



Teachers' perspectives in motor learning with traditional game approach for early childhood

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ABSTRACT

Many traditional games from various parts of Indonesia, particularly Yogyakarta, may support children's learning in the early years. The study aims to explore the teachers' perception in implementing, understanding, and adapting traditional games that could develop students' motor skills in kindergarten. This research employed a quantitative descriptive approach with a questionnaire as its instrument, with an Aiken-V as its validation. The study was carried out at kindergartens partnered with the Early-Childhood Teacher Education Department, Faculty of Education, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, with several 35 kindergarten teachers participating. The results showed that the teacher's perspectives of traditional games were generally limited to a superficial understanding and were not yet robust in terms of their benefits to other learning aspects. The implementation of traditional games in learning was heterogeneous and merely based on the understanding of each teacher. Teachers relied on curriculum sources to adapt to conventional games and were hesitant to expand their knowledge with other sources. It was shown that these kindergarten teachers were unable to properly utilize traditional games in physical motor instruction. Teachers must gain a deeper grasp of traditional games and learn about the features of early development in order to integrate them into the classroom.

Keywords: Traditional Games, Early Childhood, Kindergarten Teacher

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INTRODUCTION

Motor physical abilities have become one of the significant skills in early childhood development. Dewantara (Rukiyati & Purwastuti, 2015) emphasized that education must fulfill three aspects, character, mind, and body of children. In this case, the child's body is interpreted as motor skills. This ability relates to children's behavioral, affective, and cognitive aspects (Lavega et al., 2014), and similar to this, a study by McEvilly et al. (2015) has discussed several perspectives about motor activities, food, and the body. In recent days, there have been parenting styles that somewhat limit childhood to have less mobility. In recent years, there have been parenting approaches that have limited the mobility of children. The play environment is not entirely safe, and it may obstruct children's growth, which is a source of concern for parents and teachers. They are accustomed to watching television, playing smartphone games, and playing games on play stations. It may cause them to become passive, weakening the physical condition of children. This was proven by Copperman & Bath (2007) that youngsters spend 115 minutes on weekdays and 198 minutes on weekends watching television or movies, 82 minutes on weekdays, and 124 minutes on weekends playing video or computer games.

Teachers serve as innovators in knowledge systems who are responsible for complex tasks so that they are required to improve and adjust their professional abilities. Gananathan (2011) states that the role of early childhood teachers does not only comprise teaching, but also the other

essential element, which is parenting. A future educator is not the key actor of knowledge transfer and is not the only resource for the students. This notion is in line with Scott (1994) who claims that education in the wise tradition is aimed at providing services and achieving social, cognitive, and humanity goals.

Early childhood is characterized by active mobility, including playing activities. Murray (2018) states that playing may positively affect children's lives in social and exploration ways. Prioletta & Pyle (2017) in their study also found that playing for early childhood has a strong impact on their academic abilities. It is relevant to Kovačević & Opić's (2014) findings that playing allows students to participate actively, improve their confidence, and build a network within the group. Games not only have entertainment potential but can also be used for learning by providing instructional guidance, problem-solving challenges, or individual skill test (Trajkovik et al., 2018).

A traditional game is one of the game categories; it is a game that has been passed down from generation to generation and is still played in today's society (Charles et al., 2017). Javanese children's traditional games (Dewantara, 2013) have various purposes, namely, to teach them care (titis pratitis), computation, sport, and noble behavior. Sukirman (2005) in his research study categorizes traditional games in Yogyakarta into three types, which are 1) playing and singing, such as *ancak-ancak alis*, *bethet ting tong*, *cublek-cublak suweng*; 2) playing and thinking, such as *dhakon*, *macanan*, *bas-basan*; and 3) playing and performing agility, such as *engklek*, *benthik*, *gobak sodor*. Traditional children play which can be used to develop fundamental motor skills are as follows (1) *Ambah-ambah lemah*, (2) *Benthik*, (3) *Bethet Thing Thong*, (4) *Blarak-blarak sempal*, (5) *Boy-boynan*, (6) *Dhul-dhulan*, (7) *Engklek/Sunda Manda*, (8) *Gambaran*; (9) *Gatheng*. (10) *Gobak sodor*, (11) *Ingkling Gunungan*, (12) *Jamuran*, (13) *Jeg-jegan*, (14) *Jethungan/Dhelikan*, (15) *Jlong-jling kitiran*, (16) *Kasti*, (17) *Kotak* (Suherman et al., 2019). In the learning process, kids need something fun, and playing and singing are some of the important things. This is because of the character of students who like to play and sing. AmbrettiA., PalumboC., & Kourkoutas (2019) argue that play can be effective to create a learning and development environment, is challenging, creates a sense of security and well-being, and builds a sense of community.

