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Turkish Folk Dances in Physical Education and Sport Place and Importance

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doi: [10.33472/AFJBS.6.6.2024.7660-7668](https://doi.org/10.33472/AFJBS.6.6.2024.7660-7668)**ABSTRACT:**

The subject of the research is to investigate the place and importance of Turkish folk dances in physical education and sports. Method of the research; In order to reveal the current situation with descriptive study method, books, articles, theses, etc. scientific sources were used. Importance of the research; The research is considered important in terms of revealing the place and importance of Turkish folk dances, which are one of the important culture-art phenomena of Turkish culture and civilization, in the light of scientific data in terms of physical education with the aspect of developing the body and being a sport with the aspect of competition and competition, and its place and importance in physical education and sports. In this study, the historical processes of the concepts of movement, game, physical education and sport, which are the development steps of physical education and sport, as well as the movement, game, physical education and sport aspects of Turkish folk dances within the concept of game are revealed. In this direction, the study includes Selim Sırrı Tarcan's efforts to popularise Turkish folk dances as a national culture-art as well as his contribution to the introduction of physical education and sports in schools as an education-teaching phenomenon in our country. In the research, the sports aspect of Turkish folk dances was mentioned due to the fact that Turkish folk dances are physical activities that contribute to the development of rhythm, music sense and physical fitness components (health and performance) of the individual, and that there is a reward as a result of events such as competitions and competitions that require competition. In addition, in this study; Turkish folk dances are taught as a course in faculties of sports sciences in our country, in addition to being included in the physical education and sports curriculum in national education, the contribution of the Turkish folk dances federation to Turkish folk dances in terms of sports and culture and art is also included.

As a result; from the first existence of humanity to the present day, movement-based games, Turkish folk dances, physical education and sports culture have existed. In addition to being a cultural heritage of thousands of years, Turkish folk dances contribute to the multifaceted development of the human body through movement and gain a sports identity by transforming into the phenomenon of competition and competition. In addition to these, the fact that Turkish folk dances are included as compulsory and elective courses in sports sciences faculties, and that they are included in the physical education and sports curriculum in national education shows that they have an important place in physical education and sports.

Keywords: Turkish Folk Dances, Physical Education and Sports.

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1. Introduction

The first sign of life in nature is built on the concept of movement, which is also expressed as the displacement of the human body in spatial space (Mengütay, 2005). The concept of movement, like all cultural phenomena produced by human beings, has also formed the basis of games, Turkish folk dances, physical education and sports science. Movement is the displacement of a living being in the area where it lives (Kale, 2007). Human beings, like other living creatures, have struggled with wild animals and other people without or using tools in order to meet their needs such as nutrition, shelter, protection and survival by moving in order to survive in prehistoric times when they first existed in the world through movement. Humans laid the foundations of games, folk dances, physical education and sports through movement without realising it in their struggle to prevail over nature and other living creatures (Huizinga, 2006). As a result of the gamification of the movements put forward by human beings by transforming them into rules, using the sounds emitted by the body; the game was accompanied by clapping hands and the sounds emitted by the feet from the ground. Within the concept of play, people have started to express their thoughts and feelings through movement by imitating the events, phenomena and nature in daily life. While making these movements, people created rhythmic and harmonious movements by hitting their bodies and the drums they invented (Koçkar, 1998). In addition to the use of music and words in the game, the game is performed only with rhythm without words and music. In folk dance, on the other hand, music, rhythm, word and movement are performed in harmony with each other (Gözüaydın, 2002). Folk dances are the first art phenomenon that carries the cultural and artistic assets created by human beings from prehistoric times to the present and future. Turkish folk dances, which are included in the concept of game, one of the developmental stages of physical education and sports science, are a national value in terms of affective (emotional) aspects in terms of providing the individual with cognitive (mental), kinetic, social integrity, tolerance to differences, love for nature and homeland with its movement, music and rhythm structure (Öngel, 1992). Turkish folk dances are an important phenomenon within the scope of physical education and sports science that contributes to the multidimensional development of the individual (cognitive, affective and cognitive) as well as being culture-art in essence. Turkish folk dances; physical fitness (health and performance) of the individual

Physical education in terms of its contribution to its components and sport in terms of being a competition and contest are considered important for physical education and sport science. Selim Sırrı Tarcan, an important physical education and sports scientist, ensured that physical education and sports were introduced to schools as a subject of education (Çapan, 1999, 91). Selim Sırrı Tarcan was the first to state that Turkish folk dances are a symbol of national culture (Öztürkmen, 1998). Turkish folk dances are taught as a compulsory course in the department of physical education and sports teaching in the faculties of sport sciences of universities in our country and as an elective course in other departments. In addition, the fact that Turkish folk dances are included in the physical education and sports curriculum created in national education, and the activities of the Turkish folk dances federation established within the Ministry of Youth and Sports reveal the place and importance of Turkish folk dances within the scope of physical education and sports in the spread of Turkish folk dances.

