



Improving Defensive Skills Through Man-to-Man Marking and Zone Defense in Futsal Games

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effect of man-to man marking and zone defense training on improving the defense skills of futsal extracurricular participants at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke. This study uses a quantitative approach with an experimental method through a quasi-experimental design in the form of a two-group pretest-posttest design. The study population consisted of 18 students, all of whom were sampled using a total sampling technique. The sample was divided into two groups, namely the man-to man marking training group and the zone defense training group. The research instrument used a defense skill test in futsal games in the form of 1-on-1, block, and intercept tests. Data analysis techniques used descriptive and inferential statistics through normality tests, homogeneity tests, and t-tests with the help of the SPSS application at a significance level of 0.05. The results showed that man-to man marking training improved defense abilities with an average pretest score of 17.22 to 22 in the posttest with an increase of 4.78%. Meanwhile, zone defense training improved defense abilities with an average pretest score of 13.78 to 19.33 in the posttest with an increase of 5.56%. The t-test results showed a significance value of $0.00 < 0.05$, indicating that both training methods significantly improved the defensive abilities of the futsal extracurricular participants at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke. Therefore, man-to man marking and zone defense are effective defensive training methods in futsal.

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INTRODUCTION

Exercise is a physical activity that plays a vital role in maintaining physical health, improving physical fitness, and supporting mental health. Regular exercise can improve metabolic function, strengthen bone structure, improve blood circulation, and help enhance cognitive function (Ashar et al., 2025). One sport that is currently growing in popularity and enjoyed by various groups of people, from children and teenagers to adults, is futsal. In fact, many schools now offer extracurricular futsal activities as a means to develop students' interests, talents, and abilities in the sport (Syafiq et al., 2025).



Futsal was first established in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1930 by Juan Carlos Ceriani. The unique qualities of futsal have gained widespread recognition throughout South America, particularly in Brazil. The attributes honed through this game can be seen in the legendary playing style displayed by Brazilian footballers on standard-sized outdoor fields. Futsal is a form of soccer played indoors with fewer players than on a large field. According to Hartono et al. (2025), futsal is played by two teams, each consisting of five players, including a goalkeeper. This game demands quick thinking, quick decision-making, basic technical skills, and strong tactical abilities. Therefore, futsal relies not only on individual abilities but also requires teamwork and effective game strategy.

Extracurricular activities are activities carried out outside of class hours as a form of coaching and developing student potential. This extracurricular program is aimed at students who have an interest and desire to develop their talents and passions, particularly in their chosen sport (Rambe & Fadhli, 2024). In futsal, the use of tactics and strategy is crucial for achieving victory. Therefore, a coach must be able to design and implement appropriate tactics and strategies for each player to significantly contribute to improved performance and teamwork. Furthermore, when implementing game tactics, each coach generally has a different concept and playing style, designed to be optimally executed by the players during the match (Forcher et al., 2024).

There are several types of defensive tactics in futsal, including man-to man marking and zone defense. Defensive tactics are carried out in each team's area using a specific formation, making teamwork crucial in dividing tasks. Many factors influence defensive strategies, including team formation, as it can determine the effectiveness of the defensive system. In principle, defensive tactics aim to ensure the goal being guarded is not conceded by the opposing team (Prabowo et al., 2024). Man-to man marking is essentially a strategy in which each player is tasked with specifically marking one opponent, following their movements wherever they go, whether they are carrying the ball or not. The primary goal of man-to man marking is not to directly steal the ball from the opponent, but rather to shadow, stick to, and apply pressure on the opponent's movements, thereby hindering their play (Helmaliya, 2024). Furthermore, zone defense involves waiting for the attacking team in their own defensive zone. Basic tactical defense itself is defined as a strategy employed by individuals, groups, or teams against opponents with the goal of achieving and maintaining victory in a match in a sporting manner (Sidik, 2023).

Based on observations of the MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke extracurricular futsal team during a student futsal tournament in Bone Regency, several issues were identified in the team's defense. These issues included a lack of coordination between players, delayed defensive transitions, poor communication when facing an opponent's attack, and a lack of understanding of proper defensive positioning. As a result, opponents found it easier to create opportunities and score goals. Furthermore, interviews with the team's coach revealed that the training program focused primarily on basic techniques and attacking strategies, while defensive tactics were not optimally implemented. This situation was one of the contributing factors to the team's weak defense. Based on these issues,

effective defensive training methods are needed to improve the defensive abilities of futsal players. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the effect of man-to man marking and zone defense training on improving defensive skills among futsal extracurricular participants at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke.

