# Character value that formed through learning the art of playing *GACIL* in early childhood

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**Abstract**

One of the developments of children's potential is the development of character values. This study aims to describe the character values formed during the learning process of the art of playing *gamelan cilik (G*ACIL). This type of research is quantitative. The subjects of this study were 618 children aged 5–6 years from kindergarten. The data analyses used to describe the character values formed in early childhood are descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis and network analysis. The results showed that there were nine character values that were successfully formed in early childhood during learning the art of playing GACIL, namely the love of God, independence, honesty, courtesy, generosity, hard work, justice, humbleness and tolerance. Character values in early childhood are 46.44% cultured, 10.84% evolving, 5.18% visible and 37.54% unseen. Generosity (DM) is a dominant character value that is formed in early childhood and there is a strong relationship between character values. This finding is a good alternative for kindergarten teachers in planting and inculcating character values through learning the art of playing GACIL based on local culture.

Keywords: Character, early childhood, *gamelan cilik*, learning, value.

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## 1. Introduction

Character is a psychological, moral or characteristic trait that characterises a person or group of people (Majid, 2010). Character, according to Khan (2010), is defined as a stable attitude, morals and personality as a result of a progressive and dynamic consolidation process. Character has relevance to a person's personality. This is a trait or characteristic of a person that comes from the influence obtained from aspects of the environment, for example, in childhood, the congenital influence of the family environment becomes a factor in shaping these traits and characteristics (Albertus, 2010).

It can be said that character is a stable attitude or personality as a result of a progressive and dynamic consolidation process; the nature of a person to respond to situations in a moral manner; the character, morals or personality of a person that are formed from the results of the internalisation of various virtues, which are believed and used as a basis for point of view, thought, attitude and action; and the nature of the human soul, from wishful thinking to being transformed into energy. Haslip and Donaldson (2021) stated the importance of instilling character strength in early childhood. Strength of character is a very important and integral component (Shubert et al., 2019; Satianingsih et al., 2020).

Basically, character education is a stimulus to students to become human beings with positive characteristics from various aspects such as feelings, hearts, thoughts and other positive aspects (Samani et al., 2012). Character education is a process for forming the values of life in a person that are needed in the life process (Kesuma, 2012). Giving an opportunity for someone to understand the values of goodness is the main provision in living life, as both personally related to oneself and relating to other people and God (Albertus, 2010; Harun et al., 2020a).

The application of the learning process based on character education is a very good thing for early childhood (Stallions & Yeatts, 2003). The integration of character education in the learning process can be applied by providing a good model by the teacher in his/her learning activities in the classroom (Silay, 2013). This is very important because the intervention of character values is needed in learning activities (Bachr, 2017; Novianti, 2017; Tutkun et al., 2017). In addition, character values are also generally reflected in the community and local wisdom (Bani, 2021). Therefore, to develop children's moral values, learning that comes from culture is one of the right efforts (Halim & Wardana, 2017).

Judging from the various definitions of character education, character education can be interpreted as a process of directing and guiding students so that they have good values and behaviour in order to achieve the goal of becoming a complete human being. Khan (2010) states that the definition of character education is a process of activities carried out with all the power and efforts consciously planned to direct students. The values of character education that can be lived according to this study are religious, nationalist, intelligent, responsible, disciplined, independent, honest and wise, respectful and polite, generous, helpful, mutually co-operative, self-confident, hard work, tough, creative, leader, democrat, humbleness, tolerance, solidarity and caring.

The inculcation of character values in schools should be sourced from the nation's culture, which has noble values. Culture is something that is very complex in which it contains knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws and customs (Anwar & Adang, 2013). Meanwhile, Ilahi (2014) states that character education should be carried out based on local wisdom. This statement is in line with the statement put forward by Wibowo and Gunawan (2015), namely character education should be based on one's own culture (local wisdom). In this way, the local culture of an area, for example, the art of *gamelan cilik* (GACIL), can be used as a basis for planting or strengthening character values in early childhood in kindergarten. Fajrussalam and Hasanah (2018) stated the importance of character education based on local culture.

