

## INTEGRATING LIFE SKILLS INTO HANDBALL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

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### Abstract

This study aimed to find out the integration of life skills through handball training program on the improvement of female handball player life skills. The research method used was one-group pretest-posttest experimental design with a quantitative approach. The population in this study were eleven youth female handball players aged 18-21 years old. The life skills scale for sport with forty seven items and eight components was used as an instrument. The descriptive data of research findings were 1.2727 mean, std. deviation 3.84892, minimum value -4.30 and with maximum value 8.90. The result of the normality test was normal 0.200 (pre -post test). Also can be seen that the result had an effect but not significant ( $0.474 > 0.05$ ) on the improvement of youth female handball player life skills. Subsequent research makes it possible to use a research approach by presenting a control group, and with a relatively longer time. To find out the dynamics of the development of youth players because it is related to an environment that tends to set high achievements, so that it becomes an important factor that must be considered.

### Keyword:

*Life skills, Training Program, Female Handball Player, Positive Youth Development*

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### Introduction

Coaching youth handball player as a team sport is a challenging one, especially for coaching youth female team. There are so many complex factor which contributes for a great performance such psychological/social aspect, physical aspect, technical aspect and also tactical aspect (Michalsik, 2018). Youth sports have been identified as a valuable means of transport to improve positive development (Fraser-Thomas, Cote, & Deakin, 2005; Holt & Neely, 2011). That is, through sports activities, both in sport settings in schools, recreation as well as high performance sports, youth have a valuable opportunity to develop themselves as healthy individuals, actively involved and productive in society, both in youth and adulthood (Hamilton, Hamilton, & Pittman, 2004). Positive youth development also promotes healthy self-development and good adaptive functioning which is a strengths-based perspective that focuses on developing skills and natural potential (Lerner et al, 2015).

Currently, positive youth development cannot be separated from the scope of educational sports, community sports and achievement sports (Law No. 11 Sports of 2022). However, there is not much literature that discusses the development of positive sports in an achievement sports environment. Santos et al, (2019) revealed that little is known about positive youth development in high performance sports

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environment, so it can be concluded that research tends to focus on sport settings in schools or recreational sports settings for society in general (Holt et al, 2016).

Positive youth development in high performance sports settings, appears to be an important issue to consider both in individual achievement sports settings and as a team. In team high performance sports settings, establishing an appropriate training program for youth players is necessary to investigate the developmental characteristics as well as the physical and psychological abilities of each stage of developmental age (Marczinka, 2010). As a team sport, handball is strongly influenced by the tactical concept of attacking and defending as well as social/mental factors both inside and outside the team. This is a complication in analyzing handball, not only because the game is multifactorial, but also because it is determined by the individual performance of each player and the tactical components and interactions between individuals in the team (Michalsik, 2018).

In high-performance youth sports, the focus is usually on developing and identifying talent in order to find many young players to start specializing, for example in the game of football (Harwood & Johnston, 2016; Read, Oliver, De Ste Croix, Myer, & Lloyd, 2016; Santos et al, 2019). Holistic youth development is often sacrificed due to results-oriented high-pressure environments (Harwood & Johnston, 2016; Sagar, Busch, & Jowett, 2010). Such a situation can be interpreted that the environment faced by young players in high-performance sports is not easy, so it is possible that developments that occur can have a positive or negative impact. Several studies have revealed that in a competitive sports environment it has been associated with antisocial behavior, low self-esteem, stress, fatigue, injury and school dropout (Baker, Cobley, & Fraser-Thomas, 2009; Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005; Harwood & Johnston, 2016; Merkel, 2013). A deeper understanding of the high-performing youth sports environment is needed in relation to positive youth development as a result of the facts revealed. This is related to the findings of a high-performing youth sports study which revealed that in professional adult competitions no more than one-third of youth were able to reach this level (Barreiros, Cote & Fonseca, 2014).

The coach is the one who responsible for ensuring that youth thriving in a high-performance sports environment are on a positive development path. Non-conductive psychosocial development such as feelings of fear of failure, tight selection, pressure from the environment be it coaches, parents, peers becomes a challenge for a teenage athlete as an individual in a high-performance sports environment (intra and interpersonal challenges) (Harwood & Johnston, 2016; Reeves et al, 2009). The coaches have the opportunity to ensure positive youth development by integrating life skills into the training program. To deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life, individuals need adaptive and positive behavior as psychosocial abilities, called life skills (UNICEF, 2003).

