CHAPTER TWO

GAMES AND THEIR FUNCTIONAL DYNAMICS
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Games are a universal part of the human experience, common to all cultures, genders and ages, in which, decisions are made in an environment where players interact. A Game is a situation, where players choose different actions in an attempt to maximize their results or returns; a pursuit or activity with rules, performed either alone or with others, for the purpose of entertainment.

According to Eric Berne, “game is a spontaneous or planned social activity carried out most productively for the benefit of the society”\(^1\), from a broader social and cultural perspective this definition holds true as games are spontaneous expressions of people’s joys and celebrations. Games are the most gratifying forms of social contact and significant social interaction most commonly takes the form of games. From a strictly physical viewpoint, Game can be defined as Shaw, Gorely and Corban quoting Loy 1968 say, “a game is any form of playful competition whose outcome is determined by physical skill, strategy or chance”\(^2\), this definition is true more in the sports, physiological and psychological context. In these forms of games, generally mental or physical stimulation and sometimes both are involved. Many games serve as a form of physical exercise and recreation besides serving children as tools to develop practical skills in the form of educational, situational and psychological growth.

A game can also be defined as a structured or semi-structured activity, usually undertaken for enjoyment, fun activities that can be educational or purely just for fun. Key components of games are goals, rules, challenge and interactivity. In the
context of economic studies, the term game is used to describe simulation of various activities e.g., for the purposes of training, analysis and prediction shows the players’ strategies and pay offs.

Games play an important role in the life of the community. Traditional games are important for the expression of the life and culture of communities, and contribute to the transmission of values and ideas from generation to generation. They play a major role in the forms of communication and entertainment we experience on a daily basis. All children will experience the arts in various forms through their personal and working lives beyond school. For some, the games will provide an opportunity to specific artistic career. For others, their learning in the arts will be applied in other occupations, be part of their leisure or feature in other parts of their daily lives.

Games are a major form of human communication and expression. Individuals and groups use them to explore, express and communicate ideas, feelings and experiences. Each game form is a language in its own right, being a major way of symbolically knowing and communicating experience. Through the games, individuals and groups express, convey and invoke meanings. Like other art forms, traditional games have their own conventions, codes, practices and meaning structures. They also communicate cultural contexts. Children benefit from understanding and using these ways of knowing and expressing feeling and experiences.

**Game theory:**

Game theory is the study of strategic situations. This theory has applications
primarily in the fields of economics and business, but also in political science, the
law and everyday life. Game theory has often been interpreted as a part of a general
type of rational behavior. This theory recommends what agents should do in
specific interactive situations given their preferences. When the outcome of an
agent’s action depends upon the actions of all the other agents involved it is said to
be interactive. Game theory studies these interactive situations. The fundamental idea
is that an agent in an interactive decision should take into account the deliberations
of his opponents who, in turn, take into account his deliberations. Because game
theory arose from the analyses of competitive scenarios, the problem is called game
and the participants are called players. But these techniques apply to more than just
sport, and are not even limited to competitive situations. In short, game theory deals
with any problem in which each player’s strategy depends on what the other players
do.

Game theory was founded by Von Neumann and Morgenstern in their book,
“The Theory of Games and Economic Behavior, Game theory and the Equilibrium
notion were first presented by them and they focused only on a specific kind of two
person games, so called zero-sum games; in these games, one player’s payoff is
exactly the inverse of that of the other player”\(^3\).

Though ‘Game Theory’ has so many applications in economy, political
sciences or organizations theory, the fact is that there are no elements in this theory
that seemed useful from the traditional games perspective, which is informal and
unstructured. The possible reason could be, as Lloyd S. Shapley [Grolier
Encyclopaedia, 1995]\(^4\) claims,

"Although the terminology of players, moves, rules, and payoffs might
suggest a preoccupation with sports or recreation, the theory of games has seldom been of practical use in playing real games. This may be because the theory is based on idealized players who have clear motives and unlimited skill and calculating ability."

This fact is further confirmed by Espen Aarseth as he explains: “Game theory, a branch of mathematics and economics is really not about entertainment games at all, but competitive situations in general”\(^5\).

