

Horse Racing: A Traditional Game to Improve Children's Motor Gross Skill (Ethnopedagogy study on Dompu Tribe)

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Abstract

Gross motor encompasses all abilities of coordination, flexibility, and balance. Children are given opportunities to play more energetically activities such as horse racing traditional game. Yet, the study aims to investigate the stages of early childhood Gross motor skill transition using traditional horse racing activities in the Dompu community of Indonesia. This research employs a qualitative approach by ethnographic methods. The research subjects consisted of six young jockeys aged 4-8 years old and seven horse owners. The data were gathered through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using domain, taxonomic, compound and theme analysis techniques. The researchers found that the child jockeys go through three stages as their gross motor abilities improve and mature. The development of children's gross motor abilities begins with horse cleaning, river riding, and regular training in the horse racing arena. All of these stages are completed by youngsters with supervision of professionals or parents. Past research have shown that horseback riding may be used as a physical motor therapy intervention for children with special needs, such as autism and down syndrome.

Keywords: *gross motor; early childhood; horse racing; dompu tribe*

Abstrak

Motorik kasar meliputi semua kemampuan koordinasi, kelenturan, dan keseimbangan. Anak-anak harus diberi kesempatan untuk bermain lebih giat seperti permainan tradisional pacuan kuda. Oleh sebab itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui tahapan transisi keterampilan motorik kasar anak usia dini dalam pacuan kuda tradisional di masyarakat Dompu Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode etnografi. Subjek penelitian terdiri dari enam orang joki muda berusia 4-8 tahun, dan tujuh orang pemilik kuda. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. selanjutnya dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis domain, taksonomi, majemuk, dan analisis tema. Peneliti menemukan bahwa joki cilik melewati tiga tahap saat kemampuan motorik kasar meningkat dan matang. Pengembangan kemampuan motorik kasar dimulai saat membersihkan kuda, berkuda, dan menunggang kuda di arena pacuan kuda. Semua tahapan tersebut diselesaikan dalam pengawasan profesional atau orangtua. Peneliti juga menegaskan bahwa menunggang kuda dapat digunakan sebagai intervensi terapi motorik fisik untuk anak berkebutuhan khusus, seperti autisme dan down sindrom.

Kata Kunci: *motorik kasar; pendidikan anak usia dini; balapan kuda; suku dompu*

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INTRODUCTION

Early childhood as stated in the NAEYC (National Association for Education of Young Children), are children aged between 0 to 8 years who obtain educational services in child care parks, family child care home, pre-school education both public and private, kindergarten and elementary school (Siti Aisyah, 2011). In Indonesia, early childhood (AUD) children aged between 0-6 years. The growth and development of young children should be exactly encouraged in order to stimulate their growth in a healthy and maximum manner. Yet, it is of great importance for parents, adults, and teachers to understand all facets of child growth and development (Suryana, 2013). One key feature of development for children is a physical motor that makes students ready to enter further education (Permendikbud, 2014). Physical motor development is one of the important stages in AUD. These motor skills can be classified based on the size of the muscles and related body parts, that is to say, Gross motor skills and fine motor skills (Hasanah, 2016). Gross motor refers to a part of motor that comprises the skills of large muscles such as the hands, feet, and the child's whole body. Coarse motor skills in early childhood experience development when they play, which involves them in activities that need children to use large muscles, such as running, climbing or driving a vehicle (Mcquillan, Coleman, & Rowell, 2007). Gross motor embraces all the abilities of body movements in a coordinated, flexible, balanced, agile, locomotor, well-organized non-locomotor (SNP PAUD, 2014).

Gross motor skills as body movements control through coordinated activities between the nervous system, muscles, brain, and spinal cord, which are required since the age of a toddler as part of the growth and development of children (Elizabeth B Hurlock, 2005). Gross motor is hugely linked to the work of large muscles in the human body commonly used by children to do sports activities and actions of the nerve center, nerves, and nerve-coordinated muscles. This ability is related to the children's ability to do different movements (Apriloka, 2020).

