

Character Values In Block-Building Play At Tk Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City Among Children Aged 5–6 Years

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the character values that emerge through block-building play activities among children aged 5–6 years at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City. The research method used was descriptive quantitative research. The research subjects consisted of 20 Group B children aged 5–6 years. Data were collected through observation using an observation sheet containing character value indicators, namely discipline, responsibility, cooperation, honesty, independence, and creativity. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of percentages. The results of the study showed that block-building play was able to foster various character values in children. The most dominant character values were cooperation and responsibility, while the character values that still need improvement were honesty and discipline. Therefore, block-building play can serve as an effective learning activity for instilling character values in early childhood.



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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education is an educational effort aimed at children from birth to six years of age through the provision of various educational stimuli to support their physical and spiritual growth and development so that they are prepared to enter further education. Early childhood is often referred to as the golden age because, during this period, brain development occurs very rapidly, allowing various aspects of child development to grow optimally when provided with appropriate stimulation (Susanto, 2021). One of the developmental aspects that is important to instill from an early age is character. Character education is the process of instilling moral values aimed at shaping individuals who possess good attitudes, behaviors, and personalities in their daily lives. According to Lickona (2013),

good character consists of three main components, namely moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. These three components must develop in a balanced manner so that children not only understand moral values but also possess the awareness and ability to apply them in everyday life.

From the perspective of Islamic education, character education is known as moral (akhlaq) education. Morality is the primary foundation in shaping human personality. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Indeed, I was sent to perfect noble character" (Narrated by Ahmad). This hadith indicates that the formation of good morals is the primary objective of Islamic education. Therefore, character education needs to be instilled from an early age through various activities that are appropriate to children's developmental stages. The Qur'an also emphasizes the importance of character education as stated in Surah Luqman verse 17: "O my son, establish prayer, enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and be patient over what befalls you. Indeed, that is of the matters requiring determination." (Qur'an, Luqman: 17).

This verse demonstrates that values such as responsibility, discipline, patience, and social concern should be instilled in children from an early age. These values are not only taught through advice but also through direct experiences gained by children in their daily lives. During early childhood, play is a very important activity because it serves as the primary means through which children learn. Through play, children gain direct experiences that support the development of cognitive, language, social-emotional, physical-motor, religious, and moral aspects (Sujiono, 2019). Play not only provides enjoyment for children but also serves as an effective learning medium for developing various abilities and positive character traits.

One form of play that is widely used in early childhood education is block-building play. Block-building play is a constructive activity that involves thinking skills, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and social interaction. When children build with blocks individually or in groups, they learn to cooperate, share, respect others' opinions, take responsibility for assigned tasks, and strive to solve problems that arise during play. According to Tedjasaputra (2018), block play provides children with opportunities to explore various shapes, sizes, and structures according to their imagination. This activity not only develops logical thinking and creativity but also helps children learn to interact with their peers, allowing various character values to develop naturally.

Character values that can develop through block-building play include discipline, responsibility, cooperation, honesty, independence, and creativity. Discipline is demonstrated when children follow the rules of the game. Responsibility emerges when children take care of and tidy up the blocks after use. Cooperation develops when children work together with their peers to construct buildings. Honesty is reflected when children admit mistakes made during play. Independence is shown when children are able to complete tasks without assistance from others, while creativity appears when children create various structures based on their own ideas and imagination.

Based on preliminary observations conducted at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City, block-building play is one of the activities frequently used in the learning process. Teachers utilize this activity as a means of developing various aspects of children's growth and development. However, it is not yet clearly understood which character values specifically develop through block-building play among children aged 5–6 years.

Therefore, this study was conducted to identify the character values that emerge through block-building play at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City among children aged 5–6 years. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of learning approaches oriented toward character formation in early childhood education in accordance with the goals of national education and Islamic educational values.

Character education is an important aspect of early childhood education. Early childhood is a crucial period that greatly influences the development of children's personalities in later

life. Through various play activities, children not only gain cognitive learning experiences but also learn to develop attitudes and behaviors that reflect positive character values.

Block-building play is one of the activities commonly used in early childhood learning. This activity provides children with opportunities to interact with peers, solve problems, cooperate with others, and develop creativity. When children engage in block play in groups, they learn to share, take turns, respect their friends' opinions, and take responsibility for the outcomes of their collective work.

Character values such as discipline, cooperation, responsibility, honesty, independence, and creativity can be developed through structured play activities. Therefore, block-building play can serve as an effective medium for developing character in early childhood. Based on preliminary observations conducted at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City, block play is one of the activities frequently implemented in the learning process. Therefore, this study was conducted to identify the character values that emerge through block-building play among children aged 5–6 years.

