



How to Use Early Childhood Educational Play Tools in Religious Moral Development Centers in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the availability and utilization of Educational Game Tools (EGT) focused on religious and moral development in Early Childhood Education Institutions (ECEIs) across Indonesia. Using data from the 2022 National Dapodik system, the research highlights disparities in the distribution of faith- and piety-oriented EGT among provinces. Findings reveal that such EGT are significantly less available compared to other categories, with Central Java reporting the highest availability, while Gorontalo, Riau Islands, Maluku, and Southeast Sulawesi exhibit minimal provision. The study also finds that private kindergartens possess more religious EGT than public ones, suggesting divergent institutional priorities. Key challenges include limited teacher competence in using religious EGT, budget constraints, and the absence of supportive policies for moral-religious learning materials. Given EGT's potential in fostering early religious and moral understanding, this study underscores the need for targeted policy interventions, professional development for educators, and innovative approaches to EGT design. Strengthening these areas can enhance the integration of faith-based values in early education and address regional and institutional disparities in EGT access.

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1. Introduction

In the realm of early childhood education, play is a fundamental tool for helping children grasp various concepts. Among these, understanding moral and religious values is essential for shaping character and social behavior. Games provide an engaging and developmentally appropriate means for children to explore these values actively, making abstract principles more concrete and meaningful in their learning process (Knoblauch, 2023).

Educational Game Tools (EGT) are one of the tools used to support the learning process designed to develop children's cognitive, social, and moral aspects through play activities (Fernández-Gavira et al., 2021). The application of EGT in religious moral education has the potential to be an effective strategy in shaping children's character from an early age. However, the extent to which the use of EGT in religious moral development centers is effective is still a question that needs further research.

Religious moral education at an early age is very crucial because at this time children begin to absorb values that will shape their personalities in the future (Masruroh, 2023). According to Santrock (2020), children's moral development develops through social interaction and direct experience in their environment. Meanwhile, recent research by Berk (2021) emphasizes the importance of the role of the environment, including the role of teachers and educational aids, in building moral and religious understanding. In this context, EGT is one method that can be used to teach religious values in a fun way and in accordance with the child's developmental stage (Zulkifli et al., 2022).

The use of EGT in religious moral development centers in Indonesia is an effective approach in supporting early childhood development (Permana et al., 2022). These game tools are specifically designed

to help implement the teaching of moral and religious values to children. Research shows that EGT, such as picture cards, has a positive influence on the development of morals and religion in early childhood (Mustika & Suyadi, 2021). This shows how important the use of game tools is in instilling religious values that are essential for the formation of their character (Hidayat et al., 2023).

Furthermore, Ariyanto and Nazarullail highlighted the challenges faced by early childhood education teachers in providing EGT, especially related to the cost and understanding of making tools from waste around them (Tri Ariyanto & Nazarullail, 2022). This is important to note, because EGT not only helps in the teaching aspect, but also teaches children about sustainability and creativity through the use of materials available in their environment (Faizah et al., 2020). The problems faced by early childhood education teachers and the solutions offered, such as training in making EGT with cheap materials, help overcome these limitations and support the development of sustainable morals and religion in children (Pamuji et al., 2024). In addition, Fasha and Hibana emphasized that teachers' understanding of the use of EGT is crucial in the learning process (Fasha & Hibana, 2023). Without proper understanding, the effectiveness of EGT in teaching moral and religious values can be minimized. Trained teachers are not only teachers, but also role models for children in understanding the moral values taught through play. This study emphasizes the importance of education for teaching staff so that they can utilize EGT optimally (Fitriana, 2022).

Research also shows that these play tools can stimulate various aspects of children's development, including cognitive, gross and fine motor skills, and language (Sain et al., 2013). By designing games that have educational elements, such as puzzles or model-based games, children not only learn religious concepts but also practical skills that will be useful in everyday life (Hatta, 2021). This supports social interaction and the ability to work together between children, which in turn is in line with the development of morals and noble values that we want to instill. On the other hand, it is important to integrate parental education in the use of EGT, as is done in community service to support the use of EGT from simple materials (Hidayah et al., 2021). Parental participation in understanding and supporting the use of EGT at home will strengthen the learning obtained in the center for the development of religious morals, involving the entire ecosystem of children's education.

