

# Exploring the Characteristics of the Boy – Boyan Games as an Expression of Cultural Diversity in Garut

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## ABSTRACT

The challenge of technological advancement has many impacts including the moral decline of school-age children, in reducing its impact character education is needed. Traditional games have a positive impact on character values in children, one of which is the boy - boyan game, a fun physical activity and has the formation of character values to children. The purpose of the study was to explore and analyze children's character developed through the application of traditional boy-boy games. This type of qualitative research with a literature study method using a literature review in the form of relevant and credible journal articles, articles limited to publications in 2020 - 2025. The findings show that traditional games are not only a source of entertainment but also instill moral principles and characters that are very important for children's personality development and healthy social interactions. Based on the analysis of character values in boy-boy games, six character values were obtained, including the characters of mutual cooperation, integrity, social interaction, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and independence in controlling themselves. This boy - boyan game approach has proven successful in fostering children's character and is very promising in introducing social values and regional culture.

**Keyword** : Boy – boyan, Character Value, Cultural, Education, Traditional Games

## INTRODUCTION

Globalization and increasing technological sophistication have created more complex problems for education systems. One of the main aspects of a country's growth is the education of its children. Opportunities and problems in children's education have become more diverse and complex in the current era of globalization. Significant changes have occurred due to globalization in many aspects of society, including education (Utina et al., 2023). Education provided to children in the era of globalization needs to adopt a holistic and inclusive approach. In addition to mastering academic knowledge and skills, education must also focus on developing social, cultural, and emotional skills. Children must be equipped to communicate, work in teams, think critically, and deal with differences with tolerance and understanding (Isaeva et al., 2025; Syahputra et al., 2022).

This technological advancement has greatly influenced the behavior and character of school children. According to Isnaini & Fanreza (2023), the majority of cases involving student behavior, including fights, disrespect toward parents, elders, and teachers, sexual harassment, promiscuity, drug use, lying, cheating, and other deviant behaviors, have been reported in both electronic and non-electronic news media. Teachers claim that many students are not serious about their studies, often arrive late, fail to complete projects, cheat, act rudely and arrogantly, belittle others, behave disrespectfully, are stubborn, seek revenge, and are unable to handle pressure (Bustan, 2022; Isnaini & Fanreza, 2023). The moral decline occurring today is closely linked to technological advancements, which have brought about numerous negative impacts, including difficulties in adapting and interacting socially. This has led to students lacking self-discipline, thereby fostering maladaptive character changes. Character education significantly influences students' future thinking patterns and behavior.

Developing moral and ethical ideals in humans is the goal of a learning process known as character education. To ensure that people not only know what is right but are also motivated to act in accordance with moral principles and develop the habit of doing so, this process is not limited to the cognitive domain; it also encompasses the emotional and psychomotor domains (Ediwar et al., 2023; Jana et al., 2024). The role of education in schools has a huge influence on educating children. Various positive activities are needed to foster better attitudes in behavior, learning, adaptation, and social interaction, which can be carried out in schools, whether through extracurricular or learning activities. One thing that can be done to encourage children to persevere and adapt to their environment is through a cultural approach to education.

School education is seen as the foundation for children's growth and development, and its quality and methods are directly related to the development of children's cognitive, social, and emotional skills. Educational approaches in different cultures are unique, reflecting the values, educational philosophies, and child-rearing traditions of a particular society (Xia, 2024). Cultural diversity can shape character education in children. Cultural diversity in education involves incorporating various perspectives, experiences, and values into the curriculum to create a more inclusive learning environment and enrich knowledge (Basnet, 2024). Indonesia has a lot of unique and interesting cultural diversity from various regions, one of which is Garut. Garut is a city with many natural and cultural beauties. Garut has various cultural diversities, one of which is traditional games or often referred to as *kaaulinan barudak lembur*.

Basic activities such as integrating culture through traditional games in the classroom can help students build their character, which in turn supports character education. Traditional games are activities passed down from generation to generation and have evolved in specific regions. They are rich in cultural values and reflect the ideals of communal living. Children generally enjoy playing traditional games (Siti Anisah & Holis, 2020). Traditional games require cooperation, perseverance, integrity, and good physical balance. Furthermore, teaching traditional games to children is beneficial because they will learn about their ancestors' cultural heritage, which is intended to preserve cultural values in the face of globalization and digitalization (Yusup et al., 2023). The lack of interest among children in playing traditional games is due to behavioral patterns that prefer online games, so we need to continue preserving traditional games that can be played at school because they have many character-building values that are beneficial for children.