METHODS

This research used a quantitative approach with an experimental method. Quantitative research is a research approach that aims to collect and analyze numerical data. Experimental research is a research approach in which the researcher controls one or more independent variables to identify the causal relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Hardi & Mutmainna, 2025).

The research design used was a quasi-experimental design with a two-group pretest-posttest design. This study aimed to determine the improvement of defensive skills through the implementation of man-to man marking and zone defense training in futsal. The research was conducted at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke, located in Bakke Village, Barebbo District, Bone Regency. The population in this study were all 18 students participating in the MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke futsal extracurricular activity. The sampling technique used total sampling, so the entire population served as the research sample (Jud & Sariul, 2022).

The sample was then divided into two groups: the man-to man marking training group and the zone defense training group. Before receiving the treatment, both groups took a pretest to determine their initial defensive skills. Next, each group was given a training program according to the method applied for 13 sessions. After the treatment was completed, a posttest was administered to determine the improvement in the players' defensive skills.

The research instrument used was a futsal defensive skills test, which included an individual skills test, a 1-on-1 test, and a block and intercept test. Data analysis techniques used descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the mean, standard deviation, maximum, and minimum values of the research results. Furthermore, prerequisite analysis tests, including normality and homogeneity tests, were conducted before hypothesis testing. Hypothesis testing used T-test, with the entire data analysis process conducted using SPSS with a significance level of 0.05.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

During the man-to man marking defensive tactics training at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke, futsal extracurricular participants underwent a pre- and post-test on their defensive skills. The results are presented in the following table:

Table 1.
 Descriptive of Man-to Man Marking Training Group

Statistics	Pretest	Posttest
N	9	9
Mean	17.22	22
Sum	155	198
Std. Deviation	2,587	1,225
Minimum	12	20
Maximum	21	24

Table 1 shows that the pretest results obtained an average score of 17.22, with a total score of 155, a standard deviation of 2.587, a minimum score of 12, and a maximum score of 21. Meanwhile, the posttest results showed an increase, with an average score of 22, a total score of 198, a standard deviation of 1.225, a minimum score of 20, and a maximum score of 24. In the zone defense training at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke, futsal extracurricular participants underwent a pre- and post-test on their defensive abilities. The description is presented in the following table:

Table 2.
 Descriptive of Zone Defense Training Group

Statistics	Pretest	Posttest
N	9	9
Mean	13.78	19.33
Sum	124	174
Std. Deviation	3.270	1.225
Minimum	10	17
Maximum	18	21

Table 2 shows that the pretest results obtained an average score of 13.78 with a total score of 124, a standard deviation of 3.270, a minimum score of 10, and a maximum score of 18. Meanwhile, the posttest results showed an increase, with an average score of 19.33, a total score of 174, a standard deviation of 1.225, a minimum score of 17, and a maximum score of 21.

Table 3.
 Normality Test

Group		P	Sig.	Description
Man-to man marking	Pretest	0.558	0.05	Normal
	Posttest	0.830	0.05	Normal
Zone Defense	Pretest	0.155	0.05	Normal
	Posttest	0.286	0.05	Normal

Table 3 shows the pretest-posttest data showing the defensive abilities of MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke extracurricular participants has a p-value (Sig.) > 0.05, as can be seen from the table above, indicating that the variable is normally distributed.

Table 4.
 Homogeneity Test

Group	P	Sig.	Description
Pretest-posttest Man-to man marking	0.171	0.05	Homogeneous
Pretest-posttest zone defense	0.832	0.05	Homogeneous

Table 4 shows the pretest-posttest data for the man-to man marking group of MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke extracurricular futsal players with a sig. 0.171 >, indicating homogeneity of the data. Meanwhile, the pretest-posttest data for the zone defense group of extracurricular futsal players at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke showed a sig. 0.832 > 0.05, indicating homogeneity of the data.

Table 5.

