



The Influence of *Makan Bajamba* on the Social Behavior of Children Aged 5–6 Years

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Abstrak

Perilaku sosial pada anak usia dini menjadi fondasi krusial dalam pengembangan karakter dan kompetensi interpersonal sejak masa awal kehidupan melalui makan bajamba, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengevaluasi dampak aktivitas makan bajamba terhadap perilaku sosial anak berusia 5–6 tahun di TK Sabbihisma 2 Ulak Karang. Riset ini menerapkan metodologi kuantitatif dengan rancangan quasi-experimental. Partisipan penelitian meliputi 20 anak yang diklasifikasikan menjadi dua grup, yakni 10 anak dari kelas B3 sebagai grup treatment dan 10 anak dari kelas B4 sebagai grup kontrol, yang ditetapkan melalui metode purposive sampling. Alat ukur penelitian berupa instrumen tes yang memuat sembilan item pernyataan untuk menilai perilaku sosial anak. Proses analisis data dijalankan menggunakan aplikasi SPSS versi 25.0, dimulai dengan pengujian normalitas dan homogenitas yang membuktikan bahwa data terdistribusi normal dan memiliki keseragaman varians. Kemudian, diimplementasikan uji independent sample t-test yang menghasilkan nilai probabilitas (2-tailed) sebesar $0,014 < 0,05$ dan nilai t hitung sebesar $2,730 > t$ tabel sebesar 1,734. Output tersebut mengindikasikan bahwa aktivitas makan bajamba memberikan pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap peningkatan perilaku sosial anak. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan dapat berfungsi sebagai acuan dalam formulasi pendekatan pembelajaran yang lebih dinamis dan engaging untuk mendukung konstruksi karakter sosial anak usia dini.

Kata Kunci: *Perilaku Sosial; Makan Bajamba; Anak Usia Dini.*

Abstract

Social behaviour in early childhood is a crucial foundation in the development of character and interpersonal competence from an early age through eating bajamba. This study aims to evaluate the impact of eating bajamba activities on the social behaviour of 5-6-year-old children at Sabbihisma 2 Ulak Karang Kindergarten. This research applied quantitative methodology with a quasi-experimental design. The research participants included 20 children classified into two groups, namely 10 children from class B3 as the treatment group and 10 children from class B4 as the control group, which were determined through a purposive sampling method. The research measurement tool was a test instrument containing nine statement items to assess children's social behaviour. The data analysis process was carried out using the SPSS version 25.0 application, starting with normality and homogeneity testing, which proved that the data were normally distributed and had uniform variance. Then, the independent sample t-test was implemented, which resulted in a probability value (2-tailed) of $0.014 < 0.05$ and a calculated t value of $2.730 > t$ table of 1.734. The output indicates that the bajamba eating activity has a significant effect on improving children's social behaviour. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference in the formulation of a more dynamic and engaging learning approach to support the construction of early childhood social character.

Keywords: Social Behavior; Makan Bajamba; Early Childhood.

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INTRODUCTION

Behavior is an act or action of an individual as a reflection of their attitude. Observable behavior involves physical actions in the form of real deeds to create interaction between the individual and their environment, which can be observed (Marlina et al., 2021). Social behavior displayed by children may include the ability to imitate positive behavior, compete healthily, cooperate in groups, show empathy toward others, receive social support from peers, share, and build closeness through affection. This indicates that social behavior encompasses various aspects that foster the development of strong interpersonal relationships (Utami, 2018).

