

Exploring Perspective and Awareness of Traditional Sport Engagement Among Youth in Klang Valley

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Abstract

This research examines the awareness, perspectives, and engagement in traditional sports among youth in the Klang Valley. The study aims to examine the current level of awareness towards traditional sports, identify specific sports that youths are aware of, and explore their perspectives on interest in and attitudes towards traditional sports. In addition, the research aims to understand the factors that influence youths' decisions to participate in or forego traditional sports activities. The study collects data on levels of awareness, preferences, and influencing factors using a questionnaire-based approach. The results contribute to a comprehensive understanding of traditional sports' cultural and recreational landscape among youths in the Klang Valley. This research is essential for informing educational and community initiatives aimed at promoting and preserving traditional sports in the context of modern lifestyles. This research illuminates youths' awareness and engagement with traditional sports in the Klang Valley, provides insights into cultural preservation, and guides initiatives to promote these activities within the educational landscape.

Keywords: Traditional Sports, Awareness, Perspective, Cultural, Youth

Introduction

With the rapid pace of technological advancement and the dominance of contemporary sports, traditional sports are at a crucial juncture in their survival and relevance. These sports, deeply rooted in historical and cultural heritage, embody a variety of social customs, human movement, and community building. Given the ongoing dynamic transformation of the world, it is of utmost importance to grasp the youth's perspectives and awareness of traditional sports. This understanding is vital for preserving cultural diversity and promoting holistic well-being in our societies.

This study sets out to delve into the intricate world of traditional sports, viewed through the lens of the youth population. This generation, adept at navigating the complex interplay between tradition and modernity, offers unique insights. The globalized modern civilization has ushered in a plethora of leisure and recreational options, often overshadowing traditional sports. Therefore, the perspectives and understandings of today's youth about conventional sports present a fascinating area of exploration.

The study aims to explore the various levels at which young people participate in traditional sports in different types of cultures. Researchers intend to further our understanding of the significance traditional sports have in the lives of the younger generation by examining the variables impacting awareness levels and the diverse viewpoints held by the youth. The possible effects on cultural identity, community cohesiveness, and the overall development of individuals within these communities make this research particularly relevant.

Researchers are aware of the possible effects that this research may have on youth-oriented cultural preservation programs, sports marketing campaigns, and educational programs. This study aims to provide insight into how young people view traditional sports to influence practices and policies that support the harmonious coexistence of tradition and modernity in the dynamic world of sports and culture.

Historical Perspective on Traditional Sports

Due to its diverse ethnic population and multiracial society, Malaysia is rich in culture and history. The many age-old traditional children's activities, like Congkak (filling the wooden board), Batu Seremban (tossing the stones), Sepak Takraw (kicking the rattan ball), Gasing (spinning top), Wau (kite flying), and many others, are a part of this rich cultural heritage. However, in traditional sports, generations have different perspectives, particularly younger and older generations. Nowadays, people think universal games are better than traditional games (Yusoff et al., 2020).

Children's toys and games have significantly transformed over the past few decades due to modernization efforts and the swift development of electronic devices; they are now known as modern games and toys instead of traditional ones.

Traditional children's games, which were previously quite prevalent in our society, are gradually disappearing due to the advancement of digital technology and the effects of globalization. As a result of the mainstream media's promotion and exposure to commercially created electronic toys and games, our kids are growing up with an increasing number of devices in their daily lives, including laptops, mobile phones, and portable game consoles. (Nayan & Kun, 2019).

It appears that young people want these traditional activities supplemented by other activities in broader curricula rather than eliminated, even though McPhail et al (2003) stated that it may be right when they say that "young people are telling us that they do not support programs dominated by these traditional activities." It is evident that sports (and even team games) still have a place in young people's chosen leisure activities; in fact, young people's participative repertoires still include sports and team games (Ken et al., 2007).

Contemporary Trends in Sports Engagement

Sports are rooted in cultures, and their histories interact intricately with local community developments (Aggerholm & Breivik, 2022). Changes in societies and lifestyles have influenced the extrinsic conditions and partially the content of the games, as described by (RGT, 2022). Contemporary sports events draw on many advantageous components such as

live events, significant personalities, a big-business nature, massive simultaneous audiences, and technology-enriched and media-centered environments to present an integrated, content-rich experience that lives beyond the execution of an event or the playing of a game (Stavros et al., 2022).