Although many studies have discussed the use of games in early childhood education, studies that specifically examine the role of EGT in the development of religious morals are still limited. Most previous studies have focused more on the cognitive and social aspects of educational games, without highlighting how these games can be used to shEGT religious understanding and moral values in children. In addition, there are different views on the effectiveness of play methods in moral learning, with some arguing that moral values are more effectively taught through direct interaction and role models, compared to educational games alone (Lickona, 2019).

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring how teachers at Al Kamil Islamic Kindergarten, Depok, utilize EGT to instill religious moral values in early childhood. This study will also identify the types of games used and analyze children's responses to these play activities. Thus, this study is expected to provide new insights into the effectiveness of EGT in religious moral education and provide recommendations for educators and parents in developing game-based learning strategies.

This article is organized into several main sections. The first section will review relevant literature on religious moral education, the role of educational games in early childhood learning, and various views that support or criticize this method. Next, the method section will explain the research approach used, including data collection and analysis techniques. The results of the study will be presented in the form of empirical findings that support or challenge the initial assumptions about the effectiveness of EGT in the center of religious moral development. Finally, the discussion and conclusion section will discuss the implications of the research findings for religious moral education in school and family environments, and suggest directions for further research in the future. Data analysis is also presented comprehensively regarding the use of EGT in religious moral learning, this study is expected to contribute to the development of more effective learning methods for early childhood. The findings in this study can also be a basis for educational policy makers in designing a more innovative curriculum that is in accordance with the needs of child development, especially in the study of instilling religious values from an early age.

2. Method

Approach and Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method conducted at Al Kamil Islamic Kindergarten, and Nabila Integrated Islamic Kindergarten, Depok. This method was chosen to understand in depth how the use of EGT in the development of religious morals in early childhood education environments. This study was designed as a qualitative study with a descriptive approach (Nassaji, 2015). The focus of this study is an in-depth exploration of the use of EGT by teachers in conveying religious moral values to early childhood.

Research Subjects

The subjects in this study were 6 kindergarten teachers in the Depok area who had experience in using EGT as a means of learning religious morals. The selection of subjects was carried out by purposive sampling, considering their involvement in the implementation of EGT in the learning process (Rais & Nurdyansyah, 2023).

Data Collection Techniques

Data in this study were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Semi-Structured Interviews were conducted to obtain more in-depth qualitative data related to teachers' experiences, perceptions, and challenges in using EGT in teaching religious morals. Interview informants were selected from questionnaire respondents who showed variations in the level of EGT utilization. Data were collected through participatory observation techniques, in-depth interviews with teachers and parents, and documentation of play activities at the religious moral development center (Darna et al., 2023). Observations were conducted to see first-hand how EGT is used in learning. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured interview guidelines to explore teachers' and parents' perspectives on the effectiveness of this method (Husband, 2020). Documentation of secondary data was obtained from the Basic Education Data (DAPODIK) system to see the availability and distribution of EGT in kindergartens in the Depok area. This documentation was used as triangulation material to ensure the validity of the research data.

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data from the 2022 Dapodik database were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation, and range) to map the availability of Educational Game Tools (EGT) across various categories and geographic locations. This analysis revealed disparities in the distribution of religiously themed EGT (e.g., faith and piety tools) and highlighted institutions with notably high or low levels of EGT availability. These statistical findings served two main purposes: (1) Identifying Patterns: Highlighting areas or institutions with extreme values (either rich or lacking in religious EGT). (2) Informant Selection: The statistical data directly informed the purposive sampling process for interview informants. Specifically, teachers were selected from kindergartens (in Depok) that, according to the Dapodik records, demonstrated contrasting levels of religious EGT availability some with higher-than-average presence of Faith and piety tools, and others with little or none. This strategy ensured variation in experiential insights from the field.

