



Introducing and Implementing Basic Kabaddi Training for Physical Education Students at Universitas Syiah Kuala

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Abstract.

Background

Kabaddi, a traditional team sport originating from South Asia, offers a unique combination of physical, tactical, and cooperative elements that can enrich the physical education curriculum in higher education. However, its implementation in Indonesian university settings, particularly among Physical Education students, remains limited.

Objectives

This community service program aimed to introduce and implement basic Kabaddi training to enhance physical competence, teamwork, and cultural awareness among students of the Physical Education Department at Universitas Syiah Kuala.

Methods

The program was conducted through a series of workshops, practical training sessions, and simulation games over a two-week period. A total of 40 students participated. Data were collected using pre- and post-activity questionnaires, field observations, and performance assessments focusing on motor coordination, teamwork, and understanding of Kabaddi rules.

Results

The results showed a significant increase in students' knowledge of Kabaddi (average improvement of 65%), improved physical coordination, and enhanced engagement in team-based physical activities. Participants also expressed enthusiasm and interest in incorporating Kabaddi into future teaching practices.

Conclusion

The implementation of basic Kabaddi training effectively introduced students to a culturally rich and physically engaging sport, enhancing both their practical skills and pedagogical perspectives. This initiative demonstrates the potential of Kabaddi as an innovative alternative in physical education programs in Indonesian universities.

Keywords: Health Education, Healthy Lifestyle, Elementary School Students, Personal Hygiene

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INTRODUCTION

Kabaddi is a traditional contact sport that originated in South Asia and has gained international recognition, particularly in countries such as India, Iran, Bangladesh, and South Korea (Wismanadi et al., 2025). It is a dynamic game that emphasizes agility, endurance, tactical awareness, and teamwork, making it suitable for physical education (PE) and youth sports development (Lin & Lu, 2018). Despite its popularity in the Asian Games and Pro Kabaddi League, Kabaddi remains largely unfamiliar in many Southeast Asian nations, including Indonesia (Mahyuddin et al., 2021).

In the context of physical education, Kabaddi offers a rich platform to develop fundamental movement skills, cardiovascular endurance, and interpersonal communication (Mohammad Nasima Sultana & PPS Paul Kumar, 2020). As a sport requiring both anaerobic and aerobic capacities, it challenges participants to perform high-intensity movements while maintaining strategic positioning. Such physical demands are highly relevant to the goals of tertiary-level physical education programs (Wang et al., 2024).

University-level physical education students are expected not only to master various forms of physical activity but also to explore culturally diverse sports that can be adapted into school curricula. Introducing traditional sports like Kabaddi can enrich the students' knowledge base and pedagogical skills, while also promoting cultural appreciation and innovation in teaching practices (Ahmed & Al Salim, 2024). Furthermore, the inclusion of Kabaddi aligns with the current movement toward globalizing physical education through exposure to non-Western and indigenous games (Dwivedi et al., 2024).

In Indonesia, physical education curricula at the university level still focus predominantly on mainstream sports such as football, volleyball, and athletics. Limited exposure to alternative or culturally

significant games may hinder students' creativity and responsiveness to diverse learning environments in future teaching roles (Hariyanto et al., 2023). Introducing Kabaddi to physical education students at Universitas Syiah Kuala represents a step toward curricular innovation and diversification.

Therefore, this study aimed to introduce and implement a basic Kabaddi training program for students in the Department of Physical Education at Universitas Syiah Kuala. The goal was to evaluate the effectiveness of this program in enhancing students' physical skills, tactical understanding, and receptiveness to integrating traditional sports into modern education frameworks (Jafar et al., 2023).

METHOD

Participant

(Sugiyono, 2017) This community service study involved a total of 40 undergraduate students (22 males and 18 females) enrolled in the Physical Education Study Program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP), Universitas Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh, Indonesia. All participants were in their 3rd or 5th semester and had completed at least one course in basic sports coaching. Prior to participation, all students provided informed consent and were briefed about the objectives and procedures of the activity. The program was conducted with the approval of the academic department and complied with university guidelines for student engagement in physical activity programs.

