

Exploring The Fundamental Aspect of Grassroot Football Academy: A Case Study in Indonesia

Explorando el aspecto fundamental de la academia de fútbol base: un caso de estudio en Indonesia

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Abstract. This research explores the fundamental aspects coaches teach in several grassroots football academies in Indonesia. Qualitative methods through case study design were employed in the current research, and the data were collected through interviews. Ten coaches from various grassroots football academies in Indonesia were interviewed. They were asked about the fundamental aspects of football taught in their grassroots football academy. In this case, the purposeful sampling method was used to determine the participants. The participants were chosen based on having a coaching license and having a minimum of 5 years of coaching experience. The data collected was analyzed with qualitative research software, namely N-Vivo 14. In this case, three packages of N-Vivo were used, namely word cloud, tree map, and frequency query. The results revealed several words or topics that the participants mainly discussed. Based on the findings, several fundamental aspects of the Indonesian grassroots football academy were mental, discipline, practice, goal, concentration, confidence, motivation, and physical. These are the fundamental aspects taught mainly by the coaches in the grassroots football academy in Indonesia.

Keywords: youth athlete; football; essential factor in grassroots football.

Resumen. Esta investigación explora los aspectos fundamentales enseñados por los entrenadores en varias academias de fútbol de base en Indonesia. En la investigación actual se emplearon métodos cualitativos mediante el diseño de estudios de caso, y los datos se recogieron a través de entrevistas. Se entrevistaron a 10 entrenadores de diversas academias de fútbol de Indonesia. Se les preguntó sobre los aspectos fundamentales del fútbol enseñado en su academia de fútbol de base. En este caso, se utilizó el método de muestreo específico para determinar a los participantes. Los participantes fueron elegidos sobre la base de tener una licencia de entrenamiento y tener un mínimo de 5 años de experiencia en entrenamiento. Los datos recogidos fueron analizados con el software de investigación cualitativa, a saber, N-Vivo 14. En este caso, se utilizaron tres paquetes de N-Vivo, a saber, la nube de palabras, el mapa de árboles y la consulta de frecuencia. Los resultados revelaron varias palabras o temas que fueron discutidos principalmente por los participantes. Basándose en el hallazgo, varios aspectos fundamentales en la academia de fútbol de Indonesia eran mental, disciplina, práctica, objetivo, concentración, confianza, motivación y físico. Se puede concluir que estos son los aspectos fundamentales que son enseñados principalmente por los entrenadores en la academia de fútbol de base en Indonesia

Palabras clave: deportista juvenil; fútbol; factor esencial en el fútbol de base.

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Introduction

Football holds a prominent position in Indonesia, boasting a substantial following with more than 1.8 million registered players as of 2018. The significance of grassroots football programs cannot be overstated, as they play a pivotal role in nurturing the potential of future generations of players and fans alike. Indonesia's commitment to fostering young talent is evident in various initiatives. The Ministry of Youth and Sports orchestrates national student league competitions, engaging over 50,000 players under the age of 12 from all provinces. Furthermore, prominent football clubs such as Persib, Persija, and Arema have established their own youth academies, dedicated to identifying and training promising talents in the 6-15 age range. Complementing these efforts are independent grassroots academies like SSB Bintang Timur, Diklat Persib, and SSB Putra Samarinda, which focus on honing fundamental skills for children aged 5-12. Together, these initiatives form a comprehensive framework that contributes to the holistic development of football in Indonesia, nurturing both skillful players and passionate fans.

According to Syukur and Soniawan (2015), the development of Indonesian football is declining compared to other countries. The decreasing achievement of Indonesian

football can be seen from their failure in the 2009 Sea Games, and in the 2015 Sea Games, Indonesia was only able to get fourth place. Besides that, Indonesia failed in several earlier ASEAN competitions, such as the Sea Games 2015 in Singapore and the ASEAN Games 2018 in Indonesia (Putra, 2018). In 2023, according to the FIFA official website, Indonesia was ranked 145 below Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam. It means that the quality of Indonesian football was below that of Malaysia and Vietnam. The effort to enhance the quality of Indonesian football should be done correctly; therefore, any aspect of Indonesian football should be emphasized. Other than that, analyzing the current football condition and understanding the declining factor can be done to manage an appropriate development strategy in the future.

