CHAPTER 5

The Effect of Games and Traditional Games on Cultural Transfer

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1. The Game

The effect of play on people has been a constant source of interest over time (Huizinga 1995). Although the concept of play has different definitions, it is a phenomenon that has existed from past to present and enriches human life in various aspects. The game is defined as a set of entertaining activities that take place with the participation of individuals or groups within generally determined rules and that develop mental, physical and affective abilities (Vocational Education and Training System Strengthening Project, 2006). In addition to affective characteristics, it is known that play develops children's skills such as gaining experience, active participation in activities, learning by doing, research and discovery. The gains offered by play are not only limited to having fun, feeling pleasure and enjoyment; it also contributes to the social development of the child (Çelik & Şahin, 2013). The game has emerged from the primitive to the present day in the form of movements of imitations of nature, animals and other living things, and these imitations, often accompanied by music, have evolved from ritual motifs, embodied in body culture, developed, renewed from time to time and assumed the identity of performance sports (Ayan et al, 2015).

Play allows children to reveal their individual potential, while at the same time helping individuals of learning age to develop their existing knowledge, skills and abilities. The dynamic nature of play increases children's interest in learning and enables them to develop a positive attitude. Play contributes not only to the processes of gaining

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knowledge, but also to the processes of establishing social relationships, developing communication skills and increasing empathy skills. Various forms of play allow children to develop their creativity by giving them problem-solving skills. Play plays an important role at different stages of individuals' lives. It is not only an activity specific to children, but is also used among adults to strengthen social bonds, cope with stress, develop teamwork skills and continue learning through fun. Among adults, play also aims to keep creativity alive, increase mental flexibility and provide an escape from the monotony of life (Sevinç, 2009; Alıncak & Yeltekin, 2021). As a result, play is of great importance in human life. Beyond being fun, play contributes to the cognitive, affective and social development of individuals. As a pleasant learning tool for both children and adults, the inclusion of play at every stage of life allows individuals to discover their potential, strengthen their relationships and make their lives richer.

Play is a phenomenon that contributes significantly to the development of children. This process allows children to develop their physical, mental and social skills. Especially games that encourage children to move, support muscle development and have positive effects on general physical health. While examining the social sciences, psychology, sociology andanthropology have different evaluations in terms of examining games and behaviours arising from them, and when they are examined from the perspective of health sciences, they gain important contributions in terms of increasing the qualities and quality of life that physical activity brings to metabolism (Alıncak & Tuzcuoğulları, 2016; Abakay & Alıncak, 2016).

Children repeat many different movements during games. These repetitions help the muscles to strengthen and develop naturally (Özer et al. 2017). Physical activities such as running, jumping, jumping, climbing, etc. make the child's respiratory, circulatory, digestive and excretory systems work regularly (Pancar, 2018a; Pancar, 2018b; Pancar, 2018c). This increases oxygen intake, accelerates blood circulation and allows more nutrients to be transported to the tissues. Movement games also help children explore and recognise their environment. Games enable children to understand the world around them by using their physical skills. Actions such as walking, running and jumping develop the child's motor skills and encourage them to interact with their environment. Games play an important role in the development of hand and finger muscles. Activities such as holding, plucking, cutting and tying help children to strengthen their small muscles. This allows them to acquire daily life skills, learn and interact with their environment (Alıncak, 2017).

Games that require physical strength affect the child's growth process. Activities such as running and jumping ensure the regular functioning of body systems and have a positive effect on overall health. In addition, the child's expenditure of energy and use of their body helps them to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Such games also develop the child's

imagination and creativity. Games offer children the opportunity to create their own stories, develop their analyses and learn problem-solving skills. This contributes to their cognitive and emotional development. In conclusion, games for children are not only fun activities but also an important part of a healthy development process. The skills that children acquire through games contribute to their becoming successful individuals in later life. For this reason, the inclusion and support of games in children's daily lives contributes to the creation of a healthy society (Terkin & Abakay, 2023).

