

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING ISLAMIC VALUES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH ENGLISH BASED EDUCATIONAL GAMES

Sarika Naina Putri^{*1}, Muhammad Rafi`i²

^{1,2}Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

^{*1,2}e-mail: sarikanainaputri@gmail.com, muhammadrafii@umsu.ac.id

Abstract: The research on this issue aims to find the effectiveness of educational games based on Islamic values in developing English skills in early childhood. This study will utilize a quasi-experimental design, with one group of early childhood receiving learning materials through educational games based on Islamic values and another group receiving traditional learning materials. Data will be collected through pre- and post-tests, as well as observations. The results of the study showed that early childhood who participated in educational games based on Islamic values showed a significantly higher level of English language skills compared to the other groups. These results indicate that integrating Islamic values into educational games can increase early childhood's motivation and engagement in learning English, which ultimately leads to improved language skills. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the field of English education by showing empirical evidence related to the benefits of integrating Islamic values into game-based learning. In addition, this study will also provide other offers on practical implications for educators and curriculum developers in designing effective and interesting language learning materials.

Keyword: : Islamic values, educational games, english skills, early childhood and quasi-experimental design.

Introduction

English is one of the international languages because it is used by people in countries whose primary language is English. In addition, English is also one of the important universal languages to master. In several former British colonies, English will be placed as a foreign language that must be mastered after their native language. English skills are increasingly important in the era of globalization. Seeing this reality, efforts to improve early childhood's English skills are a major concern. The demand to master English can be seen from the progress of scientific development, the source of it is using English, both in the form of textbooks and electronics. Our country is very aware of the importance of mastering the world's language of instruction. One interesting approach is to integrate English learning with Islamic values. Islamic education provides learning for early childhood with an understanding of Islamic values, introducing Islamic teachings and forming an attitude of obedience to the commands of Allah SWT. While moral education equips early childhood to know the difference between right and wrong, and fosters good attitudes and empathy for fellow human beings and the environment. By instilling Islamic values from an early age, it is hoped that children will not only master English, but also have good character. Educational games are considered as one of the effective media for delivering learning materials, including foreign languages to early childhood. Educational games can make the learning process more fun and interesting so that early childhood are more motivated to learn.

Although there are several research journals that provide information on the effectiveness of educational games in learning Islamic values, there is still limited research that specifically investigates the influence of educational games based on Islamic values on improving early childhood's English skills. Therefore, this study aims to answer the question: How effective are educational games based on Islamic values in improving early childhood's English skills?

Research Objectives, this research aims to: 1) Provide information related to the differences in the ability to understand Islamic values between students who take part in English based educational game-based learning and students who take traditional learning, 2) Explore the things that cause the effectiveness of educational games for learning Islamic values in improving early childhood's English skills.

The results of this research are expected to provide information for educators, parents, and developers of learning media about the importance of integrating Islamic values in the process of learning a foreign language. In addition, this research can also have a major impact on the development of a more effective and enjoyable English learning model, especially for early childhood..

Literature Review

Issue of this research discuss a topic about the main discussion of the problem regarding the integration of Islamic values in learning English as a universal language, has become a very interesting topic for researchers to study in recent years. Paying attention to educational games as a learning medium will be more relevant to technological developments and in accordance with the interests of early childhood in games.

1. The Importance of Learning English by Early Childhood

Various studies that have been conducted previously have proven the importance of learning English from an early age. Experts have agreed that early childhood has an extraordinary ability to learn and recognize new languages, especially before the age of 10. The neuroplasticity of children's brains makes it easy for them to absorb and adapt to differences in language structure more easily than adults. Research emphasizes that early childhood who learn a foreign language can make them more creative, improve critical thinking skills, and memory. In addition, they are sometimes not afraid to make mistakes, which is one thing that greatly supports the learning process. Learning English in early childhood can foster a strong foundation for developing cognitive and social skills in children. English as a foreign language is chosen because it has become the language of instruction used in almost all countries in the world. English is learned by early childhood will become language's knowledge that will be their provision later in high school.

