Historical Development of Play and Its Impact on Children's Development

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To Cite This Chapter

Üzüm, H., Yıldız, F., & Malay, F. (2024). Historical Development of Play and Its Impact on Children's Development. In F. Alıncak & M. Özdal (Eds.), *Current Studies in Physical Education and Sports 2024* (pp. 71-82). ISRES Publishing.

Introduction

The word "oyun", one of the oldest words in Turkish (And, 2012), appears among the various names of Central Asian shamans, for example, as "oyun, uyun" among the Yakuts. Female shamans are called "udahan" in Mongolian, the middle shaman "orta-oyun" and the supreme shaman "uluhan-oyun". The word "play" is used not only for shamans but also for all shamanic ceremonies (e.g. in Turkestan). Thus, with the word play, the origin of theater, dance and various spectacles are gathered at one point (Hazar, 2017). Play has become indispensable as a part of human life since the emergence of human beings. Scientists have characterized play in various ways. According to Gross, "Play is an acquisition of experience, it is the experience of the attitude situations that the individual will encounter in daily life in his future life through play. In this way, the child has the chance to experience the events that he may experience in the future in a protected area." Freud defined the definition of play as "useful activities that help children and young people to help their social development and to find the individual self. Freud also defines it as "a mirror that reflects the child's movements and self." Plato suggests that "education should be done in two areas: physical/motor and psychological education. Children should grow up with play by emphasizing the importance of the concept of play in terms of physical education". Bandura defines play as; "The child communicates in play, expresses himself, has friends and becomes a social being. The socialized child makes observations and acquires new behaviors when repeated" (Duman, 2015).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).

Play helps children to feel good about themselves. Play is an outlet for the child's happiness and excess energy in life (Nutku, 2006). Play is one of the basic building blocks of personality, which includes various values such as sociability, ability and

intelligence. Play is a form of learning that involves the discharge of excess energy, relaxation and pleasure (Aksoy & Çiftçi, 2014).

The game is a situation where there are participants playing the game and objects being played or spectators watching the players, which is fun and allows the excess energy to be discharged (Altunpınar, 2018). Play is an important part for the child that he/she enjoys, starts and continues in line with his/her own wishes and supports his/her holistic development (Ogelman, 2014). Johan Huizinga describes people who play games as "ludens" and people learn their daily life by playing games. According to Huizinga, playing games is an important activity in the lives of individuals and even individuals express themselves through games. Play is a collection of voluntary behaviors that people carry out entirely of their own volition. For this reason, playing games are activities that depend on a person's pleasure and a time when he/she has no work (Hazar, 2006). According to Piaget, it is defined as discovering, experimenting and adapting objects from the external environment (Sormaz & Yüksel, 2012).

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

Based on the definitions of play, play can be defined as a set of activities that allow children to relax physically and spiritually, express their wishes, make sense of social life and gain experience, improve all areas of development, are enjoyable for children and are generally played as an imitation of social life (Cinel, 2006; Sağ et al. 2022). When the research on play is examined, it is seen that there are many definitions of play, but it is difficult to make a common definition, and different meanings are attributed to each definition. The lack of a common definition leads to the conclusion that the subject of play is very comprehensive and has wide boundaries. The fact that there are so many definitions and theories reveals the importance and value of play and answers the question of why so much research has been conducted on it (Aydınlı & Ramazanoğlu, 2016; Ayan et al., 2015). 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). Playing games is actually a need, it has always existed and will continue to exist in the lives of humans and all other living things. Games are activities that are beneficial in many developmental areas such as social skills, peer relations, cognitive development, language development, motor development, especially in childhood. When important factors such as gaining the ability to express oneself freely in school life and supporting language development are carried out together with games, it is easier to achieve these gains. Play prepares the child for real life. Through play, children can express their emotions, feel happy and show positive psychological developmental characteristics. In addition, playing games in children is also effective in variables such as making choices and problem solving (Yalçın & Bertiz, 2019).

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Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the historical development of the game and its impact on child development.

History of the Game

The history of the game is as old as the history of humanity (Poyraz, 2003). With humanity, all the struggles have started and the first sportive activities are games and musical festivals organized for the purpose of preparing for war, hunting and religious rituals (Kıldan, 2001). In the past, we come across the first signs of the game in religious rituals and musical activities. During the ceremonies, people would follow the harmony of the music, sometimes stomping with enthusiasm and making strange sounds; sometimes they would fidget and move with soft naive movements, thus feeling close to the gods (Sel, 1990).