Efforts that can be optimized by coaches to improve positive development in youth high-performance sports by integrating life skills in each training session must be designed in such a way as to suit the objectives to be achieve. In the training process, the philosophy of a coach is technically very important with regard to the need for it to support all aspects of his training, the philosophy is derived from coaching experience, depth of knowledge possessed, values held, opinions and beliefs (Cassidy, Jones, & Potrac, 2009; Nash, Sproule, & Horton, 2008). To provide

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a quality experience in training sessions for an athlete, the coach can deliberately write down the philosophy he uses during the training process in an effort to form the basic foundation of a strong character in athletes (Nash et al, 2008). Although when talking about coaching philosophy there are still many uncertainties (Cushion & Partington, 2016), so it is still necessary for a coach to reflect on the philosophy that is believed to be in the process of encouraging the development and transfer of an athlete's life skills.

In integrating life skills into teaching, there are four principles that can help trainers in the process of implementing them. The first principle is to focus on one life skill in one lesson, the second principle introduces life skills at the beginning of the lesson, the third principle applies it with teaching strategies and the fourth principle asks questions about life skills at the end of the lesson (Kendellen et al, 2017). To be able to achieve the goal and improve life skills, in principle, it must be designed properly (Akin, 2020). Sport and life skills are seen as the pursuit of equal and inclusive coaching, a philosophy that can be created by coaches in an effort to build on the philosophical principles of developing and transferring healthy life skills which are described in six levels namely the first structuring in the context of sport, the second in facilitating a positive environmental climate, the third discusses life skills, the fourth trains life skills, the fifth discusses the transfer of life skills from sports to other aspects of life and the sixth trains repetitive skills transfer (Bean et al, 2018).

The six levels are further explained, Bean, Kramers, Forneris, & Camire, (2018): first, setting the sports context. Efforts to regulate the situation in the sports context are defined as creating an environment that enriches and motivates athletes intrinsically so that it has an impact on physically and psychologically athletes who feel safe enough to dare to take risks, are willing to learn from mistakes and engage in social activities that are significant for themselves (Danish, 2007). Petitpas & Hale, 1993; Petitpas et al, 2005), the first component of this level refers to the recognition of the demands inherent in sport, which underlie conscious structuring. What stands out from sport are inherently three demands: the first is that competition is rooted in the definition of sport and that while competing provides athletes with experiences that have the potential to influence the development of the athlete's life skills. The process of competition that occurs is characterized by competitors who give their best efforts to create healthy competition (Camiré, 2015). Second, the physical, technical and tactical development of an athlete is inherently a need that is carried out through sports activities to develop skills and proficiency (Fraser Thomas, Côté, & Deakin, 2005). Athletes' life skills are potentially affected as long as athletes are in the process of attaining proficiency in their sport. Third, the athlete's interaction with various parties such as stakeholders (eg, coaches, parents, referees and teammates) is a social effort that occurs in sport (Fraser-Thomas et al, 2005). From the three inherent aspects, it can be concluded that only being involved in sports activities allows an athlete to develop life skills (Chinkov & Holt, 2016; Holt & Sehn, 2008; Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn, & Wall, 2008; Lacroix et al. , 2008; Pierce et al, 2017). Several factors such as building a safe environment for the physical and psychological condition of athletes; watch closely; make activities systematic, active, focused and explicit; providing challenging and authentic activities in a sporting context can be actively structured by coaches by



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designing and designing beyond the demands of the previous sport (Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010; Fraser Thomas et al, 2005; Lockwood & Perlman, 2008; Strachan, Cote, & Deakin, 2011). So there is an assumption that athletes who grow up in a comfortable environment provide experiences that have the potential to increase the development of life skills.

Second, building a positive climate is an effort for athletes to experience a good sports environment where positive relationships can be maintained (Bean et al, 2018), this can be achieved by facilitating a positive climate through examples set by coaches who behave positively (Fraser-Thomas et al, 2005; Gould & Carson, 2008; Gould et al, 2007). Coaches can implement this by providing positive examples of behavior as a strategy, such as being patient, realistic, appreciating athletes' efforts, respecting athletes' parents, other officials and other coaches, being good at communicating and being able to see mistakes as opportunities to learn (Camiré et al, 2010). 2012; Gould, Voelker, & Blanton, 2012; Turnnidge, Evans, Vierimaa, Allan, & Cote, 2016; Vella, Oades, & Crowe, 2013). Athletes who interact with coaches who exemplify positive behavior are expected to have a positive climate of experience in developing their life skills.

