



## The Role of the Traditional Game *Congklak* as a Medium for Character Education Based on *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* Values of Students in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah

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### Abstract

Indonesia is facing a moral crisis that contrasts sharply with the rapid advancement of technology. One way to cultivate character values from an early age is by utilizing *congklak* as the traditional game. This study explores the role of *congklak* in shaping *rahmatan lil 'alamin* character values among Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students. The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach with field-based study methods to examine the role of the traditional game *congklak* in character formation aligned with the *rahmatan lil 'alamin* student profile at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah, South Tangerang. The data were examined using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model combined with source triangulation techniques, resulting in a theoretical insight into the effectiveness of *congklak* as a tool for character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah. The findings highlight that *congklak* holds a significant role in supporting character education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah by fostering students' moral, cultural, and social attitudes. In addition to develop cognitive skills such as arithmetic and strategic thinking, this game also helps students cultivate fairness (*i 'tidāl*), proper manners (*ta 'addub*), and innovative thinking dynamics (*tathawwur wa ibtikār*). The integration of *congklak* into school learning aligns with the *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* values of the student profile, which balances intellectual, emotional, and social intelligence to shape a generation with noble character and cultural awareness.

**Keywords:** *Congklak*, Character Education, Traditional Games, *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*

*Indonesia menghadapi krisis akhlak yang berbanding terbalik dengan pesatnya kemajuan teknologi. Salah satu upaya menanamkan karakter sejak dini adalah dengan permainan tradisional congklak. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi peran congklak pada pembentukan karakter rahmatan lil alamin pada siswa Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Penelitian dilakukan dengan arah pendekatan kualitatif secara deskriptif berbasis penelitian lapangan untuk mengetahui peran permainan tradisional congklak dalam pembentukan karakter yang selaras dengan profil peserta didik rahmatan lil alamin di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah Tangerang Selatan. Data dianalisis dengan model Miles, Huberman, & Saldana serta teknik triangulasi sumber, sehingga menghasilkan pemahaman teoritis tentang efektivitas permainan congklak sebagai instrumen pendidikan karakter di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah. Hasil penelitian menggarisbawahi bahwa permainan congklak memiliki posisi penting dalam menyokong pendidikan karakter di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah dengan menumbuhkan sikap moral, budaya, dan sosial dari peserta didik. Selain melatih keterampilan kognitif seperti berhitung dan berpikir strategis, permainan ini juga membantu siswa mengembangkan sikap adil (i'tidal), adab yang bagus (ta'addub), juga berpikir dengan dinamika yang inovatif (tathawwur wa ibtikar). Implementasi congklak dalam pembelajaran di madrasah selaras dengan konsep profil pelajar Rahmatan Lil Alamin, yang menyeimbangkan kecerdasan intelektual, emosional, dan sosial untuk membentuk generasi berakhlak mulia dan berwawasan budaya.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Congklak, Pendidikan Karakter, Permainan Tradisional, Rahmatan lil'Alamin*

## INTRODUCTION

The current education landscape presents a contrasting reality in which Indonesia is facing a moral decline. This situation sharply contrasts with the fast-paced progress of technology. While science and technology continue to progress remarkably, morality has experienced a significant decline. The development of science and technology brings both positive and negative influences. One evident detrimental phenomenon in our society is the growing prevalence of materialistic culture (Amalia & Zuhro, 2022).

One of the most pressing issues in the education sector today is the decline in students' morality. Although character education has been integrated into school curricula since 2010, previous studies, such as the study of Suratman, Muttaqin, & Fitriyani (2024) have highlighted that extracurricular scouting activities have been implemented to shape students' character by instilling values such as collaboration, perseverance, independence, discipline, and social awareness. These activities utilize various learning methods that integrate educational and game elements to make students more engaging and enjoyable. However, their implementation has yet to yield optimal results. This issue is particularly evident at the elementary school and Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Islamic Elementary School) levels, where character development should be prioritized over cognitive or psychomotor development (Prastowo, 2018). Early-stage education significantly impacts children's long-term development, shaping their moral and religious values, cognitive abilities, fine and gross motor skills, communication skills, socio-emotional aspects, and appreciation of the arts.

