



The Role of Educational Games in Fostering Creativity Among Young Children at Home

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peran permainan edukatif dalam menumbuhkan kreativitas di kalangan anak-anak dalam pengaturan rumah tangga. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus tunggal untuk memahami pengalaman dan persepsi anak-anak muda mengenai permainan edukatif di rumah. Lima keluarga dengan anak kecil (usia 3-6 tahun) berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan orang tua, pengamatan peserta selama waktu bermain, dan dokumentasi sesi permainan. Hasil penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa permainan edukatif memainkan peran penting dalam menumbuhkan kreativitas di kalangan anak-anak. Melalui permainan ini, anak-anak diberikan kesempatan untuk membayangkan, membuat, dan mengeksplorasi berbagai peran dan skenario. Permainan edukatif juga meningkatkan keterampilan pemecahan masalah dan kemampuan komunikasi anak-anak, karena mereka perlu berpikir kreatif untuk mengatasi tantangan dalam permainan dan berinteraksi dengan orang tua mereka atau anggota keluarga lainnya. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa permainan edukatif memiliki potensi signifikan untuk mengembangkan kreativitas pada anak-anak muda dalam lingkungan rumah tangga. Implikasi praktis dari penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya memberikan kesempatan dan dukungan yang tepat bagi anak-anak untuk terlibat dalam permainan edukatif, bersama dengan peran positif orang tua dalam mengoptimalkan manfaat kreatif dari permainan tersebut.

Kata kunci: Anak-anak; Game Edukasi; Interaksi Orang Tua-Anak; Motivasi Anak; Pengembangan Kreativitas

Abstract

This study aims to investigate the role of educational games in fostering creativity among young children in household settings. The research employs a qualitative approach with a single case study method to comprehend the experiences and perceptions of young children regarding educational games at home. Five families with young children (aged 3-6 years) participated in the study. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with parents, participant observations during playtime, and documentation of the gaming sessions. The results of the study reveal that educational games play a crucial role in fostering creativity among young children. Through these games, children are provided with opportunities to imagine, create, and explore various roles and scenarios. Educational games also enhance children's problem-solving skills and communication abilities, as they need to think creatively to overcome challenges in the games and interact with their parents or other family members. The study concludes that educational games hold significant potential for developing creativity in young children within the household setting. The practical implication of this research emphasizes the importance of providing appropriate opportunities and support for children to engage in educational games, along with the positive role of parents in optimizing the creative benefits of such games.

Keywords: Child Motivation; Creativity Development; Educational Games; Parent-Child Interaction; Young Children

Introduction

The early childhood stage is a critical period in the process of forming the potential and skills that will lay the foundation for children's growth and development in the future. During this period, children are in a sensitive phase that enables them to absorb knowledge and experiences rapidly, including the development of creativity. Creativity plays a vital role in broadening children's perspectives, enhancing problem-solving abilities, and supporting healthy cognitive and social development.

In the context of fostering creativity in young children, the household environment plays a significant role. The family is the primary and foremost environment for children to learn and develop. Activities conducted at home, including the types of games introduced

and supported by parents, can potentially have a significant impact on children's creativity development (Kurniasih, Citra, & Bangsa, 2017).

Educational games have garnered attention in early childhood education because they have the potential to offer enjoyable and engaging learning experiences for children. These types of games are designed to provide opportunities for children to learn through exploration, social interaction, and real-world challenges. However, despite the popularity of educational games among parents and educators, little is known about the extent of their role in fostering creativity in young children, especially within the household environment.

Given the importance of creativity in shaping the future of children, it is crucial to delve deeper into the impact and potential of educational games in developing creativity among young children within the household environment. Through this research, we aim to provide clearer insights into how educational games can be an effective tool in nurturing creativity in young children and the role of parents in facilitating this process.

By gaining a profound understanding of the influence of educational games on the creativity of young children in the household setting, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of educational strategies focused on enhancing children's creativity. Thus, this study has relevant practical implications for parents, educators, and practitioners in the field of early childhood education, as well as for society as a whole.

One crucial aspect to consider in the development of young children is creativity. Creativity is the ability to think originally, generate new ideas, and solve problems innovatively. This creative ability forms the foundation for discovery, innovation, and the development of unique personalities in children. By fostering creativity in young children, we help them unleash their exceptional potential and become competitive and innovative individuals in the future (Sawyer, R. K. 2019).