In addition to all these, the problems brought by the new century are inevitable. With the advancement of technology in our age, living conditions make people less mobile (Hacıcaferoğlu & Öztürk, 2020). This fast and routine way of life also distances parents from the conditions of being an ideal family and causes them to lose control over their children. These technological developments also take children away from street games and confine them to the house or room. Although this technology addiction may seem problematic at first, it is certain that it will bring serious problems in terms of health in the future.

2. Traditional Games

Traditional games are activities that stand out in folk culture, have certain characteristics and are played in groups in periods when entertainment opportunities are limited. These games allow people to come together by incorporating various features such as satire, intelligence, and mobility. As social beings, people interact with other individuals around them and this interaction causes them to assume certain roles in the society they live in. An individual's role acquisition usually starts in childhood and games play an important role in this role acquisition process. Traditional games embody social values. Children become aware of the basic values of their society with the cultural values they experience and adopt in the play environment. These conscious children will play an effective role in the transfer of values to future generations. Traditional games not only offer entertainment to children, but also strengthen social ties and continue to be an important tool for protecting cultural heritage (Sümbüllü and Altınışık, 2016). Play is an activity that exists in every period of an individual's life and contributes to the development of the individual (Yılmaz et al, 2020).

Through games, children learn the norms, values and social skills of their society. This interaction contributes to their personal development and understanding of their social responsibilities. Traditional games are not only a means of having fun, but also provide children with the opportunity to understand and internalise the cultural richness of the society they live in. For this reason, traditional games should be recognised not only as a means of entertainment, but also as an important learning tool that carries the values, norms and cultural identity of a society. Thanks to these games, children not only have

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fun, but also enrich their social accumulation and create strong foundations for their future role acquisition (Budak, 2016; Abakay et al. 2015).

Games offer valuable opportunities for the transmission of culture and the enhancement of cultural richness. The richness of a culture depends on the diversity of the elements that make up that culture and how effectively these elements are preserved. Games, as one of these elements, have been kept alive by those who play them and passed on to future generations. Traditional children's games, reaching from the past to the present, mediate the learning of the characteristics of the period while being played by children and form the basis of cultural transfer to the next generations. In addition to keeping cultural heritage alive, these games enable children to understand their past and transfer these values to future generations (Özyürek, Şahin, & Gündüz, 2018). The large compilation titled "Traditional Children's Games Living in Turkey in 2004", prepared under the leadership of Öcal and Ersoy, offers a rich content by addressing children's games in various dimensions. This important compilation analyses in detail the richness of traditional games, their deep-rooted history in the cultural context and the experiences children gain through these games. In order to analyse children's games, the compilation focuses on the materials used in the games and is grouped into 27 different categories around these materials. This categorisation aims to reveal the uniqueness of the games in each category and their contribution to culture. For example, games played with minstrelsy are not only a means of entertainment, but also show how music is integrated into children's lives. Games with rag dolls can help children develop their empathy skills, while at the same time increasing their hand skills and creativity. Categories such as games with beads, buttons and marks include materials that contribute to the development of children's manual skills and visual perception. These games can help children to build their aesthetic sense and be sensitive to traditional crafts. Games played with iron rods provide children with endurance and physical strength, while at the same time allowing them to develop their mental abilities through the strategies they strategise during the game. The cultural values that the compilation brings to the fore help us understand how children learn social norms through games and how they comply with these norms. These cultural values emphasise the link between children's upbringing in traditional games and the transmission of these games to future generations. To summarise, the compilation "Traditional Children's Games Living in Turkey in 2004" is a comprehensive resource that guides us to understand the rich and multi-layered world of children's games. Understanding how these games contribute to children's growth process and the preservation of cultural heritage is an important issue that both educators and cultural researchers should focus on (Öcal & Ersoy, 2005).

3. Benefits of Traditional Games

Traditional games, which have been a part of the human community for thousands

of years, attract people of all ages by providing both entertainment and learning opportunities. These games have had a significant impact on shaping cultures and communities in the past and continue to influence society in various ways today. One of the main reasons why traditional games influence society is their strong role in social interaction and role sharing. These games, which usually involve co-operation, competition and communication, offer individuals opportunities to interact with others, develop relationships and gain social skills (Brown, 2014). Individuals participating in traditional games have the chance to learn core values such as respect for justice, teamwork and respect for others.