However, teachers have got different perceptions on implementing traditional games concerning children's motor development. Teachers should be able to create learning that supports children's motor development (McEvelly et al., 2013). Trajkovik et al (2014), in line with this, found that different games impact the learner's satisfaction, which in turn has a significant impact on educational outcomes. The issue is what teachers' perceptions of how conventional games are implemented, understood, and adapted in kindergarten can help youngsters improve motor skills. Traditional games in this study pertain to Yogyakarta's traditional games. The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' perceptions on how traditional games can help students improve motor skills at a kindergarten that was a partner school of the Department of Early-Childhood Teacher Education, Faculty of Education, Yogyakarta State University.

METHOD

This study is descriptive research that attempts to describe facts in a certain population. The facts in the current study refer to traditional games in the motor physical education subject at the kindergarten level. Participants in this study were kindergarten teachers. The study was conducted in the school which was partnered with Early-Childhood Teacher Education Department, Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Indonesia. There were 35 kindergarten teachers from seven schools who voluntarily participated. Characteristics of the contributors in this study are presented in Table 1.

This study employs a questionnaire to collect the data, and its questions include three aspects: teacher understanding of traditional games, traditional games in the classroom, and

teachers' ability in adapting to traditional games. The framework for the research instrument in this study is presented in Table 2.

The validity of the instrument was measured by Aiken-V $p = 0,05$ and V index = 0,75. It involved expert judgment of early childhood learning. For testing its reliability, the instrument utilized test-retest, involving eight kindergarten teachers. The result of reliability showed that all items have significant value. The reliability of the instrument in this study is presented in Table 3.

Based on the table above, the value of r with a significance level of 0.05 and $n = 8$ is 0.6319. Alpha reliability value of 0.791 indicates that the tested instrument is good. The average value between raters is 0.883, meaning that the average value between raters is greater than r . It is then possible to determine that the instrument to be utilized is reliable.

Table 1. Participants' characteristics

Aspects	Characteristics	Total number of teachers
Teaching experience	a. more than 10 years	11
	b. 5-10 years	6
	c. less than 5 years	18
Educational background	a. undergraduate degree in childhood education	15
	b. non-childhood education degree	20
Teaching certificate	a. standardized	5
	b. non-standardized	30

Table 2. The framework for the research instrument

Aspect	Indicator	Number of items
Teacher understanding of traditional games	a. Definition of traditional games	5
	b. Advantages of traditional games in other aspects	5
Traditional games in the classroom	a. Traditional games which have been previously practiced	3
	b. Frequency of traditional game implementation in the classroom	3
	c. Challenges of traditional game implementation	3
	d. Suitability of motor physical education principles	3
	e. Suitability of motor assessment	
Teacher ability in adapting traditional games	a. Suitability of early childhood student development	5
	b. The underlying principles within the theories for performing game modification	5
Total Number of Item		32

Table 3. The reliability of the instrument (n=8)

	r	Intraclass Correlatio n ^b	Lower Bound	Sig
Single Measures		.791 ^a	.618	.000
Average Measures	0.6319	.883 ^c	.764	.000

The average value between raters is 0.883, meaning that the average value between raters is greater than r . It is then possible to determine that the instrument to be utilized is reliable.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Results

One of the findings in the current study is related to kindergarten teachers' understanding on traditional games from Yogyakarta. Teacher understanding was classified into three aspects: teacher views on traditional games, advantages of motor physical development, and advantages of other developmental aspects. Firstly, it appears that teacher perceptions of traditional games are diverse. They are divided into five categories based on the findings. Cultural games, former popular games, native games, Javanese games, and 'I don't know' responses are all on the list. Traditional games were defined by thirty-one teachers (88.4%) as past popular games that have been played for a long time, cultural games that were derived from people's playing habits, and native games that were brought to other places by a particular community to other regions and comprise a set of activities in children's free time. There were four teachers (11.4%) who did not understand the definition of traditional games.

