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### The Influence of Psychological (Mental) Training to Improve the Performance of Football

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#### Abstract

*This research is aimed to identify the experiment of psychological training on football players to improve their performance. The method used in this research is experimental. This research participant is two football teams, namely Persigar and Porda Garut, consisting of 46 football players. The instrument in this research is Mental Skills Test-football (MST-f) and Evaluation Football Performance. The results revealed that the implementation of psychological training is affected, performance players. That means there is a significant relationship between psychology and football performance. The experimental group's psychological test results (Porda Garut) showed an average score of 3.75 points, those higher than the control group (Persigar Garut), which had an average score of 3.16 points. The experimental group's performance test (Porda Garut) had a higher increase of 73.11%, while the control group (Persigar Garut) experienced a lower growth of 15.54%. This research concludes that psychological training can be implemented in football training as well.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Apart from the physical condition and physical training, which are essential in football skills (Permadi, 2016), football players must also be in good psychological condition (Gledhill et al., 2017; Höner & Feichtinger, 2016). But we often see that psychological factors are usually not too

crucial for players and even football coaches (Thelwell et al., 2018). Several researchers revealed that young football players still have physical and mental limitations and must have stable psychology (Natalia, 2015; O'Reilly & Wong, 2013). In particular, good mental abilities are widely discussed in the branch of sports psychology (Holt & Tamminen, 2010;

Lamont et al., 2017; Thøgersen-Ntoumani et al., 2005). Sports psychology is an emerging field of science that is very much needed in the world of sports (Balish et al., 2013; Hudson et al., 2016; Smith & Sparkes, 2009). The relationship between sports and psychological (mental) achievement is very influential (Gledhill et al., 2017; Höner & Feichtinger, 2016) on the athlete appearance during training and competition (Barreira et al., 2016). Sports psychology studies the behaviors and mental processes of the individuals involved in training and sport participation (Trandafirescu, 2015). At the same time, Sport Science is a scientific cluster that focuses on shaping athletes to have technical, physical, and mental (psychological) qualities at the highest level (Nieuwenhuys et al., 2008).

The importance of sports psychology should be implemented in football training based on the fact that four elements determine the success of a football player or a team in a match on the field, namely physical, technical, tactical (Dillon et al., 2018; Kempton et al., 2015; Natalia, 2015), and mental (psychology) (Natalia, 2015; Slimani et al., 2014). Judging from the four elements, two factors, namely physical and mental (psychology), are factors in the human body that will always influence each other (Balish et al., 2013; Lamont et al., 2017). One way to support the success of a player in a physical sense is by providing regular and structured training based on their position (Altavilla et al., 2017; Nilsson & Cardinale, 2018) so that all team members can understand their duties and responsibilities so

that they can get better team performance (Robertson & Joyce, 2018). In line with this, several studies have revealed the result that, "A combination of three main elements determines performance in any sport: physical conditioning for competition (Balish et al., 2013; Gonçalves et al., 2014), skill level (Lee et al., 2014; Qader et al., 2017), and psychological readiness to compete (Höner & Feichtinger, 2016; Natalia, 2015; Trandafirescu, 2015)."

In previous studies, most researchers only analyzed the level of confidence of football players when taking a penalty kick (Permadi, 2017). Then measure the level of emotional intelligence in football players (Permadi, 2016) but have not applied psychological (mental) training in the research process. Then the researcher in this research will conduct the research that implemented by psychological (mental) training those focused on the Influence of Psychological (Mental) Training to Improve the Performance of Football Players.

## METHODS

This type of research is experimental. Experimentation is a way to reveal a relationship between two or more variables and look for one variable's influence on other variables. The design in this study was a "randomized control group pretest-posttest." The treatment in this study is the preparation phase, the focusing phase, and the execution phase, emphasizing each training, namely the

trainer's direction, with positive sentences (do your best, concentrate, feel confident, etc.).

The research design can be seen in table 1.