2. Educational Games as Effective Learning Media

Educational games are one of the learning media that have proven to be a powerful tool for fostering learning motivation and conceptual understanding in early childhood. Montessori argues that educational games can help early childhood learn independently and understand the form of learning concepts through direct experience. Elizabeth Peabody also emphasized that effective games can make early childhood more creative and have children's social skills.

3. Integration of Islamic Values in Learning

Integration of Islamic values in learning subject matter can not only increase children's understanding of Islam, but can also shape good personalities. The results of this study explain that the Islamic values learning system is a system for building the character of early childhood which aims to produce children who have a faithful, pious and noble character

and do good deeds (Annisa Mayasari and Opan Arifudin, 2023). Islamic values are expected to be realized by all early childhood in everyday life as a guideline in carrying out activities

4. Relevant Previous Research

- a. Research A: Research by (A. Wathon, 2018) proves that the basis for building the volition to learn through educational games is to create an interactive and interesting learning zone for early childhood. With educational games, they can be more active and directly involved during the learning process. Learning activities through educational games can enable early childhood to develop their talents and knowledge.
- b. Research B: This study explains that the use of educational game learning methods has an impact on the growth of moral character and Islamic values in early childhood. This progress is obtained from the progress of the values received while early childhood relies on educational game-based learning media (Nadha Mustika and Suyadi, 2021). The use of educational game-based learning methods can help early childhood to understand and be able to answer questions received related to Islamic values.

5. Research Gaps

Previous studies have shown very significant contributions, but there are several research gaps that need to be further studied. First, most studies focus on cognitive and social-emotional aspects, while studies that specifically investigate the effects of English based educational games on the ability to understand Islamic values in early childhood are still limited. Second, the number of studies that rely on strong experimental designs to check the effectiveness of interventions is still relatively small. This study will explain the understanding of Islamic values in early childhood through English-based educational games.

In accordance with the literature review that has been explained above, this study can be hypothesized that English based educational games can improve the ability to understand Islamic values in early childhood. Dewey proved that games are one example of how society organizes itself and structures patterns of relationships between its citizens and argues that games provide attitudes of change in early childhood and make them think more critically so that they complete tasks and take responsibility (Schultz, 2017). Piaget argued that games are the last presentation of early childhood to pleasure and he studied the close relationship between intellectual growth and play activities. (Linaza, 1984). This study is expected to combine fun elements in educational games and Islamic values and early childhood will be more motivated to learn English. In addition, through this educational game, early childhood can apply English directly in everyday life so that their understanding of English will be deeper.

Method

1. Research Design

- a. Quasi-Experimental Design
This design is suitable for showing the difference between the effectiveness of two learning patterns, namely by utilizing educational games to understand Islamic values based on English and conventional methods.
- b. Pre-test and Post-test: This procedure can be done by measuring the level of English skills and understanding of Islamic values before and after the research conducted to determine significant differences.
- c. Normal group:
This research requires a normal group form that doesn't use educational game learning media based on Islamic values to determine the difference in results with the previous experimental group.

2. Group and Sample

This reserach uses a simple random sample to divide the group of early childhood into two, namely the experimental group and the control group.

3. Research Tools

a. Interpretation Test of Islamic Values

This test is designed to determine the level of understanding of early childhood on Islamic values applied through educational games.

b. English Test

This test is designed to determine the level of English skills for early childhood, consisting of vocabulary, grammar, and speaking skills.

c. Research Sheet

At this procedure, activities will be carried out to observe the behavior of early childhood during the learning process, such as enthusiasm, participation, and collaboration skills.

4. Procedure in Research

a. Preparation procedure:

- 1) Prepare educational game materials about Islamic values that are adjusted to the age and abilities of early childhood.
- 2) Create research tools (tests and research sheets).
- 3) Divide the group of early childhood into two groups randomly.

b. Implementation procedure:

- 1) This experimental group will participate in learning activities by utilizing the educational game learning method about Islamic values based on English for a certain period of time.
- 2) The control group will participate in learning activities with conventional learning methods.

c. Do the research during the learning process.