Traditional children's games can generally be defined as activities that incorporate the cultural and traditional elements of the society and contribute to the social, physical and mental development of the players (Tuzcuoğulları et al, 2020). Another way in which traditional games influence society is through their role in promoting physical and mental health. These games often involve physical activity and offer individuals the chance to improve their physical skills such as co-ordination, balance and endurance (Jegede, 2009). Participants in games may have the opportunity to improve their overall physical health and well-being. Furthermore, traditional games often require critical thinking, problem solving and strategy, which can help individuals improve their cognitive skills such as memory and attention (Brown, 2014). Traditional games can also play an important role in preserving cultural heritage. These games serve as a means to transmit cultural values and traditions across generations, often reflecting the unique cultural and historical context of a particular community. In this way, communities utilise games as a carrier of heritage to ensure the maintenance of their cultural identity. These games support cultural continuity by playing an important role in the process of keeping a community's values alive and passing them on to the future (Jegede, 2009).

Traditional games have played an important role in the long history of human society, bringing together people of all age groups by providing opportunities for entertainment and education. These games, which have existed for thousands of years, have played a key role in shaping past cultures and communities and continue to influence society in various ways today. An important way in which these games affect society is their role in socialisation. Traditional games, which often involve cooperation, competition, and communication, offer individuals opportunities to interact with others, build relationships, and develop social skills (Brown, 2014). Individuals who participate in these games have the chance to learn important values and norms such as justice, teamwork, and respect for others. Another way in which traditional games influence society is through their role in promoting physical and mental health. Many traditional games are physically active and provide opportunities for individuals to develop physical skills such as coordination, balance and endurance (Jegede, 2009). Individuals who participate in games can improve

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their overall physical health and well-being. Furthermore, traditional games often require critical thinking, problem solving and strategy and can help individuals improve their cognitive skills, especially memory and attention (Brown, 2014). These games can also play an important role in preserving cultural heritage. Often reflecting the unique cultural and historical context of a particular community, traditional games serve as a vehicle for the transmission of cultural values and traditions from one generation to the next (Jegede, 2009).

By participating in traditional games, individuals learn about their cultural heritage, build strong links with their communities and feel a sense of pride and belonging. However, factors such as the increasing use of modern technology and the decline of outdoor play have left many communities facing the challenge of preserving their traditional games. It is therefore important to preserve and promote traditional games to ensure access to these rich experiences. To achieve this goal, individuals can be provided with opportunities to participate in games, support can be provided to teach the games through educational programmes and community-based initiatives can be encouraged. Thus, traditional games can help future generations to utilise the many advantages that both individuals and society offer in terms of health, well-being and cultural richness (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016).

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Traditional games also play an important role in the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage. These games often reflect the unique cultural and historical elements of

a particular community, teaching children the values and traditions of the community to which they belong. Thus, children develop a deeper connection to the cultural framework in which they live and shape their own identities in this context (Jegede, 2009). However, nowadays, with factors such as the increasing use of technology and the decrease in outdoor games, traditional games are in danger of disappearing. In order to prevent this situation and to pass on these rich cultural experiences to future generations, it is of great importance to protect, promote and support traditional games. In this context, teaching traditional games to children, providing opportunities to participate in these games through educational programmes and encouraging community-based initiatives are effective steps to make cultural heritage sustainable (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016). Since traditional children's games are usually played in groups or in pairs, they make an important contribution to children's learning of many emotional responses such as trust, loyalty, fear, friendship, enmity, winning and losing. For example, games such as Al Atlılı Kır Atlıya Bina, Ay Gördüm, Fırın Kızdı, Kebirlim, Köy Göçtü, Kütük, Mort, Uzun Eşek help children grasp concepts such as joining a community, creating a team spirit and trusting their friends (Gürbüz, 2016).

4. The Values Traditional Games Bring to Society and Their Effect on Intercultural Transfer

Every society realises the importance of transferring the cultural heritage and values shaped over time to its individuals. This transmission process usually starts in childhood and games play an important role in passing on this cultural heritage to generations in a lively way. Through traditional children's games, children have the opportunity to learn the norms, values and culture of their society while building an identity of their own (Senemoğlu, 1994).