Besides, teachers' belief in the benefits of traditional games to the childhood motor physical aspect is categorized into two. Five teachers (20%) consider that traditional games are beneficial for children's gross motor skills including basic locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative movements. Meanwhile, 30 teachers (80%) believe that these games can enhance children's fine and gross motor skills. According to the participating teachers, fine motor skills involve the ways the children move their fingers to pick up, hold, and catch something.

The data on teachers' perceptions on how traditional games benefit other aspects are diverse. In general, these data are grouped into five aspects of advantages, namely: religious and moral value, cognitive, social-emotional, language, and art. Besides, the result of this study shows that teachers do not see traditional games as beneficial to only one aspect, the motor physical. For more details, the results of teacher understanding are presented in Table 4.

The implementation of traditional games in learning

This study classifies traditional games into three, namely singing, thinking, and performing agility. In line with this, data were collected based on those categories of games that had been performed in classes. It is found that all teachers conducted singing games, but out of 14 types of games, only six had been done in classes. The type of traditional game that teachers used the most is playing and performing agility.

The frequency of using games in classes is one of the data obtained. There are variations of how often games are implemented in learning. This study divides this frequency into 4 categories, namely: every day, once a week, once a month, and once a semester. The most frequently used traditional games in learning are performed once a week and are applied in physical education classes. Teachers used the games in the physical-motor development activities.

In their implementation, various obstacles were faced by teachers. The obtained data about these challenges are classified into six categories. They are activating students, motivating students to play, understanding students when playing, providing school facilities and infrastructure, preparing teacher references, adjusting the load of children's school activity, and no difficulties in traditional game implementation. Teachers state that the biggest problem is explaining the games to children as it is difficult for them to understand the game rules. They might not understand the game rules and have never played traditional games outside schools. Besides, the teachers find it difficult to motivate them to play and provide the needed infrastructure. Games must involve movements to satisfy the demands of very young kids to move around. In this regard, games must meet four criteria: increasing student knowledge, giving fair opportunities for all students, increasing student motivation, and adjusting student competencies. According to teachers, the least compliance to students' requirements during games is to give all learners the same opportunity during the games.

This demonstrates that not all kids are granted the same opportunities. They, on the other hand, believe that most games can boost student knowledge and motivation because teachers usually strive to explain the games to the students while they are playing. Furthermore, allowing children to play makes them joyful since it allows them to move around and express themselves. The adjustment to student competencies was then carried out as well.

Table 4. Data on teacher understanding

Indicator	Result	Percentage	Total percentage
Understanding of traditional games	a. popular games in the past	42.6	100
	b. cultural games	22.6	
	c. native games	17.1	
	d. Javanese games which comprise a set of activities in children's free time	5.7	
	e. no prior knowledge of traditional games	11.4	
Advantages for the development of motor aspects	a. only benefit to gross motor skills	20	100
	b. benefit to fine and gross motor skills	80	
Advantages to other aspects of development	a. social-emotional	57.2	100
	b. religious and moral value	8.6	
	c. language	8.6	
	d. cognitive aspects	20	
	e. art	5.6	

Table 5. The learning results with traditional games

Indicator	Result	Percentage
ype of traditional game	a. playing and singing	42.8
	b. playing and thinking	21
	c. playing and performing agility	50
Frequency	a. every day	5.7
	b. once a week	37.1
	c. once a month	34.4
	d. once a semester	25.75
Challenges	a. provide understanding	48.6
	b. provide motivation	51.4
Suitability of motor physical education principles	a. increase knowledge	97.1
	b. develop motivation	97.1
	c. provide the same opportunity	77.15
	d. adjust competence	88.6
Suitability of motor assessment	a. suitable	45.77
	b. not suitable	51.3

