

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE EARLY CHILDHOOD COMPOUND INTELLIGENCE THROUGH TRADITIONAL GAMES

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Abstract. This study aims to examine strategies for increasing the plural intelligence of early childhood through the use of traditional games in the early childhood education environment. The background of the research is based on the importance of comprehensive stimulation for early childhood in the golden age of development, as well as the increasing abandonment of traditional games due to the influence of digital culture. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study at PAUD Melati Ceria, Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency, Jambi Province. Data collection techniques were carried out through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The research subjects consisted of 30 children aged 4–6 years, 4 PAUD teachers, and 10 parents. The results of the study show that traditional games are able to stimulate various aspects of multiple intelligence, such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence. In addition, traditional games provide a fun, contextual learning experience as well as reinforce local cultural values. With the active role of teachers and parents, as well as structured implementation strategies, traditional games can be effectively integrated in early childhood learning to support children's development holistically.

Keywords: Multiple intelligence, traditional games, early childhood, early childhood

1 Introduction

Early childhood is an individual who is in a very rapid phase of development, both physically, cognitively, socially, emotionally, and linguistically. This period is known as the golden age, because during this period the child's brain develops very quickly and is plastic in receiving various stimuli (Santrock, 2011). Therefore, it is important for educators, parents, and education stakeholders to provide appropriate, fun, and meaningful stimuli for children's growth and development. One form of stimulation that is effective, cheap, and in accordance with the characteristics of the child's world is through play activities (Yuliani, 2013).

Games for children are not just leisure activities, but are the main medium in the learning process. Play is a child's natural way of understanding the world around him (Hurlock, 1991). In play, children can explore the environment, build social interactions, develop motor skills, and grow thinking and language skills. The right games will provide a rich, fun learning

experience, and encourage the holistic development of various aspects of children's intelligence (Mayesty, 2018).

In the context of the development of children's intelligence, the theory of multiple intelligences put forward by Howard Gardner in 1983 is one of the important references. Gardner states that intelligence is not singular as in conventional understanding, but rather consists of various aspects that each individual has uniquely and has the potential to develop (Gardner, 2006). These intelligences include linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. In early childhood education, a compound intelligence-based approach allows each child to develop according to their individual strengths through varied and contextual learning experiences (Suyadi, 2015).

Unfortunately, in the practice of early childhood education in various regions of Indonesia, the learning approach still tends to be fixated on formal academic activities. Children are often required to sit still, work on worksheets, or follow the one-way lecture method. This approach is not in accordance with the characteristics of early childhood development that is learned through direct and concrete experience (Yus, 2011). This condition is increasingly complex with increasing exposure to digital technology, where children spend more time playing gadgets than interacting socially and playing actively in the surrounding environment (Setiawan & Mustadi, 2018).

In fact, Indonesia has an extraordinary wealth of local culture, one of which is in the form of traditional games. Games such as congklak, engklek, hide and seek, fort, gobak sodor, and cublak-cublak suweng are cultural heritage that is loaded with educational and social values. These games train physical, logical, language, cooperation, and even spiritual and emotional values (Komalasari, 2017). Unfortunately, the popularity of these traditional games is fading amid the dominance of digital gaming and changes in modern lifestyles.

Seeing these conditions, there is a need for strategic efforts to revitalize traditional games as a contextual and meaningful learning medium, as well as a means of developing early childhood multiple intelligence. This strategy is not only important in the context of education, but also as part of efforts to preserve the nation's culture that is rich in moral and social values (Sutarto, 2015).

This research aims to explore the potential of traditional games in developing early childhood multiple intelligence and formulate strategies for their implementation in learning in early childhood institutions. The main focus is directed at how traditional games can be optimally utilized to stimulate various aspects of intelligence. In addition, this study also examines the role of teachers, parents, and educational institutions in integrating traditional games into systematic and sustainable learning activities.

With the right approach, traditional games can become an integral part of a fun, relevant, and effective early childhood education curriculum. This game is able to bridge the gap between children's needs to play and the demands of development of all aspects of development. Therefore, a clear and structured framework is needed in the application of traditional games as a medium for the development of multiple intelligences in the early childhood education environment.

