



The Effect of Self-Talk on Increasing the Self-Confidence of Pencak Silat Athletes

Natasya Arifah¹, Mulyana^{2✉}, Muhamad Tafaqur³

Study Program of Sport Coaching Education, Faculty of Sport and Health Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, 40154, West Java, Indonesia¹²³

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effect of self-talk training on improving the self-confidence of Pencak Silat athletes. Self-confidence is an essential psychological factor influencing athletic performance, while self-talk is a mental training technique that helps regulate thoughts and emotions through positive internal dialogue. This study employed a one-group pretest-posttest experimental design involving 21 Pencak Silat athletes from Junior high school 46 Jakarta. The intervention consisted of eight self-talk sessions over four weeks focusing on education, practice, and reflection. Data were analyzed using SPSS 26. The average self-confidence score at the pretest was 33.52 with a standard deviation of 3.842, while at the posttest it increased to 38.57 with a standard deviation of 3.501. The Shapiro-Wilk normality test showed that both pretest and posttest data were normally distributed ($p > 0.05$), and the Levene's Test indicated homogeneous variance ($p = 0.567$). The paired sample t-test produced a significance value of $p = 0.000$, indicating a significant difference between pretest and posttest results. These findings demonstrate that self-talk training effectively increases athletes' self-confidence, emotional control, and focus, making it a practical psychological strategy to improve mental readiness and performance in Pencak Silat athletes.

How to Cite

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✉ Correspondence address :
E-mail: nina.sutesna@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

In the field of sports, especially pencak silat, self-confidence is a very important psychological component. Athletes with high self-confidence tend to be able to manage their emotions, make wiser choices, and perform at their best during competitions (Ilham, 2021). On the other hand, low self-confidence can lead to excessive worry. Therefore, one of the main goals of pencak silat athlete training is to develop techniques to increase self-confidence.

Self-talk training is a popular technique in sports psychology for increasing self-confidence (Fauzan et al., 2022). Self-talk is also used by individuals to control their emotions, ideas, and behavior in various contexts, including competition, both internally and externally (Kusuma & Rindaningsih, 2024). Therefore, self-talk has been proven to increase athletes' motivation, focus, and emotional control in the context of sports. This is in line with previous research which revealed that athletes who routinely engage in self-talk are better able to handle the tension of competition and have higher levels of self-confidence (Kahrović et al., 2014).

Self-confidence is a key factor in pencak silat that affects the readiness and performance of participants in the arena. A pencak silat athlete must have courage and self-confidence in order to perform attacking and defensive maneuvers accurately and quickly. In addition to being able to maintain composure under pressure, confident athletes are also better prepared to face various dynamic conditions during competition (Bandura, 1997). However, many pencak silat participants, especially in the junior division, find it difficult to maintain confidence when competing at a high level or against more experienced opponents.

According to Nurmalasari et al., (2024) athletes who engage in structured self-talk report feeling more confident and less anxious about competition. In addition, athletes who engage in positive self-talk throughout the competition are reported to feel more confident than those who do not (Heydari et al., 2018). According to other studies, athletes can use self-talk to improve focus and manage psychological pressure before competing (Hatzigeorgiadis et al., 2014).

Based on previous research findings and the requirement for a balance between skill and psychological aspects, both aspects must be developed synergistically in order to achieve maximum performance. This condition led the author to research the effect of self-talk training on in-

creasing the confidence of pencak silat athletes.

And looking at the facts in the field through the results of an interview with one of the athletes, he said,

"I feel insecure and hesitant when competing, even though during the training process I don't feel that way. This condition greatly affects my performance, especially during competitions."

Based on this interview, one of the problems faced by athletes is self-confidence, which prevents them from performing at their best. One way to increase self-confidence is through mental training.

Mental training in pencak silat involves building self-confidence. Although self-talk in sports has been widely studied, there is still little research specifically examining its effect on pencak silat. Most previous studies have focused on team sports such as basketball and soccer or individual sports such as tennis and athletics. Therefore, the diversity of pencak silat is often associated with mental management and competitive strategies, requiring more research to determine the extent to which self-talk can increase the confidence of pencak silat athletes.

This research focuses on the importance of developing contextual and evidence-based psychological training methods for pencak silat. In the face of increasingly fierce competition at the national and international levels, athletes are not only required to be physically strong but also mentally tough. Self-talk, as a mental strategy that has been proven effective in various sports, needs to be tested for its effectiveness specifically in the context of pencak silat, so that the training approach used is truly in line with the psychological characteristics of martial arts athletes.

This study focuses on examining the effect of self-talk training on increasing the self-confidence of pencak silat athletes. This study not only contributes to the literature on sports psychology but also offers a new approach to mental training for martial artists, which has rarely been studied, especially among junior athletes. This provides a new contribution to the literature on sports psychology. Using an experimental design and a specific population from the pencak silat discipline, the results of this study are expected to provide practical implications for coaches, sports psychologists, and other stakeholders in developing more targeted and effective intervention programs.

