



# Introducing Traditional Games as Learning Media to Children in Tegalmending, Umbulmartani, Ngemplak, Sleman, Yogyakarta

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**Abstract.** In this day and age, many traditional games have been forgotten by the young generation. Children are no longer attracted to know about traditional games. Most children in Tegalmending village are busy with their gadgets even when they gather in a place. Located near campus, Tegalmending is a developed area with many children that live in it. However, none of the children play traditional games. This condition triggered the authors to create a program to introduce traditional games through learning. The authors began to plan the program by asking for permission from the head of the village. The program was expected to make the children familiar with traditional games, so the use of gadgets might be reduced. It was also expected that the children could meet each other more often to get closer and solid.

**Keywords:** Children · learning · traditional games

## 1 Introduction

Student Independent Community Service is conducted by Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta as a community service program. This program was conducted online because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the students were still required to actively participate in social activities conducted by the community. The university allowed the students who lived in the green zone of COVID-19 (safe area) to participate in the activities in person, but they should consider the health protocols.

In this community service, the students were expected to provide help in accordance with their expertise for the community. They were also required to pour the knowledge that they have gained during lectures into programs that aim to help the community to solve problems. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of community service programs was creating programs that enhance community awareness of COVID-19.

This Independent Community Service was conducted near students' house areas to make it easier for them to plan the program. The authors carried out the community service in Tegalmending Hamlet which is located in Umbulmartani Village, Ngemplak District, Sleman Regency, City Yogyakarta from July 16 to September 30, 2020.

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Before carrying out Independent Community Service, the authors conducted field observations as a form of situation analysis to determine the condition of the community. The authors determined which area to be used as the location for conducting the community service. They also considered joining other students to do community service. After conducting observation and discussing the issues with other students, Tegalmanding Hamlet was chosen to be the location of the community service. The authors tried to get close to the elementary school children in Tegalmanding, so they could introduce traditional games as learning media to children living in the area.

This community service aimed to introduce traditional games to Tegalmanding children. In article 2, paragraph 1 of Special Region of Yogyakarta Regional Regulation No. 5 of 2011 on Management and Implementation of Culture-Based Education, it is stated that the management and implementation of education in a region should be based on the National Education System that promotes the noble values of culture. The cultural noble values are honesty, humility, discipline, orderliness, decency, courtesy, honesty, patience, cooperation, tolerance, and so on [1, 8]. Therefore, the authors try to encourage Tegalmanding children to love and preserve traditional games because those games may teach them the values stated above.

## 2 Methodology

Before the program started, the authors asked for the village head permission. Then, on July 16, 2020, the authors informed the children about the program. The first activity was conducted in Darul Islam mosque. The authors directly asked the children to participate so that they would be more excited to attend.

## 3 Results and Discussion

This community service was focused on introducing traditional games as learning media. The games used were Dakon, Gobak Sodor, and Engklek [3, 7]. The program was chosen by the authors because the millennial generation is not familiar with and has long forgotten the culture inherited from their ancestors since they are now more attracted to gadgets [2, 5]. The authors intended to teach cultural values through traditional games. Below are descriptions of each traditional game taught to Tegalmanding children.

### 3.1 Dakon

*Dakon/Mancala* is a word that comes from the word *dhaku-an* which means “to confess that it belongs to someone else” [9]. According to history, the first *Dakon* game was brought by Saudi Arabia immigrants who came to Indonesia to trade or preach. This game is based on farming life, so it depicts how farmers plant the land and then store the harvest in the barn.

*Dakon* is played by two people, and each of them has a "paddy field" and a "barn". The barns are located on the right and left sides. There are seven holes in the paddy field each filled with 7 seeds. The players may use buttons, corn kernels, and pebbles instead

of seeds. One of the players should scoop up all the seeds from a hole. Then, he/she drops a seed in each hole, continues depositing the seeds clockwise, and stops after all the seeds are used up. The opposite player then plays the game in the same way. The winners are those having more seeds in their barns [10].

There are many lessons to learn from this game. When the seeds are scooped up and then distributed to other holes, the children may learn the idea of taking and giving. This idea becomes the basis of life balance as it is impossible for a person to always give or always receive something [4].

Besides, the seeds are taken one by one and cannot be taken all at once. This idea teaches us honesty. Having a little something is more precious than obtaining many things dishonestly. Moreover, this game shows real life as the children learn about saving. This is shown by how players deposit each seed in every hole.