As such, Game theory is exciting because although the principles are simple the applications are far-reaching. Interdependent decisions are everywhere, potentially including almost any endeavor in which self-interested agents cooperate or compete. Probably the most interesting games involve communication, because so many layers of strategy are possible. Game theory can be used to design credible commitments, threats or promises or to assess propositions and statements offered by others. There are two fundamental types of games: one is sequential and the other is simultaneous. In sequential games, the players must make alternate moves; in simultaneous games, the players can act at the same time. These types are distinguished because they require different analytical approaches.

**Traditional and Folk Games:**

Every national, ethnic and cultural group owns a treasury of traditional games, which still have cultural and educational value and often stimulate intellectual and emotional development. Traditional games are well-known games among specific groups/regions that are played by everybody, boys and girls, children and adults. They
are played in fields, on the street and at home and have been known for generations and transmitted from one generation to the next and sustained. They exist everywhere; in every country the games are numerous and each game is an illustration in miniature of its culture and civilization. Traditional games are part of the folk culture in which the child/adult actively employs all his physical, motor, sensory-perceptive, intellectual, linguistic, social and emotional abilities.

Folk games are popular games mainly played in rural as well as urban areas and passed along from one generation to another. According to Brunvand, “folk games are a form of structured play, have an objective, have rules, have variability, and generally need no special equipment or specific playing area”\(^6\). As per Renson R & Smulders, H “The term ‘Folk’ is refers to a group of people who share a common culture and lifestyle. Folk games are active games with a recreational character, requiring specific physical skills, strategy or chance, or a combination of these three”\(^7\).

As ‘Metin And’, a Turkish scholar, says, “one of the most important aspects of folk games is vocal or verbal expression. Since many folk rhymes are descended from myth-the concomitant and accompaniment of ritual-the study of them may serve to reveal the original function and inherent motivation of the games in which they are sung or recited. Some games demand the spoken word, rhymes, or chants; yet other games require the suppression of all sound. At the opposite pole from these games rich in verbal dimension, we find games where speaking is strictly prohibited. Some are mere diversions meant to while away the tedium and some have a serious, perhaps religious or magical significance”\(^8\).
Folk games are in general, expressions of joys and celebrations of people mostly demonstrated in vocal form than otherwise. Citing the example of Turkish folk games ‘Metin And’ distinguishes four main categories of verbal expression: songs and chants, rhymes, tongue twisters, and riddles. Songs accompanying games and question-and-answer chants enjoy the greatest popularity among girls.

‘Folk’ games are those traditional games passed along informally from one group to another. They are more often than not are preserved by oral tradition throughout centuries. These games have the ability to amuse, instruct and inspire. They reflect the values and beliefs of their cultures. Games help minds and imaginations of children to mature, providing them with a chance to act out roles, make choices, and experience the thrill of winning and the disappointment of losing.

**Significance of Traditional Games:**

Each and every culture and tradition possesses its own wisdom. Traditional games provide an inexpensive and effective way to help children explore traditional culture to gain insight towards acquiring this wisdom. To share this culture with children is to introduce them to an important part of their own heritage. Each part of our planet was home to different local folks, so through games we can explore even the heritage of the people that inhabited that particular region. These games demonstrate some important aspects of traditional folk values and way of life. First, they show children that despite the gap in time and culture, traditional children liked to have fun just like children today. And they are fun, they involve suspense, or competition, or a skill challenge, just like today’s games. Children learn about aspects of traditional life
through the objects of these games. Through traditional games children recognize divergent views and the importance of cultural values.

Traditional games can inform, teach, persuade and provoke thought. They can reproduce and reinforce existing ideas and values, challenge them, or offer new ways of thinking and feeling. They can confirm existing values and practices, they can bring about change. As a result, the arts play an important role in shaping our understanding of ourselves as individuals and members of society and our understanding of the world in which we live.

But interest in games in general had greatly declined during the first half of the twentieth century and was revived primarily by scholars in other disciplines following World War II. Sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, and educators have primarily argued that the playing of games is of functional and developmental importance-physically, psychologically, socially, and intellectually-and such conclusions one could probably assert for all human behaviours. But most importantly, such scholarship exemplifies that playing is not trivial, and, as George Eisen poignantly suggests in "Coping with Adversity: Children's Play in the Holocaust" (1987), play, or perhaps more accurately playfulness, may be an essential aspect for survival".9

In addition, traditional games can be enjoyed across generations, allowing people of different ages to interact. People of all ages can be invited to join in, thereby fostering a sense of local community. One of the main aims in adopting traditional games in schools is to create opportunities for children to interact with different kinds of people in different situations.