GACIL is a set of musical instruments with pentatonic tones consisting of kendang, bonang barung, bonang penerus, demung, saron, peking (*gamelan*), kenong, kethuk and slenthem, and specific gongs, namely size, shape, weight and range of punches that are adjusted with the child's body. The main components of the GACIL instruments are metal and wood. Each instrument has its own function in a gamelan musical performance. The word *gamelan cilik* (GACIL) itself comes from the Javanese word '*gamel*' which means hitting / beating, followed by the suffix 'an' which makes it a noun, while '*cilik*' means little. So it can be concluded that the term *gamelan cilik* is a unit of young gamelan musical instruments that are played together. The barrel is a unit of tone in this little gamelan which has two different tunings, namely the slendro barrel and the pelog barrel. The slendro barrel of each octave is divided into five tones, namely 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6, while the pelog barrel is divided into seven tones, namely 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Only one gamelan unit can be tuned to slendro or pelog tunes. However, the complete gamelan is available in gamelan with slendro and pelog tunes. Because the slendro tuned gamelan is not the same as the pelog tune, the two tunes can be used as a complementary musical unit and one of the tunes is made the same. For example, six slendros are made equal to six pelogs. On the device, a gamelan like this is called Gamelan Tumbuk 6. There is also gamelan made with mash 5, but what is commonly used today is mash 6.

The success of learning is highly dependent on the teacher's strategy in bringing it (Tjabolo & Herwin, 2020; Wuryandani & Herwin, 2021). The application of GACIL is a very appropriate strategy, especially in character development. Schunk (2012) determined that learning is a change of attitude for the better through experience and practice. According to Huda (2013), learning is the result of memory, cognition and metacognition that affect understanding. Art is a process of work and one's ideas through skills, creativity and sensitivity of the five senses, heart and mind to obtain works that are full of beauty and harmony (Sumanto, 2005). Art and beauty are forms of quality in terms of visual appearance, and it has been stated that beauty is a visible quality of the senses (Soehardjo, 2012). Appearance is formally in the form of a beautiful quality, and the beauty in question is the beauty of form. Thus, through learning the art of *gamelan cilik*, which is carried out in kindergarten, it can shape and develop students' characteristics. It is very important to describe the character values that are formed during the process of learning the art of playing GACIL in early childhood in kindergarten. The research questions posed are: (1) What are the character values that are formed during the learning process of the art of playing GACIL in early childhood? (2) Which character values are dominant in early childhood during the learning process of playing GACIL? and (3) Is there a relationship or linkage between character values during the learning process of playing GACIL?

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Types of research

This type of research is quantitative. The aims are to describe the character values formed during the learning process of the art of playing GACIL in early childhood, to find out the values of the dominant

characters formed in early childhood during the learning process of playing GACIL and to know the relationships or linkages between character values during the learning process of playing GACIL.

## 2.2. Research participants

The subjects of this study were 618 children aged 5–6 years from kindergarten institutions who were trained to play the little gamelan. Respondents from Paliyan district were 589 (95%) respondents and 29 (5%) respondents were from Patuk district.

## 2.3. Data collection technique

The research variable is the character value of early childhood. The type of research data collected is observational data about the character values formed in early childhood during the learning process of the art of playing GACIL. The data collection technique uses the observation of character values that are formed in early childhood. The instrument is filled in by the teacher based on the observations of each student. The character assessment observation sheet contains 35 statement items covering 9 characters values. CT character (4 items), KT character (6 items), KA character (2 items), HS character (3 items), DM character (4 items), PB character (6 items), KK character (1 items), BR (4 items) and TK characters (5 items). The assessment categories used are unseen (BT), start visible (MT), start evolving (MB) and culture (MK). This assessment instrument has gone through expert validation tests and legibility tests. The instrument reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.964. Table 1 presents the character values and examples of the assessment items used in the observation.

Table 1. Character values and examples of character value assessment items

| Character values | Code | Example of statement item |
|---|---|---|
| The character of God's love and all of His creation appear when playing GACIL | CT | Saying greetings to friends who met at the GACIL training |
| Independence and responsibility arise when playing GACIL | KT | Arrive early for the GACIL training |
| Honesty / trustworthiness and diplomacy appears when playing GACIL | KA | Be honest with the GACIL instructor, if you have not mastered certain tones. |
| Respect and courtesy appear when playing GACIL | HS | Ask the instructor politely |
| Generous, like to help and mutual co-operation appear when playing GACIL | DM | Help a friend find a bat according to the gamelan instrument |
| Confidence and hard work come when playing GACIL | PB | Try to be serious about playing the GACIL |
| Leadership and justice emerge when playing GACIL | KK | Invite friends to play GACIL |
| Kindness and humbleness appear when playing GACIL | BR | Take the bat patiently even if you have to be in queue |
| The characters of tolerance, peace and unity appear when playing GACIL | TK | Accept voluntarily when moved to play other gamelan instruments |

## 2.4. Data analysis technique

The data analyses used to describe the character values formed in early childhood are descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis and network analysis. The tools used to facilitate analysis are

using the LISREL and JASP programmes. The criteria used to state the construct model of early childhood character variables are declared fit, referring to the opinion of Hair et al. (2013).

