



The Relationship Between Coach Leadership, Training Motivation, and Training Discipline with the Character of Central Java Degree Fighting Athletes

Shinta Della Bestari^{1✉}, Mugiyo Hartono², Hermawan Pamot Raharjo³

¹ Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia; shintadellabestari30@students.unnes.ac.id

² Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia; mugiyohartono@mail.unnes.ac.id

³ Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia; hermawan_pamot@mail.unnes.ac.id

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Abstract

Tarung Derajat is a martial sport native to Indonesia that has a peculiarity in the athlete character development system that is integrated with the training and competition process. The coaching is not only directed at achieving achievements, but also at instilling the values of discipline, responsibility, respect for coaches and organizations, and mental toughness. This study aims to analyze the relationship between coach leadership, training motivation, and training discipline on the character of Central Java Tarung Derajat athletes. The study used a quantitative approach with a correlational survey design. The research subjects amounted to 141 athletes who were declared to meet the analysis criteria from the total participants of the 2025 Provincial Sports Week (BK Porprov) Qualifying Round. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire that measured the variables of coach leadership, motivation to train, training discipline, and athlete character. Data analysis uses the Spearman correlation test to look at partial relationships and multiple linear regressions to test simultaneous relationships. The results showed that coach leadership, training motivation, and training discipline had a positive and significant relationship with athlete character ($p < 0.05$). Simultaneously, the three variables showed a strong relationship with the athlete's character with a double correlation coefficient value of $R = 0.681$ and a contribution of 45.2%, with motivation to train as the most dominant variable. These findings confirm that the character of Tarung Derajat athletes is formed through the integration of effective coach leadership, strong motivation to practice, and the application of consistent and educational training disciplines.

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✉ Address correspondence:
Universitas Negeri Semarang, Kampus Sekaran, Gunungpati,
Semarang
E-mail: (shintadellabestari30@students.unnes.ac.id)

INTRODUCTION

Achievement sports are not only oriented towards the achievement of physical performance and technical skills, but also have a strategic role in the development of athletes' character. In the context of sports education and psychology, character development such as sportsmanship, emotional control, responsibility, and moral values help athletes in dealing with competitive pressures and maintaining personality qualities inside and outside the arena (Indah et al., 2025; May, 2019). The international literature shows that structured sports participation can be an effective means of fostering moral values, self-regulation, and prosocial behavior through processes of social interaction and meaningful competitive experiences (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Bondanini et al., 2020). In addition, the Self-Determination Theory-based approach asserts that a training environment that supports the basic psychological needs of athletes contributes to a deeper and more sustained internalization of character values (Yenen et al., 2023).

Tarung Derajat is a martial sport native to Indonesia that has a peculiarity in the athlete character development system. In addition to emphasizing the physical aspects and techniques of competition, Tarung Derajat also instills the values of discipline, responsibility, ethical courage, and sportsmanship as an integral part of the training process and its philosophical culture. This is reflected in the motto "I Am Friendly Does Not Mean Fear, I Submit Does Not Mean Conquer," which not only describes fighting techniques but also the value of self-control and respect for others that are part of the mental development of athletes. In practice, this sport is seen as a means of character development that strengthens the mental toughness and moral values of athletes in competition and daily life, so that it is not only a competitive sport but also a

forum for the formation of personalities with integrity and discipline (Fitri et al., 2024).

In coaching practice, the formation of the character of Tarung Derajat athletes cannot be separated from the coach's leadership role, training motivation, and training discipline. Effective coach leadership not only directs the technical aspect, but also serves as a role model for values, attitude directors, and a source of motivation for athletes. Research shows that coach leadership behavior is significantly correlated with athlete motivation and coach-athlete relationships, which has an impact on psychological engagement and athlete character development in competitive conditions (Bin Hassan & Bin Nazarudin, 2023). In addition, positive leadership can strengthen coach-athlete relationships and contribute to athletes' motivation, engagement, and mental readiness, which are important dimensions in character formation and disciplined behavior in training and competition (Liu et al., 2025a).

Namun demikian, kajian empiris yang menempatkan karakter atlet sebagai variabel utama, terutama dalam konteks olahraga bela diri yang sarat nilai moral seperti Tarung Derajat, masih terbatas. Penelitian terdahulu umumnya lebih fokus pada aspek teknis atau prestasi fisik, bukan karakter psikologis. Studi internasional menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan pelatih berhubungan signifikan dengan motivasi dan hubungan pelatih atlet, yang merupakan dimensi psikologis penting dalam pembentukan karakter atlet (Bin Hassan & Bin Nazarudin, 2023; Liu et al., 2025). Gap ini menandakan kebutuhan penelitian lanjutan yang menguji kepemimpinan pelatih, motivasi berlatih, dan disiplin latihan secara bersamaan dalam konteks bela diri seperti Tarung Derajat.