Traditional children's games are not only a means of entertainment, but also provide children with important skills such as understanding the complexity of life, developing emotional reactions, and establishing friendship relationships. Games such as Al Atlılı Kır Atlıya Bina, Ay Gördüm, Fırın Kızdı, Kebirlim, Köy Göçtü, Kütük, Mort, Uzun Eşek offer children the opportunity to learn social skills such as working together, competing, winning and losing (Gürbüz, 2016). These games contribute to children to create a team spirit and trust each other by taking part in a group.

Children's games are not only educational but also contribute greatly to language development. Language is the cornerstone of intercultural communication and children enrich their vocabulary by meeting language elements such as idioms, proverbs and rhymes during traditional games. Traditional children's games allow children to develop their language skills and express their cultural background through these games (Gürbüz, 2016). Therefore, children not only have fun by playing traditional games,

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but also strengthen their language skills in the process of creating their own cultural identities. Societies carry their past to the future by transferring their cultural heritage to generations through traditional children's games. Games provide a cultural context by reflecting a society's philosophy of life, values and norms. In this context, the motifs we see in the games of a society reflect the values adopted by that society. Games are one of the important elements that form the collective consciousness of a society (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016).

Nebi Özdemir (2006) emphasises that children's games not only undertake the task of creating and carrying a tradition, but are also a means of cultural communication. Children's games are living creativity that evolve, change and develop over time. These games prepare the ground for the recognition, experimentation and adoption of cultural accumulation. As Özdemir states, oral traditions and intangible heritage transmitted through children's games ensure the continuity of cultural richness. Play is an important activity that plays a central role in the development of the child and today it has started to change its shape with technological advances. Therefore, children's understanding of play, the form of play, the tools required, the number of players and play environments are rapidly evolving. This change process causes traditional games to be forgotten. This situation reveals the necessity of protecting the games that are passed down from generation to generation (Gürbüz, 2016).

Beyond being an activity that takes place within the framework of certain rules, play is a fun time not only for children but also for adults. Boratav defines play as a moment of entertainment that takes place in the time left over from daily life (Boratav 1973: 284). Yavuzer, on the other hand, defines play as behaviour that is done for the sole purpose of having fun, without thinking about the outcome (Yavuzer 2001: 176). Although these sources have an entertainment-oriented perspective, play stands out as an activity that completes the development and education of the child, enriches it in terms of quality and quantity, and ensures the continuity of the cultural structure (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016).

Games are an important element that keeps societies together throughout history, reflects cultural richness and is transferred from one generation to another. These dances embody the story of a country, its past, traditions and customs, music, dance, in short, all its cultural assets. As Özhan points out, through games, societies carry their history to future generations and this is a critical way of preserving a country's identity and unity. In a social and emotional sense, games function as a means of strengthening the spiritual values of a society. Values such as love, respect, tolerance, sharing, helping, co-operation and solidarity are instilled in individuals through games. These values strengthen the spirit of solidarity and social bonds of society. In addition, games encourage people to interact with each other, which contributes to the formation of healthier relationships

within society. Games also play a key role in the transmission of culture. The traditions of a society are kept alive through games for generations. Traditional dances, games and rituals are passed on to younger generations, ensuring the continuity of cultural heritage. In this way, society consists of individuals who are connected to their roots, respectful to their history and protect their culture (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016).

Another important point emphasised by Yatmaz et al. (2021) is that games strengthen intergenerational communication. Especially generations Y and Z, while keeping up with the rapid change of the digital age, can establish ties with the past through traditional games. By playing games between family elders and young people, knowledge and experiences are shared, and at the same time, respect and love for each other are reinforced. Games reflect the spirit of the period in which societies live and reveal the norms, values and lifestyle of that period. Therefore, the game culture of a society is an important source for understanding the social, economic and cultural structure of that society. Games are not only a means of having fun, but also a mirror that reflects the spirit, character and values of a society. As a result, games are one of the cornerstones of a society. These games, which have existed throughout history, strengthen social ties and support intergenerational communication as well as preserving cultural richness. Despite the rapid change of the digital age, traditional games maintain their importance as an effective tool to keep our cultural heritage alive. These games are a treasure for future generations and play a critical role in carrying our culture and identity into the future (Yatmaz et al. 2021). Traditional games contribute positively to children's emotional and mental development and help them develop their sharing and problem-solving skills. Children gain self-confidence through these games and establish positive bonds with their immediate environment through these traditional games that are passed down from generation to generation (Yatmaz, Çok, Gökçe, Erdoğan, & Avaroğlu, 2021). Social and cultural values such as love, respect, friendship, sharing, solidarity, solidarity, helping, goodness, evil, righteousness, injustice, honesty in traditional children's games are taught to children through values education. Games also contribute to language development and strengthen children's communication skills (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016).