## 3. Results and discussion

The data collected based on the results of the observations were analysed. The results of the analysis include descriptive character values formed in early childhood during the learning process of the art of playing *gamelan cilik* (GACIL), the values of dominant characters formed in early childhood during the learning process of playing GACIL and the relationships or linkages between character values during the learning process of playing GACIL.

### 3.1. Establishment of early childhood character values during playing GACIL

Learning the art of playing GACIL will cultivate and develop the character values of early childhood. The observed character values were the love of God and all His creation (CT), independence and responsibility (KT), honesty / trustworthiness (KA), respect and courtesy (HS), generosity and mutual co-operation (DM), confidence and hard work (PB), leadership and justice (KK), kindness and humbleness (BR) and tolerance, peace and unity (TK). It can be concluded that 46.44% was culture (MK), 10.84% was starting to evolve (MB), 5.18% was visibly starting (MT) and 37.54% was unseen (BT). Figure 1 shows a graph of the percentage of early childhood character development.
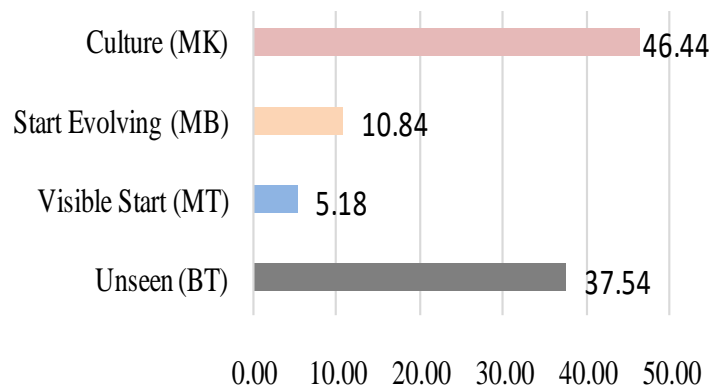


Figure 1. Percentage of early childhood character development

### 3.2. The dominant character value of early childhood during playing GACIL

The value of the dominant character in early childhood that is formed during learning the art of playing GACIL is known based on the value of the loading factor that is formed. The biggest factor loading value shows that the dominant character value is formed in early childhood. The results of the analysis show that the loading factor for the CT is 0.73, for KT is 0.87, for KA is 0.82, for HS is 0.81, for DM is 0.93, for PB is 0.91, for KK is 0.76, for BR is 0.88 and for TK is 0.89. All characters have a loading factor value > 0.5, meaning that the character values are considered valid (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014). The distribution of the loading factor values for each character value is shown in Figure 2.
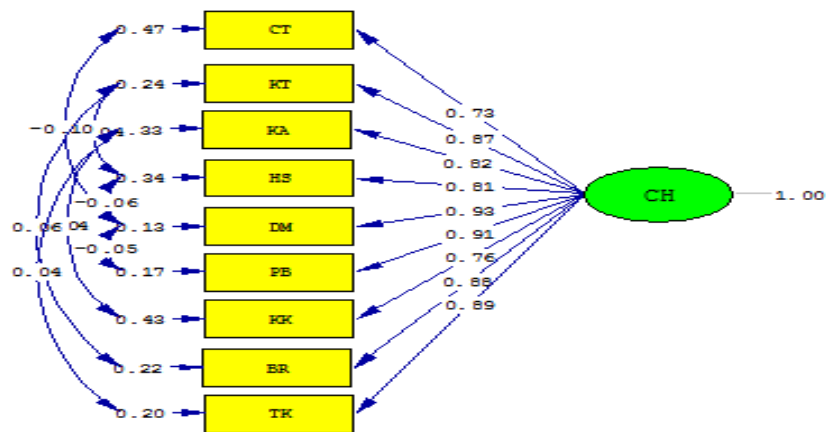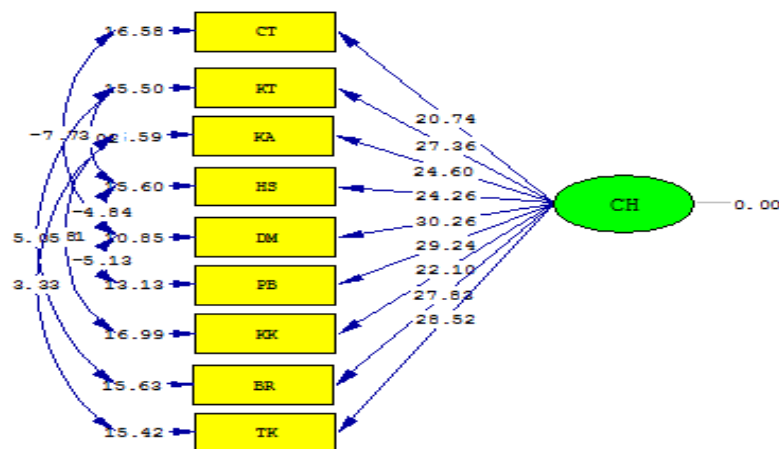
Chi-Square=27.93, df=20, P-value=0.11097, RMSEA=0.025

