

Identification of Sports Talent of Grade VIII Students, Jambi City State Middle School 22

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to identify the sports talents of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 22, Jambi City, and to map sports that suit their potential. This study used a quantitative research design with a survey method. The study population was all 215 eighth-grade students. Through random sampling techniques, a sample of 15% of the population, or 28 students, was determined. The results showed that there were 17 students who had potential or talent in sports. The findings also confirmed that around 13 years of age is a more appropriate age limit for identifying sports talent, because ages 6–12 are still in the childhood phase, which is the initial stage of introduction to physical activity and sports. Overall, this study concluded that eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 22, Jambi City, have a tendency to be talented in seven sports, namely football, volleyball, race walking, sepak takraw, gymnastics, table tennis, and boxing. These results can be a basis for schools in developing more targeted sports achievement coaching and development programs that are in accordance with students' potential.

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B. Acquisition of data;
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INTRODUCTION

According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), sport is the activity of moving the body to improve health and strength (Prianto, 2021). The definition of sport is any physical movement performed by humans using specific techniques to shape the body, with a specific intensity, time limit, and purpose (Bangun, 2016). Sport can also be defined as an activity involving physical effort and skill by individuals or teams, performed for entertainment. Sport is any form of physical activity undertaken to achieve specific goals, such as improving health, fitness, skills, or for entertainment and recreation (Nababan, 2022).

Educational sports in Indonesia are regulated by Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 3 of 2005 concerning the National Sports System. Article 25, paragraph 1, states that the development and development of educational sports are implemented and directed as a systematic and continuous unit within the national education system

(2005). The placement of physical education as part of the school curriculum is not without reason. The curriculum, which is a set of knowledge and skills, is a systematic effort to equip students to become complete and integrated human beings.

Sport is essentially a physical activity that involves structured, planned body movements that follow specific rules, whether performed individually or in groups. Rubiyatno (2014) explains that sport is a systematic process to encourage, foster, and develop physical, spiritual, and social potential. Thus, sport is not only a means of developing fitness but also a medium for individuals to explore their motor abilities, improve health, strengthen social skills, and build a spirit of togetherness and competitiveness. Based on the views of these experts, it can be concluded that sport is a physical activity that contains elements of play, motor skills, and developmental values, both physically and spiritually.

Talent is a fundamental potential possessed by an individual that enables them to learn or master a skill more quickly than others (Fitri et al., 2023; Zubaidah et al., 2025). Talent is not a permanent ability; rather, this potential needs to be cultivated through systematic training to develop into superior abilities. Yuliawan (2023) states that talent identification can be done through natural methods or scientific methods. Natural methods are observational, based on direct observation, while scientific methods are carried out through standardized measurements and using a scientific and technological approach.

Identifying talent in children is crucial because every child requires a learning program tailored to their individual talents (Anggraini et al., 2020; Ririnni & Afrahamiryano, 2024). Early identification will help parents and educators guide and nurture children so that their potential and talents develop optimally. Therefore, sports talent can be understood as a natural ability inherent from birth, but it still requires targeted training to develop into achievement. The process of identifying sports talent in secondary school students is crucial because at this stage, their understanding of sports is sufficiently mature, allowing the identification results to form the basis for effective coaching. Therefore, this research is highly relevant for eighth-grade students in the 2024/2025 academic year.

Eighth-grade students are generally between 12 and 14 years old, which is considered the early adolescent phase. During this period, emotional development tends to fluctuate as students adjust, but thinking skills begin to develop in a more complex direction. Students at this age are characterized by critical thinking, a strong curiosity, and the ability to absorb information quickly. Therefore, support for both academic and non-academic development is essential.

Physically, early adolescence is characterized by rapid changes in body proportions, both in height and weight. This often leads to imbalances in physical development, necessitating appropriate sports activities to help students maintain fitness and develop healthy bodies. Furthermore, interests and career choices begin to become clearer at this stage, as students' thinking skills have reached a more refined level of understanding (Irsu & Winingsih, 2022; Juwitaningrum, 2013). In the context of physical education, this provides an opportune moment to identify students' sporting talents, allowing them to be appropriately directed through structured development programs.

Based on this description, identifying sporting talents is a crucial step in developing students' comprehensive potential. By identifying sports that align with students' natural abilities, schools can optimize the development process, increase motivation to learn sports, and support the development of potential athletes in the future.

METHODS

In this study, the design used is a quantitative descriptive research type. This method is used to collect data from a group of respondents in order to see how the sports talents of class VIII students of SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi. The purpose of this study is to determine the sports talents of class VIII students of SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi. Data collection techniques to obtain individual data from each variable involved in this study used R programming, talent guidance tests, and measurements consisting of 6 tests and 5 measurements. The instruments used in this study are related to the preparation of tools used for the application of R programming, namely: Height, Sitting height, Weight, Arm span, Throwing and catching tennis balls, Throwing basketballs, Vertical jumps, Agility runs, 40-meter sprints, and Multistage aerobic fitness tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study aims to identify the sports talents of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 22, Jambi City. Based on the data collection and measurement process using a sports talent identification instrument, 17 students showed indicators of talent in certain sports, while 11 other students did not meet the talent criteria.

