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Traditional Sundanese Games as Community-Based Learning Media for Interreligious Tolerance: A Qualitative Case Study at Sakola Motekar, West Java, Indonesia

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines how traditional Sundanese games function as a medium for interreligious tolerance among children within a community-based learning setting at Sakola Motekar. It addresses the growing concern over intolerance by exploring local cultural practices that enable children from different religious backgrounds to interact inclusively in everyday social spaces beyond formal schooling. **Methodology**: The study employs a qualitative single-case study design focused on the "Kaulinan" (traditional play) program at Sakola Motekar. Data were collected through participatory observation of recurring game sessions, in-depth semi-structured interviews with child participants and adult stakeholders. **Findings**: The findings show that the games were implemented as routinely facilitated activities embedded in weekly/outdoor sessions rather than purely child-initiated recreation. Across the three games, tolerance was enacted as observable interaction routines: children consistently participated in non-segregated groupings through shared formations, mixed teams, and turn-taking structures; cooperation toward shared goals was strengthened by game mechanics requiring task interdependence (maintaining an intact line, rebuilding a stack under pressure, or practicing balance with peer assistance); supportive peer responses (reassurance, encouragement, and practical help) were common when minor setbacks occurred; and rule disagreements were brief and typically resolved through quick negotiation supported by light-touch facilitator reminders, allowing play to continue without disrupting cohesion. **Implications**: The study suggests that facilitated traditional play can operate as a practical interaction infrastructure for tolerance education, where values emerge through repeated embodied practice rather than primarily through verbal instruction. Programmatically, the findings support the adoption of minimal facilitation standards to sustain inclusive participation and physical safety in community-based settings. **Originality/Value**: This research contributes naturalistic evidence from a community-based learning context showing how tolerance is produced as an everyday interactional accomplishment (grouping, cooperation, reassurance, and rule negotiation) rather than being treated mainly as a declarative attitude. It also offers multi-source qualitative support demonstrating how traditional games can function as cultural "media" (McLuhan) and experiential learning cycles (Kolb) that extend children's social capacities in pluralistic settings.

Keywords: Community-based learning; experiential learning; interreligious tolerance; Sakola Motekar; Sundanese traditional games.

Introduction

Religious diversity in Indonesia is a wealth as well as a challenge in an effort to build a harmonious national life. Although Indonesian people in daily life are accustomed

to coexisting with differences, the phenomenon of intolerance between religious communities is increasingly concerning, especially among the younger generation (Japar, Syarifa, & Fadhilah, 2020). In Ciamis Regency, West Java, data from the National Human Rights Commission shows an increase in cases of intolerance in the last three years, including the sealing of the Ahmadiyya Nur Khilafat Mosque which has a negative impact in the form of human rights violations (Sigit & Hasani, 2021). This condition indicates that the younger generation who should be the hope in maintaining tolerance is actually vulnerable to being influenced by a narrow attitude and easily judging others with different views or backgrounds. If this condition is left unchecked, the potential for division can occur and damage the values of togetherness that have been upheld by the Indonesian nation. Therefore, concrete efforts are needed to overcome the threat of intolerance through a more contextual approach and based on local wisdom (Taufiq, Budiman, & Nurholis, 2024).

Formal education in West Java, which is generally under the auspices of the government with a textbook-based learning system, has not been able to fully reach the aspect of forming a comprehensive and contextual attitude of tolerance. Reports from institutions such as the Setara Institute and the Wahid Foundation show that there are still cases of discrimination, hate speech, and rejection of certain religious groups. On the other hand, West Java has a diversity of arts and traditions that can be used as a non-formal educational medium. Traditional games, as an important part of local culture that have moral and educational values, have the potential to be an alternative means of effective value education (Herawati, Basori, & Wigna, 2023). Traditional games are not only entertaining, but also teach social values such as cooperation, honesty, and tolerance through hands-on experience and interaction (Ubadah, 2022). By engaging in these activities, children learn to work together, follow common rules, respect differences, resolve disputes peacefully, and do so regardless of religion, ethnicity, or social status (Nasution, 2022). Integrating traditional games in learning activities or daily activities can help shape the character of children who are more tolerant and appreciate diversity (Atmadibrata, Sopandi, & Gandasubrata, 1981).

Research on traditional games and tolerance education is well established and can be grouped into three main strands. First, a body of studies positions traditional games as vehicles for children's character formation and socio-emotional development—for example, Masrurin (2021) on Hompimpa as a medium for national character values, Nugraheni, Nugrahanta, and Kurniastuti (2021) on developing traditional-game modules to cultivate tolerant character in children aged 6–8 years, and Rianto and Yulaningsih (2021) on empathy and emotional capacities fostered through traditional play. This strand is reinforced by more recent work showing that traditional games can intentionally develop core social skills (cooperation, sharing, communication, conflict resolution, empathy) through holistic learning experiences grounded in local educational philosophy (Lathifah, Sutapa, Syamsudin, & Christianti, 2025), strengthen cultural values and belonging through community-rooted play practices (Calixto, Paucar, Maridueña, & Alvarado, 2024; Rakhoveio, Gill, & Veimy, 2025), and be mobilized in peace-oriented character education that explicitly trains respect, openness, cooperation, and tolerance (Kogoya et al., 2023). Related heritage-focused discussions also argue that revitalizing traditional games matters not only for child development but for safeguarding cultural transmission amid digitalization and urban change (Abdull Rahman et al., 2025). However, despite this strong evidence base on character and values, many studies in this strand still treat "tolerance" primarily as a general moral or civic disposition, and they rarely foreground religious diversity as an explicit analytic dimension.

Second, another strand examines creative media and local cultural forms as resources for tolerance education. This includes Fadli (2019), who discusses Walisongo's use of cultural media such as puppetry to communicate tolerance values in Javanese society; Tangidy and Setiawan (2016), who draw on Pela Gandong culture through board-game media for students; and Fauzia, Hakim, Fitriah, and Maulana (2024), who explore digital technology and social media in cultivating interreligious tolerance. This strand can be further strengthened by research that frames traditional games themselves as cultural infrastructures that carry identity, norms, and cohesion—suggesting that tolerance education can be embedded in cultural participation and heritage continuity, not only in explicit moral messaging (Abdull Rahman et al., 2025; Rakhoveio et al., 2025). Even so, these culture-and-media approaches often remain more conceptual or programmatic, and many focus on adolescents/adults or on message transmission, leaving less empirical attention to the micro-level, everyday interaction processes through which children across different religious backgrounds actually build inclusive relations in situ.

Third, research on tolerance education in early life often highlights the role of teachers and formal schooling. Examples include Pitaloka, Dimyanti, and Purwanta (2021) on teachers' roles in instilling tolerance within multicultural contexts, Suryadilaga (2021) on tolerance education from a hadith perspective, and Rusmiati (2023) on early habituation toward harmonious living through tolerance values. This strand is complemented by work that operationalizes tolerance through structured pedagogical play in school settings—such as studies showing that game-based practices can foster tolerant attitudes toward peers with disabilities in preschool contexts (Sannikova, 2018) and that integrating traditional games within physical education can support inclusion and participation (including for children with special needs) as part of broader inclusive-education goals (Fogliata, Mazzella, Gamberini, & Ambretti, 2025). Nonetheless, much of this literature still centers on instructional strategies (teacher modeling, planned lessons, habituation programs) and school-based implementation, which often leaves underexplored how tolerance emerges through spontaneous peer interaction beyond formal classroom structures—particularly in community-based learning spaces where children from different religious backgrounds meet and negotiate participation through play.

