
Characters in Traditional Games; Analysis of Literature Related to Character Values Developed in Children Through Traditional Games

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Abstract

Traditional games are folk games that are inherited or developed from generation to generation in a particular area or culture. Traditional games are usually played in groups indoors or outdoors using simple equipment available in the surrounding environment with a fun nature. This study aims to identify and analyze children's characters developed through the application of traditional games. The type of qualitative research with descriptive analysis methods. Literature review of relevant journal articles from Google Scholar , articles are limited to publications in 2024 with the search keywords "character education, character, traditional games and children" is a data collection technique in this study. The focus of the study is a literature review of various types of traditional games and the character values of children developed through these games. Traditional games are not only a means of entertainment, but also contain character values that are important for the formation of good personality and social interaction in children. Based on the Analysis of Character Values in the journal on the formation of children's character through traditional games in 2024, eleven character values were obtained, including the characters of honesty, sportsmanship, justice, responsibility, cooperation, discipline, creativity, hard work, independence, control or self-control and tolerance.

Keywords – Character; Traditional Games; Children



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1. Introduction

Character is defined as "attitude, behavior or values possessed by individuals that can be accepted by society (Suyanto, 2013). Individuals with good character will habituate good behaviors that are very much needed for peace, comfort and well-being in life both in personal and social environments. Meanwhile, individuals who lose or do not have character will lose their value or genuine side, and their presence in public will be less useful and even add to the complexity of life problems both for themselves, their families, other people and even society. Even more broadly according to (Soraya, 2020) a nation will be destroyed if its next generation loses character. The big role of character is as a giver of character or determinant of purity in a person's life, a person will be successful or vice versa depending on the character they have. The great role of character requires a person to develop the character they have from an early age.

The formation and development of character is also stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning national education. Namely, national education functions to develop abilities and form the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to educate the life of the nation based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. And aims to develop students to become people who believe and fear God Almighty, have noble morals, are healthy, handsome, knowledgeable, creative, independent and become democratic and responsible citizens. Based on the above, a very important scope that has a great influence on the formation and development of a person's personal character, besides family and society, is through education.

Character education is a system of naming character values that includes components of awareness or willingness, knowledge, and actions to implement these character values, both in oneself, fellow peers, the environment, and the nation, and towards God Almighty (Omeri, 2023) . One way to instill character education through schools is to implement traditional games in learning/education.

Traditional games are folk games that develop or are passed down to the next generation in a particular region or culture, games that are usually played in groups and are fun, and use simple equipment available in the surrounding environment. Traditional games are cultural assets that have noble values that can be passed down to children as the next generation of the nation. Various traditional games contribute directly to children towards the formation of a child's physique that is fit, healthy, tough, superior and competitive; the formation of a mentality of sportsmanship, tolerance, discipline and democracy; the formation of children's morals that are sensitive, responsive, honest and sincere; and the formation of abilities in the social aspect, namely being able to work together, be disciplined, compete, be friendly, and be national) (Hasanah, 2016) . Seeing the great contribution of traditional games, traditional games are very worthy of being used as an educational medium to develop children's character. This is in line with the research results (Utami, 2024) , which states that traditional games are an effective tool for student character education, and is clarified by research (Fahmi et al., 2024) that traditional games played by early childhood are very useful for developing character in themselves.

Reflecting on Finland, the number one country with the best education system in the world, emphasizing the importance of playing and learning to children. More crucially, Finland is currently starting to abandon writing and reading using laptops or cellphones, and returning to using the previous education system, namely the learning system of reading using books and writing using pens. According to experts, this is because technology makes children lazy to learn, coupled with the sophistication of AI technology which causes children to rarely use their brains to think and results in children having low reasoning. Based on this, returning to the system and then making a positive contribution to education, it is only right that Indonesia, which is rich in diverse cultural values inherited from its ancestors, utilizes this in the field of education. Indonesia

should return to using the treasury of traditional games of various types in education, because traditional games can develop good character in children.

2. Method

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the character traits that develop in children through the implementation of various types of traditional games. This research employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive analysis method to explore the relationship between traditional games and character development. By examining different traditional games played by children, this study seeks to understand how these activities contribute to fostering positive character traits such as teamwork, discipline, honesty, patience, and problem-solving skills. The research aims to highlight the cultural significance of traditional games as an educational tool that not only provides entertainment but also serves as a medium for character-building.