Table 6. Teachers' ability to adapt to traditional games

Indicator	Result	Percentage
Suitability with the level of childhood development	a. Adapting	68.6
	b. Not yet adapting	31.4
Guidelines used to modify games	a. Standard for Childhood Development Level	48.6
	b. Textbooks and modules	8.8
	c. Not knowing	34.2

When children play traditional games, teachers need to assess their motor skill development. The assessment procedure used by teachers varies depending on the data received. Teachers, overall, utilize improper instruments since they were devised solely based on the

teachers' own experiences. Teachers, in general, evaluated the learners based on their knowledge. The rest of the teachers assessed childhood properly because they follow the early childhood education curriculum's Standard for Childhood Development Level to do so. Table 5 presents the use of traditional games in learning.

Teachers' ability to adapt traditional games

The results related to the suitability of traditional game implementation with early age children's motor physical characteristics are categorized into two, namely conformity to children at the early age development level and basic principles applied to modify traditional games.

The obtained data on the suitability of the implementation of traditional games with the level of early childhood development is divided into two. The first is whether the teachers have adapted traditional games to suit early age children's characteristics, and the second is whether the teachers have never adapted traditional games to suit early age children's characteristics. Teachers, in general, have tried to adapt traditional games to fit the characteristics of children at an early age. The adaptation takes the form of game tools, rules, duration, and rewards. Some others have never adapted the traditional games because they lack an understanding of how to adjust games that match early age children's characteristics.

Data on the theoretical foundations used to adapt traditional learning games reveal a variety of outcomes. In general, teachers followed a set of rules when implementing traditional games. The Standard for Childhood Development Level suggested in the Early Childhood Education Curriculum was perhaps the most widely utilized framework for incorporating traditional games into educational settings (48.6%). Teachers used modules and books in addition to the standard to adapt traditional games, though this only accounts for a small portion of the total (8.8%). However, 12 teachers (34.2%) do not follow any criteria when it comes to using conventional games in the classroom. For more details, the results of teachers' ability to adapt traditional games are presented in Table 6, while types of traditional games that can be adapted by teachers in motor learning are *Yeye* (jumping rope), *Egrang bathok* (coconut shell stilts), *Cublak-cublak suweng*, *Jamuran*, *Dakon* (Southeast Asian mancala), *Engklek* and *Gobak Sodors*.

Discussion

Based on the results of the study, this section would cover three aspects. The first one is the teacher's understanding or perception of traditional games. Concerning this, kindergarten teachers' understanding of traditional games would be first discussed. Kindergarten teachers perceive traditional games as something passed down from an ancestor, a game that originated in a region and was widespread. Traditional games may evolve because of a cultural process that took place in a specific region. The play creates habits and is passed down through generations. They spread from one place to the next as human evolution progressed, and they have cultural and geographical significance (Charles et al., 2017).

Similarly, teachers' views on the advantages of motor activities in traditional games in general mainly highlight the motor aspects. Traditional games are seen to be ineffective at stimulating other parts of holistic development. Traditional games' motor exercises only help to improve some components of development. Traditional game activities primarily focus on physical motor abilities, which is consistent with a claim (Jaydari et al., 2016) that playing traditional games increases motor skills. In the play, some movements meet the students' needs. Traditional games provide basic movements consisting of locomotor, manipulation, and non-locomotor. In addition, traditional games can stimulate fine motor skills, such as handling and moving the fingers.

On the other hand, the teacher's understanding as revealed in this study contradicts Lopinzi's that physical activity is very good for the brain and supportive learning barriers in mathematics and reading subjects (Cardinal, 2016). Active youngsters are more likely to assist their cognitive development though, of course, students cannot directly feel the impact of traditional games on cognitive components while playing. Children's games are beneficial in developing mind sharpness and willpower (Dewantara, 2013). In their study, Trajkovik et al. (2014) discovered that traditional games on cognitive components of play have an impact on student happiness, which has a major impact on educational outcomes. Furthermore, Trajkovik et

al. (2018) believe that intrinsic and extrinsic motivating elements, as well as perceived experiences, have a direct impact on student accomplishment. Furthermore, all kids embrace the integration of traditional games in primary school courses because their personality traits have no direct impact on their learning experiences or outcomes. Due to enhanced learning motivation, students who play traditional games likely improve their cognitive capacities.

