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Traditional Games as a Strategy for Physical Education Based on Local Wisdom for Primary School Teacher Education Students

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Abstract

Traditional games have the potential to integrate motor skill development, character building, and local cultural understanding within Physical Education, Sports, and Health (PJOK). This study analyzed their potential as an instructional strategy grounded in local wisdom and their implications for students in Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) programmes as prospective teachers. A qualitative narrative literature review was conducted using journal articles, academic books, and other relevant scholarly sources addressing traditional games, physical education, motor skills, and local wisdom. Analysis involved information selection, thematic categorization, comparison of findings, and synthesis. The review suggests that traditional games can offer opportunities to develop fundamental movement skills, coordination, and balance while encouraging cooperation, sportsmanship, and responsibility. For PGSD students, these games may also support the development of competencies in designing, implementing, and evaluating contextualized PJOK instruction. Implementation should consider learner characteristics, instructional objectives, safety, available facilities, and cultural diversity. The study concludes that traditional games represent a promising instructional strategy for integrating local wisdom into physical education, although their effectiveness requires evaluation within specific learning contexts. The synthesis provides guidance for preparing prospective primary school teachers to incorporate local cultural resources into physical education.

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Keywords: Traditional Games; Physical Education; Local Wisdom; Primary School Teacher Education; Fundamental Movement Skills

INTRODUCTION

Physical Education, Sports, and Health (PJOK) is an essential component of primary education because it provides students with opportunities to develop movement skills, physical fitness, health knowledge, and the ability to interact positively with others. High-quality PJOK instruction focuses not only on physical abilities but also on students' cognitive, social, emotional, and character development. Bailey (2006) explains that physical education and sport have the potential to contribute to children's physical, social, affective, and cognitive development. Realizing these benefits requires well-planned instruction that encourages active participation and takes students' characteristics into account.

Sport involves planned physical activity intended to develop physical abilities, movement skills, fitness, and social competencies. In primary education, sport is incorporated into PJOK to provide movement experiences while supporting students' holistic development. Bailey (2006) explains that physical education and sport have the potential to provide physical, social, affective, and cognitive benefits. To achieve these benefits, teachers need to design activities that align with students' needs and characteristics.

PJOK instruction should provide students with opportunities to engage in physical activity, practice new skills, understand rules, and cooperate with others. Traditional games represent one approach that can support these objectives.

One alternative instructional strategy for PJOK is the use of traditional games. Traditional games are recreational activities that have developed within communities and been passed down from one generation to the next. Games such as gobak sodor, bentengan, engklek, jump rope, bakiak (traditional wooden clogs), and egrang (stilts) involve distinctive movement patterns and rules that can be incorporated into sports and physical education activities. Traditional games can serve as a means of developing locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills. For example, gobak sodor involves running and changing direction, whereas engklek involves jumping and maintaining balance. The game of bentengan also provides students with opportunities to practice decision-making, communication, and teamwork.

Traditional games are games that develop within communities and are passed down through cultural practices from one generation to the next. They have established rules, movement patterns, and social values that can be used as learning resources. Anggita (2019) identified various traditional games practiced in Indonesian communities, including bentengan, gobak sodor, bakiak, egrang, and other group games. This diversity demonstrates that traditional games can provide children with varied physical activities and social experiences. Traditional games have several characteristics: They originate from community traditions and cultural practices. They follow rules agreed upon by the players. They involve physical activity and social interaction. They may use simple equipment or readily available environmental resources. They can be adapted to meet educational objectives. These characteristics make traditional games suitable for development as instructional media that connect physical activity with local culture.

An instructional strategy is a planned set of activities designed to achieve educational objectives. In PJOK, instructional strategies should consider the movement skills being developed, the level of difficulty, student participation, available facilities, and safety. Traditional games can be implemented as an instructional strategy by aligning their movement patterns with specific learning objectives. For example, gobak sodor can provide opportunities for students to practice running and changing direction. Engklek can be used to practice balance, while jump rope can help develop coordination and movement rhythm.

Prasetio and Praramdana (2020) examined gobak sodor and bentengan as traditional games in character-based physical education at the primary school level. Their study indicates that traditional games can provide opportunities to foster cooperation, self-confidence, honesty, responsibility, tolerance, mutual respect, and discipline. Meanwhile, Aliriad et al. (2024) investigated the use of traditional games to develop motor skills and motivation to learn physical education.