Final Stage:

- 1) Give post-test results to both groups of early childhood.
- 2) Collect and identify data.

5. Data Analysis

a. Data analysis through quantitative:

Relying on descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) used to explain data and inferential statistics related to testing the differences between the experimental and control groups.

b. Data analysis through qualitative:

Identifying research data that serves to obtain a deeper interpretation of the learning process and responses of early childhood children to educational games. The examples of educational games about Islamic values based on English:

1) Educational games through role-playing

This educational game can be done by playing characters in Islamic stories that reflect Islamic values that function to practice speaking skills and understanding of good values.

2) Educational games by singing

This game begins with singing in English based early childhood's songs that contain Islamic values.

3) Educational games that use puzzles

This game begins by arranging picture puzzles about Islamic stories.

4) Educational games through card games

This game uses picture cards to learn English vocabulary and Islamic values. Through this research methodology, it is expected to show empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of educational games about Islamic values in improving English skills and understanding of Islamic values in early childhood.

Result and Discussion

Developing creativity is a series of activities carried out consciously towards changes that are occurring in early childhood so that they can understand and master the skills to create something new. Early childhood creativity can be learned from new activities. The development of creativity can be done systematically through designing and searching activities, so that early childhood will verify by utilizing new ideas or things with the tools and materials around them. Early childhood is basically a very creative child and really likes to experiment, because by experience they learn to design and create ways to solve things. To increase the creativity of early childhood, a process is needed that begins with increasing the natural abilities of early childhood, namely through the implementation of creative activities. The results of this study explain that educational games based on Islamic values using English can significantly improve the English skills of early childhood and they will better understand Islamic values so that they can apply them in everyday life. The results of this study are in accordance with previous findings which prove that the effectiveness of educational games can foster a desire to learn in early childhood and understanding of concepts in learning (Veronica, 2018).

1. Impact of Educational Games on Understanding Islamic Values in Early Childhood

The results of this study prove that educational games based on Islamic values can make it easier for them to understand the concept of Islamic values. This proves that games can be a very effective learning medium for understanding moral values from an early age. By playing, early childhood can directly understand Islamic values such as honesty, compassion, and tolerance.

2. Impact of Educational Games on English Skills in Early Childhood

The research shows that educational games based on Islamic values can improve the English skills of early childhood. This can be seen through several things that support it:

First, the game will create a very fun and interactive learning environment, so that early childhood will be interested in understanding Islamic values and learning to speak English.

3. Implications in Education

The results of this research show important implications of education, such as in the development of curriculum and learning methods. Some implications that can be taken from this study are:

a. The Importance of Collaboration:

Collaboration of Islamic values and English in learning can show a dual function for early childhood, namely improving English skills and character.

b. Development of Educational Games:

In learning, it is necessary to develop more educational games based on Islamic values and using English that are adapted to the needs of early childhood.

c. Improving Teacher Skills: Teachers need to be given special training to design and implement educational game-based learning.

Conclusion

The final result of this research is educational games based on Islamic values show great ability in developing excellence in English and understanding of Islamic values in early childhood. With learning methods that are adjusted to the abilities of early childhood and

interactive, early childhood not only acquires important Islamic values in everyday life, but they can develop English skills. The main results concluded from this research are:

1. Understanding Islamic values through English based educational games can significantly develop English skills in early childhood, especially in terms of vocabulary and speaking skills.
2. Early childhood who take learning by utilizing educational games show better interpretations of Islamic values, such as honesty, tolerance, and compassion.
3. Educational games can create a constructive learning environment that can motivate early childhood to actively participate in the learning process.
4. The implications of this study are:
5. For educators: Teachers can combine learning by integrating educational games based on Islamic values and English for learning.
6. For curriculum developers: The curriculum for understanding Islamic values can be developed by including English vocabulary.
7. For parents: Parents can contribute to creating a positive learning environment at home by utilizing educational games.