In social and emotional aspects, teachers believe that the benefits of traditional games are not only on one aspect of development. As students interact when playing and using verbal and non-verbal language to communicate with playmates, at a certain level, their emotions will be expressed and controlled; for example, when they win or lose. In line with this, Lavega et al. (2014) agree that traditional games that are collaboratively played will affect children's emotional development and winning is associated with positive emotions. DeVries, in other words, says that by playing, students learn social skills such as sharing, understanding, having various perspectives, and taking turns (Aypay, 2016). Furthermore, game rules compel students to obey them, thus socially supportive sanctions bring about new emotional experiences. In traditional games, Lavega et al. (2014) uncover a link between emotional experiences and a competitive environment. When students play, they would like to bring out their optimal ability to achieve the expected outcomes.

The traditional game's benefits for language features are poorly recognized by teachers. This contradicts the findings of Weisberg et al. (2013) who found that children learn words better during directed and guided games than during free play, as measured by the number of words children understand (receptive tasks) and the number of words they can define (expressive tasks). Students communicate with their peers and teachers while playing, and this enables them to learn new vocabulary during the conversations. Levy's (1984) findings of three aspects of game and language will be reviewed as follows: 1) the use of language to facilitate a play; 2) language as an object to play; and 3) egocentric speech or "talking to yourself" as what happens in a play situation. Traditional games applied in learning can improve students' language development as they try to communicate verbally or non-verbally according to their abilities. Communication with friends is needed for students to express opinions and simple strategies, while communication with the teacher is used to understand the information provided when carrying out play activities.

In this study, it was found that teachers lack understanding of the traditional game benefits to the development of moral aspects. Dewantara (2013) argues that children's play as a sports game uses body strength and mental attitude. Children's games are closely related to exercise (psychomotor) and character (affective). Wright et al. (2020), through their research, likewise show that imaginative role-play can serve as an attractive and interactive moral training, a media that promotes moral development and highlights the difference between antisocial and asocial violence. Role and imaginative plays are found in traditional games. Moral messages contained in traditional games have contributed to the introduction of cultural values (Rakhman & Wibawa, 2019). Students realize the functions of their role in playing, so they must be active in following each role. Traditional games can develop characters through a process of socialization with friends (Sukadari et al., 2019). This role function requires that they obey and understand the benefits of each role in a game. Vizano et al. (2020) therefore suggest that informational physical education for students should be designed to diminish students' constraints when interacting with their environment.

Another finding in this study reveals that teachers do not regularly apply traditional games in learning, as there are too many obstacles that are complicated to cope with. This has become another point when compared to van Oers & Duijkers (2013) study that every 6 to 8 weeks, teachers can select a theme for social activities so that children can adopt how to play and learn about rules in the context of a play. As educators, teachers should be able to introduce regional cultural treasures to childhood from an early age. This is because education has a significant role as a communication tool to promote the development of student culture (van Oers & Duijkers, 2013). Student learning through motors was also voiced by Dewey (Tore et al., 2016); learning by preschool childhood involves eyes, ears, sensations, and combinations of feelings, and nonverbal social interactions are good before language development. Besides, learning enables

organs to function. These exercises can be done either in or out of the classroom, and they can be used in conjunction with good facilities. Traditional games can be played on a variety of occasions; the most essential thing is that they can help learners appreciate the culture in which they live.

However, the low frequency with which teachers use conventional games to teach students may be a barrier in education. At school, learners are normally taught to accommodate changes while also learning about the world around them, including past cultures. Concerning this, traditional games can be used in the classroom or outside learning activities. Traditional games can be introduced into classroom sessions to improve student motivation (Vasileva-Stojanovska et al., 2014). To adapt to school settings and student peculiarities, however, the teacher must be able to use his or her inventiveness.

Overall, this study indicates that the assessment of motor physical learning was not done adequately. To determine students' motor skill standards, the teachers undertook an evaluation based on their personal experience. This is comparable to McEville et al.'s (2013) literature study, that assessing physical activity levels requires professionals who can construct structured circumstances of students' experience, behavior, and subjectivity. The teacher, hence, should be the expert who monitors the progress of the students. Assessment of motor function in children has become increasingly relevant in recent years, according to Piek et al. (2012), due to the understanding that motor disorders are linked to cognitive, verbal, social, and emotional issues. The growth of students' motor skills can be used to illustrate the development of other skills. Thus, examining a student's motor abilities can contribute to the diagnosis of issues with other aspects of motion and development (Dourou et al., 2017).

