

Traditional Games as Fun Media in Strengthening Multiple Intelligences During Learning at Home in the Corona Pandemic

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Abstract

The corona pandemic is not over yet. Currently, Indonesia is implementing social activity restrictions in several areas since last July 2021. It causes everyone just stay at home and do the activities from home, including the learning process. Of course, it causes every student feels bored and become stress because basically, the students in childhood need social interaction and excitement, like playing. Actually, there are many Indonesian traditional games that can be played at home with the family. However, based on data, there are about 40% of Indonesian traditional games have become extinct and about 65% of Indonesian children are no longer familiar with traditional games. Therefore, this study aims to: 1) explain the conditions of learning at home during the pandemic; 2) explain the application of traditional games can stimulate learning and social interaction activities at home; 3) explain the existence of traditional games as fun learning media for strengthening personal character as well as increasing multiple intelligences. A qualitative design is used in this study. Then, a critical paradigm to find new concept from local knowledge with indigenous ethnography approach is also used in this study. The data is collected by the techniques of observation (some using students' video from other places while playing traditional games), interviews, documentation, and the study of documents. Moreover, some students from several places in Indonesia become informants of this research (25 students from elementary school and junior high school). Meanwhile, the collected data are analyzed using the interactive model analysis by Miles and Huberman (focus on descriptive, emotion, and values coding). The results of this study are: (1) the condition of learning process at home during pandemic experienced many obstacles that make students bored and stressed; (2) the application of traditional games can stimulate learning and social interaction activities at home; and (3) the existence of traditional games as fun learning media for strengthening personal character as well as increasing multiple intelligences.

Keywords: Traditional game, Multiple intelligences, Learning at home, Corona pandemic



1. The Background

The corona pandemic is not over yet. As of Thursday (July 1, 2021), the daily case in Indonesia reached 24,836 cases and mortality rate increased by 250% in the same period [1]. Because of this condition, Indonesia is implementing social activity restrictions in several areas since last July 2021. This effort is through the COVID-19 Handling Task Force with Circular (SE) No. 16 of 2021 concerning Travel of Domestic People during the COVID-19 Pandemic Period, which is effective from 26 July 2021. In line with that, the Ministry of Law and Human Rights also issued regulation (Permenkumham) No. 27 of 2021 concerning Restrictions on Foreigners Entering Indonesia During the Emergency PPKM Period. It is enforced to prevent the entry of virus variants originating from outside Indonesia [2]. This condition causes everyone just stay at home and do the activities from home, including the learning process. Of course, it causes every student feels bored and becomes stress because basically, the students in childhood need social interaction and excitement, like playing.

Actually, Indonesia has many traditional games that can be played at home with the family members. There are about 2500 traditional games in Indonesia [3]. However, based on data, there are about 40% of Indonesian traditional games have become extinct [4] and about 65% of Indonesian children are no longer familiar with traditional games [5]. Based on initial observations, there are several games that can increase students' knowledge about the diversity of Indonesian culture, especially Indonesian traditional games. In addition, these games can also stimulate students' multiple intelligences, and motivate students to keep studying even at home. The games are *engklek*, *congklak*, *cublak-cublak suweng*, *bentengan*, *ular naga*, *petak umpet*, and *ABC 5 Dasar*.

Based on previous scholar's research, traditional games are said being able to develop the moral and language aspects of students at school [6]. Furthermore, the use of *engklek* in the learning process at school is able to strengthen students' mathematical abilities [7] while preserving traditional games. Besides *engklek*, *congklak* can also improve the mathematical abilities of students at school [8]. Then, *cublak-cublak suweng* contains many values of local wisdom that can shape the character of students [9]. Informatively, *bentengan* is a game that is included in the category of Indonesian intangible cultural heritage set by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture in 2018 [10]. Meanwhile, the game of *ular naga* and *petak umpet* is considered beneficial for the physical development of early childhood [11] [12]. Finally, the game of *ABC 5 Dasar* is able to improve the ability of students' memorizing new vocabulary at school [13]. These studies focus on learning at school, not at home.