Social behavior is a form of action or response demonstrated by individuals when interacting with others within their social environment. This behavior includes how a person communicates, cooperates, shares, helps, obeys rules, and shows empathy and concern for others. Social behavior is not only seen in concrete actions but also the attitudes and thought processes individuals have toward the social situations around them. This means that social behavior is not only reflected through visible actions but also through how individuals think and feel about the surrounding social conditions, including the ability to communicate well, help others, follow social norms and rules, as well as show care and a sense of responsibility for the well-being of others. Social behavior can be understood as a form of integration between actions, attitudes, and the values held by individuals in social life (Suryana, 2024)

This form of social behavior includes a child's capacity to engage in constructive interaction in daily activities, such as the ability to share toys or food with peers, collaborate in completing group tasks, patiently take turns while playing, greet others with proper etiquette, provide support when peers face challenges, and show sensitivity to others' emotional conditions through empathy and responsive behavior. These socialization competencies play a fundamental role, especially during early childhood, as this is the stage where children begin constructing the foundation of their understanding of regulations, conventions, and social principles that apply in their community. Through continuous and meaningful social interactions, children not only acquire knowledge on how to build positive interpersonal relationships but also develop productive communication skills, better regulate emotional responses, and adapt to diverse social contexts they may encounter, whether within the family, educational institutions, or broader communities. The development of mature social behavior ultimately contributes significantly to a child's achievements in future social

dimensions of life, including the formation of interpersonal relationships, participation in collective work, and transformation into empathetic individuals with strong social integrity (Junita & Anhusadar, 2021).

The benefits of positive social behavior in early childhood play a significant role in shaping a child's personality and socialization skills from an early age. A child's ability to exhibit positive social behavior makes them more likely to build healthy and harmonious interactions with peers, educators, and surrounding adults (Apriani et al., 2021; Wirda, 2019). Young children who display positive behaviors such as cooperating, sharing, taking turns, respecting differences, and being able to express thoughts and feelings appropriately tend to have strong social skills. The development of a strong and empathetic character becomes an essential foundation for individual growth. In addition, well-developed social behavior also helps children navigate complex social situations in the future, boosts their self-confidence, and supports their academic and emotional success. Instilling and nurturing social behavior from an early age is a long-term investment in creating a generation that is ethical, responsible, and caring toward others (Tohari & Rahman, 2024).

According to (Putri & Putra, 2019), the social dimension has a fundamental contribution to the learning mechanisms of children in early childhood. This perspective emphasizes that a child's cognitive development does not occur in isolation but is greatly influenced by the social context in which the child undergoes growth and development. The series of social interactions experienced by the child, including relationships with peers, adults, educators, and family members, serves as a primary foundation in shaping their mindset and optimizing their mental capacity. Through these interactive dynamics, children learn through imitation, understanding, and internalization of knowledge and value systems present in their surrounding environment.

The importance of developing social behavior in early childhood lies in the fact that this stage is known as a golden period in the formation of a child's personality and character. At this age, children begin to establish social relationships beyond the family circle, such as interacting with peers and teachers in the school environment. The ability to form social connections, such as sharing, cooperating, showing empathy, and respecting differences, becomes a crucial foundation for their future life. The lack of early development in social behavior may lead to difficulties in building interpersonal relationships, both in school and in broader social contexts. Therefore, learning strategies that stimulate children's social skills must be applied in a planned and continuous manner to help them grow into emotionally intelligent individuals who are adaptable and socially aware (Erlina & Nasrulloh, 2024).

The formation of social behavior in early childhood is influenced by various interacting variables, both from the child's intrinsic characteristics and environmental stimuli. The family plays one of the most influential roles, as it is the first place where children gain initial experiences in shaping their attitudes and behaviors. Parenting styles, attention, affection, and the way parents communicate greatly influence the development of a child's attitudes and behaviors. The social environment, such as peers, teachers, and the surrounding community, also plays a vital role, as children learn norms, rules, and behavioral skills through social interaction. Educational factors, both formal and non-formal, provide children with opportunities to socialize and understand their roles within a group. In today's era, mass media and technology have also become significant influences, as what children see and watch can shape their perceptions and behavior patterns.