So that the gross motor skills of early childhood develop well, the children are provided with chances to play more vigorously outside the classroom (Sharifah Nor Puteh & Aliza Ali, 2013). Play is regarded crucial for the development in entire areas: physical, social, cognitive, mental/emotional and spiritual. Children's physical education lies in children's active exploration in their environment (Petrie & Clarkin-phillips, 2017). Children should be allowed to perform physical activities as their fundamental needs, which can stimulate considerable aspects of their health (Javanainen-Levonen, Poskiparta, Rintala, & Satomaa, 2009). Providing opportunities for children to have physical activity is an essential requirement (Zeng et al., 2017). Based on the ecological theory of human development, that the development of children, including physical development of motor skills is mostly influenced by the system of direct interaction with the environment (Sagala & Khasanah, 2015), and community life, in its connection with living space and time, has formed a pattern of life behaviour in the form of culture (Nasir, Badrudin, Pujiyati, & Safitri, 2020). Yet, closeness to nature can assist in improving the ability of children to concentrate and improve physical and cognitive abilities (Yıldırım & Akamca, 2017). Early cognitive abilities are also essential for children to cope with problems in daily life (Mulyati, Yufiarti, 2019). Additionally, children who usually have immediate contact with nature can assist other children in introducing them to be familiar with the surrounding environment (Bento & Dias, 2017). As Nasir, Rahmawati, & Adam (2019) stated in their research that traditional dance such as Lulo even meets curriculum principles to become a medium and learning input in early childhood education because Lulo dance contains elements of thought activity, heart processing, exercise feeling, intention, and sports and contain positive values contains.

A traditional game refers to a game that is directly linked to nature. One of nature's media discovered benefits such as playing games employing boards to develop children's cognitive physical abilities (W D Andika, M Akbar, Yufiarti, 2019). Additionally, one of the most unique traditional games is horse racing in the Dompu tribe, Indonesia. Horse racing is

played by young childrenb aged 4-8 years old. Early childhood riding horses are called little jockeys. Children's involvement in traditional horse racing games is in line with previous research, which suggests that children use traditional games to improve physical motor skills in boys with mental retardation to stimulate long jumping abilities, kicks, and catching thrown balls (Jaydari, Rouzbahani, & Hasanvand, 2016).

In terms of the horse racing games, they indicate that there are beneficial advantages that can increase motor physical, psychological, and social welfare for children with special needs (Voznesenskyy, Rivera-Quinatoa, Bonilla-Yacelga, & Cedeño-Zamora, 2016), and improve motor skills and sensory functions after taking part in riding activities (Yee-Pay Wang, Chih-Chung Wang, Mao-Hsiung Huang, 2015).

Horse racing in the Dompu tribe is carried out individually by early childhood. Horse riders have good physical strength and balance because when children ride horses, they must be able to control the horse and maintain balance. The age of the horse rider ranges from 4-8 years. They must also have a very good average ability in horseback riding. Such a situation is a typical thing that is generally seen. Children who play this game will be taught about the importance of loving animals such as horses and also the obligation to maintain environmental ecosystems. Damaging the environment is the same as violating the provisions of their ancestors (Ihlas, Yufiarti, & Edwita, 2019)

METHODOLOGY

This present study employs a qualitative approach with ethnographic methods, conducted in early childhood in the Dompu tribe, Indonesia. The study lasted for eight months. The researcher explored and described environmental conditions, jockey activities, horse owners and the community. During practices and racing horse racing activities, he worked with the people at the jockey's house and while training in the rice fields and rivers. Furthermore, understand it carefully. Researchers interviewed horse owners, parents of small jockeys, the government and the community. Data were documented through recordings, notes and videos concerning with the whole horse racing game activities. Researchers are engaged in total activities of the inhabitants. Participants in the study were 6 (six) young jockeys aged 4-8 years old, and 10 horse owners. The researcher also interviewed the parents of each young jockey pertaining to parenting them so that they can ride and handle a horse.

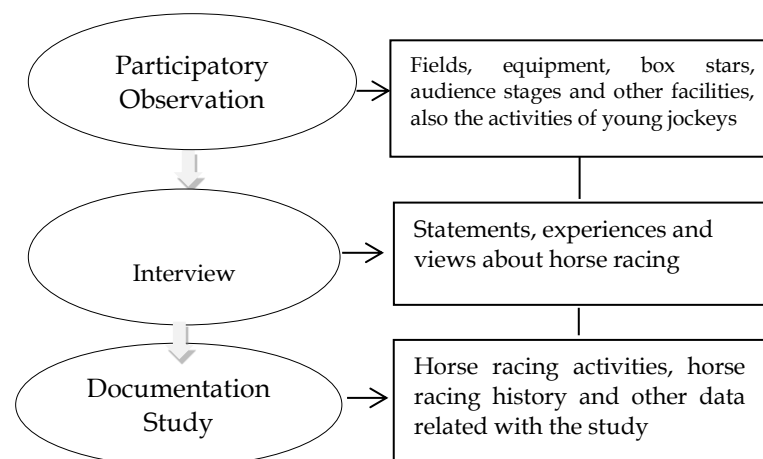


Figure 1. Data Collection Technique (Rahmawati, dkk., 2020)