**Figure 1. Traditional Game *Bentengan*
(Intangible Cultural Heritage on 2018)**

Anthropologically, traditional games are part of local knowledge. Local knowledge (spirituality, values, thoughts, tastes, and body) begins and returns to the environment [14]. It means that traditional games start from knowledge with a background of environmental conditions and return to the surrounding environment, such as the game *congklak* which is made from wood and seeds or shells. This knowledge is obtained through experience and concrete understanding of the environment [15]. It is in line with experiential learning developed by Kolb: abstract conceptualization and concrete experience (understanding experience) as well as active experimentation and reflective observation (changing experience) [16]. This allows students (children) to be interested in learning and it becomes the stimulation of learning. In simpler terms, experiential learning includes abstract conceptualization, concrete experience, active experimentation, and reflective observation [17]. All of these things can be found by the students (children) in traditional games.

The traditional games mentioned above, are theoretically associated with learning aimed at increasing students' (children's) multiple intelligences. There are 8 categories of multiple intelligences introduced by Gardner, namely: naturalist, spatial, musical, logical reasoning (mathematical), interpersonal, body kinesthetic, linguistic, and intrapersonal intelligence [18] [19] [20]. In addition, traditional games are also examined from their function to strengthen the relationship between parents and children at home. Parent-child relationships have powerful effects on children's emotional well-being [21].

Based on the background above, this study aims to: 1) explain the conditions of learning at home during the pandemic; 2) explain the application of traditional games can stimulate learning and social interaction activities at home; 3) explain the existence of traditional games as fun learning media for strengthening personal character as well as increasing multiple intelligences.

Method

This study uses a qualitative design and with a critical paradigm to find new concept from local knowledge with indigenous ethnography approach. The phenomenological approach used for collecting data about the phenomena of using traditional games and its function for strengthening multiple intelligences. It originates from philosophical and psychological knowledge based on the researcher's experience of a phenomenon in an area. In terms of the character of the data obtained, this approach is more dominated by interview techniques [22].

This study also examines cultural and local wisdom of traditional games for strengthening multiple intelligences and children's character. So, this study also uses an ethnographic approach. The ethnographic approach is based on anthropological and sociological studies that examine the conditions of behavior, language, and actions that take place in a cultural group naturally for a long time [22].

The data is collected by the techniques of observation (some using students' video from other places while playing traditional games), interviews, documentation, and the study of documents. Some students from several places in Indonesia become informants (25 students from elementary school and junior high school). Then, the collected data are analyzed using the interactive model analysis by Miles and Huberman (focus on descriptive, emotion, and values coding) [23].

For measuring the validity of the data, it is used triangulation techniques (sources), member checks (asking the same questions to different informants) and increasing observation persistence. This is in line with the data analysis technique used, namely an interactive model of data analysis that allows the researcher (as the main instrument) to measure data validity.

Discussion

As said in the background, the corona pandemic is not over yet that causes everyone just stay at home and do the activities from home, including the learning process. Of course, it causes every student feels bored and becomes stress.

1. The Conditions of Learning at Home During the Pandemic

There are many obstacles during learning at home. This condition dues to many things, such as the sudden pandemic condition and the problem of poor internet network. In addition, the use of online media makes the interactions between teachers and students are difficult so that it needs alternative media for attracting the students. Besides the difficulties faced by teachers, learning during the corona pandemic has also causes several problems for students, such as not all students have ICT devices for learning, such as cellphones and laptops (sometimes they have to alternate with parents and other relatives) and the understanding of students in using the media and learning the material. Learning from home also causes difficulties for the mentoring of parents while learning using online media because some parents work (from home too). Then, learning from home also affects the social interaction of students to others, and so many others. This is as conveyed by the following students:

(a) *“Saya kesulitan konsentrasi kalau belajar dari rumah karena penjelasan guru kadang-kadang tidak jelas.”*

(“I become difficult to concentrate when learning from home because the teacher's explanations are sometimes not clear.”)

(b) *“Kalau belajar dari rumah, saya suka kangen teman-teman trus tidak bisa main. Bosan.”*

(“When I learn from home, I like to miss my friends and can't play together. Bored.”)

