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The Psychological Skill Level of Bengkulu Athletes During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a tremendous impact on sporting events. This research aimed to determine the psychological skill level of Bengkulu PON athletes during the Covid-19 pandemic. The research method used in this study was a quantitative descriptive method with a survey approach. The subjects of this research were all athletes of PON Bengkulu, with a total of 83 athletes. The data of the research variable was collected using a questionnaire, "The Psychological Skills Inventory for Sports (PSIS)," adopted from (Mahoney, Gabriel & Perkins, 1987). The validity of this instrument was 0.797-0.801, while the reliability was 0.795. The researcher used the mean ideal and standard deviation to analyze the research data. The result of this research showed that: (1) aspect of motivation was a high category with 57.8%; (2) aspect of self-confidence was a high category with 66%; (3) aspect of anxiety control was a high category with 67.3%; (4) aspect of mental preparation was a high category with 56.6%; (5) aspect of team emphasize it was high category with 51.8%; (6) aspect of concentration with 48%. This research concluded that the psychological skill level of PON Bengkulu athletes during the Covid-19 pandemic was in the high category.

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INTRODUCTION

The current COVID-19 pandemic has affected many aspects of life and resulted in an unprecedented global health emergency (Casadevall & Pirofski, 2020). Most governments worldwide have implemented

self-isolation and social distancing strategies to reduce the spread of the virus and help health workers work to deal with the virus well (Sarto., Impellizzeri., Spörri., Porcelli., & Olmo, 2020). Bengkulu government has also implemented social distancing strategies. From

April to December 2020, the Bengkulu provincial government has issued two large-scale social restrictions. This strategy has a significant impact on Bengkulu athletes conducting training camps to participate in PON (National Sports Week) XX Papua. Social distancing regulations also restrict the movement of athletes for training and prohibit athletes from gaining access to training facilities (Susanto, 2020). Athletes can no longer follow their regular training schedule, and the XX PON sporting event has also been postponed until 2021.

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic certainly have a significant impact on the physical and psychological implications of Bengkulu athletes. With the existence of social distancing regulations providing sufficient time for recovery for athletes, but if done too long or more than four weeks, it will reduce the athlete's Vo₂max 4 to 14%, detraining harms muscle activity and range of motion which can result in loss of efficiency and fine motor tuning which can cause a slight decrease in technique (Mujika & Padilla, 2020). Furthermore, isolation and the absence of regular training habits, together with the cancellation or postponement of significant events and competitions, can adversely affect athletes' mental health and well-being (Mann et al., 2020).

Most athletes focus their energies on reaching the top at a particularly significant event, such as the National Sports Week (PON). The imposition of sudden training restrictions, together with the rescheduling of

competitions and a synchronized return to the state to the sport, can harm the mental health of athletes. In this uncertain situation, sports coaches and psychologists play an essential role - new training goals need to be set, although there is no clear indication when the sporting event will start. These unique circumstances have resulted in athletes using technology and online platforms to maintain some level of training fitness stimulus (Lamberts & Gomez, 2020). While it is impossible to replicate a regular training session for a complete 100%, some athletes benefit from indoor cycling, use of a treadmill, routines for weight loss, exercise videos, or simulators. Besides, this online platform also allows athletes to compete and compete with each other and socialize with teammates and colleagues (Lamberts & Gomez, 2020).

PON athletes require a significant investment in physical and psychological exertion. Many of these athletes' economic and professional future depends on the outcome of one competition held every four years. These are the main factors for uncertainty, stress, and stress (Kellman & Gunther, 2000). Therefore, having adaptive and resilient psychological skills and controlling anxiety is critical in achieving success (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2012). At present, apart from all these factors, the COVID-19 pandemic is emerging as a new factor of uncertainty and lack of control, becoming a new stressor for athletes. Athletes display low values of psychological inflexibility, loneliness, and anxiety control (Bond., Hayes., Baer., Carpenter., Guenole.,

Orcutt, & 2011; Belinchon-de Miguel, Ruisoto-Palomera., & Clemente-Suárez 2019).

Several research results regarding the psychological skills of athletes have been carried out, including (Nopiyanto & Dimiyati, 2018) examined the psychological characteristics of Indonesian Sea Games athletes, which state that the psychological attributes of sea games athletes have excellent characters. Subsequent research, namely (Dongoran & Kolalo, 2020), examined the psychological profile of Papuan PON athletes, which suggests that the psychological characteristics of Papua athletes have good characters. Similar researches were also conducted by (Sutoro, Guntoro & Putra, 2020), who examined the psychological attributes of athletic athletes, which stated that Papua muscular athletes had high motivation, commitment, hard work but had low control of anxiety and concentration.

The research was conducted outside Bengkulu province and did not discuss the psychological skill level of athletes during the Covid-19 pandemic. So that researchers are interested in assessing the psychological skill level of Bengkulu athletes during the Covid-19 pandemic as an actual effort to improve the psychological skills of athletes to get maximum results at PON XX Papua 2021.

