Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Self Control in Water Polo Atheles

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Abstract

Water polo is a sport that involves significant physical contact between players. This sometimes makes it difficult for athletes to control their emotions in the game. As a result, athletes often take actions that are detrimental to themselves, the team, and even the opponent. This problem ultimately results in athletes not being able to achieve their best performance. Therefore, good self-control is needed in this sport. Emotional intelligence allows athletes to manage emotions well. This research aims to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-control in water polo athletes. The Descriptive method with a quantitative approach was used in the study involving 20 water polo athletes from Club Tirtamerta Bandung. The instruments used in this study were a Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Short Form (TEIQUE-SF) and a Brief Self-Control Scale (BSCS) given once to the sample. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and self-control in water polo athletes. This is indicated by a large correlation between variables, which means emotional intelligence and self-control have a strong relationship. This study concludes that emotional intelligence has a significant relationship with self-control in water polo athletes, with that the hypothesis that has been proposed is accepted and stated that there is a significant positive relationship between the two variables. Thus it is recommended to focus more attention on the emotional intelligence of athletes during the training stage so that it is expected that the level of self-control in water polo athletes will also increase.

How to Cite

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INTRODUCTION

The high intensity of the game and the inevitable physical contact often trigger strong emotions in water polo athletes (Utoro, 2016). Emotional feelings such as fear, anxiety, anger, and worry, are almost always felt by most players. Emotional turmoil that appears at high levels can interfere with and harm the athlete's performance in achieving his best performance ((Martinus et al., 2019). Therefore, good self-control skills are needed so that athletes can maintain team performance and avoid potentially harmful impulsive actions. With good self-control, athletes can also stay focused and make the right decisions even in stressful situations. That is why an athlete needs high self-control (Englert, 2017). One of the factors that plays an important role in self-control is emotional intelligence (Dumciene & Sipaviciene, 2021).

Emotions affect success in sports performance (Tamminen & Dunn, 2022). Therefore, emotional intelligence is important for every individual (Rinanda & Haryanta, 2019). In the world of sports, many athletes may have good technical skills but are unable to manage their emotions effectively. This inability can result in significant obstacles in their performance on the field because when emotions cannot be managed properly, athletes tend to experience decreased concentration, increased anxiety, and intrusive reactions, all of which negatively affect the outcome of the match (Yusuf, 2024). Meanwhile, individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence can actively control stress regulate emotions well, and have positive coping strategies to face and overcome problems (Fteiha & Awwad, 2020).

Previous research states, that psychological aspects play an important role in sports performance (Purnamasari & Novian, 2021). The higher the emotional intelligence possessed by athletes, the lower the anxiety (Pradnyaswari & Budisetyani, 2018). Athletes are required to have the ability to manage emotions in every match they participate in (Sutisyana et al., 2023). Therefore, athletes are expected to have good self-control, so that skills when competing can be optimal (Agus & Fahrizqi, 2020). Poor self-control has an impact on the emergence of risky behavior, which is caused by a person's inability to exercise self-control. This is certainly detrimental to the individual and the team as a whole (Budianto & Jannah, 2020). With an increased understanding of the role of emotional intelligence on self-control, coaches can develop mental training programs that are more structured and based on scientific data.

Previous studies revealed that emotional intelligence plays an important role in improving self-control because individuals with high emotional intelligence are better able to manage stress and pressure (Mujibah & Winarsih, 2024). Various studies have examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-control in various populations, such as research on futsal sports which shows a positive correlation between emotional intelligence and emotional control during competition (Prasetyo, 2024). However, due to differences in sports characteristics, these results may not necessarily be generalized to the sport of water polo.

The low level of emotional intelligence in water polo athletes causes the athletes' self-control to be less than optimal during the match. This is very detrimental to athletes if left alone, so special attention is needed to help athletes overcome this problem. In relation to this, the author sees that there is still a lack of literature studies that discuss emotional intelligence and self-control in water polo athletes. Thus, this study aims to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and self-control in water polo athletes. This study is expected to provide practical contributions to the development of psychological training for water polo athletes and also fill the gap in the literature in the field of sports psychology in the sport of water polo.

METHODS

The method used in this research is a descriptive method with a quantitative approach. The quantitative descriptive method is one of the research methods that aims to describe or illustrate a phenomenon using quantitative data (Sihotang, 2023). In this study, a correlational design was used. The subjects of this study were 20 active water polo athletes who are members of the Tirtamerta Bandung club and have participated in city to national level competitions. Data collection for the emotional intelligence scale was measured with the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Short From (TEIQUE-SF) and the self-control scale was measured using the Brief Self-Control Scale (BSCS).