The data collection technique in this study is based on a literature review of relevant journal articles, with a specific focus on those published in 2024 on Google Scholar using the keywords "character" and "traditional children's games." This study does not impose restrictions on the type or methodological approach of previous research but rather concentrates on identifying the character values embedded in traditional games. The exploration of these games is conducted by analyzing literature on various traditional games from different regions in Indonesia, assessing their role in shaping children's behavior and moral values. Through this analysis, the study aims to provide insights into how traditional games can be effectively integrated into educational settings to support character education and cultural preservation.

3. Result and Discussion

Character building

Education is an organized system and has quite broad functions, namely everything related to physical development, health, skills, thoughts, feelings, will,

social and even matters of faith (Sukatin et al., 2023), while the term character in Greek and Latin, *charassein* which means "to carve a permanent and indelible pattern" character or character is a combination of all human traits that are permanent so that they become a special sign to distinguish one person from another (Santoso et al., 2023) .

Character is a mindset, feeling pattern, and behavior pattern that has become a daily habit, which is a characteristic of each individual or group of individuals or nation to live and work together, both in the family environment and society (Zuhdi, Prasetya, & Masruri, 2013). Character is manifested in the nature, nature, morals or personality of a person which is formed from the results of internalizing various virtues that are believed and used as a basis for perspective, thinking, behaving and acting (Cicilia et al., 2022; Yudistita et al., 2024) .

Character education can be interpreted as a conscious and planned effort made by someone regarding goodness, loving goodness that can be developed into a positive personality, morals, nobility, positive attitudes and behaviors as expected so that they can be done and applied in everyday life (Devianti et al., 2020) . Character education is very important for human life, therefore, the world of education must maximize its role which is not only to show moral knowledge, but also to love and want to do these moral actions. This is in accordance with what was expressed by Thomas Likona as the father of modern character education, that the terminology of character education actually boils down to three main elements, namely knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good .

Character education requires methods and approaches that are in sync with the potential or personality of early childhood (Yulfiani, 2024) . The tasks and objectives of character education itself are achieved if character education is implemented correctly and uses the right media (Sukatin et al., 2023) . One of the

techniques for developing children's character is to apply various types of traditional games in learning.

Traditional Games

Traditional games are a type of regional game that is developed based on the culture of the region with traditional rules and concepts, and is divided into two forms, namely outdoor and indoor games (Sutini, 2018) . There are many traditional games and various types. Traditional games in Indonesia include hopscotch, ant injit-injit, gansing, grobak sodor, catfish patok, tug of war, stilts, kites, rope jumping, dragon snakes, cak ingkling and so on. Traditional games are full of positive characters, for example the hopscotch game. Hopscotch is a game of passing through regular square pictures on a flat surface with the characteristic that players are required to jump from one square to another using only one foot, maintaining balance and accuracy so as not to step on the boundary lines of the squares that have been made (Widhyanto & Priambodo, 2024) . The hopscotch game not only involves physical activities such as jumping, but also requires an understanding of the rules, calculations, and coordination of movements. Engklek games can be a fun and educational medium for children (Fitrichyra & Miranda, 2024), the application of engklek games to early childhood provides benefits in the development of motor skills, social skills, and cultural values (Maulina et al., 2024) , in addition, traditional engklek games can encourage children to be more active, passionate, and enthusiastic in the learning process (Nurkayatin & Fitri, 2024) .

Traditional games are games that contain educational values. Children's participation in traditional games is not only limited to the physical aspect, but also involves deep social and emotional dimensions, children learn cooperation, honesty, responsibility, discipline, and love for their country through interactions in games (Sari & Kurniawan, 2024) . Children's social-emotional development through traditional games can be seen from children's interactions with peers, relationship building skills, problem-solving skills, socialization, cooperation, self-confidence, helping friends, and cooperation in groups (Sudaryanti et al., 2024) .

Traditional games can also foster character such as self-control character (Sekarningrum et al., 2021), stimulate honest character (Mailona & Marlina, 2023), and can form religious character, honesty, sportsmanship, cooperation, discipline, responsibility, hard work, and mutual respect (Hasanan, Oktariya & Agusdianita, 2024).

