emphasised.

This study determined that the 421 traditional games did not play an important role in teaching the remaining seven values (benevolence, conformity, security, self-direction, stimulation, tradition and universalism), but only the values of hedonism, achievement, and power. This is due to the fact that the remaining seven values were emphasised in almost none of the games. Whereas one of the three games that emphasised tradition was played only by girls, the remaining two were played by both boys and girls. While one of the two games that emphasised benevolence was played only by girls, the other game was played by both boys and girls. Similarly, where one of the two games that emphasised conformity was played only by girls, the other game was played by both boys and girls. Two of the five games in which the value of tradition was featured also emphasised both kindness and conformity. There were no winners in the games featuring these values. The aim was not to defeat rivals because there were no rivals. These games were based on cooperation, social roles, helping each other, acting for interests of the society, and historical heritage. *Hidiirellez Comlegi Game* (Bursa/Mudanya) (Basal, 2010, p. 72-73) and *El Sik Selam Ver Kos Game* (Ercelik et al., 2011, p. 12) are examples of the games that featured tradition. *Yagmur Gelini Game* (Kayseri/Mimar Sinan district) (Oguz & Ersoy, 2007, p. 99-100) and *Evcilik Game* (Eskisehir/Mihalicçik) (Oguz & Ersoy, 2007, p. 30) emphasised tradition, benevolence and conformity together.

In this study, only one game was found to emphasise the value of self-direction with the value of achievement by stimulating children's creative ideas. This was the *Pasa Game* (Trabzon/Koprubasi) (Basal, 2010, p. 53). The analyses revealed that the value of stimulation was emphasised only in two of the 421 games. One of these two games was *Tornet Game*, which was played with wooden toy cars (Ercelik et al., 2011, p. 22). The other game featuring stimulation was *Pat Pat Game* (Hatay/Antakya-Narlica village) (Oguz & Ersoy, 2007, p. 140-141). Only three of the 431 games emphasised security. *Kız Kacirma Game* (Hatay/İskenderun) (Oguz & Ersoy, 2007, p. 97-98) and *Kurt ve Coban Game* (Erzincan) (Basal, 2007, p. 259) were examples of these games.

## Conclusion and Suggestions

This study aimed to determine the role of 421 children's games traditionally played in Turkey on the education of ten universal values. The primary finding revealed in the analysis was that all games have the value of *hedonism*. All games were played to evoke pleasure and had the characteristic of spending time in an enjoyable way. In a way, children play games to make life more fun. In this way, they

may understand the importance of experiencing life with pleasure. Entertainment is in the nature of playing games. Likewise, Tugrul, Erturk, Ozen, Altinkaynak, and Gunes (2014) found that games were perceived as tools of entertainment rather than sources of learning.

Another finding that was notable was that the games tended to feature the value of achievement through characteristics such as a high level of competition, winning over others, and outperforming other players. Almost all the games had a winner (a player/players who succeeded) and a loser (a player/players who failed). The games were played to win, in a sense. When evaluated within the psychology literature, this emphasis on achievement in this way showed that this value is based on the proof of competence. In the literature, achievement motivation can work toward both performance goals and mastery goals. Performance goals include a desire to achieve that focus on the proof of competency as also seen in the games. Mastery goals include the desire of developing both competency and mastery (Cury, Elliot, Da Fonseca & Moller, 2006; Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). As performance goals lead individuals to maladaptive behavioural outcomes and coping methods, mastery goals lead them to adaptive behavioural outcomes (Cury, Elliot, Da Fonseca & Moller, 2006; Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). When evaluated from this aspect, it can be argued that traditional games' emphasis on achievement encourages children in a way that could yield negative results rather than positive results in their lives. In daily life, scenes in which children cry at the end of the game, refuse defeat, whine, and leave the game early by getting mad at their friends are frequently encountered. These impressions support the interpretation that positive, functional achievement cannot be encouraged with traditional games. In addition, the games being based on competition weakened children's consciousness of cooperation and caused them to be more competitive.

