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MODIFIED SOFTBALL FOR THE STUDENTS AT STATE PRIMARY SCHOOL 1 TOSURAYA RATAHAN NORTH SULAWESI

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ABSTRACT

Softball is a team sport modified baseball which have been developed and popular in the USA. It is modified games since it could previously be played by male. George Hancock was the one who started to modify baseball which the purpose was to make the game was playable in the winter by establishing written rules named indoor baseball. The school is a good starting point to introduce this game. Through school physical education, the effort is to provide modified softball. Several problems which will be explored are why softball needs to be modified. What is the advantage of the modification, and what are the modified forms of softball?

Keywords : Modification, softball, Primary School

INTRODUCTION

Primary education is a formal education environment which gives various things for the children's growth and development. Starting from their small family environment, the children will enter the wider school world which absolutely has different situation from their family. Entering the school world, the children are met with the school rules, teachers' authority, school discipline, and various tight demands. All of them will give big effect and experience for the children's personality development. Through this school, the children will get interesting experience which is different from their home. Many experts said that primary school age is a game age.

Playing activity for the children is a spontaneous activity as the way to deliver the eagerness. According to Mutohir (2004:104), the advantages of playing are: a) spending the extra energy, optimizing the growth of body parts such as bone, muscle, and organ, c) increasing children's appetite, d) getting the children to learn how to control their selves, e) developing various skills which will be used for the whole life, f) improving creativity, g) getting the chance to interact with other children, h) having a chance to be the looser or winner in the game, i) having a chance to follow the rules, and j) being able to develop their intellectual skill. According to Thompson (1992:56), playing is giving the children a chance to get the experience of interesting learning process. Pate states that, children who are lack of the chance to participate in the game tend to get difficulties in achieving the higher motoric skill (1993:198).

Therefore, the children will recognize various things, understand the characteristics of certain things through playing, and get the satisfaction and happiness through games. Through games, the children will learn how to interact and recognize other children in the group and work together in various activities. Citation of the various advantages got by the children through game are : 1) *games promote physical growth and development*, 2) *games promote the socialization process*, 3) *games aid in development of motor skill*, 4) *games help develop emotional understanding between and within youngsters*, 5) *games can use up excess energy on the part of youngster*. Based on the citation above, it can be concluded that game can

improve children's growth and development, improve socialization process, help the development of the motor skill, help the development of the understanding among children and be used to deliver the energy as the parts of the children.

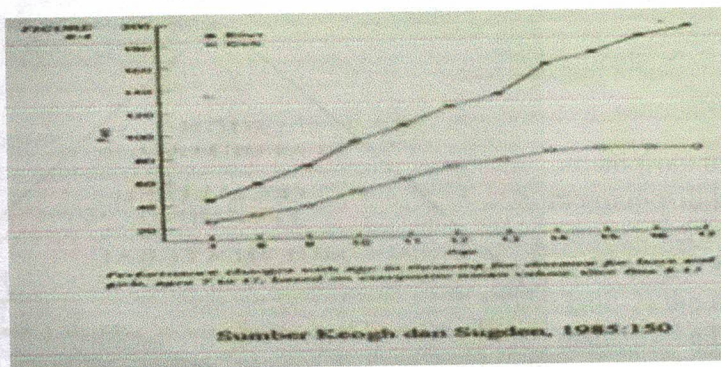
MODIFIED RULES AND TOOLS FOR SOFTBALL

Softball is one of the group games which can give the playing experience for the children. The excess of the energy is one of the children's characteristics which make them be able to do the activities together with their friends in a group. Through game, a child will be able to gain their happiness, to cooperate with other children in another group, and try to understand the existing rules. Therefore, some rules which are very tight can be simplified to make it understandable. According to Thomson (1991: 59), changing the rules in order to meet the children's ability will improve learning process quickly and improve their happiness in doing this activity.

On the other words, modification is needed to make the game is easy to play and to understand. The advantage of this modification is make the implementation easily runs. Therefore, the children are expected to be interest in learning the games seriously. According to Ausie Sport (1993), modification needs three elements which must be considered by the teacher or the coach, they are: a) field size modification, b) tools modification, c) time modification, and d) rules modification. Mutohir (2004: 107) states that the effect of size, tools, and rules modification will give the students a chance to move in doing the physical education. Children's motoric skill in the primary school has been developed well.

In line with the development theory, Hurlock (1991: 159) states that good muscle coordination will follow the development theory. Therefore, the hand skill will be able to be learnt first than the leg skill. Honestly, in the beginning of this skill, there will be uncoordinated and unimportant movements.

In line with the motoric skill development, it will be followed the increasing of the movement speed, accuracy, strength, and efficiency. The biggest improvement of the accuracy, according to Hurlock, will happen to the child and the teenager period (1991:158). The picture below shows the difference of ball throwing performance between boys and girls around 7 – 17 years old. The picture below shows the difference of ball throwing performance between boys and girls.