**Table 1 Research Design randomized control group pretest-posttest**

Sampling Technique	Group	Pretest	Treatment	Posttest
Random	<i>Pengembangan Latihan</i>	<i>P01</i>	<i>X1</i>	<i>P1</i>
	<i>Kontrol</i>	<i>P02</i>		<i>P2</i>

(Ramadan & Juniarti, 2020)

The treatment used in this research is mental training in real football based on periodization football training. The training phases were divided into three phases, General Preparations, Specific Preparations, and Pre-

competition. Every training phase has three stages which are preparation, focusing, and execution. In the execution stage, there were some topics implemented due to the training phase mentioned before.

**Table 2 Psychological Periodization Program**

Training Phases	Topic
<b>General Preparations</b>	1. Interpersonal 2. Goals and Commitments 3. Motivation and Fighting power 4. Positive Attitude
<b>Specific Preparations</b>	1. Mental Imagery 2. Self-talk
<b>Pre-competition</b>	1. Focus 2. Emotional Management 3. Stress Management

The effectiveness test stage using 46 players as the subject by dividing 23 experimental groups and 23 control groups. The instruments used in this study were performance evaluation and the Mental Skills Test-Questionnaire (MST) developed by Pensgaard & Hollinger in 2004. MST is in an available version and a sports-specific version, and it is the football version of the MST (MST-f) used here (Rasmussen, 2019).

The questionnaire has six categories, and each one contains seven items. The total instrument items on this research are 42 items, where the six categories were Match Preparation, Visualization, Self-talk and Self-confidence, Energy, Management, Concentration, Goal, setting, and Motivation. Then the participants answered each item using a 5-point Ordinal scale.

**Table 3 Mental Skills Test - football (MST-f)**

Source	Categories	Scale	Items
Mental Skills Test - football (MST-f) (Rasmussen, 2019)	1. Match Preparation	Ordinal	A1 – A7
	2. Imagery		B1 – B7
	3. Self-talk and Self-confidence		C1 – C7

4. Energy Management	D1 – D7
5. Concentration	E1 – E7
6. Goal Setting and Motivation	F1 – F7

For the performance test, here is the instrument to measures the performance of football players. A team of analysts carries out the entire trial, or it could be a coach to assess

the extent to which the players are performing based on the aspects of the assessment during conditions on the field.

**Table 4 Performance Test Instrument**

Assessment Aspects	Items	Score
Passing & Control	PC 1 – PC 8	A/B/C/D (Very Good – Poor)
Shooting/Finishing	SF 1 – SF 8	
Crossing	C1 - C7	
Heading	H 1 – H 8	
Tactical Components	TC 1 – TC 8	
Physical Components	SC 1 – SC 8	
Physical Attributes	PA 1 – PA 8	

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

results in the control group and the experimental group:

### Finding

The following is a description of the data from the average psychological test

**Figure 1 Average Score of Psychological Test Result**

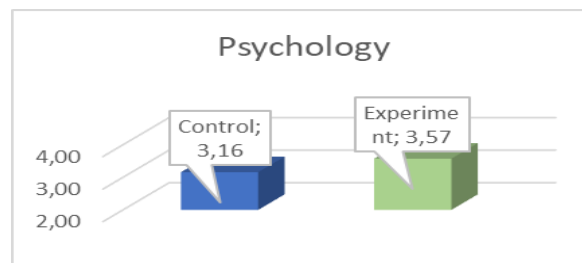
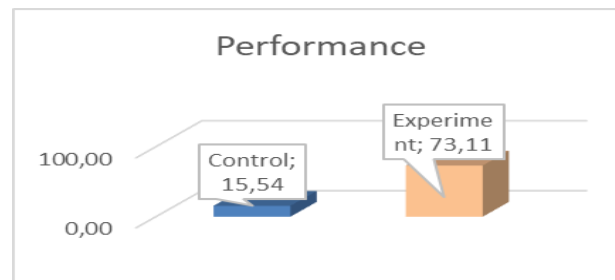


Figure 1 can be seen the psychological test results in the control group and the experimental group. The figure showed the product from the average score from participants who answered each item of the questionnaire using a 5-point Ordinal scale. The experimental group showed an average score of 3.75 points, while the control group had an average score of 3.16 points. Thus, it can be said that the psychology of Porda Garut

football players is better than the psychology of Persigar Garut football players.