Games have always played a diverse and important role within a community, and they have also provided a means by which communities link themselves to one another and into larger social networks. They also have a strong impact on the
psychological and social quality of life. To many people these games are a cordial way to spend their leisure time and to keep fit and active. Moreover, traditional games offer opportunities for people to get together and to have social contacts with each other. In modern times of growing individualization these traditional games, could help develop community bonding, where every participant and the spectator are a valuable asset to the growth of their own community.

The benefits provided by traditional games through outdoor environments and nature experiences are remarkable and extensive. According to Dr Joe L. Forst, “these include: inner peace, stress reduction, fitness, healing, mental health, and creativity; physical, emotional and intellectual development; bonding with nature, appreciation of nature, and heightened sense of beauty. Play and learning are mutually supportive and necessary for a healthy childhood and a competent adulthood”.

Another important dimension to be considered is the occasion and functions of the games. As mere amusement, games are performed on a great variety of occasions. As per Martin And, “Man finds many situations for game-playing, such as birth, puberty, circumcision, marriage, return from military service, and release from prison, to which may be added the religious and national holidays, fairs, seasonal festivals, and ceremonies. Each region and each town has its indoor and out-door gatherings and parties held on various occasions, their names and traditions differing from place to place. Some games are responsible for the growth of the crops, for the increase of flocks and herds, the making of rain or to ensure sunshine or an increase of solar heat”.

Martin And states, “since peasants and children are among the most obstinate conservators of traditional usage, the study of their legends, anecdotal material, certain fragmentary meanings and actions, and the rich game vocabulary still extant can help to
reveal the connection of many games with primitive forms of ritual and their original functions.\textsuperscript{12}

The main focus of my project is to identify and compile a list of those games and make a record of the traditional children’s games, to examine the possibilities of using traditional children’s games in contemporary education and to make them applicable for children’s theatre practice.

**Features of Traditional Games**

For playing traditional games, the materials needed are often not expensive, easily available like sand, pebbles and sticks and the like, which are freely available everywhere. These games are also played with water, soil, piece of wood, piece of pottery, cloth, rope, stones, marbles and other such things which can be obtained with little or no difficulty.

Some of the material and spaces used for play and the games associated with them are; Sand&Stick-kuchi kuchi pulla, stick-gilli danda, piece of cloth-vottotti surotti, open ground-nela banda aata, kuntata, kappalata, jantalata, piece of pottery-pettelata, tokkudu billa, fields-meka puli aata, sand-upppata, pieces of bangles-gajulata, pebbles-achchnagayalu-, stones-latchars, nalugu rallata, rope-thadata(skipping) and marbles-goli lata.

A traditional game can be turn-based, or allow players from every side to act simultaneously. In traditional games where units have orthogonal actions, players may switch sides in alternate turns (e.g. pursuers swapping roles with evaders), either on a turn-taking basis or when a pursuer(s) succeeds in capturing a victim. The state of a

60
player and/or object may be changed when one player moves in order to catch an opponent, evade being touched, protect himself or herself, guard a player, rescue a player, reach a destination, etc., the actions that can be performed with the objects are: throw, deflect, pick up, discard, strike and arrange etc.,\textsuperscript{13} Besides these, there are games of physical contact, movement, distance, defense, suspense and blocking games.

The abundance of games guarantees a splendid gradation and diversification to suit different age groups – from kindergarten up to and including adults, for both genders and for small and large groups\textsuperscript{14}. There are games for younger children as there are for adults, there are games for women as there are for men. There are also group games as well as team games. They are easy to learn and to teach. The rules of the games are easy to modify and to adapt to different contexts and situations.

The traditional games played by children have an important role to play in the development of the children. Through game playing, children act out the war between good and evil and learn moral lessons. Games instruct children in the folklore of a culture as well as in the mental and physical skills required of them as adults. They teach children about power and cunning and luck. They help them learn about humor. They show them how to think by solving riddles and how to make choices. And finally they are a child's outlet often for secret hopes and fears and dreams.

Competition has to be considered in a cultural context and this consideration is to be examined in relation to such aspects as appreciation of physical skills, entertainment and, especially, the social view of cooperation and community.