From these three categories, it can be seen that most of the research is still centered on formal forms of education or structured pedagogical approaches. There have not been many studies that specifically examine how traditional Sundanese games can function as a medium of interfaith interaction in the context of children's lives directly in real social spaces. This gap is what this research aims to fill, namely by exploring traditional games as participatory media that are not only fun, but also shape interfaith social experiences naturally. This study tries to show that through a neutral and egalitarian local cultural context, the values of tolerance can be internalized more effectively than a purely instructional approach. Thus, this research is expected to contribute to the development of character education that is based on local culture and relevant to the life of multicultural communities, especially in the non-formal education environment.

This study adopts two main theories that complement each other. First, Marshall McLuhan's media theory, which states that media is not just a channel for conveying messages, but a means of interaction to build an understanding of the world (McLuhan, 1964). Traditional games are understood as cultural media that shape an individual's perspective and behavior in their social context. McLuhan asserts that each medium is an extension of the capacities of the human senses, body, and mind. At Sakola Motekar (Motekar School), Ciamis, games such as *oray-orayan* or *boy-boyan* are an extension of

the children's social body to learn to relate, communicate, and form solidarity. Gestures, singing, and rules of play extend the expression of collective values such as cooperation and tolerance. Games allow children from different religious backgrounds to experience togetherness in a concrete way, making it a social education medium that extends the ability to live in a peaceful and inclusive pluralistic society. Second, David Kolb's (2014) theory is relevant to the practice of learning through traditional Sundanese games. In contrast to verbal delivery of values, games present hands-on experiences that involve emotions, physical, and social interactions. The learning process begins from concrete experience when children are actively involved in interfaith games, followed by reflective observation through discussions to reflect on experiences, then abstract conceptualization to conclude the values of tolerance and togetherness, to active experimentation by applying this understanding in daily interactions.

These two theories are connected to form a conceptual framework: McLuhan describes the function of play as a medium that expands social abilities, while Kolb describes the process of learning through the cycle of experience. The research hypothesis is that traditional Sundanese games function as cultural expressions that actively shape children's thoughts and social interactions, creating a neutral and effective interaction space in fostering values of tolerance among different religions.

Based on the above background and conceptual framework, this study aims to examine how traditional Sundanese games, especially *oray-orayan*, *boy-boyan*, and *jajangkungan*, are used as an educational medium for the value of tolerance between religions at Sakola Motekar, Ciamis. Specifically, this study seeks to fill the gap in field studies on how traditional games create spaces for interfaith interaction in real contexts, as well as identify the values of tolerance that grow naturally during play activities. Thus, this research is expected to make a theoretical and practical contribution to the development of character education based on local wisdom in the context of Indonesia's multicultural society.

Research Method

The unit of analysis in this study is a traditional Sundanese game that is used as a means of interfaith interaction in the "*Kaulinan*" activity at Sakola Motekar, a non-formal education space that raises local wisdom as a learning approach. The main focus of the research is directed at how traditional games play a role in shaping social meeting spaces between children from different religious backgrounds, as well as how the values of tolerance are manifested in the process of playing together. The types of games used include *oray-orayan*, *boy-boyan*, and *jajangkungan*. The analysis included the context of the implementation of the activity (time, place, facilitator, purpose of the activity), the pattern of interaction between interfaith participants during the game, and the participants' perception of their experiences. This analysis helps dissect how games function as an effective social medium in fostering mutual understanding, cooperation, and acceptance of differences within the framework of religious diversity (Melenia, Rofiq, Putra, Rif'atunabilah, & Zaqiah, 2025).

This study employed a qualitative single-case study design to explore how traditional Sundanese games function as a medium for interreligious tolerance within a bounded non-formal educational setting. The case under investigation was Sakola Motekar (Motekar School), Ciamis, West Java, particularly the "Kaulinan" (traditional play) activities as a recurring educational practice. A case study design was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of social processes, meanings, and

interactions as they unfold in a specific local context.

The data source consisted of primary data obtained through direct observation of traditional game activities in the "*Kaulinan*" program at Sakola Motekar, as well as interviews with school activists, school facilitators, the surrounding community, and game participants from Muslim and non-Muslim backgrounds. Secondary data include institutional documents, scientific articles, visual recordings of activities, as well as academic literature that discusses traditional games and tolerance education (Cendana & Suryana, 2022).

Data collection techniques are carried out through three main methods: participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Participatory observation was carried out by directly engaging in the "Kaulinan" activity to witness the dynamics of games and social interactions between participants from various religious backgrounds, so that researchers can capture social nuances such as gestures, expressions, and patterns of spontaneous interaction. In-depth interviews were conducted to explore the meanings, perceptions, and experiences of the parties involved using flexible semi-structured guidelines. Interviews were conducted with various key stakeholders, such as the founder of Sakola Motekar, activity facilitators, religious leaders, parents of participants, as well as children from Muslim and non-Muslim backgrounds. Documentation is carried out through photos and videos of game activities, activity archives, and supporting documents from the organizing institution (Mashudi, Siahaan, & Kuswardayan, 2014).

Data analysis uses techniques developed by Miles and Huberman, which include three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and verification and drawing of conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). At the data reduction stage, the researcher sorted out relevant information from observations, interviews, and documentation, particularly related to the practice and values of tolerance in traditional games. The data presentation stage was carried out by systematically compiling the findings in the form of descriptive narratives based on key themes such as the type of game, interaction patterns between participants, forms of interfaith cooperation, and participants' emotional responses. The last stage is verification and drawing conclusions by thoroughly examining the data to find patterns related to the formation of tolerance attitudes. The researcher sought the relationship between game practices and values such as mutual respect, cooperation, and acceptance of differences to conclude the extent to which traditional Sundanese games function as an effective medium in forming a harmonious and inclusive interfaith interaction space.

Because this study involved children aged 7–10 years and includes interview excerpts reported as personal communication, enhanced ethical safeguards were applied. Participation was conducted only after obtaining parent/guardian consent (parental consent) and the child's voluntary agreement (assent) using age-appropriate explanations. To ensure confidentiality, the identities of all informants (children, facilitators, parents, community activists, and any other participants) were protected by replacing real names with participant codes (e.g., P1, P2, P3, etc.) and removing any potentially identifying or sensitive details from the manuscript. In addition, formal permission to conduct the study was secured from the Sakola Motekar community/management, and clear data-handling procedures were implemented, including protocols for recording (where permitted), secure storage, limited access, and systematic anonymization of all interview and observational records prior to analysis and publication.

Results and Discussion

1. Implementation of traditional games at Sakola Motekar

Traditional games are an important part of the culture that is passed down from generation to generation in the community. More than just a form of folk entertainment, this game contains noble values such as cooperation, honesty, and mutual respect. These values make traditional games a potential means in the formation of the character of the younger generation. In the midst of globalization and modernization, the existence of traditional games is beginning to be marginalized by digital games that are individualistic. In fact, traditional games are able to build strong social interaction among their players. Therefore, efforts are needed to revitalize traditional games so that they remain relevant and accessible to today's children. Sakola Motekar is present as a concrete example of an educational institution that integrates traditional Sundanese games in its teaching and learning activities. Through a local cultural approach, this school not only preserves cultural richness, but also instills the values of togetherness, empathy, and tolerance between religious communities. This approach proves that character education can be done in a contextual and fun way.

a) Oray-orayan

Oray-orayan is a group-based Sundanese traditional game in which children form a "snake" line by holding the shoulders or waist of the person in front, moving in coordinated steps while chanting (Maryati & Pranata, 2019). In the Sakola Motekar case, *oray-orayan* was implemented as a facilitated activity rather than a purely child-initiated game. It was typically conducted once a week during outdoor learning sessions, with companions/facilitators guiding the formation of the line and maintaining a conducive atmosphere while allowing children to choose roles such as "head" and "tail." Participation was open to all children without grouping by religion, age, or gender, situating the game as an inclusive routine within the school's outdoor setting.

