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Skill Profile of Semarang City PSE Pencak Silat Athletes

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ABSTRACT

The Semarang Emas Program (PSE) is one of the initiatives by the Semarang City Government to nurture and develop high-performing athletes, including those in the martial art of *pencak silat*. This study aims to describe the skill profile of *pencak silat* athletes who are part of the PSE in Semarang City. The main focus of the study is on fundamental technical skills such as punches, kicks, blocks, stances, and movement combinations. This research employed a descriptive quantitative method, with data collected through direct observation, coach interviews, and technical skill tests. The results indicate that most athletes demonstrate good mastery of skills, particularly in offensive and defensive techniques. However, there is still variation in skill levels among individuals, influenced by factors such as age, competition experience, and training frequency. These findings are expected to serve as an evaluation tool for coaches and PSE program managers in designing more targeted and athlete-specific training programs.

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INTRODUCTION

Pencak Silat, as a cultural entity, transcends the boundaries of conventional martial arts definitions. It is a manifestation of local wisdom embodied in movements, ethics, and a philosophy of life passed down through generations. International recognition of Pencak Silat, particularly its designation as an Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO, affirms its position as a national identity that must be preserved. However, along with changing times and global demands, Pencak Silat has undergone a significant modernization process, transforming into a competitive sport governed by a set of standard rules under the auspices of the Indonesian Pencak Silat Association (IPSI) and international federations.

This change has logical consequences for the demands on athletes' skills. While previously the primary focus was on self-defense effectiveness, the focus has now shifted to movement efficiency, accuracy of points, and tactical adaptability within a

limited match duration. Modern competitions, such as those seen at the Asian Games or SEA Games, require athletes to possess explosive physical capacity and superior endurance to maintain the intensity of attacks and defenses throughout the round (Andrianto & Hariono, 2024). Furthermore, the psychological pressures that accompany high-level competition, where split-second decisions can determine the final outcome, require athletes to possess strong stress management skills and a strong motivation to achieve (Khozanah, 2025). Therefore, the development of Pencak Silat athletes in this era of achievement must be based on a deep understanding of the integration of the four pillars of expertise: physical, technical, tactical, and mental. Failure to optimize any of these pillars will become a weak point exploited by opponents at higher levels of competition.

In a systematic effort to develop high-achieving athletes, the Semarang City government, through the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI) and the Indonesian Youth and Sports Agency (DISPORA), has launched the Golden Semarang Program (PSE). This program is not simply a routine training activity, but rather an integrated development ecosystem that adopts modern sports management principles. The PSE is designed as a long-term program aimed at creating a golden generation of athletes capable of dominating the regional and national sports scene (Nugroho, 2024). The PSE structure includes talent identification, recruitment of competent athletes and coaches, provision of adequate training facilities, and integrated nutritional and medical support.

Pencak Silat, as a leading sport, receives special attention within the PSE due to its significant medal potential in every multi-event event. The success of the PSE depends heavily on program management, particularly staffing (placement of athletes, coaches, and support staff), as this aspect has proven to be a significant contributor to team performance (Kusmaedi, 2020). Kusmaedi (2020) found that overall team management contributed 66.3% to achievement success, with staffing being the most influential indicator (71.2%). This underscores that the skill profile of recruited and developed athletes must align with program needs and achievement targets.

Therefore, the Skill Profile of Pencak Silat Athlete Candidates in the Semarang Emas Program is a key variable that must be analyzed. This profile should reflect the skill standards targeted by the PSE, which ideally exceed local standards and approach national athlete standards. This profile includes: (1) Physical Condition, measured by parameters such as power, speed, and endurance; (2) Technical Skills, measured by the efficiency of offensive and defensive movements, often through biomechanical analysis; (3) Tactical Skills, measured by the ability to read situations and make strategic decisions; and (4) Psychological Skills, measured by levels of motivation, self-efficacy, and the ability to cope with anxiety (Afifah, 2025; Khozanah, 2025). An in-depth analysis of this profile will provide an objective picture of the output of the implemented development program.

Although the Semarang Emas Program has an ambitious vision, the reality on the ground often shows a disparity between program expectations and the athletes' actual

skill levels. This gap becomes an objective problem that hinders achievement advancement to a higher level.

First, in terms of physical condition, Andrianto and Hariono's (2024) research on young Pencak Silat athletes showed that although the average physical condition was in the good category, the percentage of athletes achieving the excellent category was still low. This indicates that the training program may not have fully optimized the athletes' physical potential to the maximum extent required for elite competition. Pencak Silat competition requires high anaerobic explosive power due to the intermittent and explosive nature of combat. If the training program does not specifically target increasing this explosive power, athletes will struggle to maintain attack intensity late in the round.