Indonesia is a rich country in biodiversity and cultural heritage. This diversity includes a wide range of local languages, traditions, culinary specialties, attire, textiles, and traditional games that vary from one region to another (Roostin et al., 2023). As a multicultural nation, Indonesia possesses a wealth of traditions, including folk games

passed down through generations. Traditional games have evolved to meet contemporary needs by utilizing available natural resources. More importantly, traditional games contribute to fostering children's creativity in a natural manner (R. Dewi et al., 2023). According to studies conducted by (Alvi et al., 2021) The traditional game of Cak Bur is an effort made to inherit the local culture, so that children have the character to love the local culture. The comes about of the recognizable proof appear that the conventional amusement of cak bur has character values that can back the social, mental, physical, and imaginative improvement of the more youthful era. Research by (Utami, 2024) The traditional games of meong-meongan, guwak-guwakan, and poh-pohan are efficient in helping kids grow as individuals, particularly in the areas of responsibility, collaboration, and sportsmanship. Research by (Bessy et al., 2023) Traditional clogs games can develop students' characters, including student personality, communicative, hard work, honesty, responsibility, independence, creativity, and social concern.

However, traditional games are increasingly marginalized due to the dominance of online gaming. Digital games and the internet have diverted children's attention from the traditional games inherited from previous generations. This shift is driven by significant factors. Based on data from the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association in 2024, Indonesia recorded 221,563,479 internet users out of a total population of 278,696,200 in 2023. The country's internet penetration rate in 2024 reached 79.5%, reflecting a 1.4% increase from the previous year (APJII, 2024). Despite this, traditional games provide children with opportunities to express various emotions, such as joy and sadness, and to interact with peers and opponents. These emotional experiences, crucial for children's emotional development, remain an inherent part of traditional games. Traditional games also create an environment that supports children's social and emotional learning (Sartika et al., 2023). The declining interest in traditional games raises concerns about its potential impact on children's character development (Faradiyah Nurul et al., 2022). Therefore, educational institutions must take proactive measures to strengthen strategies and methods for character education to address increasingly complex challenges (Aprily, 2020).

Character is an important aspect of an individual that influences how a person is perceived by others. The character that a person displays reflects their values and personality in social life. Character is generally understood to be a conglomeration of attitudes and characteristics that influence an individual's thought process, behaves, and acts (Character et al., 2020). The basic concept of character education and its implementation at the elementary or madrasah ibtidaiyah level must be in harmony with the psychological development of students, which is different from the higher education level. Primary education plays an important role as an initial foundation before students proceed to the next stage of learning. Therefore, character development needs to be ingrained from a young age to ensure optimal personal growth. Strong personalities and characters will have a significant impact on their future. In this case, the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah stage is a critical period in shaping children's character (Miskiah, 2019).

In the educational environment, particularly in schools, character building and reinforcement require collaboration among all school members. Not only classroom teachers play a role in designing learning activity programs in the classroom, but guidance and counseling teachers also play an important role in supporting the development of students' character in schools. Guidance and counseling teachers can design programs that are in accordance with the needs of student development both academically and non-academically. One of the methods that can be used is the use of media in the form of

traditional games *congklak*. The game combines character values such as social awareness, empathy, honesty, sportsmanship, and respect for others, supporting character education through counseling services (Lack of Speech, 2017).

The traditional game of *congklak* integrates various character education values, including peace, faith and piety, patriotism, environmental awareness, hard work, enthusiasm for learning, creativity, courage, discipline, cooperation, familial bonds, honesty, and deliberation. The most dominant character trait observed is independence, with a 100% occurrence rate, followed by religiosity at 75% and mutual cooperation at 66% (Safitri et al., 2022). According to (Yulfiani, 2024) Traditional Games *congklak* are educational values in character formation such as improving social skills, increasing sportsmanship, increasing patience and precision, improving opportunity analysis skills and training self-confidence. According to (Apriyanti & Nurfadillah, 2024) Traditional Games *congklak* may teach pupils virtues like accountability, integrity, self-control, and diligence in the classroom, and appreciating achievements. In today's era, students tend to prefer modern and accessible activities. Traditional games, which used to be a part of everyday life, are now rarely played, while online games are becoming more popular. In today's era, students tend to prefer modern and easily accessible activities. Traditional games, once a part of daily life, are now rarely played, while online games have become more popular. However, traditional games carry significant values that contribute to shaping individual character (Safitri et al., 2022).