Oray-orayan is commonly played by first selecting two "gatekeepers" (guards) using *hompimpah* or *cingciripit*.[1] The game begins with children lining up while holding the shoulders or waist of the person in front, with the front player acting as the "head" who leads the movement and the others forming the body and tail. The line then moves in rhythm while turning, spinning, or weaving through the "gatekeepers," with the main challenge being to keep the line intact; if the line breaks, the round is repeated or the detached player leaves the line (Ardillani, 2022). The activity is accompanied by a sung rhyme:

Oray-orayan luar leor mapay sawah
Entong ka sawah parena keur sedeng beukah.
Oray-orayan luar leor mapay kebon
Entong ka kebon loba barudak keur ngangon
Mending ka leuwi, di leuwi loba nu mandi

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[1] *Hompimpah*: a quick group "lot-drawing" chant. Players place a hand in the center and, at the end of the rhyme (often "hompimpa alaium gambreng"), they simultaneously flip their hands (commonly palm-up or palm-down). The person (or group) whose hand position is different from the majority is selected (e.g., becomes the "gatekeeper"), or the process is repeated until a single person is chosen. *Cingciripit*: a finger-and-palm elimination game accompanied by a short chant. One child places a palm open, and the others place an index finger on it (or vice versa, depending on local practice). At the end of the rhyme, the palm snaps shut to "catch" fingers; those who are caught (or those who escape, depending on the agreed rule) become the selected player, or the round continues until one role is assigned.

Saha anu mandi, anu mandina pandeuri
Hok... hok... hok…

Oray-orayan slithers along, winding through the rice fields,
Don't go into the rice fields—the rice is in bloom.
Oray-orayan slithers along, winding through the gardens,
Don't go into the gardens—many children are herding.
Better go down to the deep pool, where many people are bathing.
Who is bathing? The one bathing is at the back.
Hok… hok… hok…

In Sakola Motekar, *oray-orayan* was typically conducted once a week as part of an outdoor learning session. The activity was facilitated by companions/facilitators, who initiated the game and organized the children into a playable formation rather than leaving it entirely to the children's spontaneous initiative. While children were given autonomy to choose roles the facilitators managed the line formation, provided brief instructions, and ensured the play remained safe and conducive. The sessions generally took place in a spacious courtyard shaded by trees, which supported an open and comfortable setting for group play.

Figure 1 Observation photo of an *oray-orayan* session at Sakola Motekar (Personal documentation, 2025)

Figure 1 documents an *oray-orayan* session conducted in an outdoor setting at Sakola Motekar, where children participate in a coordinated group activity under facilitator supervision (Personal documentation, 2025). The image shows participants forming a connected line that resembles the game's "snake" formation, while a facilitator stands close to the moving group to guide the flow of play and maintain a safe, orderly formation. Several children are positioned around the main line as observers or waiting participants, indicating that the session was organized and staged within a shared learning space rather than occurring spontaneously. The open courtyard environment and shaded area visible in the background support the outdoor, communal nature of the activity, reflecting a setting conducive to collective movement, interaction, and supervision.

During the *oray-orayan* sessions, participation was inclusive and non-segregated, with children joining the line without grouping by religion, age, or gender. The atmosphere was consistently cheerful, marked by laughter, playful teasing, and cheering as the "snake" moved and changed direction. Observationally, the game required continuous coordination of movement, with participants actively adjusting their pace and grip to help keep the line intact and prevent it from breaking. This synchronized "holding" mechanic appeared to foster a shared sense of togetherness as children moved in unison toward a common goal. In addition, minority-background participants reported feeling accepted and comfortable within the group during the activity.

These observed patterns were also reflected in participants' accounts of togetherness and non-discriminatory interaction during play. One child described the collective feeling produced by the game mechanics: "*I really like to play oray-orayan, because it's crowded and all my friends can join. We hold each other's hands, so it feels really good together*" (P1, 8 years old, Muslim participant, personal communication, March 12, 2025). Another child emphasized the absence of exclusion despite difference: "*When I played, I laughed. No one is angry or picky of friends. Even though we are different, we all play together*" (P2, 9 years old, Christian participant, personal communication, March 12, 2025). A companion corroborated these observations by noting changes in children's social engagement over repeated sessions: "*I often see children who were initially quiet become active after several plays. They began to greet each other, help each other, and even defend each other. For me, it is proof that games can form empathy*" (P3, companion, personal communication, March 12, 2025). Collectively, these accounts reinforce that *oray-orayan* at Sakola Motekar functioned as an inclusive play setting where coordinated movement and shared rules supported togetherness and everyday experiences of acceptance.

The Sakola Motekar case indicates that *oray-orayan* was not merely conducted as a recreational activity but functioned as a structured, facilitator-supported routine that consistently generated inclusive interaction in an outdoor learning context. Across weekly sessions, the game's simple requirement to move as a connected "snake" created repeated opportunities for children to coordinate, negotiate pace, and maintain collective responsibility for keeping the line intact. Importantly, the non-segregated participation and the reported comfort of minority-background participants suggest that the activity provided a practical, everyday setting for cross-identity social engagement. Taken together, these findings position *oray-orayan* as a concrete example of how traditional play, when intentionally facilitated, can sustain a shared atmosphere of togetherness and acceptance within Sakola Motekar's learning environment.

b) Boy-boyan

Boy-boyan is a traditional team game in which players use a ball to knock down a small stack of tiles, cans, or stones and then attempt to rebuild the stack before the opposing team hits them with the ball, with teams alternating between attacking and defending roles (Khisbiyah, Lestari, Purwanto, & Hidayat, 2021; Kusumawati, Muhsinin, & Masruroh, 2021). In the Sakola Motekar case, *boy-boyan* was documented as part of the study's observed traditional-game activities conducted in an outdoor setting. The game was played in a shared open area where children gathered around the target stack and coordinated turns between throwing, running, and rebuilding. Rather than being described as a purely spontaneous pastime, the session reflected an organized group activity within the school's community-based learning context.

In Sakola Motekar, *boy-boyan* was conducted as part of routine weekly sessions in

the outdoor learning program rather than as an incidental activity. The session was facilitated by companions/facilitators who initiated the game, clarified basic rules, and monitored the flow of play. Children were assigned to two teams in a mixed and non-segregated manner (i.e., not based on religious or social background), and the facilitators ensured that all participants were actively and equally involved. During play, the teams alternated between knocking down a stacked target, attempting to rebuild it, and avoiding being hit by the ball as the opposing team defended. The activity took place in an open yard setting, providing sufficient space for running, dodging, and group coordination.

Figure 2 Observation photo of a boy-boyan session at Sakola Motekar (Personal documentation, 2025)

Figure 2 shows a *boy-boyan* session taking place in an open outdoor area at Sakola Motekar, with several children gathered around the central play area where the target stack is being arranged, and a ball is visible nearby (Personal documentation, 2025). A companion/adult is positioned close to the children at the center, indicating that the activity is being supervised and facilitated during the session. Other children stand around the main action—watching, waiting for their turn, or preparing to re-enter play—suggesting an organized group session rather than an individual, spontaneous game. The surrounding scene includes multiple participants and observers in the same shared space, creating a communal and lively activity setting.

During *boy-boyan* sessions, children formed mixed teams and blended easily in play without emphasizing identity differences or creating exclusive groupings. The atmosphere was consistently lively, with laughter and cheering, and the game unfolded without visible tension or exclusionary behavior. Cooperation was evident through quick team communication and shared strategies, particularly when players coordinated to rebuild the target stack while others supported by distracting opponents or helping teammates avoid being hit. When a child was struck by the ball, the response was typically collective laughter or brief reassurance rather than ridicule, and play continued smoothly. Across sessions, facilitators also monitored participation to ensure that all children remained actively and equally involved in the game.