Ariyanto et al. (2020) examined the use of traditional games to improve fundamental movement skills among primary school students. Their research is relevant to the development of varied movement-based learning activities through play. However, game selection must be guided by clearly defined objectives. Teachers need to identify the skills to be developed, establish the rules, and determine observable indicators to ensure that activities serve educational purposes rather than functioning solely as recreation.

Local wisdom refers to the knowledge, values, and cultural practices that develop within communities. In education, local wisdom can serve as a learning resource that helps students understand their surroundings and cultural identities. Kurniawan (2018b) explains that traditional games from Yogyakarta have the potential to serve as alternative learning resources based on local wisdom in primary schools. These games can be connected to educational objectives because they offer varied activities and cultural values that students can explore.

In PJOK, local wisdom can be integrated by introducing the origins of games, explaining their rules, identifying their cultural values, and conducting activities appropriate to students' needs. For PGSD students, this process provides opportunities to learn about local culture and develop contextually relevant instructional materials. They must also ensure that information about a game's origins is supported by reliable sources.

Motor skills refer to the ability to perform coordinated body movements. In PJOK, these skills can be developed through locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative activities. Locomotor movements include walking, running, and jumping. Non-locomotor movements include bending, twisting, and maintaining body positions. Manipulative movements include throwing, catching, and controlling objects.

Aliriad et al. (2024) investigated the use of traditional games to develop motor skills and motivation to learn physical education among primary school students. Their research provides an empirical basis for considering traditional games as an alternative approach to movement-based instruction.

Furthermore, Prasetio and Praramdana (2020) examined character values associated with gobak sodor and bentengan. Group games can provide opportunities for students to learn cooperation, follow rules, respect their peers, and demonstrate responsibility. Nevertheless, character development requires teacher guidance and reflection. Participation in games alone does not guarantee that these values will develop automatically.

In higher education, students enrolled in Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) programs are prepared to become prospective teachers who can design instruction according to the needs of primary school pupils. These students need to understand how to select appropriate games, establish learning objectives, modify rules, ensure safety, and assess learning outcomes. Therefore, traditional games should not be viewed merely as recreational

activities; rather, they should be developed into instructional strategies with clear pedagogical objectives.

PGSD students need to develop the skills required to design, implement, and evaluate instruction in primary schools. When using traditional games, they should be able to:

Establish appropriate learning objectives. Select games based on the skills they aim to develop. Design game rules and implementation procedures. Adapt activities to students' abilities. Ensure safety and inclusive participation. Assess students' movement skills and social behavior. Reflect on the effectiveness of the learning process.

Traditional games can therefore serve as a practical pedagogical tool in PGSD teacher education programs. Students not only learn about the games themselves but also gain experience in managing PJOK instruction creatively, contextually, and responsibly.

Although previous studies have addressed specific dimensions of traditional games in physical education, including character development, fundamental movement skills, and the use of local wisdom, the present article brings these strands together with attention to the pedagogical competencies of PGSD students. Its contribution lies in synthesizing the potential of traditional games across motor skills, character development, local culture, and the preparation of prospective primary school teachers.

Accordingly, this article aims to analyze the potential of traditional games as a local wisdom-based instructional strategy for Physical Education, Sports, and Health (PJOK), and to discuss their implications for the pedagogical competencies of students in Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) programs.

METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a narrative literature review method. The review examined scholarly sources addressing traditional games, Physical Education, Sports, and Health (PJOK), motor skills, character education, and local wisdom. This method was selected to identify and synthesize previously published ideas and findings rather than to test an intervention involving university students or primary school pupils.

Because this study was a narrative literature review, it did not involve human participants or participant sampling. The unit of analysis consisted of published scholarly sources relevant to the study focus.

The study focused on four main aspects: (1) the potential of traditional games in PJOK instruction; (2) the relationship between traditional games, motor skills, and character development; (3) the integration of local wisdom into physical education; and (4) the implications of using traditional games for the pedagogical competencies of students enrolled in Primary School Teacher Education (PGSD) programs.

The data sources included scholarly journal articles, research methodology books, academic books on physical education, and documents relevant to physical activity and education. The main references included studies by Prasetio and Praramdana (2020), Kurniawan (2018), Ariyanto et al. (2020), and Aliriad et al. (2024). These sources were used to examine character values, local wisdom, fundamental movement skills, and the implementation of traditional games in education.

