

Collective Role of Village Youth in Early Childhood Football Development in Darupono Village, Kendal Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the collective role of village youth in early childhood football development in Darupono Village, Kendal Regency (Peran Kolektif Pemuda Desa dalam Pengembangan Sepak Bola Anak Usia Dini di Desa Darupono, Kabupaten Kendal). Through a descriptive qualitative approach, this research is carried out in Desa Darupono, Kecamatan Kaliwungu Selatan, Kabupaten Kendal, with data collection techniques in the form of observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show that early childhood football coaching in Desa Darupono not only focuses on the technical aspects of sports but also functions as a means of character education and strengthening community social capital. Village youth play a key role in organizing training activities, mobilizing community participation, and instilling the values of discipline, responsibility, cooperation, and sportsmanship in children. This activity also has significant social and economic impacts, strengthens community social cohesion, and preserves the culture of mutual cooperation. The main supporting factors for coaching include youth collective spirit, family support, and community participation, while the obstacles faced are limited facilities, lack of funds, and a shortage of licensed trainers. Overall, this study confirms that early childhood football coaching in Desa Darupono is a community-based development practice oriented toward character formation and social empowerment at the rural level.

KEYWORDS



Early Childhood Football Coaching, Role of Village Youth, Community-Based Development, Character Education, Social Capital

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INTRODUCTION

Village communities are social forums that play an important role in creating space for the younger generation. Villages are not only understood as geographical areas but also as spaces for social, economic, and cultural interaction that foster solidarity and *gotong royong*. Togetherness is a characteristic of village communities (Asmal & Latief, 2023; Nursalam et al., 2025; Sahharon et al., 2018). Community support for education and non-formal activities, including sports, demonstrates that villages play a real role in supporting children's growth and development. This phenomenon aligns with the view that the success of grassroots sports coaching depends not only on technical factors but also on community social support. When communities provide support—through motivation, facilities, or direct involvement—sports coaching can run more optimally (Mardhika et al., 2024).

Village development today extends beyond physical and economic aspects to include human resource development, such as through sports. Sports offer great potential as a medium for social development (*alat pembangunan sosial*), character education, and community identity formation. Ba'Zandya et al. (2024) explain that community-level sports play a strategic role in strengthening social solidarity, increasing participation, and fostering intergenerational togetherness. Thus, collective village sports activities serve not only as recreation but also as non-formal education that instills values of discipline, sportsmanship, and social responsibility.

In society's social structure, youth occupy a strategic position as agents of change. Village youth are not merely the next generation but also possess high energy, creativity, and social concern. In various local development practices, they act as initiators and implementers of activities ranging from youth programs and religious events to sports (Boadu et al., 2021; Hoekman et al., 2019; Wheaton et al., 2017). News from the Ministry of Youth and Sports in 2022 emphasizes that youth roles in sports extend beyond athletes to community mobilizers and facilitators of village-level coaching. Their involvement in village sports creates meaningful opportunities, channeling hobbies and talents while providing social learning spaces for children (Edwards, 2015; Kiptiah, 2023). In Desa Darupono, caring youth focused on sports—especially football—hold great potential for developing a community-based coaching model emphasizing collective effort (Firdaus, 2023).

The early age of 6–12 years is known as the golden age in child development. At this stage, children experience rapid physical, mental, and social growth, so positive stimulation shapes their future character (Children et al., 2020). Football, as a popular sport, effectively trains motor skills, basic techniques, and character values like discipline, responsibility, and cooperation. Research shows that early-age sports coaching significantly influences children's holistic development, from physiological to psychological aspects (Widiyanto, 2024). Furthermore, PSSI news from 2022 stresses that early childhood football coaching forms the foundation for national athlete regeneration, as achievements stem from long-term processes starting in childhood. This underscores the need for serious attention to early childhood coaching at both national and village levels (Lang et al., 2023; Leach & Bradbury, 2024; Pearson et al., 2022; Yu et al., 2024).

Football, Indonesia's most popular sport, holds strong social appeal. Nearly every village has a football field serving as a hub for play, practice, and socializing. Oktafiani and Hadiana (2025) state that football builds character and life skills, such as cooperation, leadership, and emotional control. In other words, football is not just competitive but also a vehicle for effective character education and social coaching.

Early childhood football coaching requires a systematic, sustainable approach, including program planning, competent coaches, adequate facilities, and support from parents and communities. Research on Indonesian Football Schools (*Sekolah Sepak Bola*, SSB) shows that success hinges on organizational management, coach quality, and competition sustainability (Wijaya, 2021). In rural areas, however, limited facilities, licensed trainers, and funding pose major obstacles. Here, the collective role of youth and communities becomes key. Through *gotong royong*, they create local solutions like utilizing village fields, forming community clubs, and involving parents in training. This reflects emerging awareness among village youth to build a sustainable sports ecosystem—not only technically but also socially—via activity organization, community mobilization, and collective values that strengthen solidarity.

