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Analyzing Coaches' Skills: A Survey of Table Tennis Coaches in Riau

Province and DIY Province, Indonesia

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Abstract

Studi purpose. The purpose of this study was to determine the ideal coach skills for Table Tennis.

Materials and methods. This research was descriptive and quantitative using a survey. The sample of this study were athletes who had won medals in table tennis competitions at the city or district level in Riau Province and Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) Province as evidenced by certificates during 2023. Therefore, the sample of table tennis athletes involved was 70 athletes (44 boys and 26 girls). The characteristics of the athletes were an average age of 18.7 ± 7.2 years and 6.1 ± 0.9 years of training experience. The research instrument was a questionnaire distributed via a *Google form*. The questionnaire contained 20 statement items with a scale of 1 - 4. The coach's skills are divided into 4 factors, which were 1) skills in applying sports techniques, 2) skills in applying training periodization, 3) psychological skills, and 4) communication skills.

Results. Table Tennis Coaches' skills in general showed "very poor" 2 answers (3.32%), "poor" 19 answers (28.33%), "fair" 25 answers (33.53%), "good" 22 answers (31.68%), and "very good" 2 answers (3.32%).

Conclusions. From the results of this study, it is expected that the Riau Province and DIY Province table tennis organizations pay more attention to the quality of coach skills. One effective solution at this time is to provide training to coaches in stages. Further, providing opportunities for former athletes who no longer have a career to be given basic coaching knowledge so that later they can become professional coaches.

Keywords: Coach Skills, Table Tennis, Sports Coaching

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Introduction

Table tennis is a sport that is tactically included in the net game group. Table tennis is a game that has many fans in the wider community because this game does not require large costs and can be used as entertainment (Gu et al., 2021). In Indonesia, table tennis is very popular in the community, on campuses, in villages, in agencies, companies, and so on. Even in certain countries, table tennis has become a sport that can be used as a livelihood or professional sport

(Andrijanto, 2023). Because of its popularity, table tennis has become a sport that is competed at regional, national, Asian, and Olympic levels (Pradas et al., 2022). So it can be said that table tennis is one type of achievement sport in Indonesia.

Regarding sports achievements, the role of coaches and athletes cannot be separated. Athletes who can achieve achievements cannot be separated from the most influencing factor, namely the level of skill of the coach (Nabilla et al., 2019). The success of a coach does not only teach technical and physical, but also several aspects such as mental, how to communicate with athletes, experience, and licenses (Fahmi et al., 2019), (Prabowo et al., 2023). However, the skill level of table tennis coaches is still unknown. Table tennis coaches still apply training methods previously experienced by the coach when he was an athlete. Thus, the training method is no longer relevant and there is no sports science approach. Ideally, a qualified coach must at least have a table tennis coaching license (Theodosiou, 2021), (Cardoso et al., 2022), (B. Zhang & Chen, 2022). A coaching license is obtained through coach training or by studying at a sports university. However, not all coaches have the opportunity to obtain this license.

Previous research explains that quality coach skills through coaching clinics can improve basic playing techniques in children's football athletes (Jumain et al., 2021). In addition, improving coach skills can also affect the coach's motivation level. Good coach skills can diagnose athlete movement errors, correct errors, and ineffective movements, and provide more detailed and accurate technical movement improvements to improve the playing skills of badminton athletes (Donie et al., 2021). In addition, the coach's ability to apply good leadership also has an impact on athlete progress. It is explained that coaches who have strong leadership allow athletes to practice cooperation between teams and coaches for soccer athletes (Sulistiyono et al., 2022). The results of this study also state that the leadership ability of the coach has a strong influence on the technical ability and behavior of football athletes. From combat sports it was also found that coaches who have expertise in nutrition are also indispensable in boxing to regulate and maintain body weight (Prabowo et al., 2022), (Prabowo et al., 2023). Furthermore, from a psychological perspective, coaches who have the skills to mentally train athletes also influence athletes' skills. Coaches who have skills in mental training can increase self-confidence, focus, and motivation in athletes (Candra et al., 2023). However, from the results of these studies, the ideal and appropriate coach skills for table tennis have not been studied. The ideal coach skills already exist but have not been published.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to determine the ideal coach skills for table tennis in Riau Province and Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) Province. The uniqueness of this study is that there has not been any research that analyses the skills of coaches in all sports or specifically for table tennis. The importance of this research is as a basis and reference for coaches regarding the coaching skills that must be possessed by each coach so that their athletes can achieve achievements.