A *Rahmatan Lil Alamin* learner is an individual who represents a way of thinking, feeling, and doing that reflects universally admirable ideals. This characteristics demonstrate high levels of tolerance, strengthen unity, and contribute to peace within their surroundings. Additionally, *rahmatan lil alamin* learners possess various cognitive abilities like analytical thinking, decision-making, and self-awareness in learning. In other hand, *rahmatan lil alamin* is effective communicators, collaborative team players, and exhibit creativity and innovation in diverse situations. Beyond intellectual skills, these learners also have strong information literacy, piety, exemplary morals, and a moderate approach to religious practices (Directorate KSKK, 2022).

Based on this background, the author aims to integrate character education through the traditional game of *congklak* for students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah in South Tangerang. The use of *congklak* games as an educational medium based on the values of *rahmatan lil alamin*. In addition to being a classic game, the *congklak* game includes an educational tool that teaches tolerance, honesty, and togetherness within the framework of inclusive Islamic values. This approach serves as a learning strategy that is not only enjoyable but also effective in fostering social and moral values. *Congklak* was chosen for its educational elements, which help develop strategic thinking skills, patience, sportsmanship, and teamwork. Through this approach, students not only recognize and preserve the nation's cultural heritage but also develop essential character traits such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility. Integrating *congklak* into the learning process is expected to contribute positively to shaping students with noble character, a strong sense of unity, and the ability to adapt to social life. This aligns with the core principles of character education, embracing the values of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is designed using a descriptive qualitative approach based on field research to understand the experiences, interactions, and values integrated into the *congklak* game activities. This field study seeks to deeply explore the role of the

traditional *congklak* game in shaping *rahmatan lil 'alamin* character among students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah. The study was conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah in Tangerang City, where the traditional game of *congklak* has been incorporated into the learning process. The research subjects include fourth and fifth-grade students who regularly participate in *congklak* activities, classroom teachers who facilitate traditional game-based learning, and the school principal, who plays a role in formulating character education policies. Subjects were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance and alignment with the study focus (Suggestion, 2021). This research process was carried out for one month.

Data for this field study was collected through several techniques: The researcher conducted direct observations of students playing *congklak*, focusing on behaviors that demonstrate character values such as cooperation, honesty, discipline, and patience. These observations were carried out both in classroom learning activities and outdoor settings, documenting the dynamics of student-to-student and student-teacher interactions (Miles et al., 2014). To enhance data validity and obtain more comprehensive insights, the researcher also analyzed documents such as lesson plans and syllabi that indicate the integration of traditional games in learning, as well as school policies related to character education based on local cultural values.

The data was examined using the Miles and Huberman (2014), framework, beginning with data reduction, where information was selected and simplified based on the study's focus. This was followed by data presentation in a descriptive narrative format to provide an in-depth understanding of the studied phenomenon and the drawing of conclusions based on patterns and key findings aligned with theories and field data. To ensure data validity, this study employed methodological triangulation (observations and document analysis) and source triangulation (teachers, students, and the principal). These techniques ensure that the collected information is consistent and reliable (Suggestion, 2021). This field study offers a detailed and comprehensive framework for understanding the impact of the traditional *congklak* game in shaping the character of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah students.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Educational Values in the *Congkak* Game

*Congklak*, which was once a favorite game among children, is now gradually being forgotten as modern games become more popular. Despite this, *congklak* is not just a fun activity but also contributes significantly to the cognitive development of children during their early years. (Fydarliani et al., 2021). Traditional games have been played for generations and passed down within communities. These games involve physical skills, strategic thinking, and social interaction while also reflecting local culture and values. Additionally, traditional games can act as a tool for character education, playing a vital role in shaping children's attitudes and behavior. In the current digital age, where technology-driven entertainment prevails, these games offer an alternative way to instill strong social and moral values while promoting cooperation and responsibility from an early age (Yulfiani, 2024).

Playing is essentially an activity conducted for fun, allowing children to freely express their emotions, thoughts, and imagination. Among the many traditional games spread across the Indonesian archipelago, *congklak* makes a positive contribution to children's cognitive development, particularly in improving their counting and reading abilities. Counting skills, which include addition and subtraction, are essential abilities

that children can develop through this game. By playing *congklak*, children not only enjoy but also enhance their mathematical skills in an engaging way (Muthoharoh & Santoso, 2019).