Desa Darupono in South Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, exemplifies how youth drive early childhood sports coaching. Through independent initiatives, they organize children's soccer practices, local competitions, and collaborations with communities and village officials. Despite limited facilities, the youth demonstrate commitment, innovation, and creativity in managing activities (Jamil, 2022). Football coaching in Desa Darupono prioritizes not just achievement but also character education and social identity formation for village children through values like discipline, responsibility, cooperation, sportsmanship, and mutual

respect. This aligns with Positive Youth Development (*Positive Youth Development*, PYD) principles, which emphasize adolescents' potential and positive character via constructive activities (Verina et al., 2024). Additionally, it yields significant social, economic, and cultural impacts, strengthening cohesion and preserving Indonesia's *gotong royong* culture (Fithroni & Rusdiawan, 2023).

In character education, early childhood football coaching in Desa Darupono effectively instills moral values and social ethics like honesty, hard work, and respect for differences. These align with sports-based character education, which Triansyah (2025) says is vital for building resilient, integrity-filled youth. At the macro level, Darupono youth activities reflect a community-based development model empowering locals to identify problems and implement solutions independently (Dzulfian Syafrian, 2025). Therefore, this research is crucial for understanding how youth construct community development systems, the strategies they employ, and the character values cultivated. Through a descriptive qualitative approach, it aims to contribute theoretically to sports science, character education, and youth studies, while offering practical benefits for village communities in building participatory, sustainable, socio-culturally grounded early childhood football coaching.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the meanings, experiences, and social processes in Desa Darupono's early childhood football coaching. Researchers interacted directly with subjects to gain in-depth insights into how village youth formed and enacted their collective roles.

The research took place in Desa Darupono, South Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, Central Java Province, from October 24 to 26, 2025. Location and timing were selected purposively to align with youth-led coaching schedules via the Darupono *Sekolah Sepak Bola* (SSB), enabling observation of training, interactions, and community support.

Subjects comprised active youth involved in early childhood football coaching, selected purposively based on their direct knowledge of the phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2020).

Data consisted of primary data gathered from interviews, observations, and documentation—covering youth roles, processes, community support, and challenges—supplemented by secondary data drawn from documents, archives, village reports, and relevant literature.

Data collection techniques included direct, systematic observation of coaching activities, youth-child interactions, and community involvement on the village football field; semi-structured in-depth interviews exploring youth motivation, collective strategies, and social support; and documentation of photos, participant lists, organizational structures, and activity archives.

Data analysis followed a descriptive qualitative process, conducted iteratively from collection through final stages (Miles & Huberman, 2014; Sugiyono, 2020). It involved data reduction through selecting, focusing, and theming information (e.g., youth participation forms and character values); data display via narratives, tables, and excerpts; and conclusion drawing/verification by interpreting meanings, triangulating sources, and re-checking for validity until saturation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Research Locations

This research was carried out in Darupono Village, South Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency. This village has the characteristics of a dynamic social community and upholds the value of mutual cooperation. One of the prominent activities in this village is early childhood football coaching facilitated by the Darupono football school (SSB).

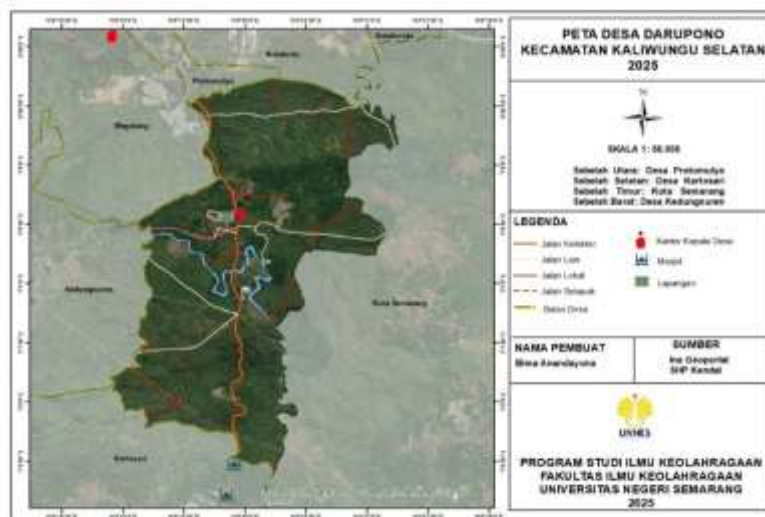


Figure 1. General Map

Map of Darupono Village : Source Ina Geoportal, SHP Kendal

Judging from its geographical location, Darupono Village is quite far from the center of formal football education which is generally located in urban areas. This condition encourages village youth to take the initiative to establish a football school (SSB) as a means of fostering and developing the potential of early childhood in rural areas. Due to the limited access to the research location, it requires more effort to reach, both in terms of distance and transportation facilities. In this condition, it does not hinder the enthusiasm of the village youth in carrying out early childhood football coaching activities in the area.

