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Basic Passing And Control Technical Skills, Soccer Game At SSB Tadulako Soccer School Age 15 Years

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the level of basic passing and receiving (control) skills of 15-year-old Tadulako Soccer School (TSS) players. The research method used is descriptive quantitative with a survey method through tests and measurements. The study population was all 15-year-old TSS players with a sample of 25 players taken using a total sampling technique. The instrument used was a passing and control test using a target board for 30 seconds. The results showed that the passing skills of TSS players were in the "moderate" category with a percentage of 40% (10 players). Similarly, control skills were predominantly in the "moderate" category at 44% (11 players). Based on these results, it can be concluded that the basic technical abilities of players still need to be improved through a more structured and varied training program.

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INTRODUCTION

Soccer is a team sport that demands consistent mastery of basic techniques as the primary foundation for achieving optimal performance. Among the various technical skills, passing and control play a central role as they connect players in building game organization, maintaining possession of the ball, and creating goal-scoring opportunities (Bozkurt et al., 2020; Sarmento et al., 2018). Passing accuracy and control quality not only reflect individual skill but also serve as indicators of game intelligence and team tactical efficiency (Gómez et al., 2019). Therefore, failure to master these two basic techniques can directly impact a team's poor collective performance on the field.

Soccer success does not emerge instantly but is the result of a complex interaction between genetic factors, discipline, quality training, and a structured coaching

environment (Williams & Reilly, 2000; Scheunemann, 2005). Systematically designed, sustainable, and supervised training by professional coaches has been shown to significantly improve players' basic technical skills, particularly during the early childhood and youth development phases (Ford et al., 2017; Purnomo et al., 2022). In the Indonesian context, early childhood development through Soccer Schools (SSB) is a strategic pillar in preparing high-achieving athletes, in line with the mandate of parent organizations like the Indonesian Football Association (PSSI) to strengthen the tiered player development system.

However, in practice, many SSBs still face inconsistent basic technical skills, particularly in passing and control. Variations in individual abilities, limited facilities, and inadequate training programs often lead to suboptimal training outcomes (Naldi & Irwan, 2020; Pratama et al., 2021). This condition was also identified at the Tadulako Soccer School (TSS) SSB, where initial observations indicated inaccurate passing, unstable ball control, and players struggling to adapt to less-than-ideal field conditions. These issues underscore the need for objective evaluation of players' basic technical skills as a basis for improving training programs.

Recent research shows that mastery of basic passing and control techniques strongly correlates with game effectiveness and match outcomes (Lago-Peñas et al., 2017; Clemente et al., 2021). A study by Bozkurt et al. (2020) confirmed that technical skills such as passing, control, and dribbling are key determinants of young players' performance in real-life match situations. Furthermore, Sarmento et al. (2018) found that players with high passing accuracy tend to make greater tactical contributions in the attacking phase.

In the context of youth development, evaluating basic technical skills is an important tool for monitoring athlete development and the effectiveness of training programs (Ford et al., 2017; Haugen et al., 2019). Research by Putra et al. (2024) showed that players with good mastery of basic techniques are able to maintain stable performance throughout matches. Meanwhile, Hilmi et al. (2024) reported that the majority of adolescent SSB players are in the "fair" skill category, but still require ongoing evaluation to achieve higher competitive standards.

However, most previous research has focused on the influence of specific training models or interventions on skill improvement, while diagnostic studies of the actual profile of passing and control skills in the local SSB context are still relatively limited, particularly in eastern Indonesia. Yet, an evaluative-descriptive approach is crucial as an empirical foundation for designing targeted training interventions (Clemente et al., 2021).

Based on the literature review, there are clear research gaps. First, there are still few studies that specifically analyze the passing and control skill levels objectively in locally based SSB players, taking into account real-world training conditions and environments. Second, some studies tend to generalize results without considering variations in facilities, field quality, and training program characteristics at each SSB (Pratama et al., 2021; Haugen et al., 2019). Third, evaluative research is often positioned as supplementary, even though technical evaluation results play a strategic role in short- and long-term training planning.

The absence of comprehensive empirical data on the passing and control skill levels of TSS players has the potential to lead to training programs being developed without being based on the athletes' actual needs. Therefore, research is needed that can map the actual state of basic technical skills to provide a basis for evidence-based coaching decisions.

This study aims to objectively analyze the basic passing and control skill levels of SSB Tadulako Soccer School (TSS) players. The research results are expected to provide scientific evaluation material for coaches in developing and modifying more effective and contextual training programs.

The novelty of this research lies in: the presentation of an empirical profile of the passing and control skills of local SSB players as a basis for evaluating youth development; the integration of basic technique analysis with the real-world context of the training environment and facility conditions; and the contribution of baseline data that can be used as a reference for developing basic soccer technique training models based on athlete needs.

