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Original

## **Desarrollo juvenil positivo: integración de habilidades para la vida en deportes de softbol basados en competencias**

## **Positive Youth Development: Life Skills Integration in Competition-Based Softball Sports**

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## DESARROLLO JUVENIL POSITIVO: INTEGRACIÓN DE HABILIDADES PARA LA VIDA EN DEPORTES DE SOFTBOL BASADOS EN COMPETENCIAS

### RESUMEN

El propósito de este estudio fue evaluar un programa de integración de habilidades para la vida diseñado para promover el Desarrollo Positivo de la Juventud (PYD) en adolescentes que compiten en softbol. El estudio se realizó en adolescentes de 14 a 18 años utilizando un método experimental. 30 participantes participaron en este estudio, divididos en dos grupos: el grupo experimental recibió un tratamiento de entrenamiento de softbol basado en competencias mediante la integración de un programa de habilidades para la vida, mientras que el grupo de control no recibió un programa de habilidades para la vida. El instrumento utilizado en el estudio fue la escala de habilidades para la vida desarrollada por Cronin y Alen (2017). Los resultados del análisis mostraron que hubo una diferencia significativa entre el grupo de integración de habilidades para la vida basada en la competencia y el grupo sin integración, como lo indican los resultados del análisis de la prueba t de muestra independiente, que mostró un valor sig (bilateral) de  $0,000 < 0,05$  para ambos grupos de integración de habilidades para la vida. El valor promedio de adquisición de habilidades para la vida del grupo de integración basado en la competencia fue mayor que el del grupo sin integración, lo que indica que su mejora en las habilidades para la vida fue superior a la del grupo sin integración. Los hallazgos de este estudio ilustran que los participantes en actividades de entrenamiento de softbol pueden aplicar el dominio de las habilidades para la vida en sus actividades diarias a través de la estructura deliberada de habilidades para la vida proporcionada en el programa de entrenamiento de softbol.

**Palabras clave:** Desarrollo juvenil positivo, softbol, competencia, habilidades para la vida.

## POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT: LIFE SKILLS INTEGRATION IN COMPETITION-BASED SOFTBALL SPORTS

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate a life skills integration program designed to promote Positive Youth Development (PYD) in adolescents competing in softball. The study was conducted on adolescents aged 14-18 years using an experimental method. 30 participants were involved in this study, divided into two groups: The experimental group was given competency-based softball training treatment by integrating a life skills program, while the control group was not given a life skills program. The instrument used in the study was the life skills scale developed by Cronin and Alen (2017). The results of the analysis showed that there was a significant difference between the competition-based life skills integration group and the non-integration group, as indicated by the results of the independent sample t-test analysis, which showed a sig value (2-tailed) of  $0.000 < 0.05$  for both life skills integration groups. The average acquisition value of the competition-based integration group for life skills was greater than that of the non-integration group, indicating that their life skills improvement was superior to that of the non-integration group. The findings in this study illustrate that participants in softball training activities can apply the life skills domain in their daily activities through the deliberate life skills structure provided in the softball training program.

**Keywords:** Positive youth development, softball, competition, life skills



## INTRODUCTION

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is an idea of activity-based development that views kids and teenagers as having resources that can be developed to help them deal with issues that need to be resolved (Holt et al., 2017; Lerner, 2002). PYD is a new paradigm in positive psychology that offers an alternative to the reductionist and reactive techniques that have traditionally been applied to youth (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Catalano et al., 2002; Damon, 2004). In addition, it is a viewpoint that emphasizes the acquisition of abilities that come naturally and may support teenagers' healthy growth and adaptive functioning. This strategy seeks to create people who, as young people and as adults, are active, healthy, and contributing members of society (Lerner et al., 2005; O'Connor et al., 2019).