After its establishment, early childhood football coaching in Darupono Village experienced very rapid growth. This is due to a number of supporting factors, one of which is the existence of strong community ties, village officials, and active community members. The synergy between the three elements creates a conducive environment for children to grow and develop through football activities. Community support is seen through individual participation in training children, while village officials provide facilities and encourage the use of the field as a place for activities. In other situations, youth play a key role in the implementation of training and development of ongoing coaching programs. The combination of these various supports makes (SSB) Darupono Village able to grow into an active and oriented early childhood football coaching center at the village level.

This coaching activity is not only oriented to the character development of the younger generation, it also includes improving football technical skills, instilling character education values such as discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and sportsmanship. The support from the community and village officials made this activity continue and become a pride for the residents of Darupono Village.

Judging from the formulation of the problem above, the author focuses this research on the role of local youth who are quite dominant in the development of early childhood football, this is supported by some data that the author obtained when conducting field observations. Some of these roles include several aspects, namely early childhood interest and talent in football, social aspects, age regeneration in creating sustainable football coaching.

1. The Role of Darupono Village Youth in Social Development

Youth is a social group that has a strategic role in the process of community development. They have vitality, creativity, and the ability to drive social participation in the surrounding community. In the context of social development, youth are not only beneficiaries but also as the main drivers who can create change at the societal level. This is also seen in the residents of Darupono Village, who are actively involved in developing the social life of the community through sports activities, especially the use of football. They took the initiative to make the Football School (SSB) a tangible example of social and moral awareness about the development of the young generation in society (Reynaldi & Khan, 2021).

The activities carried out by the residents of Darupono Village do not only focus on the sports aspect, but also on the creation of a new social space where the values of cooperation, discipline, and teamwork are upheld. Through the use of football, educators can create positive interactions between children, adults, and local communities, which strengthens social cohesion. This phenomenon is in line with the belief that students' social behavior at the village level often arises from moral dilemmas and collective action to create alternative social spaces outside of formal organizations. In this case, the residents of Darupono Village play the role of agents of social change, promoting the return of community harmony and solidarity through community-based activities (Lahi et al., 2025).

As a result, the contribution of the residents of Darupono Village to the development of the community is not only limited to their physical contributions or the sports activities they participate in; It also includes their ability to build collective bonds and create more participatory social structures. Through early childhood football activities, they realize that social development in the village can arise from the actions of the local community, both from and for the residents of Darupono Village.

The author divides several social roles that arise from the youth of Darupono Village in the context of social development at the local level. Based on the results of interviews, field observations, and literature reviews, these social roles can be seen as follows:

- a. As a Driver of Social and Sports Activities
- b. As a Facilitator of Character Education and Social Discipline
- c. As an Initiator of Community Participation and Mutual Cooperation
- d. As a Guardian of Local Values and Community Solidarity
- e. As an Agent of Social Change and Innovation at the Village Level

The following are the results of an in-depth interview conducted by the author in the field on October 24, 2025 with the youth chairman of SSB Darupono Village: "I am financially and facilities are still limited, our intention is still strong to form this SSB, so I remain strongly committed if financial factors are not a reason not to train children. and I think this is very influential in causing social activities of the community at the village level." (said Galuh).

The statement reflects the high social commitment and spirit of independence of youth in carrying out their roles. They are not only trainers or managers of activities, but also agents

of social change who seek to create a positive space for children in the village environment. Through football coaching activities, youth are able to instill the values of cooperation, discipline, and the spirit of togetherness of social values that are the foundation of character development in the village community.

2. Social Capital of Darupono Village Youth in Early Childhood Football Development

Social capital is one of the main forces that support the sustainability of early childhood football coaching activities in Darupono Village. In this context, youth demonstrate the ability to build and maintain social relationships based on trust, solidarity, and collective awareness to contribute to society without relying on formal governance structures.

Football coaching activities at SSB Darupono grew from the collective initiative of village youth, not from official institution programs. They prepare training schedules, manage children, and repair field facilities independently. Even though it does not have financial support or an established organizational structure, these activities continue to run continuously due to a sense of responsibility and mutual trust between members (Ripal et al., 2025).

