

Character Values in Traditional Ponorogo Games: A Literature Study for Alternative Learning Materials in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

The purpose of this study research is to examine traditional games in Ponorogo Regency for the development of character education values in the midst of the disruption of online games for elementary school students. The research method with literature review is not limited to the study of books but also various scientific works sourced from reputable scientific databases. The results showed (1) bathok stilts; (2) Games; (3) Gaheng Games; (4) Map Games; and (5) Antem-anteman Bal contains values that can be developed for character education. Advice for teachers is that each game can be considered to be integrated in strengthening character education, both through learning activities and play activities outside the classroom.

Keywords: Elementary School; Character Values; Traditional Games.

INTRODUCTION

The changing times bring changes in children's play. These games also shape the child's inner development. These games influence cognitive, psychomotor, and affective development. Developments during a particular stage of development will shape a child's future self. This is because the environment around them, such as the games they play, also influences their development (Sinta Zakiyah et al., 2024).

Today, the direction of children's play has changed. Elementary school-aged children, with the access of their devices, can access games without leaving home. They play modern games online, which impacts their development. The impact tends to be negative (Lisnawati et al., 2021). Those addicted to online games experience a decrease in enthusiasm for learning and an impact on academic success (Febriany et al., 2021). Other research also shows a decline in academic performance accompanied by weakened problem-solving abilities (Muspito et al., 2022). Online games ultimately influence character traits such as addiction, laziness, and socialization (Kartikawati & Nurhasanah, 2023). Therefore, alternative games for elementary school children are needed to influence their personalities.

One alternative that can be reused is traditional games. Traditional games refer to games passed down from previous generations to the present (Cahyani et al., 2023). These traditional games are used by elementary school students to learn about cultural heritage. For students themselves, they can also build their character through enjoyable learning experiences (Miratunnisah, 2024). In elementary school learning, traditional games are a valuable tool (Ningsih et al., 2024).

Traditional games in every region have their own diversity. Behind the diversity of traditional game development, there are values embedded within them. Cultural values are the fundamental values embodied within them. These values foster pride in one's homeland and identity. Character values such as cooperation, responsibility, and respect are also embedded (Iasha et al., 2020). Therefore, traditional games found in each region have the potential to be utilized by teachers in that region to develop character values.

Ponorogo is a cultural city. The regency's slogan is "Ponorogo the ethnic art of Java," a slogan that indicates a region focused on culture. As a regency with a cultural city, traditional games are also present, just like in other distinctive regions. These games have been passed down from generation to generation amidst the disruption of online games that are popular with elementary school-aged children. Traditional games that have developed or existed can be rediscovered to develop character values in elementary schools. In the context of this research study, the games studied in developing character values are: (1) *Coconut Shells Stilts (Stilts)*; (2) *Gim-Giman* (game); (3) *Gatheng* (game); (4) *Pel-Pelan* (game); and (5) *Antem-Anteman Bal* (game).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a literature review approach. The literature review encompassed not only books but also various scientific works sourced from reputable scientific databases such as Google Scholar, Sinta, and Garuda, as well as various direct sources such as OJS (open journal system)-based journals from the internet (Setiawan et al., 2020). The combing, sorting, and analysis of various scientific texts and readings on the themes of children's games, traditional games, traditional game tools, character values, and character learning in elementary schools were carried out in an organized and in-depth manner. Each step was taken to review various traditional games that can be utilized by teachers in developing elementary school students' character values.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Traditional Ponorogo games are traditional games played by children in the Ponorogo Regency. As regional games, these games have the potential to be used as a

medium for strengthening character values both outside and inside elementary school. Several games have been identified, including: (1) Coconut Shells Stilts (Stilts); (2) Gim-Giman (Giman); (3) Gatheng (Gatheng); (4) Pel-Pelan (Pelan); and (5) Antem-Anteman Bal (Ball). The following describes the playing techniques and the character values contained in each traditional game.

