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## Interpersonal Communication Between Coaches And Karate Athletes At Dojo Inkai Ciko (Cirebon City)

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### Abstract

*Communication is one of the components that support the success of training. The method used in this study is a qualitative descriptive method, which gives an overview of a situation that is taking place at the time of the research carried out and examines the cause of a particular symptom. The data collection techniques in this study are interviews as well as library studies. The results of the data collection are then presented qualitatively and descriptively, with reference to the Theory of Interpersonal Communication Effectiveness. From this study, it is known that the interpersonal communication carried out by coaches and athletes in Dojo Inkai Cirebon to improve performance so far has gone well, by having done various forms of communication in both verbal and non-verbal. The obstacles that can occur in this communication process are human and psychological factors*

**Keywords:** Anterpersonal Communication, Athlete, Coach, Karate

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## INTRODUCTION

Two-way communication is an interaction that involves at least two parties, where information is exchanged reciprocally. This process goes beyond merely sending messages; it also includes responses or feedback from the message recipient. In other words, two-way communication is an active dialogue that allows both parties to exchange thoughts and ideas (Dewi et al., 2024).

Communication is one of the components that supports performance and the success of training. It also plays a crucial role in bridging the connection between coaches and their athletes. Communication, which includes criticism and suggestions during evaluations, various commands, prohibitions, and cues, is used to convey the objectives of a training session. In training, various elements such as language, tone of voice, symbols or words, and even body language and facial expressions are essential to the process. If an athlete does not understand the coach's language, they will be unable to execute the commands given by the coach. From this, it is evident that communication is extremely important (Isfahri, 2021).

The theory of interpersonal communication can be defined as communication that occurs verbally or nonverbally between two individuals who have a strong, clear, and spontaneous relationship. In the field of sports, interpersonal communication can take place contextually during each training session, representing a two-way relationship between coaches and their athletes. The goal is to mutually build and achieve success in the training process (Charolin et al., 2021). Verbally, if communication is not conveyed effectively, the interpersonal communication goals of a coach will not be achieved. Likewise, for athletes, if communication is delivered under unfavorable conditions, the objectives of that communication will not be fully realized.

From the observations conducted between August 2023 and 2024, it is evident that interpersonal communication is established between athletes and coaches during training and development at INKAI Cirebon City. To achieve optimal karate training at Dojo Inkai Cirebon City, effective communication between athletes and coaches is essential. This is necessary to align two activities: coaching and training, in order to achieve the best performance. Coaches

provide instructions in two ways: verbally and nonverbally. However, even if coaches deliver instructions effectively, athletes' perceptions of those instructions may not necessarily align.

This study uses several previous research works as comparisons and references. One of them is a study titled "The Role of Interpersonal Communication Between Coaches and Athletes of Brawijaya SC Shooting Club in Improving Performance at the 'Club National Championship 2022' During the COVID-19 Pandemic Era New Normal" (Kusnarto, 2022), which employs a positivist paradigm and scientific methods to test hypotheses about social phenomena. Kusnarto's research findings indicate that interpersonal communication between coaches and athletes of the Brawijaya SC Shooting Club is a crucial tool in training and competition activities. This helps coaches develop their athletes and enhance their performance, even after the COVID-19 pandemic.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative descriptive method, meaning the author aims to describe and gain a deep understanding of interpersonal communication between coaches and karate athletes at Dojo Inkai Cirebon. Qualitative techniques can enhance the researcher's depth of understanding regarding the phenomena being studied (Morissan, 2019). The qualitative data analysis process involves processing non-numeric data (e.g., interview results, observations, or documents) to identify patterns, themes, and deep meanings, following three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 1992).

To achieve the research objectives, the author employs several data collection techniques, including in-depth interviews, data triangulation, and inductive data analysis. The author conducts direct interviews with informants, consisting of one coach and two athletes. This allows the author to gather detailed information about the experiences, perceptions, and thoughts of the informants regarding interpersonal communication between them. Data triangulation is used to ensure the validity and credibility of the collected data by asking informants to verify the information. Inductive data analysis is employed to analyze the qualitative data collected by identifying patterns and themes and developing theories.

Qualitative descriptive research does not aim to find general conclusions; its focus is on understanding the realities experienced by individuals within a specific context. Therefore, the findings of this study are based on the experiences and thoughts of the informants and are expected to provide a deeper understanding of how interpersonal communication occurs between coaches and karate athletes.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The foundation of interpersonal communication is listening and speaking. If there are deficiencies or errors in listening, it can lead to a lack of understanding of the language used to interpret the conveyed message, insufficient time to grasp the intent of the verbal message, or the nonverbal cues accompanying the verbal message being overlooked (Kurniawati et al., 2013). Interpersonal communication can be considered effective if the messages conveyed can be received and understood well without any obstacles.