Computer games do not offer the same richness in learning these values. Children who play computer games may tend to be selfish and withdrawn. Traditional children's games, on the other hand, allow children to become extroverted and self-confident individuals while developing their social skills. The rhymes used in traditional games help children strengthen their language skills and gain the habit of speaking properly (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016). In addition, traditional children's games not only strengthen the friendship between children, but also strengthen the bonds within the family. These games, which are a bridge between generations, create a nostalgic childhood memory for the older generations, while the new generations happily enjoy the game with their

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families. This is an important element that strengthens family ties and ensures the continuation of traditional game culture. In conclusion, traditional children's games constitute an important cultural heritage that allows children not only to have fun, but also to contribute to their social, emotional and language development. These games strengthen intergenerational communication, teach children valuable life lessons and strengthen family ties. In this way, traditional games play a critical role for the overall well-being of children and society (Yatmaz, Çok, Gökçe, Erdoğan, & Avaroğlu, 2021).

Traditional games are an important element reflecting the spirit and identity of a society. These games play a role not only as a means of entertainment, but also as a carrier of cultural heritage. By reflecting the history, traditions, values and social norms of societies, they undertake the task of transferring these elements to future generations. Traditional games form the collective memory of a society and this memory is kept alive for generations through the individuals who play the games. These games make important contributions to children's character development. Social skills such as sharing, co-operation and problem solving are developed during the game. At the same time, increasing self-confidence and gaining the ability to express oneself in a group is one of the benefits of traditional games. Children learn the values and norms of their own culture through these games. They become stronger in bilateral relationships and internalise spiritual values such as love, respect and friendship (Yatmaz, Çok, Gökçe, Erdoğan, & Avaroğlu, 2021).

Traditional children's games are in danger of being forgotten due to the spread of digital games and the decrease in outdoor games. This situation brings an important responsibility for the protection of cultural heritage. In order to prevent the extinction of traditional games, these games should be transmitted, taught and kept alive from generation to generation. In this context, it is of great importance that educational programmes and community-based initiatives undertake the mission of preserving and promoting these games. Playing traditional games allows children not only to have fun but also to develop their social skills by interacting with each other. These games allow children to come together and interact in accordance with the rules. It helps them learn values such as waiting their turn and respecting the rights of others. In addition, traditional games encourage physical activity and contribute to the development of children's motor skills. Traditional children's games play a role in strengthening family ties. By creating a common language between generations, they enable family members to spend time together. Older generations enjoy passing on their cultural heritage to younger generations by recounting their childhood through these games. This creates a sense of solidarity and sharing within the family. In conclusion, traditional children's games reflect the cultural richness of a society not only as a means of entertainment, but also as a storehouse of heritage and values. In addition to contributing to the social,

emotional and physical development of children, these games have an important role in strengthening cultural ties and enabling intergenerational communication. Therefore, the protection and survival of traditional games are of great importance for societies (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016).

It has been observed that participation in traditional games has a more positive and healthy effect on human relations among children growing up in Generation X and Y. This generation develops a more tolerant attitude and has a happy childhood experience thanks to traditional games. On the other hand, children from Generation Z have come to the forefront in research that engaging in technological and digital games leads to negative social skills. This generation lacks the social skills required for human relations and cannot fully develop their self-confidence. Studies reveal that Generation Z individuals cannot clearly reveal their emotional expressions, have difficulties in issues such as anger control and lack of compassion, and have difficulty in showing love to others. In this context, it is possible to say that the effect of traditional games on cultural transmission is important (Yatmaz, Çok, Gökçe, Erdoğan, & Avaroğlu, 2021).