Some activities can stimulate children's social behavior, which is not unique but also closely connected to their everyday lives. One such activity is *makan bajamba*. *Makan bajamba* is a traditional communal eating practice originating from West Sumatra, usually carried out during traditional ceremonies and Islamic celebrations. The practice emphasizes togetherness and includes embedded rules and social values (Wirda, 2019).

Early childhood social behavior should ideally develop well, as it is influenced by factors such as the family environment, education, social interaction, as well as the child's biological and psychological conditions. However, observational results show a different reality. In practice, there are still children who experience obstacles in displaying appropriate social behavior.

Based on observations conducted at Sabbihisma Kindergarten, specifically Sabbihisma 2 Ulak Karang, which is one of the Qur'an-based schools, it was found that many children face issues with social behavior. These issues include children preferring to play alone, refusing to cooperate, mocking their peers, fighting over food, not listening to teachers or classmates, being selective in choosing friends, disobeying rules, yelling at peers, and criticizing food they dislike. The observed strategies used in addressing these behaviors include methods such as lectures, storytelling, singing, giving assignments, the use of Educational Teaching Aids (Alat Peraga Edukatif/APE), as well as routines like communal eating and play activities. The implementation of these activities at Sabbihisma 2 Ulak Karang Kindergarten shows that children usually eat together with food already served on plates, ready to be eaten. These activities aim to stimulate various aspects of child development. Many kindergartens have adopted similar activities; therefore, it is essential to design engaging strategies to stimulate children's social behavior better.

Based on the issues found in the field, one cultural approach believed to support the development of children's social behavior is the tradition of *makan bajamba*. *Makan bajamba* is a unique tradition of the Minangkabau people, in which several people (usually five to seven) eat together from a large shared plate or container (*jamba*) (Wirdahnengsih, 2019). Food traditions vary significantly across regions, and in Minangkabau, a region located in West Sumatra Province, *makan bajamba* is a distinct practice. The people of West Sumatra engage in *makan bajamba* as a communal eating activity, typically involving three to five people gathering in one room to eat together. The purpose of this tradition is to strengthen social bonds and express closeness among members of the Minangkabau ethnic group. *Makan bajamba*, as a means of social interaction and the transmission of cultural values, represents one of its fundamental functions (Asnan, 2022; Cahyani et al., 2024).

The *makan bajamba* activity teaches children to share food, respect turns, and maintain cleanliness and good manners during communal meals (Wina et al., 2019). These values are instilled naturally and enjoyably, making this tradition effective as a contextual learning medium in shaping the social behavior of early childhood children (Jendriadi et al., 2021).

The philosophical values embedded in the *makan bajamba* tradition hold great potential to be utilized as a contextual and meaningful learning method in early childhood education settings. The communal eating activity, conducted in an atmosphere of warmth and familiarity, can be used by educators to instill social values directly through real-life experiences. Children are not only trained to interact and cooperate, but also encouraged to build empathy, show care for others, and appreciate the diversity of their peers' personalities. With this approach, the learning process becomes more enjoyable and, at the same time, effective in stimulating children's social-emotional development (Rina Andriyeni, 2024). The integration of local traditions such as *makan bajamba* into teaching and learning activities is highly relevant for shaping more positive social behavior in children from an early age. The *makan bajamba* tradition has a strong correlation with children's social behavior, as it inherently involves togetherness and social interaction among individuals.

Referring to the description above, it becomes essential to conduct ongoing research studies related to "The Influence of *Makan Bajamba* on the Social Behavior of Children Aged 5–6 Years." The researcher is highly interested in experimenting with the *makan bajamba* tradition as a method for stimulating social behavior in children aged 5–6 years. This eating activity, which is a cultural hallmark of the Minangkabau people known as *makan bajamba*, when implemented in early childhood education, not only supports children's social development but also increases parents' understanding of how to optimize their child's early development. Social behavior demonstrated during mealtime is crucial to teach children. Eating is not only about fulfilling nutritional needs and

satisfying hunger; it is also a vital context for the development of children's social interaction with others, which in turn fosters good social skills. The objective of this research is to examine the influence of *makan bajamba* on the social behavior of children aged 5–6 years at Sabbihisma 2 Kindergarten.