According to John Dewey, play involves unconscious behaviors, while Huizinga defines play as a regular activity that is done willingly at a certain time and place. Spencer sees play as a way to release energy, while Eibesfeldt considers play as an active learning process. Groos sees play as a preparation for the next stages of life, while Mitchell and Mason emphasize the importance of play, which they define as a means of self-expression. Gulick sees play as the realization of desired actions (Ergün, 1980).

Throughout history, many different views have been put forward about how play is and should be. What all these different views have in common is that play is a vital activity for children. As McLuhan emphasized when he said that play, like any art form, is a concrete example of an event that is difficult to experience, it is important to point out that play plays a fundamental role in children's lives, no matter how broad the meaning of the word (Çalışkan & Karadağ, 2005). 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).

By considering the concept of play from various perspectives, various ideas about play can be obtained. According to these perspectives, play can be defined as an activity that allows children to express their emotions and imagination, helps them recognize their environment and gain experience, and contributes to their overall development. It can also be a source of happiness for children and offer a preview of what they will do in their lives (Cinel, 2006).

Huizinga defined play as "a voluntary action or activity in which the individual participates freely and voluntarily, in a specific and limited place and time, in accordance with predetermined rules, prepared to achieve a goal, a serious activity in which the individual involves himself completely" (Anchor, 1978). 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; Tuzcuoğulları et al. 2017).
Games sharpen the child's senses and develop their abilities and skills. Play, which is seen as a basic need for the development of the child, provides versatile development individually (Baysan, 2019). Play has a history as old as human history. Archaeological excavations show that games existed ages ago. Various games such as the Sumerian game

board dated around 2600 BC and dice dated around 1600 BC were found in the tombs of kings and queens. Remains of many game representations were found in Egyptian hieroglyphs and wall paintings (Ağbaba, 2021).

Importance of the Game

Play takes place in all periods of an individual's life. Play has a great role in the socialization of the individual and in becoming an important member of society. It is the most basic activity of infancy and childhood. Games are the most important means of social cohesion and solidarity. There are countless number of games. Games vary according to the places where they are played, the number of people playing, the tools and equipment used, gender and age of the players. With the development of technology, changes have also begun to occur in the game. The most important change has been the change in the location of the game. The games that are usually played on the street have been replaced by games played in digital environments. One of the biggest reasons for the games played on the street and the shift towards digital is that the streets are no longer seen as safe places. Henri Lefebvre wrote the book "Urban Revolution" by examining the street with a political approach and mentioned the "power of the street" in this book. According to Lefebvre, the street should not only be considered as a road, street or geographical space, but also cafes, parks, cinemas and he argued that the street is a way of life and its meaning is special and great (Lefebvre, 2013).

In today's conditions, it is possible to teach all lessons to children through drama. The reason for this is that the child obtains all his/her experiences through play and develops his/her ability to resist problems and to think (Alıncak, 2016). Thanks to the concept of play, children learn scientific concepts quickly and develop themselves (Alıncak & Tuzcuoğulları, 2016).

Play has become indispensable as a part of human life since the emergence of human beings. Scientists have characterized play in various ways. According to Gross, "Play is an acquisition of experience, it is the experience of the attitude situations that the individual will encounter in daily life in his future life through play. In this way, the child has the chance to experience the events that he may experience in the future in a protected area." Freud defined the definition of play as "useful activities that help children and young people to help their social development and to find the individual self. Freud also defines it as "a mirror that reflects the child's movements and self." Plato suggests that "education should be done in two areas: physical/motor and psychological education. Children should grow up with play by emphasizing the importance of the concept of play in terms of physical education". Bandura defines play as; "The child communicates in play, expresses himself, has friends and becomes a social being. The socialized child makes observations and acquires new behaviors when repeated" (Duman, 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 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; Yeltekin and Alıncak, 2021).

Play and the Child

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Play is an activity that entertains, exists within the flow of life, is not carried out for external purposes, and takes place spontaneously with the will of the individual. According to Piaget, play is a primitive function of thought and is done for pleasure (Yavuzer, 2018). From an adult's perspective, it is said that play is getting rid of mediocrity.

