



The Effect of Growth Mindset-Based Block Play on Kindergarten Children's Social Behavior

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ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the phenomenon of low social skills in group A children, which includes aspects of cooperation, interaction between individuals, and independence during learning activities. The main objective of this study is to evaluate the impact of the use of block media with the integration of growth mindset in improving social skills. Using the quantitative method of experimental design, this research involved group A participants as intervention subjects. Data were collected through structured observation techniques using social behavior assessment instruments, where the results were analyzed by comparing conditions before and after the action was given. The findings show a significant positive transformation in all indicators. The most notable increase was seen in the aspect of independence which reached the category of developing very well at 60%, followed by aspects of social interaction (53.3%) and cooperation (33.3%). Overall, these results confirm that the growth mindset-based block game strategy is very effective in optimizing early childhood social development, as well as being a reference for the application of more varied learning methods. This study contributes to the development of innovative play-based learning methods to support early childhood social development.

INTRODUCTION

The development of social behavior in early childhood is a crucial aspect that needs to be optimally stimulated through learning that is tailored to the child's developmental characteristics. Between the ages of 0–6, children's brains experience rapid growth with a high level of neuroplasticity, making it easier for them to receive environmental stimulation, form social habits, and develop the ability to interact with others. Therefore, early childhood learning needs to be designed through educational, fun, and meaningful play activities to optimally support children's social development. In line with the opinion Suryana (2021), learning activities for early childhood should be carried out through a play approach that can provide active learning experiences for children.

Based on initial observations at Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten in Palu, the social skills of children in Group A are still relatively low. This is evident in the many children who

still have difficulty interacting with their peers, are unable to cooperate in group activities, and lack independence in completing assignments given by teachers. Furthermore, some children appear passive, lack self-confidence, and give up easily when faced with difficulties during learning activities.

The problem of social behavior in early childhood is also supported by several previous research findings Wahyuni *et al.*, (2023) Research shows that children's low social skills are characterized by a lack of ability to cooperate, interact, and control emotions when playing with peers Durrotunnisa (2022), explains that children who have not received appropriate learning stimulation tend to have low self-confidence and give up easily when facing social challenges. In addition, research Rahmawati and Suryana, (2021), found that playing with blocks can improve children's cooperation and communication through group play activities Fitriani *et al.*, (2023) also shows that constructive play can develop social interaction, creativity, and problem-solving skills in early childhood. Other research from Pratiwi (2024). revealed that collaborative play-based learning effectively improves children's social-emotional abilities through activities that involve interactions between peers.

However, most previous research has focused solely on developing physical-motor aspects and constructive play activities, such as stacking, moving, and shaping blocks. This approach has not integrated psychological aspects that can foster positive mindsets in children when facing social challenges. Consequently, stimulation of self-confidence, perseverance, courage to try, and the ability to bounce back from social difficulties has not optimally developed. In fact, children's social behavior is influenced not only by play activities but also by how children view the learning process and deal with failure in interacting with their surroundings.

One relevant approach to supporting children's social development is a growth mindset. According to Carol Dweck, a growth mindset is a mindset that believes that abilities can develop through effort, practice, and learning experiences. Children with a growth mindset tend to be more confident, actively collaborate, persistent, and willing to try again when they encounter difficulties interacting or completing tasks with their peers. Integrating a growth mindset into block play can provide a learning experience that not only stimulates children's motor skills and creativity but also fosters positive social attitudes through cooperation, communication, perseverance, and mutual respect during play.

Research on the application of growth mindset in early childhood is still relatively limited, particularly when combined with block play as a learning medium. However, research Durrotunnisa, (2023) explains that strengthening a growth mindset from an early age influences the development of resilience, self-confidence, and subjective well-being in children at later stages of development. Therefore, the integration of growth mindset-based block play is seen as having the potential to optimally improve children's social behavior.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of block games with a growth mindset approach in early childhood learning to improve the social behavior of group A children at Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten, Palu. Previous research generally only examined block games as a constructive play medium to develop children's motor and social skills, while this research adds the strengthening of positive mindsets through motivation, appreciation of children's efforts, courage to try, and habituation of children so that they do not give up easily when interacting or working together with friends.

Based on the description, the purpose of this study is to analyze the effect of growth mindset-based block games on improving the social behavior of group A children at Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten, Palu. As an alternative solution, growth mindset-based block games can be used as a more effective learning innovation to optimize social behavior in children. This approach not only involves playing activities, but also instills positive thinking patterns in children so that they dare to try, do not give up easily, and are able to work together with friends. The teacher acts as a facilitator who provides motivation and appreciation for children's efforts during the learning process (Pratiwi & Rahmawati, 2023) The integration of block play and growth mindset is expected to provide children with a more enjoyable and meaningful learning experience.

METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental research type. The research design applied was a one-group pretest-posttest design to determine the effect of growth mindset-based block play on the social behavior of group A children at Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten, Palu. In this design, the research subjects were given an initial measurement (pretest) before treatment, then given treatment in the form of growth mindset-based block play activities, and ended with a final measurement (posttest) to determine changes in children's social behavior after the intervention was given. The research design is described as follows:

$$O_1 \rightarrow X \rightarrow O_2$$

Information:

O_1 : Pretest of children's social behavior abilities before treatment

X: Treatment in the form of block games based on growth mindset

O_2 : Posttest of children's social behavior abilities after treatment

The subjects of this study were all 15 children in group A of Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten, Palu, consisting of 7 girls and 8 boys. The sampling technique used was total sampling because the entire population of group A was used as the research subject. The determination of the subjects was based on the consideration that children aged 4–5 years are at a stage of social development that requires optimal stimulation through play activities and group interactions. The inclusion criteria for research subjects include: (1) children registered as active students in group A, (2) children regularly participate in learning activities, and (3) obtain permission from their parents to participate in the research. Meanwhile, the exclusion criteria included children who did not participate in the research activities completely during the treatment process.

The study was conducted over a one-month period with a total of eight treatment sessions. Each session lasted approximately 60 minutes. The treatment activities began with the teacher providing motivation and reinforcing a growth mindset, such as appreciating the children's efforts, encouraging them to try, and encouraging them to persevere when faced with difficulties. Next, the children engaged in block play activities in groups, such as constructing simple structures, working together to complete constructions, and discussing their work with their friends. At the end of the activity, the teacher provided reflection and positive reinforcement for the children's cooperation, courage, and independence during play.

Data collection techniques in this study used observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted to measure the development of children's social behavior before and after treatment using observation sheets compiled based on indicators of early childhood social behavior. Interviews were conducted with teachers in Group A to obtain supporting information regarding the development of children's social behavior during learning activities. Documentation was used to support the research data in the form of activity photos and notes on the learning process.

The research instruments used were observation sheets for children's social behavior and teacher interview guidelines. Observed social behavior indicators included the child's ability to interact, cooperate, be confident, and be independent. Assessment of child development refers to the early childhood development categories, namely Not Yet Developing (BB), Starting to Develop (MB), Developing According to Expectations (BSH), and Developing Very Well (BSB). Before use, the research instrument was first tested for content validity through expert judgment by an early childhood education expert lecturer and a kindergarten teacher. The validation results showed that the instrument was suitable for use with several revisions to the language and clarity of the indicators. The instrument reliability test using the Cronbach's Alpha formula obtained a coefficient of 0.82, indicating that the instrument has a high level of reliability.

The research data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis techniques. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the development of children's social behavior through average values, percentages, and distribution of child development categories. Meanwhile, inferential analysis was conducted using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test to determine the significance of the influence of growth mindset-based block play on children's social behavior based on a comparison of pretest and posttest results. The Wilcoxon test was chosen because the sample size was relatively small and the data were ordinal. The entire data analysis process was carried out with the help of statistical software to obtain accurate and objective analysis results.

RESULTS

1. Recapitulation of Pre-test and Post-test Results

This research was conducted in two stages: a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test was conducted before implementing the growth mindset-based block play to determine children's initial social behavior skills. The post-test was conducted after the children received the growth mindset-based block play activity. The pre-test and post-test results for cooperation, social interaction, and independence are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Pre-test and Post-test Results of Block-Based Game Treatment
Growth mindset

No	Category Development	Pretest (Frequency)	Pretest (%)	Posttest (Frequency)	Posttest (%)
Aspects of Cooperation					
1	BSB	0	0%	5	33.3%
2	BSH	4	26.7%	9	60.0%
3	MB	7	46.7%	1	6.7%

4	BM	4	26.7%	0	0%
Aspects of Social Interaction					
1	BSB	0	0%	8	53.3%
2	BSH	3	20.0%	5	33.3%
3	MB	8	53.3%	2	13.4%
4	BM	4	26.7%	0	0%
Aspect Independence					
1	BSB	0	0%	9	60.0%
2	BSH	4	26.7%	6	40.0%
3	MB	8	53.3%	0	0%
4	BM	3	20.0%	0	0%

Source: Primary Data from Research Results 2026

Based on the research results on the cooperation aspect, there was an increase in children's social skills after being given treatment. In the pre-test stage, there were no children in the Very Well Developing (BSB) category, whereas after treatment in the post-test stage, this increased to 5 children or 33.3%. The Developing According to Expectations (BSH) category also increased from 4 children (26.7%) to 9 children (60.0%). Meanwhile, the Starting to Develop (MB) category decreased from 7 children (46.7%) to 1 child (6.7%), and the Not Yet Developing (BB) category decreased from 4 children (26.7%) to 0 children. These results indicate that the growth mindset-based block game is able to improve children's cooperation skills in group activities.