Figure 2. Character value construct model with first order approach (loading factor)

Based on these results, it can be interpreted that all loading factor coefficients have meaning in measuring character variables. Based on the views of Herwin and Nurhayati (2021), the loading factor is said to have meaning if it is more than 0.4. The DM character value (generous and mutual co-operation) has the largest loading factor value compared to other character values. This shows that during the learning process, the art of playing GACIL in kindergarten has a big impact on the formation of DM character values. Meanwhile, the CT character value (love of God and all His creations) has the smallest loading factor value compared to the other character values.

Further analysis based on the t-value obtained the CT character t-value of 20.74, KT of 27.36, KA of 24.60, HS for 24.64, DM of 30.26, PB of 29.24, KK of 22.10, BR of 27.82 and TK of 28.52. All characters have a t-value > 1.96, meaning that each character value affects the early childhood character variables (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014). The distribution of t-values for each character value is shown in Figure 3.



Chi-Square=27.93, df=20, P-value=0.11097, RMSEA=0.025

Figure 3. The character value construct model with the first order approach (t-value)

Based on the model fit test using the measurement modelling approach, the construct model variable of character values for early childhood is obtained fit during the learning process of the art of

playing GACIL. Character values, namely the love of God and all of His creation (CT), independence and responsibility (KT), honesty / trustworthiness (KA), respect and courtesy (HS), generosity and mutual co-operation (DM), confidence and hard work (PB), leadership and justice (KK), kindness and humbleness (BR) and tolerance, peace and unity (TK) are the values of the characteristics that appear in early childhood while playing GACIL. Table 2 shows that the model construct meets the model fit criteria required.

Table 2. Findings of research data to prove the fit of the model

| GoF size | Match criteria | Data findings | Match rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chi-square | expected small | 27.93 | fulfil |
| P-Value | > 0.05 | 0.11 | fulfil |
| RMSEA | > 0.08 | 0.02 | fulfil |
| NFI | ≥ 0.90 | 0.99 | fulfil |
| NNFI | ≥ 0.90 | 1.00 | fulfil |
| CFI | ≥ 0.90 | 1.00 | fulfil |
| GFI | ≥ 0.90 | 0.99 | fulfil |
| AGFI | ≥ 0.90 | 0.98 | fulfil |

Based on the results presented in Table 2, the measurement model shows that it has met the criteria for the goodness of fit model. This result is based on the criteria suggested by Ghozali and Fuat (2014), Herwin and Nurhayati (2021) and Tungkunanan (2020).