One of the causes of the declining trend of Indonesian football was the failure to manage and pay attention to the sport at the grassroots level (Syukur & Soniawan, 2015; Putra, 2020). According to Soniawan and Irawan (2018), the critical success of one country in the football competition was the development of the grassroots football academy. Long-term, systematic, planned, and consistent coaching in grassroots academies is needed to foster professional athletes (Fitriani et al., 2021; Carbonell et al., 2023). Attention to the grassroots football academy is

necessary for countries that aim to have a professional national team, including Indonesia. This is because the practice of emphasizing the development of grassroots football academies was conducted worldwide, including in countries with high rankings in world football (Rossing et al., 2020). The development of the grassroots football academy has brought Nigeria a gold medal in the 1996 Olympics, as admitted by one of the athletes (Jeroh, 2012). Andy Roxburgh, Technical Director of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), raised a vital question: If grassroots football becomes weak, where will the next generation of players, referees, administrators, officials, coaches, and supporters come from? It indicates the importance of the grassroots football academy.

Football sports activities are an excellent means to shape social values through intentional structuring. This influences improving outcomes since they gain strong talents and ideally develop social values as a provision for our young generation to continue to participate in this globalized competition (Purnomo et al., 2024). Grassroots Football Academy is related not only to player skill development but also to many other aspects. Therefore, research in grassroots football academies covers a variety of factors. For example, in terms of talent identification, the player should not merely be judged or determined through the physical or skill they had, but it should be based on an analytical framework that can help to achieve the academy's distinct social world (Thomas et al., 2022). In terms of player skill development, research was suggested to scrutinize player exercise and skill development and how the environment could support the player (Andreu & Muñoz, 2020). Rossing et al. (2020) stated that coincidence and condition factors should be emphasized in the success of the grassroots football academy. In this case, coincidence is related to how the players support each other, which could create the stability of the team and close physical proximity between the athletes.

The primary purpose of the grassroots football academy was to form the fundamental aspects of the athletes. According to Niko (2010), to develop a professional player, there must be a solid basic understanding of the fundamental aspects of football. The fundamental aspect is correlated with the athlete's basic technique, which must be mastered by the athlete from an early age (Syukur & Soniawan, 2015; Gamonalas et al., 2020). Soniawan and Irawan (2018) stated that when athletes want to master a skill, they must learn the fundamental aspect of the technique. Therefore, mastering the fundamental aspects of football from an early age is essential. The fundamental aspects are the processes of movement, passing, trapping, dribbling, and shooting, as well as the biomechanics aspect, which is related to the form and movement-based aspects (Asril & Komaini, 2017). Niko (2010) stated that the fundamental aspects are the technical, player position, physical, and psychological aspects. In their research, April and Komaini (2017) concluded that athletes who taught the fundamental aspect of football, namely technique,

were better in terms of overall learning outcomes than students who only taught through the portion method. García-Ceberino et al. (2020) also revealed that the fundamental aspect of decision-making in football is the key to success because it involves the capacity to use available information in any given situation (Duncan et al., 2023).

Regarding the importance of mastering the fundamental aspects of football to become a professional player, athletes in the grassroots football academy should be taught the fundamental aspects of football appropriately. According to Riyadi et al. (2018), coaching, the fundamental aspect of football, should be scientifically approach-based. It means the learning material or the technique to deliver the materials was based on scientific results. Hence, the athletes got appropriate learning to enhance their football skills. Direct instruction is the most common teaching method in football, where the coach is the central focus and directs the athletes to learn the basic technique of football (Robles et al., 2011; García-Ceberino et al., 2020; Paixao et al., 2021). In the coaching process, one of the critical aspects to emphasize is that practice should lead to pertinence and ensure the athletes grasp the essential essence of the technique (Ju, 2015). Therefore, making sure the material delivered was what was needed was important. In other words, in coaching the fundamental aspect of football, the material should be the one that leads to the improvement of the fundamental aspect of the athlete.