Playing traditional games aims to explore various values. Playing these games allows children to feel free from any pressure, reflecting a sense of joy and happiness. This aspect of joy also aids in children's psychological development. Playing traditional games can also help children build relationships with younger or older friends or with peers (peer groups). Children can also learn how to resolve conflicts and overcome challenges through playing these games. In general, traditional games can foster critical thinking, courage, honesty, and sportsmanship (Wijaya, 2023; Yusup et al., 2023). This is in line with research findings (Utami, 2024) showing that traditional games are one of the best ways to teach character to students. Traditional activities for young children are very good for helping children build their own character.

One traditional game from Garut that plays a role in supporting various aspects of children's development and character is boy-boyan. The traditional game of boy-boyan is played by five to ten players. The basis of this game is small stone slabs, often made of porcelain or roof tiles. The balls are soft and not hard to avoid causing pain, and are often made from unwrapped paper bundles. To keep the tiles safe, one person takes turns throwing the stack of tiles containing the balls until they all fall to the ground. When the keeper falls, they must pass the ball and pass it to another person who threw it first. The keeper is the one who takes turns throwing the ball. According to Aditya (2023), the boy-boyan game can foster cooperation, unity, and respect for others' opinions.

Traditional games have a significant impact and influence on children's development, social interaction, and character formation. By incorporating traditional games into children's education, it reflects cultural inclusivity as a strategy to apply cultural diversity in character education. The importance of traditional games in preserving children's character and achieving quality education. This study aims to explore the traditional game of boy-boyan in representing character values that can support children's development in terms of learning, education, and social life in their environment.

## **METHOD**

The data collection method used in this qualitative study is based on a literature review, and data analysis is conducted by reviewing relevant data sources from reputable publications. The literature review includes activities related to library data collection techniques, reading, note-taking, and evaluating research resources solely from bibliographic collection materials—thus, field investigations are not required.

The data collection technique in this study is based on a literature survey of relevant journals, with an emphasis on journals published in the Garuda Database between 2020 and 2025 and using the keywords “character values,” “traditional children's games,” and “boy-boyan.” This research focuses on identifying the character values contained in boy-boyan games and does not restrict the type or strategy to previous research methodologies. By reviewing literature on several traditional boy-boyan games from the Garut region.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **The Existence of Traditional Games for Character Values**

Local culture includes traditional games, which should be used to help shape children's characters because traditional games instill many values, including creativity, patience, hard work, teamwork, collaboration, and courage. Since traditional games preserve the unique knowledge of Indonesian society, they not only help children develop their physical skills but also instill strong moral values. In an effort to preserve local knowledge in Indonesia in the face of the growing popularity of internet games among the current generation, traditional games are also taught to children (Hidayati, 2020). Games create joy in learning and can instill good character values. By playing traditional games, children can learn to socialize, communicate, respect others' opinions, follow rules, develop self-discipline, empathize, and collaborate (Suhra, 2023).

According to research by Asrial et al. (2021), the integration of traditional games into learning has a good category of 43.47% on children's character. This is because when traditional games are incorporated into the learning process, students become more engaged and develop their emotional and psychomotor skills alongside their cognitive abilities. The integration of traditional games is considered highly suitable for the character and age of elementary school children. Traditional games have been proven to influence children's responses, as well as their character traits of loving peace and loving their homeland (Asrial et al., 2021). Another study conducted by Hasmarita et al. (2023) found a significant increase in pretest and posttest scores, with a t-value of 4.011 and a significance level of  $0.03 < 0.05$ . Therefore, it can be concluded that traditional games have a significant influence on the character of elementary school students. Traditional games still hold relevance as activities that students can engage in to enhance and maintain good character and foster positive attitudes.

### **Transformation of Character Values in Traditional Boy – Boyan Games**

Children gain many benefits from traditional games in terms of developing talent, agility, and social survival skills. Since ancient times, traditional games have been played and passed down from generation to generation. The reintroduction of traditional games, known as “boy-boyan,” in contemporary schools can enhance social development indicators, including playing games, maintaining roles in play, resolving conflicts during play, and taking initiative to interact with peers (Mukhlisina et al., 2023). This study identifies several character values in the boy-boyan game, including:

#### **Cooperation**

The game is not played by a single individual but in a group, requiring strong commitment through cooperation or mutual assistance to sustain the game until completion. The character values embedded in the boy-boyan game include cooperation or smart work, and adherence to social rules. Hanim et al. (2021) state that children can play with friends or actively participate in group activities involving traditional boy-boyan games. Students who are enthusiastic and cooperative in preparing the playing area and equipment demonstrate the importance of collaborative effort. This demonstrates how students engage and support one another. Collaborative work is a character value that reflects actions such as valuing the spirit of cooperation, working together to solve problems, enjoying conversations, interacting with others, being friendly, and helping those who are less fortunate,

marginalized, and in need. Respect, collaboration, inclusivity, dedication to collective decision-making, consensus, mutual assistance, solidarity, empathy, anti-discrimination, anti-violence, and voluntarism are sub-values of collaborative work (Lusi'ani & Khusumadewi, 2020). The cultivation of character values through traditional games makes children more adaptable to face every stage of life, as they are already equipped with a cooperative attitude within a group, which will continue to be beneficial for their future.