According to Metin And, ‘Another dimension of games is the values assigned to the outcome of the game, that is, rewards and penalties. In many games the loser or
the losing group pays a forfeit; this often takes the form of being made to appear ridiculous. For instance, he or she has to stand on a chair and crow like a cock, or bray like a donkey, or have his or her face smeared with paint. Sometimes these penalties become a game played independently. We may call them "victimizing games," where horseplay and jokes are abundant and sometimes the victim is the innocent party who does not know what will happen to him”

They are games touching and dealing with all aspects of human development - motor, cognitive, emotional, moral and social behavior and employing all the senses.

**Classification of Games:**

The category of children's traditional games is very rich and varied. The publication of proceedings of "Traditional Games and Children of Today" conference dedicated to the Belgrade—OMEP (Organisation Mondiale Pour l Education Prescolaire - World Organization for Early Childhood Education) Project on traditional children's games mentions that, “the richness of traditional games is evident by their number. Some of the popular anthologists, scholars and play theorists have huge collection of games to their credit. For example, Opie and Opie (1969) have an index of 2500 games(and their varieties), Sutton-Smith recorded (1972) more than 300 games in New Zealand, and Renson (1981), recording games of a narrower group than defined here in various parts of Flanders, obtained 95-233 protocols of different games, or 806 protocols in total”

The publication further states that the wealth and variety of traditional children's games is reflected in the number of categories of these games. As an
illustration, they list only some of the categories: bouncing games, clapping games, walking games, counting rhyme, tongue--twisters, mocking rhymes, riddles, funny rhymes, chasing games, catching games, hiding games, duelling games, games of competition, jumping games, games of wit, games of expression, strength, agility, chance, humour, disguising, daring, games for expressing sympathy, etc.

But, the general classification followed by anthologists of various countries and cultures in compiling and studying traditional games divides them into three types; games of physical skill, games of strategy and games of chance. The games of physical skill are those in which the physical strength plays the main part. The other type of traditional game is the game of strategy. The hide-and-seek kind of games are games of strategy. The third type of game is games of chance. The three elements: physical skill, strategy and chance generally emerge separately, but sometimes in relation to each other.

In order to arrive at compiling common and universal traditional games known and played, it is essential to understand and deliberate upon various criteria for classification of traditional games of different regions and cultures of different countries and all the relevant classification systems should be studied. According to the publication ‘Belgrade—OMEP Project on traditional children's games’ the following will serve as one of the criterion for classification: “This description covers a wide range of traditional games.

- The **content** of games (chasing, seeking, hunting, games, etc., as in the book by Opie and Opie, 1969);
- The **psychological functions** employed in the game (games of motor and intellectual skill, games of humour and social interaction, games of perception, memory or speech, etc.);

- The **social functions** of games (games primarily stimulating social integration, or social differentiation and individualisation; games of cooperation vs. games of competition, etc.);

- The **psycho-developmental** criteria (i.e., a classification derived from the developmental stage of the psychological functions employed in the game, as for example, sensory-motor, pre-operational, concrete-operational games, according to Piaget's theory; developmental classification derived from other theories of psychological development are also possible);

- The **structure** of games as a criterion for classification opens complex problems, but also allows various classifications of children's games; some existing systems, such as those in which games are divided into games of skill vs. games of chance, or games of competition, duelling vs. Games of cooperation and expression, etc.,”\(^\text{17}\).

The classification theory by French Sociologist Roger Caillois’s follows a psycho-developmental criterion in describing play in four forms and it is fundamentally sociological and a blend of psychology and philosophy. According to him, “games can be classified as games of

1. Agon (Competition), e.g. Chess, racing, wrestling and fencing etc,

2. Alea (Chance), e.g., counting-out rhymes, heads or tails, betting etc,

3. Mimesis (Mimicry or Simulation), e.g., mimicry, role playing, etc,

4. Ilinx (Vertigo), e.g., Swinging, tight rope walking, whirling horseback, etc.,”\(^\text{18}\)
The above forms of play as defined by Caillois are expressive forms of human personal and social behaviour.

Another category of traditional children’s games cited in Belgrade—OMEP traditional games project, focuses on games in which the child actively engages all his physical, motor, sensory, intellectual, emotional and social abilities. Based on this specification, the games are reduced to two categories a) traditional children's games with rules, and b) non-rule regulated games, games in which behaviour is mostly regulated, but not by rules, but by behavioral patterns (1986, P.19).

The first category of games – traditional games with rules is characterized by the existence of an explicit system of rules which regulate the behaviour of the players. Typical examples of traditional children's games are hide-and-seek, games of marbles, tag, etc.