### 3.3. Relationship between early childhood character values during playing GACIL

The relationship between character values, namely the love of God and all of His creation (CT), independence and responsibility (KT), honesty / trustworthiness (KA), respect and courtesy (HS), generosity and mutual co-operation (DM), confidence and hard work (PB), leadership and justice (KK), kindness and humbleness (BR) and tolerance, peace and unity (TK) formed during the learning process of the art of playing GACIL can be identified through network analysis. Network analysis is carried out to describe the relationships or linkages between the character values that are formed. The results of the analysis are shown in Figure 4.
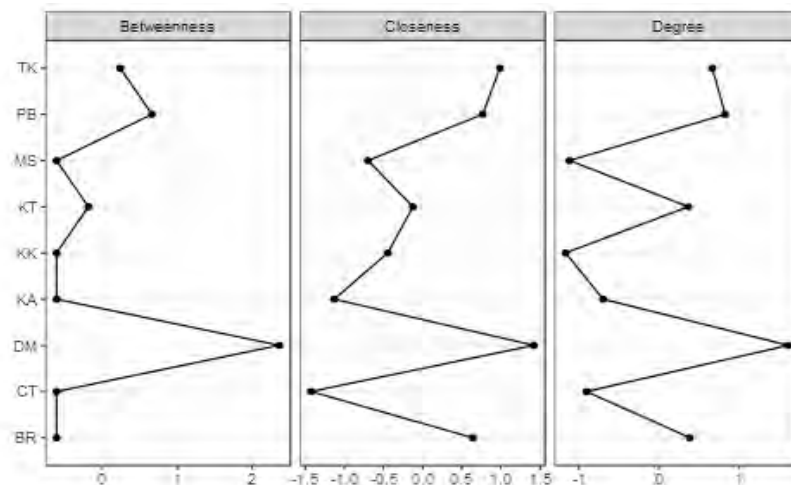


Figure 4. Betweenness, closeness, and degree between character values

Figure 4 shows that the early childhood character values formed during learning the art of playing GACIL have betweenness, closeness and degree values. The characters KA to DM and DM to CT have a value of betweenness >2.0, closeness >1.0 and degree >1.0. The characters KK to KA have negative betweenness, closeness and degree values. Thus, the character values formed in early childhood through the art of playing GACIL have positive and negative betweenness, closeness and degree.

Table 3. Centrality measures a character value

| Character value | Betweenness | Closeness | Strength |
|---|---|---|---|
| BR | -0.614 | 0.642 | 0.388 |
| CT | -0.614 | -1.424 | -0.906 |
| DM | 2.363 | 1.421 | 1.626 |
| KA | -0.614 | -1.129 | -0.698 |
| KK | -0.614 | -0.445 | -1.168 |
| KT | -0.189 | -0.123 | 0.371 |
| MS | -0.614 | -0.698 | -1.118 |
| PB | 0.662 | 0.768 | 0.833 |
| TK | 0.236 | 0.988 | 0.672 |

The correlation stability coefficient was positive for acceptable TK characters that were acceptable (node strength = 0.672; closeness = 0.988; and betweenness = 0.236). Meanwhile, the positive correlation stability for PB characters was acceptable (node strength = -0.833; closeness = 0.768; and betweenness = 0.662). Overall, Table 3 shows that there is a positive and negative correlation between the character values.
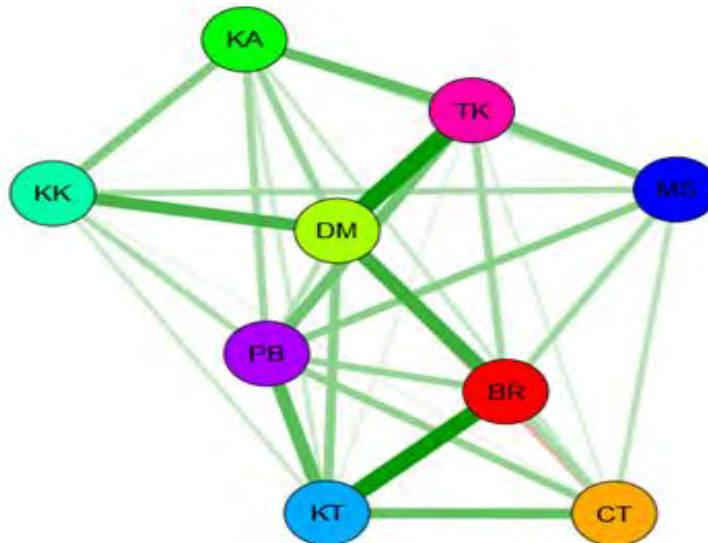


Figure 5. Estimated network analysis of character values

The results of the network analysis show that there is an indication of a relationship between character values. Based on Figure 5, the character values of KT and BR, BR and DM, DM and TK and DM and KK have an indication of a strong relationship (correlation stability) marked by thick green lines. Thus, there is a relationship between the characteristic values formed through the process of learning the art of playing GACIL in kindergarten.