Boy-boyan participants described the game as requiring an active strategy while also enabling social connection within the group. One child highlighted the competitive excitement and the need for planning during play: "*This boy-boyan game is really exciting*

because this game requires a strategy to be able to win and make emotions if you lose"
(P4, child participant, personal communication, December 23, 2024). Another child
emphasized the game's social benefit in forming new relationships: "*When I was playing
boy-boyan, I got to know new friends from the next hamlet. We immediately got to know
each other because of a team*" (P5, 10 years old, Muslim participant, personal
communication, December 12, 2024). These quotes indicate that *boy-boyan* combined a
fast-paced, goal-oriented team dynamic with an interactional setting that lowered social
barriers and helped participants form new peer ties through shared team membership.

This inclusive and collaborative dynamic was also reinforced by the facilitator's
observations across sessions. As one companion noted, "*I like to see children playing boy-
boyan. The game is simple, but they are compact, no one is excluded*" (P6,
companion/facilitator, personal communication, December 12, 2024). This account
supports the field observation that, despite the game's simple materials and rules,
participation tended to be organized in a way that kept children engaged as a team, sharing
roles, coordinating actions around rebuilding the target pile, and ensuring that no
participant was left out of the interaction space during play.

The *boy-boyan* sessions at Sakola Motekar were documented as a structured,
facilitator-supported activity that consistently generated cooperative, non-exclusive
interaction among children in an outdoor learning context. Across observations and
participant accounts, the game combined rapid coordination (throw–run–rebuild–avoid
being hit) with mixed-team participation that encouraged communication, shared
strategy, and peer support. Children's comments highlighted both the game's strategic
intensity and its capacity to create new social connections through teamwork, while the
facilitator's account confirmed that participation remained cohesive and inclusive. Taken
together, these findings indicate that *boy-boyan* functioned not only as a physical team
game but also as a routine interaction space where children practiced collaboration and
experienced equal involvement through collective play.

c) Jajangkungan

Jajangkungan (bamboo stilts) is a traditional game in which players stand on two
bamboo poles with footholds and practice walking while maintaining balance and body
coordination (Sungkari, Santi, & Fauziah, 2024; Supriyanto, Gunawijaya, & Nurbaeti,
2022). In the Sakola Motekar case, *jajangkungan* was documented as part of the study's
observed traditional-game activities conducted in an outdoor learning environment. The
activity was presented as a shared group session where children learned to mount the stilts
gradually and practice stepping in a controlled manner. Within this study setting,
jajangkungan functioned as a facilitated activity embedded in Sakola Motekar's routine
outdoor/weekly program rather than an entirely child-initiated pastime.

In Sakola Motekar, *jajangkungan* was conducted periodically as part of the weekly
outdoor program rather than as an incidental activity. The sessions were facilitated by
companions/facilitators who provided basic safety instructions and hands-on assistance
with technique, including how to step onto the stilts and stabilize balance before moving
forward. Children were invited to participate in mixed, informal groupings, with peers
taking turns and joining without separation by background. During play, the atmosphere
was consistently supportive, with children encouraging one another to try again after
slipping or falling and re-entering the activity without embarrassment. The sessions took
place in an open yard surrounded by trees, offering a spacious setting for supervised
practice and movement.

Figure 3 shows a *jajangkungan* activity taking place in an open outdoor area at

Sakola Motekar, where participants practice standing and moving on bamboo stilts while facilitators remain nearby to supervise and assist (Personal documentation, 2025). The participants include visiting university students who were taking part in an international short-course program and joining a traditional-games session at the site. The image captures a step-by-step learning process, with learners attempting the stilts gradually while others observe, wait their turn, or prepare to try. The arrangement of participants and facilitators suggests an organized session designed for guided practice rather than a spontaneous individual activity.

Figure 3 Observation photo of a *jajangkungan* (bamboo stilts) session with visiting university students at Sakola Motekar (Personal documentation, 2025)

During *jajangkungan* sessions at Sakola Motekar, participation was inclusive and non-segregated, with children joining the activity without grouping by religion, age, or gender. The atmosphere was consistently supportive, marked by laughter and encouragement, and there were no observed instances of shaming when participants struggled or fell. Peer assistance was frequently visible as children helped one another maintain balance, offered brief guidance, and encouraged friends to try again after unsuccessful attempts. Facilitators remained attentive to safety and participation, providing reminders and support while ensuring that each child had opportunities to practice. These interaction patterns—inclusive participation, supportive peer help, and repeated "*try again*" encouragement—were observed across sessions in the weekly program.

To further illustrate the observed fear–support–retry pattern in *jajangkungan* sessions, participants described how falling was treated as a normal part of learning rather than a reason for embarrassment. One child noted how peer support reduced fear and encouraged persistence: "*At first I was afraid of falling, but my friends helped. Now I even want to keep racing*" (P8, 9 years old, Muslim participant, personal communication, January 12, 2025). This account aligns with the facilitator's emphasis on normalizing mistakes and reinforcing mutual support during practice: "*We not only teach the technique of playing jajangkungan, but also instill that falling is normal, the important thing is to get up and help each other*" (P9, facilitator, personal communication, January 12, 2025). These statements reinforce that *jajangkungan* at Sakola Motekar was experienced as a supported learning space where children were encouraged to persist, assist peers, and re-

try after setbacks.

Jajangkungan at Sakola Motekar functioned as a shared learning activity where peer support was central to participation. Children who were more confident on the stilts frequently helped others with balance and stepping technique, creating a practical form of mutual assistance during play. The repeated encouragement to "try again" contributed to a sense of safety for participants to make mistakes and re-attempt without fear of being shamed. Participation also remained non-segregated, with children joining and taking turns without role allocation based on religion, age, or gender, while facilitators monitored safety and ensured equal opportunities to practice. Taken together, the sessions consistently showed that *jajangkungan* combined physical skill-building with an interactional environment that supported equitable involvement and a supportive peer climate.

In one observed session that involved visiting university students in an international short-course program, a community activist (P7) described the activity as a form of cultural exchange that enabled visitors to observe local practices of cooperation and collaborative community life in *situ* (P7, personal communication, January 14, 2025). The same informant noted that such visits were expected to strengthen Sakola Motekar's role as a venue for exchange and observation, without positioning the activity as a formal intervention. P7 also expressed a hope that interactions of this kind could support local confidence and make local cultural potential more visible to outsiders, framed as an aspiration rather than a measured outcome (P7, personal communication, January 14, 2025).

Overall, *jajangkungan* at Sakola Motekar was conducted as a facilitated activity within a weekly program, with facilitators providing safety guidance and technical support while children practiced in a shared outdoor space. Across observations, participation remained non-segregated, with children joining regardless of religion, age, or gender and taking turns within the same activity area. The sessions consistently showed supportive peer dynamics, as children encouraged one another to try again, offered practical help when someone struggled to balance, and responded to falls without shaming. Taken together, these patterns indicate that *jajangkungan* functioned as a structured play session where repeated practice, peer support, and equal participation were routinely enacted in the course of the activity.

2. Values of Tolerance in Children's Interactions While Playing

Building on the implementation described in the previous section, this section synthesizes how tolerance-related interactions emerged during children's play across the observed traditional games at Sakola Motekar. Based on direct observation and interviews with child participants and facilitators, we identified recurring interaction patterns related to inclusive participation, cooperation toward shared goals, and supportive peer responses. Rather than treating tolerance as an abstract concept, the findings in this section highlight how it was enacted through everyday group formation, coordinated play, and peer assistance within the play setting.

a) Non-segregated grouping and equal participation

Across the three games observed at Sakola Motekar—oray-orayan, boy-boyan, and jajangkungan—children consistently participated in mixed groupings rather than being separated into different play groups. In each session, children joined lines, teams, or turn-taking arrangements without grouping by religion, age, or gender, and play positions or roles emerged from the flow of the activity rather than identity-based selection. In boy-

boyan, children were assigned into mixed teams, while in oray-orayan and jajangkungan participation likewise remained open and non-segregated as children formed a shared line or took turns using the stilts. Companions/facilitators remained present to organize the basic structure of play and to monitor participation so that all children stayed actively and equally involved. Overall, this pattern of non-segregated grouping and equal participation was observed repeatedly across the sessions documented in the study.