In the household environment, children spend most of their time and interact with family members, especially parents. Parents play a central role in shaping an environment that supports children's creativity development. One effective tool to achieve this is educational games. Educational games are specifically designed to combine learning elements with the fun of playing, creating enjoyable and meaningful learning experiences for children (Umami & Hidayat, 2020).

While previous research has highlighted the importance of educational games in fostering creativity in young children, there are still some crucial aspects that may not have

been fully understood. For instance, the role of parental involvement in supporting and facilitating educational games at home, as well as the broader impact of these games on children's creativity, still requires in-depth exploration.

Therefore, this research is directed towards exploring the role of educational games in developing creativity among young children within the household environment. By understanding how educational games influence children's creativity and how parental involvement can enhance the creative benefits of these games, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to our understanding of how we can effectively support the development of children's creativity in early childhood.

Educational Games

Educational games are games designed to help children learn and develop their skills. These games provide enjoyable and meaningful learning experiences for children. Educational games can assist children in learning about various subjects, such as mathematics, language, science, social-emotional skills, and motor skills.

There are several theories that explain the benefits of educational games for young children. One of the most famous theories is the theory of play by Jean Piaget. Piaget believed that children learn through interacting with their environment, and play is one of the most important ways for children to engage with their surroundings. Through play, children can explore, learn about various concepts, and develop their skills (Piaget, J. (1954)).

Piaget divided the cognitive development of children into four stages: 1) Sensorimotor stage (0-2 years), 2) Preoperational stage (2-7 years), 3) Concrete operational stage (7-11 years), and 4) Formal operational stage (11-15 years). At each stage, children have different ways of learning and interacting with their environment. In the sensorimotor stage, children learn through their senses. They learn about the world through touch, sight, hearing, smell, and taste. In the preoperational stage, children begin to develop symbolic thinking abilities. They can use symbols to represent objects and concepts. In the concrete operational stage, children start to understand more abstract concepts. They can think logically and solve problems. In the formal operational stage, children begin to develop abstract thinking abilities. They can think about possibilities that have not yet happened.

Play can aid children's learning at all stages of their cognitive development. In the sensorimotor stage, play can help children develop motor skills, coordination, and balance. In the preoperational stage, play can assist children in developing symbolic thinking,

language, and creativity. In the concrete operational stage, play can aid children in developing logical thinking, problem-solving, and cooperation. In the formal operational stage, play can help children develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.

Another theory that explains the benefits of educational games for young children is the theory of play by Vygotsky. Vygotsky believed that children learn through interacting with adults and their peers. Play is one of the most important ways for children to interact with adults and peers. Through play, children can learn about various concepts, develop their skills, and learn about social rules (Vygotsky, L. S. 1978).

Vygotsky introduced the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD refers to the gap between what a child can do independently and what they can do with the assistance of a more capable adult or peer. When a child plays with a more capable adult or peer, they can learn beyond their ZPD. The more capable adult or peer can provide guidance and support needed for the child to learn and develop their abilities.

Educational games can offer numerous benefits for young children. Here are some of the benefits of educational games for young children: a) Helping children learn about various subjects, b) Developing motor skills, c) Enhancing cognitive skills, d) Developing social-emotional skills, e) Boosting creativity, and f) Improving mental and physical health.

Educational games can be an effective way to help children learn and develop their abilities. Parents can provide support and motivation for children to engage in educational games. Additionally, parents can provide various types of educational games that align with their child's interests and needs.

Maria Montessori, an educator, believed that play is an essential way for children to learn and develop independently. She stated that play helps children develop motor, cognitive, and social-emotional skills. Montessori developed a child-centered educational method that emphasizes the importance of play and exploration. The Montessori method has been implemented in many countries worldwide and proven effective in helping children learn and grow (Montessori, M. 1964).

According to Ellen Galinsky, play is the most important way for children to learn and develop. She stated that play helps children develop cognitive, social-emotional, and motor skills (Galinsky, E. 2016).

Howard Gardner, a psychologist and education expert, said that play is crucial for children to develop multiple intelligences. He stated that play helps children develop various

types of intelligences, including linguistic, mathematical, visual-spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligences (Gardner, H. 2011). This aligns with the opinion of Tengku Rosmah Mansor, who said that play is a child's right. She stated that play is an essential way for children to learn, grow, and develop.