The following is a description of data from the average change in performance test results before and after being given treatment:

**Figure 2 Average Change in Performance Test Results**



From Figure 2, it can be seen that the performance test results in the control group and the experimental group both have increased. Then, based on the graphic above, it can be seen that the average change in test results in the experimental group is higher than the control group. The experimental group had a high increase of 73.11%, while the control group experienced a low growth of 15.54%. It can be said that the treatment in the experimental group has a higher effect on the performance test results compared to the treatment in the control group.

In this study, the psychological relationship to the performance of football players will be tested. The following is a description of the hypothesis in this study:

The criteria for decision making are based on probability or significance (Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)), namely: "If the significance value >  $\alpha = 0,05$ , then  $H_0$  is accepted, whereas if the significance value  $\leq \alpha = 0,05$ , then  $H_0$  is rejected. ".

The results of hypothesis testing with the Spearman Correlation processed using SPSS 23 are as follows:

**Table 2 Correlation Test Results**

Correlations (Spearman's rho)		Psychology
Performance	Correlation Coefficient	0.786
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	46

The results of the Spearman test using SPSS 23 obtained a significance value (p-value) smaller than 0.05, so it can be stated that  $H_1$  is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that: "There is a significant relationship between psychology and football performance." Then in Table 2, it can be seen that the correlation coefficient has a positive

value of 0.786, meaning that the player's performance has a direct relationship with the psychology of the player. It can be said that if the psychology of the players is good, then the performance results will increase.

## Discussion

Based on the results of research that has been analyzed, it shows that the role of

psychology (mental) contributes to the development of a football player about the appearance of playing (performance). This can be seen from the average results of psychological tests and performance tests. The psychological test results in Figure 1 show that the psychology of the Porda Garut football player is better than that of the Persigar Garut football player. Furthermore, from the performance test results listed in Figure 2, it is said that the treatment in the experimental group has a higher effect on the performance test results compared to the treatment in the control group.

The relationship between psychology (mental) and performance when playing football has an important role. The psychology (mental) role in this study refers to the Mental Skill Test-football (MST-f) developed by Pensgaard & Hollinger in 2004. MST is in an available version and a sports-specific version, and it is the football version of the MST (MST-f) used here (Rasmussen, 2019). Having a mental attitude in playing football certainly affects the playing of a significant role player, namely match preparation, imagery, self-talk and self-confidence, energy management, concentration, and Goal setting and Motivation. In a football match, if these aspects are owned, you can deal with any situation or pressure from your opponent and apply the tactics or strategies carried out.

Psychological factors that support performance in football games. The role of mental psychology in football is needed to support implementation in the field. Mentally

is the key to success in the world of sports. For an athlete, physical ability initially seems to determine competition that supports performance in the field. Good and bad performance is determined by the emotional management of a football player to stay focused so that motivation and fighting spirit give their best performance in achieving victory.

The results of the Spearman test using SPSS 23 obtained a significance value (p-value) smaller than 0.05, so it can be stated that H1 is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that: "There is a significant relationship between the performance test results and the psychology of the players." Then in Table 2, it can be seen that the correlation coefficient has a positive value of 0.786, meaning that the player's performance has a direct relationship with the psychology of the player. It can be said that if the psychology of the players is good, then the performance results will increase.

## CONCLUSION

The psychological test results of the experimental group (Porda Garut) showed an average score of 3.75 points, those higher than the control group (Persigar Garut), which had an average score of 3.16 points. The performance test of the experimental group (Porda Garut) had a higher increase of 73.11%, while the control group (Persigar Garut) experienced a lower growth of 15.54%.



There is a significant relationship between psychology and football performance, meaning that player performance directly relates to player psychology. It can be said that if the psychology of the players is good, then the performance results will increase.

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