

Designing Children's Traditional Games through Visual Thinking in the Socio-Cultural Concept

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Abstract

This paper aims to debate the results of visual thinking from children's games based on the method of making and using materials through the concept of social and cultural systems. The main purpose of the study is to identify the types of traditional children's games as cultural heritage that needs to be documented. Exploring the relationship between formalistic aspects of art and social culture through the design of traditional children's games in the 80s or 90s. Most of the children of the past applied the art of making traditional games using the objects around them. This study also aims to look at behaviour patterns, environment, values and needs to form expressions from visual thinking through social and cultural systems. The written and visual data collection methodology in this study uses descriptive qualitative approach. Methods such as documentation, visual recording and observation are used to collect information about the research being studied. The findings of the study show that children's traditional games are closely related to the process of forming cultural values through informally acquired visual thinking. This process occurs through the production of game designs using tools and materials found in the environment, game methods and the creativities generated among the players or producers involved. The implications of the study show that children's traditional games are seen and appreciated from a social and cultural point of view, not only can be seen from the formalistic point of art alone. Traditional games can have a positive impact on the construction of the new generation's self-concept. It is based on social skills in a society that consists of various cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

Keywords: Art Appreciation, Social-Cultural, Children's Traditional Games.

Introduction

Playing is a routine activity that a child does naturally (Nor et al., 2014). Through playing, children can explore their environment and are able to produce a high imagination through symbolic activities. It gives meaning towards children's development (Isenberg & Jolongo, 2000).

Games that exist from the social and cultural system of the Malay community are interpreted as a way of expressing the emotions of the people involved. Hamid (1991) stated that the joy and satisfaction obtained from a game can express the feeling hidden in the soul of an individual. Playing is the basis for children to do social interaction and is very important for the learning process (Vickerius & Sandberg, 2006). Traditional children's games are games that are loaded with ethical, moral and cultural values of society. It can be the best way to develop children's education and creativity.

There are various types of traditional games in the past that are not and are rarely introduced to the current generation. The study of children's games is an effort to understand and interpret the visual thinking of the games being studied. This helps us to understand the importance of games that are played in building the formation of identity (Hamid, 2015).

Visual thinking means a process that occurs through the mind that is not verbal and is produced from visual observational stimuli. It is to find meaning and understanding to explore ideas or creations. In this study, traditional children's games such as *bedil buluh*, *kapal sabut kelapa*, *perahu batang pisang* and *Helikopter biji getah* became visual materials observed. Then visual thinking is obtained through the expression of the resulting game form, function, material and meaning.

In reality, visual thinking is expressed through symbols or icons from children's games based on social and cultural systems. It refers to the cultural approach as a system that serves as a guide to go through the process of life (Hamid, 2015).

Rohidi (2000) explains that culture is the whole of ideas, actions and the results of human work in the framework of community life that is made one's own by studying it. A work of art involving the art of making games is produced through the thoughts experienced by the producer due to the effects of observation and the entire cultural system learned in his life.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to visually explain the artistry of children's game design in the context of understanding the socio-cultural system manifested by producers and players. It is seen in the context of values, environment, needs and behaviour that are reflected in game making techniques as follows:

1. Identify the types of traditional children's games of the 80s or 90s.
2. Classify the design and manufacturing techniques of traditional children's games.
3. Analysing the relationship between art formalism in children's games through social and cultural systems.