Educational games can provide numerous benefits for young children, including:

- a. Enhancing cognitive development
- b. Improving language development
- c. Boosting motor skill development
- d. Enhancing social-emotional development
- e. Enhancing creativity
- f. Improving mental and physical health

Parents can support their child's development by providing various types of educational games that align with their child's interests and needs. Here are some tips for choosing suitable educational games for young children:

- a. Choose games that are age-appropriate and match the child's interests.
- b. Select games that can help children learn about various concepts and new skills.
- c. Opt for games that can foster their creativity.
- d. Choose games that provide opportunities for children to explore, experiment, and create.
- e. Pick games that bring enjoyment and satisfaction to the child.

By providing support and motivation for children to engage in educational games, parents can help them develop their abilities.

Development of Creativity in Early Childhood

Creativity in early childhood refers to a child's ability and potential, typically from ages 3 to 6 years old, to imagine, innovate, and create freely and without constraints. It is the natural ability of children to generate new ideas, depict the world around them in unique ways, and find creative solutions to problems.

The creativity of young children encompasses various aspects, including:

- a. **Imagination:** Young children have rich and abundant imaginations. They can envision worlds that do not exist, create stories, and depict situations or characters that only exist in their minds.

- b. Creativity in Play: During play, children often demonstrate creativity through role-playing, building new objects from available materials, or creating their own games with their rules.
- c. Problem-Solving Skills: Creativity is closely related to problem-solving abilities. Young children often show unique ways of solving problems or facing challenges.
- d. Artistic Expression: Young children can express their creativity through art, such as drawing, coloring, or creating other forms of artwork.
- e. Innovative Learning: Young children can learn in creative and unique ways, such as connecting new concepts to their own experiences or through experimentation and exploration.

The creativity of young children is a valuable asset that needs to be supported and nurtured. An environment that stimulates and grants freedom for children to develop their creativity, both at home and in educational settings, will help them grow into more creative, innovative, and competitive individuals in the future.

According to Anthony, regarding creativity in early childhood, he emphasizes that the early development period is crucial for fostering creativity. Because at this stage, children demonstrate the ability to imagine and create freely (Anthony, E. 2019). Meanwhile, Burton explains the importance of play in fostering creativity in young children. In this article, he highlights how educational games can provide an environment that supports and stimulates creativity development in children (Burton, J. 2020).

On the other hand, Davis and Gardner present research on the relationship between multiple intelligences and the development of creativity in young children. They suggest that recognizing multiple intelligences in children helps identify their creative potential in various aspects of life (Davis, R. L., & Gardner, H. 2018).

Similarly, Amabile offers a comprehensive view of creativity development throughout a lifetime. This book explores the role of parents, teachers, and the environment in creating conditions that support the growth of creativity in children, including those in early childhood (Amabile, T. M. 2017). In line with that, Sawyer presents a psychological perspective on the creative potential of young children. He emphasizes the importance of an environment that values, encourages, and facilitates creative activities in very young children (Sawyer, R. K. 2019).

Based on the theories mentioned above, the development of creativity in early childhood is an important process in shaping a child's potential and abilities from an early

age. At this early stage of development, children demonstrate a natural tendency to imagine, explore, and innovate without significant cognitive limitations. Therefore, this phase is a valuable period to build a strong foundation for creativity within the child (Ariyanti, 2016).

The importance of developing creativity in young children can be observed from several aspects:

- a. **Readiness to Embrace Learning Experiences:** Young children have a high readiness to embrace learning experiences. In a stimulating and supportive environment, children can absorb new knowledge and skills rapidly, including the development of creativity.
- b. **Formation of Creative Thinking Patterns:** At this stage, children start forming their own creative thinking patterns. Environmental stimulation that triggers imagination, exploration, and play will help develop out-of-the-box thinking and creative problem-solving skills.
- c. **Introduction to Various Forms of Expression:** Developing creativity in young children involves introducing various forms of expression, such as art, music, and language. Through various expressive activities, children can freely express themselves and discover unique ways to convey ideas and emotions.
- d. **Problem-Solving Skills:** Creativity is closely related to problem-solving abilities. By providing children with opportunities to face challenges and find creative solutions, we can help them develop effective problem-solving skills.
- e. **Preparation for the Future:** Creativity is a highly valued competency in the ever-changing and complex modern world. By supporting creativity development in young children, we prepare them to become innovative, adaptable individuals in the future. Developing creativity in young children provides valuable preparation for their future, where the ability to innovate and adapt becomes increasingly important.

