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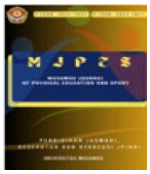

Basic Soccer Skills of Fifth-Grade Students: A Descriptive Survey at SD Negeri 050616 Namuukur

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Abstract

Objectives: This study described the basic soccer-skill profile of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 050616 Namuukur using an age-referenced field-test battery.

Materials and Methods: A quantitative cross-sectional descriptive survey was conducted. The fifth-grade population comprised 31 students, and complete test results were reported for 27 students. Six skills were assessed using the soccer-skill test battery for children aged 10–12 years developed by Daral Fauzi: dribbling, short passing, throw-in, running with the ball, heading, and shooting. Raw results were converted to standardized scores and classified using the instrument norms. Frequencies and percentages were calculated.

Results: No student reached the excellent or good categories. Nine students (33.3%) were classified as average, 8 (29.6%) as poor, and 10 (37.0%) as very poor. Consequently, 18 of 27 students (66.7%) were in the poor or very-poor categories, and the modal category was very poor.

Conclusions: The assessed group displayed limited overall proficiency across the six basic soccer skills. Physical education should provide progressive, high-contact practice that combines focused technique tasks with appropriately designed small-sided games. Item-level scores should guide individual feedback and reassessment. The reason four students lacked analyzed results must be confirmed before submission.

Keywords: children; physical education; skill assessment; soccer; technical skills

Introduction

Soccer is widely used in elementary physical education because it combines locomotor, object-control, perceptual, and social demands within an accessible team activity. Participation can help children practise accelerating, stopping, changing direction, controlling a ball, passing, and shooting while learning cooperation and decision-making. These outcomes are not automatic: age-appropriate equipment, task design, feedback, and sufficient opportunities to contact the ball are needed for meaningful skill development.

Basic technical skills provide the movement vocabulary for later game participation. Dribbling enables a player to move while retaining control; passing and receiving support cooperation; running with the ball integrates speed and control; shooting directs the ball toward a target; heading and throw-ins address specific restarts or aerial actions. Soccer performance nevertheless remains an open-skill activity. Technical execution is continually shaped by teammates, opponents, available space, and the need to decide whether to pass, dribble, or shoot (Iuliano et al., 2023).

Assessment can identify students who need additional support and reveal which skills should receive instructional priority. However, an isolated field-test score and successful game performance are related but distinct. Standardized tasks offer consistent measurement of execution, whereas small-sided play samples perception, decision-making, and technique under pressure. A balanced physical education program should therefore use tests diagnostically and create representative opportunities to apply skills in games.

Recent youth-soccer research supports this combined approach. Structured passing practice with progressive task complexity and feedback improved side-foot kick accuracy among young players (Carlsson et al., 2025). In children's match play, reducing the format from 7v7 to 4v4 approximately doubled technical and tactical actions per player, increasing learning opportunities for both more- and less-dominant participants (Hintermann et al., 2021). Integrative drills can also combine technical actions with attention and decision demands (Mao et al., 2024).

At SD Negeri 050616 Namuukur, fifth-grade students reportedly showed enthusiasm for soccer, yet preliminary teacher observations indicated uneven mastery of basic techniques. Facilities were described as adequate, but no

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consolidated skill profile had been available to direct instruction. This study therefore aimed to describe students' performance in six basic soccer skills and classify their combined scores using norms for children aged 10–12 years. The results were intended as a local diagnostic baseline, not as evidence of the causes of students' performance.

Materials and Methods

Study Design

This study used a quantitative, cross-sectional descriptive survey design. It characterized current performance without manipulating instruction or testing causal hypotheses. The study was conducted at SD Negeri 050616 Namuukur, Indonesia.

Study Participants

The source manuscript identified 31 fifth-grade students as the class population but reported complete category results for 27 students. Accordingly, the analyzed sample in this article is n = 27. The source did not explain whether the remaining four students were absent, ineligible, withdrew, or had incomplete data. The authors must verify the participant flow before submission. Age distribution, sex distribution, prior soccer experience, health status, and inclusion or exclusion criteria were also not reported and should be added from the original records.

Study Organization

Six field-test items from the Daral Fauzi soccer-skill battery for children aged 10–12 years were administered: (1) dribbling, (2) short passing, (3) throw-in, (4) running with the ball, (5) heading, and (6) shooting at goal. The testing area was arranged and the tasks were explained before performance. Because the component tests use different units, raw values were converted to standardized scores and combined according to the instrument procedure.

The source manuscript did not provide field diagrams, dimensions, equipment specifications, number of trials, scoring direction, rest intervals, warm-up, assessor training, surface conditions, or primary evidence for the battery's reliability and validity. These details and a complete citation for the test manual should be restored from the original records before submission. Standardization is essential because task distance, target size, timing method, and number of attempts can change test performance.

Statistical Analysis

Combined standardized scores were classified using the reported age-referenced norms: excellent (≥479), good (401–478), average (323–400), poor (246–322), and very poor (≤245). Category frequencies were divided by the analyzed sample of 27 and multiplied by 100. Percentages are presented to one decimal place. No inferential statistics were used.

Ethical Considerations

The source manuscript did not report an ethics committee, approval number, school authorization, parental consent, child assent, privacy procedures, or safety protocol. The authors should verify and insert these details before journal submission. Student names have been excluded from the revised report.

Results

Complete composite classifications were available for 27 students. No student was classified as excellent or good. Nine students (33.3%) were average, 8 (29.6%) were poor, and 10 (37.0%) were very poor. Thus, 18 students (66.7%) were below the average category, while 9 (33.3%) were average and none exceeded it.