There is a need to make sure that the teaching material leads to the cultivation of the grassroots fundamental aspect. Furthermore, despite the increased research interest in the development of talented players, the context of the early development phase of football players (6–12 years of age) remains unexplored mainly (Zibung & Conzelmann, 2017; Rossing et al., 2020). Therefore, analyzing the current practice at the grassroots level is necessary. According to Albano et al. (2021), there is a need to explore or ascertain the teaching methods and materials currently used in the football field, specifically in Indonesia, where the grassroots football academy is in the progress stages. Moreover, problems such as athletes experiencing fatigue and headaches due to the physical and cognitive activities during the coaching (Muslimin et al., 2022) and coaches giving too much physical exercise to the athletes (Handoko & Sugihartono, 2019) were found in Indonesia. Soccer coaches' communication influences players' behaviors. Therefore, it is necessary to determine how soccer coaches communicate during training sessions and competitions (Deborah et al., 2023). Environmental influences and changes in athletes' behavior in dealing with the pressures of training resulting in disturbances to the body and mind are called stress (Sepdanius et al., 2023).

Research analyzing the practice of fundamental aspect improvement among Indonesian athletes will reveal the current strategy implemented and the material given so that any evaluation and reflection can be done appropriately. Optimizing sports performance through psychological

variables, influencing positive aspects related to motivation, self-confidence, and self-perception, as well as developing training tasks, aims to be a process to overcome gaps and difficulties that may arise both in training and competition to improve sports performance (Zapata Huenullán et al., 2023).

Therefore, this research explores the fundamental aspects taught by the coaches in the grassroots football academy in Indonesia. Research regarding this theme was scarce. In this context, Kurniawan (2022) explores the process of learning the fundamental aspects of football technique in Indonesia. However, this research used classroom action research and did not directly explore the theme with the coaches. Putra (2018) developed the skill training model for football basic technique training in Indonesia; Yudi (2020) developed the transitional training model based on fundamental football skills in Sumatera, Indonesia; Doewes et al. (2020) explored the effect of the small-sided game training method on the dribbling basic technique for Indonesian players. Atiq (2012) analyzed the basic football technique level in LPI Pontianak, Indonesia, and Pratama (2017) analyzed the basic football technique level in LPI Student Team UNSRI, Indonesia. It confirmed that researchers gauging the fundamental aspect taught by coaches in Indonesian grassroots football academies based on the coach's perspective was scarce. Therefore, this research will explore this case by analyzing the coaches' perspectives regarding how and what the fundamental aspects were taught during their coaching experience at the Indonesian grassroots academy in Indonesia.

Materials and Methods

Design

The current research follows the three pillars of the research process, consisting of design, measurement, and analysis, proposed by Kline (2009). In terms of the design, the current research is qualitative research in the form of a case study design. The case study design is suitable for the current research with the purpose of exploring the specific fundamental aspects of the grassroots football academy. According to Muzari et al. (2022), a case study was conducted by analyzing variables such as cases, people, events, decisions, or social systems. In this case, the case study design hoped to explore the current fundamental aspect emphasized in the grassroots football academy. Other than that, in case study research, the researcher critically analyzes the data or cases being studied in the form of the participant's view to formulate the conclusion critically (Mohajan, 2018). Therefore, the researcher can explore and reveal the fundamental aspects of the grassroots football academy in Indonesia.

Participants

Since the research aimed to explore the participants' perspectives regarding the fundamental aspects of grassroots football, the purposive sampling technique was con-

sidered, considering the participants' expertise, experience, and knowledge. There are two participant characteristics in the current research, namely having a coaching license and having coaching experience of at least five years. Other than that, the purposive sampling method is appropriate for a case study research design. The randomization principle is uncommon in single case study designs because there is only one unit in a case study (Ato et al., 2013). Details about the participants can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.
Participant Information

No	Age	License	Education	Coaching experience (year)	Coaching experience (Club)	Status
R(1)-I	30	C	Degree	10	Persib Academy	Active
KP(2)-I	38	C	Degree	12	SKO Padang	Active
RJ(3)-I	31	C	Master	6	UGM & Persiba Academy	Active
EB(4)-I	43	B	Degree	17	Persiba Academy	Active
FS(5)-I	53	B	Degree	16	PSS Sleman	Active
H(6)-I	49	B	Degree	15	PSS Sleman	Active
GC(7)-I	42	A	Master		Asisten Timnas U19	Active
DU(8)-I	45	B	Master	18	PPLP Sumbar	Active
RB(9)-I	36	A	Doctor	13	PSP Padang	Active
HA(10)-I	42	A	High School	6	SP FC	Active