In *oray-orayan* sessions, children joined a single connected line and were not separated into different rows by religion, age, or gender; roles such as "head" and "tail" were selected within the group rather than predetermined by background. Participants moved together as one formation, and children could shift positions as the line reorganized, with facilitators arranging the line so it remained playable while allowing children to take different roles. In *boy-boyan*, children were assigned to two mixed teams, and facilitators monitored the game so that participation was evenly distributed rather than dominated by a few players. Team members rotated through throwing, running, and rebuilding tasks, and children remained involved as teammates supported one another in completing the stack and avoiding the ball. In *jajangkungan*, children took turns using the bamboo stilts in a shared area, and participation occurred in mixed groupings rather than separate clusters. Facilitators provided safety instructions and practical help so that children with different confidence levels could join in, and the turn-taking structure ensured that access to the activity was shared across participants.

Participant and facilitator accounts also directly reinforced the observed pattern of open participation without exclusion. One child emphasized that the game was open to everyone: "*I really like to play oray-orayan, because it's crowded and all my friends can join*" (P1, 8 years old, Muslim participant, personal communication, March 12, 2025). Another child explicitly noted the absence of selective friendship despite differences: "*No one is angry or picky of friends. Even though we are different, we all play together*" (P2, 9 years old, Christian participant, personal communication, March 12, 2025). A facilitator similarly highlighted the inclusive group dynamic: "*The game is simple, but they are compact, no one is excluded*" (P6, companion/facilitator, personal communication, December 12, 2024). Collectively, these statements match the cross-session observations that children joined mixed lines and teams rather than forming identity-based groupings, and that participation was maintained as a shared, group-based activity.

The non-segregated structure of play at Sakola Motekar was sustained not only by children's willingness to join mixed lines and teams, but also by the facilitators' consistent organization of roles, turns, and access to participation. Across *oray-orayan*, *boy-boyan*, and *jajangkungan*, the same practical pattern recurred: children entered the activity through shared formations or mixed teams, rotated through roles, and remained engaged without being separated by background characteristics. Sessions were organized to keep the activity playable and safe while ensuring that participation opportunities were distributed rather than concentrated among a few children. As a result, equal participation functioned as an observable routine feature of the play setting and served as the immediate interactional context in which inclusive peer relations were practiced during the documented sessions.

b) Cooperation toward a shared goal

Across the three games observed at Sakola Motekar cooperation toward a shared goal was repeatedly observed as a recurring interaction pattern. In *oray-orayan*, children coordinated pace and grip to keep the connected line intact as they moved in unison, while in *boy-boyan* teams worked together to knock down and rebuild the target stack while

coordinating movement to avoid being hit by the ball. In *jajangkungan*, children took turns using the bamboo stilts and frequently assisted peers in maintaining balance through step-by-step support. Companions/facilitators supported these cooperative dynamics by providing brief instructions, organizing turn-taking or team structure, and monitoring the flow of play to keep participation active and orderly. Overall, this goal-oriented cooperation appeared consistently across the documented sessions rather than emerging only in isolated moments.

In *oray-orayan* sessions, children cooperated by continuously coordinating their movement to maintain a single "snake" formation while moving and turning together. Observationally, children adjusted their pace and grip to match the person in front, helping keep the line intact and preventing the formation from breaking during direction changes. When the line began to loosen, nearby participants typically tightened their hold or slowed their steps so the group could re-synchronize, rather than continuing individually. This shared regulation of rhythm and spacing kept the activity playable and sustained the collective goal of moving as one connected unit. One child explicitly linked this sense of togetherness to the game's "holding" mechanic: "*I really like to play oray-orayan, because it's crowded and all my friends can join. We hold each other's hands, so it feels really good together*" (P1, 8 years old, Muslim participant, personal communication, March 12, 2025).

In *boy-boyan* sessions, cooperation was organized around rapid team strategy and coordinated role-sharing, with children alternately taking responsibility for throwing, protecting/distracting opponents, and rebuilding the target stack. Observationally, teams relied on quick verbal cues and spontaneous signals to time runs toward the stack, decide who would rebuild, and support teammates in avoiding the ball while the opposing team defended. When the stack was knocked down, players often shifted roles immediately—one child moved to rebuild while others positioned themselves to draw throws away or warn a teammate to dodge—so the collective effort stayed focused on completing the rebuild. This fast-paced coordination required short, continuous communication and mutual awareness of teammates' positions and actions. A child participant described this strategic, goal-oriented teamwork in terms of planning for victory and managing the emotional stakes of losing: "*This boy-boyan game is really exciting because this game requires a strategy to be able to win and make emotions if you lose*" (P4, child participant, personal communication, December 23, 2024).

In *jajangkungan* sessions, cooperation was observed through practical peer assistance and shared turn-taking, as children supported one another while learning to balance on the bamboo stilts. Children who were more confident often steadied a friend's body, offered brief instructions on foot placement or posture, and waited for turns in a shared practice area, while facilitators provided safety reminders and hands-on guidance to keep the activity orderly and safe. This pattern was echoed in participant and facilitator accounts: "*At first I was afraid of falling, but my friends helped. Now I even want to keep racing*" (P8, 9 years old, Muslim participant, personal communication, January 12, 2025), and "We not only teach the technique of playing engrang, but also instill that falling is normal, the important thing is to get up and help each other" (P9, facilitator, personal communication, January 12, 2025).

Participant accounts aligned with the observed emphasis on coordinated team effort across the sessions. As one companion noted, "*I often see children who were initially quiet become active after several plays*" (P3, companion, personal communication, March 12, 2025), while another facilitator highlighted the team cohesion that sustained participation: "*The game is simple, but they are compact, no one is excluded*" (P6,

companion/facilitator, personal communication, December 12, 2024). In the same account, P3 also observed that children "*began to greet each other [and] help each other*" (P3, companion, personal communication, March 12, 2025). These brief statements match what was documented in the field: children worked to keep the *oray-orayan* line intact through coordinated pacing and grip, coordinated roles and communication to rebuild the *boy-boyan* stack while avoiding the ball, and provided hands-on peer help during *jajangkungan* practice.

Across the three games, cooperation toward a shared goal was consistently structured by the game mechanics themselves: the *oray-orayan* line had to remain intact, the *boy-boyan* stack had to be rebuilt under pressure, and *jajangkungan* practice required turn-taking and practical support to maintain balance. In the documented sessions, children repeatedly coordinated actions so that the group task could continue without interruption. These cooperative patterns were observed across sessions and were supported by companions/facilitators who organized the basic play structure and monitored participation so that all children remained actively involved. Building on this goal-oriented cooperation, the next subsection focuses on how peer support and responses to difficulty (e.g., helping, reassuring, and encouraging "try again") appeared during play interactions.

c) Supportive peer responses

Across the documented sessions at Sakola Motekar, supportive peer responses were consistently observed whenever children experienced difficulty or minor failure during play. In all three games, peers reacted not with ridicule but with laughter shared in good humor, short words of reassurance, or direct practical assistance. When a child was hit by a ball in *boy-boyan* or lost balance in *jajangkungan*, nearby peers typically offered encouragement—phrases like *"it's okay"* or *"try again"*—and often extended a hand or adjusted positions to help them rejoin the activity. Facilitators were present to ensure safety and maintain order, but the primary support emerged organically from the children themselves through spontaneous gestures of empathy and inclusion. This consistent pattern of positive peer response appeared across the observed sessions, reinforcing a collective atmosphere of acceptance and mutual encouragement during traditional play.