The other category of games - is those games based on stable behavioural patterns. It may be the result of the physical characteristics of objects and toys used in the game (i.e. the manner of throwing or catching a ball or a boomerang or the game of bow and arrow etc.). Another source of universality are the motor patterns in human behaviour (e.g., various games of balance, dumping games, leaping, running, all games of motor agility, etc.). There are also games whose characteristics result from a combination of the physical characteristics of objects used in the game and characteristics of human motility such as rope-jumping games, sack-racing, walking on stilts, etc.). In all these games, physical, material factors play a great role.

Universal patterns of interaction and communication are also a common source of this category of games. The hiding and disclosing games (from the simplest such as peek-a-boo, to very complex games with masks and disguise, etc.), mother-and-infant
interaction games, games of competition and cooperation, betting games, daring games, all team games, etc.

Very close to the games discussed above, are games which are based on general patterns of speech behaviour: riddle and conundrums, dialogue games, message-twisting games, tongue-twisters, senseless rhymes, tales without ending, word twisters. Intellectual games (games of reflection, games of wit, games of logic, games of intellectual skill, etc.) are based on universal patterns of intellectual behaviour.

Discussing games classification, Richard M. Darson observes “since 1900, folklore scholars have devoted comparatively little attention to traditional pastimes, no classification systems have been prepared for games and recreations as they have for folk narrative and no new theories of play have been advanced by folklorists”19. He further explains that ‘students of traditional recreations and games have devoted the bulk of their time in recording, editing and annotating texts. But each investigator has also had to cope with the problem of the nature of the traditional pastimes, if for no other reason than to find a suitable classification system for his material, perusal of any standard collection reveals the difficulties along configurational lines, frequently according to the nature of the activity involved (chasing, guessing and hiding games), often on the basis of the sex of the players (games of little girls, boys ) and occasionally according to the type of equipment used (specialised versus readily available objects)”(Darson,176).

The cross-cultural studies of Roberts, et al. were restricted to games of physical skill, strategy, and chance. Within this limited approach, they also found that games of physical skill were the most widespread, whereas strategy and chance were found in fewer cultural contexts. Furthermore, there were relatively few statistically significant
cultural associations with games of physical skill, whereas there were many with games of both strategy and chance. This suggests, that the physical activities of play and games have a relatively stronger adaptive component and that those of strategy and chance have a relatively stronger cultural component. In kinds of play where the major reliance is upon physical activity, that is, we might expect custom to play a smaller role than in those kinds in which symbolic matters are the heart of the play (Sutton-Smith 1972).

Another aspect of traditional games is that many games involve folk music as part of playing games, emphasizing the relation between the folk music and folk games, any activity that combines music and games Janet M. Cliff, says “Song games in English appear to depend on context as to whether they are games or songs. A song game is a game that is sung. Unlike singing games, the song does not provide the structure for the activity. Besides the fun, the action, and the possibility of words focusing on a meaningful situation, singing games are also appealing because of their social context. Even the few games which can be played alone (e.g., jump rope, ball bouncing games) are often played with others around, and all of the games are learned from someone else”20.

Furthermore she adds, the most popular combination of folk music and folk games in English for both scholars and participants is singing games, ‘that is, a game which has a song that creates the structure (and often also the rhythm) of the activity. Scholars have always separated jump rope, hand claps, ball bouncing, and counting out from other singing games without any explanation, although such activities are as much singing games as Farmer in the Dell. In general, small groups (2-15 people) of young (7-9 years) females usually participate in singing games (1992, 129-151). However, some girls dislike these games and refuse to participate, and some boys often engage in
these activities. Many of the same songs are also performed as chants or even rhymes without tunes, sometimes making a text difficult to recognize as part of a ‘singing’ game. The tune for a particular text is fairly consistent throughout the English speaking world. The same tune can be found for different texts, further complicating the study of singing games.

One such example of singing game cited by ‘Evelyn Carrington’ in singing games from folk-lore record is as under.

**The Fox and the Chickens.**

(The Hen.) Who's going round my sunny wall to-night?

(Fox.) Only little Jacky-Lingo.

(Hen.) Don't steal any of my fat chicks.

(Fox.) I stole one last night,

And gave it a little hay;

There came a little blackbird

And carried it away (Carrington, 188: 169-173).