Third, in the context of sports, discussion of life skills is defined as a verbal, deliberate effort (Bean et al, 2018). As a scenario in integrating Life Skills in the program of lesson sessions, discussing one of the Life Skills at the beginning becomes a stimulus for athletes to think and reflect on the importance of this aspect of Life Skills, so that athlete input can also provide coaches with a structured definition of Life Skills that is targeted to be developed (Kendellen & Camiré, 2017). In the effort to develop and transfer life skills, the tendency for better potential is found in athletes who are able to clearly understand the meaning and different life skills. That way the coach has a better chance to develop the athlete's life skills through the dedication of time given to the athlete, the coach can effectively and efficiently talk about life skills and sports skills simultaneously in training situations (Bean & Forneris, 2017b; Hellison, 2011). For example, when discussing the basic principles of making decisions in a game situation in handball, the coach can also recognize the importance of communication skills in life. Life skills development will be encouraged along with the effective integration of discussions about sports and life skills ideally created by coaches (Camiré, 2015; Gould, Voelker, & Griffes, 2013).

Fourth, practicing these life skills is considered an opportunity given to athletes to apply and perfect the athlete's life skills in the context of sports (Bean et al, 2018). The first way is to practice life skills intentionally in sports activities. The results of empirical and theoretical studies reveal how coaches who deliberately provide opportunities for their athletes to practice life skills have facilitated the process of developing life skills (Bean & Forneris, 2016; Holt et al, 2017). For example, when considering life skills in emotional control in handball, a coach could train his athlete to take three deep breaths before completing a shooting execution by breaking through, while explaining how to control oneself to assess the situation before executing a move.

The fifth, discusses the idea of life skills transfer as a clear and deliberate effort (Bean et al, 2018). The concept that the life skills learned by athletes in sports can

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be transferred and applied to environments outside of sports such as schools, homes and workplaces based on research results, it turns out that not all athletes understand the concept (Danish, Taylor, & Fazio, 2003; Pierce et al, 2017). This means that it takes time dedicated from the coach during the training process to talk about the transfer of life skills and its importance through concurrent discussions with athletes. So that athletes are awakened and increased awareness of the opportunities for transfer of life skills. Thus, these efforts can be enhanced by facilitating a discussion how athletes are able to recognize and identify their strengths in sport and then consider how these strengths can help maintain their performance in life (Camiré et al, 2012; Hellison, 2011; Petitpas et al, 2005).

The sixth, applying and perfecting life skills in contexts outside of sports as opportunities to practice transfer of life skills (non-sports) (Bean et al, 2018). In this regard, coaches must build and establish communication with parents, teachers and community members to enable successful application in real life of the life skills learned in sport (Camiré & Kendellen, 2016; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Pierce et al, 2018). In the context of this transfer, coaches initiate communication with the community (parents, teachers and other members) to enable successful athletes to apply life skills in real life from life skills learned in sport (Camiré & Kendellen, 2016; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Pierce et al, 2018).

As a team sports, strategic periodization can be defined as the deliberate culmination of a match or event that is considered to be the greatest priority or difficulty throughout a competitive season (Robertson & Joyce, 2015). Therefore, this study aims to find out how to improve the life skills of adolescent female handball players at the preparation stage by integrating life skills in an annual training program that runs from micro to micro, meso to meso from the preparation stage to the competition stage which aims to reach peak performance as previously described.

Based on the results of previous studies, researchers sought to find out the effect of integrating life skills into young women's handball training programs explicitly or intentionally.

## Methods

The experimental method was used in this study (Fraenkel, et al, 2012). According to the method used of this study, researcher applied one group pre test-post test design approach (Creswell, 2018).

### *Participant*

This research involved 11 youth female handball players as participants with an age range of 18-21 years. Before the study was conducted, the players signed informed consent as the proof of their agreement to be involved in the research. To collect the data, the starting condition of the players was firstly tested.

### *Population & Samplw*

In The population who became the samples of this study were the members of Bandung Handball Team consisting of 11 persons.

