
Developing Leadership Skills in Softball Practice

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ABSTRACT

Background: Youth leadership in Indonesia faces several challenges, including inadequate vocational education and the increasing burden of chronic non-communicable diseases. Vocational schools struggle with theoretical approaches, inadequate facilities, and limited industry support, leading to job placement difficulties for graduates.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of a leadership integration program on softball training activities for adolescents.

Methods: This study is an experiment with a one-group pretest-posttest design. Participants in this study were students who participated in high school softball extracurricular activities in Bandung City. Respondents consisted of males and females aged 14-18 years, with a total of 41 respondents. The main instrument used in this study was an adaptation of the Life Skills Scale for Sport (LSSS) instrument.

Results: Data analysis There was a statistically significant increase in leadership scores from pre-test to post-test ($t(40) = -4.88, p < .001$). This indicates that the intervention or treatment given was effective in improving participants' leadership abilities.

Conclusion: The leadership integration program in softball training is a reference for other sports in an effort to improve leadership values in adolescents through sports training activities.

KEYWORD: Leadership, Softball, Coaching

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INTRODUCTION

Youth leadership is a complex phenomenon involving influence, skill development, and action. Youth leaders perceive influence as a means to accomplish tasks and set an example

and recognize its positive and negative potential (Moguel, 2015). Youth leadership development follows a pathway of understanding, acting, and reflecting, emphasizing the transferability of skills across environments (Karagianni et al., 2023). Volunteering plays a critical role in fostering youth leadership, providing opportunities for skill development and social engagement (Gumilar, 2024). Key components of youth leadership development include skills such as social and emotional intelligence, collaboration, and vision articulation; environmental factors such as authentic opportunities; and commitment to action through inspiring followership and persistence (Redmond & Dolan, 2016). These studies highlight the importance of understanding youth leadership as a dynamic process, distinct from traditional adult leadership models, and emphasize the need for tailored programs and research to support the growth and influence of youth leaders.

Youth leadership in Indonesia faces several challenges, including a generational gap in leadership understanding, with younger generations emphasizing collaboration and competence while older generations focus on authority and experience (Prakoso & Simanjuntak, 2025). Limited access to education, economic opportunities, and digital literacy further hamper youth leadership development (Prakoso & Simanjuntak, 2025). The leadership crisis is evident in students' reluctance to take on leadership roles in university extracurricular activities (Qois, 2021). Traditional mindsets in Indonesia often underestimate the potential of young people and certain leadership styles (Dwipayana et al., 2022). However, opportunities exist through leadership training programs, character development initiatives, and the application of transformational leadership approaches (Prakoso & Simanjuntak, 2025). Research shows that leadership styles affect emotional and spiritual competencies differently among Indonesian youth, depending on their level of education (Lionardo & Nasirin, 2020).

Youth in Indonesia face several challenges, including inadequate vocational education and a growing burden of chronic non-communicable diseases. Vocational schools struggle with theoretical approaches, inadequate facilities, and limited industry support, leading to job placement difficulties for graduates (Suharno et al., 2020). The country is also grappling with an epidemic of non-communicable diseases, which requires better risk factor monitoring, health system responses, and equitable prevention strategies (Schröders et al., 2017). Youth empowerment programs have gained popularity globally, aiming to develop psychosocial assets and improve self-efficacy and self-esteem among adolescents (Morton & Montgomery, 2011). However, the effectiveness of psychotherapy for youth with mental health problems has not consistently improved over time, with significant declines in treatment effects for depression and conduct problems (Weisz et al., 2019). These findings highlight the need for innovative approaches to youth development and mental health interventions in Indonesia.

Transformational leadership by coaches can improve athletes' intrinsic motivation and sport performance (Gumilar et al., 2023). Effective leadership performance involves establishing a clear approach, understanding roles, developing contextual awareness, enhancing personal skills, and strengthening relationships (Arnold et al., 2012). Athlete leadership, both formal and informal, has a significant impact on team satisfaction and cohesion (Cotterill & Fransen, 2016). Coach leadership behaviors, particularly in coaching and instruction, democratic behavior, social support, and positive feedback, are positively associated with athlete satisfaction with their performance progress (Moen et al., 2014). To optimize performance, sport organizations must focus on hiring the right leaders, creating an optimal environment, implementing effective systems, developing an inclusive culture, and providing appropriate support (Arnold et al., 2012). These findings underscore the importance of leadership development in coaches and athletes to improve overall team performance.