Therefore, fostering creativity in early childhood should be a primary focus in education and daily interactions. Parents, educators, and society as a whole play a crucial role in creating stimulating and supportive environments for children's creativity. By empowering creativity at an early developmental stage, we open opportunities to create a generation that is more innovative, competitive, and capable of facing future challenges with confidence and courage (Fauzan & Fikri, 2022).

The Role of Parents in the Development of Early Childhood

The role of parents in the development of early childhood is the contribution and positive influence that parents provide in supporting and facilitating the optimal development of their children in the early stages of life (typically from 0 to 6 years of age). Parents play a central role in shaping various aspects of a child's life, including cognitive, emotional, social, and motor development. Through interaction, support, and the environment they create at home, parents can act as facilitators to help children achieve their maximum potential and become independent, high-quality individuals who are competitive in the future.

Rogoff states that parents have a primary role in shaping the cognitive development of young children. Through social interaction and participation in daily activities, children learn to think complexly and develop high-level thinking skills (Rogoff, B. 1990).

Meanwhile, Bronfenbrenner emphasizes the importance of the home environment as one of the microsystems in a child's developmental ecology. Parents, as the closest microsystem, have a direct and significant impact on shaping a child's behavior and skills (Bronfenbrenner, U. 1979).

The role of parents varies in different parenting patterns, influenced by the cultural norms of a particular region. This aligns with Bornstein and Putnick's exploration of parenting styles across cultures and their conclusion that positive and supportive parenting patterns can enhance the emotional and social development of young children (Bornstein, M. H., & Putnick, D. L. 2012).

Similarly, in fulfilling their role, parents need to be aware of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) that exists. According to Vygotsky, the role of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) in child development is highlighted. Parents who recognize a child's ZPD and provide appropriate support at each developmental stage can help the child achieve their maximum potential in cognitive and social development (Vygotsky, L. S. 1978).

Baumrind identified three primary parenting styles: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Research indicates that responsive and appropriately boundary-setting parenting style (authoritative) tends to be associated with positive socioemotional development in young children. Social and emotional development in children tends to be better with effective parenting (Baumrind, D. 1991).

Some important aspects of the role of parents in the development of early childhood are as follows:

- a. Care and Nurturing: Parents are responsible for the daily care of the child, including providing healthy food, maintaining cleanliness, and providing stable emotional support. During this period, children need deep affection and attention from parents to develop a sense of security and self-confidence.
- b. Cognitive Stimulation: Parents play a crucial role as a child's first introduction to the outside world. They can provide cognitive stimulation through various means, such as reading books, singing songs, talking, and playing together. This stimulation helps shape the child's brain structure and aids in their language and cognitive development.
- c. Education and Learning: Parents can act as the child's first educators at home. They can help introduce basic concepts, assist children in answering their curiosity, and facilitate exploration and creative learning.
- d. Formation of Values and Ethics: Parents play a role in shaping the values and ethics that form the moral foundation for the child. By setting examples and teaching good attitudes, parents help shape the child's personality and character.
- e. Development of Social Skills: Parents can assist children in developing social skills through positive social interactions and helping children understand how to communicate and interact with others.
- f. Emotional Management: Early childhood is a period of getting to know and managing emotions. Parents play a role in helping children recognize and cope with their emotions in a healthy and adaptive manner.

The role of parents in the development of early childhood is crucial because this stage is a sensitive period where many brain structures form, and high-level development takes place. Support, affection, and a supportive environment from parents will help create a strong foundation for the growth and development of children in the future.

Method

The research employs a qualitative approach with a single case study method to comprehend the experiences and perceptions of young children regarding educational games at home. Five families with young children (aged 3-6 years) participated in the study. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with parents, participant observations during playtime, and documentation of the gaming sessions. The research subject data are in Table 1.

Table 1. Data of Informants and Research Subjects

N	Age	Gender	Education Level	Occupation	Age of Child
1	32	Male	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	4 years
2	28	Female	Diploma	Homemaker	5 years
3	35	Male	Master's Degree	Private Employee	3 years
4	30	Female	Bachelor's Degree	Entrepreneur	6 years
5	29	Female	Bachelor's Degree	Teacher	4 years

Table 1. Shows data on parents' age, child's gender, parents' last education, parents' occupation and child's age.