*Congklak* is a traditional Indonesian game made from stone, wood, or even plastic. This game has numerous benefits and should be preserved. In the past, *congklak* was often played in pendapa (pavilion halls), house basements, or near telephone poles with raised seating mats. After finishing the game, young girls and children would continue playing at night, usually after helping their parents with chores or before studying. *Congklak* is played alternately by two players using a special board and small seeds such as pebbles, tamarind seeds, or sapodilla seeds. Each seed is assigned a number, such as 70, 84, or 98, depending on the number of holes in the *congklak* board. The board generally consists of 10, 12, or 14 holes, with two large slots on the left and right sides and smaller opposing slots on the other side (Susilo in Yulfiani, 2024).

The traditional *congklak* game in Indonesia is known by various names and can be played using seeds, shells, or small stones. Usually played by two or more people, *congklak* significantly influences children's social-emotional growth. This game trains children to share joy, understand turn-taking, and adapt to role changes, thereby fostering positive social and emotional attitudes (Rambe et al., 2023). Game *congklak* can train students' patience in playing by using the game method, students are not easily bored during the learning process activities. Students' patience in the game is when students take turns playing games with their opponents (Daughter, 2024). Because the game *congklak* may positively impact honest character, it can raise the value of children's honest character. This traditional game allows children to learn to be honest with their friends or co-stars because this game is played together or in groups. Children can also learn to be patient when experiencing defeat and accept victory in playing honestly (Jais et al., 2022). Character education can be formed in schools, educational institutions have a central role in providing services to megaaccommodate the cultivation of children's character (Najili et al., 2022).

### **The Character Portrait of *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* Students in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah**

Education holds a crucial role in preserving national commitment while instilling the values of Pancasila and Islam as a blessing for all creation in the realities of statehood, nationhood, and religious life. By embedding these values in each generation, it is hoped that individuals with a moderate mindset will emerge, capable of fostering a harmonious society. Future generations who uphold the principles of tolerance, democracy, nationalism, and social awareness will contribute to building a just and peaceful society. Additionally, a character that reflects patriotism and global diversity will further strengthen unity within the nation (Directorate KSKK, 2022).

In modern Islamic education, the *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* student profile holds a vital role in overcoming the challenges faced by today's youth. Amid globalization and shifting social norms, education efforts should not only emphasize academic intelligence but also cultivate strong moral values. The approach in Islamic education should not merely focus on academic achievements but integrate compassion and kindness that benefit all of creation (Nugraha et al., 2024).

The *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* student profile consists of ten core aspects that instill values of compassion, tolerance, and harmony in diversity. These aspects include the development of noble character (*ta'addub*), exemplary behavior (*Qudwah*), and national as well as civic attitudes (*mutawatanah*). Students are also taught to be moderate

(*tawassut*), balanced (*tawazun*), and uphold fairness and consistency (*i'tidal*). Additionally, students are also nurtured to embrace equality (*musawah*), prioritize discussion (*Shura*), demonstrate mutual respect (*tasamuh*), and maintain a proactive and creative mindset (*patience and patience*). By internalizing these principles, students are expected to become not only intellectuals but also individuals with strong personalities, accustomed to coexisting in diversity, and ready to address contemporary challenges with progressive and innovative solutions (Nugraha et al., 2024).

Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah in South Tangerang is committed to nurturing an Islamic generation that not only possesses academic knowledge but also embodies noble character that benefits their surroundings. This aligns with the perspective that madrasahs hold a strategic role in shaping students' character through a comprehensive and continuous approach (Daheri & Warsah, 2019). Character education becomes more effective when there is collaboration between madrasahs and families (Mustoip, 2018). The *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* student concept, as part of noble character development, is implemented within the education system to cultivate students who are ethical, knowledgeable, and contribute positively to society. This concept is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings that emphasize compassion, tolerance, and universal benefit, as exemplified by the Prophet of the last era, Muhammad (SAW).

As an Islamic-based educational institution, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah instills faith and piety through various programs, such as Qur'an and Hadith studies, *tahfidz* (Qur'an memorization), congregational prayers, short-term Islamic boarding school programs, and commemorations of Islamic holidays. Moreover, the application of *akhlakul karimah* (noble character) in daily life is an integral part of shaping students' positive character. In addition to strengthening religious values, this madrasah also emphasizes the importance of mastering science and technology to equip students for future challenges. Learning is conducted interactively by utilizing digital technology, as well as incorporating simple science experiments and practical activities to make the learning process more engaging and applicable.