The qualitative component, consisting of semi-structured interviews with six kindergarten teachers, was analyzed using a six-phase thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006), with an emphasis on systematic coding at each stage:

- 1) Familiarization with all interview transcripts were read multiple times. Initial notes were taken to capture emerging ideas and recurring teacher concerns.
- 2) Generating Initial Codes using manual line-by-line coding, segments of data were labeled based on semantic meaning (e.g., "*limited tools*," "*children repeat stories*," "*make from local materials*"). Codes were categorized into inductive (data-driven) and deductive (theory-driven) types, reflecting both teacher narratives and theoretical constructs from Piaget and Vygotsky.
- 3) Searching for Themes, related codes were grouped into candidate themes such as: *EGT as moral transmission tools*, *Emotional engagement in learning*, *Institutional and policy barriers*, *Local adaptation and innovation*.
- 4) Reviewing Themes. Themes were refined by re-examining coded extracts to ensure consistency and coherence within and across themes. Some sub-themes (e.g., *spiritual role modeling*) were merged under broader categories (*EGT as moral transmission tools*).
- 5) Defining and Naming Themes, where each theme was defined conceptually and empirically, supported by illustrative quotations from informants. This ensured that themes were grounded in actual classroom experiences. The themes were then interpreted in relation to the study's

objectives, theoretical framework, and the quantitative findings from Dapodik. (Lysfjord et al., 2024).

3. Result And Discussion

3.1. Result

The results of descriptive data analysis on the distribution of educational game tools in Early Childhood Education Institutions in Indonesia are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Kindergarten Educational Game Tools in Indonesia

EGT type	Mean	Std Dev	Min	25%	50% (Median)	75%	Max
Block	0.55	1.63	0	0	0	1	84
Music	0.21	1.41	0	0	0	0	98
Creativity Art	0.23	1.35	0	0	0	0	84
Role Play	0.22	1.31	0	0	0	0	84
Cooking	0.21	1.31	0	0	0	0	84
Faith and piety	0.17	1.31	0	0	0	0	91
Preparation	0.18	1.53	0	0	0	0	99
EGT outside	0.45	1.50	0	0	0	1	84
Natural Material	0.17	1.18	0	0	0	0	77

Table 1 shows the results of descriptive analysis of Educational Game Tools for Kindergarten in Indonesia. The main findings of this study are: the majority of schools do not have EGT in a particular category. This can be seen from the median (50%) which is always 0 in each variable. However, there are several institutions that have a much larger number of EGT, as seen from the high maximum value (eg, blocks up to 84, music up to 98). The average of all types of EGT is below 1 unit per institution. The standard deviation is quite high, indicating that there are schools with a very large number of EGT compared to others. The most common types of EGT are Blocks (mean = 0.55) and Outside EGT (mean = 0.45) are the two most common EGT categories found. Natural Materials and Faith and piety have the lowest averages at around 0.17.

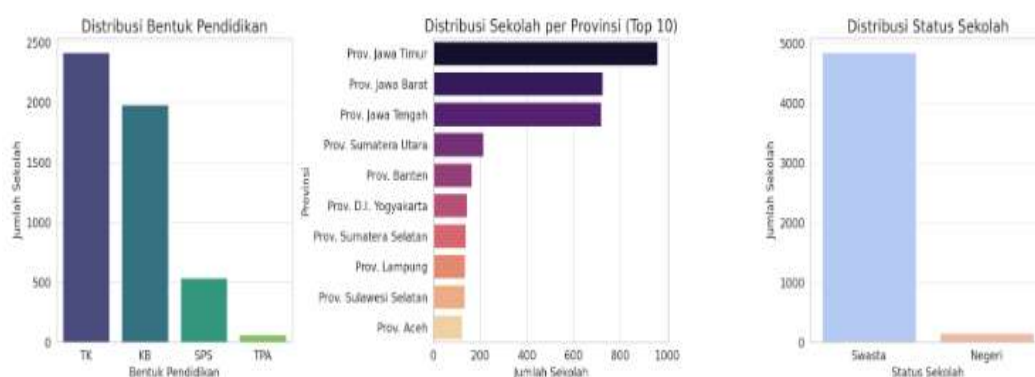


Figure 1. Graphic of Education Form, School Distribution per Province and Kindergarten School Status in Indonesia
Source: Dapodik, 2022