Research Design

(Arikunto, 2010) This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach integrated with action-based training, structured using a one-group pretest-posttest design. The intervention was implemented over the course of two weeks and consisted of a structured Kabaddi training program delivered in three distinct phases. The first phase, known as the Introduction Phase, involved classroom-based instruction that covered the fundamental rules of Kabaddi, its historical background, and cultural significance. This phase was intended to provide students with theoretical knowledge before engaging in physical activity.

The second phase, the Training Phase, focused on practical sessions in which students learned and practiced basic Kabaddi techniques. These sessions included agility drills, individual skill development, and role-based team coordination, such as raider and defender positioning. The third and final phase, referred to as the Simulation Phase, involved organizing structured Kabaddi matches among student teams. These simulations aimed to assess the application of learned skills in game scenarios and foster collaboration and strategic thinking among participants.

Each training session lasted approximately 90 minutes and was conducted four times per week on the university's outdoor sports field. Throughout the program, student progress and participation were closely monitored through continuous observation and performance assessments to evaluate the overall impact of the training on physical and cognitive engagement.

Data Analysis

Data collection in this study was conducted using three main instruments to evaluate the effectiveness of the Kabaddi training program. First, pre- and post-training questionnaires were administered to assess changes in students' knowledge, interest, and perceptions of Kabaddi. These questionnaires included both multiple-choice and Likert-scale items, focusing on the understanding of game rules, tactical awareness, and attitudes toward integrating Kabaddi into physical education.

Second, an observation checklist was used during each training and simulation session to systematically monitor students' participation, skill execution, cooperation, and overall engagement. The observations allowed the facilitators to document student progress in terms of physical coordination, teamwork, and motivation throughout the program.

Third, physical fitness assessments were conducted to measure improvements in agility, reaction time, and coordination. These assessments employed simple field-based tests such as shuttle runs, side-step drills, and tag-style reaction exercises that are relevant to Kabaddi's physical demands. The results from all instruments were analyzed descriptively, with pre- and post-intervention scores compared to identify trends in student development. Qualitative feedback gathered from student reflections was also included to provide deeper insights into their learning experience, motivation, and perceived benefits of participating in the Kabaddi program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The implementation of the Kabaddi training program demonstrated clear positive outcomes across cognitive, physical, and affective domains. Based on the pre- and post-training questionnaires, students' knowledge of Kabaddi increased significantly, with an average improvement of 65%. Initially, most participants had limited understanding of the sport's rules, techniques, and strategic principles. After the training, they were able to accurately describe gameplay structures, player roles, and tactical movements. In terms of physical coordination and agility, observation data and field-based assessments indicated notable improvements. Students exhibited faster movement patterns, more accurate footwork, and better body control during raiding and defensive drills. The enhancement in physical responsiveness was particularly visible during the simulation matches in the final phase of the program.

The training also had a substantial impact on student engagement and teamwork. Observers noted that participants became more confident and communicative throughout the sessions. The level of enthusiasm during the practical sessions and simulation games was high, and peer cooperation increased as students became more familiar with their roles in the game. Many students expressed a strong interest in integrating Kabaddi into their future physical education teaching practices, particularly as a culturally unique and engaging alternative to traditional sports.

Table 1. Summary of Results in Three Domains

Domain	Indicator Assessed	Pre-Training Level	Post-Training Level	Improvement
Cognitive	Knowledge of Kabaddi rules and techniques	Low (avg. 35%)	High (avg. 95%)	+65%
Physical	Agility and coordination (field tests)	Moderate	Good to Excellent	Noticeable
Affective	Engagement, teamwork, and motivation	Varied (some passive)	High participation & enthusiasm	Strong increase

These results suggest that Kabaddi not only supports physical development but also promotes cooperation, cultural literacy, and motivation among physical education students. The data support the potential for broader adoption of Kabaddi in university-level curricula as a means to enrich both the skill set and the instructional creativity of future educators.