The ability of teachers to adapt traditional games to students' learning needs is the final point to discuss. The appropriateness of the applied traditional games with the characteristics of the students indicates the quality of traditional games. The Standard for Childhood Development Level was most likely the primary source for adapting material from other sources without adding depth. This conclusion, however, does not address the notion of how teachers design learning arrangements of various stimuli and variables in the main environment of the educational process. Teachers commonly use structures and equipment that are thought to be the solution to motor difficulties to arrange the learning process (Tore et al., 2016). As a result, they must be willing to keep improving their ability and creativity in organizing learning, especially traditional games.

Traditional games have four aspects that do not address the learners' physical motor development. The first is the traditional game, which does not allow kids to participate in the action. In fact, only learners who are already proficient are subjected to higher levels of stimulus. This has nothing to do with the findings (McEville et al., 2013) on the kindergarten education program's purpose of increasing student movement or active being. Individual stimulation is surely provided by the same activities for all kids. Second, not all traditional games are appropriate for students' development. The teacher makes changes as a result of trial and error. As a result, children find it tough or too easy to participate in physical activities.

Motor learning is about adapting physical activities, as well as adjusting differences in environment and individual characteristics (Tore et al., 2016). Students must feel challenged to perform traditional games. The level of difficulty will affect their desire to play. Third, due to the unsuitability of the program, students are not motivated to play. The results show that the motivating environmental impact on the emergence of kindergarten students' motor skills influences fundamental motor skills (McEville et al., 2013). Students who are motivated to play will feel satisfied and want to continue playing the game. Finally, the lack of desire to play is because students do not feel challenged to play activities. Vygotsky (Meacham & Almalki, 2018) concerning this asserts that the interaction between students and people with skills will increase the zone of proximal development in learning.

According to Trudeau & Shephard (2008), physical activities in schools have become more constant as a result of teacher responsibilities. Consistent in the sense that the teacher has planned a variety of physical activities based on conventional games that are measurable and tailored to the student's individual needs. According to Corbin (Hartoto, 2000), providing motor physical activity necessitates the following principles: activities to develop "movement awareness,"

fostering children's motivation through challenging programs, opening opportunities, "salient and retentive" approaches, and providing equal opportunities to foster a child's enthusiasm. Physical exercises prepared in the classroom can cater to kids' requirements and growth, subsequently benefiting them.

CONCLUSION

There are varied ways teachers may use in understanding, implementing, and adapting traditional games in learning. Teachers' knowledge of various traditional games can be valuable in establishing the definition of traditional games. Understanding should not be restricted to the meaning of the phrase in this situation but should also assist other elements of development. Traditional games are also important in physical motor learning, especially because improvements are needed in the type of game, the frequency of implementation in learning, the constraints faced, differences in conformity to physical motor learning principles, and differences in the suitability of motor assessment to illustrate how large the learning gap is. Furthermore, the ability of the teacher to adjust to traditional games is still contingent on their respective expertise. This can certainly lead to differences in the development of young children. To adapt traditional games to the characteristics of youngsters, the majority of the teachers refer to the Standard for Childhood Development level.

This study suggests that to improve understanding of traditional games, teachers should examine not only the physical aspects of motor skills, but also the six aspects of early childhood development, namely physical motor, religious and moral values, cognitive, social-emotional, artistic, and linguistic development. Each game will undoubtedly profit from these features. Second, the teacher should provide conventional games that are altered according to the learning theme for implementation. The teacher must also modify components of the traditional games, such as color, size, and rules, to fit the student's needs. Assessments must also be prepared with proper references in order for the assessment's outcomes to be valid in terms of delivering information regarding student development. The final recommendation is that traditional games be adapted for physical motor learning. Teachers should draw inspiration from a range of sources when developing classic games. More materials will broaden the teacher's understanding, allowing for a more appropriate application.

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