Materials and methods

Study Participants

The population of this study were table tennis athletes from Riau Province and Yogyakarta Special Region (DIY) Province, then the research sample was taken using *purposive sampling*. The sample of this study were athletes who had won medals at the city or district-level table tennis championships in Riau Province and Yogyakarta Province as evidenced by certificates during 2023. Therefore, the sample of table tennis athletes involved was 70 athletes (44 boys and 26 girls). The characteristics of athletes were the average age of 18.7 ± 7.2 years and 6.1 ± 0.9 years of training experience.

Study Organization

This research was descriptive and quantitative using a survey conducted on table tennis athletes to assess the skills of table tennis coaches. Data was collected during December 2023. Then, this study involved 11 table tennis coaches in an instrument validation test, who had a national coach license recognized by the Indonesian table tennis organization, which was the Indonesian Table Tennis Association (PTMSI) and the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF).

The instrument was developed through a literature review and previous research by identifying competency factors in coaches (Setiawan et al., 2023), (Prabowo et al., 2023), (Juita et al., 2024), (Wijayanti et al., 2024), (Mandan et al., 2024)). Furthermore, a focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted with academic experts, namely lecturers in the field of sports coaching. This research instrument was a questionnaire distributed through Google Forms. The questionnaire contained 20 statement items with a scale of 1-4. The following is a questionnaire grid in Table 1.

Table 1. Questionnaire Grid

Factor	Indicator	Item
Skills in applying sports techniques	Have a sports education background	1
	is a former athlete	2
	Have knowledge about sports coaching	3
	Have certification as a coach in the community	4
	Have excellent physical fitness condition	5
	Creative in finding and applying variations in both tools and exercises	6
Skills in applying training periodization	Always prepare athletes long before the competition takes place	7
	Apply appropriate training program that suits the athletes' abilities and leads to achieving the goals	8
	Provide good training load regulation	9
	Have a planned, systematic, and repetitive training program	10
Psychological skills	Apply a spirit of sportsmanship, responsibility, and discipline	11
	Diligent and never bored in providing training material to athletes	12
	Have a positive attitude when dealing with the athletes you train	13
	Able to make the training atmosphere always enjoyable	14
	Be fair to all athletes without discriminating	15
Communication skills	Be honest and open	16
	Able to increase motivation	17
	Give praise when you win a championship or medal	18
	Never angry	19
	Give instructions with gestures and body language	20

Statistical Analysis

Data analysis in the first stage of research was to conduct validity tests using Aiken V (Lewis. R. Aiken, 1985) and reliability tests using Cronbach's Alpha. The second stage was a descriptive percentage, but in order for the data in this research sample to be normal, a normality test was carried out using Kolmogorov-Smirnov. Data analysis of this study was assisted by SPSS version 26 application software.

Results

Table 2. Test Results of Instrument Validity and Reliability

Factor	Aiken V	Cronbach's Alpha
Skills in applying sports techniques	0.877	0.783
Skills in applying training periodization	0.834	0.748
Psychological skills	0.826	0.736
Communication skills	0.842	0.795

Based on Table 2, the results of the validity test of the four factors obtained a V value > 0.8, the Cronbach's Alpha value is more than > 0.6. The four factors are 1) Skills in applying sports techniques, 2) Skills in applying exercise periodization, 3) Psychological skills, and 4) Communication skills were declared valid and reliable. Therefore, this instrument was suitable to be tested on athletes.

Before descriptive analysis using percentages, a normality test was first carried out using Kolmogorov-Smirnov. The purpose of the normality test was to determine whether the distribution of this research data was normal or abnormal in the population.

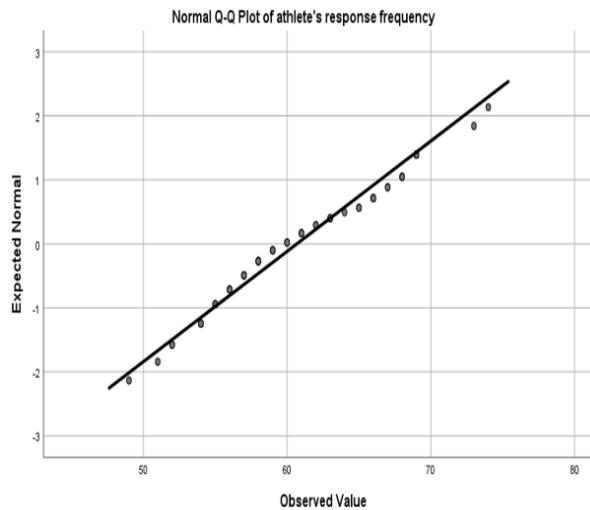


Figure 1. Normality Test Results

Based on the Kolmogorov Smirnov test results, this study has a normal sig distribution. $0.071 > 0.05$, then based on Figure 1, the points are close to a straight line. It can be concluded that the data in this study is normally distributed and suitable for further analysis using descriptive percentages.