Figure 1 shows information on education forms (TK, KB, SPS), school distribution (TK) per province, and school status (Private/State). The results of the school distribution graphic analysis are based on: (1) Education Form, The majority of schools in the dataset are Kindergarten, followed by playgroup, (2) Province (Top 10), The largest distribution of schools is in certain provinces, and (3) School Status: Private schools have a much greater number than state schools.

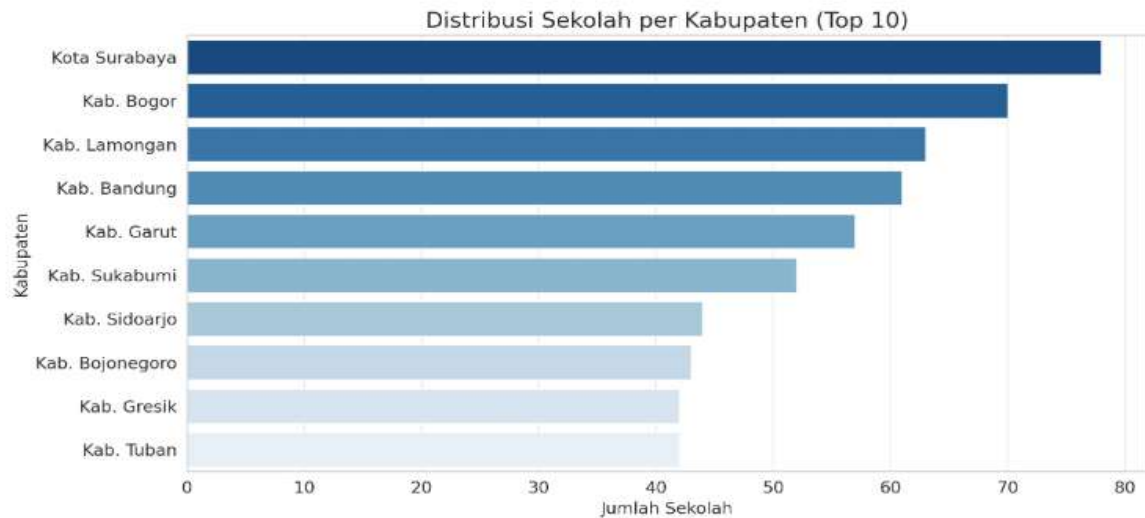


Figure 2. Distribution of the Largest Number of Kindergarten Schools from 10 Districts
Source: Dapodik, 2022

Figure 2, which shows the distribution graph of the largest number of Kindergarten schools from 10 Districts, provides important data to understand the distribution pattern of Kindergarten schools in several districts in Indonesia. The graph presents data in the form of the number of Kindergarten schools registered in each district included in the top 10 list. Each district will have a specific number that shows the total number of Kindergartens, distinguishing them from other districts that may have a lower number. The appearance of this data also highlights the variation that exists between districts, where there are districts that have a much larger number of Kindergartens than others. For example, one district may show hundreds of Kindergartens, while another district may only have dozens. This indicates a disparity in the development of early childhood education infrastructure between regions.

The high number of Kindergarten schools in several districts can be linked to the ease of access to education for children, which can have a positive impact on the level of children's participation in early childhood education. Conversely, districts with fewer kindergartens may face challenges in reaching children in the area, potentially hindering their early development. The availability of more kindergartens may be directly related to the provision of EGT. If a district has many kindergartens, there is a greater opportunity for a more diverse and quality EGT provision, thus supporting effective learning. On the other hand, districts with fewer kindergartens may face difficulties in accessing these educational resources.

