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EXPLORATION OF PHYSICAL ELEMENTS IN THE TRADITIONAL GAME OF WELA MAKA IN WAWOWAE VILLAGE

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to explore the physical elements in the traditional Wela Maka sport in Wawowae Village. The method used is descriptive qualitative with a naturalistic approach. The population in this study consisted of the people of Wawowae village who were also sports activists, and the sample was obtained using purposive sampling, resulting in a total sample of 4 people. non-test techniques (surveys) consisting of reviewing documents and archives (content analysis), observation and in-depth interviews (in-depth interviews) with community leaders, sports activists, the public and sports enthusiasts as well as analysis of available field documentation. The results of the implementation of this research are that the exploration of the physical elements contained in the wela maka or top game include: balance, eye and hand coordination, agility, strength and speed. By mastering these motor skills, a gasing player will easily master the series of movements in this wela maka game.

Keywords: Physical Elements, Traditional Game of Wela Maka.


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INTRODUCTION

Traditional games are an inseparable part of the cultural heritage of a society passed down from generation to generation by our ancestors which contain positive values that are able to develop the physical, health, fitness and mental abilities of the players which must be preserved today (Lubis et al., 2021). These traditional games and sports are generally played with simple equipment that is easily found around the local social community environment (Hayati et al, 2021). Basically, traditional games are children's games, but are also played by adults. This game remains fun and exciting for the players because it aims as a means of

entertainment (Rifky et al., 2013). The principle is that traditional games have unique characteristics compared to other types of games. First, traditional games usually use tools or facilities available in the surrounding environment without having to buy them. Second, these games tend to involve many players and are communal in nature. It is not surprising to see that almost every traditional game involves many participants. This is because in addition to prioritizing togetherness, traditional games also aim to improve interaction skills between players, as seen in the games of jamuran, betengan, and snakes and dragons, tops and others (Wariyanti, 2021).

Wela maka or better known as gasing is a traditional game originating from the Bajawa region in East Nusa Tenggara province, Indonesia (Rini Dewi, 2017). The game has a long history and plays an important role in the social and cultural life of the Bajawa community. Through this game, the local community continues to instill historical values that are passed down from generation to generation with the implementation of game activities carried out regularly every year as a form of socialization to preserve cultural heritage which is currently threatened by the times and modernization. The wela maka game in Bajawa is not just a game, but is also full of cultural values and symbolism. The game is often associated with traditional rites and ceremonies that aim to strengthen social ties and community identity. This game has its own characteristics and is a very old game and is often played by children and adolescents in the area with a beautiful form of performance and the characteristics of the game, which is rotating on one axis balanced at one point (Jayendra et al., 2019; Suartika et al., 2022). In relation to this research, the exploration of physical elements in the traditional game of wela maka then becomes the main focus. This traditional game contains ten elements of physical fitness, which are agility, balance, strength, speed, flexibility, endurance, muscle power, reaction, health, and coordination. Various types of traditional games can improve the ability of community elements to exercise (Hadjarati, Dai, & Haryanto, 2021; Wardika, 2019). Exploration of the physical elements above is seen as important to understand more profoundly and comprehensively how these

games contribute to the physical development and health of the players and activists, which can be a tool to motivate someone to exercise in improving their physical motor abilities which of course have a significant role and benefit to the elements of physical fitness (Bile et al, 2021), so that through traditional wela games, in addition to developing cultural values that are important to preserve, it is also important to explore more deeply the impact on the dominant physical elements that influence them. In this modern world, many traditional games are facing the threat of extinction due to the lack of interest of the younger generation and the increasingly prolific influence of pop culture. The rapid advancement of electronic games has caused traditional games to be increasingly eliminated and almost forgotten (Allsabah et al, 2019). Unlike games on smartphones that tend to be individualized, making players like zombies during the day, immersed in their game world without any social interaction around them. Other negative impacts are also seen in children's physical health. Eye health and radiation exposure from online games pose a real threat to children's health. Therefore, research on traditional games such as wela is not only important to understand the physical aspects of the game, but also involves sporting activities that can improve the character values of each player, especially in terms of cooperation seen through interactions between players, strategies used, and the level of concentration and focus required. All of this provides a more holistic understanding of the benefits of these traditional games for children and youth development (Latif, Faozi, Bakhri, Harja, & Listiandi, 2019; Rusita, Sarmidi, & Erliana, 2020). By exploring the body movements, strength, and agility required in these games, we can assess the extent to which these games contribute to physical health, including muscle development, balance, and motor coordination.