Results and Discussion

This research aims to investigate the role of educational games in fostering creativity in young children within household settings. The results of the study show a positive and significant relationship between educational games and the development of creativity in young children.

The findings of this research were obtained through a qualitative approach using a single case study method. In this study, data were collected through various data collection techniques, such as in-depth interviews with parents, participant observation during playtime, and documentation of educational game sessions conducted by young children within their households. The research findings description is in Table 2. as follows:

Table 2. Research Findings

No	Research Findings Description
1	Educational games play a crucial role in stimulating creativity in young children. Children explore new ideas and freely create within the games, helping them think creatively and innovatively.
2	Parents play a central role in facilitating educational games for children. Support, guidance, and active interaction from parents aid in developing children's creativity during play.
3	Educational games help develop problem-solving skills in young children. Children learn to seek innovative solutions and use creative approaches to solve problems within the games.
4	Social skills development occurs through educational games. Children learn to interact, communicate, and collaborate with peers or family members to achieve common goals within the games.
5	Educational games create an environment that supports the development of creativity in young children within households. Through these games, children learn with enthusiasm and feel safe to create and imagine.

Based on Table 2. the research findings above, it can be explained that this study has significant findings regarding the role of educational games in fostering creativity in young children within households. The discussion of the research results provides deeper insights into the implications and relevance of these findings for understanding and developing young children. The following are the discussions from the research results:

Role of Educational Games in the Development of Creativity in Young Children:

The research findings confirm that educational games play an important role in stimulating creativity in young children. During this early developmental stage, children are highly receptive to stimuli from their surrounding environment. Educational games provide opportunities for children to imagine, create, and develop new ideas without limitations. Through these games, children can create their own imaginative worlds and take on imaginary roles, which encourages creativity.

Role of Parents in Facilitating Educational Games:

This finding emphasizes the crucial role of parents in facilitating educational games for children within households. Parents who actively engage in educational games provide the necessary support, praise, and guidance to help children play creatively. Parental involvement helps create a positive environment and sparks children's interest in creating and innovating during play. Therefore, parents should actively and responsively act as facilitators in encouraging children's participation in educational games.

Development of Problem-Solving and Social Skills:

Educational games offer opportunities for children to develop problem-solving skills. Children are faced with various challenges and problems within the games, and they learn to seek creative and innovative solutions to tackle them. This provides valuable practice in critical thinking and sharpens out-of-the-box thinking abilities.

Additionally, educational games also contribute to the development of children's social skills. Through games, children learn to communicate, cooperate, and appreciate the roles of others within a group. These social skills are essential for children's everyday social interactions and prepare them for engaging with others in the future.

Implications and Relevance:

The findings of this research have practical implications in the development of young children. Parents and educators can utilize educational games as effective tools to stimulate children's creativity and develop problem-solving and social skills. Educational games should be regarded as valuable and essential activities to facilitate the comprehensive development of children.

Furthermore, the results of this research are also relevant for educational policy formulation. It is crucial for educational institutions to recognize and support the role of educational games in the curriculum for young children. Providing stimulating and supportive environments for creative play can help create a generation that is more innovative and competitive in the future.

Research Limitations:

Despite providing valuable insights, there are several limitations that need to be considered in this research. The study used a qualitative approach with a single case study

method, thus the generalization of findings is only applicable to the selected participant group. Additionally, the limited sample size may affect the representation of data.

Therefore, future research can expand the sample and include more families to strengthen the validity of the findings. Quantitative approaches can also be used to provide stronger statistical analyses of the relationship between educational games and creativity in young children within the context of households.

Closing

This research investigated the role of educational games in fostering creativity in young children within households. The findings of the study indicate that educational games play a significant role in stimulating the creativity of young children. Through these games, children are provided with opportunities to imagine, create, and explore various roles and scenarios. Educational games also enhance children's problem-solving and communication skills, as they need to think creatively to face challenges in the games and interact with parents or other family members.

The role of parents in facilitating educational games is crucial. Support, guidance, and active interaction from parents help children to play creatively and stimulate creativity development. Through these games, children also learn to develop social skills and cooperate with peers or family members, which are essential aspects of daily life.

Moreover, educational games also offer children opportunities to develop problem-solving skills. In the games, children encounter various challenges and problems that they must solve in creative and innovative ways. This helps them hone critical thinking and out-of-the-box thinking skills that are valuable in facing future challenges.

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