METHODS

The research method used in this study was a quantitative descriptive method with a survey approach. This research was conducted

in Bengkulu from August to October 2020. Subjects in this study were Bengkulu athletes who would participate in the XX PON in 2021 and had received a letter of approval from the Bengkulu National Sports Committee (KONI). All subjects were 83 athletes, consisting of 17 branches, namely: athletics, badminton, billiards, Kempo, Muaythai, football, tennis, karate, silat, wrestling, swimming, rock climbing, diving, boxing, volleyball, weightlifting, and bodybuilding.

The data of the research variable was collected using a questionnaire "*The Psychological Skills Inventory for Sports* (PSIS)" adopted from (Mahoney, Gabriel & Perkins, 1987). The validity of this instrument was 0.797-0.801, while the reliability was 0.795. The statement items contained in the questionnaire have five choices always, often, sometimes, very rarely, never. Each answer has a rating ranging from very positive to very negative. Based on these descriptions, the researcher compiled the scoring categories: Every positive statement, namely, always = score 5, often = score 4, sometimes = score 3, very rarely = score 2, and never = score 1. Each negative statement, namely, always = score 1, often = score 2, sometimes = score 3, very rarely = score 4 and never = score 5. The researcher used the mean ideal and standard deviation to analyze the research data (Wagiran, 2015).

$$Mi = \frac{(ST + SR)}{2} \quad SDi = \frac{(ST - SR)}{6}$$

Information

Mi : The ideal mean

SDi : The ideal standard deviation
ST : The highest score
SR : The lowest score

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Psychological skills are the ability of athletes to overcome challenges to achieve the best achievements, which consist of motivation, self-confidence, anxiety control, mental preparation, the importance of the team, and concentration (Nopiyanto, Raibowo & Ugo, 2021). Each of these aspects is described below

1. The aspect of motivation

The motivation aspect was the first aspect to determine the psychological skill level of athletes. Based on data analysis, it can be seen that in the motivation aspect there were 48 or 58% of athletes have high motivation, and 35 or 42% have a very high reason, and there were no athletes who have inspiration in the category deficient, low, and moderate.

2. The aspect of self-confidence

The second aspect of this research was self-confidence. Based on data analysis, it can be seen that in the element of self-confidence, as much as 1 or 16% of athletes have moderate self-confidence, 55 or 66% of athletes have high self-confidence, and 15 or 18% of athletes have very high self-confidence

3. The aspect of anxiety control

Aspects of anxiety control become an essential part of this research. Based on data analysis, it can be seen that in the element of

anxiety control, as much as 6 or 7.22% of athletes have very high anxiety control, 59 or 71.08% of athletes have high anxiety control, 18 or 22% of the athletes have moderate anxiety control, and none of the athletes has low or deficient anxiety control.

4. The aspect of mental preparation

The mental preparation aspect was the fourth aspect to determine the psychological skill level of athletes. Based on data analysis, it can be seen that as many as 31 or 37% of athletes have moderate mental preparation, 47 or 57% of athletes have high mental preparation, and 5 or 6% of athletes have very high mental preparation, and neither athlete was mentally prepared in the low or deficient category.

5. The aspect of team emphasize

The team emphasis was the fifth aspect that was part of this research. Based on data analysis, it can be seen that as many as 3 or 4% of athletes have a low category, 32 athletes or 38% of athletes have a moderate type, 43 or 52% have the high class, 5 or 6% were in the very high category.

6. The aspects of concentration

The last aspect of this research was concentration. Based on data analysis it can be seen that there was 1 or 1 % athlete has a deficient category, 9 or 11% athletes have a low type, 40 or 48% athletes have a moderate category, 33 or 40% athletes have a high category, and no athlete has a very high concentration.

Tabel 1 The Psychological Skill Levels of Athletes

No.	Aspects	Score	Frequency	Category	Percentage
1.	Motivation	27.21 – 33.59	48	High	57.8 %
2.	Self-confidence	23.81 – 29.41	55	High	66 %
3.	Anxiety control	23.81 – 29.41	59	High	67.3 %
4.	Mental preparation	20.50 – 25.20	47	High	56.6%
5.	Team emphasize	13.61 – 16.80	43	High	51.8%
6.	Concentration	15.70 – 20.40	40	Moderate	48 %

Discussion

Table 1 showed that the motivation aspect was that 48 or 58% of athletes have high motivation. This means that the Covid-19 pandemic did not reduce Bengkulu athletes' motivation to train to get the best performance in PON XX Papua 2021. As is known, reason has a significant role for athletes to achieve their best. Several research results indicate a meaningful relationship between motivation and athlete achievement (Jannah, Mulayana, & Mutohir, 2015; Muskanan, 2015; Rahayu & Mulyana, 2015). Bengkulu PON athletes are elite athletes, so it is not surprising that during the Covid-19 pandemic, they still have high motivation. Similar researches were also conducted by (Nopiyanto & Dimiyati, 2018; Nopiyanto, Dimiyati, & Dongoran, 2019; Nopiyanto & Alimuddin 2020), who found that the elite athletes of the Indonesian Sea Games have very high motivation in terms of gender and sports. The increased cause possessed by PON Bengkulu athletes during the Covid-19 pandemic is inseparable from the role of teammates and coaches, and families who continue to support athletes to actively

train independently at home (Lamberts & Gomez, 2020).

