

## Effectiveness of Puppet-Assisted Media in Strengthening Religious Characteristic Value and Language Skill of Early Childhood

Musyawaroh Musywaroh <sup>1✉</sup>, Joko Sutarto <sup>2</sup>, Kurotul Aeni <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>. TK ABA 05 Penyangkringan, Semarang, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>. Pascasarjana, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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### Abstract

The growth and development of early childhood should be stimulated by strengthening the religious character value and the language skill; therefore, children have noble behavior. This research aimed to develop the religious behavior attitude and the language skill of early childhood. The research object was hand-puppet-assisted media to strengthen the religious character value and the language skill. The population in this research were 30 children aged 5-6 years of the group B at TK ABA 04 Penaruban of the experiment class, and 30 children of the group B at TK ABA 03 Bumiayu of the control class. The data collection techniques used observation sheets, interviews, and documentation. The analysis used was the t-test using SPSS for windows version 16.00. The data analysis used the hand-puppet-assisted storytelling method. The hypothesis test results showed that the average pretest value of the experiment class was 18.21, and the average posttest was 21.00, so that it increased by 2.79. It was also found that the  $t_{count} > t_{table}$  at a significant level of 5% ( $15.649 > 2.037$ ) and with a p-value of  $< 0.05$ , which means that it can be concluded that there was a significant increase in the score of student learning outcomes of the experiment group. Thus, it can be concluded that the strengthening of the religious character value and the language skill of children aged 5-6 years at TK ABA 04 Penaruban using the hand-puppet-assisted storytelling method was more effective than using conventional media

✉ Correspondence address:

TK ABA 05 Penyangkringan, Semarang, Indonesia 51355

E-mail: musywaroh1805@gmail.com

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## INTRODUCTION

Strengthening the value of religious character and language skills of early childhood aims to from the way of behaving. The method used is the storytelling with the media of hand puppets that show the conversation of two characters named Tini and Tono, as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Hand Puppet Tono and Tini

Tini always advises her little brother, Tono, to pray when doing any activities. For example, praying before and after eating, practicing says the sentence Subhanallah if something pleases him, Astaghfirullah if he makes a mistake, and Innalillah if he gets unlucky condition. The strength of the religious character values with that method can improve early childhood language skills so that children can say the words Subhanallah, Astaghfirullah, and Innalillah in a proper way.

The growth and development of early childhood should be stimulated by the religious character value education, both directly and indirectly. Following the opinion by Handayani (2015) in her theory which explains that stimulants from the environment, especially parents, are needed to maximize the growth of children in their golden age. This is relevant to the opinion by Syofriend (2014) in his research which explains that aspects of early childhood development can be stimulated by providing interesting learning activities with multimedia and methods.

The research developed six aspects of development, including religious and moral

values, language, cognitive, physical motor, social-emotional, and artistic. Stimulating the six aspects of development can be done by providing daily activities through interesting habits with the puppet-assisted storytelling method. This opinion is strengthened by Sobarna (2017) which conclude that character education should start at early age.

Based on the opinion, stimulants in children at early age are very important to maximize their growth and development in their golden age, and build their personal through daily practice and habituation with the media-assisted storytelling method repeatedly, therefore it is easier for them to absorb the story contents for them to have characteristic behavioral attitude. Character education should start at early age. In learning activities, early childhood is more emphasized on strengthening their religious value as the foundation to strengthen their behavioral attitude that is practiced routinely in their daily environment, therefore it prioritizes more in strengthening the character value.

The opinion by Kurniawati (2014) states that character education is an effort to create the next generation with superior character. The research above shows that the character education which starts at early age will be easier to shape the children's personality that reflects noble behavior, with talents, interests as a superior generation, and with reliable abilities and potential. The character education that incorporates religious and moral values can create a generation with good morals as well. This opinion is relevant to the theory of Ariyastana (2017) which explains that the character education has the same essence and meaning as moral education and moral education, the goal is for children to have good personalities. According to Fitria (2018) it has been explained that character education is carried out at every level of education in an integrated manner in subjects. This opinion is strengthened by who has concluded in his research that character education is intended to cover all characteristics of behavior, habits,

interests, abilities, talents, potential, values, and mindsets.