METHODOLOGY

Type of Research

This study employs a quantitative approach with a quasi-experimental design to explore real conditions in situations where complete control is not feasible (Sugiyono, 2019). The group of children in this study was predetermined based on existing classes; thus, complete randomization was not conducted. According to (Sugiyono, 2019), quasi-experimental methods are used to extract information from situations that do not allow complete control over the independent variables.

Time and Place of the Research

The implementation of this study was carried out at Sabbihisma 2 Kindergarten in Ulak Karang, located in Padang City, West Sumatra. The research activities took place during the even semester of the current academic year, specifically from February 13 to March 13, with a total research duration of four weeks.

Research Subjects

The target population in this study includes all children aged 5–6 years at Sabbihisma 2 Kindergarten, totaling 55 individuals. The sample selection process was conducted using purposive sampling, which involves determining the sample based on specific considerations and parameters aligned with the research objectives. Prior to the implementation of *makan bajamba* activities, classroom conditions at Sabbihisma 2 Kindergarten in Ulak Karang indicated that many children preferred to play alone, were reluctant to cooperate, and frequently teased their peers. The children also often fought over food, ignored instructions from teachers and peers, and tended to be selective in choosing friends. Furthermore, they were often disobedient to rules, shouted at their friends, and criticized food they disliked. Due to this uncondusive social interaction environment, the researcher used purposive sampling to select suitable subjects from each class as experimental and control groups, allowing the influence of *makan bajamba* activities on children's social behavior to be

accurately measured. Two classes were selected as research samples, namely Class B3 as the experimental group and Class B4 as the control group, with each class consisting of 10 children.

Data Collection Techniques and Instrument Development

The data collection procedure in this study utilized test and documentation methods. The test method was applied to measure the level of children's social behavior during the pre-intervention and post-intervention stages. The instrument used was a questionnaire consisting of 9 statement items related to indicators of social behavior in early childhood. Based on the theoretical framework proposed by Safitri (2019), the instrument blueprint was developed by taking into account dimensions of social behavior that are relevant for early childhood, as outlined in the following structure:

Table 1. Instrument Blueprint

Variable	Sub variable	Indicator	Item Number
Children's Social Behavior	Cooperation	1. The child can cooperate in preparing activities	1,2,3
		2. The child can cooperate in organizing eating utensils before and after meals	
		3. The child can cooperate in cleaning up food leftovers	
	Sharing	4. The child is able to share food with peers	4,5
		5. The child can share food with the teacher	
	Caring for others	6. The child can help a friend in difficulty	6,7
		7. The child can help the teacher with difficulty	
	Friendly behavior	8. The child can talk about the food he/she like	8,9
		9. The child can invite the teacher to eat together	

Data Analysis Technique

The data in this research were processed using statistical software. The analysis procedure began with the implementation of a normality test to identify whether the data followed a normal distribution. The normality test was necessary to verify that the data met the standard distribution requirements so that the hypothesis could be evaluated using an accurate statistical approach and produce reliable outcomes. Next, a homogeneity test was conducted to ensure that the variability of

data between groups was homogeneous. If both prerequisites were fulfilled, hypothesis testing was carried out using the Independent Sample t-Test, which was used to detect significant disparities between the treatment and control groups. The determination of the test result was based on the probability value (sig. 2-tailed), where if the obtained value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted. Thus, it could be concluded that the makan bajamba activity significantly influenced children's social behavior.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

Based on the analysis results in this study, there is evidence confirming that the makan *bajamba* activity has a significant impact on the development of children's social behavior at TK Sabbihisma 2 Padang. The transformation observed in the social behavior of students in the treatment group B3 serves as concrete proof of the effectiveness of the implemented intervention. The data evaluation procedure involved a series of comprehensive statistical analysis stages, including the testing of normal distribution, verification of variance homogeneity, and hypothesis testing. The overall results of the statistical analysis process present a conclusive picture of the positive contribution of the makan *bajamba* activity in enhancing early childhood social behavior competence, as validated through the systematically implemented data analysis procedures.

