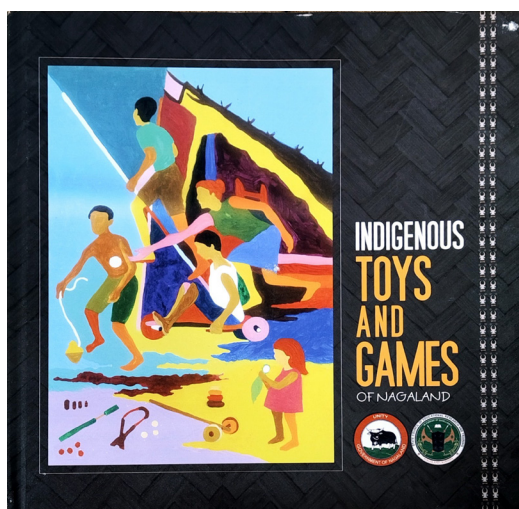


## Indigenous Toys and Games of Nagaland

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Games and toys are vital parts of every childhood. Indigenous toys and games provide wide scope for stimulating different developmental areas in children, such as communication, fine and gross motor skills, cognition, creativity, ingenuity, problem-solving, learning ability, social interaction, etc. Indigenous toys and games also help reinforce culture and the values that are important, and enhance learning

opportunities and boost attendance at school.

The emphasis on play-based learning for the foundational and preparatory years in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 highlights the importance of reviving indigenous toys and games that have pedagogical implications. This is of particular significance at the Foundational and Preparatory Stages. The recommendations of the NEP 2020 are reflected in the National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage (NCF-FS). The overarching objective of this NCF is to help positively transform the school education system of India as envisioned in NEP 2020, through corresponding positive changes in the curriculum, including pedagogy. In particular, the NCF aims to help change practices in education, not just ideas. Indeed, since the word 'curriculum' encapsulates the overall experiences that a student has in school, 'practices' do not just refer

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to curricular content and pedagogy, but also include school environment and culture. It is this holistic overall transformation of the curriculum that will enable us to positively transform overall learning experiences for students.

Reviving and promoting indigenous toys and games, and innovating it with modern technology will be a sustainable intervention in toy/play-based learning, and promote experiential learning in interesting ways for teaching learning of mathematics, science, languages, etc.

Nagaland has a rich cultural heritage in indigenous games and toys. Children are engaged in playing varieties of indigenous games in their everyday lives. In the past, many indigenous games were associated with festivals and were played by children as well as adults during festivals. Other indigenous games were played during periods of comparative inactivity in society, for example, immediately after the harvest. Such games provided a reliable framework for enjoyable play as well as opportunities for creativity and exploration.

The Naga indigenous toys and games in this resource book is meant for implementation across the education curriculum in the foundational and preparatory stage, and beyond. It makes teachers realise that it is possible to include traditional indigenous games in many contexts, and across a range

of classroom (indoor) lessons and outdoor activities. In order to provide some guidance for planning and implementation, the indigenous games and toys have been categorised into different types, viz., physical games, social games, cognitive games, games using sensory toys/sensory games and games played using locally available resources/games played with toys made of locally available resources, and comprise both indoor and outdoor games.

Indigenous toy making in Nagaland varies across tribes, with toys made of various kinds of material. It is known for the craft value and also for the rich culture it represents, for example, bamboo-spinning toy.



*Figure 1: Bamboo-spinning toy*

The materials required are locally available: a one-foot hollow bamboo with a one-inch circumference, a short four-inch piece of bamboo, a bamboo strip of 10 inches in length for spinning and a long piece of string. Making the toy and playing with it develops eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills.

Many skills, such as agility, strength, balance, reflexes, hand-eye coordination, accuracy, strategy, intuition, patience, etc., which were required by indigenous communities for survival and livelihood in the past, were learned at an early age through games and play.

The readers would notice that most of the names refer to living creatures, for example, crow jump, cock fight, crabshell soundmaker, etc. This indicates the extent of human-nature interaction that was a feature of the daily lives of the previous generation. When students become engaged in the activities, their observation

for the natural world is enhanced. Furthermore, most of the games make use of indigenous natural material, for example, bamboo sheath basket, pebble picking, seven stones, etc.

The wolf game is pedagogically interesting and challenging. One person is picked out in the group to play the wolf and another one is selected to play the mother. A piece of cloth is tied around the waist of each player, except the wolf. This is held by the player standing behind each other, with the mother leading the line. The whole group moves in the direction in which the mother moves. The wolf tries to catch the last player of the line. This member of the group warns the team about the arrival of the wolf. He/she says aloud, “the wolf is about to finish our food so you must kick up some dirt and shout Chaa Woo!” Then the message is passed on by the team members until it reaches the mother. The mother then tries to protect the team members



*Figure 2: The wolf game*

by running in different directions and the line follows the mother. The game ends when the last person is caught by the wolf. This game allows children to develop socio-emotional skills, psychomotor abilities and language skills. This game also upskills the art of safeguarding among children. It prepares children on how to protect themselves from any adverse situation in forests and the remote areas which are prone to animal attacks. This is in accordance with the NEP 2020 and NCF-FS, which endorse that the early years (if adequate input is given) provide the basis for language, physical dexterity and social behaviour that will remain for life.

This book is the culmination of a series of workshops conducted by the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and fieldworks conducted by the Training of Trainers (TOTs), primary teachers representing all the blocks of the 11 districts of Nagaland and the Project Team, Indigenous Toys and Games of Nagaland, SCERT, Nagaland.

The documentation of indigenous toys and games and its application for effective implementation of

toy-based pedagogy embodies the NEP 2020 vision of the Ministry of Education, Government of India. This book on indigenous toys and games of Nagaland is an initiative to fulfil this vision, while revelling in the rich legacy of our forefathers as this resource is put into action.

The annexures included in the book provide helpful information. Annexure 1 lists the team members of SCERT, Nagaland, involved in the project. Annexure 2 has the list of TOTs and teachers who submitted the assigned work on indigenous games and toys. Annexure 3 has the list of schools where indigenous games were conducted for photography, while Annexure 4 lists the contributors of the actual photographs. Annexure 5 meticulously provides the names of Language Officers (LOs) and Language Assistants (LAs), working in the State Centre of Nagaland Languages (SCNL), who have added/validated the local names of indigenous toys and games in this book. It is indeed a valuable pedagogical resource and a must in every school library.