Thus, this research not only enriches the scientific body of soccer coaching knowledge but also makes a practical contribution to improving the quality of youth soccer development in Indonesia.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative descriptive approach with a survey method, employing testing and measurement techniques. The aim was to objectively and systematically describe the level of basic passing and control skills in soccer. The quantitative descriptive approach was chosen because it is suitable for mapping the actual state of technical skills without providing specific treatment or intervention to the research subjects. Therefore, the data obtained represents the players' actual abilities in the context of routine training (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Thomas et al., 2015). Test-based survey methods have been widely used in the study of soccer technical skills because they produce measurable, reliable, and easily comparable data across individuals and age groups (Ali, 2017; Haugen et al., 2019).

The population in this study was all soccer players actively enrolled at the Tadulako Soccer School (TSS). The sampling technique used was total sampling, with all members of the population, totaling 25 players in the 15-year-old age group, being the sample. The age of 15 was chosen based on athlete development considerations, as the early to middle adolescence phase is a crucial period for the development of basic technical skills before players are directed to mastering advanced tactical and strategic aspects of the game (Ford et al., 2017; Vaeyens et al., 2009). At this age, passing and control skills are expected to be at a stable and consistent level, making technical skill evaluation relevant as a basis for further development (Bozkurt et al., 2020; Sarmento et al., 2018).

This research was conducted in November 2025 at Madani Field, Sigi Regency, Central Sulawesi, which is the regular training location of the Tadulako Soccer School. The selection of the research location within the daily training environment aimed to

maintain ecological validity, ensuring that player performance reflects real-world conditions during training and playing, rather than artificial situations that could potentially influence measurement results (Clemente et al., 2021; Lago-Peñas et al., 2017).

The research instrument used was a 30-second passing and control test using a 2-meter x 60-cm target board 3 meters from the kicking point. This test was designed to repeatedly measure passing accuracy and control quality within a limited time, as recommended in the evaluation of youth soccer technical skills (Ali, 2017; Pratama et al., 2021). Scores were obtained from the number of valid ball bounces during the test, with the criteria being that the bounces met the target and could be re-controlled by the player. This frequency-based measurement model is considered effective in representing the consistency of player technique and motor coordination (Haugen et al., 2019; Putra et al., 2024).

The data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean, median, mode, and standard deviation, using SPSS software. Descriptive analysis was used to provide a comprehensive overview of the distribution of players' basic passing and control skill levels (Field, 2018; Thomas et al., 2015). Furthermore, the analysis results were classified into five assessment categories, namely Very Good, Good, Moderate, Poor, and Very Poor, to facilitate data interpretation and provide practical recommendations for coaches in developing training programs based on the actual needs of athletes (Clemente et al., 2021; Hilmi et al., 2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study aims to describe the basic passing and control skills of 15-year-old Tadulako Soccer School (TSS) players. Test data from 25 samples were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the mean, median, mode, and standard deviation. A summary of the descriptive statistics is presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics of Passing and Control Skills

Statistic	Passing	Kontrol
N	25	25
Mean	12.64	12.60
Median	13.00	13.00
Mode (Modus)	12	11
Std. Deviation	2.146	2.456
Minimum	8	9
Maximum	18	17

To determine player skill levels, the data was grouped into five categories. The frequency distribution of TSS player passing and control test results can be seen in Table 2:

Table 2.
Frequency Distribution of Passing and Control Skills

Category	Score Range	Freq (Passing)	%	Freq (control)	%
Very Good	> 16	2	8%	1	4%
Good	14-16	8	32%	8	32%
Moderate	12-13	10	40%	11	44%
Poor	10-11	5	20%	4	16%
Very Poor	< 10	0	0%	1	4%
Total		**25**	**100%**	**25**	**100%**

Based on Table 2 above, it can be seen that the majority of Tadulako Soccer School (TSS) players have passing skills in the "Medium" category (40%) and control skills in the "Medium" category (44%).