- a. Trust and a Sense of Shared Responsibility
- b. Social Networking and Community Support
- c. The Value of Mutual Cooperation and Togetherness
- d. Sustained Collective Consciousness

The following are the results of an in-depth interview conducted by the author in the field on October 24, 2025 with the youth of SSB Darupono Village: "We do not have an official structure like a large organization, only reckless capital and social support for local residents who already know their respective tasks. There are those who take care of the ball, some who coach, and some who manage the children's schedules. So the path continues even though it is still simple" (said Wahyu Widya).

Based on the results of an interview with Wahyu Widya, one of the drivers of early childhood football coaching activities in Darupono Village, information was obtained that the activity ran independently without an official organizational structure. Wahyu said that only the capital of enthusiasm and social support from local residents who have understood their respective roles.

3. Community-Based Social Movements

It is important to understand the forms that emerge from local communities are not necessarily top-down organizations in social entrepreneurship. Community-based social movements are collective actions by community members who have a common goal and independently organize actions to achieve them, namely mobilization of local resources, solidarity, and active participation. SSB Darupono can be seen as a manifestation of community-based social movements in the context of early childhood football in Darupono Village. This movement grew organically from the enthusiasm and awareness of village youth who have concern for the future of children and a positive image in general. Without structural support from formal organizations, the participants voluntarily and spontaneously organized activities, planned exercises, provided assistance, and even repaired the field on a daily basis.

This is not because of the existence of large government programs or sponsorships, but because of a strong sense of social solidarity and togetherness among the participants. Each member of the community has an informal but coordinated role, partly as a teacher, partly as a coach, and partly as a caregiver and organizer of children's activities. This shows the existence

of an independent community movement, which is a group of people who can organize themselves according to their own values and beliefs.

More specifically, SSB Darupono serves as a social center that strengthens relationships between individuals throughout the region. Regular interaction between students, parents, and others creates strong social bonds and mutual trust. Therefore, from this social role, the SSB Darupono community was formed which encourages various activities in the community so as to create sustainable coaching that accommodates the interests and talents of the children of Darupono Village. This was obtained by the author while conducting field observations in Darupono Village, one of which was said directly by Galuh as the founder and chairman of the Darupono Village football school youth community: "At first, I just wanted the young people here to like football. I think, it's a pity if young children are not facilitated. So yes, I do regular afternoon exercises. There is no official structure or outside assistance, everything is the result of mutual cooperation and small contributions. That's why I created this community. So I made this community there are those who take care of it like coaches, there are those who arrange training schedules, treasurers, secretaries, so that this activity runs sustainably" (Galuh 2025).

From the theory and interviews above, the author will map the form of the early childhood football coaching community in Darupono Village. The organizational structure of SSB Darupono was formed simply through the agreement of the village youth. Even though it is non-formal, each member has a clear role and responsibility so that football coaching activities continue to run.

4. The Concept of Collective Roles

The collective role in football coaching refers to the cooperation between various parties, such as students, players, staff, the general public, and social organizations, who work together to support the development of human resources. In this context, coaching is not limited to individuals or formal structures; rather, it is based on teamwork, mutual respect, and social awareness of the importance of character education and the development of future generations (Komarudin, 2005).

Through the collective, coaching football can be a social education tool that develops character, strengthens relationships between members, and gives birth to a healthy, resilient, and honest generation. Therefore, the success of football is determined not only by the ability of the students or facilities, but also by the fact that each member of the community actively participates in cooperation.

Collective strength is one of the advantages of SSB Darupono Village as a place where people can gather as a community. Each activity is carried out politely and respectfully by the local community. All members have a strong sense of responsibility, from students, instructors, to staff who support the provision of facilities and assistance. This collective role is reflected in the spirit of cooperation, a sense of belonging, and a shared awareness that football coaching is a means of character formation for the young generation of the village. Through non-profit collaboration with formal organizations, SSB Darupono is an example of a social community that can carry out activities independently.

The collective role at SSB Darupono stems from the initiative and leadership of the active coaching chair, who works closely with other organizations, including other SSBs in the surrounding area. Through the relationships and friendships that have been established, SSB Darupono has succeeded in collaborating with one of them, SSB Mororejo. This collaboration

is one of the most important factors that affect the success and continuity of coaching activities at SSB Darupono.

This cooperation between communities not only expands social networks, but also opens up opportunities for children to participate in friendly matches, share experiences, and improve their technical and mental abilities in playing football. As a result of this process, it is possible to regenerate early age players who have high potential and athletic level.