The core character traits Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah aims to cultivate in its students include noble morals, social awareness, patriotism, and tolerance. Character education is reinforced through daily habits, such as greeting others, speaking politely, and learning from the inspirational stories of the Prophet and his companions. Social awareness is nurtured through *infaq* and charity programs, social service activities, and environmental care movements. Meanwhile, patriotism and tolerance are instilled through national day celebrations, scouting programs, and Nusantara cultural studies to foster mutual respect in diversity.

The implementation of *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* student values at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah is realized through various educational programs and daily activities. These include habitual practices such as reciting prayers before and after lessons, performing *Dhuha* and *Dhuhr* congregational prayers, and group *tilawah* (Qur'an recitation) before classes begin. Special programs such as *tahfidzul* Qur'an, scouting activities, *Jum'at Berkah* (Blessed Friday charity initiatives), and social service projects serve as means to strengthen students' character. Additionally, the madrasah organizes inspirational sessions featuring motivational speakers, as well as various Islamic competitions to enhance students' religious and academic competencies. In response to the digital era, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah also develops 21st-century skills by integrating technology into learning and providing digital literacy training to help students use the internet wisely.

Through a holistic approach that combines religious education, scientific knowledge, and character development, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah South Tangerang is committed to nurturing an outstanding generation that embodies mercy for the world. The values of *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* are not only taught in theory but are also practiced in daily activities to ensure students grow into pious, intelligent individuals who contribute positively to society. Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah provides facilities and accommodates traditional games as a character education medium that aims to be able to instill character values in children. Traditional games can make character education media fun and not boring when applied to the learning process.

### **Integration of *Congklak* in Learning**

*Congklak*, as a traditional heritage game, can be an effective tool for instilling character values in elementary school children, including honesty, cooperation, and discipline (Iswinarti & Saraswati, 2022). Through traditional games, students learn the importance of respecting others, working together, and developing tolerance, which aligns with the *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin* concept (Hanahana & Rahayu, 2021). *Congklak* plays a significant role in shaping positive character traits in students, such as patience, precision, and strategic thinking, fostering individuals with noble morals (Rahman, 2023). As part of the socialization process, character education helps students understand and apply behaviors that align with accepted norms, enabling students to interact effectively and succeed in their professional lives (Rosyad, 2020). As an Islamic educational institution, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah holds a crucial role in shaping and reinforcing moral values in students' character education. Therefore, Madrasah Ibtidaiyah serves as a strategic platform for building children's personalities from an early age, playing an essential role in instilling and developing positive values in character education (Aprily, 2020).

Research by Dewi, Mulyana, & Santana (2020) indicates that *congklak* is an effective learning medium for fostering children's social and emotional aspects. Kamid (2021) found that *congklak* positively impacts students' cooperative character and their response to mathematics learning. With a high cooperative character percentage of 60%, *congklak* proves to be an effective game for enhancing students' teamwork skills. Additionally, students' responses to this traditional game were positive, reaching 55% (Kamid et al., 2021).

A study by Alvi et al. (2022), further supports the idea that *congklak* significantly contributes to fostering honesty in children, showing a positive impact on their integrity. The improvement was evident at each stage of development. Before the intervention, children's honesty levels were recorded at 26.67% in the "Starting to Develop" category. After the first cycle, this percentage rose to 43.33%, although it remained within the same category. A more substantial improvement occurred in the second cycle, with children's honesty levels increasing to 79.6%, placing children in the "Highly Optimal Development" category. This finding highlights the effectiveness of *congklak* in shaping honesty in children.

Rambe, in his research, states that playing *congklak* instills values of sportsmanship and honesty in every form of children's competition while training children to avoid cheating. Additionally, *congklak* also builds empathy by helping, praying for each other, as well as giving and asking for forgiveness during play. This game enhances concentration, trains strategic planning, and sharpens thinking skills. Beyond entertainment, *congklak* holds historical and cultural value, having been passed down by

ancestors for centuries and remaining popular to this day (Rambe et al., 2023). Guardians, schools, and society can play a dynamic part in cultivating children's trustworthiness in different ways, such as utilizing conventional recreations.. Traditional games are not only a source of fun but also play a role in shaping and instilling character values that are highly beneficial for the development of the younger generation, including in forming honest behavior in daily life (Alvi et al., 2021).

Arifin in Astuti & Thohir (2024) examines the benefits of traditional games in the context of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. His research reveals that the flexibility offered by the Merdeka Curriculum provides a great opportunity to integrate traditional games into the learning process. This approach not only fosters students' character development but also plays a vital role in preserving and transmitting cultural values within the educational environment.