In terms of independence, the results of the study showed an increase in children's development after the treatment was given. In the pre-test stage, there were no children in the BSB category, while in the post-test stage, the number increased to 9 children (60.0%). The BSH category increased from 4 children (26.7%) to 6 children (40.0%). In addition, the MB category, which previously had 8 children (53.3%), decreased to 0 children, and the BB category, which previously had 3 children (20.0%) decreased to 0 children after the treatment was given. These results indicate that growth mindset-based block games can increase children's self-confidence and ability to complete tasks independently.

Overall, the pre-test and post-test results showed a positive change in children's social behavior development after the implementation of growth mindset-based block games. Children who were previously in the Beginning to Develop (MB) and Not Yet Developing (BB) categories improved to the Developing as Expected (BSH) and Very Well Developing (BSB) categories.

2. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test Results

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test to determine whether there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results after the growth mindset-based block game treatment. The Wilcoxon test was used because the research data were not normally distributed, so nonparametric statistics were used for analysis. This test was used to compare the results before and after treatment in terms of cooperation, social interaction, and children's independence. The test results are presented in

Table 2.

Table 2. Results of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test on Children's Social Abilities

No	Aspects	Asymp.Sig. (2_tailed)	Remarks
1.	Collaboration	0,000	Signifikan
2.	Social Interaction	0,000	Signifikan
3.	Independence	0,000	Signifikan

Source: Primary Data from Research Results 2026

Based on the results of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test in Table 2, it is known that the Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value for the aspects of cooperation, social interaction, and independence is 0.000 each. This value is smaller than the significance level of 0.05, thus indicating a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results in all aspects of the children's social behavior studied.

These results demonstrate that the implementation of growth mindset-based block games significantly improves the social behavior of children in Group A of Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten, Palu City. This improvement is evident in the children's ability to cooperate, interact socially, and complete tasks independently during learning activities. Therefore, the research hypothesis is accepted, namely that growth mindset-based block games significantly improve the social behavior of early childhood children.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study showed that growth mindset-based block games significantly improved the social behavior of group A children at Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten, Palu. This improvement was seen in the aspects of cooperation, social interaction, and independence of children after being given treatment. Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test, most children who were previously in the Not Yet Developing (BB) and Starting to Develop (MB) categories experienced an increase to the Developing According to Expectations (BSH) and Very Well Developing (BSB) categories. These findings indicate that the integration of constructive play with a growth mindset approach can provide positive stimulation for the social development of early childhood.

In terms of cooperation, improvements are evident in children's ability to work in groups, share tasks, and complete activities with peers. Block play activities encourage children to discuss and help each other build certain shapes. This indirectly fosters children's communication skills, tolerance, and social responsibility. These findings align with research.Sari, (2022),Rahmawati and Suryana, (2021), as well as Hidayat, (2023)which states that constructive play can improve children's cooperative skills through direct interaction in group activities.Fitriani *et al.*, (2023)also shows that block play can help children develop the ability to share roles and resolve simple social conflicts during the play process.

In addition to enhancing cooperation, growth mindset-based block play has also been shown to improve children's social interactions. Children become more active in communicating, express their opinions, and become more confident when interacting with friends. This occurs because play provides a space for children to exchange ideas and express themselves in a fun learning environment. The findings of this study support this notion.Pratiwi (2021)And Wahyuni *et al.*, (2022) which explains that an interactive play environment can help

children learn to socialize through direct experience. International research conducted by Dweck (2020) also explains that growth mindset can increase children's courage to try and not be afraid to make mistakes in the learning process or social interactions.

The improvement in children's social behavior in this study was influenced not only by block play activities but also by the application of growth mindset principles throughout the learning process. Teachers consistently provided motivation, appreciation for children's efforts, and encouragement to encourage them to persevere when faced with difficulties. This approach helped children understand that social skills can develop through practice and experience. Children who were initially passive became more active in groups because they felt valued for their learning. These findings align with research by Princess (2022), Durrotunnisa and Sulistiani (2023), As well as Blackwell *et al.*, (2021) which explains that growth mindset influences increasing children's self-confidence, learning motivation, and resilience in facing social challenges.