For the child, play is a way of learning, an endeavor, doing something and trying again and again. In primitive societies, the adult's pursuits are quite limited, and the child's play is similar to that of the parent's world. Today, however, girls do not have to be housewives and boys do not have to follow in their fathers' footsteps. This is why it is important to offer children different kinds of experiences in their play that can help us understand them. Play is similarly a form of cultural transmission. The picture of eighty-four children's games drawn by the Dutch artist Peter Breughel in 1560 shows us that traditional games such as hopscotch and hoops are almost unchanged today. Even baby rattles date back to ancient times (Arnold, 1995).

Play and toys develop the child's physical skills and cognitively develop creative thinking and exploration skills. They enable the child to use language and, as a natural consequence, to communicate and socialize. During play, they reveal the fears and pains they experience in real life. For example, a girl who is punished by her mother goes to court to be a judge and punish her little baby. Thus, the child overcomes her anger and guilt and internalizes the problem. Freud was the first to suggest that children reveal their feelings in play. Freud understood the relationship between fantasy behavior and play and stated that children express their unconscious desires in play. Erikson also established a relationship between psychoanalytic theory and the child's personality development and stated that the child establishes a great connection with play in terms of psycho-social development (Başal, 2010).

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). As children play, their senses sharpen and their talents emerge. For the child, play is the most natural form of learning. The child who plays establishes the sovereignty of his/her own world. They may get angry and react when you try to change the game they have built or when you accidentally knock down the tower they have erected. Because no matter how insignificant it may seem to an adult, that tower is the child's own creation. Play is the bridge between the world of imagination and the world of reality. The child establishes a connection with both worlds. In play, the child gets rid of being restricted and experiences the pleasure of being on his/her own. Play is the child's freedom. By using his/her imagination freely like an artist, the child gets rid of the chains of logic and obtains a new composition based on sounds, words and lines (Yörükoğlu, 2008).

Imaginative play refers to unstructured and spontaneous play that occurs during children's natural developmental stages. Imaginative play is the play in which children explore the adult world and imitate the human relationships, behaviors and character traits of those around them (Erbay & Durmuşoğlu, 2012). When we look at the definition of play, it is stated that it may or may not have a specific purpose, but the child is involved in it, the child definitely enjoys it, it supports the child's development and creates an effective learning process (Yılmaz & Erduran, 2016). Children learn and experience daily life skills through play (Pyle & Danniels, 2017).

According to Elkind, children's play is grouped under four main headings: mastery, creative, affinity and therapeutic play. Mastery play enables children to learn a new concept, acquire knowledge and use their skills in daily life. In creative play, children are given the opportunity to generate or diversify new knowledge after learning concepts and skills. Proximity play, on the other hand, is defined as the games that children play

with their peers in order to establish closeness and accept them by communicating with them. Therapeutic play is described as games that enable the child to produce strategies for the problems that the child has encountered or may encounter. Looking at the focal point of the game classification created by Elkindin, it is stated that the game is played in a universal way, contributes to the child's learning experience and that this learning experience is functionally involved in the child's life (Aytaş and Uysal, 2017).

Contributions of Play to Child Development

For a mechanical system to run smoothly, it is based on the principle that its parts must be complete, and at the same time, the regularly needed maintenance must be carried out completely. The healthy development and survival of the human body is directly proportional to the correct and complete fulfillment of its needs. The most important difference between the two is that human beings have a soul that makes them superior. Primary needs such as food, drink, sleep, rest, etc. are not enough. In addition, development can be fully realized by meeting spiritual needs such as love, peace, happiness and trust. Play supports all areas of development and nourishes children with love and happiness, the food of the soul. Play offers an environment where children are free with voluntary participation, meet their need for movement, acquire many knowledge and behaviors that they will use in their adult life, learn and keep alive our culture and values, develop their personalities, and more importantly, be happy. Individuals begin by getting to know their bodies, realize their abilities, learn through trials and repetitions, and improve what they have learned. Their sense of self-confidence increases, they socialize and always move forward. In this journey of development, children who play games go through a healthy development process by traveling faster and further than children who do not play. The historical process has shown that it is imperative for human communities to ensure the continuation of their lineage and to keep their culture alive. To achieve this, it is essential to establish a family and raise children. The most valuable thing for a family is its child and all kinds of sacrifices are made to ensure that he/she grows up in the best way possible. Especially those in the education community know that the knowledge gained through experiences gained by doing and experiencing improves the intelligence more and makes the knowledge more permanent. All developmental areas of individuals develop in a healthy way with the necessary play environment and materials, whether they are used as a purpose or a tool. Many researchers express the view that the development of a child who does not play games cannot be healthy. Since playing games is of vital importance in terms of development, it has been found more accurate to examine its contribution to developmental areas separately. These are: physical development, mental development, social development, psycho-motor development, emotional development and language development (Gedik, 2012; İnan, 2011; Kerkez, 2006).