The research conducted by Afriansyah et al. (2024), highlights the role of traditional games in education, particularly through the development of COLAKTRA or Congklak Nusantara, which serves as an innovative and interactive learning tool. This game is not merely a means of entertainment but also serves as an educational medium that introduces the concept of citizens' rights and responsibilities while instilling appreciation for Indonesia's cultural diversity. By adapting educational elements, such as cultural information on province cards, COLAKTRA contributes to enriching geographical understanding, strengthening character, and stimulating students' cognitive and social abilities. To preserve local cultural heritage, *congklak* is expected to shape a generation with national awareness, a love for their homeland, and readiness to take on roles as skilled individuals who uphold a strong sense of responsibility.

The traditional game of *congklak* has been proven to play a crucial role in fostering positive character traits in children, particularly in social, emotional, and cognitive domains. Research indicates that this game is effective in fostering cooperative behavior, enhancing honesty, and shaping sportsmanship and empathy in children. Beyond entertainment, *congklak* also contributes to improving concentration, strategic thinking, and teamwork skills. In the context of Islamic education, *congklak* aligns with the *Rahmatan Lil Alamin* student profile, which emphasizes values of justice, compassion, cooperation, and social awareness. This game teaches children to respect others, be fair in following rules, and develop attitudes of mutual respect and sharing, which embody Islam's essence as a mercy to all creation.

According to Hasan, Arisah, Dinar, Rahmatullah, & Nurdiana (2023), through playing *congklak*, children learn to build social relationships with peers and share experiences during play. When disagreements arise, children practice resolving conflicts independently, fostering leadership skills and assertiveness in facing challenges. The rules of *congklak*, requiring players to move seeds one by one into each hole, instill values of honesty and responsibility in children. Additionally, when a player runs out of seeds, children learn to accept defeat and take turns with their opponent. This process cultivates hard work and action-oriented behavior. The turn-based nature of *congklak* also encourages children to become more independent and creative.

*Congklak* stimulates fine motor skills, enhances numerical abilities, and trains students' concentration. Besides being easily accessible in the surrounding environment, this game emphasizes mastery of counting concepts. Through counting and placing *congklak* seeds one by one on the game board, children develop arithmetic skills, fine motor coordination, and concentration abilities. Thus, *congklak* serves as an effective method for supporting children's cognitive development (Santi & Bachtiar, 2020). In

mathematics, analysis conducted by Laela Nur Hasanah, Pamungkas Stiya Mulyani, and Noor Aziz indicates that using *congklak* significantly improves mathematical learning outcomes, particularly in Least Common Multiple (LCM) and Greatest Common Factor (GCF) topics, compared to conventional teaching methods (Hasanah et al., 2024).

The previous discussion is closely related to the study by Harbiyah & Lukmanulhakim (2022) which highlights how *congklak* strengthens various aspects of child development, including moral values (honesty, sportsmanship, obedience), physical aspects (fine motor skills), cognitive skills (number recognition and counting), language (understanding rules and verbal communication), socio-emotional development (prosocial behavior and emotional regulation), and artistic aspects. The character education approach at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah in South Tangerang aligns with the meanings and principles embedded in traditional games like *congklak*. This game not only enhances children's cognitive intelligence but also instills positive character traits such as patience, honesty, sportsmanship, and strategic decision-making. By applying the *Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin's* Students concept, students are taught to contribute positively to their personal growth and their surroundings, reflecting the principles of harmony and equality found in *congklak*.

Islam emphasizes character formation that is not only strong in spiritual aspects but also highly socially responsible and caring toward others. Therefore, education is directed at fostering social and moral awareness, such as empathy, justice, and positive contributions to daily life. This approach aligns with the *Rahmatan Lil Alamin* student personality concept, which aims to create a balance between intellectual, emotional, and social intelligence (Mufid, 2023).

### **Implementation of *Congklak* in Character Education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah, South Tangerang**

The use of *congklak* in character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah incorporates moral and social values into interactive learning through play. *Congklak* is more than just a recreational game; it also serves as an effective educational tool for cultivating positive character traits in students, including honesty, sportsmanship, cooperation, responsibility, and patience. Its use in the learning process allows teachers to incorporate moral values into various subjects, especially those related to Civic Education and Islamic Studies. The *congklak* game used in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah South Tangerang is also integrated into various subjects including mathematics with calculation operation materials and the concepts of multiplication and division. In the counting operation material, children can learn by counting the number of *congklak* seeds in a certain hole. Additionally, in order to help students grasp the fundamental ideas of multiplication and division, the instructor splits the *congklak* seeds in the lesson plan. *Congklak* can also be integrated into Indonesian language subjects with materials about vocabulary and making stories.