Using technology to improve experiences and engagement is one of the most significant trends in sports management. Virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), social media platforms, interactive apps, and other technological advancements are transforming the way sports participants engage with the game (Rasool et al., 2020). Sports groups and teams are using technology to increase fan interaction. Yim et al (2021) state that millennial fans are even more likely to use technology when they consume sports because sports-related experiences complement their other generational traits. They crave exclusive and shareable experiences that technology can amplify (Leszczynski et al., 2021).

Social media is rapidly becoming increasingly popular and significant in the sports industry. The usage of social media platforms remained a major factor in sports participation. Sports teams, players, and organizations use social media sites like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok to interact with fans, post behind-the-scenes photos, and develop a worldwide fan following. This is important as it can foster cross-platform engagement, inducing synergies for the social media strategies of professional sports organizations (Naraine et al., 2019).

Cultural Significance of Traditional Sports

Traditional sports are repositories of cultural values and practices (Smith, 2017). In the multicultural landscape of the Klang Valley, traditional sports offer a unique platform for youth to connect with their cultural roots. For example, Sepak Takraw, a traditional Southeast Asian sport, reflects the region's cultural nuances and historical ties (Abdullah & Lim, 2019). Engaging in such sports allows youth to participate in physical activities and immerse themselves in their communities' rich cultural tapestry.

Participation in traditional sports contributes to social cohesion and community identity among youth (Chan, 2020). The communal nature of traditional sports fosters teamwork, mutual respect, and camaraderie. Studies indicate that youths who engage in traditional sports are more likely to develop a sense of belonging and connection to their cultural communities (Nguyen et al., 2018). This social aspect not only enhances the overall well-being of youths but also strengthens the bonds within the diverse communities of the Klang Valley.

Traditional sports offer educational benefits beyond physical fitness. They provide a unique platform for experiential learning, teaching youths about history, teamwork, and discipline (Tan & Yap, 2021). Incorporating traditional sports into the curriculum can enhance youths' understanding of cultural heritage while promoting a holistic approach to education. Additionally, educators can leverage traditional sports as a tool for cultural exchange, fostering a more inclusive and culturally aware learning environment.

While recognizing traditional sports' cultural significance, it is essential to address the challenges hindering their widespread engagement among youths. Factors such as modernization, technology, and changing lifestyle preferences may contribute to the decline in interest (Wong & Lee, 2019). Identifying these challenges is crucial for developing effective strategies to promote the integration of traditional sports within the educational framework.

In conclusion, understanding the cultural significance of traditional sports is essential for promoting engagement among youth in the Klang Valley. These sports serve as valuable tools for cultural preservation, social cohesion, and holistic education. By recognizing and addressing challenges, educators, and policymakers can create initiatives that revive interest in traditional sports and contribute to the overall well-being and cultural awareness among youth.

Factors Influencing Sports Participation

Participating in sports is one straightforward way to attain physical exercise that enhances health. Nonetheless, adolescent sports involvement decreases, and more than 85% of teenage girls do not engage in 60 minutes per day of moderate-to-intense physical exercise (Hopkins et al., 2022). Multiple studies have highlighted the influence of cultural factors on sports participation, particularly the preference for popular and fashionable sports within a specific culture (Lacosa & Lacson, 2022).

Eime et al (2016) stated that age and gender are important factors that significantly influence youths' participation in traditional and modern sports.

Similarly, a study conducted by Sainz-de-Baranda et al (2020) mentioned that age and gender significantly influence youth participation in both traditional and modern sports. In addition, youth decision-making is influenced by cultural norms and attitudes toward sports. Meanwhile, according to Olayinka (2022), younger children and adolescents are more likely to participate in sports, while older individuals may become less active in physical activities. The study indicates that gender also has an impact, with men often participating in sports at a higher rate than women. Their parents greatly influence sports participation among youth. Their attitudes, support, and involvement in sports activities can significantly influence a child's decision to participate in sports. The influence of family structure and socioeconomic status also impact youth participation in sports (Aitken et al., 2008).