Data were collected through literature documentation using the following steps: (1) identifying search keywords, such as traditional games, PJOK, PGSD, local wisdom, and motor skills; (2) searching for relevant scholarly publications through journal websites and academic databases; (3) examining the available sources' titles, abstracts, methods, results, and conclusions; (4) recording findings relevant to the research focus; and (5) organizing the findings according to predetermined themes.

The data were analyzed using a descriptive thematic approach adapted from the qualitative data analysis procedures proposed by Miles et al. (2014). The analysis involved data condensation, data display, comparison of findings, and conclusion drawing. During data condensation, information unrelated to the research focus was excluded from the synthesis. During data display, the information was organized into four themes: motor skills, character development, local wisdom, and pedagogical competencies.

Subsequently, findings from different sources were compared to identify similarities and differences. Conclusions were drawn based on the available information while taking into account the limitations of each study. This review was narrative in nature and did not employ a fully documented systematic review procedure. Therefore, the numbers of articles identified, screened, and excluded are not reported as empirical figures.

As the study relied on published materials, no direct data collection from human participants was conducted. The sources are acknowledged through in-text citations and the reference list.

RESULTS

The literature synthesis indicates that traditional games have the potential to support Physical Education, Sports, and Health (PJOK) instruction through physical movement, social interaction, and the introduction of local culture. These potential benefits can be categorized into four main themes. The synthesis of findings and their instructional implications is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Synthesis of Literature Findings and Instructional Implications

Aspect	Synthesis of Findings	Instructional Implications
Motor skills	Traditional games involve running, jumping, dodging, and maintaining balance.	Teachers should select games that align with the intended movement skills.
Character education	Group games provide opportunities to practice cooperation and compliance with rules.	Teachers should guide students' behavior and facilitate reflection.
Local wisdom	Traditional games can introduce community traditions and cultural practices.	Students should use verifiable information about local culture.
Pedagogical competence	Implementing games requires planning, classroom management, and assessment.	PGSD students can practice designing and delivering instructional activities.

Analysis of Traditional Games

Gobak Sodor. This game involves running, dodging, and changing direction. It can be used to develop agility while providing students with opportunities to cooperate and follow rules.

Engklek (Hopscotch). This game involves jumping and maintaining balance. Teachers can adjust the distances between squares and the level of difficulty to suit students' abilities.

Ma'benteng (Traditional Fortress Game). This game involves chasing, dodging, and decision-making. As a group activity, it provides opportunities for students to develop communication and teamwork skills.

Jump Rope. This activity involves movement coordination and rhythmic adjustment. The level of difficulty should be adapted to students' abilities and the condition of the equipment.

Local Traditional Games. Games practiced within local communities can be selected according to their movement requirements, learning objectives, cultural values, and safety considerations.

This mapping represents a pedagogical analysis based on the general characteristics of traditional games rather than the results of direct measurements conducted by the author.

Analysis of the Alignment Between Traditional Games and Learning Objectives

Table 2 presents the relationship between selected traditional games, their learning focus, and observable indicators that can be used in instructional practice.

Table 2. Alignment of Traditional Games with Learning Objectives

Game	Learning Focus	Observable Indicators
Gobak Sodor	Agility and changes in direction	Students can change direction in a controlled manner.
Engklek (Hopscotch)	Balance and coordination	Students can perform jumps appropriate to their ability levels.
Bentengan (Traditional Fortress Game)	Reaction speed and cooperation	Students can respond to situations and communicate with their teammates.
Jump Rope	Coordination and movement rhythm	Students can coordinate their jumps with the rhythm of the rope.

These indicators can be developed into observation rubrics for teaching practice conducted by PGSD students. Assessment should take into account students' initial abilities, safety, and equal opportunities for participation.

DISCUSSION

Traditional Games in the Development of Motor Skills

Traditional games have the potential to serve as instructional media for movement-based learning because they involve a variety of physical activities. Movements such as running, jumping, dodging, and maintaining balance provide students with opportunities to practice body control in game situations.

The study by Ariyanto et al. (2020) is relevant to discussions of fundamental movement skills among primary school students. Meanwhile, Aliriad et al. (2024) investigated motor skills and learning motivation through the use of traditional games. These two sources support the importance of considering traditional games in Physical Education, Sports, and Health (PJOK) instruction. However, the effectiveness of each game should still be evaluated

according to the learning objectives, students' characteristics, duration of practice, and appropriate assessment instruments.