Impact on Cognitive Development

One of the most important benefits of play in terms of child development is the opportunity to learn by exploring. The child enters a mental process to produce solutions to a situation or problem that he/she encounters, using his/her existing knowledge and constantly experimenting. The child who produces solutions as a result of his/her experiments realizes learning, which is the first effect of the mental development of the game. In this process, as the gains obtained through experimentation and learning increase, mental development is realized rapidly. They are constantly interacting with the environment to satisfy their feelings of curiosity and discovery. The child explores his/her environment, recognizes objects, reasoning, generating solutions, making choices and constantly obtains new information by using his/her intelligence. In the cognitive process during play, mental developments such as creative thinking, decision-making, establishing relationships, problem solving, synthesizing, being careful, reasoning, and generating strategies are realized. The child who encounters objects in the activities he/she participates in and uses them in his/her play learns many conceptual properties of objects such as shape, color, weight, volume, big and small, far and near, soft and hard,

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hot and cold, as well as classification, sorting and grouping. Many rules such as sharing, patience, cooperation, order, order, cooperation, respecting the rights of others, which cause difficulties in teaching children, are learned naturally in play without effort (Uskan & Bozkuş, 2019; Bekmezci & Özkan, 2015).

Effect on Psychomotor Development

Children's games, which are usually played in an active way, provide a natural environment for growth, development and learning, as well as for the acquisition and increase of voluntary motor skills such as strength, coordination and balance. In this natural environment offered by the game, the child who runs, jumps, jumps, crawls, catches, climbs, and constantly struggles, repeats these movements without getting bored with the taste of the game, and thanks to these repetitions, the development of the muscles accelerates, while at the same time memorizing the movements exhibited. In direct proportion to muscle development, motor skills are exhibited and developed fluently. The child becomes aware of his/her own capacity, his/her movement control mechanism develops, his/her emotions become clearer, and his/her abilities and skills improve. Motor skills such as strength, power, endurance, balance, flexibility and coordination are developed through motor responses that are constantly tested in play. Fine motor skills are also developed through activities with materials such as mud, clay, play dough, cutting, gluing and toys. The development and maturation of the neuromuscular system leads to improved skills and performance. In the process that begins with mobility in the womb, the child opens his/her eyes to the world with various reactions and motor skills. Babies' first movements and reflex reactions are the basis of learning, and as their learning increases with experience, their motor skill development accelerates. Especially in this process where the development from birth to the end of kindergarten period is very fast, it is very important that the environments where children grow up are designed to support the development of the child in terms of correct and healthy development (Alıncak & Bozdal, 2022; Bozkurt & Sözer, 2017; Kerkez, 2006).

Impact on Social Development

Humans are social beings by nature and live collectively with intense communication thanks to language skills that other living beings lack. Although children open their eyes to the environment of their nuclear family, as they grow up, their social environment expands and interaction with other children begins. When they start playing in groups with their peers, they step into social life and community life. On the way to adapting to this new game format, children initially have problems in following the rules by exhibiting negative behaviors such as selfishness, resentment, closedness to sharing, whining, but they learn to follow the rules with the effect of the painful experience of being out of the game and the indescribable taste of the game. Children begin to recognize real life in play. In fact, the positive and negative behaviors exhibited in the game are clues to how they grow up in the family (Karğın, 2018).