Bibliography

- Azzahra, Hilyatul Karimah., Rahmawati, Juannita Eka & Sundari, Rista. (2024). Pembuatan Alat Permainan Edukatif Sisi Imtaq Dalam Meningkatkan Aspek Nilai Agama Dan Moral Anak Usia Dini. Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo, 2(2), 110-123
- Fatimah, Friska Nur., Afifah, Hilyatul Ulya Najwa., Auliani, Rizky & Larasati, Sekar Ayu. (2023). Alat Permainan Edukatif Sebagai Sumber Dan Media Pembelajaran Anak Usia Dini. UIN Sumatera Utara, 7(1), 44-56
- Hairiyah, Siti & Mukhlis. (2019). Pengembangan Kreativitas Anak Usia Dini Melalui Permainan Edukatif. STIT Al-Karimiyyah Sumenep, 7(2), 265-282
- Hidayati, Niswatin Nurul. (2018). Pentingnya Peningkatan Kompetensi Bahasa Inggris Bagi Guru Anak Usia Dini. STAI Al Hikmah Tuban, 2(1), 59-74
- Hidayati, Nurul & Wathon A. (2018). Membangun Minat Melalui Kegiatan Bermain Alat Permainan Edukatif. STAI Miftahul Ula Nganjuk, 1(1), 111-123
- Kamila, Aiena. (2023). Pentingnya Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Pendidikan Moral Dalam Membina Karakter Anak Sekolah Dasar. Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, 2(5), 321-338
- Karim, Muhammad Busyro & Wifroh, Siti Herlina. (2014). Meningkatkan Perkembangan Kognitif Anak Usia Dini Melalui Alat Permainan Edukatif. Universitas Trunajoyo Madura, 1(2), 103-113
- Laili, Alfi Rahmania., Mintarsih., Masrurroh, Mi`rotin Barro., Astuti, Mardiana Dwi & Susanti, Mei Tri. (2017). Meningkatkan Kreativitas Anak Usia Dini Melalui Pembuatan Alat Permainan Edukatif (APE). Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya, 2(2), 41-48
- Mayasari, Annisa & Arifudin, Opan. (2023). Penerapan Model Pembelajaran Nilai Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membentuk Karakter Siswa. Universitas Primagraha, 1(1), 47-59
- Mustaka, Nadha & Suyadi. (2022). Pengaruh Alat Permainan Edukatif Kartu Bergambar Terhadap Moral Dan Agama Anak Usia Dini. Universitas Sunan Kalijaga, 6(3), 2052-2060
- Setyaningsih, Rina. (2023). Peran Permainan Edukatif Dalam Mengembangkan Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris Pada Anak Usia Dini. Universitas Islam Annur Lampung, 7(6), 7299-7307

- Shunhaji, Akhmad & Fadiyah, Nur. (2020). Efektivitas Alat Peraga Edukatif (APE) Balok Dalam Mengembangkan Kognitif Anak Usia Dini. Institut PTIQ Jakarta, 2(1), 1-30
- Talan, Tank., Dogan, Yunus & Batdi, Veli. (2020). Efficiency Of Digital And Non-Digital Educational Games: A Comparative Meta-Analysis And A Meta-Thematic Analysis. Firat University Elazig Turkey, 52(4), 474-514
- Veronica, Nina. (2018). Permainan Edukatif Dan Perkembangan Kognitif Anak Usia Dini. Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya, 4(2), 49-55
- Warniati, Desty & Hanum, Upi Laila. (2020). Sosialisasi Pentingnya Belajar Bahasa Inggris Sejak Dini Di SD Inpres Workwana, Distrik Arso, Kabupaten Keerom. Universitas Sains Dan Teknologi Jayapura, 1(1), 78-85