METHOD

This research aims to explore the physical elements contained in traditional games and is a type of descriptive qualitative research with a naturalistic approach. This qualitative method through a naturalistic approach will be used to explore the various physical aspects of traditional games, including movement,

space, tools, and the physical environment that influence the play experience. Through this approach, this research aims to gain a deeper understanding of how these physical elements influence the dynamics of traditional games and the experience of play for the participants. The research methods used were participatory observation and interviews.

Data were collected using non-test (survey) techniques consisting of document and archive review (content analysis), observation and in-depth interviews with community leaders, sports activists, the community and wela sports enthusiasts and analysis of available field documentation. The validity technique used is data triangulation. The data analysis technique used is an interactive model analysis through three components, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing or verification. These three components must be present in qualitative data analysis. The strong attachment between the three components needs to be continuously compared to determine the direction of the conclusion as the final result of the research. The interactive analysis pattern presented by Miles and Huberman can be seen in the following graph.

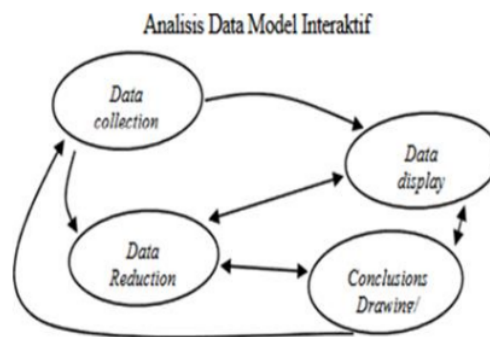


Figure 1. Data Analysis Interactive Model (Miles and Huberman, 2018)

Data collection is a collection of information that allows researchers to make conclusions and take action. Data presentation is a complete explanation of information in the form of descriptions and narratives, which are organized based on the points of findings in data reduction. Data reduction is a process of selecting.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Wela maka is one of the traditional games in Bajawa, specifically in Wawowae village in Ngada district on the island of Flores, East Nusa Tenggara Province, which aims to welcome the traditional feast of reba or thanksgiving for the local harvest. This game has a deep cultural meaning and is part of the tradition and identity of the local community which is held annually. Etymologically, this wela maka game contains the word wela which means throwing and the word maka which means spinning, so the name wela maka means a spinning game, so this game is actually played by men, both children of middle and high school age and adults, to welcome the local community's traditional event called reba or thanksgiving to God, nature and ancestors for the harvest obtained by the local community in a year. This certainly provides confirmation that traditional games are useful to be developed in order to increase people's understanding as cultured people of the culture of the heritage of ancestors that have to be maintained, cared for and preserved to all generations and young people (Pratiwi & Pujiastuti, 2020).

The people involved are usually men, both young and old, who participate in the game as players or supporters. In the game, each team or group consists of 10 men and each player must be in the traditional dress of Bajawa. The game uses materials such as hard and resistant wood such as coffee and orange wood. Each part of the top or wela maka has a specific function that determines its role in the game, such as the head of the wela maka or top which acts as the center of the balance of the top and serves as a barrier to blows from the opponent's top; the neck part serves as the starting place for the main winding of the rope and is often the target of blows from the opponent's top; The shoulder of the wela maka or top which functions as a place for the continuation of the rope winding, as well as a role in holding the balance of the top and being the target of the opponent's blow from the top; the tail has an important role as a determinant of the stability of the top and is the target of the opponent's blow from the top; the pedestal of the wela maka or top also functions as a place for installing the pax or nail, as well as being

the main support and balance determinant (the lower part of the top). The tools used in traditional games usually do not require high costs; in fact, objects found in the surrounding environment can be used as fun materials for traditional games (Ririn Yuniasih, et.al., 2020). Other materials that are also needed in the wela maka game then in Wawaowae village are ropes which are usually made of strong and easily available materials such as nylon or natural fiber rope, with a length of approximately 1 meter which is tied to a spinning top and then pulled to rotate it and nails or pointed wood which is used as a shaft or axis on a spinning top located at the bottom of the spinning top to make it easier for the spinning top to rotate properly with a size of 5-7 cm.