Table 3. Pre-test Statistics of the Experimental Class

Statistics		
<i>Pre-test</i> experiment		
N	Valid	10
	Missing	0
Mean	24.00	
Std. Error of Mean	1.085	
Median	24.50	
Mode	23 ^a	
Std. Deviation	3.432	
Variance	11.778	
Range	10	
Minimum	18	
Maximum	28	
Sum	240	

Based on the test results, the data above shows a mean score of 24.50 with a standard deviation of 3.432, a minimum score of 18, and a maximum score of 28. Furthermore, a test was also conducted on the experimental class to determine the posttest results. This can be seen in the following table:

Table 4. Posttest Statistics of the Experimental Class

Statistics		
<i>Post-test</i> experiment		
N	Valid	10
	Missing	0
Mean	27.80	
Std. Error of Mean	.904	
Median	27.00	
Mode	27	
Std. Deviation	2.860	
Variance	8.178	
Range	9	
Minimum	23	
Maximum	32	
Sum	278	

Based on the table, the mean score is 27.8, with a standard deviation of 2.860, a minimum score of 23, and a maximum score of 32.

Based on the experimental class data, it is described that the pre-test data was followed by a treatment conducted over three sessions, then concluded with a posttest. The development of children's social behavior showed an increase, as evidenced by the total pre-test score of 240 with an average of 24.00, while the posttest recorded a total score of 278 with an average of 27.80.

Table 5. Normality Test

Tests of Normality							
kelas		Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
hasil	pre-test kelas kontrol	.236	10	.120	.882	10	.136
	pre-test kelas eksperimen	.185	10	.200*	.914	10	.307
	post-test kelas kontrol	.251	10	.073	.847	10	.063
	post-test kelas eksperimen	.210	10	.200*	.950	10	.672

Referring to the results of the normality test that has been implemented, the Shapiro-Wilk significance value for the experimental group's pre-test showed a score of 0.307, and the posttest reached 0.672. Meanwhile, the control group's pre-test obtained a significance value of 0.63, and the

posttest showed a score of 0.672. All of these data are classified as having a normal distribution because they meet the standard criteria for normality testing, namely a significance value > 0.05 . Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the data distribution in both research groups, experimental and control, has the characteristics of a normal distribution. This normality test result serves as a crucial prerequisite to proceed with further parametric statistical analysis, as the assumption of data normality is a fundamental basis in applying accurate and reliable statistical tests. The fulfillment of the normality assumption in both groups indicates that the research data is of good quality and representative, ensuring that the analysis results are trustworthy and have high statistical validity.

Table 6. Homogeneity Test

Test of Homogeneity of Variance					
		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
hasil	Based on the Mean	.378	3	36	.769
	Based on the Median	.409	3	36	.747
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.409	3	34.464	.747
	Based on the trimmed mean	.387	3	36	.763

Referring to the table and based on the analysis using SPSS 25, it can be identified that the probability value is 0.769. Since this value exceeds (i.e., $0.769 > 0.05$), the data can thus be categorized as homogeneous.

Table 7. Independent Samples Test

Independent Samples Test									
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Differ ence	Std. Error Differ ence	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper
H	Equal	.923	.349	2.7	18	.014	4.000	1.465	.922 7.078
A	variances			30					
SI	assumed								
L	Equal			2.7	17.	.014	4.000	1.465	.909 7.091
	variances			30	034				
	not								
	assumed.								