The research can be interpreted that character education for early childhood in planting strengthening attitudes of good behavior with habits carried out routinely every day through interests, talents, and abilities, and potential, therefore they can influence a person's values and mindset which will eventually form a personal with good morals and noble character. Based on this theory, achieving educational quality can be done by increasing the strengthening of the good character value in children, which will produce a generation of personality and moral behavior with noble character. If at every level of education in can include strengthening character values in the subjects, children at early age are certainly familiar with good character and morals in their families and their environment as well as at school.

The early childhood at 4 to 5-year -old stage like the kind of character education using fairy tales and storytelling methods, where children at these ages still like to imitate what they hear, see, and practice. In learning the story contents, children of this age are not perfect, and are still influenced by emotional feelings. As Opinion by Adiyatsari (2014) stated in their research that children aged 4-5 years are in the fairy tale stage, where the way they learn the religious value is still influenced by fantasy and emotion. Early childhood has not been able to interpret the meaning of religious characters, thus by applying the religious value with the method of storytelling or fairy tales will increase children's knowledge in learning religion. The research is also delivered by Hidayat (2019) explaining that the teachers' role in learning has very important potential, especially in conveying knowledge of moral value, since the teachers' task is not only limited to deliver learning materials at classroom, but they also educate and direct students to have good attitudes and behavior, therefore teachers have to find the right method for the process of internalizing values in developing the character of students as good individuals for themselves,

their families, communities, nations, and countries. The theory by Hasjiandito (2015) explain that the Hasanah preschool and kindergarten, as one of the institutions for early childhood, seek to develop innovative learning models using interactive learning CDs developed by the teachers. This research uses media in religious-themed learning so that it is relevant to this research because it used puppet-assisted media to strengthen the religious character value.

Based on this opinion, in conveying the religious character development for early childhood using the storytelling method, the way to learn the religious value is still influenced by fantasy and emotion so that in this coaching assistance, teachers need religious-themed innovation media to develop learning. The opinion is strengthened by Mulyani (2018) their research explaining that early childhood teachers have to choose the right technique for early childhood. Children love the atmosphere of play, fun, and free from pressure. The research is relevant and effective because children prefer learning in a fun atmosphere, play freely without pressure from the guidance of the teacher, and the technique used by Mulyani (2018) is by storytelling, while this research using the storytelling method so that the teacher can choose the right technique which makes it is easier to plant the strength of religious character value assisted by puppet media. The opinion by Sugiana (2015) have stated that teachers and educators generally should have a strong sense of self-confidence to successfully grow the good character in their students.

Thus, teachers have the confidence and competence mature enough in developing learning so that they can shape the character of their students. Media and visual aids are complementary supports in learning to strengthen the religious character value with the guidance of professional teachers so that they are right on target. The opinion by Nursih (2019) state that developing learning towards increasing the competence of early childhood education teachers is by visual media in the

preparation center. The research is relevant to this research because it uses media assisted by hand puppets in the storytelling method, while Nursih (2019) research uses visual media in the preparation center. The early childhood education learning with religious character as well as the media-assisted storytelling method involves both teachers at school and parents at home, therefore parents can understand the early childhood education.

Based on this opinion, professional teachers can develop appropriate learning for early childhood and have strong self-confidence so that they can improve the teacher competence in choosing the right media on target. Good cooperation between teachers and parents in educating children at home and school is very important.

As stated by Vinayatri (2017) who concludes that parents do not fully understand that early childhood education is important as an individual foundation in the future. This research is strengthened by Nafisah (2013) which states that the bond between children and parents to the care environment at home by any other than parents has quite good bond. While at daycare, the parent-child bond tends to be more comfortable. The relationship between children and their parents in their daily life is inseparable. As the opinion by Sary (2018) explain that parenting is a pattern of interaction between parents and children, or it can be said that the behavior of parents when interacting with children, including how to apply rules, teach values or norms, give attention and affection, and show attitudes and good behavior, thus they become role models for their children.

Based on the theory, the relationship between children and their parents is inseparable since they have a very close bond in their hearts and souls. Parental love for children cannot be replaced by anyone and with anything, so that the attachment of the children's heart to parents at home will feel at ease, and so as the bond of the children's heart at daycare feels comfortable. Therefore, if children at daycare and at school get stimulation

to stimulate their communication and information, their behavior formation will be good as well.