Conceptual Framework

Movement: Movement is the first sign of vitality. The spatial space and displacement of the living being defines the concept of movement. Movement is a comprehensive phenomenon that includes physical education and sports science, games and Turkish folk dances (Kale,

2007). Human nature is built on movement. Through movement, it contributes to the human body to fulfil its physiological functions in a healthy and harmonious way (Mengütay, 2005).

The Game: The concept of play is an activity that differs from daily life in which emotions such as tension and joy are experienced within a certain time and space limit by participating freely within the framework of rules in line with a purpose. Huizinga opposed the identification of the game with the concept of sport in today's modern countries. According to Huizinga, since sport contains excessive rules and the ambition to win, it has transformed the game, which has an individual characteristic, into a social phenomenon, and over time, homo ludens (the person who plays games) has been removed from its true identity (Huizinga, 2006).

Turkish Folk Dances: Turkish folk dances; in addition to being a national identity, intangible cultural heritage, it is a value that turns into the art of movement with the harmonious display of rhythm, music and movement. In addition to contributing to physical development, Turkish folk dances are a deep-rooted and national value that contributes to the socialisation of the individual, to the affective skill aspect that gives love for nature and homeland (Öngel, 1992). Turkish folk dances are the display of our rich traditional national cultural values with rhythm and music accompanied by individual, group or collective harmonious movements (Şenol, 1998).

Physical Education: "General education carried out through physical activities, the main basis of which is the human body, the aim of which is the personality and all-round development of the individual" (Gaulhofer, 1956). In Western civilization, the concept of physical education was first used in the 18th century (Broadmann, 1984). Physical education is the realisation of teaching and learning activities through movement. Physical education refers to all gymnastics, games and physical activities that contribute to the individual's social development and all-round development (cognitive, affective, kinetic). Physical education activities contribute to the assimilation of moral values and the positive development of personality as well as providing individuals of all age groups with lifelong health habits through movement (MoNE., 2019). Physical education constitutes the whole of health and effective education activities. In this respect, physical education constitutes all activities that contribute to the protection of mental and physical health of the individual, to be happy by increasing life efficiency and to contribute to personality development (Bucher, 1983).

Sport: It is the movements that are organised under equal conditions and performed within the framework of certain rules in line with the goal of overcoming and defeating in order to achieve success despite various difficulties of the human's innate drive to succeed and struggle. Sports are movement activities that require intense muscle work and struggle at a high level, reward the winners, and have rules that combine play and competition (Şahin, 2002). The first sportive activities in history are examples of sportive games such as running, bull jumping boxing, archery, wrestling, acrobats in chariot races, discus throwing and javelin throwing in Minoan and Mycenaean Civilisations (Crete) in 2000 BC (Peters, 2020).

Importance of Turkish Folk Dances in Physical Education and Sports

Movements arising from the reflection of human beings' struggle with life such as production and protection in order to survive in daily life constitute the basis of games, folk dances, physical education and sports. In prehistoric times and ages, people used tools such as spears, swords, arrows and bows to defeat their enemies in order to prepare for war and laid the foundations of today's physical education and sports activities without realising it. These tools used in preparation for war were used as accessories in folk dances over time. When the

societies provided an environment of peace, they revealed the concept of play in free times when there was no production work in daily life, and the movements they put forward as a game over time; It formed the basis of folk dances by being exhibited harmoniously with music and rhythm (Çelebi, 1991). Turkish folk dances, which transformed into the art of movement over time; while it is a sociological subject in terms of human relations and nature relations, it reveals its feature of being a game, physical education and sports in terms of rhythm, music and movement harmony (Aydın, 1982). In the historical process, physical education and sports have developed in every age. Physical education culture was seen as a part of general education based on the human body in the Ancient Greek civilization and as an important element in the transfer of cultural accumulation (Fişek, 1985). In this period, rhythmic gymnastics, different sports and games with artistic qualities were appreciated. Folk dances, which are the expression of the transformation of rhythm and music into art by displaying them in harmony with movement, are not considered separately from sports. In the Ancient Greek Civilization, folk dances were considered important for the balanced development of the human body, providing the body with the necessary flexibility and aesthetics by transforming it into entertainment. In addition, in the context of mythology, which emerged with the effect of polytheistic belief in this period, the idea that dance was performed in dedication to the gods made folk dances valuable (Alpman, 2001).