In *boy-boyan* sessions, supportive peer responses were most visible in moments when a player was struck by the ball and temporarily removed from active play. When this happened, nearby children typically responded with collective laughter and cheering that functioned as shared excitement rather than mockery, followed by brief reassurance such as *"it's okay"* before the next turn continued. Observationally, the affected child was not singled out or excluded; instead, they remained part of the group's interaction space and rejoined the flow of play as roles rotated. The game resumed smoothly after these incidents, with teammates quickly shifting focus back to rebuilding the stack or coordinating the next defensive move. Facilitators stayed close to the play area to keep the interaction safe and orderly, ensuring that reactions did not escalate into roughness or exclusion.

In *jajangkungan* sessions, supportive peer responses were most apparent when a child lost balance, hesitated, or fell while stepping onto the bamboo stilts. In these moments, other children commonly moved closer to steady a friend's body, offer a hand for support, or give brief practical cues (e.g., where to place feet and how to hold posture) rather than leaving the child to manage alone. The typical response was encouragement to "try again," with practice continuing in small, step-by-step attempts until the child regained confidence and balance. No shaming or ridicule was observed; instead, the

atmosphere remained supportive, with peers treating falls as part of the shared learning process. Facilitators reinforced this dynamic by providing safety reminders and hands-on technical assistance to keep the practice orderly and safe while children continued supporting one another.

Supportive peer responses during difficult moments were also reflected in participant accounts, especially when children described fear, assistance from friends, and the decision to keep trying. One child directly linked the experience of falling-risk to peer help and renewed willingness to continue: "*At first I was afraid of falling, but my friends helped. Now I even want to keep racing*" (P8, 9 years old, Muslim participant, personal communication, January 12, 2025). A facilitator similarly framed falls as a normal part of learning and highlighted mutual help as the expected response: "*We not only teach the technique of playing jajangkungan, but also instill that falling is normal, the important thing is to get up and help each other*" (P9, facilitator, personal communication, January 12, 2025). Together, these statements reinforce that difficulty and recovery were treated as shared experiences rather than individual failure.

These accounts align with what was documented across games regarding how children responded when mistakes or minor incidents occurred. In *boy-boyan*, when a player was hit by the ball, the common response was brief collective laughter or short reassurance (e.g., "it's okay"), after which the game continued without prolonged disruption or exclusion. In *jajangkungan*, the parallel pattern appeared through hands-on peer assistance during imbalance and repeated encouragement to try again through gradual practice. In both settings, supportive reactions were integrated into the flow of play, and facilitators remained nearby to keep responses safe and the activity moving smoothly.

d) Handling disagreement and rule negotiation

Across the observed sessions, occasional minor disagreements about rules emerged during play, particularly when children interpreted turns or boundaries differently. These moments were typically brief and were addressed within the flow of the activity rather than interrupting the session for an extended period. Facilitators remained nearby to monitor the process and maintain a safe, orderly sequence of play, while allowing children to reach agreement among themselves. This pattern of handling small frictions through immediate clarification and continuation was observed during the documented activities.

During boy-boyan sessions, minor disagreements occasionally arose regarding rule interpretation (e.g., whether a hit counted, how throwing turns were taken, the permitted throwing distance, or whether a rebuild attempt was valid). As documented in the field notes, "*minor disagreements over rules… quickly resolve together*," indicating that these moments did not persist or escalate. These disagreements were typically handled through brief peer discussion and mutual clarification until a shared agreement was reached. After agreement was reached, play resumed smoothly and team participation remained intact. Facilitators monitored these moments and provided brief clarification or gentle reminders when needed to keep the session orderly.

These brief episodes of rule negotiation occurred within the normal flow of *boy-boyan* play and did not disrupt group cohesion or participation, as children returned to coordinated team roles immediately after reaching agreement. In the documented sessions, the resolution process functioned as a practical mechanism for maintaining continuity and shared engagement during fast-paced play. This pattern provides a clear lead-in to the next sub-section on how children managed fairness-related moments (e.g., turn-taking and equitable participation) while sustaining orderly interaction.

3. From Play to Tolerance: Interpreting the Findings

Across the three traditional games documented at Sakola Motekar (*oray-orayan*, *boy-boyan*, and *jajangkungan*), the findings indicate that play was implemented as a facilitated activity embedded in routine weekly/outdoor sessions rather than occurring solely as spontaneous, child-initiated recreation. Within these sessions, children consistently joined mixed lines, teams, or turn-taking arrangements without grouping by religion, age, or gender, and facilitators monitored the flow of play to maintain equal participation. Cooperation toward a shared goal was repeatedly observed as a core interaction pattern structured by the mechanics of each game, including maintaining an intact line in *oray-orayan*, rebuilding a target stack under pressure in *boy-boyan*, and practicing balance through shared turn-taking and assistance in *jajangkungan*. Supportive peer responses were also common during minor setbacks, as children offered reassurance and practical help when peers were hit by the ball or lost balance, and play continued without prolonged disruption or exclusion. In addition, minor rule disagreements— especially in *boy-boyan*, were brief, resolved together through short negotiation and clarification, and followed by smooth resumption of the activity.

Participant and facilitator accounts provided additional anchoring evidence for these patterns without expanding beyond the documented observations. Child participants described the inclusive and collective nature of play (e.g., P1 and P2), the strategic and goal-oriented teamwork involved in *boy-boyan* (P4), and the emergence of new peer ties beyond usual circles through shared team membership (P5). Facilitators similarly highlighted sustained group cohesion and the absence of exclusion during sessions (P6), while participants and facilitators described fear–support–retry dynamics during *jajangkungan* practice, including peer assistance and the normalization of falling as part of learning (P8 and P9). Taken together, these convergent observations and interview sources summarize a consistent picture of facilitated traditional play at Sakola Motekar as an everyday interaction setting characterized by mixed participation, coordinated group effort, supportive peer responses, and rapid maintenance of group continuity when minor frictions occurred.

This pattern is consistent with evidence from structured play research showing that when play is intentionally organized around shared routines, children's interaction becomes more inclusive because participation is "built into" the activity rather than left to self-selected peer clusters. Studies in inclusive early-childhood settings report that structured play interventions can increase peer-directed interaction and reduce solitary or isolated play, particularly when the activity design requires children to coordinate with others (Maich, Hall, van Rhijn, & Squires, 2018; Stanton-Chapman & Snell, 2011). Importantly, the facilitator role aligns closely with your Sakola Motekar mechanism: adult guidance that initiates the session, models participation, and provides brief prompts/clarifications has been shown to strengthen peer interaction and sustain engagement in mixed groups, including in contexts involving children with social-communication challenges (Stanton-Chapman, Denning, & Jamison, 2012; Watkins, O'Reilly, Kuhn, & Ledbetter-Cho, 2019). Likewise, research that explicitly targets turn-taking demonstrates that structured opportunities to take turns and respond to peers can produce measurable gains in social communication and reciprocal interaction (Stanton-Chapman et al., 2012; Stanton-Chapman & Snell, 2011). Finally, findings from collaborative task studies suggest that moving from rigid individual turns toward shared, collaborative participation can support more joint contribution and coordinated action (Fink, 2020).

Cooperation toward shared goals appeared strong because each game at Sakola Motekar was built on task interdependence, meaning the activity could only progress when children coordinated their actions toward a shared outcome; prior research shows that higher task interdependence tends to strengthen cooperative coordination and team effectiveness because members must align roles and manage the task together (Shi, Zhao, Zhang, Li, & Ye, 2023; Somech, Desivilya, & Lidogoster, 2009). In *oray-orayan*, the line had to remain intact, so children repeatedly synchronized pace and grip to keep the "snake" formation playable; in *boy-boyan*, the team's success depended on fast role coordination (throwing, rebuilding, distracting/protecting) while managing pressure from the opposing team; and in *jajangkungan*, turn-taking for limited equipment and balance practice required practical peer assistance so participation could continue safely. This mechanism is consistent with evidence from cooperative learning contexts showing that positive task interdependence can increase both cooperative achievement and perceived peer support because progress depends on shared contribution rather than isolated effort (Bertucci, Johnson, Johnson, & Conte, 2011; Bertucci, Meloni, Johnson, & Johnson, 2015). Research on cooperative gaming similarly indicates that interdependent game tasks elicit frequent teamwork behaviors such as coordination, planning, and mutual monitoring, which parallels the repeated coordination observed in these traditional games (Farah & Dorneich, 2022; Farah, Dorneich, & Gilbert, 2022). In short, the observed cooperation at Sakola Motekar can be explained as an operational consequence of game structures that require children to rely on one another to maintain formation, complete reconstruction tasks, or sustain safe practice in sequence (Marsicano, De Oliveira, De Mariz, & Da Silva, 2018).