Children from single-parent families and low socioeconomic status backgrounds may have fewer opportunities and resources available to participate in sports. The influence of access to resources such as facilities, equipment, and transportation, also plays a significant role in youth participation in sports. Youth with easy access to sports facilities, proper equipment, and transportation are more likely to participate in traditional and modern sports (Zhel et al., 2022).

Awareness and Perspectives in Sports Literature

Awareness is an intangible concept that changes from one individual to another. The person's experiences are only a perception that belongs to themselves and reflects the inner world of people. According to Uyar (2023), in a society characterized by a heightened level of sports awareness, there tends to be a greater inclination towards engaging in regular physical activities. Conversely, regular physical exercise is likely less prevalent in a society where sports awareness is low.

Bayan et al (2023) highlighted that sports are a socializing, competitive, unifying, and culturally significant endeavour. It contributes to economic, social, and cultural development, physical health, personality, and character development. Additionally, it promotes solidarity and cohesion within societies, thereby contributing to global peace. Their study further

indicated that male participants demonstrated a higher level of sports awareness than their female counterparts. Furthermore, participants aged 25-29 exhibited a greater level of sports awareness than individuals in other age groups.

Yilmaz et al (2022) have observed that sports engagement fosters social awareness and enhances social cohesion among individuals. The study concludes that with an increase in class level, there is a corresponding rise in attitudes and awareness. Those who engage in regular sports tend to exhibit higher attitudes and awareness. Moreover, youths attending general education schools show elevated attitudes towards active sports, and overall sports awareness tends to increase with the participants' age. Kalman and Klara (2021) mentioned that underscoring the significance of imparting health awareness to young individuals is crucial, particularly in the current era where the rise of technology and prolonged screen time (on smartphones, tablets, and TVs) are closely associated with physical inactivity.

A study conducted by Kela et al (2023) revealed that a significant portion, precisely 75.6%, of school learners need more awareness and understanding of the pivotal role school sports play in enhancing learners' well-being. The findings indicate a reluctance among learners to actively participate in school sports unless the mode of participation transitions from voluntary to compulsory. Furthermore, the study found that most respondents needed to be made aware of the significance and benefits of sports, which contributed to their limited engagement in sporting activities. In order to address this gap, it is recommended that schools and educational institutions implement annual awareness programs to educate learners about the importance of sports and exercise. This initiative aims to motivate, encourage, and inform learners about the numerous benefits associated with sports participation.

Materials and Methods

Data Collection Procedure

This study employs a quantitative approach, utilizing a scenario-based survey to delve into the factors influencing engagement in traditional sports among youth in the Klang Valley. The survey design is crafted to mitigate potential biases linked to low awareness, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of youth perspectives and behaviours regarding traditional sports. Data collection involves a self-administered questionnaire distributed to the Klang Valley's youths and college youths. The questionnaire addresses demographics, current awareness levels of traditional sports, specific sports identification, and factors influencing decisions to participate or abstain from traditional sports activities.

Sample Profile

As shown in Table 1, 160 responses were collected; 63.75% were male, and 36.25% were female. Age-wise, the majority falls within the 16-21 age range, comprising 37.50% of the respondents, reflecting a diverse representation across various stages of adolescence. A noteworthy finding is that 91.30% of the surveyed youths are familiar with traditional sports in Malaysia, underlining a considerable level of awareness within the demographic. This awareness is crucial for understanding the cultural landscape and potential interest in traditional sports activities. The responses vary when one examines the interest levels in playing traditional games. A significant portion expresses interest, with 31.25% considering themselves interested and an additional 30.00% noting being very interested. However, there is also a notable proportion of 27.50% who neither express interest nor disinterest,

highlighting the nuanced nature of attitudes toward traditional sports. Regarding participation in traditional sports activities, 66.88% of the respondents affirm their involvement, indicating a substantial level of engagement within the surveyed population. This insight suggests that many youths must be made traditional sports and participate in related activities.

Table 1
Overview of Demographic Characteristics.