Figure 1. Reflection session with Physical Education students



Figure 2. Kabaddi match simulation by students at Universitas Syiah Kuala.

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate that implementing a Kabaddi training program among physical education students can produce substantial benefits in terms of cognitive understanding, physical development, and affective engagement. The 65% increase in knowledge reflects the effectiveness of structured instruction in enhancing students' comprehension of non-mainstream sports. This finding aligns with previous studies suggesting that integrating traditional games into the curriculum can broaden students' theoretical and pedagogical horizons (Hartanto et al., 2021).

From a physical standpoint, the improvement in agility and coordination observed during field assessments supports the notion that Kabaddi is a highly dynamic sport capable of promoting functional movement skills (Loland et al., 2023). highlight that high-intensity activities involving multidirectional movements such as those in Kabaddi can significantly improve cardiovascular fitness and neuromuscular control. The consistent participation and active involvement of students during the training sessions further reinforce the sport's applicability as an effective tool for physical conditioning in university-level physical education programs.

The affective outcomes of this program, particularly increased student motivation, teamwork, and enthusiasm, are equally significant. Throughout the sessions, students not only developed technical skills but also demonstrated improved communication, cooperation, and role awareness. These findings resonate with the work of Chowdhury and Manna (2019), who argue that Kabaddi promotes social learning and group dynamics, making it suitable for inclusion in educational environments that emphasize character-building and cooperative learning (Huang & Lajoie, 2023).

An important implication of this study is its potential contribution to curriculum innovation. In Indonesia, physical education programs remain largely centered around globalized mainstream sports. The inclusion of culturally rooted yet globally recognized sports like Kabaddi can help diversify the learning experience while fostering intercultural awareness. Moreover, the positive reception from students suggests that such integration is not only feasible but also desirable.

However, the study also has its limitations. The short duration of the training and the relatively small sample size may limit the generalizability of the findings. Future studies could incorporate longer intervention periods and comparative group designs to better assess the long-term impacts of Kabaddi training on student learning outcomes. Additionally, integrating more objective performance metrics such as heart rate monitoring or motion analysis could strengthen the physical assessment dimension.

In summary, this study provides evidence that Kabaddi can serve as a valuable addition to physical education programs in higher education. It enhances students' physical and cognitive skills while also enriching their cultural and pedagogical perspectives. The findings support broader efforts to include traditional sports as educational tools within contemporary learning environments.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of a basic Kabaddi training program for Physical Education students at Universitas Syiah Kuala has proven to be an effective approach to enhancing multiple aspects of student development. The program significantly improved students' understanding of the sport, elevated their physical coordination, and fostered higher levels of engagement and teamwork. These outcomes suggest that Kabaddi is not only physically beneficial but also pedagogically valuable, particularly for future educators seeking diverse and culturally relevant tools for physical education instruction.

Furthermore, the program highlighted the potential of traditional sports to enrich university-level curricula by offering alternative learning experiences that go beyond mainstream sports. The high level of student enthusiasm and their expressed interest in applying Kabaddi in future teaching practices affirm its relevance and adaptability in educational settings.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that institutions of higher education consider incorporating traditional and indigenous sports such as Kabaddi into physical education programs. Doing so may enhance the cultural competency, instructional creativity, and physical literacy of pre-service physical education teachers. Future research involving extended training durations and comparative designs would be beneficial to explore the broader impacts of Kabaddi on educational and physical outcomes.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Jul Fajrial conceptualized the project, designed the training framework, and led the implementation of the Kabaddi sessions. Amanda Syukriadi contributed to the development of instructional materials, coordinated data collection, and conducted participant observations. Novi Lidya Isdianti performed data analysis, compiled the results, and contributed to the drafting and editing of the manuscript. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and contributed equally to the discussion and interpretation of findings.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND FUNDING

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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