The self-confidence level of PON Bengkulu athletes during the Covid-19 pandemic showed that 55 or 66% of athletes had high self-confidence. This study supports the results (Bebetsos, 2015), who showed that elite athletes have good self-confidence. Bengkulu PON athletes consider that the Covid-19 pandemic provides an opportunity for them to train longer to prepare themselves well for the XX Papua PON 2021. It is known that athletes who have self-confidence can control themselves, be calm in any circumstances, feel challenged, and do not easily frustrated (Weinberg & Gould, 2011). There was a significant positive relationship between self-confidence and athlete achievement (Besharat & Pourbohlool, 2011; Mowlaie, Besharat & Pourbohlool, 2011).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Bengkulu government issued a decree stating that all citizens must carry out independent isolation in their respective homes without the exception of the PON Bengkulu athletes. Many people are worried about Covid-19. Based on the research results, it is known that

people who are not athletes have higher anxiety and stress than athletes (Şenışık, Denerel, Köyağasıoğlu, & Tunç, 2020). Most of the research shows that the Covid-19 pandemic has adverse effects (Wang et al., 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has led to increased symptoms of depression and anxiety for health workers (Lai., Wang., Cai., Hu., Wei., 2019; Lu., Wang., Lin., Li., 2020). And research on the impact of Covid-19 on athletes found a decrease in physical activity, an increase in sleep speed, depression, and feelings of sadness (NCAA, 2020). In this study, it was observed that 59 or 71.08% of athletes have high anxiety control. It means that PON Bengkulu athletes can control themselves and adapt to the Covid-19 pandemic that is currently happening as it is known that the ability to control anxiety has a positive relationship with an athlete's performance (Kaye, Frith, & Vosloo, 2015). This means that high levels of the athlete's ability to control anxiety will be as good as his performance.

The mental preparation of PON Bengkulu athletes during the Covid-19 pandemic showed 47 or 57% of athletes have high mental preparation. It means that during the Covid-19 training pandemic, PON Bengkulu athletes carried out good mental preparation. Mental preparation is a strategy for athletes and teams in all aspects of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral use to obtain optimal psychological performance and condition in competition or training (Brewer, 2009). Mental preparation significantly affects

the athlete's performance (Komarudin, 2015). Several mental preparation techniques that PON Bengkulu athletes can perform during the COVID-19 pandemic are imagery, goal setting, self-talk, and relaxation because they are proven to be effective in improving athlete's performance (Sadeghi, Omar-Fauzee, Jamali's., Ab-Latif., & Cherie 2010).

The team emphasis was the fifth aspect that was part of this research. Teams are groups of people who must communicate with one member to achieve a common goal (Weinberg & Gould, 2011). The team emphasis of PON Bengkulu athletes during the Covid-19 pandemic showed that 43 or 52% have the high category. Even though athletes do social distancing and exercises at home, athletes can communicate with each other through various existing social media. These new circumstances have resulted in athletes using technology and online platforms to maintain some level of training fitness stimulus (Lamberts & Gomez, 2020). While it is impossible to replicate a regular training session for a complete 100%, some athletes benefit from indoor cycling, use of a treadmill, routines for weight loss, exercise videos, or simulators. Besides, this online platform also allows athletes to compete and compete with each other and socialize with teammates and colleagues (Lamberts & Gomez, 2020).

Uncertain conditions and the tentative implementation schedule of PON Papua 2021 impact the concentration of PON Bengkulu athletes. Based on data analysis, it can be seen that there were 40 or 48% of athletes have a

moderate category. Many studies claim that a lack of concentration will harm an athlete's performance. For example, a lack of attention on basketball athletes can fail to take free shots (Weinberg & Gould, 2011). High concentration is also required by all sports athletes (Dongoran, Nopiyanto, Saputro, & Nugroho, 2019). Increased attention is needed by athletes who are competing and athletes who are on the bench (Dosil, 2006). The social distancing applied by the government affects the concentration level of PON Bengkulu athletes because athletes feel bored staying at home for a long time.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the psychological skill level of PON Bengkulu athletes during the COVID-19 pandemic was in the high category. However, there is one aspect that has a moderate type, namely concentration. The results of this study are a reference for athletes to increase engagement to get optimal achievement in PON Papua 2021. Coaches are advised to provide mental skills training continuously in preparation for PON Papua 2021

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