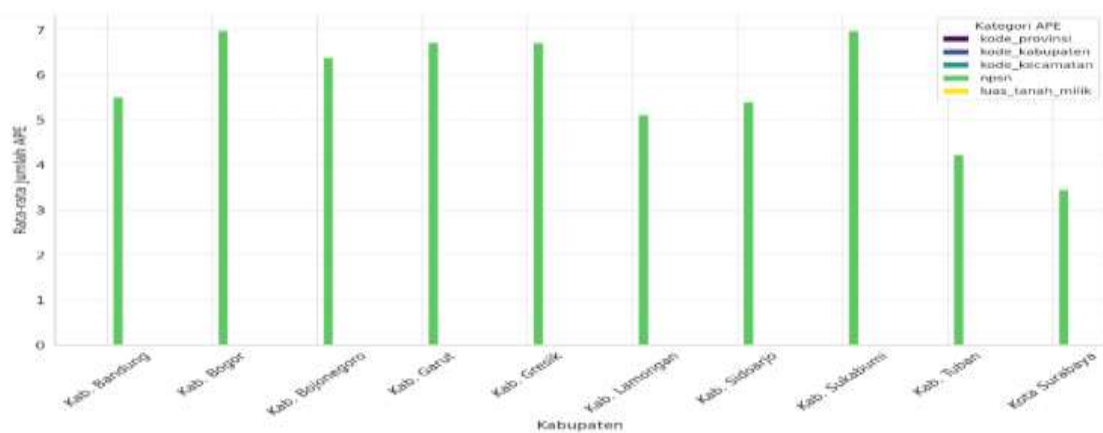


Figure 3. Average Number of EGT per Regency (Top 10)
Source: Dapodik, 2022

Figure 3 The graph above shows the average number of EGT per category in the 10 regencies with the largest number of schools. Some of the main findings are the differences in EGT Distribution between Regencies, some regencies have a higher number of certain EGTs than others. Categories such as blocks and outside EGTs tend to be more numerous than other categories. Variation between Regencies, namely

there are regencies with a higher average EGT in all categories, indicating greater investment in the provision of educational props. Other regencies have a lower number of EGTs, which can be a concern in the distribution of educational facilities.

Qualitative Findings: Teachers' Voices and Classroom Realities

Qualitative data gathered through interviews with six experienced kindergarten teachers in Depok provide deeper insights into the lived experiences behind the numbers. Thematic analysis revealed several recurring themes:

1. Religious EGT as a Medium for Values Internalization

Teachers consistently reported that EGTs particularly picture cards, puppets, and story-based board games help children grasp moral concepts in a way that lectures or verbal instruction cannot.

"When I use puppets to tell stories about Prophet Ibrahim's honesty, children become excited. They repeat the dialogue and even act it out during free play," (Teacher A, Al Kamil Kindergarten).

These tools were not only instructional aids but platforms for reflection and imitation, demonstrating how moral behaviors can be modeled through play.

2. Emotional Engagement and Enjoyment

Many teachers emphasized that children's engagement increased significantly when religious values were taught through interactive play.

"During role play about helping friends, one child said, 'I want to be like the boy who shares his toys,' without being prompted. It shows they internalize what they experience," (Teacher B, Nabila Kindergarten).

This suggests that EGTs bridge the gap between abstract religious teachings and children's daily behaviors.

3. Barriers to Effective Use: Training and Resources

While acknowledging the importance of EGT, several teachers noted barriers to implementation, especially in public kindergartens:

"We rarely get training on how to integrate religious themes into play. Sometimes we just modify general tools ourselves," (Teacher C).

Budget constraints, lack of standardized religious EGTs, and limited policy support emerged as consistent challenges.

4. Teacher Innovation and Cultural Adaptation

Despite resource limitations, teachers often demonstrated innovation, such as creating EGTs from recycled or local materials to represent religious stories.