Theoretical Framework

A combination of interdisciplinary approaches using concepts in art formalism and Socio-cultural systems to look at the design of traditional children's games through materials, techniques, functions and aesthetics. A combination of these concepts is adapted to form the conceptual framework thought in parallel with the analysis to be used as a reference for the questions in the study

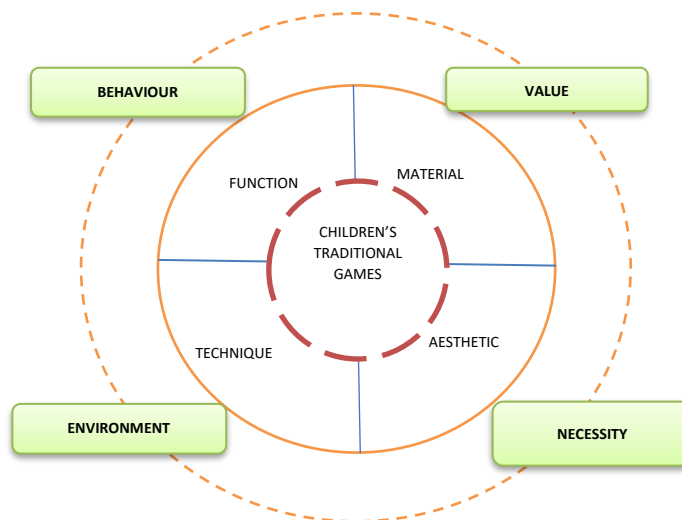


Figure 1: The theoretical framework is adapted from the formalistic concept of art, social and cultural systems

Research Methodology

The research approach is descriptive qualitative with inter-disciplinary implementation. There are three data collection methods used, namely observation, visual recording and documentation analysis to obtain information about the design of traditional children's games in the context of appreciation and social culture. The data is collected based on empirical fieldwork data obtained while in the field.

Analysis of the Children's Traditional Games

Perahu Batang Pisang



Traditional children's games that have been passed down from generation to generation include the *perahu batang pisang*. This game is a traditional game made from materials such as banana fronds, banana leaves and coconut skewers. It is created in the shape of a boat and is played in the rivers, lakes, ditches, and waterways. Thread and knife are also needed during the manufacturing process. In the production method, banana fronds need to be cut and assembled with the help of skewers as an adhesive tool. Then it is modified until it forms as desired by the producer.

Bedil Buluh



Bedil buluh or also known as *caplong* is a traditional children's game during the 80s/90s. Cenerai fruits or newspaper soaked in water are used as ammunition. This gun is made of medium-sized bamboo such as Chinese bamboo/forest bamboo. This bamboo tree is usually easy to find in villages because it grows in cascades by the river. The size of the gun is one foot long, it is accompanied by a *gobek/shovel* made of reeds that are cut round to compress and affect the barrel chamber. *Cenderai* fruits are put into the barrel and pushed and produce an explosive sound.

Helikopter Biji Getah



Children in the past were very creative creating their own games. One of the popular ones is the *helikopter biji getah* or even the game can also be used as a fan. The way to produce it requires rubber beans, thick thread, bamboo or skewers that have been sharpened. The rubber seeds need to be dug out and the inside contents removed and 3 holes punched. One on the belly of the rubber fruit, two more on the top and bottom. A skewer or reed is inserted through the top hole and penetrates the bottom hole. Then the thread will stick out in the middle hole. A stick will be used to wind the thread and then pull the thread quickly over and over again. Then the game tool will spin.

Kapal Sabut Kelapa



This game uses materials and tools found in the environment, namely 10 cm coconut husks; medium-sized leaves and skewers, but there are also some producers who use scraped bamboo.

Cultural Social System in Traditional Children's Games

Cultural Environment

Art is a soul's manifestation in shaping the culture that exists in a society that is based on the cultural influence of the environment; it forms the personality of a workman.

Traditional children's games are part of the cultural manifestations inherent in a society based on the influence of the environment, each of which is produced is based on the external reaction of the producer to its environment (Hussain, 2014). It causes the individual to interpret in his own design. Because of this, a unique game exists.

Jamal (1989) explained that the understanding of nature provides an opportunity for the Malays to transfer the beauty of the environment to the results of creativity in the arts. Such art also involves the soul, feelings, social values, general views and thoughts built into society. Ayob (2016) among the artistic processes involved in the production of traditional forms of play is usually inspired by the surrounding environment. Thus, a work is created from the relationship of the work with society and the environment.