The authors introduce this game, so the children learn about patience while they wait for their turn to play. In addition, they can also learn about the strategy of finding ways to collect as many seeds as possible in the barns. This game teaches frugality, honesty, sportsmanship, thoroughness, and friendship.

### 3.2 Gobak Sodor

The phrase *Gobak Sodor* comes from English phrase of “Go back through (the) door”. The words “Go back” is then pronounced as “*Gobak*” that means chasing or hunting. Meanwhile, the words to (the) door are pronounced as “*sodor*” that means a guard. The guards are players that are allowed to move around the space and each door. The number of *Gobak Sodor* players is not limited as long as players are divided equally into two groups [11]. Those two groups of players determine who is in charge of guarding the door. Players draw a rectangle and lines in the ground to represent the doors. The players who act as the guards stand on each line to keep the door from being passed by the opponent. The group that is not on guard should stand at the forefront and try to get through all the lines. They should go back to the first line while avoiding the group of guards. If someone is caught, his/her group must take turns guarding the door. The winner is the group whose members successfully pass through all the doors and avoid the guard group.

The authors asked the children in Tegalmanding to play *Gobak Sodor* to train them to communicate with each other and work together. This game also improves their agility and strategy on how to get through the doors without being caught by the guards. In this game, they can express the emotions of anger, sadness, and happiness. They can also learn about responsibility by carrying out the rules that have been made together before the game starts. Similar to life, this game requires us to keep on communicating with other people. Then, in the context of work life, people must be responsible and work together to achieve a common goal. They must be smart and make a strategy in order to achieve the goal by going through various obstacles. In addition, there are philosophical and spiritual messages in *Gobak Sodor* game. When the children try to cross the finish line, it may feel like successfully obtaining happiness in life. Therefore, they need to keep on working honestly and fairly.

### 3.3 Engklek

*Engklek/Hopscotch* is commonly referred to as *Ingkling* or *Sundhah Mandhah*. The word “*shundah*” comes from the Sanskrit language which means “pure, sincere, and reduced”. In this game, the players use an object called “*Gacuk/Gaco*” to mark the boxes drawn on the ground. *Gacuk* can be replaced by various small objects such as stones and a small piece of tile or brick, etc. The players should bend one leg while hopping on each box. It does not necessarily a box because players may draw various shapes on the ground. The game starts when *Gacuk* is put on the first box, and the player hops on each box and then returns to the first box without stepping on the *Gacuk*. The player who can hop on all the boxes without stepping on the *Gacuk* is the winner and will get a point. This is a competitive game that requires physical strength. This game also teaches the values of honesty, accuracy, decision-making, and life balance. Besides, the children learn about concentration and self-control [6, 8]. The authors asked the children to play *Engklek* to train them to focus on *Gacuk* on the boxes that must be avoided. Thus, it taught them to focus on what they were facing and to try solving problems step by step. In addition, the children also obtained the knowledge of life balance which was represented by the way players hop using one leg.

The explanation above shows that traditional games may teach children some values of life. The children can be more sociable and better possess good character. According to article 2, paragraph (1) of the Regional Regulation mentioned in the previous section, the noble values that should be instilled in education are honesty, humility, orderliness/discipline, decency, politeness, patience, cooperation, tolerance, responsibility, justice, caring, self-confidence, self-control, integrity, hardworking/tenacity/diligence, thoroughness, leadership, and/or toughness. Moreover, a traditional game is one of the cultural heritages that contain the cultural noble values. Through traditional games, it is expected that children can build noble characters.

## 4 Conclusions and Suggestions

### 4.1 Conclusions

Traditional games were introduced to children as learning media to instill noble cultural values that could build children’s characters in accordance with article 2, paragraph 1 of Special Region of Yogyakarta Regional Regulation No. 5 of 2011 on Management and Implementation of Culture-Based Education. As children are no longer interested in cultural heritage, traditional games are somehow left out. Through the introduction of traditional games, it is expected that the children will possess noble characters, for example, honesty, humility, orderliness/discipline, decency, politeness, patience, cooperation, tolerance, responsibility, justice, caring, self-confidence, self-control, integrity, hardworking/tenacity/diligence, thoroughness, leadership, and/or toughness.

### 4.2 Suggestions

In order to preserve the traditional games, some parties should be involved in the efforts of culture preservation. Introducing the social values and benefits of traditional games

should be done by the parties. Besides, introducing the cultural values through traditional games should be done especially for children in both educational and social environments as it can support children character development and culture preservation.

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