"We use banana leaves to make mosques or prayer mats during art sessions. The children relate more when it's from their surroundings," (Teacher D).

This shows a strong intersection of moral education with local culture and sustainability.

Direct observation was carried out at Nabila Depok Integrated Islamic Kindergarten to obtain the latest information by observing the place or room where the children study and taking photos at the research location as shown in Figures 4 and 5.



Figure 4. Educational Block Game Tools in the Block Center (left), Children's Work (right) rooms



Figure 5. Children's work on the development of religious morals (faith and piety)

This figure depicts the installation of block game tools within a designated area known as the "Block Center." The presence of these tools is critical as they provide a tangible medium through which children can engage in constructive play. Block play is foundational in early childhood education; it aids in the development of fine motor skills, spatial awareness, and cognitive abilities like problem-solving and critical thinking. Furthermore, through collaborative block play, children can explore moral concepts such as cooperation and sharing, integral to fostering social-emotional learning. The corresponding figure of the Children's Work room highlights the environment where children partake in various activities, including the use of EGT for moral and religious learning (Dos Santos et al., 2016) (Wahyudin et al., 2024). This setting likely showcases children's individual or group projects, demonstrating how EGT facilitates hands-on learning experiences. It underscores the importance of creating an engaging and interactive space where children can express their understanding of moral and religious values through creativity and exploration. By presenting their work, children not only consolidate their learning but also develop communication skills and gain confidence in expressing religious and moral concepts.

4. Discussion

The discussion is intended to interpret and interpret the research results according to the theory used and not just explain the findings. The discussion must be enriched by referring to or comparing the results of previous studies that have been published in reputable scientific journals and not from predatory journals. In the discussion, it is also suggested to integrate research results into a collection of established theories or knowledge, formulation of new theories, modification of existing theories, and implications of research results.

The Role of Play in Early Childhood Education

Child development theory, as presented by Piaget (1962), suggests that children learn through direct experience and interaction with their environment. Play provides children with the opportunity to develop cognitive and social skills. In addition, educational-based play can help children understand moral and religious values in a more enjoyable way. Along with that, the scaffolding concept proposed by Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes the importance of the teacher's active role in supporting children's learning process during play activities. Thus, teacher involvement greatly influences the effectiveness of ECE in teaching religious morals.

The Importance of Educational Play Tools in Religious Moral Learning

One of the goals of ECE is to help early childhood understand moral and religious concepts in a more accessible way. According to research by Berk (2021), an interactive learning environment, where children can be actively involved in play activities, can improve the understanding and application of moral values. This study also claims that ECE can be a bridge between theory and practice in moral education, because children can learn these values in a concrete and relevant context.

The image illustrates artifacts or projects created by children that embody their understanding of religious morals, specifically focusing on concepts such as faith and piety. By showcasing children's work, the image provides evidence of how EGT facilitates the internalization of complex moral and religious principles in an age-appropriate manner. Children often express abstract concepts through concrete forms. In this setting, their projects may include drawings, crafts, or interactive displays that symbolize religious themes. This creative expression not only enhances engagement but also allows children to process and reflect on their learning through hands-on activities, promoting critical thinking and emotional connections to the values being taught.

Each child's work represents their unique interpretation of faith and piety, providing insight into their personal understanding and experiences related to these values. This diversity in expression underscores the idea that moral and religious education is not a one-size-fits-all approach; rather, it values individual perspectives and promotes a richer dialogue around these concepts. The nature of the work likely involves collaboration among peers. Engaging in group activities not only fosters social skills but also encourages discussions about moral principles, further solidifying their understanding of faith and piety through shared narratives and experiences. This alignment with social interaction is consistent with Vygotsky's theory on the importance of social contexts in learning.