Berdasarkan latar belakang tersebut, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis hubungan antara kepemimpinan pelatih, motivasi berlatih, dan disiplin latihan terhadap karakter atlet Tarung Derajat Jawa Tengah. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat

memberikan kontribusi ilmiah dalam pengembangan kajian pendidikan dan psikologi olahraga, sekaligus menjadi dasar empiris bagi pelatih dan pengurus dalam merancang sistem pembinaan Tarung Derajat yang tidak hanya berorientasi pada prestasi, tetapi juga pada penguatan karakter atlet secara berkelanjutan sesuai dengan jati diri Tarung Derajat.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a correlational and cross-sectional design. This design was chosen to analyze the relationship between coach leadership, training motivation, and training discipline on athlete character without providing treatment or manipulation of the variables studied.

The subjects of the study were all Central Java Tarung Derajat athletes who participated in the 2025 Provincial Sports Week (BK Porprov) Qualification Round, totaling 161 athletes consisting of 112 male athletes and 49 female athletes. The sampling technique uses total sampling because the entire population has characteristics that are in accordance with the purpose of the study. However, of the total 161 questionnaires distributed, as many as 141 questionnaires were declared worthy of analysis, while the other 20 questionnaires did not meet the criteria for completeness. Thus, the number of final samples analyzed in this study was 141 athletes.

Data collection was carried out using a closed questionnaire with a Likert scale of 5 points (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The coach's leadership instrument refers to the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS), training motivation is measured using the Sport Motivation Scale II (SMS-II), training discipline uses the Self-Regulation of Learning–Sport Practice (SRL-SP), and athletes' character is measured using the Character in Sport Questionnaire (CSQ). All instruments are standard

instruments that have good validity and reliability based on previous research.

The data collection process was carried out directly after the training session with official approval from the Central Java Provincial Management of the Sport Family Fighting (KODRAT). All respondents were given an explanation of the purpose of the study and expressed their consent to participate voluntarily (informed consent). Data is collected anonymously and is only used for academic purposes.

Data analysis was carried out using correlation tests to determine the partial relationship between variables and multiple linear regression analysis to determine the simultaneous relationship between coach leadership, training motivation, and training discipline on athlete character. Before testing the hypothesis, a normality test is carried out to determine the type of correlation analysis used. Since the data is not normally distributed, the partial relationship analysis between variables is performed using the Spearman correlation test. All statistical analysis was carried out with the help of IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 at a significance level of 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to examine the relationship between coach leadership, training motivation, and training discipline on the character of Central Java Tarung Derajat athletes. The research subjects amounted to 141 athletes who are members of the Central Java Provincial Management of the Provincial Management of the Sport Fighting Family (KODRAT) and have participated in the Provincial Sports Week Qualification Round (BK Porprov) in 2025. Data collection was carried out using standardized questionnaires that have been tested for validity and reliability to measure the variables of coach leadership, training motivation, training discipline, and athlete character.

Before hypothesis testing, the data were analyzed descriptively to provide an overview of the characteristics of the research variables. The results of the analysis showed that all variables were in the medium to high category, with the athlete character having the highest average score. These findings indicate that Central Java Tarung Derajat athletes in general have a relatively good character in the context of sports achievement coaching.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Coach Leadership	141	41,10	4,18
Motivation to Practice	141	41,13	4,32
Discipline of Practice	141	40,49	5,17
Character Athlete	141	42,70	4,37

Based on the results of the normality test, the research data was not normally distributed, so the analysis of the relationship between variables was carried out using Spearman correlation. The results of the analysis showed a positive and significant relationship between the coach's leadership and the athlete's character ($\rho = 0.557$; $p < 0.05$), the motivation to train with the athlete's character ($\rho = 0.577$; $p < 0.05$), and the training discipline with the athlete's character ($\rho = 0.550$; $p < 0.05$). The entire correlation coefficient was in the medium category, which shows that the improvement in coaching quality tends to be followed by an increase in the athlete's character.

Table 2. Spearman Correlation Test Results

Variable Relationships	Correlation Coefficient (ρ)	Sig.
Coach Leadership – Athlete Character	0,557	0,000
Motivation to Train – Athlete Character	0,577	0,000
Training Discipline – Athlete Character	0,550	0,000

Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis showed a value of multiple correlation coefficient of $R = 0.681$ with an Adjusted R Square of 0.452. These findings show that coach leadership, training motivation, and training discipline were simultaneously able to explain 45.2% of athletes' character variations, while the rest were influenced by other factors outside the study model.