### **Integrity**

Children who are enthusiastic and passionate about their games demonstrate the principles of honesty and optimism. Integrity is a principle that underlies behavior committed to upholding moral and humanitarian values and is based on efforts to be a person who can always be trusted in words, deeds, and work. According to (Lusiana Manik et al., 2022), students learn self-confidence through traditional *boi-boian* games. For example, when throwing a ball at a pyramid of sandals, there is no hesitation in making a decision. However, when faced with a messy arrangement of sandal pyramids, students need to be more confident and dare to act without hesitation. This aligns with the focus of the *boy-boyan* game in fostering positive character development. A child with integrity can demonstrate a consistent and authoritative attitude by applying the principle of honesty, so the child will always value and uphold proper manners and good moral character.

### **Social Interaction**

According to Aditya's research (2023), after frequently playing *boy-boyan*, children become more sociable with peers in their environment and more creative in developing other games they can play outside the home. Additionally, the *boy-boyan* game is considered highly effective in reducing online game addiction among elementary school-aged children (Aditya, 2023). Children's social skills are developed through play activities long before they begin forming friendships. Children are prepared for social situations through play activities. Play activities can help children improve their social skills and prepare for social situations. Play helps children develop the ability to organize and solve problems. Children who play must think about how to organize materials according to their play objectives (Hanim et al., 2021). If children are given stimulation to socialize from an early age through play, they will be able to develop their abilities, adapt, easily make friends, be brave, and have leadership qualities. However, children who have difficulty interacting socially will have an indifferent attitude, be uncaring, and unable to appreciate others because their social skills are lacking.

### **Critical Thinking**

In the game of *boy-boyan*, a strategy is needed to defend oneself from being eliminated quickly and to organize the pieces neatly. To achieve this, critical thinking is required in developing a strategy to defend oneself from opponents. Research by Lusi'ani & Khusumadewi (2020) states that the *boy-boyan* game offers strong skills, including understanding, planning how strategies will be applied, implementing those ideas, and improving attention. Furthermore, traditional *boy-boyan* activities can help students think more clearly and understand how to perform operations (Lusi'ani & Khusumadewi, 2020). This supports the findings of Hanim et al. (2021), who found that *boi-boian* activities help children refine their critical thinking skills, solve problems, focus on solutions, and develop logical and systematic thinking. Children who play this game may be better prepared for future job opportunities in technical and artistic industries.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

Emotionally mature children are able to identify the various emotions they experience, communicate those emotions in a manner appropriate to their environment, and regulate and control their emotions. Emotional development is a gradual process that requires the involvement of parents and the social environment. Regulating emotions while playing when the ball does not hit the target. Children also learn how to be sportsmanlike through this game, which includes playing honestly, respecting other participants, and accepting victory or defeat with dignity. Children can develop their self-confidence by using the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) method in the boy-boyan game. This self-confidence is important because it will enable them to handle various obstacles in the future. Confident children feel more courageous to interact with others in any situation (Hanim et al., 2021). Emotional intelligence is very important as preparation for the future because by managing their emotions well, children will be able to control their attitudes and behavior. In addition, emotional intelligence can encourage children to make choices in their lives.

### **Independence**

In the boy-boyan game, classification skills emerge when children count the number of blocks in the weighing basket. The blocks used have three types of shapes: rectangles, squares, and triangles. First, the child distinguishes each type of block in the weighing basket, then groups the blocks according to their shape, and finally records them in a table. In this activity, to make it easier for the child, weighing and recording can be done together with the teacher, then giving the child the opportunity to do it independently for the other blocks (Maulia & Kurniati, 2022). Being independent does not mean not needing help from others, but doing things according to one's abilities. This can serve as a foundation for a child not to become dependent on others, not to be spoiled, and not to behave recklessly. Independence is necessary for every child to survive in the future; being independent encourages children to work hard, be strong, and have a high sense of responsibility.

## **CONCLUSION**

From the traditional game of boy-boyan, it turns out that children do not just play by throwing balls and running, but there are many character values that are very beneficial for supporting children's lives in the future. As they grow older, children will continue to think and develop, and if they have good character, they will not have difficulty in facing it. If we, as educators, can understand and support the boy-boyan game as a character education activity in schools to enhance children's skills, then children will have great hopes for their future. Traditional games are closely linked to the development of children's character, aiming to create individuals who are not only intellectually gifted but also moral and honest. Character education in schools is therefore of utmost importance. Playing traditional games can help students develop their character. Through traditional boy-boyan games, children can acquire character values such as cooperation, integrity, social interaction, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and independence. These six character values are present in traditional boy-boyan games. In this study, playing traditional games not only entertains but also helps children develop their character.

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