Those make students become lazy, bored, and often stressed in facing learning without direct interaction with teachers and other friends. The condition can be seen from the data of BNPB about Indonesian children during Corona pandemic: 47% feel bored at home; 35% worried about missing lessons; 20% miss their friends; 15% feel insecure; and 10% worried about the family's economic condition [24]. Then, from 25 informants of this research: 56% feel bored at home; 20% stress; 16% feel bored and stress; and 8% no answer (Elsa, 2021).

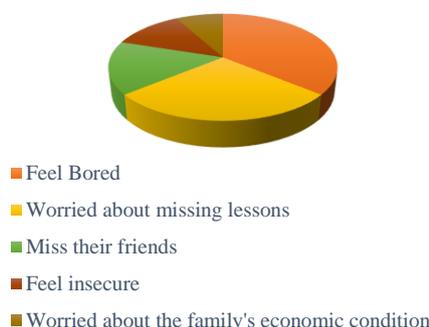


Figure 2. Diagram of Indonesian Children during Corona

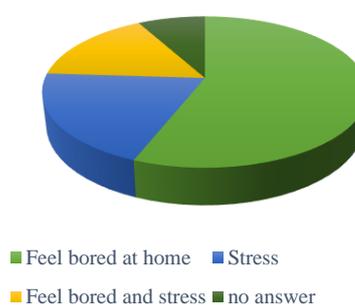


Figure 3. Diagram of Indonesian Children during Corona (Informants)

From the diagram above, it can be seen that most students feel bored, anxious about missing their lessons because they can't understand the material while learning using online media, and feel stressed while learning at home. This if left unchecked can affect the psychological condition of students and cause them to be lazy or even not want to learn at all.

2. The Application of Traditional Games Stimulates Learning as Experiential Learning and Interaction Activities at Home

Indonesian society is a multicultural society which grows with a variety of cultural structures. Indonesian has many Indonesian traditional games that can be played at home with the family. It is about 2500 traditional games. Actually, many traditional games can be used as learning media for students (children) while at home.

As explained in the background of this research, learning by applying the traditional game media is in line with experiential learning developed by Kolb (1984). The concept of experiential learning is abstract conceptualization and concrete experience (understanding experience) as well as active experimentation and reflective observation (changing experience) which make students (children) being interested in learning and it becomes the stimulation of learning. The students (children) experience the concrete condition for themselves how to count using *congklak* seeds or sing through the game *cublak cublak suweng* or also memorize vocabulary by playing *ABC 5 Dasar*. It becomes active experimentation for the students (children) in learning while playing as the following student opinions:

(c) “Main *congklak* dengan kakak, aku jadi belajar berhitung dari bijinya. Trus, kalau main *ABC 5 Dasar*, aku belajar kata-kata baru. Asyik pokoknya.”

(“When I play *congklak* with my sister, I learn how to count by using the seeds. Then, when I play *ABC 5 Dasar*, I learn new words. It's fun anyway.”)



**Figure 4. Traditional Game
*Cublak Cublak Suweng***



**Figure 5. Traditional Game
ABC 5 Dasar with Family Members**

Besides being a stimulus through experiential learning, the use of traditional games can also be an interaction activity at home that can strengthen relationships between family members, especially parents and children. A good parent-child relationship can greatly affect a child's emotional condition, as stated by the following informants:

(d) “*Bermain mainan tradisional bersama keluarga selama di rumah membuat aku senang, tidak bosan, dan jadi lebih dekat dengan Ibu sama Bapak juga kakak.*”
 (“Playing traditional games with my family while at home makes me happy, not bored, and closer to my mother, father, and brother.”)

Like the previous explanation, playing together between family members at home provides space for family members to “chat together”, laugh, and have fun together. It can bring the relationship between family members closer. When the relationship between family members is getting closer, it makes students (children) comfortable at home which in the end makes them active and not lazy, especially when studying.

3. The Existence of Traditional Games as Fun Learning Media for Strengthening and Increasing Multiple Intelligences

a. *Engklek* and *Congklak*

Engklek; the game that is played on a playing field (can be on the floor, street, field, or other flat place) by two or more people (children). The players need pictures in the form of boxes and *gajo* (objects that are thrown while playing as a marker for the player's place). Then, the player should jump one foot on the boxes that have been made. This *engklek* game creates a sense of joy, trains the motoric development of students (children), honesty (intrapersonal), sportsmanship (interpersonal), and strengthens closeness with family members.