Another notable finding was that the third most emphasised value in the games was power. However, in these games, power was obtained only after achievement. The successful player(s) earned power through imposed sanctions, sometimes pre-defined or sometimes set arbitrarily after the game, over the player(s) who did not have power since they failed. These sanctions may include the winner's seizing the loser's belongings in the game, making the loser do humiliating things such as making himself be carried by the loser or making the loser imitate an animal, asking the loser to buy something to eat, and sometimes even applying physical violence like beating (Basal, 2007, 2010; Ercelik et al., 2011; Oguz & Ersoy, 2007; Ozbakir, 2009; Yucel & Gundogdu, 2012). In other words, power was perceived as the powerful one bullying the weak one in these games. The games' emphasis on achievement and power strengthens the value of competition rather than cooperation and helping each other, values that are required by the religion commonly practised in Turkey. In addition, the perception of power as the powerful one bullying the weak one in the games is contradictory to the doctrine of values in Turkey's cultural background dictating that the wealthy should help the poor and the powerful the weak.

In the 421 games examined in the study, the seven remaining values (benevolence, conformity, security, self-direction, stimulation, tradition and universalism) almost never occurred. As they are, the games seem to be a missed opportunity in terms of values education. When Turkey's cultural structure is

examined, the traditional structure includes characteristics that can be accepted as mostly relational, but today's structure is of both relational and individual characteristics (Kagiticibasi, 1998). This indicates that the seven values listed above and almost completely ignored in the design of the games are actually a large part of Turkey's culture. Values such as stimulation or self-direction, which describe human training characteristics and are dominant in individualistic cultures, might be emphasised more weakly in Turkish society compared to the other five values (*benevolence, conformity, security, tradition, universalism*). However, the analysis showed that in the traditional children's games, the values of *benevolence, conformity, security, tradition, and universalism* were neglected, even though they are an important part of past and present Turkish culture.

Considering that games are the contexts in which children are more open to learning, the value of security can be taught to children with well-designed games. In this way, their awareness can be raised on vital risks, ways of protection, and their importance while they are having fun in a natural learning environment. Games can be designed that enable children to become self-directed individuals by developing feelings of privacy, comprehending the importance of acting independently and freely, and developing decision-making and creative thinking skills. With properly designed games, children can comprehend the vital importance of being open to innovation and being assertive. Games can be designed in such a way that children are guided to being more helpful and generous rather than to competition. Consciousness about the positive social outcomes of generosity and sharing can be presented to children through games in which they will experience the pleasure of sharing. A wisely designed game can teach children the value of kindness, obeying sensible requests, and self-discipline by leaving extremist behaviours and help train adaptable individuals. Culture is conveyed from one generation to another. Games including cultural practices can be turned into effective tools through which children learn about their own culture and cultural traditions while playing. Finally, children can be encouraged to have behaviours, feelings, and ideas that are inclusive to humanity, its environment, and nature, and feature understandings of equality and justice.

Designing games to be tools of learning would not reduce their hedonistic value. Since games provide children with opportunity for intense mobility, games significantly contribute to physical and psychomotor developments. However, games can also be implemented as effective and functional learning tools in children's cognitive, affective, social, sexual, moral, and behavioural developments. While playing well-designed games, children will be more informed about values and develop more moral and richer personalities.

The findings of this study show that games should be effectively used in teaching values. Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that experts working with children should design new games featuring other values. As the next step in this research, further studies could identify the differences that games designed for this purpose have on children's feelings, thoughts, and behaviours.

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## Türkiye'deki Geleneksel Çocuk Oyunlarının Değer Eğitimindeki Rolünün İncelenmesi

### Atıf:

- Aypay, A. (2016). Investigating the role of traditional children's games in teaching ten universal values in Turkey. *Eurasian Journal of Educational Research, 62*, 283-300, <http://dx.doi.org/10.14689/ejer.2016.62.14>