Through play, students can understand and practice ethical principles in daily life. For example, the rules of *congklak*, which require players to take turns and respect opponents, serve as a model for developing discipline and fairness. Group guidance through *congklak* aims to instill cultural values in students. This process begins with forming small groups and providing instructions on game rules and cultural meanings embedded within. During the game, students actively interact, collaborate, strategize, and respect turns, with counselors ensuring their engagement. This aligns with The Man of the Moon (2023) research, which highlights that traditional games, including *congklak*,

carry diverse values that benefit children. The game sharpens reasoning through counting activities, enhances fine motor skills, and teaches values such as honesty, sportsmanship, precision, and attentiveness. Additionally, *congklak* fosters essential cultural values, including joy, independence, friendship, leadership, responsibility, solidarity, mutual assistance, discipline, and cognitive and numerical skills. These values contribute to children's character development.

Embedding character values in society is a fundamental priority, especially in education. This commitment is strengthened by Ministerial Regulation No. 24 of 2016 from the Ministry of Education and Culture, which highlights the significance of character education in shaping individuals' personalities. Character is a person's unique identity reflected in thinking and behavior, including decision-making, active participation in social life, and teamwork within school, family, and community settings (Rianto & Yuliananingsih, 2021). Additionally, counselors reinforce essential values such as sportsmanship, patience, and togetherness while encouraging students to reflect on the relevance of these principles in their daily routines. Group discussions following the game enable students to evaluate their experiences, share challenges, and recognize the positive impact of *congklak* on their behavior.

In the final stage, teachers and researchers monitor changes in students' behavior to assess the program's effectiveness. Observing how cultural values are applied in daily interactions serves as the basis for refining or repeating the program to achieve optimal results. This reinforces that *congklak* is not merely a recreational activity but also a meaningful tool for character education. As part of a culturally based group guidance approach, *congklak* has been proven to contribute to students' positive behavioral development. Through participation in this activity, students not only enhance their social interaction skills and emotional management but also strengthen their appreciation for local culture. This traditional game is not just a form of entertainment but an effective character-building tool.

In its implementation, schools play a crucial role in supporting this program, especially by identifying students' behavioral issues early on. Regular observations and communication with teachers and parents enable schools to understand the factors influencing students' behavior, whether from family environments, peer interactions, or internal aspects such as emotions and learning motivation. With this approach, schools can develop more effective character-building strategies. Azis & Hidayat (2022) highlight that responsibility is a key character trait influencing various aspects of students' lives, both in learning processes and in social interactions within their families. Responsible students tend to be disciplined in completing tasks, respecting rules, and making positive contributions to society.

Character formation requires schools to actively monitor students' behavioral development on an ongoing basis. Customary assessments are fundamental to survey the viability of the direction program and execute vital alterations to meet students' needs. With the right strategies, schools are not only institutions for academic learning but also nurturing environments that shape students' personalities. Through collaboration among various stakeholders, a culturally rooted approach, and continuous evaluation, schools can foster a conducive environment for students' positive behavioral growth. Character education, as a conscious process aimed at instilling moral values, plays a crucial role in developing individuals with strong character, those who strive to contribute positively to God, their personal growth, others, their surroundings, and society at large. This is achieved by maximizing personal potential, accompanied by self-awareness and

emotional regulation (Kamid et al., 2021). Character education is embedded across all subjects through core competencies, with role modeling and habitual reinforcement ensuring that moral values become internalized and serve as the foundation for students' everyday behavior (Rosyad, 2020).

Beyond character development, *congklak* also benefits students' cognitive growth, particularly in enhancing logical thinking and decision-making skills. The implementation of this game in character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah, South Tangerang, aligns with the Pelajar *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* concept, which aims to cultivate students who bring goodness to their personal growth and society. Thus, character-focused education can be delivered effectively through enjoyable methods that align with children's developmental processes.