Working together as a team not only strengthens social bonds but also gives children the opportunity to participate in family activities, exchange stories, and improve their technical and mental skills while playing soccer. Through this process, it is possible to develop young players who have high potential and levels of physical fitness.

Therefore, collaborative efforts and social relations between SSBs are the main foundation in developing a rapidly growing football ecosystem in Darupono Village. The above idea received direct support from the youth leader, as revealed by the author through the results of the interview on the implementation obtained during the interview session: "In the past, I also participated in SSB when I was a child, so from there I had many relationships, one of which was at SSB Mororejo. From that experience, I tried to invite them to work together so that SSB Darupono could develop. Through that relationship, I can exchange ideas and experiences, hold sparring, and help the children here have the spirit to continue practicing. Because of frequent sparring, there are my students who get offers from outside to play in other SSBs and luckily my students become the best players" (Said Galuh as the chairman)

From the results of the interview above, we can see how important the collective is in supporting the role of youth who want to advance SSB Darupono Village, one of which we can take some points that, from the side of the chairman also has a background that is in harmony with this organization, then it fully supports and creates great players from the Darupono Village football school (SSB). The role of this collective is also one of the great breakthroughs considering that several barrier factors are not the reason for the development of early childhood interest and talent in the Darupono Village football school

5. Early Childhood Football Coaching Concept

Early childhood football coaching is a systematic and rigorous process that begins from the moment a child is born in the early stages of development (usually between the ages of 6 and 12). The goal is not only to develop children's soccer skills, but also to develop their character, social skills, and physical attributes comprehensively.

Early childhood football coaching refers to the process of developing children's basic skills in playing football calmly, regularly, and cooperatively. The main goal of the program is not to make players more athletic, but rather to develop their motor skills, discipline, and sense of sportsmanship from an early age.

Coaching is carried out in the context of SSB Darupono through a social and educational approach. The training activities focused on the basics of introduction techniques such as balls, gopers, and kicking, as well as planting values such as cooperation, responsibility, and mutual respect. The program aims to ensure that children grow up in a positive social environment rather than just a technical environment.

Coaches have a crucial role in helping children grow according to their developmental stages while considering psychological and emotional factors. In addition, the community and the environment are components of the collective coaching system. This kind of cooperation

creates an engaging learning environment and builds children's motivation to continue learning and developing.

Therefore, the concept of early childhood football at SSB Darupono shows a balance between teaching game mechanics and character development. This is a catalyst for the regeneration of young players who are not only receptive but also have strong social ties and a strong sense of community. There are several concepts that support youth in early childhood football coaching.

a. Develop motor skills

At SSB Darupono, the development of motor skills is carried out simply but effectively by trainers from village youth. The young coaches understand the children's character and create a fun and non-stressful training atmosphere. They use game methods such as zig-zag dribble, to train children's agility and body coordination.



Figure 2 Zig-zag dribble concept

Darupono Village Field: Source (Documentation 2025)

The photo above is the concept of zig-zag dribble training applied by youth in early childhood football coaching training in Darupono Village. From the photo above, we can see that the concept of the training is very effective where each training participant is asked to go through several training mechanisms to support the development of motor skills.

b. Cultivate discipline

SSB Darupono students who are easy to teach use persuasive and educational methods, not only punishment, but also example and motivation. They explained that discipline is not a bad thing, but a positive attitude that makes training more effective and fun. For example, teachers give awards to children who attend consistently or perform their duties well. One of them is by coming on time and regularly practicing twice a week for meetings.



Figure 3 The Concept of Discipline

Darupono Village Field Area: Source (2025 Documentation)

From the photo above, it is explained that one of the disciplines in practicing as we see children enthusiastically listening to the direction of coaches or youth before conducting match training sessions that have an impact both outside and on the field.

c. Instilling a sense of sportsmanship

In the process, Darupono young coaches not only teach techniques, but also instill moral values and social character through real examples in the field. For example, they reprimand children who play rough or do not want to cooperate, as well as give appreciation to children who show sportsmanship and respect for friends.



Figure 4 Helping Opponents When Injured

Darupono Village field area: Source (Documentation 2025)

From the photo above, it shows that teammates are helping with the first treatment when the opponent is injured, one of which shows a form of sportsmanship in the match. The results of these observations are strengthened by an interview conducted by the author with Rio Teguh as the goalkeeper coach at SSB Darupono, on October 26, 2025: "We always tell children, playing football is not only about winning, but also respecting each other. If someone falls, yes, help, don't even laugh" (said Rio Teguh)

From this statement, it can be understood that the cultivation of sportsmanship is carried out through habituation and affirmation of moral values during training and matches. The coaches not only teach the techniques of the game, but also form the social character of cooperation, empathy, and respect for fellow coaches.