Instrument

In this research, a semi-structured interview was conducted in order to gauge the participant's perspectives deeply. In this case, the researcher prepared and validated interview items and protocols. The instrument validation covers face validity and content validity with Cohen kappa analysis. In this research, ten experts rated the instrument. The experts were four experts in football, four in qualitative research, and two in psychology. The expert rating was then analyzed using the Cohen kappa analysis to examine the instrument's appropriateness with the theme being explored in this research. The standard of interpretation of the Cohen kappa was to follow the procedure given by Landis and Koch (1977) (<0.00 = very weak, $0.00-0.20$ = weak, $0.21-0.40$ = relatively weak, $0.41-0.60$ = appropriate, $0.61-0.80$ = good, and $0.81-1.00$ = very good). The result of the validation can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2.
Cohen Kappa Result

Expert A	Expert B	Expert C	Expert D	Expert E	Kappa Coefficient	Min
25-12.5	24-12.5	23-12.5	22-12.5	25-12.5	K=	K1+K2+K3+K4+K5
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25-12.5	25-12.5	25-12.5	25-12.5	25-12.5		
1.000	0.920	0.840	0.760	1.000		0.904

Ethical consideration

In order to be responsible for the research ethic, this research got permission from the Research Ethic Committee of Sultan Idris University of Education (IUPSI). The research ethics committee gave several revisions and suggestions. The researcher then did revisions where possible in order to gain ethical permission. After several revisions

spective of Indonesian grassroots coaches. The coaches discussed the topic based on their experience, perspective, and understanding regarding the grassroots football academy. The *in vivo* analysis revealed eight topics most discussed by the coaches: training, mentality, discipline, practice, goal, concentration, confidence, and motivation. Based on the results, the most common word or topic discussed by the coaches was mental.

According to the coaches, mentality is the most essential aspect to be built on the grassroots football level. Coach (KP(2)-I) stated that football cannot be separated from the mental; the mental has about 60–70% of the role in the football game. Moreover, RB (9)-I, emphasized that the mental aspect of a football game was 85%, and the rest was the physical aspect. RPJ(3): I stated that when mental health is OK, all the player's abilities can be utilized effectively. A player with a weak mentality will feel under pressure and lose his skill. EB(4)-I. The mentality discussed in this topic was the mentality of sportiveness (KP(2)-I), the mentality of attacking, transitioning, and defencing processes (KP(2)-I), and the mentality of competition. RPJ(3)-I, mental of responsibilities; EB(4)-I, mental of facing an opponent in the match MNH(6)-I, and mentality in facing the game pressure MNH(6)-I. Regarding the importance of mental health at the grassroots level, the coaches suggested or implemented mental health training for their players (KP(2)-I). Moreover, RPJ(3)-I conducted special mental training on his athletes. R(1): I also provide material and motivation for the mental training to prepare his athletes for the U-17 competition.

The finding that mental training was the most emphasized fundamental aspect aligns with previous literature that highlights the importance of psychological skills in football. For instance, studies from Spain (Garcia-Mas et al., 2017) and Nigeria (Adeyemo & Adeyeye, 2017) have also identified mental skills like concentration, motivation and confidence as key for youth football development. The consensus on this importance of mental training across different cultural contexts like Indonesia, Spain and Nigeria underscores that psychological readiness is a universal requirement for aspiring football players regardless of background. However, while the present study found mental training to be the most discussed aspect by coaches, Garcia-Mas et al. (2017) reported that few grassroots coaches actually implement mental skill training in their programs. This reveals a discrepancy between acknowledging the importance of mental skills versus dedicating time and effort to train them systematically. As suggested by (Donie et al., 2023), coaches may need more education on how to effectively integrate mental conditioning rather than just physical training alone. The present study indicates Indonesian coaches recognize the value of mental preparation, but practical programs on applying mental training may be still lacking. Emphasizing the importance of mental health in grassroots football academies, the literature showed that mental training activities could introduce young players to awareness regarding the issues and

problems they face in the game as well as the ability to absorb information cognitively (García-Más et al., 2017; Bravou et al., 2022). It proved to be one of the key success strategies in implementing a grassroots football academy. In their research, Adeyemo and Adeyeye (2017) conclude that self-talk training, one of the mental exercise activities, has a significant effect on an athlete's free-kick abilities. According to McElroy et al. (2008), one of the successful examples of implementing mental training was Manchester United, which has numerous trophies and outstanding achievements.