### Özet

*Problem Durumu:* Oyun oynarken çocuklar diğer çocuklarla ya da yetişkinlerle kurdukları eğlenceli etkileşimlerle farklı gelişim alanlarında sürekli olarak uyarılmaktadırlar. Bu nedenle oyunlar çocukların en hızlı, en kalıcı ve en etkili öğrenme bağlarıdır. Bu değeri açısından oyunlar çocuklara başka yollarla kazandırmakta zorlanacağımız ya da çok zaman alacak öğrenmeleri hızlı bir biçimde içselleştirerek kazandırmamızda en büyük yardımcımızdır. Oyunlar çocuklar için kültürel öğrenmelerin de etkili ve önemli araçları olabilir. Kültürü öğrenmek, aynı zamanda kültürel değerleri öğrenmek demektir. Yaşamı anlamlandırmamızda yol gösterici ve görece kararlı birer rehber olan değerler içinde bulunduğumuz kültürde uygun davranışlar sergileyebilmemiz için gerekli bir dizi beklenti ve kuralın oluşmasına öncülük eder. Değerler kültürel farklılıklar gösterebilmekle birlikte; evrensel olarak paylaşılabilir de. Başarı, cömertlik/iylıkseverlik, uyma/uyumluluk, hazcılık, güç, güvenlik, kendini yönetme, uyarılma, gelenek ve evrensellik değerlerinin evrensel olarak paylaşılan değerler olduğu ileri sürülmektedir. Değerlere ilişkin öğrenmeler erken çocukluk yıllarından itibaren başlamaktadır. Çocukluk yıllarında çocuklarla gerçekleştirilen paylaşımların çocuklarda kültürel olarak kendilerinden beklenen varoluş biçimleri hakkında bazı görüşler oluşturduğu bilinmektedir. Çocukluk yıllarında özellikle de oyun oynama süreçlerinde çocuklar her türlü öğrenmeye hazır hale gelirler. Çünkü oyun ile çocuk tüm öğrenme kanallarını açık konuma getirir. Bu nedenle, çocukluk yıllarında oynanan ve iyi kurgulanmış oyunlar özellikle de kültürel paylaşımın en önemli öğelerinden biri olan değerlerin öğrenilmesinde çok önemli bir araca dönüşebilir. Oyunlar içinde değerleri öğrenmeye yönelik mesajlar çocuklar tarafından önce oyunun bir gereği olarak rol yaparak davranışlara dökülürken, zamanla bu mesajlar çocuğun yaşamı boyunca

koruyacağı ortak kültürel paylaşımı yansıtan kalıcı duygu, düşünce ve davranışlara dönüşebilir. Bu amaçla yapılabilecek çalışmalara bir zemin hazırlaması açısından öncelikle, geleneksel olarak oynanan mevcut oyunların değerlerin öğretilmesinde ne kadar işe koşulduğunun belirlenmesi gerekir. Bu nedenle Türkiye’de oynanan geleneksel çocuk oyunlarının evrensel değerleri (Başarı, cömertlik/iyilikseverlik, uyma/uyumluluk, hazcılık, güç, güvenlik, kendini yönetme, uyarılma, gelenek ve evrensellik) kazandırmadaki rolünün araştırılması önemli görülmektedir.

*Araştırmanın Amacı:* Bu çalışmada Türkiye’de oynandığı belirlenmiş geleneksel çocuk oyunlarının evrensel on değeri (Başarı, cömertlik/iyilikseverlik, uyma/uyumluluk, hazcılık, güç, güvenlik, kendini yönetme, uyarılma, gelenek ve evrensellik) kazandırmadaki rolünün belirlenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