METHOD

The method used in this study is an experiment with a one-group pretest-posttest design. The assumption underlying the choice of this design is because only one group was given leadership intervention in this study. Participants in this study were students who participated in high school softball extracurricular activities in the city of Bandung; respondents consisted of males and females aged 14-18 years, with a total of 41 respondents. The main instrument used in this study is an adaptation of the Life Skills Scale for Sport (LSSS) instrument developed by Cronin & Allen (Cronin & Allen, 2017), LSSS is an instrument to assess eight dimensions of life skills, namely teamwork, goal setting, social skills, leadership, problem solving and decision making, interpersonal communication, emotional skills, and time management, felt by participants when given sports intervention. The LSSS questionnaire was developed for adolescents aged 11 to 21 years and consists of 47 statement items. For this study, the author took the leadership dimension as an instrument to obtain data.

The implementation of the treatment is a leadership integration program integrated into softball training. The treatment was carried out for eighteen meetings outside the implementation of the pre-test and post-test. The training schedule is carried out 3 times a week. The treatment was carried out at the Lodaya Softball Field, Bandung City, Jl. Lodaya, Malabar, Lengkong District, Bandung City, West Java.

Data analysis was carried out using the paired sample t-test, using the jamovi application. The analysis carried out was to conduct a descriptive test, normality test, and paired sample t-test to test the hypothesis of the leadership pre-test and post-test.

RESULT

After the data was collected, the author then conducted an analysis by conducting a descriptive test, normality test, and paired sample t-test to test the hypotheses of the leadership pre-test and post-test.

Table 1. Descriptives Data Leadership

	N	Mean	Median	SD	SE
Pre-Test Leadership	41	27.6	27	3.79	0.593
Post-Test Leadership	41	31.0	30	4.92	0.768

Pre-Test Leadership: N = 41 indicates that 41 participants took the leadership test before the intervention. Mean = 27.6 is the average leadership score before the intervention. Median = 27 indicates the middle value of the data, slightly lower than the mean, which could indicate some high values above the mean. SD (Standard Deviation) = 3.79 indicates the distribution of participants' scores to the mean, classified as moderate. SE (Standard Error) = 0.593 is the estimated error of the mean; the smaller the SE, the more precise the estimate of the mean. Post-Test Leadership: After the intervention, the average score increased to 31.0, indicating an increase in leadership ability. Median = 30, still close to the mean, indicating a fairly symmetrical distribution of scores. SD = 4.92 indicates a slightly larger distribution of values compared to the pretest. SE = 0.768, also increased, along with the increasing variation in scores after the intervention.

Table 2. Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk) Leadership

		W	p
Pre-Test Leadership	- Post-Test Leadership	0.954	0.095

Note. A low p-value suggests a violation of the assumption of normality

The Shapiro-Wilk test is used to check whether the data distribution is significantly different from the normal distribution. $W = 0.954$ is the Shapiro-Wilk test statistic. A W value close to 1 indicates that the data is close to a normal distribution. $p = 0.095$ is the significance value. Since $p > 0.05$, there is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) that the data is normally distributed. In other words, the leadership pre-test and post-test score data are considered normally distributed, thus fulfilling one of the important assumptions for parametric analysis, such as the paired-sample t-test.

Table 3. Paired Samples T-Test Leadership

			statistic	df	p
Pre-Test Leadership	Post-Test Leadership	Student's t	-4.88	40.0	<.001

Note. $H_a \mu_{\text{Measure 1}} - \mu_{\text{Measure 2}} \neq 0$

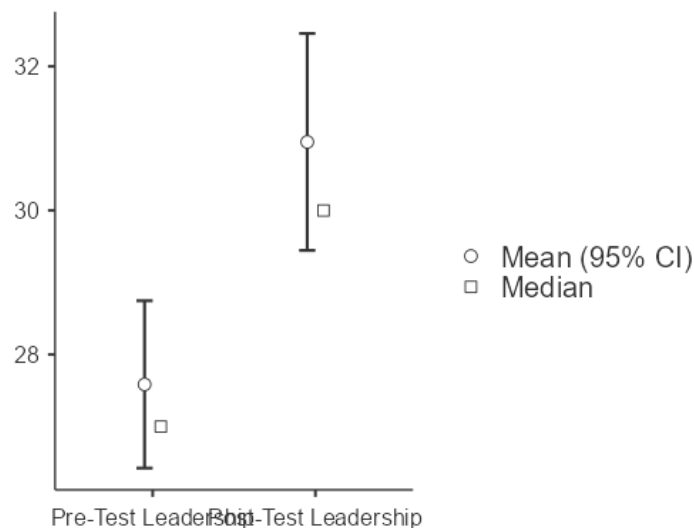


Figure 1. Plot Analysis Pre-test and Post-test Leadership

The analysis test conducted was the paired samples t-test, used to compare two average values from the same group before and after the intervention (pre-test vs. post-test). Statistic $t = -4.88$ indicates a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. A negative sign means that the post-test score is higher than the pre-test (because the calculation is pre - post). df (degrees of freedom) = 40: In accordance with the number