The fox steals one chicken every time, and so on till they are all gone. The chickens then form in procession behind the fox, and the hen tries to catch them again. The fox rushes forward to prevent her.
Traditional Games in India:

‘The history of games in India dates back to Vedic times’ (Subrahmanyam, 1975:56). It is widely considered that people of that period, must have had some specific exercises and games as part of their physical culture to maintain physical fitness for wielding weapons, and for riding, hunting, and swimming and also for the purpose of recreation. As per Dr. Vadla Subramanyam, “Though, Chariot racing was the chief source of amusement of the early Aryans and their pastime was gambling and generally racing, they were also deeply interested in music both vocal and instrumental. Among the instruments we find reference to are the Veena, Drum and Flute. Early vedic aryans were also greatly interested in dancing.”²¹

The prominent feature of Indian forms of traditional games is that they require very meager apparatus and space when compared to the western forms of traditional games and numerous traditional children games have a rhythmic musical component in the form of chants and counting rhymes.

Many of the traditional Indian games have similarities with the games played around the world, though known by different names. Some of the universal games such as ‘hide and seek’, ‘top spinning’, ‘kite play’ and ‘tug of war’ are known in Andhra Pradesh as ‘dagudu muthalu’, ‘bongarala aata’, ‘galipatalata’ and ‘sarigunjulata’, respectively.”²²

Though games are played by and large as pastimes for fun and amusement, they become integral part of the celebrations during festivals, fairs and on special religious occasions where children and adults participate in huge numbers as other
members of the community too bond with them by watching and encouraging the participants.

The common play areas of the games include streets, verandas, inside the house, under the shade of the trees, temple premises, meadows, gardens, orchards, fields, on the banks of river or lake and open grounds outside the villages.

**Categories of Games:**

The attempt to find a suitable classification system for traditional games is encountered by many difficulties along configurationally lines because many of the games cannot be slotted under a specific category as they fit into multiple genres. Sutton-smith makes a similar admission in his study “The games of New Zealand children’ (1959), adding that the reason for the difficulty in classifying games is because games are complex group behaviors deriving their nature from many sources”23.

Students of children's games have to deal with several paradoxes. First, some games appear to be so widespread that they may well be universal, while others appear to be clearly products of human diversity. How then can one explain games that fit both of these categories? Second, the view developed in the nineteenth century that children's games were the residue of earlier adult cultural customs, while in this century, play theorists largely emphasized children's creativity through play (Darson, 1972).

In the same way, for the traditional games of India, a strict classification of the games is difficult to arrive at, as the following quote suggests in Standard dictionary.
of folklore mythology and legend, “the classification of games has been the subject of many studies and there are almost as many ways of considering the subject as there are writers on the matter. Games may be discussed according to the season in which they are played; according to the sex or age of the participants etc.”

Let us consider the game ‘achchnagayalu’ (a game played by marbles or pebbles) a popular game played in Andhra Pradesh, Southern India. It may be categorized variously depending on the following parameters:

Age - it is played by both children and adults;

Gender - it is played by females

Number of participants - played in groups of 4 or 5 but often also played individually.

Play area - this game could be played indoors as well as outdoors.

Time of play - it is played in day time.

Playing occasion - it is a common and regularly played game with no special festive or religious significance.

Location - it is usually played in rural rather than in urban settings.

Skills - this is a physical skills rather than a mental skills game

Objects used - played with inanimate objects

Functional activity - it is a game played by sitting on the ground”.

From the above, it is once again clear that the process of categorization of the games is not simple but a complex one, and should be studied from various angles of
structural and functional aspects, to have a practical categorization of traditional games, but to begin with, there are three broad categories of games from which study of categorization could be carried forward.

Primarily, traditional games can be classified according to age, according to gender, according to number of participants, according to time of play (day and night), according to place (indoor and outdoor), rural or urban, animated or unanimated, physical or mental games in the historical, social and cultural context. After considerable deliberation, a broad list of categories of traditional games have been devised to facilitate the grouping of the categories of games which were collected for this project, based on the field experience and the methodology followed by the researcher for collecting the games.