The interview data reveal that Educational Game Tools (EGT) serve as powerful mediums for instilling moral and religious values in early childhood. This finding aligns with Piaget's theory (1962) that emphasizes the role of active engagement in learning. Through play, children internalize abstract concepts by transforming them into tangible, experience-based activities. The teachers interviewed repeatedly emphasized that religious EGT, such as puppets, picture cards, and storytelling games, created more profound engagement compared to verbal instruction alone. For instance, Teacher A shared that children often reenacted religious stories using puppets without adult prompting. This observation resonates with Vygotsky's theory (1978) of sociocultural learning, where internalization occurs through social interaction and guided participation. The child's spontaneous role play reflects an internal grasp of values like honesty and kindness, achieved through active imitation and symbolic exploration.

Availability of Religious EGT and Inhibiting Factors

According to the research results, the availability of Faith and piety EGT in various regions varies and it was found that private kindergartens have better access than public kindergartens. This shows a disparity in the procurement of learning tools based on financial resources and education policies in each region. Research by Santrock (2020) states that the lack of teacher understanding in the use of EGT, budget constraints, and the lack of policies that support the procurement of EGT based on religious morals can hinder the effectiveness of learning. Therefore, a more systematic and policy-based approach is needed to increase the availability and use of EGT.

According to Jean Piaget, children's cognitive development occurs through interaction with their environment, which includes play activities. Through play, children not only interact socially but can also understand moral and religious concepts better. Research by Berk (2021) shows that an interactive environment strengthens children's understanding of moral values and their ability to apply them in real situations. This is in line with the results of this study showing the importance of EGT in creating a learning environment that supports the moral development of early childhood.

Use of EGT as a Learning Method Research by Mustika and Suyadi (2021) explains that game tools such as picture cards facilitate the teaching of religious values interactively. By implementing play-based methods, children not only learn cognitively but also emotionally and socially. This game tool is an effective medium for teaching religious values in a fun way, thus supporting Vygotsky's theory on the importance of social interaction in learning (Rafsanjani et al., 2024) (Taber, 2024).

Factors Inhibiting the Availability of EGT According to Santrock (2020), the challenges faced in moral development also come from limited resources, both in terms of teacher understanding and school budget. This is in line with the findings of this study, which showed that teachers are often under-trained in the use of EEP for moral and religious teaching. Therefore, an emphasis on teacher training programs and supportive education policies is needed, so that EGT can be used optimally in teaching religious morals (Zein et al., 2020).

Differences in Availability of EGT between Private and Public Kindergartens This study found that private kindergartens have better access to EGT than public kindergartens, indicating a disparity in resources that must be addressed. In the context of education, the theory of distributive justice can be applied here, which emphasizes the importance of equalizing educational resources so that all students, regardless of school background, have equal access to learning tools that can enhance their moral and religious development.

The interviews also highlighted the emotional dimension of learning through play. Several teachers noted that when children were emotionally invested in role-play scenarios or storytelling using EGT, they more readily adopted the behaviors being portrayed. For example, Teacher B recounted how a child expressed a desire to emulate a character who shared toys indicating both cognitive understanding and affective commitment. This supports Berk's (2021) assertion that moral development in early childhood is enhanced when learning is contextualized in emotionally rich, socially meaningful experiences. Furthermore, the children's work exhibited in Figure 5, such as drawings and constructions with blocks

representing mosques or prayer activities, showcases how symbolic play encourages self-expression of internalized values. These outputs serve as tangible indicators of children's spiritual and moral growth aligning with Fernández-Gavira et al. (2021), who argue that creative game-based tools enable children to reflect their evolving ethical awareness.

Despite the promise of EGTs in religious learning, the interviews also exposed systemic challenges, particularly in public kindergartens. Teachers voiced concerns about insufficient training and limited access to culturally relevant EGTs. As Teacher C explained, the lack of structured workshops and resource support leaves educators to rely on self-made or improvised tools, which vary widely in quality.