In terms of independence, research results show that children are better able to complete tasks without relying on help from teachers or peers. Children appear more confident in making decisions and attempting to solve problems that arise during play. This indicates that growth mindset-based block play can provide learning experiences that encourage children to think independently and take responsibility for their tasks. These findings are supported by research by Rahmawati (2022), Nugroho (2023), And Wulandari (2021) which states that constructive play activities can improve problem solving skills and independence of early childhood through direct learning experiences.

Theoretically, the results of this study reinforce the growth mindset theory developed by Carol Dweck, which states that individual abilities can develop through continuous learning, experience, and practice. In early childhood education, this theory has proven relevant in helping children develop social behavior through active and collaborative learning. This study also reinforces the theory of social constructivism, which emphasizes that children's social development is shaped through interactions with their environment and peers. Therefore, the combination of block play and a growth mindset can be an effective learning approach to supporting the social and emotional development of early childhood.

The results of this study are also in line with various other national and international studies. Research by Agusniatih (2021) Research shows that play methods can increase children's enthusiasm and participation in learning. Fitriana (2025) explains that a positive social environment influences the formation of children's social behavior from an early age. Durrotunnisa *et al.*, (2024) also states that children with a growth mindset tend to be more resilient, able to manage emotions, and adapt more easily in social environments. In addition, international research by Yeager and Walton (2021), Claro *et al.*, (2023), as well as Gunderson *et al.*, (2021) shows that growth mindset has a positive relationship with children's social skills, intrinsic motivation, and courage in facing academic and social challenges.

Based on the results of the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, a significance value of 0.000 was obtained, or less than 0.05. These results indicate a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results after the implementation of growth mindset-based block games. Thus, the research hypothesis is accepted, namely that growth mindset-based block games have a significant effect on improving the social behavior of group A children at Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten, Palu. This finding strengthens the research. Nugroho (2023) And Hidayat

(2023) which states that block play makes a big contribution to the social emotional development of early childhood.

This research has practical implications for early childhood education, particularly in developing innovative and engaging learning strategies. Teachers can utilize growth mindset-based block games as a learning tool to enhance children's cooperation, social interaction, and independence. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that providing positive motivation and appreciation for children's efforts is crucial in supporting their social-emotional development.

Although this study showed positive results, it still has several limitations. First, the number of research subjects was relatively limited, involving only 15 children in one group. Second, the treatment duration of one month was insufficient to assess children's long-term social development. Third, the research design, a one-group pretest-posttest design, still has limitations in internal validity because it did not include a control group for comparison. Therefore, further research is recommended to involve a larger sample size, use a more robust experimental design, and extend the treatment duration to ensure more generalizable and in-depth results.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that growth mindset-based block play has a significant effect on improving the social behavior of group A children at Kemala Bhayangkari 16 Kindergarten, Palu. This improvement is seen in the aspects of cooperation, social interaction, and independence of children after being given treatment through block play activities combined with a growth mindset approach. Children become more active in interacting, able to work together in groups, more confident, and more independent in completing tasks. The results of this study indicate that the integration of constructive play with the reinforcement of positive mindsets can be an effective learning strategy in supporting the social and emotional development of early childhood. The findings of this study strengthen the growth mindset theory that children's social abilities can develop through learning processes, experiences, and appropriate stimulation. In addition, this study has practical implications for early childhood teachers in developing innovative, interactive, and fun learning through directed play activities. Teachers can utilize growth mindset-based block play as a learning medium to improve children's cooperation, communication, self-confidence, and independence in group activities. This study also has a novelty in the form of integrating a growth mindset approach in block play to stimulate the social behavior of early childhood. Unlike previous research that focused more on physical-motor aspects and constructive activities, this study emphasizes the development of positive mindsets in children in facing social challenges through group play activities. Thus, this research provides a new contribution to the development of social-emotional learning strategies in early childhood. Although the study shows positive results, it still has several limitations. First, the number of research subjects was relatively limited because it only involved one group of children. Second, the short duration of treatment was not sufficient to observe the development of children's social behavior in the long term. Third, the research design used, a one-group pretest-posttest design, still has limitations in internal validity because it does not include a control group for comparison. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve a larger sample size, use a more robust experimental design with a control group, and extend the treatment duration to provide more

in-depth research results and have a better level of generalizability.

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