The data are gathered through participant observation, interviews and documentation (Figure 1). Researcher observed children's activities, physical characteristics of social situations, and took part in horse racing activities. Observations were conducted at the location of horse racing activities, at the jockey's house, at the training ground. The researcher starts researching by making extensive descriptive observations, attempting to obtain thge

description of the social situation and what occurred during the process of horse racing activities. After recording and analyzing preliminary data, the research was limited and researchers started making focused observations. Lastly, after more analysis and repeated observation was conducted in the field to narrow the investigation, the researcher further makes selective observations, subsequently making focused observations. He proceeded to make common descriptive observations till the end of the field study (Sherman & Webb, 2005). Next, a study of documentation (pictures, notes, and recordings of horse racing) was conducted.

Whereas, data analysis in this study uses the James Spradley approach, which includes 4 steps; (1) domain analysis, (2) taxonomic analysis, (3) componential analysis, (4) theme analysis (Spradley, 1980; Sherman & Webb, 2005)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Gross Motor Skills

It is a must for children to experience a sequence of Gross motor skill strengthening processes before becoming a professional jockey. The natural method without formal learning. Children just play while sharing experiences with their playmates. The transformation stage of the motor ability to ride a horse begins with the habit of watching others ride, then get motivated, train, practice. The following figure is the process of transforming motor skills of early age children as a small jockey in the culture of horse racing done by the Dompu people.

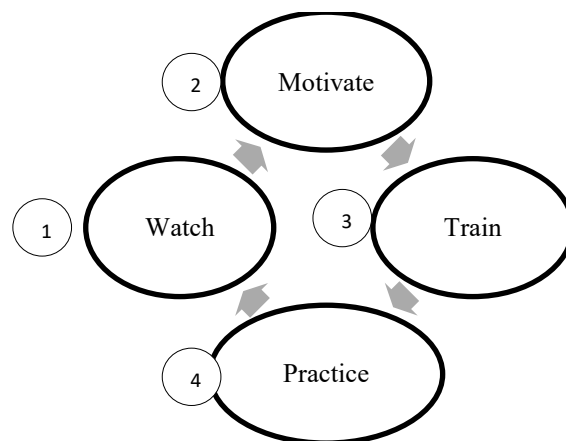


Figure 2. Transformation of children's motoric skills

The first step that the children possess riding skills is the candidate jockeys start riding by holding a rope and bathing horses in rivers, rice fields and on the coastline (**Figure 3**). In this stage, the prospective jockey's children are led by a senior child. In the second step, the jockey begins to ride horses in river water. After a few months, got into the habit of riding horses in the river, subsequently the third phase of the jockeys began to practice in the muddy fields (**Figure 4**). Next, after the jockey is regarded to have started the strong motor, it will be continued to the next phase of training on the horse racing field (**Figure 5**). At certain times the little jockeys commonly show the ability to ride horses in the official racetrack. For instance, when celebrating traditional events of the Dompu people.

If a young jockey participates in the game, the competition stage will begin with the jockey going into the star box. Inside the star box, he will be advised the way how to hold and control the horse. Furthermore, the horse off then ran exceedingly fast. Once a horse runs fast, muscle strength, focus power, courage, accuracy and foresight of the little jockey is exceptionally crucial and determine whether the horse he rides can be a winner or not. Gross motor skills also become essential so that the jockey does not fall on the horse he rides. The stages of transformation of Gross motor skills in children's horse racing games are as Chart 1.