Items		Frequency	%
Gender	Male	102	63.7
	Female	58	36.2
Age	13 - 15	10	6.25
	16 - 18	60	37.5
	19 - 21	73	45.6
	22 >	17	10.6
Have you ever heard about traditional sports in Malaysia?	Yes	147	91.3
	No	13	8.0
	Not interested at all	10	6.25
	Not interested at all	8	5.00
To what extent are you interested in playing traditional games?	Neither	44	27.5
	Interested	50	31.2
	Very interested	48	30.0
			0
Have you ever participated in any traditional sports activities?	Yes	107	66.8
	No	53	33.1

Result and Finding

The primary aim of this study is to explore the impact of traditional sports beliefs among youths in the Klang Valley on their engagement levels. This objective holds significant theoretical and practical implications as it delves into a relatively unexplored area of research that is gaining prominence in psychology and sports education (Wellhead et al., 2021).

Traditional Sport and Initial Exposure

The descriptive results in Table 2 offer valuable insights into the level of familiarity among youth in Klang Valley with various traditional sports. The table presents the frequency and percentage of respondents familiar with each sport. Batu Seremban, Guli, Congkak, and Gasing are the most recognized traditional sports, with Batu Seremban, a traditional Malay game involving throwing and catching small wooden blocks, being the most familiar at 71.4%. Guli, a traditional marbles game, is close behind, with 70.2% of respondents indicating familiarity, while Congkak, a mancala game traditionally played by women, is recognized by 68.9%. Gasing, a traditional spinning top game, is familiar to 69.6% of respondents. However, Diabolo/Yo-Yo Cina, a traditional Chinese game, is less familiar, with only 31.7% of respondents indicating familiarity.

Similarly, only 24.2% of respondents recognize Xiang-Qi, a traditional Chinese chess game. Colek Lidi, a traditional game involving hitting a small object with a larger one, is familiar to 45.3% of respondents. Additionally, 13.7% of respondents indicated familiarity with other traditional sports not listed in the table, suggesting a diversity of traditional sports known to the youth in Klang Valley beyond those listed.

Table 2

Familiarity with Traditional Sports

Traditional Sport	Frequency	Percentage
Batu Seremban	115	71.4
Guli	113	70.2
Diabolo/Yo-Yo Cina	51	31.7
Congkak	111	68.9
Gasing	112	69.6
Xiang-Qi	39	24.2
Colek Lidi	73	45.3
Others	22	13.7

Figure 1, which shows the familiarity of Klang Valley youth with various traditional sports, reveals that Batu Seremban, Guli, Congkak, and Gasing are the most famous traditional sports among Klang Valley youth, with the highest bars representing the highest percentages of Familiarity. Diabolo/Yo-Yo Cina, Xiang-Qi, and Colek Lidi are less well known, with shorter bars representing a lower percentage of familiarity.