1. According to different stages in life (according to age);

   a. Pre-childhood (below 5 years)
   
   b. Post-childhood (5-15 years)
   
   c. Youth (15-25)
   
   d. Adults (25-60)
   
   e. Old age (above 60 years)

2. According to gender:

   a. Females
   
   b. Males
c. Both females and males

3. According to the playing occasion:

a. Ordinary or Common or Regular games played during day or night

b. Games played on special occasions like feasts and festivals

4. According to play area:

a. Indoor games

b. Outdoor games

5. According to time of play:

a. During day time

b. During night time

6. According to place (type of settlement):

a. Urban games

b. Rural games

7. According to the number of participants:

a. Individual games

b. Group games

8. According to the apparatus used:

a. With the help of objects
b. Without the help of any object

9. According to physical or mental skills:

a. Games of physical skills

b. Games of mental skills

10. According to functional activity:

a. Games of Sitting

b. Games of running

c. Games of throwing

d. Games of jumping

Traditional children’s games are not a monopoly of any one ethnic group, though there are some exceptions, these are games played similarly, but what differs is how they are called. Some of the traditional games no matter where they are played, hide and seek, hopscotch, tug of war, top spinning, kite play etc., retain the basic structure with slight variations in the play form or content or presentation. As mentioned in the publication, ‘The New Book of Knowledge’, “down the ages children have watched adults and imitated them. Out of these imitations came games. Games are seldom invented. They grow, changing to meet the needs and customs of each new generation”

26. Names and customs change, children may dress up their games with new words and new names, but the old games live through all the changes. It is based on this premise that the transformation of traditional games into modern theatre games is considered for introducing them to children in schools as part of the regular curriculum.
Different types of Games and their functions:

According to ‘Belgrade—OMEP traditional games project’, there are two major functions to be fulfilled by traditional children’s games, these are the regulating mechanisms in social relations. These two major functions, vital for the functioning and the preservation of every culture, are social integration (i.e., the assimilation of group members, the submission to rules, social norms, etc.) and differentiation, (i.e., increasing distance between group members, the segregation of subgroups, individualization, personalization, etc.) (1986:87).

The publication also cites that examples of this kind of preparation for social integration are the games of motor and mental skill, manual dexterity, motor and communicative competence, logic, etc. Other examples are: following of rules by every person and submission to the group; joint activities, which imply the coordination of individual actions. Self control - the control of the personal desires and impulses (1986:87).

In addition to serving socio-cultural purposes, the games are helpful to children in achieving and developing physical, psychological and mental skills. Ball games such as hand ball games, with hand, with feet, bat or stick develop hand-eye co-ordination, motor control. Bowling games like marbles, bowls and shooting games of long bow, cross bow, throwing games of discs, coins, sticks, dart others develop concentration, marksmanship and perception of position.

Hopscotch is a game through which the child develops physical coordination by skilful control of shifts of balance using one leg. Skipping develops stamina and breath control. Hide and seek develops sensitivity, alertness, concentration and powers of
observation. Running, jumping and hopping games develop agility, speed and self-control.

Group games, both games of competition and cooperation, and games of expression are helpful in overcoming the social isolation and inhibition through group interaction and sportsmanship.

**Common traditional games of India and their features:**

The games discussed below are some of the popular games played across India, and familiar to children and older people alike, though known by different names in different regions. As with many of the traditional games, the games mentioned below bear the striking features of simple rules of play, minimal requirement of space and material to play at the same time giving opportunity for large number of children to play together and at once.

**Gillidanda:-**

Gilli Danda or Guli Danda, is a traditional amateur sport, popular among rural youth in the Indian subcontinent. It is known as, gooti-billa in Andhra Pradesh. This sport is generally played in the rural and small towns of the Indian subcontinent. This game bears a resemblance to cricket or baseball but without a ball.

To play this game two wooden sticks called Gilli and Danda are required. 'Gilli' is a small wooden piece which is about three inches long and 'Danda' - a stick, about 2 feet in length, is used to strike the Gilli. It is played in the open ground.

A small circle of four feet diameter is drawn. In the centre a small oblong shaped hole is dug which should be smaller than the gilli. Two teams are formed. One team
bats while the other team fields. Fielders stand in a position from where they can catch
the gilli. The first player places the gilli in the hole and lifts it quickly high in the air
with the danda and then strikes it. If he fails at first, he gets another turn. If the fielder
catches the gilli before it touches the ground, the batsman is out and the second player
tries to hit the gilli. If the gilli is not caught, then the distance from the hole to the place
where the gilli falls is measured with the danda. Each danda equals one point.