*Araştırmanın Yöntemi:* Bu çalışma tündengelim analiz yönteminin kullanıldığı içerik analizine dayalı nitel bir çalışma olarak kurgulanmıştır. Önceden hazırlanmış kategoriler tespit edilmiş ve bu kategoriler oyunları anlatan metinlerin içinde aranmıştır. Araştırmada Türkiye’de oynandığı belirlenmiş ve bilimsel çalışmalarda yer almış geleneksel oyunlardan ulaşılabilen 421 oyun değerlendirmeye alınmıştır. Bu oyunlar çocuklara değer eğitimi kazandırmadaki rolü ve değeri açısından nitel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Bu analizlerde her bir oyunda evrensel on değerden (Başarı, Cömertlik/İyilikseverlik, Uyma/Uyumluluk, Hazcılık, Güç, Güvenlik, Kendini Yönetme, Uyarılma, Gelenek ve Evrensellik) hangilerinin vurgulandığı belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Analizlerde on değer on analiz kategorisi olarak kabul edilmiştir. Ayrıca her değerle ilişkili kavramlar belirlenmiş ve değerlere yerleştirme işleminde bu kavramlardan yararlanılmıştır. Buna göre oyunlarda her bir değer aşağıda belirtilen kavramlarla ilgili vurgulara göre ilgili kategorilere yerleştirilmiştir: Oyunlarda *Başarı* değeri, başarı, kabiliyet, başarmak için hırs, etkililik, zekâ, özsaygı vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Cömertlik/İyilikseverlik* değeri, yardımseverlik, dürüstlük, bağışlayıcılık, sadakat/vefa, sorumluluk, gerçek arkadaşlık, manevi yaşam, kâmil sevgi, yaşamda anlam vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Uyma/Uyumluluk* değeri, nezaket, ebeveynleri ve yaşlıları onurlandırma, itaat, öz disiplin vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Hazcılık* değeri, haz, yaşamın tadını çıkarma, kendi isteklerine düşkünlük vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Güç* değeri, sosyal güç, otorite/uzmanlık, zenginlik, kendi toplumsal imajını koruma, toplumsal onay vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Güvenlik* değeri, temizlik, ulusal güvenlik, toplumsal düzen, aile güvenliği, yalvarışlara karşılık verme, sağlamlık, aidiyet hissi vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Kendini Yönetme* değeri, yaratıcılık, merak, özgürlük, kendi amaçlarını seçme, bağımsızlık, özel hayat vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Uyarılma* değeri, cesaret/atılganlık, farklı bir yaşam, heyecan verici yaşam vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Gelenek* değeri, dindarlık, yaşamdan pay alma, alçakgönüllülük/tevazu, itidal/denge, geleneğe saygı gösterme vurguları ile aranmıştır. Oyunlarda *Evrensellik* değeri, çevreyi koruma, güzel bir dünya, doğayla uyum, geniş düşüncelilik, sosyal adalet, bilgelik, eşitlik, barış içinde bir dünya, iç uyumu vurguları ile aranmıştır.

*Bulgular:* Analizlerin sonucunda tüm oyunların *Haz* değeri taşıdığı belirlenmiştir. Yani tüm oyunlar aslında çocukları eğlendirmektedir. *Haz* değerinin ardından oyunların neredeyse tamamına yakınında *Başarı* değerine vurgu yapıldığı belirlenmiştir. Oyunlarda *Başarı* değeri, rekabete dayalı olarak önceden belirlenmiş

bazı işleri rakibinden/ rakiplerinden önce ya da ondan daha ustalıklı yapmak biçiminde vurgulanmaktadır. Genel bir kural olarak oyunların neredeyse tamamına yakınının kazananı ve kaybedeni vardır. Analizler oyunlarda üçüncü sırada da *Güç* değerine vurgu yapıldığını ve güç değerinin hep başarı değeri ile birlikte yer aldığını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Analizlere göre, güç değeri oyunlarda kazanan oyuncunun/ oyuncuların elde ettiği başarının ardından diğerlerinin mülküne el koyma hakkını elde etmesi ya da kazananın kaybedene yaptırım uygulama hakkına sahip olması biçiminde karşılığını bulmaktadır. Geri kalan yedi değer (*Cömertlik/İyilikseverlik, Uyma/Uyumluluk, Güvenlik, Kendini Yönetme, Uyarılma, Gelenek ve Evrensellik*) oyunlarda neredeyse hiç vurgulanmamıştır.

*Sonuçlar ve Öneriler:* Bu haliyle Türkiye’de oynanan geleneksel çocuk oyunları değer eğitimi açısından kaçırılmış bir fırsat gibi görünmektedir. Oyunları farklı ve zengin öğrenmelerin bir aracı olacak şekilde kurgulamak onların haz değerini azaltmaz. İyi kurgulanmış oyunları oynarken çocuklar yapacakları öğrenmelerde daha fazla değerden haberdar olacak ve daha faziletli ve zengin birer kişilik geliştireceklerdir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları oyunların değerlerin öğretilmesinde daha etkili bir biçimde işe koşulmaları gereğine işaret etmektedir. Bu bulgulardan hareketle çocuklarla çalışan uzmanlara çocuklarla oynanacak yeni oyunlar geliştirirken diğer değerlerinde ön plana çıkacağı ya da kazandırılabilceği oyunlar kurgulamaları önerilmektedir.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Türkiye, gelenek, çocuk oyunları, evrensel değerler, değer eğitimi, içerik analizi