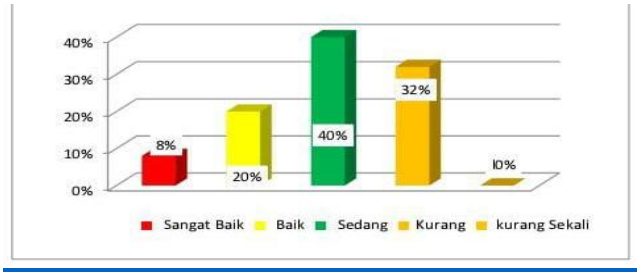

Figure 1.
Percentage Graph of Passing Skill Levels

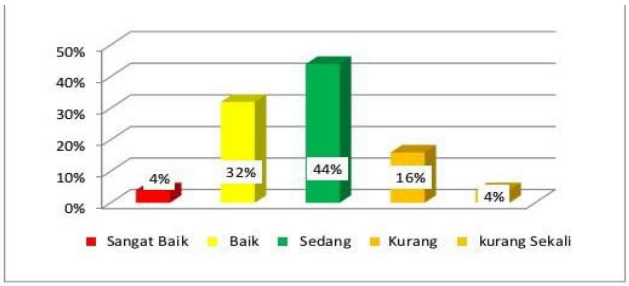

Figure 2.
Percentage Graph of Control Skill Levels

Discussion

Passing Skills

The analysis results show that the average passing skill of 15-year-old Tadulako Soccer School (TSS) players is 12.64, which falls into the Moderate category. This means that within 30 seconds, players are able to execute approximately 12–13 accurate passes to the goalposts. This finding indicates that players generally understand the basic principles of passing technique, particularly using the inside of the foot as the most stable and efficient technique for maintaining pass accuracy (Bozkurt et al., 2020; Ali, 2017). However, the stability of passing accuracy remains inconsistent, as reflected in the dominance of the "Moderate" category over the "Good" and "Very Good" categories.

Biomechanically, frequent errors—such as positioning the supporting foot too far from the ball and an unfastened ankle—have the potential to reduce control of the ball's direction and speed upon contact (Lees et al., 2018; Nunome et al., 2014). This finding aligns with the findings of Sarmento et al. (2018) and Clemente et al. (2021) confirmed that

passing accuracy is significantly influenced by good posture, foot contact angle, and lower body movement coordination. Inconsistencies in these basic techniques can result in the ball not bouncing back optimally to the player, thus reducing the effectiveness of the pass-control sequence.

From a youth development perspective, a "Moderate" achievement at age 15 indicates that players are still in the transition phase from mastering basic techniques to applying them in more dynamic game contexts (Ford et al., 2017; Haugen et al., 2019). Research by Putra et al. (2024) also reported that adolescent players with limited training frequency tend to have fluctuating passing accuracy, especially when faced with time demands and high repetitions. Therefore, the results of this study emphasize the importance of repetitive, structured, and progressive passing practice to improve technical consistency.

Control Skills

The analysis of control skills showed an average score of 12.60, also in the Moderate category. These findings indicate that players' ability to control the ball after it bounces off the goalpost is still suboptimal and relatively comparable to their passing skills. Technically, control is a fundamental skill that serves as a link between receiving and distributing the ball, so poor control directly impacts the effectiveness of subsequent passes (Gómez et al., 2019; Lago-Peñas et al., 2017).

Players in the "Very Good" and "Good" categories demonstrated the ability to apply cushioning touch, which involves dampening the ball's speed with a soft touch so that it remains within reach of the body and ready for replay. This technique aligns with modern ball control principles, which emphasize adapting touch force to the speed and direction of the incoming ball (Ali, 2017; Clemente et al., 2021). Conversely, players in the "Poor" category tended to fail to dampen the ball's momentum, resulting in the ball bouncing too far and wasting test time, which resulted in lower scores.

These findings are consistent with research by Bozkurt et al. (2020) and Pratama et al. (2021) stated that mastering control in young players is often a major challenge due to a lack of specific training that emphasizes the quality of the first touch. Furthermore, eye-foot coordination and timing also play a crucial role in successful control, particularly when the ball is bouncing at a certain speed (Williams & Ford, 2013; Haugen et al., 2019).

Coaching Implications

The predominance of the "Moderate" category in passing and control skills indicates that 15-year-old TSS players already possess a basic technical foundation, but still require improvement in quality and consistency. This finding reinforces the view that evaluating basic technical skills is crucial as a basis for developing training programs based on the athlete's actual needs (evidence-based coaching) (Clemente et al., 2021; Hilmi et al., 2024). Coaches are advised to increase the variety of passing and control training through progressive approaches, such as time-pressured training, varying bounce angles, and integrating with small-sided games, which have been shown to be

effective in improving the technique and decision-making quality of young players (Sarmento et al., 2018; Ford et al., 2017).

Overall, the results of this study confirm that the passing and control skills of 15-year-old TSS SSB players are at an intermediate level, requiring a more focused and sustainable training strategy to encourage improvement towards the "Good" and "Very Good" categories as preparation for entering the advanced coaching phase.

CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the basic passing and control skills of 15-year-old Tadulako Soccer School (TSS) players are generally in the moderate category. This finding indicates that the majority of players have a basic understanding and ability in passing and controlling the ball, but the consistency and quality of technical execution have not yet reached optimal levels, as reflected in the frequency distribution, which shows more than 40% of players are not in the good or very good category. Empirically, this condition indicates a gap between theoretical mastery of basic techniques and their consistent application in repetitive and time-limited situations.

From a conceptual coaching perspective, the moderate achievement category at 15 years of age confirms that the basic technique development phase is not yet fully completed and still requires reinforcement before players are directed to more complex tactical and strategic game demands. Therefore, the results of this study have important practical implications for the TSS SSB coaching staff to revise and optimize the training curriculum, specifically by increasing the portion of basic passing and control training combined with time pressure, high repetition intensity, and varying field conditions. A more contextual and progressive training approach is expected to improve the adaptability, accuracy, and consistency of players' techniques as a foundation for youth football development that is oriented towards long-term achievement.

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