Referring to Table 6, the output of the Independent Samples Test, which presents the t-test for Equality of Means, shows a Sig. (2-tailed) value of $0.014 < 0.05$ and a calculated t-value greater than the t-table value, with a comparison of $2.730 > 2.100$. Based on these criteria, it can be concluded that H_a is accepted and H_0 is rejected, indicating a significant effect between the treatment group that received the *bajamba* eating activity intervention and the control group that experienced conventional group eating activities, specifically in the aspect of early childhood social behavior development at TK Sabbihisma 2 Ulak Karang.

DISCUSSION

In this study, the makan *bajamba* activity was conducted four times (4 treatments) during the research process. During each session, the children participated in communal eating in turns, sitting in circles, and sharing food in a warm, togetherness-filled atmosphere. Through this process, the children not only learned to share and wait for their turn, but also began to demonstrate caring behaviors toward their peers, such as offering food, politely correcting others, and helping friends in need. The relaxed and joyful environment of makan *bajamba* served as a natural social learning platform for the children. The findings of this study revealed a clear improvement in children's social behavior, including cooperation, empathy, friendliness, and sharing ability, after participating in this activity.

The results also indicated notable increases in social behaviors such as cooperation, sharing, empathy, and friendly conduct. This aligns with findings that cooperation and the formation of bonds of brotherhood and closeness can also bring benefits to others, which can be achieved through makan *bajamba* activities (Pilpa Sari et al., 2023). Based on these findings, documentation from the makan *bajamba* activity is presented below as follows:



Image 1. Praying together



Image 2. Children tidying up the jamba place

The makan *bajamba* tradition is a cultural heritage of the Minangkabau people that is rich in values of togetherness, equality, and mutual respect. This activity is usually carried out by sitting

together in a circle on the floor or mat, surrounding a large container filled with a variety of traditional local dishes such as rendang, dendeng balado, gulai, sambal lado, and white rice. Each group typically consists of five to seven people sitting face to face, creating a warm and intimate atmosphere. In traditional ceremonies, makan *bajamba* serves as a symbol of solidarity and mutual respect among community members. This tradition also teaches the importance of sharing, maintaining polite manners while eating, and respecting each other regardless of social status or age (Metrianis et al, 2023).

This tradition involves a specific sitting arrangement and eating etiquette that must be followed, making it an opportunity to learn about mutual respect. More than just eating together, makan *bajamba* serves as an effective social education medium, especially in teaching values such as cooperation, deliberation, and caring for others. The implementation process of this tradition is not arbitrary, as it follows specific customs passed down through generations, such as seat placement based on age or social rank, and rules for taking food fairly and in moderation. Children who participate in this tradition from an early age will learn how to interact politely within the community, appreciate differences, and maintain good relationships with their social environment (Erlina & Nasrulloh, 2024).

According to Alkadafi et al., social values encompass the views held by society regarding what is considered good and evil in daily life. These values serve as guidelines for behavior that are accepted and followed by the community, functioning as a reference for collective actions. Meanwhile, (Aisyah, 2019) also explains that social values can be understood as forms of appreciation toward individuals, serving as behavioral guidelines within society. The relationship between makan *bajamba* and children's social behavior is very close, as this tradition not only teaches togetherness but also fosters essential social dynamics for child development. The makan *bajamba* tradition integrates the value of cooperation, encouraging children to internalize respectful attitudes and socialize with others, vital components in the construction of their social behavior.

The research titled "Social Behavior in Children Aged 5–6 Years at Aba Sorogaten Kindergarten, Galur, Kulon Progo" (A'ini, 2019). Examines the social behavior of children within the same age group (5–6 years), although it employs a different method. The similarity in discussing children's social behavior highlights that whether through the makan *bajamba* tradition or other studies, the importance of social interaction and the development of social behavior in early childhood has a significant impact on their overall growth. Both studies indicate that activities

involving social interaction, such as makan *bajamba*, can serve as effective means for shaping positive social behaviors in children, especially during early childhood, when the surrounding social environment highly influences social behavior development.