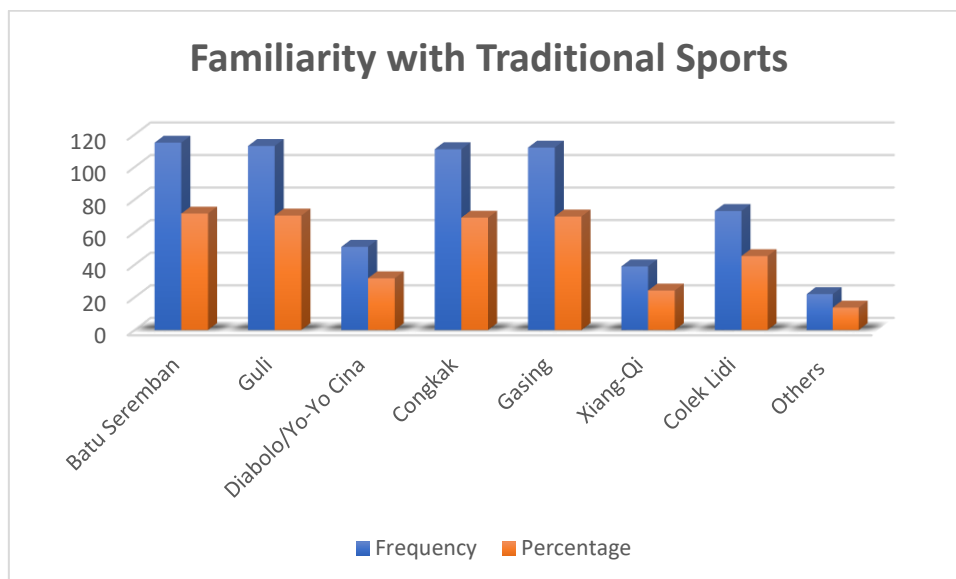


Figure 1: Familiarity with Traditional Sports

Table 3 presents data on the initial exposure of youth in Klang Valley to traditional sports, with factors listed along with the frequency and percentage of respondents who selected each factor. The most common factor was the school curriculum 65.2%, followed by family members 57.1%, TV shows 37.3%, social media platforms 29.2%, community events/festivals 28.6%, and friends 50.9%. These results suggest multiple pathways through which young people are exposed to traditional sports, with educational institutions, family, media, community events, and social networks all playing a role in promoting these sports and preserving cultural heritage. The high percentage of initial exposure through school curriculum highlights the importance of educational institutions in introducing traditional sports to the younger generation. In contrast, the significant percentage of exposure through family members underscores the importance of intergenerational communication in preserving cultural heritage. Overall, these findings suggest that a combination of factors contributes to the initial exposure of young people to traditional sports in Klang Valley.

Table 3
Initial Exposure to Traditional Sports

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
School Curriculum	105	65.2
Family Members	92	57.1
TV Shows	60	37.3
Social Media Platform	47	29.2
Community Events/Festivals	46	28.6
Friends	82	50.9

Figure 2 clearly illustrates that educational institution curriculum is the most significant factor, followed by family members, TV shows, friends, social media platforms, and community events/festivals. Using a bar chart allows for easy comparison of the different factors and provides a clear visual representation of the data, making it easier to interpret and understand the results.

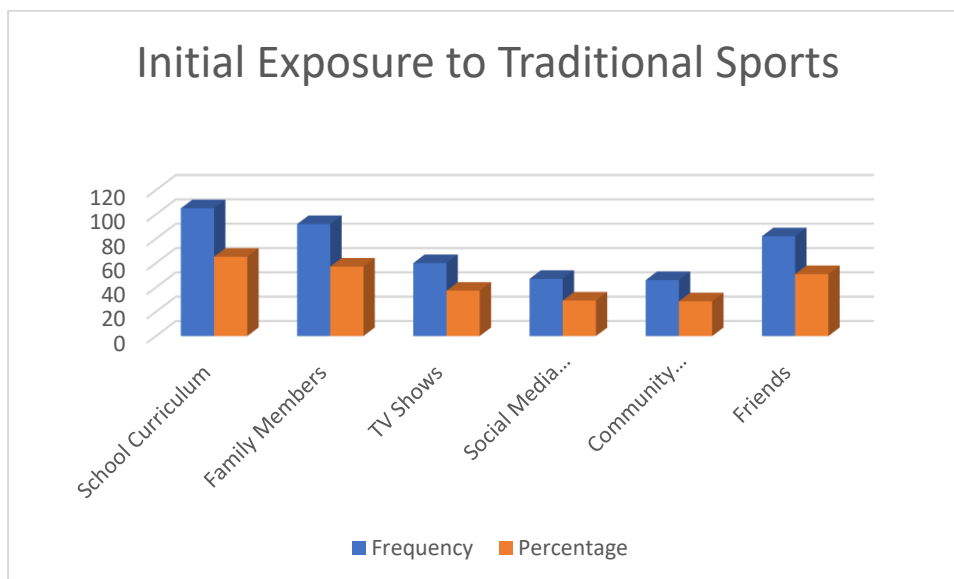


Figure 2: Initial Exposure to Traditional Sports

Additionally, the study seeks to establish a predictive model elucidating the intricate relationship between traditional sports beliefs (considered as predictive variables) and youths' engagement levels, both participation and non-participation, of traditional sports activities (criterion variable), employing the logistic regression model. This investigation contributes to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing youths' decisions regarding their involvement in traditional sports, providing valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers. A logistic regression analysis was conducted to investigate the factors that predict participation in traditional games among young adults in Klang Valley. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Logistic Regression Analysis