Previous studies and field research findings indicate that the traditional game of *congklak* significantly contributes to children's character development, particularly in social, emotional, and cognitive aspects. Studies have demonstrated that this game promotes cooperation, strengthens honesty, and nurtures sportsmanship and empathy among children (Alvi et al., 2022; E. Dewi et al., 2020; Gultom & Rambe, 2023; Kamid et al., 2021). Moreover, *congklak* enhances concentration, strategic thinking, and teamwork skills, making it a valuable educational tool that reinforces character education in schools, including within the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum (Astuti & Thohir, 2024). The implementation of *congklak* at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Nurul Hidayah in South Tangerang aligns with the *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* principle, which emphasizes balance and resilience (*i'tidal*), ethical conduct (*ta'addub*), and a focus on growth and creativity (*patience and patience*) in students' daily activities. *Congklak* is more than just a recreational game; it serves as a valuable educational tool in fostering a generation with noble character and a strong sense of cultural awareness.

The educational aspect of *congklak* aligns with the concept of Islam *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin*, which emphasizes compassion and kindness toward all beings. The value of honesty in this game is reflected in the rules that require players to fairly collect and distribute the seeds without cheating. Each player must accurately count their moves while maintaining balance without exceeding the set limits. This principle instills shiddiq (honesty) in daily life, teaching that success must be achieved through rightful and rule-abiding means. The honesty cultivated through this game serves as a foundation for developing responsible and trustworthy Muslim individuals, as exemplified in the life of Prophet Muhammad.

Beyond honesty, *congklak* also fosters *ṣabr* (patience), as players must wait for their turn and think strategically before making decisions. In this game, victory is not always immediate but requires careful calculation and perseverance in facing unfavorable situations. This value of patience is relevant to the *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* concept, as a Muslim must be able to face challenges with composure and make thoughtful decisions rather than acting hastily. Perseverance is also essential in building harmonious social relationships, both in educational settings and broader social interactions within the community.

Sportsmanship is another fundamental value in *congklak* that reflects the Islamic principle of *ʿadl* (justice). Every player must accept both victory and defeat with an open heart, without envy or resentment. Through this experience, students learn that in life, there are moments of success and moments of failure. This sense of sportsmanship teaches children to respect others in all situations while fostering resilience and perseverance in facing challenges. Thus, *congklak* is not merely a form of entertainment

but also a learning tool for shaping Muslim individuals with integrity and a strong moral character.

Furthermore, *congklak* not only provides enjoyment but also instills the values of teamwork and solidarity, aligning with the principle of *Akha-e-Islami* (Islamic brotherhood). Despite its competitive nature, the game encourages players to understand their opponents' strategies and to engage cooperatively during interactions. This value is crucial in social life, where collaboration is key to achieving shared goals. The integration of Islamic values as a source of mercy for all beings through *congklak* strengthens students' character, grounding students in Islamic morality. Therefore, the successful internalization of these values does not solely rely on the game itself but also requires support from a positive school culture, exemplary behavior from educators and institutional leaders, as well as active involvement from parents, the community, and institutional partners in reinforcing character education (Kurniawan & Fitriyani, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

Amid the rapid advancement of technology, which has shifted children's play patterns, integrating *congklak* into learning at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah serves as an effective strategy for instilling character values from an early age. Research findings highlight the urgency of *congklak* in supporting character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. As a traditional game enriched with various moral and social values, *congklak* aids in shaping children's positive character while also enhancing their cognitive skills. Its implementation in education is not limited to specific subjects such as Civic Education and Islamic Studies but can also serve as an engaging and meaningful teaching method for students. The applied learning approach is crucial in fostering students' character. Through appropriate methods, students can develop teamwork, responsibility, patience, and emotional management skills. Additionally, the incorporation of local cultural values in this process strengthens students' identity and character, thereby promoting positive behaviors in their daily lives.

As an integral part of Indonesia's cultural heritage, the traditional game of *congklak* holds a strategic role in character education at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah. Beyond enhancing arithmetic skills, strategic thinking, and decision-making abilities, *congklak* fosters essential social values such as honesty, cooperation, sportsmanship, patience, and responsibility. In the context of Islamic education, this game aligns with the *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* student profile, which highlights the balance between intellectual, emotional, and social intelligence. The integration of *congklak* in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah not only reinforces students' cultural identity but also serves as an effective strategy for imparting moral values in a fun and meaningful way. Through playing *congklak*, students learn about justice (*i'tidal*), ethical conduct (*ta'addub*), and dynamic, innovative thinking (*tathawwur wa ibtikar*). Thus, integrating *congklak* as a learning tool in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah helps cultivate students with noble character, cultural awareness, and the capability to navigate modern challenges with wisdom and responsibility.

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