Supportive peer responses at Sakola Motekar likely emerged because the weekly, facilitator-supported play sessions created a psychologically safe interaction climate in which making mistakes (e.g., being hit by the ball in *boy-boyan* or losing balance in *jajangkungan*) could be handled without embarrassment or criticism. In the broader literature, psychological safety is consistently linked to learners' willingness to speak up, take interpersonal risks, and remain engaged after errors, particularly when peer relationships are supportive, and facilitators maintain a clear, respectful learning environment (Hardie, O'Donovan, Jarvis, & Redmond, 2022; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2012; Remtulla et al., 2021). Evidence from education and training contexts further suggests that perceived peer support can strengthen psychological safety and sustain participation, while facilitator approaches such as approachability, consistent communication, and timely reminders help stabilize the "safe to try" climate (Lee & Yang, 2025; Schepers, de Jong, Wetzels, & de Ruyter, 2008; Schwarz, Carroll, Bondurant, & Miller, 2025). Research on error management also shows that when environments support learning from mistakes, psychological safety mediates helping behaviors and performance recovery after errors, which parallels the observed pattern of brief reassurance ("it's okay") and quick re-entry into play (Guchait, Lee, Wang, & Abbott, 2016; Tella, Smith, Partanen, & Turunen, 2016). Studies of play practices indicate that play itself can foster psychological safety by normalizing vulnerability and shared experimentation, making supportive peer reactions more likely when minor failures occur (Mukerjee & Metiu, 2022).

Rule negotiation appeared to end quickly because it unfolded inside fast-paced play sequences where maintaining the flow of the game functioned as an immediate shared priority, making prolonged debate costly for both teams. In *boy-boyan*, questions about whether a hit "counted," when a turn ended, or whether a rebuild attempt was valid were typically settled through brief peer clarification and rapid agreement so children could

return to coordinated roles without losing momentum; this aligns with evidence that time pressure can shape bargaining toward quick settlements and last-moment agreements rather than extended deliberation (Karagözoğlu & Kocher, 2019). Research on strategic time in negotiation also suggests that time constraints can be used to resolve deadlocks and keep interaction moving, which fits the observed pattern in which disagreements were closed quickly to resume play (Carnevale, 2019). In addition, experimental work indicates that time pressure shortens decision time and can push people toward faster, less deliberative judgments, helping explain why children favored short, practical resolutions during active play (Lin & Jia, 2023). When needed, companions/facilitators acted as light-touch moderators by offering brief reminders or clarifications—consistent with findings that situational factors and guidance can shape how people handle negotiation under pressure (Saorín-Iborra, 2008).

Taken together, the interaction patterns documented in Sakola Motekar's traditional-game sessions can be read as evidence that the games operated as "media" in McLuhan's sense: not merely as channels for transmitting messages about tolerance, but as structured social environments that extend children's bodies, senses, and relational capacities through shared movement, rules, and coordinated action (McLuhan, 1964). In this view, the recurring need to keep an *oray-orayan* line intact, rebuild a *boy-boyan* stack under pressure, or stabilize balance in *jajangkungan* functioned as a practical "social interface" that continuously required children to align pace, negotiate roles, and respond to peers' difficulties inside a common activity frame. The observed quick rule negotiations in *boy-boyan* further underscore that meaning-making occurred within the medium itself: children settled disagreements efficiently because sustaining the game's rhythm and shared engagement was part of what the medium demanded. At the same time, the findings align with Kolb's experiential learning cycle by showing how tolerance-related dispositions were likely formed through concrete experience (mixed participation and interdependent play), supported by moments of reflective sense-making during minor conflicts or setbacks, and reinforced through repeated weekly enactment that allowed children to "try again" and re-enter interaction after mistakes (Kolb, 2014). Rather than relying on verbal instruction alone, the games repeatedly staged embodied, emotionally salient episodes that made inclusion and cooperation learnable as routine practice in everyday peer interaction.

Comparatively, this study's findings align with prior literature that frames structured play as a social space that can strengthen inclusion and peer interaction when activities are organized and supported by adults, for example, studies of structured play interventions reporting increased peer interaction and reduced solitary participation through adult instruction, modeling, and managed turn-taking (Maich et al., 2018; Stanton-Chapman & Snell, 2011; Watkins et al., 2019). However, the novelty of the Sakola Motekar case lies in its context and mechanism: inclusion did not operate primarily as a targeted "intervention program," but as a routine, weekly cycle of traditional games whose mechanics effectively anchored children into shared formations (a single line, mixed teams, or a common queue), leaving limited operational space for identity-based separation, while facilitators maintained access and role rotation so participation remained evenly distributed. The strong pattern of cooperation toward shared goals is also consistent with task-interdependence research, which suggests that when success depends on mutual reliance, or practicing balance with help and turn-taking (Bertucci et al., 2011; Somech et al., 2009). In addition, the supportive peer-response pattern observed during moments of "error" (being hit by the ball or falling) resonates with psychological-safety scholarship and peer-support research: when mistakes are normalized within an orderly,

facilitator-supported climate, brief reassurance and "try again" encouragement can become a stable interaction script that keeps children engaged without escalation into ridicule or exclusion (Hardie et al., 2022; Mukerjee & Metiu, 2022). Finally, the rapid resolution of rule disagreements complements negotiation research under time pressure, which suggests that in fast-paced sequences, participants often prefer quick clarification and agreement to maintain momentum, with facilitators functioning as light-touch regulators who close deadlocks without removing children's ownership of the rules (Carnevale, 2019; Karagözoğlu & Kocher, 2019). Taken together, while earlier studies frequently emphasize formal intervention designs or specific institutional settings, this research contributes naturalistic evidence that lightly facilitated traditional games can operate as a recurring interaction infrastructure in which inclusion, coordinated cooperation, supportive peer responses, and quick rule negotiation are enacted repeatedly and observably in everyday play.

The novelty of this study is threefold. First, it documents tolerance formation within a community-based learning setting where traditional games are not incidental but are routinely facilitated, allowing interaction patterns to be observed as stable features of practice rather than one-off events. Second, tolerance is examined as an everyday interactional accomplishment rather than being treated primarily as a declarative attitude or abstract moral stance. Third, the analysis is supported by multi-source qualitative evidence, combining repeated field observation with children's accounts and facilitators' perspectives, which together strengthen the credibility of the identified patterns and clarify how they were sustained across sessions.

Interpreting these findings, the traditional-game sessions at Sakola Motekar can be understood as a socially "neutral" interaction space in which identity labels were temporarily backgrounded while the activity unfolded. Across *oray-orayan*, *boy-boyan*, and *jajangkungan*, children entered the same line, teams, or turn-taking queue without identity-based sorting, and participant accounts ("we all play together") and facilitator observations ("no one is excluded") indicate that inclusion was enacted through the immediate rules of participation rather than through explicit identity talk. This meaning aligns with inclusive-play literature that frames play settings as practical sites for social inclusion—spaces that can reduce stereotype-driven separation by organizing participation around shared activity and peer interaction, especially when adults structure access and support positive engagement (Sobel, O'Leary, & Kientz, 2015; Visser et al., 2025). In this sense, the "neutrality" was not an abstract claim but an observable feature of the play environment: the mechanics and facilitation created a common platform for interaction where children related to one another primarily as co-players working within the same game structure, which is consistent with scholarship arguing that game mechanics can operate as mediators that facilitate impartial, shared participation (Medler, 2008).