Coconut Shells Stilts

Coconut Shells Stilts are a simple game or play tool that differs from typical stilts. Coconut Shells Stilts (Stilts) are made from hollowed-out coconut shells and are provided with strong rope for handles. These stilts are an alternative to the relatively tall traditional bamboo stilts. Their simple shape and materials make them easier for children to make and use. This game was popular with children in Ponorogo between the 1990s and 2005.



Source: <https://siplah-oss.tokoladang.co.id/>

Figure 1. Egrang Bathok (Stilts)

The game is quite simple: the player raises their feet onto a coconut shell. Once their feet are on the coconut shell, the big toes and small toes grasp the rope. To prevent falling, the player holds the stilt ropes with both hands and maintains balance. The player then walks slowly, swinging their left and right legs alternately (Yani & Risqiani, 2023). Calmness and balance are key to the stilt game.

Egrang Bathok is an alternative traditional game that can be used as a medium for developing character values in elementary school students. Stilts can be implemented through activities outside or inside the classroom. This game can be played individually or in groups in simple tournaments (Sayidina et al., 2025). The stilt game doesn't require much space, making it suitable for play in relatively small schoolyards.

Various character values can be learned from this game. First, simplicity and creativity are taught through the creation of play materials using simple materials, namely coconut shells and strong rope (Jannah et al., 2018; Pratiwi et al., 2020). These two main materials are widely available in the student's environment. This simple habit will instill creativity and simplicity in the minds of elementary school students.

Second, hard work and tenacity are learned from how students make and play with the stilts. Making play equipment from simple materials actually motivates students. Their hard work will determine whether or not each stilt they design will be successful (Muslihah et al., 2024). Furthermore, playing requires effort to prevent falls. The relatively uneven shape of the coconut shell steps makes it difficult for them to place their feet comfortably. It takes tenacity and hard work to keep them from falling while walking on stilts.

Third, the value of sportsmanship. When students are invited to participate in a stilt-walking competition, not everyone will be able to perform well. Some can walk easily, while others may experience difficulties. Students are required to remain honest throughout the game and to be open-minded when they lose or fail. This stage teaches children about sportsmanship (Sholikin et al., 2022).

Gim-Giman Games

Another form of traditional game from Ponorogo is gim-giman. This is also a traditional game rarely played by children today. This game is a group game that requires 6-10 participants (Anggraini & Untari, 2014). The equipment needed is relatively simple: used tennis balls or andhu balls (woven coconut leaves) and broken roof tiles as targets (Setiawan et al., 2024). The game takes place in an open field or yard large enough to accommodate all members of the gim-giman team.



Source: <https://google.com/picture>

Figure 2. Andhu ball (woven coconut leaf ball)

Gim-giman is a form of game that focuses on defending a team's territory. The initial 6-10 participants are divided into two small groups. Group representatives play rock-paper-scissors to determine which team will throw the ball and which will guard. The guard group spreads out and waits for the throwing team to throw the ball at a pile of roof tiles. If the roof tiles fall, the guard group will attempt to hit the throwing team with a tenes/andhu ball.

The standard rule is that each member of the throwing team must not move, walk, or run, while holding the tenes/andhu ball. They must remain stationary in one spot, throwing the balls at the opposing team (Saputra et al., 2023). The opposing team attempts to approach the pile of broken roof tiles and arrange them until they are finished.

There are two possible outcomes for each team: (1) the opposing team fails to hit all the throwing team members until the tiles are re-arranged, thus winning; or (2) the opposing team fails to arrange all the tiles because all members are hit by the tenes/andhu ball thrown by the defending team, thus winning. Each game session ends when one of these possible outcomes is met.



Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lezyk3_dgh4

Figure 3. Children playing Gim-giman

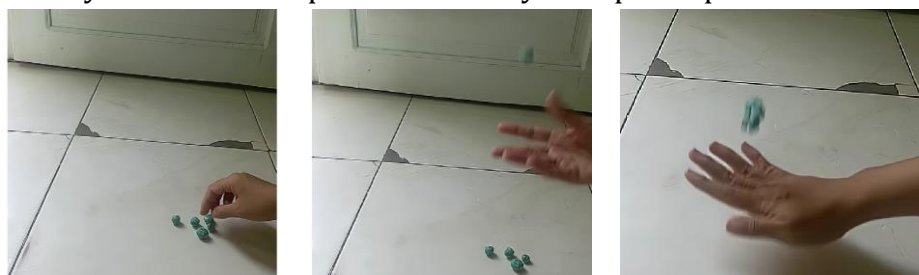
In some areas, this game is known as boy-boyan. Various character values that can be instilled in students through games include: (1) simplicity and creativity through the use of broken roof tiles, used paper, or woven bamboo leaves as balls (andhu); (2) team cohesion and cooperation among both the throwing and guarding teams; (3) responsibility for all team members to guard the area and rearrange scattered broken roof tiles; (4) discipline to ensure their teams perform their respective roles optimally; (5) sportsmanship, which involves accepting both their team's wins and losses; and (6) developing students' socio-emotional skills while playing this traditional game (Rahayu et al., 2021; Setiawan, 2024).

Gatheng Game

Another traditional game from Ponorogo is gatheng. Gatheng is an individual game, played by individuals, although it can also be played in semi-tournaments. This game relies on dexterity and manual flexibility to win and reach the marbles or game pieces used. This game is played while sitting relaxed in the yard or indoors. The gatheng game tool can be said to be simpler compared to previous games. Gatheng relies on hand movements and several tools such as fruit seeds (sapodilla, longan, or tamarind seeds), marbles, or pebbles for the game. The ore needed by each person varies between 5-7 seeds (according to the ability of the game participants) (Syamsurrijal, 2020).

How to play it is quite simple: (1) participants make a suit to determine who the first player is; (2) the first participant holds the game ball in his hand; (3) game ore is spread on the floor and 1 ore is taken as a pot; (4) the participant takes 1 seed while throwing the bag up and then catches it in his hand; (5) the game continues if the ore on the floor and the pot can be reached simultaneously; (6) Students take turns until

completion (Session 1: take 1 or 1 seed, Session 2: take 2 or 2 seeds, Session 3: take 3 seeds, and so on). (7) The final session involves students holding all the seeds in their hands, throwing them upwards, and collecting them on the back of their hands. (8) Students take turns repeating the previous steps in sequence. Points are calculated based on the number of seeds successfully caught on the back of each student's hand (Budianti et al., 2021). This step is carried out alternately, with the winner determined by the number of points earned by each participant across all their turns.



Sumber: <https://www.youtube.com/shorts/febIoTDxhlw>

Figure 4. Children playing *Gatheng*

The Gatheng game has several positive character values, including: (1) hard work, as completing the game requires focus and effort to ensure all stages are completed successfully; (2) precision, as completing the game requires memory and precision in remembering the number of seeds and the order in which they are collected from the floor; (3) Simplicity: (1) the game materials used can utilize a variety of simple materials readily available around the child; (2) discipline: each stage must be carried out sequentially and followed in sequence, thus cultivating the value of discipline in children; and (3) sportsmanship: regardless of whether they win or lose, students are taught to accept and respect the outcome (Kurniawan, 2018).

The Pel-Pelan Game

The fourth game is the traditional pel-pelan game. This game, from Ponorogo, is a variation of the popular hide-and-seek game. It is played in groups with 2-10 participants, and sometimes more. The more participants, the more exciting the pel-pelan game becomes. This game does not require special equipment or skills, and is not limited by space or age.

This game begins with all participants playing hompimpa to determine who will be on guard and who will be hiding. The student on guard duty occupies a designated spot, closes his or her eyes, and then counts according to the agreed-upon count (generally, the more students there are, the more counts are done). While the guard student counts, the other students hide in safe spots of their choice. The hiding area is usually also agreed upon, depending on how wide each student can choose their hiding spot (Wulandari, 2020).



Source: <https://riau1.com>

Figure 5. Illustration of the pel-pelan game

There are two versions of the pel-pelan game. In the first version, the guard student simply searches for and finds all the participants hiding in their respective spots. Once found, the hiding student is shouted "pel ... (participant's name)" or "dak ... (participant's name)" to indicate that the guard has found them. The first student found waits for the other students to find them. Once all participants are found, all the found students play rock, paper, scissors/hompimpa again to determine the next guard.