This opinion is strengthened by Maghfiroh (2016) who explains that the ability of children aged 5-6 years in receiving information is so high, so it is advisable to practice basic skills and behavior formation at early age. Absorption of information and communication are trained since early childhood. Likewise, the opinion of Mok and Lam (2011) have explained that the language skill of kindergarten-age children in the research sample is more proficient than the level of proficiency required in the assessment scale items in the research.

The research conducted by Azizah (2013) explain that the level of language skill (speaking) in children aged 5-6 years is higher by applying the macro role-playing method, compared to the speaking skill level of children aged 5-6 years who apply the micro role-playing method. This research is relevant to this research because it uses hand puppet media to improve the early childhood language skill, the difference with researchers is using the storytelling method, while Azizah (2013) method uses macro and micro role-playing methods.

Gilkerson (2017) have explained in their research that the more parent-child language engagement and interaction occur while reading is taking place, an increase might be expected had dialogic reading strategies been specifically taught, and suggested intervention studies in future using mated language analysis. However, the dialogical nature of reading may require adaptation for such young children.

Based on the opinion, the children's language development in communication can be measured by the acquisition of vocabulary achieved. The involvement and interaction of children with parents will appear when reading, in introducing early childhood language with the storytelling method, it is easier for children to understand. Since children are happier and can understand the content of the story if they use media in telling stories.

The opinion by Rizqillah (2013) shows that the storytelling method is very effective as a goal to build up Islamic education for children. Likewise, the opinion of Indahyani (2014) concludes that the storytelling method has a positive influence on language skills in spoken language, where spoken language can be implemented through conversational activities. While Sari's opinion (2018) explains that describing the process and learning outcomes through storytelling activities with puppets can improve the prosocial behavior of children of the Group A. This research is relevant to this study because it uses hand puppet media in increasing the strengthening of religious character values and children's language skills at early age. The difference is, this research used the storytelling method assisted by hand puppets, while the Sari's method uses storytelling activities with puppets.

Based on this opinion, the storytelling method is very effective and aims to build up Islamic education for children, and can have a positive influence on oral language skills, since spoken language can be implemented in conversation activities or while playing. It is very effective in learning with the storytelling method using hand puppet-assisted media.

The opinion of Ahmadi et al. (2017) explains that learning media serves as a source of learning is its main function. Meanwhile, Kurniawati (2016) states that in learning activities in kindergarten the media plays an important role because children's development is in a concrete period.

This media helps the learning process by transferring information that can attract children's interest. The media that children prefer is hand puppet media because it can be moved. This opinion is strengthened by Anggalia (2014) in their research that the use of moving hand puppet media (Moving Mouth Puppet) can improve the expressive language skill of kindergarten children. Meanwhile, Sulianto (2014) in their research explain that students and teachers want to support media in storytelling activities in the form of storybooks, and with the characters in the form of hand

puppets. This puppet media is made of brightly colored cotton and/or flannel to attract students' attention and interest. Asmiarti (2021) in their research concludes that the symbolic modeling method assisted by hand puppets is effective in improving the expressive language skill of children aged 5-6 years. The research is relevant to this research because it uses hand puppet media in improving the early childhood language skill. The difference is, the Asmiarti's method uses symbolic modeling, while the researcher used the storytelling method. Based on this theory, hand puppet media is a tool for storytelling to improve the early childhood language skill and to develop children's creativity and imagination.

The purpose of this research was to develop religious attitudes and language skills in early childhood. The benefit of this research is to add insight, especially in the development of teaching and learning activities and at the same time as information on language skills in early childhood in activities with various types of learning.

## METHOD

This research is conducted from June to July 2019 in the even semester of the 2018/2019 academic year, with the target of children aged 5-6 years of the Group B at TK ABA 04 Penaruban using the storytelling method assisted by hand puppets as the Experiment Class with as many as 30 children, and at TK ABA 03 Bumiayu using pictorial media as the Control Class as many as 30 children.