Method

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to obtain an in-depth overview of strategies to increase early childhood compound intelligence through traditional games. This approach was chosen because it is able to describe phenomena holistically and contextually according to the dynamics that occur in the field (Moleong, 2017). The research was conducted in the form of a case study, focusing on learning practices in PAUD institutions

that utilize traditional games as a learning medium. In this study, researchers play an active role in the data collection process to understand children's experiences, behaviors, and responses to traditional games (Creswell, 2015).

This research was carried out in Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency, Jambi Province. This location was chosen based on several considerations, including: Tanjung Jabung Barat is an area that still has a strong local cultural richness, including various types of traditional games. There is a commitment from several PAUD institutions to implement a learning approach based on local culture. The availability of adequate respondents from PAUD educators, parents, and students aged 4 to 6 years. The research was focused on PAUD Melati CERIA, Tungkal Ilir District.

The subjects in this study consisted of: 30 children aged 4–6 years, who were actively involved in traditional game play activities in PAUD institutions. 4 PAUD teachers, who are responsible for designing and facilitating traditional game-based learning activities. 10 parents of children, as additional informants to gain perspective on children's development at home. The selection of subjects uses the purposive sampling technique, which is to select informants based on certain criteria that are relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2017).

Data collection was carried out through three main techniques: Participatory Observation, the researcher conducted direct observation of children's play activities, especially when playing traditional games such as engklek, congklak, hide and seek, and gobak sodor. Observations are focused on children's behaviors that show the development of multiple intelligences, such as language skills, social cooperation, body coordination, imagination, and problem-solving skills (Patton, 2002). In-Depth Interviews; Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with teachers and parents to obtain data on their perceptions of the benefits of traditional games, experiences in their application, and changes in children's behavior after engaging in games. Semi-structured models provide flexibility in exploring informant answers more broadly (Cohen et al., 2011). Documentation; The documents collected included photos of play activities, teachers' daily activity plans (RKH) that included traditional games, children's development records, and a list of local games played by children.

The data obtained was analyzed qualitatively descriptively through three stages: Data reduction: the process of filtering, sorting, and focusing data relevant to the research problem (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data presentation: organize data in the form of narratives, tables, and thematic descriptions for easy understanding. Drawing conclusions: making interpretations based on patterns of findings from observations, interviews, and documentation. To increase the validity of the data, triangulation of sources and techniques was carried out, namely by comparing information from observations, interviews, and documentation and conducting cross-validation between informants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Result and Analysis

The Importance of Traditional Games in the Development of Early Childhood Multiple Intelligence

Traditional games have a very important function in supporting the development of early childhood compound intelligence. As stated by Gardner (2006), compound intelligence encompasses various aspects such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, kinesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. Each of these types of intelligence can be stimulated through various forms of traditional play. For example, the game of congklak can develop logical-mathematical intelligence through strategy and calculation of the number of seeds. Gobak sodor can train kinesthetic intelligence through body movements and running speed. Hide and seek strengthens spatial intelligence as children learn to recognize spaces and

hiding positions. Cublak-cublak suweng, with verses and songs, hone children's musical and linguistic intelligence. Thus, traditional games are not just recreational activities, but an effective means of contextual education in stimulating all children's intelligence potential (Suherman, 2020).

Nowadays, traditional games are increasingly abandoned along with the rampant use of digital devices among children. Data from Setiawan and Mustadi (2018) show that the time spent using gadgets in early childhood has increased significantly, inversely proportional to the frequency of active play activities. The revitalization of traditional games in the PAUD environment is a strategic step to restore children's right to a quality play experience. Traditional games must be integrated into the Early Childhood Education teacher's Daily Activity Plan (RKH), adjusted to the aspects of child development that are to be achieved. According to the Directorate of Early Childhood Education of the Ministry of Education and Culture (2017), game-based learning supports the achievement of children's basic competencies more optimally. By including traditional games in learning activities, children can learn while playing, so that cognitive, motor, language, social-emotional, and spiritual moral development can grow in a balanced manner.