Figure 4. Jockey began to practice



Figure 5. Jockies ride horses in the official racetrack



Figure 3. Jockies holding a rope and bathing horse in river

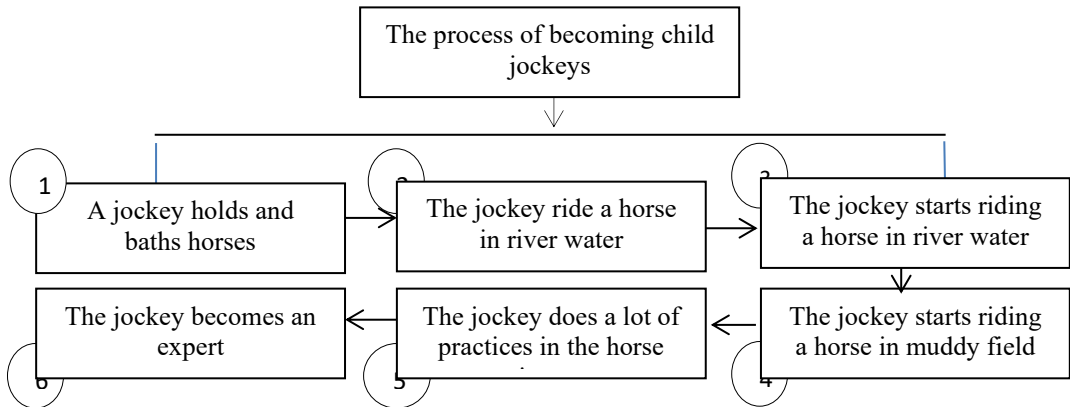


Chart 1. The stages of children learning to ride a horse

The traditional horse racing game in the Dompou community is adequate for the physical development of motor children in early childhood. Horse racing practices performed by children of Dompou tribe that occur separately agree with the opinion (Johnson, Christie, & Wardle, 2005), which prohibits teachers from excessively controlling children when playing. The presence of teachers is sufficient to supervise and concentrate on them. Adults must comprehend that children necessity actual experience independently of their environment (Walsh, 2016).

The horse racing game is immensely fond by the children of the Dompu tribe since playing is the children world, which is implemented based on feelings of pleasure, in the absence of seeing the result, acted on their own free will, without persuading them using threats or force or under pressure from other parties (Perkins & Taylor, 2016)

The beneficial impacts of horse racing can help improve the Gross motor skills of young children aged 4-8 years old. Horse riding can be a therapeutic medium for early childhood suffering from Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). This is in line with research findings that riding a horse that adults help, can assist motor development and sensory function in children with autism (Yee-Pay Wuang, Chih-Chung Wang, Mao-Hsiung Huang, 2015). Other research results revealed that riding has a very large favourable influence on children's Gross motor development in comparison to physical activities accomplished customarily. This is obvious that therapy with the assistance of horses can help with Gross motor function in children with Down syndrome. Other studies have indicated that proactively riding children contribute to the development of Gross motor sufferers with Down syndrome (Voznesenskyy et al., 2016). Riding therapy can increase balance, motor function, gait, muscle symmetry, pelvic movements, psychosocial parameters, and total quality of life of patients (Stergiou et al., 2017).

Riding a horse can help encourage the whole sensory functions of children with autism. As the theory presented by A. Jean Ayres in 1972, a model of human development termed as the sensory integration theory (SI). Furthermore, horse racing games grows children's concern to the environment and their caring for animals (Ihlas et al., 2019). Revealed in Ayres' theory, SI take place because of the influence of sensory input, including sensation of seeing, hearing, tactile, vestibular, and proprioceptive (Waiman, Gunardi, Sekartini, & Endyarni, 2011). Pertaining the function of sensory integration, the study results indicate that children with autism can perform occupational therapy to stimulate sensory integration (Petrin Kasdanel, 2013).

However, the traditional horse racing game constitutes a competition that demands little children to practice immediately in the wild. Children who work forthwith with nature can help stimulate creativity and have the ability to find solutions for solving problems (Veenema, Hetland, & Chalfen, n.d.). Furthermore, research findings revealed that children who are early participants who involve immediately in numerous activities in the wild and are physically active have good motor skills (Bell, Williams, Crane, Brown, & Temple, 2014).

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis, the researchers concluded that: there are three stages that the young jockeys of the Dompu tribe in West Nusa Tenggara go through so that their gross motor skills develop and develop. The development of children's gross motor skills starts from bathing horses, riding horses in rivers, and during routine training (horse riding) in the field or formal horse racing arena. All these stages are carried out by children with guidance or assistance from adults or jockey's parents. In addition, the results of previous related studies show that horse riding can be a means of intervention for physical motor therapy for children with special needs, such as people with autism and down syndrome.

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