Variable	Estimate (β)	S.Error (β)	Wald's/ X ²	p-value	Odd Ratio
Intercepts	-0.4	0.424	0.894	0.344	0.67
Cultural importance and heritage preservation	2.637	0.704	14.029	0.000	13.964
Peer influence and friend participation	2.865	0.813	12.412	0.000	17.544
availability and accessibility of game materials	2.615	1.117	5.486	0.019	13.669
School or community initiatives promoting traditional games	0.907	0.907	0.998	0.318	2.476
Personal interests and pleasures	0.702	0.595	1.395	0.238	2.019

-2 Log Likelihood = 92.842* ; Cox & Snell R Square = 0.249 ;and Nagelkerke R Square = 0.431.

Note: *p<0.01

The -2 Log Likelihood value measures how well the model fits the data, with lower values indicating a better fit. In this case, the value is 92.842, which indicates that the model fits the data well. The Cox & Snell R Square value is .249, indicating that the independent variables explain about 25% of the variance in the dependent variable. The Nagelkerke R Square value is .431, an adjusted version of the Cox & Snell R Square that considers the number of independent variables in the model. This value indicates that the independent variables explain about 43% of the variance in the dependent variable. These values suggest that the

model is a good fit for the data and that the independent variables included in the model explain a substantial proportion of the variance in the dependent variable.

Three predictors were found to be significant: cultural importance and heritage preservation, peer influence and friend participation, and availability and accessibility of game materials. Participants who rated cultural importance and heritage preservation as necessary were 13.964 times more likely to participate in traditional games than those who did not ($p < 0.001$). Those who reported peer influence and friend participation were 17.544 times more likely to participate in traditional games than those who did not ($p < 0.001$). Participants who reported having access to game materials were 13.669 times more likely to participate in traditional games than those who did not ($p = 0.019$). School or community initiatives promoting traditional games and personal interests and pleasures were not significant predictors of participation in traditional games ($p > 0.05$).

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings elucidated that cultural relevance and heritage preservation, peer influence and friend participation, and availability and accessibility of game materials significantly influenced traditional sports participation among youth in Klang Valley. These results align with earlier studies that have identified similar factors influencing traditional sports participation (Ibaydullaev, 2022; Mahkamjonovich, 2021). The results indicate that youth in Klang Valley value their cultural heritage and recognize the significance of preserving it through traditional sports participation. Additionally, the results show that social influence and access to game materials are crucial factors in promoting youth involvement in traditional sports. The non-significant predictors in the study, such as school or community initiatives promoting traditional games and personal interests and pleasures, propose that these factors may be less critical in influencing traditional sports participation among youth. However, these factors may still play a role in promoting participation in other contexts or populations. Therefore, future studies should explore the impact of these factors in different scenarios and populations.

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing traditional sports participation among youth. The findings highlight the significance of cultural heritage preservation, social influence, and access to game materials in promoting youth engagement in traditional sports. These results have practical consequences for educators, policymakers, and community leaders seeking to promote traditional sports participation among youth. By focusing on these significant predictors, stakeholders can expand targeted interventions and programs to increase youth involvement in traditional sports, eventually contributing to preserving cultural heritage and promoting holistic well-being.

This study contributes to the existing literature on traditional sports and youth engagement by identifying key predictors of young people's participation in traditional sports in the Klang Valley, including cultural relevance and heritage preservation, peer influence and friend involvement, and availability and accessibility of game materials. The study highlights the importance of promoting traditional sports as a means of preserving cultural heritage and promoting the holistic well-being of young people. Theoretically, the findings expand our understanding of the factors influencing young people's participation in traditional sports, providing a nuanced and context-specific analysis that enriches existing knowledge. From a practical perspective, the study offers actionable insights for educators, policymakers, and

community leaders who want to increase youth engagement in traditional sports and ultimately play a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage and promoting the well-being of young people in multi-cultural countries such as Malaysia.

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