The research sample is a group to obtain information based on the needs of research studies (Fraenkel et al, 2012). (Fraenkel et al, 2012). Sampling in this study used non-probability sampling, namely purposive sampling. The plan for

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determining non-probability sampling is built from an assessment of the possible points, and when the research is in progress the researcher will make decisions regarding the direction of sampling, participants who know best about the phenomenon, are able to articulate and explain nuances related to the purpose of the research into the researcher's judgment when taking non-probability samples (Grove, Burns & Gray, 2013, pp. 312; Padgett, 2017). Thus, decision to use purposive sampling technique is based on an assessment of a typical participant or object, of the study phenomenon, or who specifically has knowledge (Brink et al, 2018). The samples were selected purposively as a research requires a special criteria, so that the samples involved aligning with the purpose of the study. Therefore, the research problems were answered and resulted in a more representative value. Therefore, the 11 samples were involved in this study.

### *Instrument*

In the pre test and post test, all participants filled out a Life Skills Scale for Sport (LSSS) questionnaires, as research needs. LSSS consisted of eight components of life skills with 47 items statement in likert scale. The scales included five points, from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). The team work (7), goal setting (7), time management (4), emotional skill (4), interpersonal communication (4), social skills (5), leadership (8), and problem solving and decision making (4) (Cronin and Allen, 2017).

### *Procedure*

The research began from a problem found by the researcher, then the research problems were taken in form of question. To answer the question of the research problems, the researchers choose the population and samples, then gave a pre-test in the first meeting. After pre-test, treatment was conducted for 8 meetings for strength and conditioning program and 8 meetings for specific handball training. Each meeting was conducted in 120 minutes. First, the implementation of training handball program with the integrated life skill included a training series consisting of one focus of life skill that should be acquired in one meeting. Life skills are introduced at the beginning of each training session, then applied during the training session, and discussed about life skills at the end of the training session. Post test data were taken after 16 meetings. The test is carried out to find out the latest results after receiving treatment regarding life skills.

Table 1. Training Program Scenario

<b>Activity Material</b>	<b>Handball training program in preparation phase</b>
<b>Activity Time</b>	120 minutes for every session of training
<b>Activity Place</b>	Weight Training FPOK UPI Padasuka & Queen Court Handball
<b>Part</b>	Training session integrated with life skills
<b>Warm Up</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Praying before start the training session</li> <li>2. Starting warm up</li> <li>3. Explain of one focus component life skills lesson of the day</li> </ol>
<b>Main Part</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introducing of one focus lesson component life skills of the day</li> <li>2. Direct instructions and feedback</li> <li>3. Reinforce lesson of life skills of the day</li> </ol>
<b>Cooling Down</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Debrief of life skills</li> <li>2. Cooling down</li> </ol>



## Data Analysis

The data in this study is processed and analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Software v25 for macOS. The normality test of the data used the Kolmogorov Smirnov test, to determine the difference in the average between two paired or related samples use paired sample t test. Statistical significance level for all portions in this study is  $p < 0.05$  for all tests.

## Result

The results of data are described in 3 table below:

Table 2. Descriptive Data of Research Findings

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Pre test – Post test	11	1.2727	3.84892	-4.30	8.90

Table 3. Result of Kolmogorov Smirnov Test

Items	N	Sig (2-tailed)
Pre test – Post test	11	.200

Table 4. The Result of Paired Sample T-test

Items	N	T	Sig. (2 – tailed)
Pre test – Post test	11	-.744	.474

From table 2 the results of descriptive data of research findings were 1.2727 mean, std. deviation 3.84892, minimum value -4.30 and with maximum value 8.90. From table 3 the result of the normality test was normal with level of significant 0.200 (pre-tests-post-test). From table 4 can be seen that the result had an effect but not significant ( $0.474 > 0.05$ ) on the improvement of youth female handball player life skills.

## Discussion

Research by integrating life skills into a handball training program for positive youth development turns out to have an influence on the development of the life skills of this youth female handball player, which means that the integration of life skills into training in every session needs to be considered as an important thing. However, in this study there are still shortcomings so that improvements are needed by considering and paying attention to many aspects that can be an influence on the given life skills integration program. For example, the non-technical load factor being faced by players outside of training hours, then how the quality of recovery made by players during training breaks.

Subsequent research makes it possible to use a research approach by presenting a control group, and with a relatively longer time. To find out the

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dynamics of the development of youth players because it is related to an environment that tends to set high achievements, so that it becomes an important factor that must be considered.

### Conclusion

The integration of Life Skills into the female youth handball team training program has influenced the improvement of the athlete's life skills aspect. This finding can certainly be a recommendation for coaches to improve aspects of the life skills of youth female handball players. So with these findings, it is clear that the tendency of positive impact on youth development results from integrating life skills into training programs.

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