Pedagogically, the findings suggest that facilitation at Sakola Motekar functioned as an "interaction infrastructure" that made value-learning possible through routine practice rather than through direct instruction alone. Across sessions, companions/facilitators provided the practical scaffolding that kept interaction equitable and sustained—initiating play, clarifying basic rules, organizing rotation of roles/turns, and maintaining safety and order—so children could repeatedly enact inclusion, cooperation, and supportive responses within the same shared activity frame. This reading is consistent with scholarship showing that the design and refinement of rules and participation structures can shape the quality of interaction in learning settings (Chen, Wang, & Hung, 2009), and that structured rotations in practice-based team environments can cultivate the skills

needed to participate in dynamic group interaction (Battle et al., 2024). More broadly, this also aligns with the argument that infrastructures are not neutral carriers but encode and stabilize social values through how they organize participation and relations (Shilton, Snyder, & Bietz, 2017); in this case, the "rules–rotation–safety" infrastructure created by facilitators enabled children to experience those values as observable, repeatable interaction routines during play.

At the micro-cultural level, the data indicate that normalizing mistakes and falls functioned as a practical way to build children's emotional security during play, making them more willing to try again and remain engaged. In *jajangkungan* sessions, P9 explicitly framed falling as "normal" and emphasized getting up and helping each other, which aligns with the observed pattern that setbacks were treated as part of the activity rather than as grounds for embarrassment or withdrawal. This normalization appears to have lowered the interpersonal risk of making errors in front of peers, so children could re-enter the activity quickly after difficulty and sustain participation across repeated attempts. This interpretation is consistent with research showing that emotional security supports children's engagement and adjustment in challenging situations (Cheung, 2021; Schermerhorn, Nguyen, & Davies, 2021), and with evidence from social-emotional learning work that strengthening emotional skills and supportive climates can improve students' willingness to persist and stay engaged when facing difficulty (Cipriano, Barnes, Rivers, & Brackett, 2019).

From a reflective perspective, the findings suggest several functional contributions of Sakola Motekar's facilitated traditional-game sessions for sustaining inclusive interaction: routine facilitation helped keep access to participation shared and prevented a small group from consistently dominating roles, while the mechanics of each game (line formation, team rebuild under pressure, and turn-taking with limited equipment) repeatedly prompted children to coordinate toward shared goals. In addition, the observed supportive peer responses during setbacks (e.g., reassurance after being hit in *boy-boyan* and encouragement after losing balance in *jajangkungan*) appeared to protect a psychologically safe interaction climate that enabled children to rejoin play without fear of embarrassment. Finally, brief rule negotiation moments functioned as an internal maintenance mechanism that preserved group cohesion in fast-paced play rather than allowing minor frictions to fragment participation.

A reflective implication of these findings is that the inclusive interaction patterns observed at Sakola Motekar may be partly contingent on facilitation: research on structured play settings shows that facilitators commonly provide the practical conditions that make participation meaningful and inclusive (e.g., clear goals, entry arrangements, and adaptation to children's readiness), which suggests that if facilitation is reduced, inclusion and orderly participation may not be sustained with the same strength (Fabrizi, Tilman, Donald, Balsamo, & Connor, 2024; McLean et al., 2022; Xavier, Morrison, & Sulz, 2025). A second potential risk is peer dominance, because studies of peer status and playground activity indicate that more socially dominant or assertive children can disproportionately shape participation unless role rotation and access are actively managed, potentially limiting participation equity for quieter peers (Blatchford, Baines, & Pellegrini, 2003; Šalamounová & Fučík, 2021). Third, because *boy-boyan* and *jajangkungan* involve fast movement and balance demands, there is an inherent physical safety risk if supervision weakens; playground safety research emphasizes that adult supervision can reduce injuries by discouraging dangerous behaviors, reinforcing rules, and maintaining attentive monitoring (Huynh, Demeter, Burke, & Upperman, 2017; Schwebel, 2006). These points suggest that the positive interaction climate documented

in this study is supported by an "interaction infrastructure" created through facilitation and supervision, while also remaining vulnerable to predictable risks (dependence on facilitation, uneven participation, and safety exposure) if those supports are inconsistent.

Based on the potential dysfunctions identified the policy implication is to institutionalize a minimal but consistent "play facilitation standard" for Sakola Motekar (and similar community-based programs) so the interaction infrastructure remains stable across sessions. Practically, this can take the form of (1) a short facilitator training module and checklist that covers inclusive grouping routines (mixed teams/lines, structured turn-taking queues), role rotation rules to prevent a few children from dominating key roles, and simple de-escalation scripts for rule disputes; (2) a supervision and risk-management protocol for *boy-boyan* and *jajangkungan* (clear safe zones, throwing-distance limits, equipment checks, and active positioning of adults to monitor high-risk moments); and (3) a sustainability plan that reduces single-person dependence by scheduling co-facilitation/rotating facilitators and documenting session procedures in a one-page guide so the weekly routine remains consistent even when staff change. These actions are modest, implementable at the program level, and directly target the vulnerabilities observed without changing the core play activities that already support inclusive participation.

Conclusion

This study shows that traditional Sundanese games at Sakola Motekar functioned as a routinely facilitated, community-based learning practice through which tolerance-related interaction patterns were enacted in children's everyday play. Across *oray-orayan*, *boy-boyan*, and *jajangkungan*, children consistently participated in mixed, non-segregated groupings, with equal involvement sustained through shared formations, mixed-team arrangements, and turn-taking structures. Cooperation emerged strongly because the mechanics of each game required interdependence—maintaining an intact line, rebuilding a target stack under pressure, or practicing balance through shared turns and peer assistance. When minor setbacks occurred, such as being hit by the ball or losing balance, peers commonly responded with reassurance and practical help within an interaction climate where mistakes were treated as normal rather than shameful. Occasional small rule disagreements also appeared, but these were typically resolved through brief negotiation and clarification, allowing play to continue smoothly without fragmenting participation. Taken together, these findings suggest that tolerance was not only articulated as an attitude but enacted as a practical, observable interaction routine embedded in repeated play sessions.

The study contributes to scholarship on traditional games and tolerance education in three main ways. First, it extends prior work that often frames traditional games as carriers of moral values by providing fine-grained evidence of how interfaith interaction is produced in real social space—through participation structures, interdependence, reassurance, and negotiation—rather than through declarative moral instruction alone. Second, it strengthens the conceptual framing of games as cultural media (McLuhan) by showing how game rules, rhythms, and embodied coordination operate as a "social interface" that organizes children's relations during play, while also aligning with Kolb's experiential learning cycle in which tolerance-related dispositions are reinforced through concrete experience, repeated practice, and re-entry after mistakes. Third, it offers multi-source qualitative support (observations plus child and facilitator accounts) that increases credibility for interpreting tolerance as an interactional accomplishment sustained across sessions in a non-formal educational setting.

This study also has limitations. As a qualitative single-case study focused on one community-based program, the findings are context-dependent and cannot be generalized as outcomes for all settings of religious diversity or all traditional game practices. The participant age range and the bounded set of games may also limit transferability to other developmental stages or play forms, and the study did not employ longitudinal tracking to assess whether the observed interaction patterns persist beyond the sessions or translate into broader everyday relations over time. Future research could address these limitations through comparative multi-site designs, longer observation periods, and mixed-method approaches that combine qualitative interaction analysis with longitudinal follow-up on peer networks and socio-emotional outcomes. Further work may also test how facilitation intensity, role-rotation procedures, and safety protocols shape inclusion and participation equity when programs scale or operate with different facilitator capacities.

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