The success of the strategy to increase compound intelligence through traditional games is inseparable from the active role of teachers and parents. Teachers act as facilitators who design a learning environment rich in traditional games. Teachers need to understand the characteristics of local play and relate it to learning objectives, as stated by Suyadi (2015) that an integrative thematic approach is very effective for early childhood education. In addition, parents also play a role in introducing traditional games in the home environment. School and family collaboration is the main key. According to Epstein (2011), family involvement in early childhood education improves children's academic success and social-emotional development. In West Tanjung Jabung Regency, the involvement of parents in traditional game activities has been proven to enrich children's experiences, strengthen family ties, and instill local cultural values.

Based on observations made at PAUD Melati Ceria, Tungkai Ilir District, it can be concluded that traditional games are effective in developing various aspects of children's intelligence.

a. Observation of Kinesthetic and Spatial Intelligence

When children play the knick, there is an improvement in gross motor skills, body balance, and the ability to regulate movements in a coordinated manner. This is in line with the opinion of Hurlock (1991) that active motor stimulation supports the physical and cognitive growth of children. Children also show spatial ability in choosing which boxes to jump over and estimating the jump distance.

b. Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Intelligence Observation

The game of gobak sodor shows children learning to work together in groups, set strategies together, and communicate to win the game. This reflects the development of interpersonal intelligence as explained by Gardner (2006). In addition, in hide and seek games, children learn to understand their own feelings, regulate tension, and manage fear while hiding, which is part of intrapersonal intelligence.

c. Observation of Linguistic and Musical Intelligence

The activity of playing cublak-cublak suweng by singing traditional songs shows children developing language skills, memorizing verses, recognizing voice intonation, and practicing articulation (Mayesty, 2018)

Data analysis is carried out through reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To increase the validity of the data, triangulation was carried out, namely: Comparing the results of field observation with interviews with teachers and parents. Confirm observational findings with RKH documentation and child development records. The results of triangulation reinforce the finding that traditional games contribute positively to the development of children's compound intelligence.

Challenges and Solutions for Traditional Game Implementation

The implementation of traditional games in early childhood learning faces several challenges, including:

1. Lack of knowledge of teachers about the types and educational value of traditional games.
2. Lack of support for play facilities in schools.
3. The influence of digital culture that makes children more interested in screen-based games.

To overcome this challenge, it is necessary to take several steps:

1. Early childhood education teacher training on the application of traditional games based on the curriculum.
2. Provision of play infrastructure facilities that support traditional game activities in schools.
3. Socialization to parents about the importance of limiting the use of gadgets and inviting children to play actively at home.

Traditional games have a very important role in developing early childhood compound intelligence. In the midst of the current challenges of digital culture, there needs to be a structured effort from teachers, parents, and educational institutions to revitalize traditional games as an effective and meaningful learning medium. Through the integration of games in the early childhood education curriculum, children not only learn academically, but also develop their potential holistically.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the results of the research on the strategy of increasing the multiple intelligence of early childhood through traditional games carried out at PAUD Melati Ceria, West Tanjung Jabung Regency, the following can be concluded:

1. Traditional games have been shown to be effective in stimulating the multiple intelligence of early childhood. Various types of traditional games such as congklak, engklek, petak andpet, gobak sodor, and cublak-cublak suweng are able to develop children's linguistic, logical-mathematical, kinesthetic, spatial, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist intelligence simultaneously and fun.
2. Traditional games enrich children's learning experiences with a contextual approach based on local culture. This activity supports physical, cognitive, social-emotional development, and forms children's character, in accordance with the principles of holistic learning recommended in early childhood education.
3. Teachers and parents have a central role in reviving traditional games in children's lives. The involvement of teachers in learning planning and parental involvement in the home environment strengthen the effectiveness of using traditional games as a medium for intelligence development.
4. The revitalization of traditional games is an urgent need amid the rampant use of digital technology. Traditional games offer alternative activities that are not only entertaining but

also educational, as well as strengthening children's social ties with the surrounding environment.

5. The implementation of traditional games in early childhood learning requires a structured strategy, including teacher training, provision of play facilities, integration in the curriculum, and active collaboration with families.

Thus, traditional games can and do need to be optimized as an integral part of early childhood learning to develop their full potential of their compound intelligence in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.

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