The fielder stands where the gilli had fallen and tosses it to the batsman. The
batsman tries to hit the gilli while it is in the air. If it falls in the circle then he is out, if
it falls outside the circle then he taps the tapered end and lifts it in the air and strikes
while it is in the air. He gets three chances to hit the gilli. If he does not hit it, or is
catched, he is out. The game continues till all the batsmen are out. The team changes side
and continues the same way. The team with higher score wins.

Kabaddi (Chedugudu):-

The game Kabaddi is famous in all villages and small towns of the Indian
subcontinent. It is a very simple game played outdoors without the need of any
apparatus. Two teams play the game. Each team has six to eight members; generally it
is played on sandy ground. A big quadrangle is drawn with limits on either side. A
middle line is drawn. One team occupies one side and other team occupies the other. By
turn, each player enters the other team’s area while simultaneously chanting ‘chedugudu
gudu gudu’ in one breath and tries to touch the other team members. He is expected to
chant without stopping for breath till he exits the other team’s area. If the other team
members catch him and do not allow him to cross the middle line, then he is out. If he
touches one or two other team members and returns to his team’s space then those players are out. The game continues in this manner till all members of both teams are out.

**Becchalata:-**

This game is played by boys with stones of round shape of their palm size or even smaller size. Two lines are drawn in opposite directions; the distance between the lines is approximately 3 yards. A small circle is drawn in the middle and all the boys will place their stones in the circle. The stones are kept one on top of the other i.e. big one first and next small size on it and so on. Each boy has to hit the stones with one stone in his hand by standing on the line. His stone should hit the stones in the circle and go out of the other line. He should hit fiercely otherwise he is out. Next boy tries the same thing. Everyone gets their turn. Whoever fails to hit the stones in the circle beyond the other line has to go round the lines hopping; if not he has to bear the penalty of having other winners beat him on his hand. Then the game starts once again.

**Vaikunta pali:-**

It is called Vaikunta pali, because the objective of the game is to reach Vaikuntam, the heavenly abode. It is also called Paramapada sopanam. It is played by ladies or by wife and husband or the elderly people. A board having 132 squares, horizontally and vertically is placed. In some squares there are ladders and in some squares there are serpents. The game starts with throwing dice or shells. As per the number shown on the dice, the token i.e. a tamarind seed or any other object is moved from square 1 forward along the squares. The other person throws the dice and he moves
his token on the board. While playing, if the token of any one reaches the square in which there is a ladder, he can climb the ladder and place his token on the square where the ladder ends. If the token reaches the square in which there is a serpent, it will come down the board where the serpent’s tail ends. Hence, the game is called snakes and ladders. The one who reaches the 132nd square first is the winner.

**Bommala Pelli:-**

This game is an imitation of marriage celebration by the children where they assume different roles of their elders. After decorating the house, the boys and girls bring leaves or with pieces of cloth and prepare dolls. After preparing two dolls representing the bride and bridegroom they will look after marriage arrangements. They invite all the elders for their dolls’ marriage. Some sweets and candies are kept for distributing after marriage celebration. They take the dolls around the village while the band set is playing. The boy acts as priest and follows the customs and rituals of the marriage till the bridegroom ties thalibottu, a sacred thread made of beads to the bride. Then all the children who are part of the marriage party enjoy themselves, dancing and singing.

**Kite Flying (Galipatalata):-**

This is the game of kites, a favourite game of the boys. This game is enjoyable in clear weather. It is played on the roofs, open grounds and along sea shores. All the boys gather with their colourful kites and try to fly them in the sky to the maximum
extent possible, controlling the kite by holding the spool of thread in their hands. Even as they enjoy the free flight of their kites, they try to hijack the other kites which come in their way and sever the other kites from their spools.

This chapter is an attempt to discuss the features of games in general context and their significance in the society on the ground of the scholarship available in the field, and to give a comprehensive account on the game theories, different genres of games based on its game plan and physical and mental involvement, overview of Indian traditional/ folk games with ample described examples and different contextual functions of the games. To a large extend the literature survey and the field trip contributed to this chapter in order function this as a disclaimer to the later part of the thesis which is mostly based on the practice based work.
End Notes


12. Ibid

13. Kam, Matthew, Akhil Mathur et. al, Designing Digital Games for Rural Children: A Study of Traditional Village Games in India


16. Traditional Games and Children of Today, Belgrade—OMEP traditional games project, Belgrade, 1986, P.70

17. Ibid, P.72.


22. Ibid