T-Test Results of Pretest and Posttest Defensive Ability After Man-to Man Marking Training

Defensive Ability	Average	T _{test}	T _{table}	Df	Sig.
Pretest					
Posttest	4.778	9.168	8	1.85	0.00

Table 5 shows that the calculated t-test is 9.168, while the t-table value at df 8 is 1.85, with a significance value of 0.00. Thus, the improvement in defensive ability through man-to man marking training among extracurricular futsal players at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke is acceptable. After receiving man-to man marking training, the players' defensive abilities increased by 4.78%.

Table 6.

T-Test Results of Pretest and Posttest Defensive Ability After Zone Defense Training

Defensive Ability	Average	T _{test}	T _{table}	Df	Sig.
Pretest					
Posttest	5.556	6.178	8	1.85	0.00

Table 6 shows that the calculated t-test is 6.178, while the t-table value at df 8 is 1.85, with a significance value of 0.00. Thus, there is an acceptable increase in defensive abilities through man-to man marking training among the extracurricular futsal players at MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke. After receiving zone defense training, the players' defensive abilities increased by 5.56%.

Discussion

The results of the study showed that defensive tactics training using the man-to man marking and zone defense methods significantly improved the defensive abilities of participants in the MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke futsal extracurricular activity. This improvement was evident in the descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, which showed changes in defensive abilities before and after the training treatment.

The improvement in defensive abilities in man-to man marking training occurred because this method emphasized tight individual marking of opposing players (Hariyanto, 2024). This system requires players to consistently focus on their opponents' movements, accelerate their defensive reactions, and improve their ability to read their opponents' play. Furthermore, this training also helps increase players' aggressiveness in winning the ball and narrowing down opponents' movement during the match. According to Wahyudi and Saputra (2023), the man-to man marking system is effective for applying direct pressure to opponents, thereby minimizing their opportunities to create attacks. These results align with research by Hariyanto (2024), which found that man-to man marking training positively improved the defensive abilities of futsal players.

Furthermore, research by Wahyudi and Saputra (2023) also explains that individual marking can improve positional discipline, concentration, and players' ability to anticipate opponent movements during matches.

Improved defensive skills in zone defense training occur because this defensive system emphasizes area control and teamwork in maintaining the defense. In zone defense, players not only focus on guarding individual opponents but are also responsible for defending specific areas of the field. This helps players understand good defensive positions, strengthens team coordination, and improves communication between players when facing opponent attacks. Zone defense is an effective defensive system for maintaining formation stability and controlling the opponent's playing space (Akhsin et al., 2023). This research finding is supported by research by Hariyanto (2024), who stated that zone defense training can improve the defensive abilities of futsal players by improving coordination and teamwork. This area-based defensive system helps players more effectively close down opponents' movement and reduces positional errors while defending.

Overall, the research results show that both training methods, man-to man marking and zone defense, are equally effective in improving the defensive abilities of futsal players. However, each method has distinct characteristics. Man-to man marking is more effective in improving individual marking skills and direct pressure on the opponent, while zone defense is more effective in improving team coordination and controlling the defensive area. Therefore, futsal coaches can combine these two training methods according to the needs and characteristics of the team's game.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that man-to man marking and zone defense training significantly improved the defensive abilities of participants in the MTs Al-Hidayah Bakke futsal extracurricular program. Man-to man marking training was proven to improve individual guarding skills, concentration, and pressure on opponents, with an average increase of 4.78%. Meanwhile, zone defense training effectively improved team coordination, control of the defensive area, and cooperation between players, with an average increase of 5.56%.

The results indicate that both training methods can be used as alternative defensive training strategies in futsal. In addition to improving individual and collective defensive abilities, the implementation of structured defensive tactics training also contributes to the overall effectiveness of team play. Therefore, man-to man marking and zone defense training are suitable for implementation in extracurricular futsal development programs at schools. However, this study is limited by the relatively small sample size and limited training time, making the results less generalizable. Therefore, further research with a larger sample size and longer training duration is needed to obtain more comprehensive results. Based on the research findings, futsal coaches are advised to implement man-to man marking and zone defense drills in a systematic and ongoing manner in training to improve players' defensive abilities. Furthermore, players are

expected to improve communication, teamwork, and training discipline to ensure more effective implementation of the defensive system in the game. Schools are expected to support extracurricular futsal activities by providing adequate training facilities and infrastructure to ensure optimal development. Future researchers are advised to expand the study by including other variables such as physical condition, technical ability, and psychological aspects of players to gain a broader understanding of the factors influencing futsal performance.

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