From the data that the author obtained in the field along with the theory used, there are some similarities with other studies in training and developing prospective early childhood

football players. However, the author emphasizes the role of facilitators who participate in a large amount of the above problem.

Supporting Factors and Barriers

The author will discuss the factors that affect the early childhood football coaching process, both supportive and inhibiting. The success of coaching is not only determined by the technical abilities of the coach and the child, but also by environmental conditions, social support, and the motivation of the various parties involved.

In general, supporting factors are every element that supports the effectiveness, sustainability, and smooth running of coaching activities. These factors include family, role coaches, availability of facilities and infrastructure, enthusiasm, and enthusiasm of children in learning. Social and community environmental support also plays a crucial role in creating a positive coaching situation.

On the other hand, a barrier factor is an obstacle that can hinder or hinder the coaching process. These obstacles can come from limited facilities and funds, lack of competent coaches, low parental participation, and the influence of modern lifestyles that make children less active in sports.

Based on the findings of Wibiyanto's research, (2021) regarding supporting and inhibiting factors in the development of Pancasila learning characteristics, it is explained that these factors are divided into two categories: internal and external. Internal factors are related to individual motivation, attitudes, and personalities, while external factors are related to the family, teacher, and social environment. This principle is also relevant in the context of early football development because a child's development is not only influenced by his physical abilities, but also by his social environment and character education.

By understanding these two factors, coaches, coaches, and the community can more easily develop appropriate strategies to improve the supporting aspects and overcome various challenges that arise during the coaching process. From the above understanding, the author will explain several barrier factors that hinder the development of early childhood football coaching, and the supporting factors that become the foundation as well as the success strategy of early childhood football coaching in Darupono village.

1. Supporting Factors

Supporting factors are elements or conditions that play a role in facilitating and strengthening the implementation of early childhood football coaching activities. The existence of supporting factors is very important because it is the main foundation for the growth of children's requests, motivation, and consistency in following the training process. Early childhood coaching is not only about mastering football techniques, but also about character formation, discipline, and cooperation listed through sports activities (Wibiyanto, 2021).

Although the activities are carried out systematically and community-based, the enthusiasm and enthusiasm of the students, children, and the community as a whole make the coaching program continue to run consistently. Several factors are known to have a significant impact on the success of the coaching process, including the motivation of children, family members, and students, as well as the social environment around them.

In the process of coaching early childhood football in Darupono Village, there are several factors that are important in determining the success of these activities. The coaching carried

out by local coaches and the youth not only aims to improve children's basic skills in playing football, but also serves as a foundation for character formation such as discipline, cooperation, and responsibility. There are several factors that the author will discuss below.

1) Family and community support

Families have the ability to encourage children to participate in soccer activities. Family support can include moral guidance, supervision, and the necessary time and funds. People who inspire and encourage children to participate in exercise activities will develop confidence and self-confidence. According to the findings of Buchori1 et al., (2025), there is a significant impact on the sustainability of children's exercise. In addition, the surrounding community such as coral cadets, youth figures, or sports communities are social factors that increase the effectiveness of Wibiyanto's coaching activities, (2021). Based on the results of interviews with some information, the author concludes that there are several factors that affect the process of developing football at an early age in Darupono Village. These factors include family and community support, availability of facilities and infrastructure, the role of coaches, institutional support, and children's motivation to learn. The interview conducted by the author with Mr. Sumadi as a parent at SSB Darupono, on October 26, 2025: "Personally, I always support my son to participate in football practice." In addition to helping buy training equipment, sometimes I go straight to the field. Because since he was a child, I've seen that he really loves football, so I'm just supporting him so that he can develop."

In addition to support from families, the community also has the ability to protect young children. This was explained by one of the village youth leaders. The author's interview with Galuh as the chairman and coach at SSB Darupono, on October 26, 2025: "The residents here are quite enthusiastic, especially the children who practice in the afternoon." There are a lot of people watching, and we also help students with small courts or tournaments to keep them excited.

According to Buchori1 et al., (2025), family involvement has a significant impact on children's sustainability practices. This shows that social support from families and communities can increase children's motivation to continue learning. From the above understanding and the author's analysis, the support of the surrounding community, especially the family, is very important and helps village youth achieve their mission and mission in early childhood development.