For PGSD students, selecting a game should begin with identifying the movement skills to be developed. If the learning objective focuses on balance, engklek (a traditional hopscotch game) may be considered. If the objective focuses on agility, gobak sodor can be adapted to suit students' abilities and learning conditions.

Traditional Games as a Means of Character Education

Traditional games create social situations in which students can learn to cooperate, share responsibilities, follow rules, and respect others. Prasetio and Praramdana (2020) examined character values in gobak sodor and bentengan. Their findings indicate that traditional games can serve as an alternative approach to character-based physical education.

However, character development does not occur automatically. Teachers need to provide guidance, model expected behaviors, and encourage students to reflect after playing. For example, students can be asked to explain how their teams resolved disagreements or responded to defeat. Therefore, learning outcomes should not be assessed solely in terms of who wins. Teachers should also consider how students follow the rules and interact with one another throughout the activity.

Integration of Local Wisdom

The use of traditional games makes it possible to connect PJOK instruction with community culture. Kurniawan (2018b) demonstrated that traditional games from Yogyakarta can serve as alternative learning resources based on local wisdom in primary schools. For PGSD students, local wisdom can be integrated into instruction by identifying games practiced in local communities, documenting their rules, and analyzing the cultural values embedded in them. For example, students undertaking teaching practice in South Sulawesi can explore local games through literature reviews or interviews with community members who are knowledgeable about local traditions. The information gathered can then be used to design activities that align with PJOK learning objectives. This approach helps prospective teachers develop contextualized instruction while maintaining the accuracy and reliability of cultural information.

Implications for the Pedagogical Competence of PGSD Students

The use of traditional games in PGSD coursework can provide opportunities for practical pedagogical training. Students can develop lesson plans, demonstrate games, organize groups, observe movement skills, and evaluate learning activities. Through these activities, students practice formulating learning objectives, selecting instructional media, modifying rules, implementing safety procedures, and developing assessment methods.

Lecturers can use assessment rubrics to evaluate students' abilities to design activities, explain rules clearly, manage time, involve all participants, and facilitate reflection. Thus, students do not merely learn about traditional games as physical activities; they also develop the skills needed to teach these games effectively to primary school pupils.

Challenges and Alternative Solutions

The implementation of traditional games presents several challenges. First, differences in students' physical abilities may make it difficult for some participants to engage fully in certain games. This challenge can be addressed by adjusting distances, activity duration, equipment, and rules. Second, limited space and facilities may hinder implementation. Teachers should select games that suit the school environment and ensure that playing surfaces are safe.

Third, information about local games may not be adequately documented. Students can consult written sources and conduct interviews with individuals who have knowledge of local cultural traditions. Fourth, learning assessment needs to be systematically designed. Teachers can use motor-skill assessment rubrics, behavioral observation sheets, and reflective questions. Fifth, the risk of injury must be addressed through warm-up activities, environmental safety checks, clear explanations of the rules, appropriate supervision, and the suspension of activities whenever conditions become unsafe.

Research Limitations and Future Directions

This article is limited by its narrative literature review design and the absence of a fully documented systematic search and screening procedure. Accordingly, the synthesis identifies potential educational benefits but does not establish the causal effectiveness of particular traditional games in specific learning settings. Future studies may use empirical designs to evaluate selected games against clearly defined motor-skill, social-behavior, and pedagogical indicators.

CONCLUSION

Traditional games have the potential to serve as a local wisdom-based instructional strategy for Physical Education, Sports, and Health (PJOK) in primary schools. Games such as gobak sodor, engklek, bentengan, and jump rope provide opportunities to develop movement skills, social interaction, and an understanding of game rules.

Furthermore, traditional games can introduce students to community culture and foster cooperation, sportsmanship, responsibility, and discipline. For PGSD students, familiarity with traditional games can support the development of pedagogical competencies in designing, implementing, and evaluating PJOK instruction. Implementation should take into account learning objectives, students' characteristics, safety, the availability of facilities, and the local cultural context. Since this article employs a narrative literature review, its conclusions indicate potential benefits based on the literature examined rather than presenting evidence from an experiment conducted by the author.

Future research is encouraged to examine the implementation of specific traditional games in different primary school contexts and to evaluate learning outcomes using appropriate and clearly defined assessment indicators.

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