The second version is a competition between students standing guard and students hiding. At a point agreed upon as a guard spot, all participants will try to reach that point without the guard noticing. Participants who are hiding will not stay in one place, but will try to approach the guard spot. When the guard walks around looking for participants or is far from the guard spot, the participants who are hiding will approach the guard spot. Upon reaching the guard spot, the participants will shout "pel / dak" indicating that they have successfully deceived the guard. Conversely, if the guard spots the hiding participant, they can run back to the guard spot and say "pel / dak ... (participant's name)". Participants who successfully deceive the guard will be safe from guard duty. Meanwhile, participants who are found and lose gather to play hompimpa/rock, scissors to determine who will be on guard duty next.

The various character values in the pel-pel game are: (1) democracy, where all participants have the same rights and obligations, both as guards and hiding participants; (2) precision and thoroughness, where participants who are guarding must be careful and thorough so they can find their friends' hiding places; (3) honesty, where the guard must count and close his eyes until all participants are hidden, without peeking or interrupting the count; (4) independence and hard work, where the guard must strive to find all participants; and (5) sportsmanship, where all participants must not cheat, whether as guards or hiding. Furthermore, accepting both defeat and victory also teaches children sportsmanship in any situation (Samadi & Nurishlah, 2023).

Antem-anteman Bal (throwing a baseball/tenes ball to each other)

The last type of game identified was Antem-anteman Bal. This game is a variation of Gim-giman or Boy-boyan. It is played in groups of 4-10 participants. It requires simple equipment such as a woven coconut leaf ball (andhu), a ball made of rolled paper, or a used tennis ball. It is played in an open space, using a teamwork system.

The game involves dividing participants into two groups. The first group is the throwing group and the second group is the group being chased. After dividing into groups, participants determine their territories or playing area to ensure fair play. The more students involved, the larger the running area required. Next, the throwing team and the chased team gather in a circle in the center of the playing area. The throwing team throws the ball upward, while the chased team attempts to head the ball out of the thrower's reach. The chased team then scatters away from the throwing team to avoid being hit by the thrown ball.

The throwing team is not permitted to chase by running or changing positions while holding the ball. They are only permitted to pass the ball from one person to another, then aim at the participant acting as the chased team. If the shot hits the opposing team's body, that participant is inactive and must leave the arena. This does not apply if the ball hits the head; the participant remains active and continues playing. The participant being chased is also not permitted to leave the agreed-upon area; if they do, they are automatically eliminated. The game ends when the throwing team surrenders or all opposing teams have been hit by the ball.

The character values learned from this game of antem-anteman bal include: (1) cooperation and teamwork, when playing as the throwing team. Good coordination and cooperation will determine the group's success in chasing down all opposing teams. (2) discipline and adherence to rules, where both the throwing team and the opposing team must adhere to the agreed-upon rules; (3) sportsmanship, where both the winning and losing teams must respect each other's results; and (4) hard work, where achieving victory requires hard work from all players (Cahyani et al., 2023; Widodo & Lumintuarso, 2017).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Traditional games native to Ponorogo are children's games developed and played in Ponorogo Regency, East Java. Various games developed in Ponorogo have the potential to be used as a means of character development for elementary school students. Some types of traditional games identified include: (1) Coconut Shells Stilts (Stilts); (2) gim-giman (games); (3) gatheng (games). (4) pel-pelan; and (5) antem-anteman bal. Some of the character values contained in each of these games include: cooperation and solidarity, discipline and adherence to rules, sportsmanship, hard

work, democracy, thoroughness, honesty, independence, responsibility, and the values of simplicity and creativity.

Suggestions for teachers include considering integrating each game into character education, both through learning activities and play activities outside the classroom. Schools and policymakers should pay more serious attention to the preservation of traditional games. Efforts can be made through traditional game activities or festivals at the school level and at a higher policy level. A sense of ownership and cultural preservation is the responsibility of all parties, primarily due to the noble values contained in each game. Future research should explore various types of traditional games and their character values, both at the Ponorogo district level and more broadly.

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