2) Availability of facilities and infrastructure

Sports facilities are an important factor in determining the quality of training. Adequate facilities, balls, and enough training equipment will help children train more effectively. According to Thaoriq & Imam, (2022), the availability of exercise facilities has a positive impact on children's participation in sports activities. The availability of simple but well-maintained facilities can be a powerful incentive for children to continue learning and actively participating. Another supporting factor is the availability of training facilities. Despite this, the village football field remains the main location for children to play. An interview with Coco as a coach and youth said on October 26, 2025: "The field is not perfect, but it is enough for the children's training." It is very important for them to learn how to play and learn how to play football. We are also working together to clean the field so that it is still suitable for use". This is in line with the findings of Thaoriq & Imam, (2022), who stated that access to facilities can increase children's participation in learning activities.

3) The role of a competent coach and coach

Coaches, also known as coaches, are important figures who act as character educators and teachers of basic football techniques. Competent coaches are able to understand the characteristics of early childhood, are skilled in interacting, and have good communication skills. According to research by Muhammad Ikbar Ifthikharudin Fadhill, (2025), educational and communicative learning activities can significantly improve the performance and motivation of young athletes. Coaches have an important role not only in teaching football techniques, but also in instilling character values in children. Based on the results of the interview, the writer with Susanto as the goalkeeper coach said on October 26, 2025: "The children here are still young, so we not only teach kicking or passing, but also educate them about discipline, respect for friends, and teamwork. If they are not formed from now on, it will be difficult when they grow up". This statement strengthens the findings of Muhammad Ikbar Ifthikharudin Fadhill, (2025) who explained that coaches with an educational approach can improve performance while shaping children's character.

4) Institutional and government support

Educational institutions, football schools (SSB), or local governments have an important role in developing the education system. Early childhood education, training for coaches, or assistance in terms of facilities and infrastructure can contribute to support according to Thaoriq & Imam, (2022). This institutional support provides space for children to develop their skills and experience competition at the same time. Village institutions and schools also provide support for coaching activities. This support is usually in the form of a field use permit and simple equipment assistance. Based on the results of the author's interview with the Village Secretary, Mr. Dandit said on October 24, 2025: "We from the village support the activities of these children. Although there are not many of them, the minimum field facilities can be used continuously, and if there are village tournament activities, SSB Darupono can also be used". This highlights the synergy between communities, village governments, and coaches in creating a sustainable coaching system (Thaoriq & Imam, 2022).

5) Children's Motivation and Enthusiasm

Children's enthusiasm and interest in football are internal factors that have a significant impact. Children with strong motivation will be more likely to adapt to the surrounding environment and strive to improve their own abilities. According to Muhammad Ikbar Ifthikharudin Fadhill, (2025), intrinsic motivation and the social environment are the main factors in improving the performance of early age athletes. The high level of motivation of children is also a major source of inspiration. Their enthusiasm is evident in every aspect of the exercise, although the facilities available are still quite limited. The results of an interview with Yoga, one of the training participants, said on October 26, 2025: "I love practicing football, because I want to be like a national team player. Even when it rains, sometimes I still want to play, but the coach told me to rest first."

This type of intrinsic motivation is in line with the findings of Muhammad Ikbar Ifthikharudin Fadhill, (2025), who stated that enthusiasm and social support are important factors in improving the performance of young athletes.

Based on the results of the interviews mentioned above, it can be concluded that various factors, including family, community, and local government, play a role in the development of early childhood football in Darupono Village. Moral, social, and practical support creates

consistent coaching activities, although there are still some differences. These factors are very important in shaping a young generation that has integrity, athleticism, and is committed to sports (Widiyanto, 2024).

2. Barrier Factors

In addition to supporting factors, early childhood football coaching also faces other challenges that can affect the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. This can come from internal and external factors, such as the quality of facilities, the family environment, and changes in children's lifestyles. It is important to identify these barrier factors so that appropriate solutions can be found to prevent coaching interruptions (Ginanjari et al., 2023).

This condition reflects the reality often faced by communities at the village level, where limited facilities, financial support, and unprofessional trainers are challenges in themselves. In addition, social factors such as lack of parental attention and the influence of modern lifestyles also affect children's motivation to participate in regular exercises.

In the process of developing early childhood football in Darupono Village, the author notes that the activities carried out by the village coaches and youth are not affected by various field obstacles. Although morale coaching is very high, there are several obstacles that affect the effectiveness of the training and the sustainability of the program.