Character development in children can be done through play activities. Playing for children has a very important role in their growth and development. Playing is a series of activities or activities of children both indoors and outdoors with the aim of having fun. Whatever the activity, as long as there is an element of pleasure or happiness for the child, it can be called playing (Santioso, 2024). Traditional games are in the form of games that can train the cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects of children (Maulana et al., 2024). Traditional games need to be explored and developed in early childhood education so that the noble values in traditional games will foster children's character (Verawatia et al., 2020). In line with the theory of early childhood learning which emphasizes the importance of a play-while-learning approach (Pyle et al., 2023), traditional games are very suitable to be developed in learning.

Children's Character Development through the Implementation of Traditional Games

Traditional games are not only a means of entertainment, but also contain valuable character values for the formation of personality and social interaction in children. Based on the Analysis of Character Values in the journal on Google Scholar on the formation of children's character through traditional games in 2024, eleven character values were obtained, including; (1) honesty; (2) sportsmanship; (3) justice; (4) responsibility; (5) cooperation, (6) discipline, (7) creativity; (8) hard work, (9) independence, (10) self-control, (11) tolerance. The following are some character values that can be found in various traditional games:

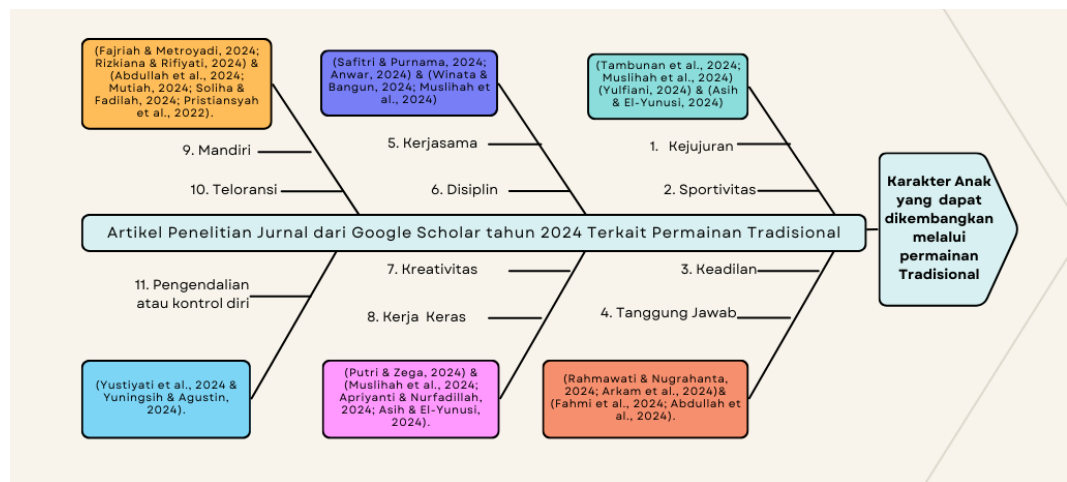


Figure 1. Character development in children through the application of traditional games

Honesty ; Children's honesty in playing is a trait or attitude that shows the conformity between the child's words and actions with the actual situation. Traditional games that emphasize honest character include hide and seek, where children must be honest about their hiding place, then the congklak game, honesty is needed to follow the rules of the game, such as not lying about the number of congklak seeds taken by the child. The value of honesty in the game of hide and seek can be seen when the child is caught while playing, or admits the mistakes made. The character of honesty in traditional games can be seen from the results of research (Tambunan et al., 2024), where there is an influence of the traditional game of hide and seek on the honesty character of children aged 5-6 years at GKPI Tarutung Kota Kindergarten. The fact is reinforced by research (Muslihah et al., 2024) that the character education values found in the Congklak game are honesty, discipline, hard work, creativity, curiosity, independence, communication, responsibility, and respect for achievement.