METHODS

This study used an experimental method

with a one-group pretest-posttest design. The population in this study consisted of 20 pencak silat athletes at Junior high school 46 Jakarta, where the entire population was sampled using total sampling technique. The instrument used was a self-confidence questionnaire adopted from a study conducted by Nursaba et al., (2024), consisting of 13 questions with indicators covering internal factors, namely technical and physical skills, competitive experience, mental readiness, and self-evaluation of play. This study aimed to examine the effect of self-talk training on athletes' self-confidence levels. The self-talk training was conducted over four weeks, consisting of eight sessions integrated with the regular training schedule, in accordance with the approach of Hatzigeorgiadis & Galanis, (2017) who stated that six to eight sessions are effective in improving athletes' performance and self-confidence. Each session lasted 30–45 minutes and covered three main components, namely education about self-talk, its practical application, and reflection and evaluation of its use. The data obtained from the tests conducted is still raw data, so the data obtained needs to be processed and analyzed statistically. In this case, the researcher used SPSS 26 software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Statistical Tests

	N	Min	Max	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pretest	21	26	39	704	33.52	3.842
Posttest	21	32	44	810	38.57	3.501

Based on **Table 1**, the average self-confidence score of athletes at the pretest was 33.52 with a standard deviation of 3.842, while at the posttest it increased to 38.57 with a standard deviation of 3.501. This increase indicates a difference in self-confidence scores before and after the self-talk training treatment

The Shapiro-Wilk normality test results show that the pretest data has a significance value of 0.054 and the posttest data has a significance value of 0.100. Since both values are greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed.

The results of the variance homogeneity test using Levene's Test show a significance value of 0.567 (based on the mean), which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the pretest and posttest data have homogeneous variance.

The results of the paired sample t-test show

a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), which means that there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. The average score difference of -5.048 indicates an increase in self-confidence after being given self-talk training.

Self-talk is a psychological technique that has been proven effective in boosting athletes' confidence, including in the sport of Pencak Silat. Through self-talk, athletes are trained to manage their thoughts and emotions by giving themselves positive messages before, during, and after competitions (Anggun et al., 2025; Putra & Jannah, 2017). This process helps athletes instill confidence in their abilities, thereby reducing doubt and anxiety when facing competitive situations. In the context of Pencak Silat, which requires concentration and quick decision-making, self-talk is an important tool for maintaining mental focus. Therefore, the application of self-talk can be a psychological strategy that supports athletes' mental readiness and optimal performance (Juhanis et al., 2025; Rachma et al., 2025).

In addition to serving as a mental reinforcement tool, self-talk also plays a role in forming a sustainable positive mindset. Athletes who are accustomed to using self-talk tend to have a more optimistic view of the challenges and mistakes that occur during training and competitions (Komarudin, 2023; Wijaya, 2024). By thinking positively, they can minimize the impact of psychological pressure that often arises in competitive sports (Mylsidayu, 2022). The process of internalizing these positive messages helps develop stable self-confidence, not just situational confidence. Thus, self-talk plays an important role in maintaining the balance between the physical and mental readiness of Pencak Silat athletes.

The results of the study show that the use of structured self-talk can significantly increase athletes' self-confidence. Athletes who received self-talk training were able to demonstrate better self-control over external pressures, such as fear of failure or opponent assessment (Pratama & Utami, 2024). This occurs because self-talk provides a calming cognitive stimulus and helps individuals assess situations more rationally. This increase in self-confidence has a direct impact on improved performance, both in terms of technique, tactics, and composure during competition (Putri & Haryono, 2024). In other words, the effectiveness of self-talk is not limited to psychological aspects but also contributes to overall athletic performance.

In addition to having a positive impact, the effectiveness of self-talk is also influenced by in-

ternal factors such as experience, motivation, and the athlete's level of self-awareness. Athletes with more experience are generally better able to use self-talk effectively because they understand the context of the situation they are facing. However, for young or novice athletes, the process of applying self-talk requires guidance from a coach or sports psychologist to ensure that the messages used are truly tailored to the individual's needs. The various forms of self-talk, whether instructional or motivational, need to be tailored to the characteristics of each athlete. This adjustment aims to ensure that the messages received by the athlete truly strengthen their self-confidence and readiness to compete.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that self-talk is an effective psychological intervention in increasing the self-confidence of Pencak Silat athletes. By practicing positive self-talk, athletes can strengthen their mental control and improve their performance consistency in various competitive situations. In addition, self-talk can also be the basis for developing a more comprehensive psychological training program in martial arts. Coaches are advised to integrate self-talk exercises into routine training programs to ensure that confidence building is ongoing. Thus, strengthening psychological aspects through self-talk is expected to support the achievement of optimal performance by Pencak Silat athletes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion, it can be concluded that self-talk has a meaningful effect on increasing the confidence of Pencak Silat athletes. Through the use of positive statements and control of internal dialogue, athletes are able to strengthen their belief in their abilities and reduce anxiety that arises before and during competitions. This technique helps athletes to be more focused, calm, and motivated in facing various competitive situations. In addition to its psychological impact, self-talk also contributes to overall performance improvement through increased emotional control and concentration. Thus, the application of self-talk training can be used as an effective psychological strategy to support the development of a winning mentality in Pencak Silat athletes.

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