Second, in terms of technical and biomechanical skills, the issue of movement efficiency is highlighted. Ramadhan (2025) and Manullang (2025) found, through biomechanical analysis, that many athletes, even at the competitive level, are unable to achieve the ideal kinetic angle in their kicking technique. For example, failing to achieve the optimal angle on a back kick can reduce momentum and power, ultimately reducing points earned. The lack of use of biomechanical technology in daily PSE evaluations can lead coaches to overlook minor movement defects that, if accumulated, can become significant performance barriers.

Third, athletes' mental and psychological readiness is often overlooked. Khozanah (2025) explicitly links high levels of anxiety to decreased athlete performance. Athletes who are highly motivated but lack adequate anxiety management skills are vulnerable to declining performance under competition pressure. Research by Pratama and Yulisatria (2025) also highlights the importance of stress management as an integral part of the coaching program. The Semarang Emas Program must ensure that this psychological aspect is not merely incidental, but integrated into the training curriculum.

Fourth, regarding PSE Program Evaluation, existing studies tend to be macro-based. Zufri and Tyoso (2018) focused on the value for money of the KONI budget, while Nugroho (2024) evaluated coaching in general in Semarang City. No research has specifically examined the correlation between PSE investment and the output of Pencak Silat athlete skill profiles at a micro and detailed level. This lack of data makes it difficult for KONI and coaches to make adjustments to programs based on scientific evidence (evidence-based practice).

The most fundamental research gap is the lack of a holistic and integrated skill profile for Pencak Silat athletes in the Semarang Emas Program. Existing research only addresses a small portion of the required skill profile: (1) Skill Data Fragmentation: Available data is fragmented; some include physical data (Andrianto & Hariono, 2024; Khafid & Yulianto, 2023), some mental data (Afifah, 2025; Khozanah, 2025), and some biomechanical data (Ramadhan, 2025; Manullang, 2025). However, no study has yet integrated these four dimensions to form a single profile of PSE-Pencak Silat athletes. This integrated profile is crucial because achievement is the result of the complex interactions between all these dimensions; (2) The Specific Context of the Semarang

Emas Program: Although there are studies on coaching in Semarang (Nugroho, 2024; Zufri & Tyoso, 2018), these studies do not focus specifically on Pencak Silat, let alone the specifics of the athletes' skills. The PSE program has unique characteristics, resources, and target pressures. Therefore, the skill profiles of PSE athletes cannot be compared to those of athletes outside the program. This lack of profiles hinders benchmarking efforts with athletes from other regional coaching programs (e.g., Sukowati Emas in Sragen, Sari et al., 2020) or national athletes; (3) Data Needs for Evidence-Based Coaching: Coaches in PSE require very specific data to implement evidence-based coaching. For example, coaches need to know precisely what percentage of their athletes have above-average anxiety levels (Khozanah, 2025) or how many degrees their kick angles deviate from the ideal standard (Ramadhan, 2025). This lack of micro data causes training programs to tend to be general, rather than individualistic and corrective.

Considering the urgency and existing research gaps, this study explicitly aims to: (1) Identify and map the physical condition profile of Pencak Silat athletes from the Semarang Gold Program in Semarang City, (2) Analyze the technical skill profile of Pencak Silat athletes from the Semarang Gold Program in Semarang City through a biomechanical analysis approach to kicking and key punching movements, (3) Measure the psychological skill profile of Pencak Silat athletes from the Semarang Gold Program in Semarang City, specifically regarding achievement motivation and anxiety management, and (4) Formulate an integrated PSE Pencak Silat athlete skill profile model and develop recommendations for a corrective training program based on scientific findings for the Semarang City Sports Committee (KONI).

This research is expected to make a significant contribution to the development of sports science, particularly in the context of developing high-achieving Pencak Silat athletes, as well as serve as a scientific basis for formulating future policies for the Semarang Gold Program.

As competition standards in pencak silat continue to rise, athlete development becomes increasingly vital and strategic. This development process must be carefully planned, continuous, and data-driven. One essential element in this process is the objective mapping of athletes' technical skills. Without accurate data on athletes' skill profiles, coaches and trainers face difficulties in designing effective and targeted training programs.

The City of Semarang, through the Semarang Emas Program (PSE), has provided a more structured framework for training promising athletes. However, detailed data on the technical abilities of pencak silat athletes in the program are still lacking. Therefore, this study aims to assess and describe the athletes' fundamental technical skills, including offensive techniques (punches and kicks), defensive techniques (blocks), stances, and movement combinations. The findings are expected to serve as an evaluative reference for coaches in enhancing training quality and athlete development in Semarang.

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METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive approach aimed at objectively and systematically describing the basic technical skill profiles of *pencak silat* athletes in the Semarang Emas Program (PSE). This method was chosen as it is suitable for evaluating and measuring technical skills using numerical data that can be analyzed statistically.