Figure 6. Traditional Game *Engklek*



Figure 7. Traditional Game *Congklak*

Congklak using *congklak* board with 7 holes and seeds which also amount to 7 for each hole. This game is played by 2 people who take turns if the seeds stop in an empty place. The

player will be deemed to have won if the main hole is filled with more seeds. This game creates a sense of pleasure, increases the mathematical ability (thinking logically) of students (children) when playing *congklak* seeds, respect for others, honesty (intrapersonal), sportsmanship (interpersonal), and strengthens closeness with family members. As stated by the following informant:

(e) “*Saat bermain congklak, aku senang dan aku bisa belajar menjumlahkan dan mengurangi dari biji congklaknya. Aku juga senang karena Ibu juga main sama aku.*”

(“When playing *congklak*, I'm happy and I can learn to add and subtract from the *congklak* seeds. I'm also happy because my mother is playing with me too.”)

b. *Cublak-Cublak Suweng* and *Ular Naga*

Cublak-cublak suweng played by several students (children) while singing the song '*Cublak-cublak Suweng*'. One player bends down on the floor, using her/his back as a 'table'. Other players place an open palm on the back of a bent student (child). While singing, one person moves a seed or small object from one palm to the next until the song ends. The rotated object is held by the child who received it when the song ended. All players keep their palms closed and the one who bends down has to guess in which hand the object is hidden.

In value, the song *Cublak-cublak Suweng* means that if you are looking for treasure, don't follow your lust but return to a clean conscience so that it will be easier to find happiness, and don't get lost in the path that forgets the afterlife. The song *Cublak-cublak Suweng* is a cultural heritage originating from *Walisongo*, who spread Islam on the Java which contains moral values about the attitude that humans should do. Thus, this game creates a sense of joy, teaches good moral values, Indonesian culture (Javanese), musical ability (singing), respect for others, honesty (intrapersonal), sportsmanship (interpersonal), and strengthens closeness with family members.

Ular naga; a game that can be played by many people while singing " *ular naga panjangnya bukan kepalang, menjalar-jalar selalu riang-kemari. Umpan yang lezat itulah yang dicari, ini dianya yang terperangkap*" (the dragon's length is absurdly long, always creeping around cheerfully here and there. That delicious bait is what you're looking for, this is what's caught in the trap). Two players become the gate, one person becomes the mother of dragon and the rest become the children of the dragon. The game begins when the mother dragon and her cubs circle through the gates while singing. When the song ends, the two gates will be lowered while catching the dragon child and offer to choose which gate to follow, and so on. The new mother dragon is selected from the gate with the most offspring. This game creates a sense of joy, musical ability (singing), honesty (intrapersonal), sportsmanship (interpersonal), and strengthens closeness with family members, as stated by the following informants:

(f) “*Main cublak-cublak suweng sama ular naga ada nyanyinya, aku senang. Aku juga senang karena semua keluarga mau main.*”

(“Playing *cublak-cublak suweng* with dragon snakes has singing, I'm happy. I'm also happy because the whole family wants to play.”)



Figure 8. Traditional Game *Ular Naga*

c. *Petak Umpet* and *Bentengan*

Petak umpet (hide and seek) is a kind of search and hide game that can be played by 2 or more people which is generally done outdoors. But during a pandemic, it can be done at home. This game creates a sense of joy, trains motoric development of students (children), honesty (intrapersonal), sportsmanship (interpersonal), and strengthens closeness with family members.