of participants ($N = 41$), then $df = N - 1$. $p < .001$: This value is very small and far below the general significance limit (0.05). Indicates that the difference between the pre-test and post-test is very statistically significant. This means that the null hypothesis (no difference) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted: there is a significant difference between leadership scores before and after the intervention.

DISCUSSIONS

Data analysis results There was a statistically significant increase in leadership scores from pre-test to post-test ($t(40) = -4.88$, $p < .001$). This shows that the intervention or treatment given was effective in improving participants' leadership abilities.

Research suggests that participation in sports and extracurricular activities can positively influence students' leadership development. Students involved in sports education demonstrate positive leadership tendencies across multiple dimensions (Çetinkaya & İmamoğlu, 2018). Extracurricular sports activities have been found to have a significant impact on students' academic and psychological development, with consistent involvement being key to developing leadership skills (Zou et al., 2024). The Student-Athlete Leadership Academy, a community-based program for high school athletes, actively facilitates leadership and life skills development through annual meetings (Monda et al., 2016). However, studies have shown mixed results regarding the relationship between sports participation and leadership skills, with some studies suggesting that sports primarily benefit physical achievement rather than leadership abilities (Esa et al., 2015). Overall, the literature suggests a potential positive relationship between sports involvement and students' leadership development, although more research may be needed to establish definitive conclusions.

Integrating leadership training into youth programs has a positive impact on youth development. Studies of volleyball training programs by Afridawati et al., (2025) and futsal by Candra et al., (2020) found significant increases in leadership skills when leadership components were integrated. Youth involved in leadership activities reported increased community support and social self-efficacy, particularly among males (Anderson et al., 2007). An evaluation of a part-time youth worker training program in Northern Ireland showed that combining traditional curriculum approaches with competency-based methodologies effectively met learning needs and improved the quality of youth programs (McRoberts & Leitch, 1998). These studies consistently show that structured and intentional leadership programs integrated into a variety of youth activities produce better leadership development outcomes compared to programs that are not integrated or have no participation in the program (Afridawati et al., 2025; Anderson et al., 2007; Candra et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

The results of the analysis show that there is a significant influence of the leadership integration program in improving youth leadership values through sports activities. The leadership integration program in softball training is a reference for other sports in an effort to improve leadership values in youth through sports training activities.

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Judul Penelitian

ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Kepemimpinan pemuda di Indonesia menghadapi beberapa tantangan, termasuk pendidikan kejuruan yang tidak memadai dan meningkatnya beban penyakit tidak menular kronis. Sekolah kejuruan berjuang dengan pendekatan teoritis, fasilitas yang tidak memadai, dan dukungan industri yang terbatas, yang menyebabkan kesulitan dalam penempatan kerja bagi para lulusan

Tujuan: Tujuan penelitian adalah untuk menguji pengaruh program integrasi leadership dalam aktivitas pelatihan softball pada remaja.


Metode: Penelitian ini merupakan eksperimen dengan one group pretest posttest design, Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah para pelajar yang mengikuti ekstrakurikuler softball sekolah menengah atas di kota Bandung, responden terdiri dari Laki-laki dan perempuan berusia 14-18 tahun dengan jumlah 41 responden. Instrumen utama yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini merupakan adaptasi dari instrument Life Skills Scale for Sport (LSSS).

Hasil: Analisis data Terdapat peningkatan skor kepemimpinan yang signifikan secara statistik dari pre-test ke post-test ($t(40) = -4.88, p < .001$). Ini menunjukkan bahwa intervensi atau perlakuan yang diberikan efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan kepemimpinan peserta.

Kesimpulan: Program integrasi leadership dalam pelatihan softball menjadi referensi bagi cabang olahraga lain dalam upaya meningkatkan nilai kepemimpinan pada remaja melalui aktivitas pelatihan olahraga.

KEYWORD: Leadership, Softball, Coaching

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