The makan *bajamba* tradition has a significantly positive impact on teaching social ethics to children, particularly in maintaining shared cleanliness. Many children who initially paid little attention to cleanliness while eating began to show greater concern after participating in this tradition. They started being mindful of how they left food, washing their hands after meals, and keeping their plates clean. Children learn that in a communal setting, every action they take must consider the comfort, cleanliness, and interests of the group. They also begin to understand that maintaining cleanliness is not just for their benefit, but also for their surroundings, such as tidying up their seating area and disposing of trash properly. All of these habits teach them to take responsibility not only for themselves but also for the environment in which they live.

The makan *bajamba* tradition also contributes to enhancing children's abilities to resolve minor conflicts that often arise during meals. For instance, when there is a disagreement about who should take the first turn, children begin to learn how to speak politely, express their opinions clearly, and find collective solutions without causing disputes. This process teaches them to listen to others' perspectives, respect each individual's rights, and strive for compromises acceptable to everyone. The makan *bajamba* tradition not only strengthens social relationships among children but also equips them with skills to resolve problems constructively, positively, and with empathy without resorting to aggression.

In line with social cognitive theory, which emphasizes that observation, imitation, and modeling play a crucial role in children's social development, the makan *bajamba* activity offers a powerful medium for learning. In this setting, children not only learn from their own experiences, but also by observing the behavior of adults or more socially mature peers. When a child witnesses a friend sharing food without being asked or helping another who is struggling to reach a dish, they indirectly learn valuable forms of prosocial behavior. This experience nurtures the awareness that living together requires empathy, responsibility, and sensitivity to the needs of others (Daryati et al., 2022; Mukhid, 2018).

The makan *bajamba* tradition serves as a contextual learning strategy that is not only effective in shaping young children's social behavior but also aligns well with the principles of constructivist and social learning theories. Learning that emphasizes real-life experiences and social engagement is believed to help children grow into individuals who are not only cognitively competent but also emotionally mature and socially skilled (Apriani et al., 2021; Jendriadi et al.,

2021). The makan *bajamba* tradition instills the concepts of equality, cooperation, and respect through the practice of eating together from the same dish. These philosophical values are highly relevant to shaping a child's inclusive and democratic character.

Early childhood education institutions need to integrate local wisdom, such as the makan *bajamba* tradition, into a joyful and meaningful learning approach that reflects the nation's noble cultural values (Daryati, 2023; Rina Andriyeni, 2024). This integration not only enriches teaching methods but also significantly contributes to the preservation of local culture and the formation of a generation with strong cultural roots. Therefore, a firm commitment from educators, policymakers, and the wider community is needed to consistently implement and develop local wisdom-based learning models in early childhood education systems.

The encouragement to create varied, engaging, and contextual learning methods offers young children the opportunity to recognize and preserve the traditions within their environment. One effective form of stimulation is through activities rooted in children's daily lives, such as the makan *bajamba* tradition originating from West Sumatra. Through this activity, children not only gain knowledge of local culture but also develop social behaviors such as cooperation, empathy, and communication. Teachers are expected to design learning experiences that combine the cultivation of social values with enjoyable, hands-on activities, making the learning process more meaningful and contributing to character development from an early age.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that the makan *bajamba* tradition is more than just a communal dining activity; it serves as a rich medium of social and cultural values that can shape children's social behavior from an early age. This activity provides children with direct experiences in building positive interactions, such as learning to share food, taking turns, cooperating while sitting together, and showing care and empathy toward their peers. The atmosphere created during makan *bajamba* fosters familiarity and comfort, allowing children to absorb social values naturally. In the learning context, this tradition creates a conducive and enjoyable environment where children not only gain knowledge but also develop social character through real-life practice. Therefore, makan *bajamba* can be viewed as an effective educational strategy rooted in local culture for instilling positive social behavior in early childhood in a contextual and meaningful way.

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