The culture of the environment is observed through the use of tools and materials to produce the game taken from the objects around them. Children or producers do not use materials and tools that are not available in their area of residence. Overall, every residence in the village area has coconut trees, banana trees, bamboo trees, rubber trees which are the main ingredients for the design of the game. While the knife is a single tool during the production process.

The environment that affects children's play is further strengthened through the selection of suitable locations for the activities. Games such as *kapal sabut kelapa* and *perahu batang pisang* require areas with water flow.



- *Kapal sabut kelapa and perahu batang pisang* games:

A kind of game in the form of a competition because it needs to be played by two or more parties. It starts by holding each other's vessels placed on the surface of the river water, ditches, and waterways to be moved. With inline positions and those boats are released when all are ready. The winner is determined by a ship or boat that manages to get ahead of the rest.

Meanwhile, games such as *Bedil buluh* and *helikopter biji getah* require a tree area.



- *Bedil buluh*:

A kind of mock war game aimed at testing the shooting efficiency of the players. The game is played in groups. One team acts as an army while the other as an enemy. The total number of points is calculated according to the number of players who are not shot. The playing area is a bush or an area where there are plenty of trees to easily hide.



- *Helikopter Biji Getah*

Most of the children play by turning the game around and making it as a tree leaf cutter that can be found around the village.

Children born and raised in the village area are more attracted and creative because they realize that materials, tools and game locations exist in their environment. Generally, these traditional games have simple and nature-inspired game methods and patterns. This situation builds the value of appreciating nature in children through the process of recycling wasted goods and produced as a plaything.

The environment that the child goes through is able to increase the process of maturity in the work. It is an adventure of life that is experienced in many forms, spaces and times. The experience of being a child born in the village area, creating his own games from surrounding objects and playing with friends. It is an attraction from the environment to create satisfaction and personal needs

Behaviour

Culture is a behavioural mould framework for a society that has value. It is influential to form a human outlook on life to determine an event in life. A human being works in a society that adapts to the actions of the surrounding behaviour. It is to create uniformity in cultivating the current life.

Desa (2004) states that observational learning is of great value to explain complex human behaviour. The media is able to influence on the education, behaviour and personality of the child. Social environmental factors can influence or be a source of learning to the process of formation of one's behaviour through various social learning patterns (Azhar, 2006). It includes humanitarian elements such as the influence of parents, teachers, peers and society that children receive during their life.

Behaviour is a thing inherent in oneself. They create their own symbols to convey the message. Elements of the environment are highlighted based on behaviour to display their distinctive artistic identity with a cultural theme.

Koentjaraningrat (2015) states, Behaviour is an act or act in a given situation. Every human behaviour in society must follow the pattern of behaviour of its society. The form of behaviour exists when the human being interacts in the everyday association with society. It arises in itself to produce a work of art of this traditional nature.

The art of making traditional children's games is produced in a cultural mould supported and educated by more adult individuals. This pattern of treatment is learned for them to communicate with the individuals around them.

Feldman (2003) states that these children's games also can influence behavior because the activities involve objects and muscle movements. This traditional children's game production technique comes from the player's observation of the behaviour of more adult individuals. Then the techniques and skills that are observed are applied according to the suitability and capabilities of the child in terms of the use of materials and tools. The initial idea of the game was also arguably an influence from the mass media.

Value

Children learn to recognize the cultural values and social norms necessary as a guideline for their future social interaction. It includes fun, freedom, unity, responsibility, compliance and cooperation.

Value is a factor that supports to do good or bad that includes cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities in an action. Among the aspects that can be developed in traditional children's games is a cognitive skill because they think the total quantity and usefulness of the material in the design of the game. Cognitive skills are the ability to think things that happen in their environment that involve mental activities such are categorizing, planning, reasoning, creating and imagining (Hamzah & Samuel, 2008).