This disparity between private and public institutions is further substantiated by the Dapodik data, which showed lower EGT availability in public kindergartens. Santrock (2020) similarly noted that teacher competence and institutional policy are significant determinants in implementing moral education tools effectively. The findings thus highlight an urgent need for equitable policy interventions and teacher capacity-building to optimize EGT usage across diverse educational settings. Interestingly, the study also uncovered a theme of teacher creativity and cultural adaptation. Teachers like D and E described how they used local materials (e.g., banana leaves, pebbles, recycled fabric) to construct religious-themed EGTs. This not only reflects ingenuity but reinforces moral education through ecological awareness and contextual relevance. The approach echoes Faizah et al. (2020), who advocate for environmental-based learning tools that connect values education with sustainability.

By rooting EGTs in the child's immediate cultural and environmental context, teachers ensure that moral lessons are not only learned but lived, fostering deeper connection and retention. This finding contributes to the growing discourse on decolonizing early childhood pedagogy, suggesting that religious and moral instruction should be localized and participatory

Practical Implications

Based on the discussion above, several practical implications can be suggested:

1. Developing Teacher Training Programs Training teachers to understand and use EEP effectively in teaching morals and religion should be a priority. These training programs could include workshops and the development of relevant teaching materials.
2. Supportive Education Policy A more inclusive policy is needed in the procurement of EGT, with budget redistribution, especially for public kindergartens that have more limited resources, to ensure that all educational institutions have adequate access.
3. Collaboration with Parents and Communities Inviting parents and communities to participate in the use of EGT at home can strengthen the teaching carried out in schools. Through active participation, it is hoped that the moral values taught can be internalized more deeply by children.

5. Conclusion

This study affirms the critical role of Educational Game Tools (EGT) as both pedagogical and developmental instruments in early childhood religious moral education. By integrating qualitative findings with national-scale data, the research highlights not only the uneven availability of EGTs across institutions but also the nuanced ways in which teachers creatively implement religious-themed play to support value internalization. Theoretically, this study extends existing frameworks in developmental psychology and moral education particularly those of Piaget and Vygotsky by illustrating how play-based learning, when infused with spiritual and moral content, becomes a powerful tool for early ethical formation.

The findings demonstrate that children do not merely mimic religious behaviors but emotionally and cognitively engage with moral concepts through symbolic play, storytelling, and creative expression. Scientifically, this research contributes a novel perspective by proposing a religiously grounded model of EGT usage, in which faith-based values are embedded not as isolated lessons but as integral aspects of interactive learning environments. It offers empirical support for the argument that spiritual education in early childhood should move beyond didactic instruction toward participatory, emotionally resonant, and culturally contextualized methods.

This study calls for the development of a national EGT framework that embraces religious and moral dimensions as core learning domains, supported by equitable policy, inclusive curriculum design, and continuous teacher training. By reaffirming the value of faith-informed play in early education, this research contributes to both scholarly discourse and practical innovation in character-building pedagogies.

This study has several limitations that offer opportunities for future research. First, the qualitative data were collected from a limited number of teachers within two Islamic kindergartens in Depok, which may not capture the full diversity of early childhood education settings across Indonesia. While the

integration of Dapodik data provided a broader quantitative context, the qualitative findings remain context-specific and may not reflect regional or institutional variations in other provinces or types of schools. Second, this research focused primarily on teacher perspectives. Although observations and documentation were conducted, future studies could incorporate the voices of children and parents more directly to deepen understanding of how Educational Game Tools (EGT) influence value internalization from multiple viewpoints. Third, while this study emphasized the moral-religious use of EGT, it did not explore in depth the design characteristics or pedagogical content of the tools themselves. Future research should investigate how specific features of EGT (e.g., symbolic representations, narrative structures, material types) influence children's spiritual and moral learning outcomes.

Future research is therefore encouraged to:

- 1) Conduct comparative studies across provinces and between public and private institutions to explore regional disparities in EGT implementation.
- 2) Utilize longitudinal or quasi-experimental designs to examine the long-term effects of religiously integrated EGT on children's moral development.
- 3) Investigate culturally responsive EGT design frameworks, integrating indigenous, religious, and local values in early education.

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