Teenage sports participation is an important way for PYD development (O'Connor et al., 2019), Teenagers and millennials who want to develop life skills via sporting activities require this. Positive youth development stems from the core tenets that building naturally existent resources is more effective than addressing a lack of human empowerment. The targeted young people should be secure, healthy, happy, moral, fully involved in life, and useful members of society (Peterson, 2004). PYD via athletics aims to teach young people transferable life skills that they may apply at home, at school, or in the workplace., he hopes that the targeted young people will be safe, healthy, happy, moral, fully engaged in life, and valuable contributors to society. PYD through sports focuses on helping youth learn life skills that can be applied elsewhere, such as at home, at school, or at work (Gould & Carson, 2008).

Just a tiny portion of the millions of young people who play sports worldwide go on to become professional athletes (Danish et al., 2005). It is true that the integrity of athletes, teams, cities, provinces, and nations depends on their sporting accomplishments. But what about the other players? An estimated 35% of young

athletes give up on sports each year; it is unknown if these athletes ever pick up their sport again (Breuner, 2012; Purcell et al., 2005). During the transitional years of adolescence, when external influences are most influential, sports attrition rates are highest. Even when kids reach the age of 15, 70–80% of them are no longer involved in sports (Adirim & Cheng, 2003; Breuner, 2012). Consequently, the abilities acquired in sport must also be able to make an influence outside of sport for it to be valuable to society (Kendellen & Camiré, 2017). Sports-related talents must be used in non-sporting contexts including the workplace, family, and school in order to qualify as life skills (Gould & Carson, 2008). Transfer is the process by which athletes absorb the abilities they have honed in competition and then use them in everyday life (Forneris et al., 2012). The majority of coaching education programs don't include how to promote healthy kid development, thus it has to be conditioned on sports activities in order to teach life skills and values via sports (Gould et al., 2006).

Sport has a positive effect on the growth of the younger generation, according to many studies. (Holt, N. L., Deal, C. J., & Pankow, 2020; O'Connor et al., 2019) found that exercise can increase self-confidence, competence, and positive experiences, and O'Connor noted gender differences. (Holt & Neely, 2011) emphasize that sport has the ability to encourage positive growth in youth. On the other hand, (Bruner et al., 2016) emphasized that Aboriginal youth have special opportunities and barriers to participating in sport. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that sport can foster the good development of young people and suggest that further research is needed in this area.

Since sports competition integrates reproductive, adaptive, maladaptive, and derivative development, it plays a significant role in children's growth and development. Competition arises from other facets of development; adaptation is the result of overcoming life experiences and developmental stress; this is an



evolutionary shift related to reproduction that can be maladaptive since it can impede growth (Kleiber, 1999). Early participation in rigorous training may impede social skill development, according to some study. For instance, studies have demonstrated that athletes who are heavily committed to their training and performance display less antisocial inclinations and less helpful and sharing conduct (Barnett & Bryan, 1974; Gelfand & Hartmann, 1978). It is thus believed that competition would help us acquire useful life skills. For kids, sports events may be quite significant since they help them build healthy lifestyles. Children can learn about physical, social, and cognitive abilities via sports tournaments. Sports tournaments can have a beneficial or negative developmental impact, depending on how children see the experience and how the event is structured (Choi et al., 2014).

Programs for sports can have a big impact on how adolescents grow. Participating in these activities, however, does not always result in advantageous developmental consequences. Sports participation could be helpful, but it is insufficient to encourage growth in a favorable direction. In reality, prior research indicates that a complex interplay of environmental, societal, and individual factors determines whether or not athletic programs can positively impact adolescent development (Turnnidge et al., 2014). Therefore, there is a need for an integration program that is paired with a sports program, as carried out by Kendellen et al., (2016). In this research, the integration carried out by the author is in softball, which is a team sport and involves many teenage students. Previous research conducted a survey of 174 teenage softball athletes and found that decision-making was the dimension that had the lowest relationship with life skills (Gumilar et al., 2023). This is the basis for the author to research a competition-based life skills integration program in the sport of softball. The purpose of this study was to evaluate a life skills integration program designed to promote

Positive Youth Development (PYD) in adolescents competing in softball.