Picture 1. Ball throwing performance between boys and girls

Since the difference of ball throwing performance between boys and girls is not significant, this game is possible to be played by boys and girls in the same time. The

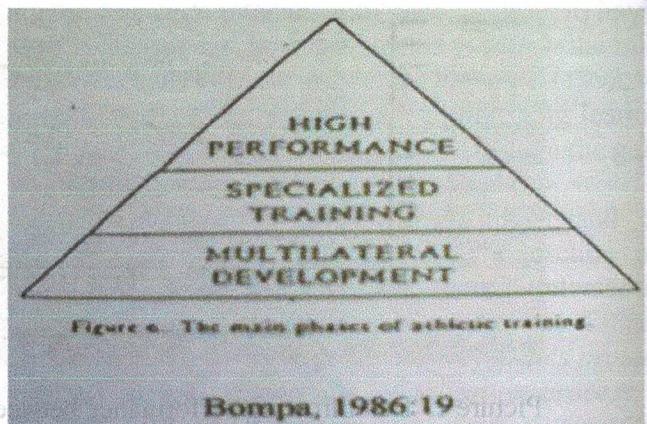
throwing skill is an important thing in this game, because it is one of the basic techniques which must be mastered. Mastering these basic techniques needs to be given as soon as possible to the primary school students to give them modal to move. Unfortunately, the use of tools and rules needs to be thought in order to make the game runs well.

Thompson (1993:58) argues that changing or adapting the technique and tools in order to meet the children's skill is something that can be done. Therefore, softball characteristics and form must be modified to meet the children's characteristics/ according to Anarino (1990:138), boys' and girls' characteristics in the fifth and sixth grade are prefer to the dynamic game and more movement. Kartini Kartono (1990 : 138) states that games loved by the children in that age is enjoyable game.

According to the children's characteristics as described above, softball is a game which can make the children be happy in the game. Movements in this game such as batting, throwing, catching, running, and jumping will be met frequently. Therefore, the children will get various experience and movement which can improve their physical and mental development unintentionally. The way to modify the softball game is a way to introduce the primary school students to the softball. Therefore, besides adding the movements, this game also is able to help children in the school, especially at N 1 Ratahan primary school.

Softball is a group game which demands good individual skill and individual technique. Mastering these skills need longer time. Thompson (1991:151) argues that the process of mastering this skill is a long term period, while Pate (1993:197) argues that movement skill is achieved gradually and in sequence before they achieve the higher level. According to Bompa (1986: 18-19), the basic to get specialist in certain skill functionally is a complete development. Based on some arguments above, it can be concluded that mastering certain skill cannot be done in short time. On the other hand, mastering certain skill needs longer time through skill levels which meets the growth and development period.

A teacher or a coach must be able to control herself/ himself from developing the special and narrow activities. However, developing larger physical skill and basic skill, especially physical preparation is one of the important basic demands to achieve the higher mastering level.



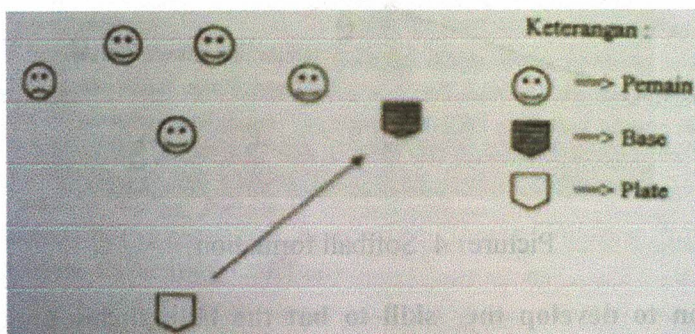
Picture2. Sport training phase

Once, the child enter a certain training or skill learning, a teacher or a coach must have a certain approach which is directed to the body functional development appropriately, therefore the activities form will have various movement which creates the happiness in doing such activities. It can decrease the boredom in their activities or game. According to Pate et al, (1993:119), sometimes there is a tendency to make the children play by using the rules which causes their learning experience does not meet their development level. For example, asking the 8 years old child to play basket by using the real size ball and the height of the basket is 3.05 meter. It will cause the children to add the movements which are related to the game. Moreover, pate et al delivers that the result of the performance above will cause: 1) the children will be frustrated by the continued failure they get and lack of the interest to do the activity, 2) the wrong activities will give negative effect to the further skill development.

The problem found is the steps and the tools and equipment's used are still expensive and very difficult to be developed at school. Based on that point, this game needs to be simplified or modified. According to Thompson (1993:59), the bigger tools and equipment's used, the bigger constrains faced in the learning process of basic techniques.