The tools used were hand puppet media. The design consisted of two groups selected randomly, and then given a pretest to determine the difference in initial conditions between the Experiment Group and the Control Group. The pretest results were good if the Experiment Group values were not significantly different. The sampling technique used for the Experiment Class and the Control Group was taken randomly from a certain population. The variables to be measured were the independent

and the dependent variables. The independent variable was the hand puppet media for strengthening the religious character value, and the dependent variable was the language skill. The data collection technique used observation, interviews, and documentation by asking questions in the form of instruments totaling 17 indicators. The analysis and the statistical model were used by giving pretest, treatment, and posttest.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research was conducted in the Group B at TK ABA 04 Penaruban and at TK ABA 03 Bumiayu, involving two research groups, namely the experiment group at TK ABA 04 Penaruban, and the control group at TK ABA 03 Bumiayu. The experiment class group used hand puppet media to measure the strengthening of the religious character value and the early childhood language skill, and the control group used the image media method.

According to Ariyastana's opinion (2017), character education has the same essence and meaning as moral education and moral education, the goal is for children to have a good personality. Adityasari (2014) argues that children aged 4-5 years are in the fairy tales stage where the way they learn the religious value is still influenced by fantasy and emotion. Early childhood has not been able to interpret the meaning of religious characters, in applying

religious values with storytelling or fairy tale methods to increase children's knowledge in receiving religious learning. The above opinion is strengthened by Anggalia (2014) that the use of muca hand puppet (Moving Mouth Puppet) media can improve the expressive language skill of kindergarten children.

Researchers obtained the data from the results of the pretest and posttest conducted in the experiment and control classes. The pretest was an ability test given to the children before being given treatment, while the posttest was carried out after the children got the treatment. Both of these tests served to measure the effectiveness of the learning program.

The data retrieval was carried out by providing questions that were used in the pretest and posttest, totaling 30 children at TK ABA 04 Penaruban, and 30 children at TK ABA 03 Bumiayu. The trial was conducted to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument. When given the treatment, the experiment class used the storytelling method with the help of hand puppets, and the control class used the image media. After the two classes were given treatment, the posttest was then given. This was done to determine the final ability of the children after the treatment. The results of strengthening the religious character value and the language skill of the children aged 5-6 years in the experiment class, before and after treatment in the research, are described in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Children Before and After Experiment Class Treatment

N	Vd	Me	Mo	SD	Mn	Mx
Pretest	30	18.3	18	1.59	16	22
Posttest	30	21	21	1.39	19	23

Information: Vd: Valid, Me: Mean, Mo: Mode, SD: Standard Devian, Mn: Minimum, Mx: Maximum

Based on Table 1, it is known that the calculation results using SPSS 16.00 on the data before the experiment class treatment obtained a valid sample of 30, the mean score = 18.3125, the mean = 18, the standard deviant = 1.59, the minimum value = 16 and the maximum value = 22. The results of the pretest showed that the strengthening of children's religious character

values and language skills was still low. It was also explained that the results of calculations with SPSS 16 after treatment in the experiment class obtained valid samples = 30, mean score = 21, mean = 21, standard deviation = 1.39, minimum value = 19, maximum value = 23.

The results of the learning pretest using hand puppet-assisted media carried out in the

experiment and control classes proved that the strengthening of religious character value and language skill of the children aged 5-6 years at TK ABA 04 Penaruban as the experiment class, and at TK ABA 03 Bumiayu as the control class, had not reached the maximum. This is relevant to the opinion of Handayani (2015) which explains that stimulants from the environment, especially parents, are needed to maximize the growth of children in their golden age. This is relevant to the opinion of Syofriend (2014) which explains that aspects of early childhood development can be stimulated by providing interesting learning activities with multi-media and methods. Early childhood education in developing 6 aspects of development includes religious and moral values, language, cognitive, physical motor, social-emotional, and art. Stimulating the 6 aspects of development can be done by providing activities that are carried out every day through interesting habits with storytelling methods assisted by puppet media. This opinion is strengthened by Sobarna (2017) who concludes that character education should start an early age. Based on the above opinion, stimulants in children at early age are very important to maximize their growth and development in their golden age, and build their personality through daily practice and habituation with repeated storytelling methods assisted by the media, therefore it is easier for children to learn the contents of the story so that

they have positive behavioral attitudes. Character education must start at early age.