## METHODS

The research is experimental, with a pretest-posttest control group design (Fraenkel JR, Wallen NE, 1993). The life skills intervention in this study was the competition-based softball life skills intervention group and without life skills intervention. The life skills intervention program is provided through competition-based softball training activities, which are held in 18 meetings three times a week. Competitions are held in the form of games every week.

### *Research subject*

Participants in this research were teenagers aged 14–18 who actively participated in softball training activities at the club. The author took 30 research subjects consisting of boys and girls, then carried out a random assignment technique to determine the research subjects. The two groups, namely the life skills integration group and the non-life skills integration training group, were 15 people. However, in the development of the treatment implementation, two participants dropped out, so the total sample of students who successfully completed the treatment was 28 students, with details in the competition-based life skills integration group of 14 students and the non-life skills integration training group of 14 people. The drop-out criteria itself is due to participants not following the established procedures, namely not being able to complete the program to completion.

### *Instrument*

In this research, the main tool used was an adaptation of the Life Skills Scale for Sport (LSSS) (Cronin & Allen, 2017). The LSSS assesses eight dimensions of participants' life skills, namely time management, interpersonal communication, problem solving and decision-making, teamwork, social skills, leadership, and emotional skills. The LSSS questionnaire was



created for adolescents aged 11 to 21 years. It consists of 47 statement items. The measurement tool is a Likert scale with a point range from 1 (not at all) to 5.

The validity of the Life Skills Scale for Sport (LSSS) instrument carried out by T. H. Lim et al (2018) states that the KLSTS is a reliable and valid measure for assessing the transfer of life skills for Korean youth with a validity value of 0.90. Another analysis also carried out by T. Lim et al (2019) showed the reliability of each indicator from the LSSS instrument, where the leadership factor scored 0.85, the goal-setting factor was 0.79, the social skills and interpersonal communication factor was 0.74, the time management factor was 0.79, and the teamwork factor was 0.68. The author himself has tested the validity and reliability of the LSSS instrument. The validity test was carried out on a sample that had the same characteristics as the sample, namely teenage softball players. The results were that all statements were declared valid with a reliability value of  $r = 0.95$ , which means that the instrument, the Life Skills Scale for Sport (LSSS), can be relied upon or used to measure the life skills of youth softball athletes in Indonesia.

### Procedure

Technically, the competition-based life skills integration program is provided by providing material at the beginning of the training and holding discussions at the end of the training to provide emphasis and understanding for integrating life skills values to be applied in everyday life. This refers to the program that has been developed by Kendellen et al (2016), namely: (a) focus on one life skill per lesson; (b) introduce life skills at the beginning of the lesson; (c) apply strategies to teach life skills during the lesson; and (d) discuss life skills at the end of the lesson. Apart from that, the program (table 1) was also validated by five trainers who were certified in the analysis results. A statement item meets content validity if there is a match between raters above 0.05 (Susetyo, 2015). Calculation using the formula  $CVR = 2ne/n-1$  (CVR analysis attached). The treatment was carried out in eighteen meetings, excluding the pre-test and post-test; this number of meetings refers to similar research developed by Danish (2002).

**Table 1.** Life skills integration program in softball sports

Indicators	Sub Indicators	Activities
<b>Teamwork</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Accept suggestions for improvement from others.</li><li>Help build team or group spirit.</li><li>Work well in a team or group.</li><li>Suggest to team or group members how they can improve.</li><li>Help other team or group members perform tasks.</li><li>Change the way I perform for the benefit of the team.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sharing season (mutual correction in each training activity)</li><li>Fielding Position</li><li>Fielding situations</li></ul>
<b>Goal Setting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Set training targets so I can stay focused.</li><li>Set short-term goals to achieve long-term goals.</li><li>Commitment to achieving targets</li><li>Assess progress in achieving targets</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Athletes are committed to high performance and ultimately create a champion team.</li><li>Train fundamental techniques (basic defense and offense).</li><li>Create progress reports for each athlete.</li></ul>
<b>Time Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Manage time well.</li><li>Assess how much time is spent on each exercise activity.</li><li>Set goals to use your time effectively.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Always emphasize to athletes that they should always be on time when they come to training.</li><li>Athletes arrive at the venue ready and equipped to practice or compete.</li><li>Players clean up the field and return team equipment to its original place.</li></ul>
<b>Emotional Skill</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Know how to control emotions.</li><li>Understand other people's emotions</li><li>Empathy</li><li>Help others control their emotions when an argument</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>4 R's (replay, relax, redo, and be ready) to help them play smartly both in and out of sports.</li><li>managing emotions: participants learn that managing their emotions, both in sport and in</li></ul>