Traditional children's games should be actively used both in the preschool and school period for the child's language development and effective learning of the mother tongue. This approach contributes to children's learning of their own culture, language features and forms of expression and strengthens intergenerational transmission. Traditional games teach children not only language skills but also responsibility for protecting and sharing their cultural heritage. In this way, children discover not only the rules of a language but also the cultural richness of that language (Gürbüz, 2016). According to a 2008 article, traditional games have a positive effect on children's social development as well as their motor skills. It has been observed that games played in a natural environment contribute to children's development in concepts such as rule awareness, obeying rules, acquiring group dynamics, belonging to a group, making group decisions, and learning reward concepts. Therefore, it is important for parents and educators to encourage children to play games because games contribute positively to children's social-emotional development. At the same time, a study conducted in 2007 emphasised the importance of traditional games played by children in Turkey in the past years. The study stated that today, due to technological developments, games have started to change in terms of shape, form, the environment played, the number of people to play, and the necessary equipment. However, while new toys are developed in developed countries in parallel with the advancement of technology, old toys and games are tried to be protected. This situation ensures the preservation of oral traditions or intangible cultural heritage by transferring culture-specific games and toys from generation to generation. The research emphasised that this cultural heritage will contribute to future child educators (Esen, 2008).

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From this point of view, it is important to preserve the value of the effect of traditional games in the transfer of culture, to protect these games that undergo change under the influence of technology and to transfer them to future generations. Along with the changing game dynamics with technological developments, efforts should be made to ensure that the cultural heritage that traditional games teach and carry is not forgotten. In this context, traditional games should be given more importance in order to support the social-emotional development of children and to transfer their culture to future generations. (Başal, 2007).

It has been observed that children enjoy playing traditional street games, find the opportunity to discharge their energy, gain the ability to express their feelings and thoughts, and develop self-confidence and communication skills. The fact that these games are mostly played outdoors is important for children to interact with their peers and for social learning to take place. In this context, traditional children's games positively support children's social-emotional development. While these games make children happy, they also contribute to the protection of spiritual values by providing cultural transmission. Therefore, it is important to encourage children to participate more in traditional games and limit the time they spend with digital games (Yatmaz, Çok, Gökçe, Erdoğan, & Avaroğlu, 2021). Traditional children's games have been an important factor contributing to children's social and cognitive development over the years. These games not only develop children's motor skills, but also strengthen their cognitive abilities, problem-solving abilities, attention and analysis skills, and provide them with important social skills such as rule awareness and compliance with rules, acquiring group dynamics, taking part in groups and making group decisions (Akay, 2017).

Nowadays, children's play habits are gradually changing and technological games are becoming more common. However, this change should not mean ignoring the deep and comprehensive learning experience offered by traditional games. While children release their energy in traditional street games, they find the opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts, gain self-confidence, and develop social emotional skills such as communication and co-operation. The fact that these games are usually played outdoors allows children to interact with their peers and supports social learning (Yatmaz, Çok, Gökçe, Erdoğan, & Avaroğlu, 2021; Yıldırım et al. 2013).

A large part of learning comes from our environment and culture. Especially in childhood, traditional games come to life with symbols and turn into behaviour over time. Traditional children's games are an important tool that conveys concrete or abstract messages to children about what is good or bad based on the value judgements of the society in which they live. These games play a critical role in the creation of an ideal social order based on moral values (Sümbüllü & Altınışık, 2016). In order to understand

and evaluate the effects of traditional children's games on child development in affective and cognitive areas, it is important to examine the general rules, style of play and content of these games. Researchers have emphasised that the main concern about the loss of interest in traditional activities is not the loss of the activities themselves, but the loss of the intergenerational friendship that the activities support. In addition to preserving the cultural heritage and values of a society, traditional play culture contributes greatly to the social, emotional and cognitive development of children. In this context, minimising the time children spend with digital games, encouraging traditional children's games and ensuring that these games are passed down from generation to generation can make a significant contribution to maintaining cultural continuity and healthy social relations (Wright, 1967).

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