Manchester United grassroots academy provides facilities and opportunities for engaging in a wide variety of arts, social, and sports activities to stimulate, promote, and encourage the physical, social, and emotional development of people (players, staff, and supporters). Mental exercise is important because it is a complementary factor to physical skills. According to Adeyemo & Adeyeye (2017), to be a skilled player, other than training physical abilities, mental abilities must also be considered, which is an effective strategy method. Three mental training techniques need special attention according to practical needs in coaching athletes for competitions: concentration, relaxation, and "imagery" (Sin, 2016). Training mental is preventive measures are needed in athletes to minimize anxiety, stress, mental health, and maladaptive emotions (Martinez-Lorca et al., 2023). It emphasized the need for mental exercise in grassroots football. Recognizing young athletes with mental exercise and training will benefit their skill development and career development.

The second topic discussed mainly by the interviewee was discipline. The disciplines meant here were discipline in terms of the training activities, discipline on time, discipline in controlling their food (KP(2)-I), discipline in practice, and discipline in rest time (DU(8)-I). According to KP(2)-I, players who need to discipline themselves to follow the training and complete the exercises given in the training will not become professional players. Discipline will build a player's good mentality, so the player will always strive to win (RPJ(3)-I). DU(8): I stated that discipline will make a player a professional player. As proved by FS(5)-I in his player success story, he stated that one of his player success factors was being reluctant, disciplined, on time, and hardworking. It is what makes the player have excellent technique on the field. RB (9): I also tell one of his player success stories; he stated that the player was disciplined on time; the training began precisely at 7 o'clock, but he always came 30 minutes earlier to self-train.

Sugiyama et al. (2017) stated that the grassroots football academy expected physical coaching, discipline, teamwork, and communication. Discipline is vital since it is fundamental to learning or success in something. According to Dosil's (2005) research on the discipline of athletes, the discipline differed in their maturity, ways of thinking, moral reasoning, and psychological processing. Because disciplined athletes follow any exercise, program,

and learning process given in the academy, their cognitive and physical processes grow efficiently. Motivated and interested athlete might be frustrated in their golden age when they receive little attention from their academy, such as exercise discipline (Antwi & Hauso, 2018). Self-motivation is essential for athletes to mentally prepare to compete with opponents (Marheni et al., 2019). It is one of the reasons many potential athletes could have developed better due to the lack of discipline given by the grassroots football academy. Therefore, discipline must be emphasized in the grassroots football academy.

The third topic discussed mainly by the interviewee was practice. The practice mentioned by the interviewee related to the practice of technique (RPJ(3)-I) and practicing discipline (DU(8)-I). According to FS(5)-I, one of the barriers to athletes becoming professionals was their need for more practice. It was emphasized by DU(8)-I, who stated that to be a professional player, the athlete must practice professionally. When the athletes perform poorly in the game, it might be because they have fewer playing experiences due to the less competition provided. MNH(6)-I further argue that to overcome this problem, the players must be given more practice in the exercise section. In competitive tournaments with young players, coaches need to find practical solutions for reducing the accumulation of fatigue since this could influence the state of well-being and physical performance of players and the possible increase in injuries (Prieto et al., 2023). The coaches need interpersonal communication as the key to success in communication between coaches and athletes to understand and know the state of an athlete (Purnomo et al., 2021).

Conclusions

This research explores the fundamental aspects coaches teach in several grassroots football academies in Indonesia. Qualitative methods, namely interviews, were used to collect the data. The data collected was analyzed with qualitative research software, namely N-Vivo 14. In this case, three packages of N-Vivo were used, namely word cloud, tree map, and frequency query. The results revealed several words or topics that the participants mainly discussed. The topics were mental, discipline, practice, goal, concentration, confidence, motivation, and physical. These are the fundamental aspects taught mainly by the coaches in the grassroots football academy in Indonesia. In conclusion, this research reveals mental training, discipline, practice and motivation as the fundamental aspects emphasized by Indonesian grassroots coaches. These findings have important implications for optimizing coaching policies and curriculum design in Indonesian football academies. Specifically, coach training programs should incorporate instruction on implementing mental skill development given its perceived importance. Academies also need to devote time and resources explicitly towards fostering discipline and motivated practice among youth players.

However, the current research is limited in its scope of ten coaches. Further quantitative research across more diverse samples can enrich the understanding of fundamental aspects in Indonesian grassroots football. The insights gained can help create a more systematic and evidence-based approach to nurturing the next generation of Indonesian football talent.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors state that there is no conflict of interest in this research.

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