Indicators	Sub Indicators	Activities
	occurs.	life, is a way to become smart.
<i>Interpersonal communication</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate well with fellow teams.</li> <li>• Pay attention to other people's body language.</li> <li>• Speak clearly and firmly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Relay Defense Practice</i></li> <li>• <i>Softball Offense and Defense Signs practice</i></li> <li>• <i>Fielding communication practice</i></li> </ul>
<i>Social skill</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get involved in group activities.</li> <li>• Help others without being asked.</li> <li>• Form close friendships with team members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Batting tee program</li> <li>• Base-to-base throwing program</li> <li>• Learn to take turns during activities and cooperate with others who are playing.</li> </ul>
<i>Leadership</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be both a leader and a follower.</li> <li>• Be a good role model.</li> <li>• Acknowledge the achievements of others.</li> <li>• Be a motivator for others.</li> <li>• Helps solve team problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take turns leading the warm-up.</li> <li>• And take turns being the team captain in each match.</li> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Be kind both on the field and outside the field.</li> <li>• Always support and provide support to team members.</li> </ul>
<i>Decision Making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select and determine various possibilities in certain situations.</li> <li>• Look for solutions to every incident.</li> <li>• Evaluate every incident that occurs.</li> <li>• Compare each solution to find the best solution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Sacrifice Program</i></li> <li>• <i>Sequice program</i></li> <li>• <i>Do or Die Program</i></li> <li>• <i>Defense dan Offense conference program</i></li> </ul>

### Data Analysis

In this research, the author intends to see the differences in the influence of competition-based and non-integration life skills integration in softball games. The pretest and posttest data were then analyzed using the independent t-test by comparing the gain from the pretest and posttest results between the two groups.

### RESULTS

In our research we have carried out an in-depth questionnaire to gain an understanding of how competition-based softball can be an effective tool for developing positive potential in the younger generation. Through a thorough investigative process and the participation of

various individuals involved in this sport, we were able to collect very valuable and relevant data. These data not only provide insight into the integration of life skills in the context of competitive softball, but also reveal how the sport can be an effective vehicle for building character and essential skills in youth. The results of this research can be seen below:

**Table 2.** Description of life skills data based on gain

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Life skills	Integration of Life skills	14	34.57	19.053
	Non-Integration of Life skills	14	9.00	11.395

**Table 3.** Life skills data normality test

Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Life skills	.146	14	.200*	.951	14	.582
	.159	14	.200*	.959	14	.712

Based on the results of the normality test analysis listed in table 3, the sig. from the two sample groups, namely the competition-based

life skills integration group, namely  $0.582 > 0.05$  (normal), and the non-integration group's life skills, namely  $0.712 > 0.05$  (normal).

**Table 4.** Independent samples t-test

Life skills		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
	Equal variances assumed	2.940	.098	4.310	26	.000	25.571
	Equal variances not assumed			4.310	21.245	.000	25.571

Table 4 shows the results of the independent samples t-test analysis of competition-based and non-competition-based life skills integration groups in softball games, which obtained a sig (2-tailed) value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , meaning that there is a significant difference in influence between the competition-based life skills integration group and the non-integration group. Judging from the average gain value, the competition-based life skills integration group improved better with a mean value of 34.57, while the non-integration group had a mean value of 9.00.