Children's behavior is still easily influenced by the surrounding environment, children are still guided, introduced to the values of religious characters that can be done every day at home and at school and in the child's environment, such as praying before and after doing activities, doing worship so that it is not optimal yet.

The results of the posttest showed that the learning in the experiment class using media assisted by hand puppets achieved maximum learning outcomes of strengthening religious character value and language skill, while the learning in the control class using image media achieved less than optimal results.

The posttest results are relevant to Anggalia research (2014) which suggests that the use of muca hand puppet (Moving Mouth Puppet) media can improve the expressive language skills of kindergarten children. Based on this opinion, children are interested in learning models with storytelling methods assisted by hand puppets, it is easier to learn the contents of the story in strengthening religious character value and improving early childhood language skill, and can increase children's creativity and imagination. The following Table 2 is the results of the t-test Pretest and Posttest Experiment class in this research.

**Table 2.** t-test results of Pretest and Posttest of Experiment Class

Class	Average	T <sub>count</sub>	T <sub>table</sub>	P
Pretest	18.21	15.649	2.037	0.000
Posttest	21.00			

Based on Table 2, it was known that the results of the t-test pretest and posttest of the experiment class aimed to determine whether there was an increase in the score. The conclusion of the research was declared significant if the  $t_{count} > t_{table}$  at a significance level of 5%, and the  $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ . The summary of the t-test pretest and posttest of the experiment class obtained an average pretest value of 18.21 for the experiment class, and an

average posttest value of 21.00 so that there was an increase of 2.79. It was also found that the  $t_{count} > t_{table}$  at a significance level of 5% ( $15.649 > 2.037$ ) and with a  $p\text{-value} < 0.05$ , meaning that there was a difference between the results of the pretest and post-test on strengthening the religious character value and the early childhood language skill.

The test results are relevant to the opinion of Asmiarti (2021) which concludes that the

symbolic modeling method assisted by hand puppets is effective in improving the expressive language skills of children aged 5-6 years. Such opinion is relevant to this opinion because it used the puppet-assisted storytelling method, while Asmiarti's opinion uses the symbolic modeling method so that it can improve the language skill of early childhood.

This opinion can be interpreted that the storytelling method in learning with media

assisted by hand puppets can improve the language skill of early childhood, and is very interesting and easily learned by the content of the story conveyed.

The results of the t-test for strengthening the religious character value and the language skill of children aged 5-6 years of the control class in this research are described in Table 3.

**Table 3.** t-test results of Pretest and Posttest of Control Classes

Class	Average	T <sub>count</sub>	T <sub>table</sub>	P
Pretest	18.31			
Posttest	19.12	5.131	2.040	0.000

Table 3 shows the results of the t-test pretest and posttest control class aimed to determine whether there was an increase in the score. The conclusion of the study was declared significant if the  $t_{count} > t_{table}$  at a significance level of 5%, and the  $p$ -value  $< 0.05$ . The summary of the t-test pretest and posttest of the control class based on the results of the t-test, it was known that the average pretest was 18.31 at the time of the posttest increased to 19.12, so the increase was 0.81. Furthermore, based on the t-test, it was obtained that the  $t_{count}$  was 5.131 with a significance of 0.00. The value of  $t_{table}$  on db 31 with a significance level of 5% is 2.040. So the value of  $t_{count} > t_{table}$  ( $5.131 > 2.040$ ) and the significance value is less than 0.05 ( $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ).

The results of the pretest and posttest of the control class are very relevant to the opinion of Ahmadi et al (2017) which explains that

learning media functions as a learning resource is its main function. This opinion is strengthened by Kurniawati (2016) which states that in learning activities in kindergarten, the media plays an important role because children's development is in a concrete period. Based on the opinion above, media is a learning resource that can be used as the main support in learning, and has an important role in early childhood activities that are growing and developing in the concrete period. Media is very liked by early childhood, its role is very helpful in facilitating the transfer of communication with the storytelling method so that it is easier for children to strengthen their religious character value and improve their early childhood language skill at TK ABA 04 Penaruban. The following Table 4 is the results of the posttest t-test for the experiment and control classes in this research.