The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Short Form (TEIQUE-SF) is used to measure the emotional intelligence scale which consists of aspects of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. And has been adapted into Indonesian and developed by previous study (Febriana, 2021). The TEIQUE-

SF consists of 30 question items, each item measured on a 7-point Likert scale, with a rating range from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The Brief Self-Control Scale (BSCS) (Tangney et al., 2004) is a self-control measurement scale consisting of 13 items and is often used to examine self-control variables. This instrument has been adapted to Indonesian (Arifin & Milla, 2020) There are 3 aspects in this instrument, namely Related to theory, the BSCS contains conceptual criteria that fit the two essentials of self-control (impulse control and long-term orientation). Compared to the long version of the scale, researchers often prefer to use the 13-item economic BSCS (Lindner et al., 2015). The 13 items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with scores of 1 (not at all like me) and 5 (very much like me).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected in this study were then processed and analyzed using SPSS software version 25, through steps such as statistical description, normality test, correlation test, and calculation of percentage results. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of tables and graphs, which are then interpreted in the results and discussion section.

Table 1. Statistical Description

Variable	N	Min.	Max.	Sum	Mean	Std. Dev.
Emotional Intelligence	20	101	143	2352	117.60	11.807
Self-Control	20	41	63	1028	51.40	6.042

Based on **Table 1**, it can be seen that the emotional intelligence variable has an average value of 117.60 with a standard deviation of 11.807, the lowest value recorded is 101 while the highest value reaches 143, with a total value of 2532. Meanwhile, for the self-control variable, the average value is 51.40, with a standard deviation of 6.402, the lowest value is 41, while the highest value is 63, with a total value of 51.40. Furthermore, the authors conducted a normality test which can be seen in **Table 2.**

Table 2. Normality Test

Variable	Statistic	df	Sig.
Emotional Intelligence	.922	20	.111
Self-Control	.946	20	.304

Based on **Table 2**, the significance value of emotional intelligence and self-control (.111;

.304) > .05, so H0 is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that both data are normally distributed. Furthermore, the author continues with hypothesis testing, which can be seen in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing

Variable	Pearson Correlation	N	Sig. (2-tailed)
Emotional Intelligence – Self-Control	.504	20	.023

Table 3 shows the results of hypothesis testing conducted using Pearson correlation. From Table 3, it can be seen that the Pearson correlation value is .504 with a Sig value. (2-tailed) of .023. Based on the test results, the Sig. (2-tailed) obtained is less than .05, so H0 is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and self-control in water polo athletes.

According to research, (Nisa et al., 2023) self-control is influenced by emotional intelligence. The high level of emotional intelligence in athletes allows athletes to evaluate situations more effectively by seeing risks as opportunities, not threats, and then making better decisions in solving challenges related to risk (Panno, 2016). Mature emotional intelligence makes an individual able to control themselves and have endurance when facing obstacles (Sulaeman et al., 2024). In the world of sports emotional intelligence can contribute to achieving success. Self-control is one of the indicators of ability in emotional intelligence (Yahya & Megalia, 2017).

An athlete certainly needs good self-control skills to win (Nurhadi et al., 2023). Self-control has a relationship with positive things (Arifin & Milla, 2020). In more detail, self-control can be defined as the ability to voluntarily control certain behavioral tendencies or resist immediate temptations to achieve long-term goals (Prameswari et al., 2025). There are several factors that can influence the development of self-control abilities in individuals, including internal factors such as age and external factors related to the individual's environment (Miskanik, 2022).

The results of this study indicate that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and self-control in water polo athletes. This can happen because emotional intelligence allows athletes to better recognize and manage their own emotions. This finding is in line with several previous studies which that athletes with high levels of emotional intelligence tend to have better self-control abilities (Cahyani

& Siswati, 2020). There has been an increase in research on emotional intelligence in the context of sports, the nature of emotional intelligence is dominant in sport research (Laborde et al., 2016).

The mental or psychological condition of athletes is the main aspect that is most decisive when competing (Kahiji et al., 2024). Water polo athletes need good emotional intelligence to achieve high performance. The players must be smart in managing their emotions, both on the field and off the field, because this has an impact on their game (Martinus et al., 2019). Mature emotional intelligence makes an individual able to control themselves and have endurance when facing obstacles (Sulaeman et al., 2024). In the training process of a sport, improving one's physical, technical, and tactical abilities will not occur significantly without the support of psychological abilities (Ryzki et al., 2021).

Psychological preparation is an important component of the overall training program that aims to prepare athletes to achieve peak performance (Firmansyah, 2017). The psychological aspects of athletes can be influenced by the figure who often interacts with them, namely the coach. Therefore, the ability or character of an athlete is significantly influenced by the coach, especially by the way the coach treats his athletes (Novian & Noors, 2020). In a long training process, there is a possibility of successive problems, which will have an impact on the quality of the athlete's performance on the team (Komarudin, 2022). The practical implication of this finding confirms the need for coaches to include emotional intelligence training so that self-control can also be developed in the coaching program. This training not only improves psychological performance but also contributes to technical performance and overall team performance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion that has been carried out, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and self-control in water polo athletes. This finding shows that athletes with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to have better self-control abilities. The relationship illustrates that self-control is an important aspect of the success of athletes and is inseparable from the emotional intelligence factors possessed by individuals. Therefore, it is recommended that coaches and related parties pay special attention to training in psychological aspects, especially emotional intelligence,

to support the improvement of self-control and overall athlete performance.

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