Table 3. Summary of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

R	Adjusted R Square	Sig.
0,681	0,452	0,000

Partially, the results of the regression test showed that the three independent variables made a significant contribution to the athlete's character, with training motivation as the most dominant variable. These findings indicate that athletes' internal factors play an important role in the process of internalizing character values, especially in sports that require discipline, self-control, and long-term commitment. The dominance of motivation to train shows that character formation depends not only on external rules, but also on the psychological readiness of athletes to undergo the coaching process consistently. These findings are in line with the research of Wahono *et al.*, (2024) and Isoard-Gauthier *et al.* (2019) which affirmed that motivation to train is closely related to

self-regulation, mental resilience, and adaptive behavior of athletes in the context of competitive sports. Partially, the results of the regression test showed that the three independent variables made a significant contribution to the athlete's character, with training motivation as the most dominant variable. These findings reinforce the view that athletes' internal motivation plays an important role in the process of internalizing character values, especially in sports that demand high discipline and self-control. This is in line with the findings of Wahono *et al.* which affirms that leadership and motivation contribute to the formation of individual behaviors and attitudes in the context of value-based coaching (Wahono *et al.*, 2024).

In the context of Tarung Derajat as a martial arts sport native to Indonesia, this finding has a distinctive relevance. Tarung Derajat is known to have a peculiarity in the athlete character development system that emphasizes the internalization of the values of discipline, responsibility, respect for coaches and organizations, and strengthening mental toughness through a structured training process. Coach leadership serves as a source of value exemplary, motivation to practice encourages the psychological involvement of athletes in the coaching process, while training discipline serves as a mechanism for consistent habituation of behavior. The interaction of these three aspects shapes the character of athletes in a sustainable and contextual manner. These findings are in line with the view that planned and value-oriented sports coaching contributes significantly to the development of athletes' character, moral attitudes, and adaptive behaviors in the long term (Ryan & Deci, 2018; Yenen *et al.*, 2023; Psicolog *et al.*, 2024).

Theoretically, the positive relationship between the leadership of the coach and the character of the athlete can be explained through the formation of a training climate that affirms behavioral norms and values. Effective leadership has the potential to

strengthen the quality of coach-athlete relationships and reduce psychological fatigue, so that athletes are better able to maintain adaptive behaviors (e.g., emotional control, consistency, respect) that intersect with character in sport (Liu *et al.*, 2025b).

The predominance of motivation to train can be understood through Self-Determination Theory, which is that when athletes have more autonomous motivation (self-determined), they tend to be more consistently involved in training, enjoy the process more, and more easily internalize moral/character values because the behavior that appears is driven by conscious choices, not mere external pressures (Amaro *et al.*, 2023).

The most logical mechanism is the chain mechanism, which is the leadership of the coach → the coach-athlete/training climate relationship → motivational quality → regularity of training behavior (self-regulation/discipline) → character internalization. In the sports psychology literature, self-regulation in sports practice is described as the process of planning, monitoring, evaluating, and adjusting training strategies that encourage self-control and responsibility, two core components of character in the context of achievement sports (Young *et al.*, 2023).

The practical implication is that character development in Tarung Derajat is not enough just by enforcing disciplinary rules, but needs to be strengthened through the leadership of educative coaches and strategies to maintain the athlete's autonomous motivation. Applicatively, coaches can (1) provide rational explanations of the rules and targets of the exercise, (2) provide feedback that emphasizes the process and values, and (3) encourage regular post-training reflection so that discipline is understood as part of the formation of integrity and self-control. This approach is important to prevent a decline in behavioral quality when athletes experience competitive

stress or psychological fatigue (Liu et al., 2025b; Young et al., 2023).

Scientifically, the contribution of these findings is to strengthen the argument that athletes' character is formed through the integration of social factors (leadership / relationships), psychological (motivation), and behavioral factors (self-regulation/discipline). In the future, further research may test mediation models (e.g., coach-athlete relationships or self-regulation as mediators) to ascertain the pathway of the most dominant mechanism in character development in martial arts (Liu et al., 2025b).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that coach leadership, training motivation, and training discipline have a significant relationship with the character of Central Java Tarung Derajat athletes, both partially and simultaneously. These findings show that the formation of athletes' character is not only influenced by the technical aspects of coaching, but also by the integration of social, psychological, and behavioral factors in the training process. Internal motivation to practice emerges as the most dominant factor in supporting the internalization of character values, while coach leadership and practice discipline play a role as consistent guides and reinforcers of behavior. The contribution of this research lies in strengthening the empirical evidence that value-based martial arts coaching can shape the character of athletes through a holistic and structured approach. These results provide theoretical implications for the development of character studies in sport as well as practical implications for coaches and organizations in designing coaching systems that are not only performance-oriented, but also on the sustainable formation of athlete integrity and responsibility

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