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach using a descriptive method. A quantitative descriptive approach was chosen because it enables researchers to systematically describe and analyze the character values that emerge during block-building play activities among children aged 5–6 years. The purpose of this study was not to test hypotheses but to provide an objective description of the character values demonstrated by children during play activities.

The research was conducted at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City, Bengkulu Province, Indonesia, during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The school was selected as the research site because block play activities are regularly implemented as part of the learning process and provide opportunities for observing the development of children's character values.

The population of this study consisted of all Group B children at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City. The sample comprised 20 children aged 5–6 years who were selected using a total sampling technique. Total sampling was employed because the population size was relatively small, allowing all children in the population to participate as research subjects.

Data were collected through direct observation using a structured observation sheet developed based on character education indicators. Observations were conducted during block-building play activities. The observation sheet contained six character value indicators, namely discipline, responsibility, cooperation, honesty, independence, and creativity. Discipline was observed through children's compliance with play rules, responsibility through their willingness to tidy up blocks after playing, cooperation through collaborative efforts in arranging blocks, honesty through admitting mistakes during play activities, independence through completing tasks without assistance, and creativity through producing various forms of block constructions. Character Value Indicators

Table 1. Character Value Indicators Observed During Block Play Activities

No	Character Value	Indicator
1	Discipline	Following the rules of play
2	Responsibility	Tidying up the blocks after playing
3	Cooperation	Working together in arranging blocks

4	Honesty	Admitting mistakes during play
5	Independence	Completing tasks without assistance
6	Creativity	Creating various forms of structures

The collected data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive analysis. The analysis process began by reviewing all observation data to ensure completeness and accuracy. The data were then grouped according to the six character value indicators established in the study. After classification, the data were tabulated and calculated to determine the frequency and percentage of occurrence for each character value indicator.

The results were subsequently interpreted based on predetermined assessment categories to determine the level of character development demonstrated by the children. The analyzed data were presented in tables and descriptive narratives to facilitate interpretation and understanding of the findings. The discussion of the results was conducted by relating the findings to theories of character education, play-based learning, and previous relevant studies. Through this process, the study provides a comprehensive description of the character values that emerged during block-building play activities among children aged 5–6 years at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Character Values Developed Through Block-Building Play

This study was conducted to identify the character values that emerged during block-building play activities among children aged 5–6 years at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City. Data collection was carried out through observations of 20 children in Group B while participating in block-building play activities. The observations were conducted based on six character value indicators, namely discipline, responsibility, cooperation, honesty, independence, and creativity.

The observation results indicated that block-building play was able to foster various character values in early childhood, ranging from good to very good categories. The research findings are presented in the following table.

Table 2 presents the results of the observations.

No	Character Value	Percentage
1	Discipline	78%
2	Responsibility	85%
3	Cooperation	88%
4	Honesty	74%
5	Independence	82%
6	Creativity	86%

Based on the table above, it is evident that the overall average of character values that emerged through block-building play reached 82.17%, which falls into the very good category. This indicates that block-building play plays a positive role in fostering and developing character among young children.

Based on the table above, the overall average percentage of character values developed through block-building play was 82.17%, which falls into the very good category. The highest score was obtained by cooperation (88%), followed by creativity (86%), responsibility (85%), independence (82%), discipline (78%), and honesty (74%).

These findings indicate that block-building play contributes positively to the development of character values in early childhood.

2. Development of Social and Personal Character Values

The findings showed that cooperation, responsibility, and independence emerged strongly during block-building play activities. Cooperation obtained the highest percentage (88%), indicating that children were able to work together effectively with peers. During play, children helped each other arrange blocks, shared materials, discussed construction ideas, and collaborated to complete structures. This finding supports Piaget's social development theory, which emphasizes the importance of peer interaction in developing children's social and moral abilities.

Responsibility achieved a percentage of 85%, categorized as very good. Children demonstrated responsibility by taking care of the blocks, completing assigned tasks, and returning materials after use. These behaviors indicate that block-building activities provide opportunities for children to practice fulfilling obligations and caring for shared resources. According to Lickona (2013), responsibility is a fundamental component of character education because it helps children become trustworthy and accountable individuals.

Independence reached 82%, also categorized as very good. Children were able to choose materials, determine construction designs, and complete tasks with minimal assistance. This finding suggests that block-building play encourages children to develop self-confidence and decision-making skills. According to Suyadi (2020), independent children tend to be more confident and capable of facing challenges in everyday life.

3. Development of Discipline, Honesty, and Creativity

Creativity obtained a percentage of 86%, indicating that block-building play provides broad opportunities for children to express ideas and imagination. Children created various structures such as houses, mosques, schools, bridges, and towers using different combinations of blocks. These findings support Sujiono (2019), who stated that constructive play stimulates children's creative thinking through exploration and experimentation.