Sportsmanship; Sportsmanship is an attitude and behavior that children need to show in traditional games. Sportsmanship is an attitude or behavior that shows respect for existing rules, honesty and fairness towards friends and opponents, recognizing the superiority of opponents and accepting victory or defeat in a game or match with an open heart. Examples of sportsmanship

characters in traditional games are in stilts and sack races, where children learn to accept victory and defeat with an open heart, and appreciate the efforts of their friends. In addition, the spirit of sportsmanship can also be seen in the rope jumping game, where children who lose are seen accepting defeat with an open heart and immediately change roles as rope holders. In addition, in the game of hopscotch, the value of sportsmanship can be seen in children who lose when they are unable to throw the gaco (a throwing tool in the form of a stone, or a flat piece of tile/glass, or are unable to pass by stepping on the game box, where children will accept failure with sportsmanship and immediately change roles with their friends. Research that reveals the development of sportsmanship characters includes (Yulfiani, 2024) where the results of the study show that the game of congklak can train and increase the spirit of sportsmanship. A similar opinion is that traditional games carry values such as honesty, sportsmanship, responsibility, commitment, persistence, and mutual cooperation (Asih & El-Yunusi, 2024) .

Justice; It is very important to teach the character of fairness to children from an early age. Fairness in games makes the game successful and creates a feeling of happiness in children. Fairness in games is related to the application of fair and clear rules for all children involved in the game, each child has the same opportunity or opportunity to play the game, there is no cheating in the game, and there is reward or recognition according to the child's achievements in the game. Examples of traditional games that develop a fair character are galah asih and hide and seek, where children cannot take sides, congklak which involves the same number of congklak seeds between children, and other games. Fair character development in games is strengthened by various studies. The growing sense of justice in children aged 7-9 years can be encouraged through the use of traditional games (Rahmawati & Nugrahanta, 2024) , then clarified by (Arkam et al., 2024) where through traditional games such as engklek or congklak, children learn about values. fairness, cooperation, and respect for turns.

Responsibility ; Responsibility is a state of being obliged to bear everything. Responsibility in traditional games can be described as a child's awareness of the obligations that must be carried out and bearing all the consequences of something they have done. Examples of traditional games that develop responsibility in children are sack racing, rope jumping, tug of war and other games, where each child is responsible for their respective turns and roles, or in marble games, responsibility in children is seen in the act of cleaning up scattered marbles after the game or changing turns to play. Research (Fahmi et al., 2024) shows that through traditional games children are not only enthusiastic about playing but also show an understanding and application of values such as honesty, responsibility, and discipline. Research with a focus on describing the character values contained in the traditional *sondah* game strengthens the explanation related to the character of responsibility, where the results of the research prove that the traditional *sondah* game contains character values in accordance with the norms that exist in society such as the values of honesty, persistence, responsibility, persistence, commitment and sportsmanship (Abdullah et al., 2024) .

Cooperation; Activities or efforts carried out by several people (institutions, governments, etc.) to achieve common goals. Examples of traditional games that train the development of cooperative characters are *gobak sodor*, *engklek*, fortifications, jump rope and other games, where in the children's players learn to work together with group members to achieve common goals. Research related to the character of cooperation in traditional games was conducted by (Safitri & Purnama, 2024) , the rope jumping or rubber jumping game shows various positive attitudes related to the cooperation skills of early childhood. Based on the results of the study, it was found that there were at least seven character education values contained in the traditional game "*Sepok Siat*", namely; honesty, solidarity, sportsmanship, courage, responsibility, cooperation, and discipline (Anwar, 2024) .

Discipline; Discipline is self-control without external interference or control. In games, discipline can be interpreted as obedience or compliance with the rules of the game. Examples of traditional games that emphasize discipline include jump rope or spinning tops, where children must follow the rules of time, turns, or how to play so that the game runs smoothly. The development of disciplined character in traditional games was studied by (Winata & Bangun, 2024) with the conclusion that playing traditional games during childhood, especially in elementary school, can stimulate aspects of motor development and the development of disciplined character. Research in line with the character of discipline, shows that in traditional rubber games, sportsmanship, togetherness, simplicity, honesty, leadership, responsibility, open-mindedness and discipline are found (Muslihah et al., 2024) .

Creativity; Creativity is the ability to use imagination to create an object or find something or a brilliant idea to solve a problem faced, where imagination is built because of interaction with ideas or concepts, other people, and the environment. Examples of traditional games that can train the development of creativity in children include marbles. When playing marbles, children are required to think creatively in playing strategies or creating variations in the game in order to win the competition in the game. Research that reveals the role of traditional games in developing creativity is research conducted by (Putri & Zega, 2024) , where the results of the study showed that traditional hopscotch games contribute to improving the health of the alpha generation, including cognitive stimulation, social interaction, stress reduction, and increased creativity.