## DISCUSSION

This study aims to investigate the differences in life skill development in the setting of PYD in softball between the integration and non-integration of life skills training. The results of this study show that because life skills are purposefully structured into the softball training program, participants in the program may apply the life skills domain to their everyday activities. Sports competition demonstrates a strong positive relationship between the drive to succeed and the level of participation in competitive sports (Halvari, 1996). Sports competitiveness is a natural trait that may serve as a driving force for success (Robson, 2004). Individual competition motivates athletes to exercise harder and push their limits both mentally and physically. To succeed as a performance art in front of an audience, a competitive environment is crucial (Halldorsson et al., 2017).

Young individuals who play team sports may have the chance to acquire a variety of competences, such as social skills, which can

lead to a number of beneficial outcomes throughout their lives (McEwan & Beauchamp, 2020). There are plenty of chances for athletes to practice using their abilities outside of competition. Thus, it is critical that other people in the athlete's life—such as parents, coaches, teammates, classmates, and counselors—encourage them to apply their abilities in different contexts (Danish et al., 1992). Athletes who have a deeper comprehension of the abilities they have developed via sports will be better equipped to communicate these abilities to potential employers and highlight the ways in which they will be helpful in occupations other than athletics (Mayocchi & Hanrahan, 2000).

Teens who get life skills training in a supportive setting see improvements in their attitudes, ideas, and conduct (Yadav & Iqbal, 2009). The life skills training program, which tackles the risk and protective variables associated with drug use beginning and imparts skills linked to social resilience and enhancing social and personal competency, is also an effective primary preventive program for drug addiction in teenagers (Botvin & Griffin, 2004). Giving kids life skills training helps them cope socially (Gumilar et al., 2022; Rahmati et al., 2010). Instilling life skills education and providing life skills training will assist youth in overcoming obstacles in their lives (Prajapati et al., 2016). Athletes face intrinsic pressures, program design, and coaches in the setting of sports, all of which have the potential to directly or indirectly affect learning. People can absorb life skills—which are psychosocial abilities, knowledge, attitudes, and/or identity transformation—through these experiences (Pierce et al., 2017). Environmental factors, like sports, provide circumstances that



can inspire and support needs and foster life skills connected to the three fundamental needs; in other words, they can help life skills grow (internalization) and eventually transfer (generalization) (Hodge et al., 2013). A sports skill has to be successfully translated and used outside of sport in order to be deemed a life skill. Although it is a significant process, the sport psychology literature has not provided a thorough description of the transfer of life skills (Pierce et al., 2017). The opinions of high school athletes on assistance, dialogue, compromise, and the development of life skills are documented in another research. The findings showed that: (1) despite observed variability, a large number of athletes felt they were able to negotiate many aspects of their participation in sports with parents and coaches; (2) a considerable number of athletes felt they received sufficient support from parents and were able to communicate with coaches; and (3) athletes felt that participating in sports allowed them to acquire a variety of life skills that they could use in other areas of their lives (Camiré et al., 2009).

## CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of integrated versus non-integrated life skills training on the development of life skills within the Positive Youth Development (PYD) framework, specifically focusing on softball. Utilizing a structured life skills framework within a purposeful softball training program, our research sheds light on how participants engage with and apply various life skills domains in their everyday lives.

Our findings, derived from an independent t-test analysis, reveal a notable difference between the competition-based life skills integration group and the non-integration group, with a two-tailed significance value (sig) of 0.000, indicating a significant result below the conventional alpha level of 0.05. The average scores from the competition-based integration group surpassed

those of the non-integration group, suggesting a more pronounced improvement in life skills among participants who underwent integrated training.

These results underscore the effectiveness of incorporating a structured life skills curriculum within softball training programs, empowering participants to effectively apply life skills in diverse daily situations. This intentional approach to life skills development not only enhances the participants' performance in softball but also equips them with invaluable life skills that have broader applications beyond the sport.

In summary, our study highlights the positive influence of integrated life skills training on the overall development of life skills within the context of PYD in competitive softball. The evidence presented emphasizes the importance of intentional and structured life skills integration in fostering holistic development among athletes, paving the way for future research and practical applications in sports education and training programs.

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