Based on the results of the research, it was found that during the learning process the art of playing GACIL has grown character values in early childhood in kindergarten. There are nine characters values that are formed through the art of playing GACIL, namely the Love of God and all His creation (CT), independence and responsibility (KT), honesty / trustworthiness (KA), respect and courtesy (HS), generosity and mutual co-operation (DM), confidence and hard work (PB), leadership and justice (KK), kindness and humbleness (BR) and tolerance, peace and unity (TK). It can be concluded that 46.44% was culture (MK), 10.84% was starting to evolve (MB), 5.18% was visibly starting (MT) and 37.54% unseen (BT). DM is the dominant character value in early childhood and there are several character values that are strongly related.

The character value constructs formed during the learning process of the art of playing GACIL met the criteria for a fit model (Hairt et al., 2013). The results of this study are in line with the research of Pamungkas et al. (2018), which shows that Gamelan Bocah can accelerate the stimulation of character values in early childhood. These findings are in line with the learning theory. Learning is a behaviour change that occurs in an individual leading to more perfect results of experiences (Gagne, 1985). Learning is an activity that involves mastering and changing knowledge, skills, strategies, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour (Schunk, 2012). The findings above are in line with the aim of character education, namely to develop the potential of students to behave well and reflect the culture and character of the nation (Kemendiknas, 2010). Thus, in early childhood, children who learn the art of playing GACIL in kindergarten will have character values (good characteristics)

Learning the art of playing GACIL is a game that involves a set of musical instruments with pentatonic tones consisting of kendang, bonang barung, bonang penerus, demung, saron, peking (gamelan), kenong, kethuk and slenthem, and specific gongs, namely size, shape, weight and range of strokes, that are adjusted to the child's body. Learning the art of playing GACIL is opened by saying hello. Furthermore, the instructor explains to the child about the method of repeating the notation. Children can even memorise the notes, so they feel confident and finally they learn quickly and do not wait for others.

The character values that appear during learning the art of playing GACIL are the values of the love for God and all his creations (CT). The loading factor value is 0.73; t-value of 20.74 is acceptable (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that CT is one of the character values for early childhood character building. In playing GACIL, children say and answer the greetings spoken by the teacher. The teacher says greetings beginning with one finger clap, followed by the children, which is also seen when praying before and after playing the gamelan. Praying is done before and after playing the gamelan in order to start the gamelan playing activities. The children pray using pre-study prayers that are recited collectively and led by the teacher. The results of this study are in line with the results of research by Harun et al. (2020b) and Manaf et al. (2020), which found that religious values in children already exist. Children must develop their religious character values in order to behave in accordance with the teachings of their religion (Azzet & Sandra, 2011)

In playing the little gamelan, the character of independence and responsibility (KT) also appears. The loading factor value is 0.87; t-value of 27.36 is accepted (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that CT is one of the character values that shape early childhood characteristics. In playing GACIL, the child takes the initiative to take the gamelan player according to the instrument being played. The child takes the musician according to the instrument then positions himself according to the instrument he is holding independently. Then, the children play gamelan simultaneously. The character of independence can also be seen when children are able to wash their hands independently. The value of the character of responsibility can also be seen when playing GACIL, i.e., the child plays GACIL according to the

instrument the child is holding and according to the teacher's instructions. After playing GACIL, the place is tidied up to play the gamelan; in this activity, the child is responsible for the tools used to play. The character values that are formed are universal noble values (Lickona, 1991). The child's experience of playing GACIL encourages the formation of character values. Appropriate and constantly evolving experiences are designed to promote positive social attitudes and behaviours (Ugurlu, 2014).

During the process of learning the art of playing GACIL, children dare to raise their hands and admit their mistakes when hitting the kempul instrument not according to the beat. This is included in the character values of honesty (KA). In gamelan playing, children are able to be given a mandate when they want to wait patiently to hit the gong at the end of the song. This finding is consistent with the loading factor value of 0.82; t-value of 24.60 is acceptable (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that KA is a character value shaping early childhood characteristics. The ethics of playing young gamelan also teaches children to behave well and politely (HS) when sitting at the same low, cross-legged or sympathetic level. When playing GACIL, children are also taught not to make fun of their friends and speak well; while playing GACIL, they must comply with the rules for playing gamelan. This finding is in line with the loading factor value of 0.81; t-value of 24.26 can is accepted (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that HS is a character value shaping early childhood characteristics. The character values that are formed are universal noble values (Lickona, 1992).