Bentengan is the game played by two groups which consisting of 4 to 8 people. Each group chooses a place as a base, usually a pillar or rock as a *benteng* (fort). The main objective of the game is to attack and take over the opponent's 'fort' by touching the pole or pillar that the opponent has chosen and shouting the word "*benteng*". This game creates a sense of pleasure, trains motoric development of students (children), the attitude cooperation, honesty (intrapersonal), sportsmanship (interpersonal), and strengthens closeness with family members.

d. *ABC 5 Dasar*

The game of *ABC 5 Dasar* was a very popular game in the 1990s. This game is very easy to play because it does not require any tools, only fingers and educative. When playing, students (children) can sit in a circle facing each other, then make game rules and what categories will be played, for example the category of animal names. Next, all players say the *ABC 5 Dasar* while pointing out how many fingers they want. The finger is calculated in alphabetical order to determine the letter that will be the basis for guessing on the last finger. For example, on the last finger is the letter R, then all players find all kinds of animals with the first letter R, such as *rusa* (deer), *rubah* (fox), and others. Players who cannot pronounce the correct vocabulary will receive consequences according to the agreement. This game creates a sense of joy, improves verbal skills and increases the vocabulary of students (children) (linguistic abilities), trains concentration, honesty (intrapersonal), sportsmanship (interpersonal), and strengthens closeness with family members.

(g) “*Main ABC 5 Dasar dengan kakak dan Bapak sangat menyenangkan. Aku jadi tau banyak kata-kata, termasuk aku juga jadi belajar kata-kata bahasa Inggris.*”

(“Playing ABC 5 Dasar with my brother and father is so much fun. I got to know a lot of words, including I also learned English words.”)

Based on the explanation above, some of Indonesian traditional games can be played at home during pandemic. Then, Indonesian traditional games become fun media for learning at home

and make closed relationship between family members. Traditional games also can strengthen personal character and multiple intelligences.

Conclusions and suggestion

Conclusions

The conditions of learning at home during the pandemic has many obstacles that make students become lazy, bored, and often stressed in facing learning without direct interaction with teachers and other friends.

The application of traditional games stimulates learning and social interaction activities at home, gives new experiential learning, and builds closed emotional relationship between family members.

The existence of traditional games as fun learning media for strengthening personal character (the attitude cooperation, sportsmanship, respect for others, honest, etc.) and increasing multiple intelligences (based on traditional games), especially: (a) getting to know Indonesian culture; (b) teaching character education; (c) practicing intrapersonal and interpersonal skills; (d) stimulating fine motoric skills; (e) improving musical skills; (f) practicing verbal/linguistic skills; and (g) honing math skills.

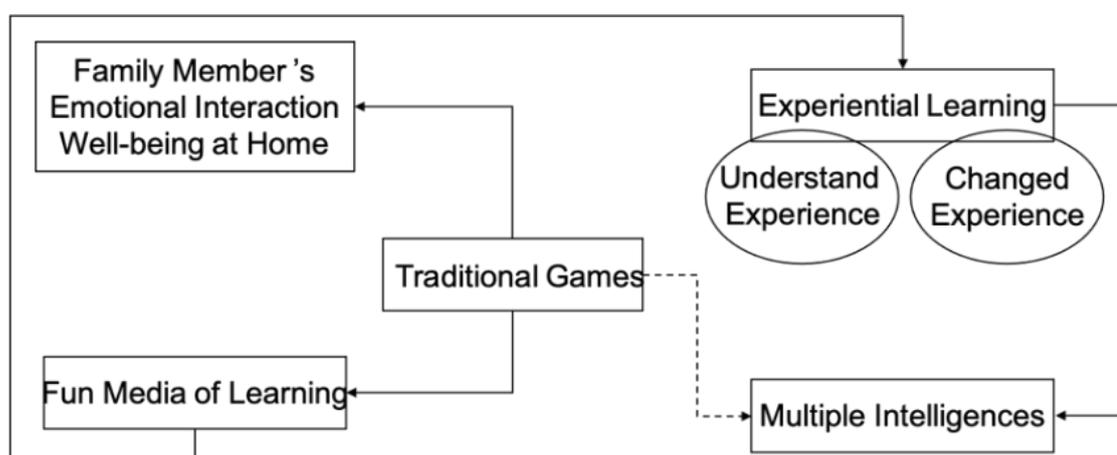


Figure 9. Traditional Games as Fun Media of Learning at Home

Suggestion

Every traditional games in other places in Indonesia or other countries can be researched and adopted as an media to strengthen personal character and multiple intelligences during and post-pandemic.

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