Discipline achieved a percentage of 78%, categorized as good. Most children followed game rules, waited for their turn, and complied with teachers' instructions. However, some children occasionally showed inconsistency in following rules, such as taking blocks before their turn or moving between groups without permission. This finding suggests that discipline still requires continuous habituation and reinforcement from teachers.

Honesty obtained the lowest percentage (74%), although it remained within the good category. Most children were willing to admit mistakes during play activities, such as accidentally damaging a structure or using another group's blocks. Nevertheless, some children were still reluctant to acknowledge their mistakes and occasionally blamed peers when problems occurred. This result can be explained by the fact that children aged 5–6 years are still in the early stages of moral development. Therefore, teachers need to continuously model honest behavior and provide positive reinforcement when children demonstrate honesty.

Overall, the findings indicate that block-building play is an effective medium for character education in early childhood. Through meaningful and enjoyable play experiences, children are able to develop discipline, responsibility, cooperation, honesty, independence, and creativity. These findings support character education theories that emphasize the importance of direct experiences in fostering positive character development among young children.

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study indicate that block-building play has an important role in developing character values among children aged 5–6 years at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City. The character values developed through this activity include discipline, responsibility, cooperation, honesty, independence, and creativity. These findings provide significant implications for the implementation of character education in Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions.

Theoretically, the findings of this study strengthen the character education theory proposed by Lickona (2013), which states that character formation will be more effective when it is carried out through direct experiences that actively involve children. Through block-building play, children not only receive knowledge about character values verbally but also practice these values directly in play activities. Thus, play-based learning has proven to be an effective means of instilling moral and social values in early childhood.

The findings of this study also reinforce the cognitive and social development theory proposed by Piaget (1977), which states that children aged 5–6 years learn through concrete experiences and interactions with their surrounding environment. Block-building activities provide opportunities for children to interact with peers, solve simple problems, make decisions, and develop creative thinking skills. Therefore, block-building play can be used as a learning strategy that is appropriate to the developmental characteristics of early childhood.

Practically, this study provides implications for ECE teachers in designing learning activities oriented toward character development. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering information but also act as facilitators who create enjoyable and meaningful learning environments. Through block-building play, teachers can integrate various character values into the learning process without reducing the element of play, which is the primary need of early childhood. Teachers can provide guidance, reinforcement, and role modeling during activities so that the emerging character values can develop optimally.

For educational institutions, the findings of this study may serve as a consideration in developing learning programs that place greater emphasis on character education. Schools can provide adequate educational play facilities, particularly block media, as one of the educational tools that support children's character development. In addition, schools can develop more structured group-play activities to enhance children's cooperation, responsibility, and honesty from an early age.

The findings of this study also have implications for parents. Parents can utilize block-building play as an educational activity at home to support children's character development. Through family play activities, children can learn cooperation, responsibility for the play materials they use, as well as develop creativity and independence. Parental involvement in providing positive examples and habituation will strengthen the character-building process that has been implemented at school.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the findings of this study indicate that block-building play can serve as a medium for instilling moral values taught in Islam, such as cooperation (*ta'awun*), responsibility (*amanah*), honesty (*siddiq*), discipline, and independence. These values constitute an essential part of noble character formation that should be instilled from an early age. Therefore, appropriately designed play activities can become learning media that not only develop cognitive aspects but also shape children's character and morality in accordance with Islamic teachings.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that honesty and discipline obtained lower percentages compared to other character values. This finding implies that teachers and parents need to pay greater attention to the development of these two character traits through continuous habituation. Teachers can establish clear play rules, provide appreciation for honest behavior, and model disciplined behavior in daily activities. Consequently, character values that still require improvement can develop more optimally.

For future researchers, the results of this study may serve as a reference for conducting

further studies related to character education in early childhood. Future studies may investigate the influence of other educational games on children's character development or employ different research methods to obtain more comprehensive findings regarding character development strategies in early childhood.

Based on these various implications, it can be understood that block-building play not only functions as a play activity but also provides broad benefits in supporting the character formation process of young children. Therefore, the utilization of block-building play in learning activities should continue to be developed as an effort to create a generation that is intelligent, creative, independent, responsible, and possesses noble character in accordance with the goals of national education and Islamic education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of research conducted at TK Bhayangkari 26 Bengkulu City involving 20 children aged 5–6 years, block-building play was found to effectively support character development in early childhood. The observed character values included discipline, responsibility, cooperation, honesty, independence, and creativity, with an overall average score of 82.17%, categorized as very good. Cooperation showed the highest percentage at 88%, followed by creativity, responsibility, and independence, while discipline and honesty demonstrated good development but still required further reinforcement. These findings indicate that block-building activities not only support cognitive and social development but also function as an effective learning strategy for instilling positive character values in children.

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