The wela maka or spinning top game generally consists of the first player throwing the spinning top to the ground with a rope tied to the top and then the other team throwing the spinning top with their own spinning top, so the throwing technique is very important to ensure that the top spins stably and for a long time. The game is divided into 2 teams, team A and team B. The game is divided into 3 stages, namely, Esa, Leke, and Riwe with each distance from Esa to Leke 2 meters, Leke to Riwe 4 to 5 meters depending on the agreement or the results of the discussion before the game starts. At the Esa stage, team A is in charge of spinning the top, while team B is in charge of throwing the top. If team B succeeds in throwing and hitting the spinning top of team A then the game will continue to stage 2, namely leke, if team B fails, then the game will be repeated and take turns to rotate and throw the spinning top. The leke stage is that the spinning top from team A will be stored upside down on a predetermined line, and team B tries to throw and hit the spinning top from team A, if team B succeeds, it will continue to stage 3, namely Riwe. If it fails, the team will rotate. The riwe stage is that team A rotates the spinning top on a predetermined line, while team B tries to throw the spinning top with a distance from the Esa line to the riwe line, if team B succeeds in hitting the spinning top from team A, then team B successfully completes the first set or in the local language, Raka Esa. The game is played as many as 5 sets, with 3 wins, if each team is able to complete it then the team is

declared the winner of the match. The game is played in an open space and is usually held in the middle of the village, so that it can be witnessed by all spectators from Wawowae village itself, as well as from several neighboring villages who are invited to this place. In addition, games carried out in open areas provide a different atmosphere for each player to more freely explore all their abilities. This is in line with what is revealed by (Sibel Beci et al, 2017) which explains that games carried out outdoors provide humans with space and opportunities to explore their living environment and learn about the world. The game has rules that must be followed and by playing of course they learn to obey these rules, so they can prepare themselves to live in society as cultured individuals.

The game of wela maka or throwing a spinning top in its implementation certainly requires physical agility from each of the players. This game requires expertise in rotating the spinning top in a perfect spinning top, as well as the physical strength to throw it so that the opponent's spinning top collapses and cannot rotate through movement activities and the game will also hone basic human movement abilities, which include the development of movement skills, physical abilities, and social skills (Lumintuarso, 2013). Traditional games generally require strength, flexibility, speed, and accuracy of the players' reactions. In addition, traditional sports also involve physical activities that can improve students' character values, especially in terms of cooperation (Latif, Faozi, Bakhri, Harja, & Listiandi, 2019; Rusita, Sarmidi, & Erliana, 2020).

The following is an exploration of the dominant physical elements or movements in the game wela maka or gasing which are summarized into five elements of motor movement, namely: Balance; When spinning the top, they must maintain their body balance in order to direct the rope correctly and ensure the top can spin stably. The balance factor is essential to maintain control during the launching process. The Wela Maka game can train the balance of each participant, because body balance is closely related to the physical strength and endurance of children. Being overweight in children clearly affects their level of physical

fitness, which in turn interferes with broader movements. In addition, children's endurance and physical strength also affect their basic movement skills. This can be an inhibiting factor for children's success in playing the traditional game of Wela Maka. Low basic skills and low physical fitness levels can simultaneously or independently increase the risk of adolescent obesity and other health problems (Lopes, Maia, Rodrigues, & Malina, 2012). Coordination; Playing a top requires good hand-eye coordination. Players must coordinate their hand movements with vision to set the speed and direction of the top correctly. Coordination is an adjustment that affects a group of muscles while performing a movement, which shows a variety of skills. According to James Tangkudung (2016), coordination is the ability to perform movements with varying degrees of difficulty quickly, efficiently and precisely. In wela games, coordination involves foot-eye coordination, eye-hand coordination, and overall coordination. Agility; Agility is required when turning and controlling the top quickly and accurately. Agile hand and body movements assist and direct the top and maintain optimal rotation. Agility in children is one of the indicators of gross motor skills in every human being. Physical abilities will develop along with the many activities carried out by each individual. Therefore, providing a learning environment is important to support skills and maturity in physical aspects. In line with this, the provision of a learning environment is necessary to develop motor skills in children (Morgan & Hansen, 2008). It is recommended that wela games are safest played on the ground and large open spaces. This avoids injuries when people play and are able to maintain their balance while playing.