From the interviews conducted with one coach and two athletes at Dojo Inkai Cirebon City, the research findings indicate that there is an application of interpersonal communication between the coach and the karate athletes. The researcher will present the results of the interviews in relation to the theory proposed by Joseph A. DeVito, who divides the indicators of communication effectiveness into five categories, as follows:

**1. (openness)**

In this regard, there are three aspects of interpersonal communication that form the basis of openness: the coach being open to listening to the difficulties faced by the athletes in training, the coach being honest in responding to the opinions of each athlete, and both the athletes and the coach taking responsibility for their own feelings and thoughts (Rizmayanti & Kusnarto, 2022). Based on the interview results, it is evident that the karate coach at Dojo Inkai Cirebon City has implemented an attitude of openness in communication with the athletes. This is demonstrated by the following points:

Communication before and after training. The coach communicates with the athletes before the training starts to understand their physical and mental condition and to inquire about any challenges they may be facing. After the training session, the coach also asks the athletes how they felt during the training and if there is anything they would like to express.

Asking about training-related matters. The coach inquires with the athletes about the difficulties they encounter while performing certain movements, the issues they experience during training, and other aspects related to the training process.

Listening attentively. The coach provides the athletes with the opportunity to answer questions honestly and listens carefully to what they express.

Receiving messages well. The coach accepts the messages conveyed by the athletes effectively, even if the manner of delivery is not as expected.

Understanding and being understanding. The coach understands and acknowledges the athletes' limitations in conveying messages and strives to maintain good communication.

Based on the points above, it can be concluded that the communication between the coach and the athletes is effective and demonstrates a high level of openness.

**Empathy**

Empathy can be defined as an individual's ability to feel and understand a situation from the perspective of others. The essence of empathy involves the effort from both parties to sense the feelings of others and the willingness to understand their attitudes, traits, and opinions (Fajriyah & Pardianto, 2021).

Regarding the attitude of empathy, the two athletes who served as informants and are positioned as message recipients in this communication stated that their implementation aligns with the coach's expectations

In line with this, the coach's remarks also indicate a concern for the improvement of athlete performance. The development and enhancement of athlete performance are greatly influenced by the coach's caring attitude. In terms of interpersonal communication, each athlete has a unique character, which requires the coach to adapt their communication style to suit each athlete's individual characteristics. At this stage, the dialogical closeness between the two should be further developed so that the information received by the coach becomes clearer and more accurate, allowing for feedback that is appropriate to the athletes' conditions and feelings.

**2. (supportiveness)**

An effective interpersonal relationship is one that includes a supportive attitude (Kenney et al., 2000). During training and competitions, athletes often receive support from their coaches. This support can take the form of motivation provided in each training session, with the hope of encouraging athletes to develop and enhance their performance (Adisasmito, 2007). Additionally, other forms of support include feedback and suggestions from the coach to inspire athletes to progress, both physically and mentally.

Based on the research, both athletes interviewed shared similar experiences regarding the supportive attitude of their coach. They mentioned that the coach provided encouraging words such as "great," "wow," "good job," and "excellent," as well as applause when they performed movements correctly or won a match. The athletes also expressed their happiness when praised by the coach for their achievements, which enhanced their motivation. Thus, the supportive

attitude from the coach contributes to the improvement in the quality of performance achieved by the athletes.

### 3. (positiveness)

During the training process, it is important for the coach to demonstrate a positive attitude towards the athletes. Providing positive encouragement can help build effective communication. Positivity can be expressed through attitudes and behaviors. In terms of attitude, those involved should communicate with positive thoughts and without negative prejudices. As for behavior, it is shown through actions that align with the goals of interpersonal communication, namely fostering cooperation (Badriyah, 2023).

According to the interview results, both informants stated that the athletes always promptly follow the coach's instructions. However, there are times when certain instructions are difficult to understand, such as new movements that have not been taught before. In such situations, the coach immediately corrects the athletes' mistakes in a positive manner. Therefore, the author can assess that this reflects the implementation of a positive attitude.

### 4. (equality)

Inequality is still frequently encountered in various situations. In the context of athletes, each athlete undoubtedly has a diverse background, whether in terms of training diligence, discipline, athleticism, and so on. According to the interview results, the coach stated that equality cannot be assessed solely based on age, the responsibilities of each athlete, or their level of understanding. However, the coach will apply equality in their approach to each athlete's personality. The coach believes that there should be no differences in the training environment or the status of each athlete. The coach is responsible for nurturing all athletes without any differential treatment, which indicates that the interpersonal communication role of the coach plays a significant role in enhancing athlete development.