Research Subjects

The research subjects were *pencak silat* athletes enrolled in the Semarang PSE Program in 2025. Samples were selected using purposive sampling with the following criteria: (1) actively participating in training for at least 6 months, (2) aged between 14–21 years, and (3) having participated in at least one competition in the past year. A total of 20 athletes, both male and female, in the adolescent and early adult age groups were involved.

Research Instruments

The instruments used included technical skill tests based on established *pencak silat* competency indicators. The skill aspects assessed were:

1. Punches (speed and accuracy)
2. Kicks (height, power, and control)
3. Blocks (responsiveness and effectiveness)
4. Stances (stability and positional accuracy)
5. Movement combinations (fluency, transitions, and coordination)

Skill assessments were conducted using observation sheets validated by three *pencak silat* experts. A reliability test was also conducted to ensure data consistency.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through a series of practical tests conducted at the official PSE training facility in Semarang. Each athlete was assessed by a panel consisting of coaches and assistant coaches using a standardized scoring rubric to maintain objectivity. Additional observations and documentation supported the quantitative data.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to present an overall picture of athletes' technical mastery. The analysis included calculating means, standard deviations, and percentages for each skill indicator. Results were categorized into five levels: very good, good, fair, poor, and very poor, based on predetermined score ranges. The purpose of this classification was to facilitate data interpretation and provide a structured overview of the athletes' skill levels. Data were presented in tables and graphs for better visual understanding.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Validity and Reliability Analysis

The results revealed that the basic technical skills of *pencak silat* athletes in the PSE Semarang Program are generally categorized as good. However, variations in

individual skill levels were noted across different technical aspects. These variations reflect the effectiveness of previous training efforts and serve as a starting point for future development.

Specifically, the punching skill emerged as the most well-developed among athletes. High average scores were recorded in terms of speed and accuracy. Strong punching skills are crucial as they function as direct attacks and form the foundation for various movement combinations. This finding highlights the effectiveness of repeated, structured training and suggests that offensive techniques receive significant emphasis in the PSE training regimen.

In the kicking aspect, some athletes experienced difficulty maintaining balance and control during high or combination kicks. Although kicking power was generally good, limited control and coordination reduced effectiveness in match scenarios. This may stem from a lack of training focus on body stability and movement transitions. Future programs should emphasize core stability and dynamic coordination drills.

For blocking, athletes showed moderate to good ability in executing correct techniques, but some struggled with quick responses to fast attacks. Since timing in defense is crucial in competitions, this aspect needs improvement through reaction-based training and realistic match simulations to enhance reflexes and decision-making.

Regarding stances, most athletes demonstrated stable control in maintaining body position, essential for both offensive and defensive actions. However, some showed stiffness when transitioning between stances, suggesting a need for mobility and agility drills to improve fluidity.

In terms of movement combinations, skill levels varied significantly. Athletes with competitive experience displayed smoother transitions and better movement flow, while less experienced ones struggled with structuring effective combinations. This emphasizes the importance of increasing sparring sessions and match simulations in training to build confidence and technical integration.

Overall, these findings align with sports training theories which emphasize that fundamental skills are the foundation for achieving athletic excellence. Skill mastery reflects not only individual motor abilities but also the efficacy of the training methods used. The variation observed supports the need for individualized training tailored to each athlete's strengths and weaknesses.

Additionally, the study highlights the importance of regular monitoring and evaluation of athlete development. With accurate skill profile data, coaches can more effectively map out training needs and adjust training programs for greater efficiency and focus. This data also serves as a basis for athlete selection for competitions, ensuring decisions are supported by valid and reliable field data rather than intuition alone.

This research is expected to provide practical benefits for coaches, PSE program managers, and the Semarang City Department of Youth and Sports in developing more effective training strategies. Future research may include psychological and physical

conditioning variables to provide a more comprehensive athlete profile for long-term sustainable development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study results, it can be concluded that the basic technical skills of pencak silat athletes in the Semarang Emas Program (PSE) are generally in the "good" category, especially in punching and stances. However, there is variation in kicking, blocking, and combination movements, indicating the need for more focused and individualized training. These variations are influenced by factors such as competition experience, training frequency, and personal skill levels.

The findings emphasize the importance of regular evaluations of athletes' technical skills as a foundation for designing more effective training programs. Data-driven training programs will be more effective in improving performance and achieving optimal results. Therefore, it is recommended that coaches and PSE program managers strengthen their technical monitoring systems, increase match simulations, and create individualized training strategies focusing on areas that require improvement.

This study serves as an initial foundation for developing a measurable, data-driven athlete development system in Semarang and contributes to the advancement of pencak silat as a leading sport both locally and nationally.

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