In the process of learning the art of playing GACIL, there is also an attitude of help and mutual co-operation (DM). The loading factor value is 0.93; t-value of 30.26 is acceptable (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that DM is one of the character values that shape early childhood characteristics. In playing GACIL, when they finish playing the gamelan, the children help each other and work together to return the instrument to its place. Children work hand in hand to carry the demung to the gamelan storage area. Other children also group together to lift the peking. This mutual co-operation activity is also assisted by the teacher. Through playing GACIL, children are able to express feelings of pleasure and are motivated to play gamelan to make it better. The character values that are formed are universal noble values (Lickona, 1992).

The character values that appear in playing GACIL are self-confidence and hard work (PB). The loading factor value is 0.91; t-value of 29.24 is accepted (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that PB is one of the character building characteristics. In playing GACIL, children will try to be serious in playing GACIL. When one is already fluent in playing the gamelan, they will have the courage to lead the game (KK) as in the drums and bonag. Slowly or not, the song always follows the drums. This fact is indicated by the loading factor of 0.76; t-value of 22.10 is accepted (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that KK is one of the characters forming the characteristics. The character values that are formed are universal noble values (Lickona, 1992) and are values needed in the 21st century.

The character values that appear in playing GACIL are kindness and humbleness (BR). This fact is shown by the loading factor of 0.88; t-value of 27.82 is accepted (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that KK is one of the character building characteristics. In playing GACIL, children take the bat patiently even if they have to be in queue, and thank the instructor who directed them when playing GACIL. In addition, playing gamelan also teaches children to be tolerant, peaceful and unified (TK). Tolerance is seen when the teacher is explaining to children the kenong and kempul instruments, other children who play the balungan instruments (demung, peking and saron) have to wait and not make a lot of noise. Discipline character values also appear in playing GACIL, especially when it comes to being on time when playing gamelan. Children obey the rules when playing gamelan according to the rules of the game. When playing gamelan, children learn according to the rules of the instrument consistently. This fact is reinforced by the loading factor 0.89; t-value of 28.52 is accepted (Ghozali & Fuat, 2014) and shows that

KK is one of the character building characteristics. The character values that are formed are universal noble values (Lickona, 1992).

Learning the art of playing GACIL has succeeded in fostering character values in early childhood in kindergarten. During the process of learning the art of playing GACIL, there has been a process of transforming character values in early childhood. This is in line with the opinion of Kesuma (2012), which states that the process of transforming the values of life is to be grown and developed in a person's personality so that they become one in that person's life behaviour. The art of playing GACIL is very appropriate as a catalyst in accelerating the formation of character values in early childhood through the learning process in kindergarten. Silay (2013) states that the strategy to instil character values in the learning process is to provide a good model by the teacher in their interactions with children in the classroom. Character values should be integrated in the learning process (Bachr, 2017; Novianti, 2017; Tutkun et al., 2017) and associated or linked with local wisdom (Bani, 2021)

## 4. Conclusions

Cultivating character values in early childhood can be carried out through learning. Learning the art of playing GACIL has been developed and has succeeded in cultivating early childhood character values in kindergarten. There were nine characters values formed during the learning process of the art of playing GACIL, namely the value of the love of God and all His creation (CT), independence and responsibility (KT), honesty / trustworthiness (KA), respect and courtesy (HS), generosity and mutual co-operation (DM), confidence and hard work (PB), leadership and justice (KK), kindness and humbleness (BR) and tolerance, peace and unity (TK). It can be concluded that 46.44% was culture (MK), 10.84% was starting to evolve (MB), 5.18% was visibly starting (MT) and 37.54% was unseen (BT). All character values have a loading factor value >0.5 and a t-value >1.96, which means that the character values are the shapers of early childhood characteristics. Based on the magnitude of the loading factor value, the most dominant DM character value is formed in early childhood. The character values that are formed are universal noble values. There are several correlated character values and have positive and negative betweenness, closeness and degree values. KT and BR, BR and DM, DM and TK and DM and KK have an indication of a strong relationship (correlation stability).

The nine characters values that are formed in early childhood are forming character variables in early childhood during the learning process of playing GACIL. Character variables formed in early childhood have met the required fit model criteria. These findings can be a good alternative for teachers in kindergarten in cultivating and instilling character values through learning the art of playing GACIL based on the local culture.

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