Meanwhile, the development of fine motoric revealed that they use limbs such as hands and fingers to incorporate the game design. Creativity exists when it comes to making good plans to produce games that suit the surrounding conditions. While emotional social involves interaction among the producers during the manufacturing process.

Traditional games are a favourite activity for children who in still value because they are independent and fun. It fosters positive values for the child. Traditional games as stated in the study are a factor that supports a person's behaviour, it is to benefit and attention to the moral values of a better life (Vengadasalam, 2019).

The cultural values that can be applied in children's games are through production methods, game techniques, location selection and the use of materials and tools. It is adapted through patience, constant effort, daring to try as it goes through the process of creating the game. This value is built into players and producers after a successful process without their realization (Suyami, 2006).

During the playing process, children acquire the values of obedience, friendship, planning, honesty, sportsmanship, cooperation and respect (Hamid, 2015). The value of respect is an important element that needs to be applied during the playing process because it teaches them more disciplined (Hussain, 2014). The positive value of traditional games is creating the effort of children to create and produce their own according to their creativity.

Therefore, traditional games have many advantages that are not found in the modern game. If handled well and introduced to children from an early age, these traditional games can optimize aspects of children's development. It can also bring children closer to the natural environment to train ecological, spiritual and moral sensitivities.

Traditional games can also be an alternative to introducing multiculturalism to children as a national identity (Merlina et al., 2015). Hussain (2014) said the lack of awareness of pure values such as respecting each others was a factor that caused disciplinary problems. Pure values must be applied in the game by each participant to respect the needs of the opponent even when competing to win in each game (Abdullah, 2008).

Necessity

Culture is associated with a society striving to meet their basic needs. To meet these needs, culture has to do with the demands of a complexly evolving group of human beings that correspond to current demands (Rahman, 1995).

Art comes as a result of the needs and desire of the human being who wants to unleash his artistic expression through the pronunciation of the media, ideas and life experiences. A human being is an individual who wants to display the inside to be released for basic human needs (Tjetjep, 2000).

Playing is important for the development of the child, through play parents have the opportunity to participate in the activities of their children. Playing is a natural activity and a necessity for every child. They learn and explore the environment through play activities due

to their high imagination. Nor et al (2014) explained that play is an activity that gives joy and satisfaction to children without considering what the outcome of the activity is.

Children are valuable awards that must be educated as best they can from an early age to ensure that they reach their own potential and form positive personalities as adults. The educational effort not only covers basic needs, such as food, shelter, health and education, but also includes physical, emotional and social. However, some communities, especially parents often overlook the importance of children's physical, emotional and social needs, namely playing.

Che Mustafa (2021) playing is a basic requirement of children set out under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The contexts of playing are broad, among them indoors and outdoors or residential environments. The activity is not made merely to provide freedom of play, but to meet the needs and rights of children through social activities to avoid stress.

Conclusion

Arts and games are the basic necessities of human life and are inseparable from the life of society to this day. In order to carry out activities in life, the community does not miss out on filling their free time with various activities that can entertain the heart, among them through the traditional children's games studied. The games are designed to foster value for nurturing skills, testing competencies, and the spirit of collaboration between the teams involved.

The society has a wide variety of cultures derived from various behaviours and lineages, these traditional games have been able to form part of the life that the childhood went through. It also measures the level of skill applied systematically in the making of the games involved resulting from the player's environment.

Children are the heirs of adults, in this regard they need to be applied with values and norms in the culture of society in order for them to fill the place and perform the expected role. Studying the culture of society is not necessarily limited in the scope of a formal school or educational institution, but can happen through games which is known as informal education (Abdullah, 2008).

Research from every angle should be taken into account including the process of channelling knowledge of traditional games. Early exposure of a child is a fundamental process of character, social and cognitive development (Zahari, 2014). Thus, education is seen as a continuous process and develops simultaneously to form an identity as early as childhood. Efforts in preserving the traditional game must be intensified and implemented so that the heritage of a nation can be fully recognized, appreciated and inherited.

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