According to the theory of interpersonal communication effectiveness and the interview results, the coach's role is crucial in the development of athletes. Coaches must be able to motivate athletes to prevent boredom and keep them engaged in skill training and technique refinement. The interview also revealed that verbal communication is the most frequently used form of communication by the coach.

### Instructional Communication

Effective communication is the key to success in karate training. The coach serves as the primary facilitator in conveying techniques, strategies, and the values of karate to the athletes. In this instructional process, both verbal and non-verbal communication play very important roles. This research aims to analyze the dominance of each type of communication and its impact on the understanding and performance of karate athletes.

Verbal communication in karate training includes the use of words, clear explanations, and specific instructions. The coach uses language that is easy for the athletes to understand to explain basic techniques, movement principles, and competition strategies. Additionally, verbal communication is used to provide feedback, motivation, and corrections for the mistakes made by the athletes. However, verbal communication alone is not sufficient to convey all aspects of karate training.

Non-verbal communication, such as body language, facial expressions, gestures, and eye contact, also plays a very important role in the instructional process. Through body language, the coach can clearly demonstrate how to perform a technique. The coach's facial expressions can convey information about the difficulty level of a movement or provide encouragement to the athletes. Appropriate gestures can help athletes understand the direction of movements and the correct body positions. Good eye contact can foster a better relationship between the coach and the athletes, as well as enhance the athletes' focus.

The dominance of verbal and non-verbal communication in karate training can vary depending on several factors, such as the athletes' experience level, the types of techniques being

taught, and the coaching style. Generally, coaches tend to use non-verbal communication more frequently to demonstrate basic techniques that require physical demonstration. Meanwhile, verbal communication is more often employed to explain more abstract concepts, such as competition strategies or the philosophy of karate.

### **The Power Relationship Between Coaches and Athletes at Dojo Inkai Cirebon.**

The power relationship in the world of sports, particularly between coaches and athletes, is a complex and ever-changing dynamic. Coaches generally possess formal power due to their roles as leaders and decision-makers (Adi et al., 2024). They have more knowledge and experience, which often leads them to be regarded as experts. This power can stem from various sources, such as their position within the organization, their reputation as successful coaches, or even their charismatic personalities. On the other hand, athletes also have sources of power, especially if they have outstanding achievements or are supported by major sponsors.

However, power is not always static. The dynamics of power in the coach-athlete relationship can change over time and be influenced by various factors, such as the athlete's performance, the personalities of both parties, and the sporting context. For example, a talented young athlete may have little power initially, but as their performance improves, they may gain greater influence in decision-making. Conversely, a coach who experiences a series of failures may lose some of their power.

A healthy and balanced power relationship is essential for an athlete's success. If power is too centralized in the coach, the athlete may feel constrained and lack initiative. Conversely, if the athlete holds too much power, the coach may struggle to provide clear direction. Open and honest communication, mutual respect, and good collaboration are key to building a healthy and productive power relationship.

### **Barriers to Interpersonal Communication**

There are two main barriers that hinder interpersonal communication between coaches and athletes at Dojo Inkai Cirebon:

1. Human barriers related to the intelligence or cognitive abilities of athletes can hinder interpersonal communication between coaches and athletes. This can manifest in several ways. First, there may be difficulty in understanding instructions. Athletes with varying levels of intelligence or cognitive abilities may struggle to comprehend the instructions given by the coach. Second, there is the challenge of applying instructions; even when athletes can understand the instructions verbally, they may still have difficulty implementing them practically. Third, differences in levels of understanding arise within a team made up of athletes with diverse cognitive abilities. Coaches need to adjust their instructional methods so that all athletes can understand and apply the guidance effectively. This requires effective communication skills and a deep understanding of each athlete's individual capabilities.
2. Psychological barriers in interpersonal communication between coaches and athletes can arise from the differences in character that each individual possesses. This character is shaped by various factors, such as personality, background, and life experiences

## **CONCLUSION**

After conducting this research, the findings indicate that at Dojo Inkai in Cirebon, coaches establish positive relationships with athletes during training sessions. They demonstrate openness, empathy, and support, creating a comfortable and conducive atmosphere for fostering collaboration and a sense of equality. Through this positive leadership, coaches motivate athletes to train harder, with the hope of achieving higher accomplishments in the future. Karate coaches at Dojo Inkai Cirebon have effectively communicated with athletes to enhance their performance. This communication includes goal setting, providing motivation, giving instructions, corrections,



guidance, and more. Despite obstacles such as human and psychological factors, coaches play a crucial role in motivating athletes to continue training and improve their skills. Therefore, the implementation of interpersonal communication at Dojo Inkai Cirebon is considered quite good. However, quality improvement must continue, as interpersonal communication is vital for maintaining and enhancing the relationship between athletes and coaches at Dojo Inkai Cirebon

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