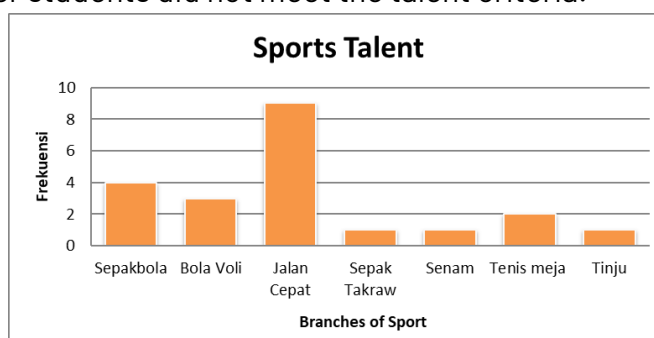


Figure 1.

Identification of Sports Talents of Class VIII Students of SMP Negeri 22 Jambi

These findings illustrate that the majority of students in the sample have an early inclination or potential to develop in school sports. The distribution of student talent in each sport is shown in Figure 1.

The graph shows that race walking had the highest frequency of talent, with 9 students. This indicates that most students possess strong basic motor skills in endurance, stride rhythm, coordination, and stride speed, which are the main characteristics of this athletic event.

Football came in second with 4 students, followed by volleyball with 3 students. These two sports demonstrate that students also have potential in team sports that require coordination, strength, and teamwork.

Table tennis was identified as having 2 students, while sepak takraw, gymnastics, and boxing each had 1 student who met the talent criteria. These findings indicate that, despite the smaller number of students, there is a diversity of student potential in sports that require specific skills such as agility, balance, flexibility, and quick reflexes. Overall, the results of this study indicate that seven sports emerged as a manifestation of student talent: football, volleyball, race walking, sepak takraw, gymnastics, table tennis, and boxing.

These findings provide an important basis for schools to implement more targeted coaching tailored to each student's individual talents, thereby helping optimize future athletic achievement.

Discussion

The research results showed that of the 28 eighth-grade students sampled, 17 had potential or talent for sports, while 11 did not meet the criteria for talent. This finding indicates that most students are at a stage of physical development that allows for the emergence of sporting potential, which can be guided through coaching. According to Hasyim (2024), talent identification in early adolescence is crucial because this is a period of increased physical capacity, coordination, and readiness for more structured training.

The distribution of talent showed that race walking had the highest potential, with 9 students. This indicates that most students possess good endurance, rhythm, and body coordination. According to Atiq et al. (2022), athletics is one of the sports where talent is easily identified because it involves basic physical abilities such as speed, strength, and endurance, which begin to stabilize between the ages of 12 and 14.

Football (4 students) and volleyball (3 students) also emerged as sports with prominent potential. Both sports require coordination, agility, and teamwork skills. According to Febriani (2022), team sports are generally attractive to adolescents because they align with their social development, as they begin to build interaction and cooperation within peer groups.

Table tennis (2 students), gymnastics (1 student), sepak takraw (1 student), and boxing (1 student) demonstrate the potential for diverse sports that require specialized technical skills. Consistent with Saharullah et al. (2019) opinion, some sports require early training stimuli or exposure to a supportive environment for talent to emerge optimally. Therefore, the low number of students in certain sports may be influenced by limited facilities, lack of coaching, or limited practical experience.

Another important finding from this study is that 13 years of age is the ideal age for talent identification. This statement aligns with Rohendi & Seba (2017), who explain that basic motor skills enter a consolidation phase at ages 12–14, making sports aptitude test results more stable and reliable than those identified at ages 6–12, when they are still in the early stages of motor development. Overall, this study confirms that seven sports hold the greatest potential for eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 22 in Jambi City.

These findings offer practical implications for schools in developing more targeted coaching programs based on student talent tendencies. According to Sengkey (2023), talent-appropriate coaching not only improves athletic performance but also enhances students' motivation, commitment, and social and emotional development.

Thus, the results of this study confirm that identifying athletic talent is a crucial step in more systematic achievement development efforts. Schools can utilize these findings as a basis for developing extracurricular activities, training groups, and collaborations with local sports institutions or clubs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study on the identification of sports talent in eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi, it can be concluded that of the 28 students sampled, 17 students showed potential or talent for sports, while the other 11 students did not meet the criteria for talent. The forms of sports talent identified included seven sports, namely football, volleyball, race walking, sepak takraw, gymnastics, table tennis, and boxing. These findings indicate that most students in this age group already have a tendency for physical and motor abilities that can be developed through more targeted sports coaching. Overall, the results of this study confirm that students of SMP Negeri 22 Kota Jambi have a variety of sports potential that can be used as a basis for developing coaching programs, both through extracurricular activities and collaboration with related sports institutions. Identification of talent as early as possible will help schools in facilitating students' interests and abilities so that their potential can develop optimally.

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