Table 3. General Table Tennis Coach Skills Results

No	Interval	Category	Answer Frequency	%
1	69,38 < 74	Very good	2	3.32%
2	63,58 < 69,38	Good	22	31.68%
3	57,78 < 63,58	Sufficient	25	33.35%
4	51,98 < 57,78	Poor	19	28.33%
5	49 < 51,98	Very Poor	2	3.32%
Amount			70	100%

Based on [Table 3](#), Table Tennis Coach Skills in general based on table tennis athlete answers Table tennis shows the results of "very poor" 2 answers (3.32%), "poor" 19 answers (28.33%), "Sufficient" 25 answers (33.53%), "good" 22 answers (31.68%), and "very good" 2 answers (3.32%).

Table 4. Result of Skills for Applying Sports Techniques

No	Interval	Category	Answer Frequency	%
1	19,70 < 20	Very good	5	8.36%
2	16,63 < 19,70	Good	22	31.67%
3	13,57 < 16,63	Sufficient	23	30%
4	10,50 < 13,57	Poor	16	23.31%
5	10 < 10,50	Very Poor	4	6.66%
Amount			70	100%

Based on [Table 4](#), the Skills of Applying Sports Techniques of Table Tennis Coaches based on the answers of table tennis athletes showed the results "very poor" 4 answers (6.66%), "poor" 16 answers (23.31%), "sufficient" 23 answers (30%), " good" 22 answers (31.67%), and "very good" 5 answers (8.36%).

Table 5. Skill Results for Applying Training Periodization

No	Interval	Category	Answer Frequency	%
1	19,82 < 20	Very good	5	8.31%
2	16,69 < 19,82	Good	23	33.34%
3	13,37 < 16,69	Sufficient	21	26.68%
4	10,44 < 13,37	Poor	17	25%
5	10 < 10,44	Very Poor	4	6.66%
Amount			70	100%

Based on [Table 5](#), the Skills of Applying Table Tennis Trainer Training Periodization based on the answers of table tennis athletes described the results as "very poor" 4 answers (6.66%), "poor" 15 answers (25%), "sufficient" 16 answers (26.68%), " good" 20 answers (33.34%), and "very good" 5 answers (8.31%).

Table 6. Result of Psychological Skills

No	Interval	Category	Answer Frequency	%
1	19,57 < 20	Very good	4	6.66%
2	16,62 < 19,57	Good	23	33.35%
3	13,68 < 16,62	Sufficient	24	31.68%
4	10,73 < 13,68	Poor	16	23.31%
5	10 < 10,73	Very Poor	3	5%
Amount			70	100%

Based on [Table 6](#), the Psychological Skills of Table Tennis Coaches based on the answers of table tennis athletes showed the results "very poor" 3 answers (5%), "poor" 16

answers (23.31%), "sufficient" 24 answers (31.68%), "good" 23 answers (33.35%), and "very good" 4 answers (6.66%).

Table 7. Communication Skills Results

No	Interval	Category	Answer Frequency	%
1	19,80 < 20	Very good	6	10%
2	16,86 < 19,80	Good	23	33.35%
3	13,74 < 16,86	Sufficient	23	30%
4	10,61 < 13,74	Poor	13	18.33%
5	10 < 10,61	Very Poor	5	8.32%
Amount			60	100%

Based on [Table 7](#), the Communication Skills of Table Tennis Coaches based on the answers of table tennis athletes showed the results "very poor" 5 answers (8.32%), "poor" 13 answers (18.33%), "sufficient" 23 answers (30%), "good" 23 answers (33.35%), and "very good" 6 answers (10%).

Discussion

Coach skills are a factor that every coach must have if they want to produce outstanding athletes. Based on [Table 3](#), the total number of answers is very good and good as many as 24 answers, the answers are very poor and not good as many as 21 answers and the rest is enough, namely 25 answers. If observed, the difference is not much different or not too significant. So, it can be interpreted that overall the skills of Riau province table tennis coaches are still in the sufficient category. Coaches who want to get good and quality coaching skills are also not easy. Many coaches get coaching skills through table tennis coach training programs or by attending lectures at sports universities ([Martinent, 2020](#)). However, attending courses at sports universities is also not easy, because those who can participate are still young, 19-25 years old. However, coaches who previously had the basics as table tennis athletes and attended coach training programs can have qualified coaching skills ([Michalski et al., 2019](#)).