Hard Work; Hard work is an effort made earnestly to overcome various obstacles when completing a task. Traditional games that can be used as a means of education or development of hard work character are yo-yo games, where children try to play even though they cannot play yet. In addition, hard work is also seen in kite games, where when children play kites, children are required to show an unyielding spirit in facing various obstacles and obstacles in achieving

the goal of flying the kite. Obstacles that occur in kite games, for example, the string used breaks, when running and falling when trying to raise the kite, the kite comes loose, the wind direction changes, the kite flies unbalanced or tilted and so on. Research that explains the role of traditional games in the formation of hard work character in children includes research (Muslihah et al., 2024) where in the traditional coconut shell stilt game, the value of hard work was found. In addition, in the traditional game of congklak, character values can be instilled in elementary school students such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, hard work, and appreciating achievement (Apriyanti & Nurfadillah, 2024) . More general research results that traditional games carry values such as honesty, sportsmanship, responsibility, commitment, persistence, and mutual cooperation were studied by (Asih & El-Yunusi, 2024) .

Independent; Independent character is the ability of individuals to organize, make decisions or take responsibility for their actions and choices. Simply put, independent character in games is the ability of children to do or say something to survive, develop or win the game without relying on help from other friends. The development of independent character in traditional games is seen in research on traditional games of hopscotch and Jamuran. Traditional hopscotch games in learning activities can develop children's activities, independence and gross motor skills (Fajriah & Metroyadi, 2024) . The traditional Jamuran game in forming the character profile of Pancasila students in elementary schools, in the traditional Jamuran game, Pancer must determine the name of the mushroom according to his imagination without being allowed to ask for help from others, so this is where the character of independence is created. This action shows independence in making decisions and does not always depend on the guidance or direction of others (Rizkiana & Rifiyati, 2024) .

Self-control or self-control ; Self-control is a person's ability to consciously control themselves so as not to act or behave badly that can harm themselves or others. Examples of traditional games that teach self-control characters include hopscotch, bekel, gasing, tug of war and other traditional games, where children

must learn to control their emotions, especially when they lose or face difficult situations. Several studies have shown that traditional games can foster positive character traits of self-control in children. Research (Yustiyati et al., 2024) shows that traditional games can train self-control and foster a sense of unity and solidarity among friends. Other studies have found that through traditional games, children are accustomed to playing honestly, collaborating with their friends, participating actively when playing, voicing their opinions, and controlling their emotions by (Yuningsih & Agustin, 2024) .

Tolerance; Tolerance is very important for every individual. Tolerance is an attitude or ability of a person to treat others who are different from them well. Traditional games can be used as a means or media to foster a tolerant character in children, because through interaction in the game, children not only learn playing techniques, but also explore the meaning and cultural context that underlies it, so that children can respect each other. Traditional games can foster an attitude of tolerance because the game can be played by anyone regardless of gender, race, religion and ethnicity (Abdullah et al., 2024) . The results of the study showed that the game of guli contains multicultural educational values, including an attitude of tolerance (Mutiah, 2024) . Traditional games not only function as a preservation of local culture, but also as an effective means to instill the values of tolerance and cooperation among students (Soliha & Fadilah, 2024) . Traditional games such as gobak sodor, engklek, and congklak have been proven effective in developing students' gross and fine motor skills, while strengthening their social skills, such as teamwork, communication, and tolerance (Pristiansyah et al., 2022).

4. Conclusion

Traditional games are not only a means of entertainment and provide opportunities for children to practice physical or biomotor skills such as agility, speed, accuracy, strength, reaction, coordination or balance, but also become a medium for social development for children, for example to practice interacting,

communicating, competing healthily, and honing children's character development such as honesty, courage, responsibility, cooperation among fellow children and other character values. Based on the Analysis of Character Values in the journal on the formation of children's character through traditional games in 2024, eleven character values emerged, namely: (1) Honesty; (2) sportsmanship; (3) Justice; (4) Responsibility; (5) Cooperation, (6) Discipline, (7) Creativity; (8) hard work, (9) Independence, (10) Control or self-control and (11) Tolerance.

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