MODIFIED SOFTBALL

The example of the modified softball made by Morris (1976: 73-76) is as follows : 1) there are two groups of 6-10 children, 2) the equipment needed are : bat, ball, 1 base and 1 home plat, 3) the movements needed, hitting, fielding, running, throwing, and catching, 4) the softball form or design.



Picture 3. The example of modified softball

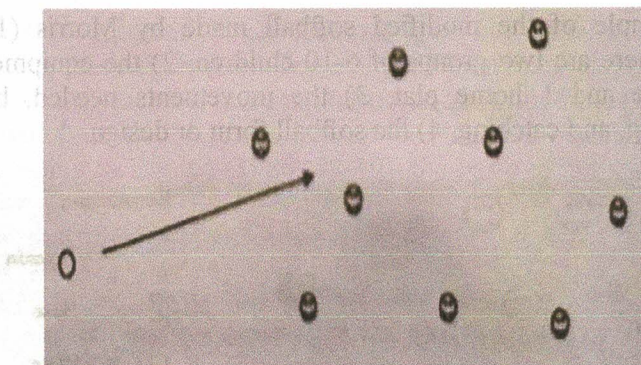
Implementation

This game aims to develop the basic skill of the softball from the base running strategy. The changing of the defensive group and fielders group will be done if there is out twice or 5 run. Pitcher is a teacher or coach. The distance between pitcher and batter is not decided. The children must do the bat correctly or fair ball. A certain batter is out when : 1) the defensive group can catch the ball, 2) the defensive group stop the runner by ball before reaching the base or home plate, 3) the ball has reached the base before the runner., 4) batter can throw the bat till go out from the batter box. The distance between base and home base is 30-40⁰. Based on the description and the example of modification above, the writer tries to give some types of softball modification. Therefore, by using this modification, the children will play this game easily. Some of the modifications are as follows:

Modification to develop batting skill and catch the fly ball

Tools and equipment's: tennis ball, batting tee, bats or rounder's. Modification : preparing the rules and exclude some of the equipment's such as glove, mask, leg guard, and helmet. The developed activities: batting and catching the ball.

The number of the players : 10-15 players for each group (a class is divided into two groups). It consists of boys and girls. The players from each group consists of 10-15 players (1 class). Implementation: 1) the groups are divided into two: defensive and offensive groups, 2) the rotation of both groups will be done if there is 3 out, 3) the way to bat is by batting the ball as long as the ball is put on the batting, it can be decided that the batting is fair ball, 4) the batting which is called as fair ball is the ball which reaches the 10 meters from batting tee. 3) If the ball only on the grounds for three time, a batter will be out, 6) point 1 will be get if the offensive group cannot catch the ball, 7) the way to stop it is by catching the ball from the batter. The general regulation is the sequence of batters is started by the smallest number, if there is a rotation between both groups, the sequence of the batters is continued by the last sequence of the related group do the previous offense and if the batters achieve the area out of the line, the batter will do it again till it is considered as the correct one. The game form and type can be seen in the picture below:



Picture 4 Softball formation

The modification to develop the skill to bat the ball, throw and catch, and improve the running skill.

The equipment's used are tennis ball, batter or rounder's, batting tee, and base. The modification is conducted by simplifying the rules and excludes the equipment's such as glove, mask, and leg guard. The players consist of two groups. Each group consists of 10-15 boys or girls. The developed activities are batting the ball, running, catching and throwing the ball. Implementation: 1) the group is divided into two groups, they are defensive and offensive group. The rotation of the groups will be done if there is out for three times (out), 2) the way to bat is by batting the ball as long as the ball is put on the batting, it can be decided that the batting is fair ball, 3) after doing the correct batting, a batter must run to achieve the base 1, and if it is possible the batter can continued to the next base, 4) point 1 is got if the batter can achieve the base, when a batter can go back to the first place after reaching the base 1,2,3, and home, the batter will get 4 points, 5) the way to stop it is by burning the base before the batter achieve the base, touching the batter in the

middle, or catch the fly ball.

The general rule is if there is a batter in the base, every batting conducted make the batter go out of the base to achieve the next bat, each base is only occupied by one batter, one batter will be out if he/she cannot do the batter for 3 times in sequence, the batting is correct if the ball can achieve the fair area and the sequence of the batter start from the smallest to the biggest number. If there is a rotation between both group, the there is a rotation between both groups, the sequence of the batters is continued by the last sequence of the related group do the previous offense.

CONCLUSION

Softball is a game which has various motions which can stimulate children's growth and development. The motions consist of batting, throwing, and running. This game needs some tools and equipment's which actually cannot be used by the primary school students. Therefore, the modification is needed. The tools and the equipment used must be modified. It is very important since the primary school children period is the period where they love playing, spend their spare time, and their excess energy. The advantages of this modified game that is can be played by the primary school children. On the other words, it can be played not only at school but also out of school.

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