Strength: Spinning a top requires strength especially in the hands and arms. Proper strength helps to give the top enough momentum to spin for a long time. During the wela game, one of the benchmarks to determine the physical strength of the players is the distance of the spinning top throw. Players who have excellent physical strength, throw far and vice versa. Through this wela game, the physical strength of the players will be strengthened because in the wela game, each participant is required to throw as hard as possible. This confirms that the

wela game requires physical strength as the main capital in carrying out the game. By playing gasing throwing, each player will reflexively express their physical strength by throwing the gasing using the dominant hand as strong as possible with a considerable distance while holding one foot as a fulcrum. The skills in this traditional game directly have the potential to train basic movement skills so that this can help strengthen the physical strength of children from a young age. In line with the above description, it certainly confirms that through simple folk games will have a significant impact on the basic movements needed for normal motor development, positive self-image, self-perceived sports competence, lifelong interest and participation in physical activities which can also improve the health or physical fitness aspects of each activist (Fisher et al., 2005; Olrich, 2002).

Speed: The speed with which the hand winds the string and pulls it quickly determines the speed at which the top rotates. This quick movement helps to create a strong and stable spin. The physical element that is the main capital in children can be trained through a variety of simple ways, one of which is through the game of wela maka or throwing a top. This effort can ultimately stimulate and show how fast each individual is able to move in completing this series of games. Indeed, the skills of basic movement elements in humans must be actively taught from an early age. Swarup Mukherjee, et.al, (2017) also explained that the most basic physical elements are most successfully acquired in adolescence. This means that efforts to train, and stimulate movement abilities and physical elements in them are important to do in order to support the process of human growth and development through various simple activities including folk games in their habitat environment.

By utilizing the five physical elements through the game wela maka or this dominant top game, each player in each team can certainly improve their respective skills so that in this top game each player is able to show and achieve physical quality in this game better and optimally and be able to win this game with satisfactory results, because in essence traditional games that are contested will be a place for people to spend their free time. In addition, the development of

traditional games has a positive impact on the development of the surrounding community, especially children who are still in school or have status as students / adolescents. Traditional games are able to improve student activeness, increase student insight and are able to foster a sense of love for the homeland, by preserving the heritage left by the ancestors (Rahayu & Firmansyah, 2019; Rusita et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

The traditional game wela maka or gasing is a type of folk or traditional game that has been and is preserved by the community members in Wawowae village, Ngada Regency, East Nusa Tenggara province. This game is certainly a reflection of the rich cultural heritage of local traditions that continue to survive today. The traditional game wela maka or gasing actually functions not only as a means of entertainment, but also as a tool for preserving culture, developing motor skills, and strengthening social and community ties.

Gasing games in Bajawa, as in many areas in Indonesia, have a purpose that is more than just entertainment. Some of the main objectives of the gasing game in Bajawa are Preserving Traditional Culture. The gasing game is an important part of Bajawa's cultural heritage. By continuing to play it, people can maintain and preserve traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation, strengthening ties of brotherhood. This game is often played in groups or at certain events, which aims to strengthen relationships between community members and build togetherness, improve skills and dexterity. When playing a top, it certainly requires special skills, both in managing the top correctly and in maintaining the rotation. This can train dexterity, hand and eye coordination, and patience. As a means of entertainment and recreation like other traditional games, gasing also functions as a means of entertainment and recreation for the community, providing joy and pleasure, as a means of healthy competition, so that the top game is often used as a means of healthy competition, both at the local and inter-village levels. This competition can strengthen relations between communities and develop a spirit of sportsmanship among local people.

In the implementation of the wela maka game, there are dominant physical elements which are the determinants and conditions which must be mastered by the players. Exploration of these physical elements includes: balance, eye and hand coordination, agility, strength and speed. By mastering these motor skills, a gasing player will easily master the series of movements in this wela maka game.

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