Through play, these negative behaviors are changed in a positive way and reinforced with positive behaviors. The child who begins to learn the qualities of the new game learns to be in harmony with the group, to struggle together, to put maximum effort into his/her part of the task. They acquire feelings and behaviors such as being a leader, being led by a leader, accepting winning and losing, knowing what is next, waiting and being patient, obeying the working order, respecting the rights of others, sharing, good-bad, right-wrong, right-unjust. In addition, they gain and develop characteristics such as self-confidence, self-control, quick decision-making, discipline and determination. In this way, the child who learns that he/she cannot behave as he/she wants during games, easily learns the moral values, social rights and responsibilities that he/she must comply with in social life in adulthood. Every child grows up in a family environment with different characteristics. When they come together, each child naturally reflects his or her unique characteristics, learns that there are differences, compares his or her views and

lifestyles with others, and changes the wrong ones. They assume various roles in their play, display and develop these roles. Although individuals are not given any training on social roles, they skillfully display the roles they need to assume in adult life thanks to the experiences they gain through social learning. As a result, play provides individuals with very strong communication and social skills (Babayiğit, 2016; Gül, 2012).

Effect on Emotional Development

The child's emotional development begins with experiences during infancy, when interaction with the environment begins. For a child, the environment in which emotions can be expressed freely in the best way is play. Children experience, learn and develop many opposing emotions in their games. Love-hate, happiness-sadness, courage-fear, friendship-hostility, trust-distrust, dependence-independence, tolerance-being rude and harsh, and pity are among these emotions. By dramatizing his emotions in the games he participates in, the child learns to control his disturbing, repressed emotions and thus gets rid of the negative emotions that cause tension and relaxes. While expressing his emotions by dreaming unlimitedly in the free environment provided by the game, enjoying himself and collecting positive energy, he tries to understand the feelings of others by moving away from egocentrism and empathizing with the development of his feelings of sharing and tolerance. By experiencing feelings of winning and achieving in games, he gets away from his worries and anxieties. Let's list it in items:

- Experiences by performing many roles.
- He gets rid of the conflicts he experiences by acquiring the ability to resolve them.
- It affects emotional relaxation, energy release and tension reduction.
- Provides opportunity for self-expression.
- It helps to have fun, enjoy and increase life energy.
- It helps increase self-confidence and self-esteem.
- It plays an active role in reducing anxiety and worry.
- It helps children calm down by having a therapeutic effect.
- It provides the opportunity to release negative emotions such as the urge for aggression (Aynacıyan and Özer, 2020; Kargın, 2018; Çağlayan, 2015).

Effect on Language Development

Language development, which starts from the birth of the child, covers the process that the child will go through until the end of his life. Individuals have to express themselves in order to meet their wishes, desires and needs, and this makes the use of language mandatory. Although language is a human ability, in order to fulfill its function, it depends on the individual learning the symbols that will enable speech, storing the learned symbols in his memory, and displaying this ability when faced with a situation that requires communication. It is known by everyone that play is one of the activities that children spend their time with. People exhibit their talents better in an environment where they feel comfortable. In a play environment where children are happy, peaceful and comfortable, they act out what they hear, see and learn, make sounds and make imitations. He learns the objects he plays with and their properties, symbolizes these objects, dramatizes them in his play, and stores the newly acquired information in his mind. The child, who has the chance to demonstrate his communication skills, especially in games played with groups where multi-faceted communication is intense, corrects and improves his communication mistakes during the repetitions of the game. He listens to his playmates when starting the game and setting the rules, and he himself gets involved in this communication and conveys his feelings and thoughts to his friends. Inner urges and desires such as being dominant in the game, directing their friends, and being in the center of attention motivate the child to acquire effective language and persuasion skills. Let's list it in items:

- It supports the development of vocabulary by acquiring new words.
- It improves the ability to tell and understand stories.

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- It improves communication skills such as expressing feelings and thoughts easily.
- It improves the ability to recognize, distinguish and use sounds and intonations correctly.
- In effective communication, gestures, facial expressions, etc. learns the importance of using it (Uskan and Bozkuş, 2019; Babayiğit, 2016; Bekmezci, 2015).

Conclusion

Play is one of the activities that children spend their time with. People exhibit their talents better in an environment where they feel comfortable. In a play environment where children are happy, peaceful and comfortable, they act out what they hear, see and learn, make sounds and make imitations. He learns the objects he plays with and their properties, symbolizes these objects, dramatizes them in his play, and stores the newly acquired information in his mind. The child, who has the chance to demonstrate his communication skills, especially in games played with groups where multi-faceted communication is intense, corrects and improves his communication mistakes during the repetitions of the game.

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