Table 1. Distribution of composite basic soccer-skill categories (n = 27)

No.	Score range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	≥479	Excellent	0	0.0%
2	401–478	Good	0	0.0%
3	323–400	Average	9	33.3%
4	246–322	Poor	8	29.6%
5	≤245	Very poor	10	37.0%
	—	**Total**	**27**	**100.0%**

The distribution was concentrated in the lower two categories, and the very-poor category was the largest single group. The archived manuscript also stated that throw-in and heading were comparatively weak, running with the ball was average, and dribbling, short passing, and shooting were generally poor. Because complete item-level frequencies and descriptive statistics were not supplied, these component observations are treated as provisional and are not tabulated.

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Discussion

The principal finding was that two-thirds of the assessed students were classified as poor or very poor, and no student reached the good or excellent categories. This pattern indicates a need for systematic foundational instruction rather than an assumption that enthusiasm alone produces proficiency. At the same time, the categories are specific to the adopted test norms and should not be interpreted as fixed ability labels. They are most useful for identifying immediate instructional priorities and monitoring change after practice.

The apparent weakness across multiple skills is compatible with evidence that soccer technique is multidimensional. Iuliano et al. (2023) showed that dribbling quality among U10 players involved not only ball control but also the accuracy of the action that followed a successful dribble. In school instruction, dribbling should therefore progress from close control and direction changes to scanning, choosing an option, and completing an accurate pass or shot. A closed dribbling test can establish a foundation, but it does not capture the entire decision-action sequence.

Passing deserves focused, progressive practice. Carlsson et al. (2025) found that a structured passing program incorporating theoretical cues, repeated practice, and feedback improved side-foot kick accuracy, whereas small-sided games alone did not improve all tested passing conditions. For students with limited proficiency, this suggests beginning with stable target-based practice, emphasizing supporting-foot placement, ankle position, contact surface, and follow-through, before gradually adding a moving ball, moving target, and defensive pressure.

Focused technique should then be connected to representative play. Hintermann et al. (2021) reported that 4v4 children's football produced approximately twice as many technical and tactical actions per player as 7v7 and increased involvement among less-dominant players. This is particularly relevant to the present group because students in the lower categories require frequent, meaningful ball contacts. Formats such as 3v3 or 4v4, small pitches, multiple small goals, and constraints requiring every player to touch the ball can reduce waiting and distribute opportunities more equitably.

Mao et al. (2024) further argued for integrative soccer drills that combine basic technique with cognitive challenges. Teachers can use color or number cues, changing targets, partner signals, and simple pass-or-dribble choices while maintaining an age-appropriate difficulty level. Such designs connect ball mastery with attention and decision-making without turning each lesson into adult-style competition. Task complexity should increase only after students can execute the basic movement with reasonable control.

The source manuscript attributed weak heading and throw-in scores to strength and fear and attributed lower overall results to female students. These explanations were not supported by participant characteristics, comparative statistics, or direct psychological measurement and have therefore been removed. Developmental status, previous practice, instructional exposure, task familiarity, confidence, and test conditions are all plausible influences, but a descriptive design cannot determine which caused the observed scores. Gender stereotypes should not substitute for data.

Physical capacities can support technical learning but should not replace it. Proprioceptive training has been associated with improvements in balance, agility, strength, and dribbling among adolescent soccer players (Gidu et al., 2022), while fundamental movement competence has been linked with soccer-specific technical skills in youth (Duncan et al., 2022). For elementary students, coordination, balance, and change-of-direction activities can be embedded with the ball so physical development and technique reinforce one another.

Practical Implications

Teachers should retain the six component scores for every student and create individual profiles rather than relying only on a composite category. Initial lessons can emphasize many successful ball contacts through stations for close dribbling, short passing, controlled shooting, and running with the ball. Throw-ins and age-appropriate heading activities require careful technical instruction and safety management. Focused repetitions should be followed by small-sided games that require students to perceive options and apply the practised skill. The same standardized test should then be repeated after a defined instructional cycle.

Limitations

This study was cross-sectional and involved one elementary school. Four of the 31 students in the stated population were not represented in the analyzed results, and the reason was unavailable. Participant characteristics, attendance, previous playing experience, component-level data, and full test protocols were not reported. The instrument's primary psychometric evidence could not be verified from the source manuscript. Composite field tests also do not directly measure tactical decisions or actual match performance. Future research should document participant flow, report every skill separately, evaluate test reliability, and test a progressive teaching program using pretest-posttest and comparison-group designs.

Conclusions

Among 27 fifth-grade students with reported test results, 9 (33.3%) had average basic soccer skills, 8 (29.6%) were poor, and 10 (37.0%) were very poor; none reached the good or excellent categories. The findings identify a local need for progressive and differentiated instruction across dribbling, passing, throw-ins, running with the ball, heading, and shooting. High-contact technique stations, age-appropriate feedback, and small-sided games should be combined, followed by standardized reassessment. The result is a diagnostic baseline and does not establish why students obtained lower scores.

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Author Contributions

Jeremia Efraim Sitepu: conceptualization, methodology, investigation, project administration, and writing—original draft. Eka Abdurrahman: data curation, formal analysis, interpretation, and writing—review and editing. Both authors approved the final manuscript and accept responsibility for the integrity of the work.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Data Availability

The aggregate category data are presented in this article. De-identified component-level data may be made available by the corresponding author upon reasonable request, subject to verification of the original records and applicable ethical requirements.

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