The body and movement, which is a sign of human life, is a social reality that interacts with other cultural elements created by human beings and adds interpretation to them. Physical education, sports, stage dance, common dance, ritualised kinetic movements contribute to the recognition of societies by revealing their identities and lifestyles by encoding the cultural heritage of the society (customs, traditions, traditions-customs, etc.) and the world of ideas (Novack, 1990, 95). In the recent history of our country, Selim Sırrı Tarcan's studies have enabled physical education and sports science to enter educational institutions as a subject of education. In the process, words such as training (physical training), movement (body movements), gymnastics, riyazat-ı bedeniyle, terbiye-i bedeniyle (physical education) were used to express physical education (Çapan, 1999). Selim Sırrı Tarcan first emphasised that Turkish folk dances were a symbol of national culture. When the national culture aspect of Turkish folk dances is taken into consideration, it is a visual culture-art that reveals the cultural roots of Turkey, whose foundation is culture (Öztürkmen, 1998). The first representation of Turkish folk dances in Turkey was performed by the students of the Istanbul School of Education, who performed "Tarcan Zeybeği", organised by Selim Sırrı Tarcan, at the training festival held at the Kadıköy Union Sports Club in Istanbul (Baykurt, 1991). Physical education teachers have contributed to the popularization of Turkish folk dances in our country over time. In addition to being culture-art, Turkish folk dances are movement phenomena based on energy use and muscle power as in physical education and sports. Turkish folk dances exhibited with the emergence of movement; It contributes positively to the components of the physical fitness of the human body related to health (cardio-respiratory, flexibility, muscle strength, muscle endurance, muscle strength, body composition) and performance (coordination, quickness, strength, speed). As in all living things, it is in the nature of human beings to move. Humans support healthy life through physical activity, exercise and Turkish folk dances that they transform into art through movement (Kaya, 2016). In this direction, Turkish folk dances, which have a scientific aspect, are compulsory in the department of physical education and sports teaching in the faculties of sport sciences of universities and as elective and specialization courses in other departments. The aspect of Turkish folk dances being a sport is provided by staging and transforming them into competitions and competitions within the framework of certain rules. In this direction, Turkish folk dances have carried the desire to achieve elements such as competition, getting a good degree and reward, which are at the core of sports, through competition on the stage

with team spirit. Over time, Turkish folk dances competitions have been carried to an international dimension and their importance has increased day by day. The competition aspect of Turkish folk dances requires the teams to carry out a certain preparatory training until the competition, as in sports activities (Ekmekçioğlu, Bekar, & Kaplan, 2001).

This situation provides positive changes in individuals' cardiovascular (cap-respiratory) system and other physiological structures during the pre-stage preparation phase and staging of Turkish folk dances. This phenomenon is to reveal that Turkish folk dances are an important physical activity and exercise that protects human health. Today, in our country, besides the cultural and artistic aspect of Turkish folk dances, the awareness of the importance of physical education and sports has developed. In our country, the Ministry of Youth and Sports contributes to the individual and society with a wide variety of sports fields in order to enable individuals to utilize their free time with sports activities outside working hours in daily life. Turkish folk dances federation is one of these sports fields. Established in 2003, the Turkish Folk Dances Federation organizes competitions in 81 provinces to transfer the national culture to future generations and to provide the society with healthy living habits through movement (MEB, 2019). The Turkish Folk Dance Federation continues its activities with 81 provincial representatives, 1900 registered clubs, 145325 athletes and academicians, 30 observers, 14,000 coaches, 1100 referees. The competition branches (competition of teams) organized between the clubs are local, traditional, stylized, project and complete. Competitions (competition of teams) are organized categorically in different age groups as "Youth and Seniors, Stars, Juniors". Approximately 650 clubs from different provinces, 12 different groups, 40.000 athletes participate in the competition organized as four finals (THOF, 2023). As a national value, Turkish folk dances are an important intangible cultural heritage that carries thousands of years of Turkish culture and civilization to the present and future. In addition to this value, Turkish folk dances are the art of sports cult movement, which also has the identity of physical education and sports culture, which positively affects the physical health of individuals and societies through movement. In the light of all this information, Turkish folk dances appear as an effective sports field with its formations such as clubbing, licensed players-coaches and competition discipline. In this direction, the aims of the competitions organized between formal and non-formal education and training institutions, universities, clubs and associations of Turkish folk dances in terms of sports are as follows (Tezcan, 1994);