**Table 4.** t-test Results of Posttest of Experiment and Control Classes

Class	Average	T <sub>count</sub>	t <sub>table</sub>	P
Experiment Class	21.00			
Control Class	19.12	5.043	1.998	0.000

Based on Table 4, it was known that the post-test t-test results showed that the average experiment class learning outcomes were 21.00, and the control class learning outcomes were 19.12, so it can be concluded that the experiment class learning outcomes were 1.88

greater compared to the control class. From the table, it was known that  $t_{count}$  is 5.043 with a significance of 0.000. The  $t_{table}$  of 63 db at the 5% significance level is 1,998. So the value of  $t_{count} > t_{table}$  ( $5.043 > 1.998$ ) and the significance value was less than 0.05 ( $p = 0.000$



<0.05). It can be concluded that there were differences in student learning outcomes scores significantly, strengthening the religious character value and the language skill in the experimental class using the hand puppet media, and the learning outcomes in the control class using picture media.

The test results are relevant to the opinion by Sulianto (2014) which explains that students and teachers want supporting media in storytelling activities in the form of storybooks

and their characters in the form of hand puppets. This puppet media is made of brightly colored cotton and/or flannel to attract students' attention and interest.

This opinion can be interpreted that hand puppet as a supporter and create creativity and interest in children's expression of playing dolls are more interested and fun in learning activities. The following Table 5 is the result of the t-test of the increase in the experiment and control classes in this research.

**Table 5.** t-test Results Increase in Experiment and Contril Classes

Class	Average	T <sub>count</sub>	t <sub>table</sub>	P
Experiment Class	2.79	8.27	1.998	0.00
Control Class	0.81			

Based on Table 5, it was known that the independent sample t-test calculation results showed that the average increase in the experiment group was 2.79, while the increase in the control class was 0.81, so it was known that the increase in learning outcomes in the experiment class was 1.98 greater than the control class. It was also known that the t<sub>count</sub> value was 8.270 with a significance of 0.000. The t<sub>table</sub> value of db 63 was 1,998. So it can be concluded that the t<sub>count</sub> > t<sub>table</sub> (8.270 > 1.998) and the significance value was less than 0.05 (p = 0.000 < 0.05), so there was a significant difference in the significant increase in the learning outcomes scores in the experiment and control groups.

The t-test of the increase in the score of the experiment and control classes aimed to determine the difference in the increase in scores from the strengthening of religious character values and language skills of the experiment and control classes. The conclusion of the study was declared significant if the t<sub>count</sub> > t<sub>table</sub> at a significance level of 5% and the p-value <0.05. It means that the difference between pretest and posttest learning outcomes with media assisted by hand puppets in the experiment class was more effective in increasing the strengthening of religious character values and language skills of children aged 5-6 years, compared to the control class using picture media.

The results of the hypothesis test are relevant to Kurniawati's research (2016) which explains that in the learning activities at kindergarten, the media plays an important role because children's development is in a concrete period. This opinion can be interpreted that in learning activities in early childhood using hand puppet-assisted media with the storytelling method so that children more easily understand the contents of the stories conveyed by the teacher. This opinion is strengthened by Rizqillah (2013) who states that the storytelling method is very effective as a goal to build up Islamic education for children. Meanwhile, Indahyani's opinion (2014) concludes that the storytelling method has a positive influence on language skills in spoken language, where spoken language can be implemented through conversational activities.

Based on the above opinion, the media is a supporter in learning activities to increase the strengthening of the religious character value and the language skill of children aged with the method of storytelling assisted by hand puppets.

This opinion is proven in this research that the experiment class was more effective in strengthening the religious character value and the language skill of the children aged 5-6 years at TK ABA 04 Penaruban, than the control class which was assisted by the picture media. In this research, the children of the experiment class

can learn using media assisted by hand puppets with the storytelling method delivered by the teacher, therefore they can carry out prayer activities as well as say *subhanallah* when feeling happy, say *astaghfirullah* when feeling surprised or feeling guilty, and say *innalillah* when dropping something accidentally or seeing someone else fall.

## CONCLUSION

The results of the hypothesis test indicate that the learning using hand-puppet-assisted media has a significant effect of the  $p < 0.05$  on increasing the religious character value and the language skill of children aged 5-6 years. This is indicated by the mean of the scores obtained on the indicators of religious character value and language skill after treatment in the very well developed category, and the results of the hypothesis test show that the  $p < 0.05$ .

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