Table tennis coach skills are further divided into 3 factors, including 1) skills in applying sports techniques, 2) skills in applying training periodization, 3) psychological skills, and 4) communication skills. The results of the skills in applying sports techniques in [Table 4](#) are the number of very good and good answers, namely 27 answers, very poor and poor answers, namely 20 answers and the rest are sufficient, namely 23 answers. These results prove that most table tennis coaches are able to apply techniques and tactics in table tennis, including basic techniques or tactics in matches. However, there are still many coaches who are considered unable to apply techniques or tactics in table tennis games ([H. Zhang & Zhou, 2019](#)). There are many factors that cause coaches to be considered unable to apply table tennis skills, such as never being an athlete, not having a coaching license, or having a coaching license but not renewing the license so that their skills in training table tennis are reduced ([B. Zhang & Chen, 2022](#)), ([Wang et al., 2022](#)).

Therefore, the coach's skill of applying training periodization is very important. Without a clear training periodization, the training done by athletes will be in vain and can even cause injury ([Narita Devi et al., 2022](#)), ([Mohammad Ramdani et al., 2023](#)), ([Wangi et al., 2023](#)). Training periodization is a training and competition planning stage that is systematically and measurably arranged by the coach in such a way that the athlete's peak performance can be achieved as planned in the competition ([Sofan et al., 2022](#)), ([Cahyuni et al., 2022](#)). The results of the application of training periodization in [Table 5](#) are the number of very good and good

answers, namely 28 answers, very poor and poor answers, namely 21 answers and the rest is enough, namely 21 answers. From these results, table tennis athletes believed that the training program that had been undertaken based on what was given by the coach was correct and in accordance with the target. However, there were quite a number of answers from athletes who stated that the training periodization program from the Riau province table tennis coach had not met the target or was not appropriate. Then in 16 other answers, table tennis athletes assessed the coach's ability to apply training periodization was sufficient.

Furthermore, the coach's skills are psychological in [Table 6](#), namely, the number of very good and good answers, namely 27 answers, very poor answers, and poor answers, namely 19 answers and the rest are sufficient, namely 24 answers. Psychology plays an important role and is needed in every type of sport. However, many coaches still often ignore psychological training ([Simpson et al., 2023](#)). Psychological training in the form of mental training is very effective in improving athlete performance ([Dohme et al., 2020](#)), ([Prabowo et al., 2023](#)). However, to implement psychological training, coaches should also have a good character and personality, speak politely and build motivation, be disciplined, firm, responsible, and have an attitude of sportsmanship. This is something that athletes can emulate. If the coach has good psychological abilities, then athletes can imitate the coach because basically, athletes tend to follow everything the coach tells them, both in terms of behavior, speaking style, and playing style ([Ramdani Mohammad et al., 2023](#)), ([Ngatman et al., 2022](#)).

The last part is communication skills, based on [Table 7](#), the number of answers is very good and good, namely 29 answers, the answers are very poor and poor, namely 18 answers, and the rest are sufficient, which is 23 answers. Communication is a small part but has a big influence on the progress of an athlete because good communication indicates the closeness between the coach and the athlete ([Mandan et al., 2024](#)). Coaches who have good communication skills can distribute technical or tactical material to athletes. Communication can be verbal or non-verbal, greetings to athletes, sign language, or body language. Good communication also has a relationship with the psychological side of athletes ([Choi et al., 2020](#)). Coaches who have good communication will definitely be able to understand the mental state of athletes during training or competition ([Sugihartono et al., 2021](#)). Coaches with good communication skills can also convey what the coach hopes for to athletes so that athletes feel proud of their coaches. Therefore, the importance of coaching skills is to create and produce athletes who are able to achieve achievements, especially in the sport of table tennis in Riau province.

Conclusions

Coach skills in table tennis in Riau province and DIY province can be said to be 'sufficient', but there are still many athletes who choose "very good" and "good" more than "very poor" and "poor", although the difference is not too significant. Coach skills are divided into four factors, namely 1) skills in applying sports techniques, 2) skills in applying training periodization, 3) psychological skills, and 4) communication skills. Of the 4 factors, the number of answers from athletes who chose very good and good was more than very poor and poor, although the difference was not too significant. From the results of this study, it is recommended that the Riau provincial table tennis organization board pay more attention to the quality of the coach's skills. One way is to provide tiered coach training and provide opportunities for former athletes who no longer have a career to be given basic coaching knowledge so that later they can become professional coaches. Future research is expected to increase the number of samples, examine other types of sports, and add several variables or factors that affect coach skills.

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Conflict of interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest.

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