- To keep the traditional Turkish folk dances, which have the characteristics of culture-art and cultural heritage, alive and transfer them to future generations without disturbing their essence,
- To contribute to the formation of historical awareness of the Turkish society as it carries the cultural values of thousands of years of Turkish culture and civilization from the past to the present,
- In order to contribute to the prevention of bad habits of Turkish children and young people, to direct them to Turkish folk dances in their free time at school and out of school,
- To contribute to the acquisition of affective skills such as self-discipline, belonging to a group, respect for differences, working in cooperation,
- To provide individuals with the characteristics of being a tolerant, mature competition spectator and a good competitor who complies with the principle of fair play,
- To contribute to the acquisition of harmonious, communication skills of individuals in social life.

In the book "Primary School Course Programmes Physical Education Programme (6th, 7th, 8th Grades)" prepared by the Ministry of National Education in 2002 for the physical

education and sports course, which is an important part of education and training, the article "Gaining knowledge and skills related to folk dances and being willing to apply them" is included in the seventeen general objectives. In this direction, the gains provided to students by Turkish folk dances are as follows (MEB, 2000);

- To provide the individual with the ability to take responsibility and to act in line with the sense of duty and the awareness of leadership and obeying the leader,
- Creating a sense of rhythm and music in the individual, applying movements in harmony with music and rhythm,
- Improving the coordination (nerve-muscle and joint harmony) skills of the individual,
- Giving the individual the habit of good posture,
- It provides individuals with the aims of being willing to participate in special days such as national holidays and liberation and to create awareness of the meaning and importance of these values.
- Giving the individual self-confidence and the ability to make and implement quick decisions,
- To provide the individual with the ability and habit of acting together and working harmoniously in co-operation,

National education renewed the "Physical Education and Sports Course Curriculum" in 2018 at different levels of schools. Accordingly, the programme was replaced as "Physical Education and Games" in primary education and "Physical Education and Sports" in secondary and secondary education. The teaching of Turkish folk dances was included in the "Learning Areas" and "Sub-Learning Areas" that make up the structure of the "Physical Education and Sports" course programme by associating with the objectives determined in line with the general and special objectives (MEB, 2018).

2. Conclusion

From prehistoric times to the present day, the cultural phenomenon formed as a result of man's struggle against nature has formed the basis of the civilizations he has established. In this framework, the life adventure of human beings, which started with movement, has formed the basis of physical education and sports culture over time, in order to survive and shelter against nature and other people. Turkish folk dances, which were initially shaped within the concept of movement, game, physical education and sport, which constitute the systematics of physical education and sports science, and then within the concept of game with the emergence of the concept of leisure time, are one of the culture-art values of Turkish culture and civilization. Turkish folk dances; It is a discipline that contributes to keeping the historical consciousness of a nation alive. Turkish folk dances; It is a value that comes to life with the display of rhythm and music in harmony with the movement of the Turkish nation's feelings, thoughts, the ideal of living together such as unity and solidarity. The harmony of phenomena such as movement, music and rhythm has a positive effect on the human body and soul. While performing Turkish folk dances, it contributes positively to the health component (flexibility, cardio-respiratory system, muscle strength and endurance) among the physical fitness components of human beings. In this respect, it is considered important in terms of physical education science. Over time, as a result of the transformation of the concept of game into sportive understanding, sports science, which includes phenomena such as competition and competition based on competition and reward, was born. The fact that Turkish folk dances have gained a national and international value as a result of being carried to the stage over time and transformed into a competition has enabled them to be evaluated within sports sciences. In this direction, the fact that Turkish folk dances have training phases in preparation for the competition is important for sports science by revealing the sports

aspect in the contributions it provides to the sports-based performance component (coordination, quickness, strength, reaction, etc.) in the physical fitness components of the individual. In our country, Selim Sırrı Tarcan started to teach physical education and sports as a course in schools for the first time. In addition, Selim Sırrı Tarcan revealed that Turkish folk dances are a national value and exhibited Turkish folk dances in schools for the first time. In this direction, Turkish folk dances have become a part of education and training. As a result, in the light of all this information, it is seen that Turkish folk dances have an important place and importance in physical education and sports science as well as being art to national culture.

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