1) Limitations of Facilities and Funds

One of the main challenges in developing football at an early age is the lack of facilities and infrastructure. There are several communities or schools in the area that still use makeshift fields with limited equipment. Limited operational funds also cause training activities to not always run consistently. All activities of Darupono Football School (SSB) still depend on self-help and voluntary parental donations. The absence of a fixed allocation of funds from certain villages or institutions makes the sustainability of activities highly dependent on the enthusiasm and commitment of the trainers. The results of these observations are strengthened by an interview conducted by the author with Rio Teguh as the goalkeeper coach at SSB Darupono, on October 26, 2025: "The field here is still ordinary land, so if it is rainy, it is often muddy. Sometimes the ball is only two or three, so we have to take turns,"



Figure 5 Damaged Field Conditions

Darupono Village field area (author source 2025)

This condition shows that the financial environment and infrastructure are basic needs that have not been fully met in the development of humanity (Zijian & Wang, 2025).

2) Lack of competent trainers

Another obstacle faced in early childhood coaching is the number of people who have special knowledge and attention to early childhood characteristics. Some of the coaches come from local youth who have high enthusiasm but have not had formal training in child training methodologies. Nevertheless, the dedication and enthusiasm of the coaches should be appreciated. They continue to try to adapt their coaching style to their abilities and improve the quality of coaching, coaches need to be equipped with technical and psychological training in early childhood so that the training process not only emphasizes the physical aspect, but also forms character, discipline, and cooperation. The author's interview with Galuh as chairman and coach at SSB Darupono, on October 26, 2025: "We teach based on our own playing experience; We have never taken any formal courses, but we still try to teach children in an easy-to-understand way".

This shows that increasing the capacity of coaches is still very much needed. Coaches with the right approach can develop a child's character and spirit, not just their technical skills (Zijian & Wang, 2025).

3) Low parental awareness and support

One of the most important factors in motivating children is family support, especially from one's own family. However, there are still many people who do not understand the importance of exercise from an early age. Think of soccer practice as just a part of an entertainment activity, not a component of character education. Lack of presence and moral support from parents often makes children lose motivation to practice regularly. In some cases, children who are initially active become passive because there is no encouragement from the family environment. The author's interview with Mr. Sumadi as a parent at SSB Darupono, on October 26, 2025: "There are parents who have not been present when their children practice." Sometimes they don't pay attention because they are busy working.

According to research by Ardiansyah et al., (2023), children's performance and perseverance in participating in sports activities, such as soccer, are greatly influenced by their environment and behavior. Lack of support can be a significant obstacle to children's growth during the early stages of development.

4) Lack of institutional and government support

Coaching programs at the village level often rely on community initiatives without clear structural support from educational institutions or local governments. Lack of attention in this regard hinders the provision of facilities and sustainable development programs. The lack of support from this institution has an impact on limited access to facilities, competencies, and training of trainers. Early childhood football coaching in Darupono still depends on the collective spirit of the community, not on a structured institutional system. Not only special policies from the village government or related agencies cause coaching activities to not have a fixed administrative and funding basis. This has an impact on the limited training facilities, the lack of regular tournament preparations, and the low opportunity for coaches to participate in competency improvement training. The interview conducted by the author with Galuh as chairman and coach at SSB Darupono, on October 26, 2025: "There is no routine assistance from the government, therefore we have to rely on ourselves. If there is a new village event, it can be a support.

This situation shows that coordination between villages, schools, and sports offices needs to be strengthened so that coaching is not stopped due to factors such as funding or policies (Ginanjari et al., 2023).

5) The influence of technology and lifestyle changes

Modern technological advances have a significant impact on children's physical activity. Many children are more likely to use gadgets or play games than participate in the training field. This phenomenon shows a shift in children's play culture from physical activities to digital activities. These changes not only have an impact on children's discipline, but also on the development of character and social skills. Children who interact frequently with screens tend to miss out on opportunities to learn to cooperate, communicate, and manage emotions through group sports activities such as soccer. An interview with Coco as a coach and youth said on October 26, 2025: "There are many young people who prefer cellphones to training. They can use a training schedule if they are not reminded.

This shows that the digital lifestyle is a new challenge for the younger generation. According to Ardiansyah et al., (2023), cooperation between individuals and students is needed to encourage the return of active behavior and the spirit of exercise.

CONCLUSION

This qualitative descriptive study examined the collective contributions of Desa Darupono villagers—particularly youth—to early childhood football development in South Kaliwungu District, Kendal Regency, focusing on social dynamics, involvement, coaching strategies, and community activities. Findings revealed that village sports serve as vehicles for character education, social interaction, and community development, fostering solidarity and youth unity through youth-driven facilitation between communities and children. The coaching process prioritized educational and character values, generating social synergy and capital via youth-community collaboration and *gotong royong*, ensuring independent sustainability. Theoretically, it advanced concepts of social capital and community-based development; practically, the model offers inspiration for other villages to integrate social values into sports. Future research could quantitatively assess long-term impacts on child outcomes or replicate the model in diverse Indonesian rural contexts.

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