

## Learning Style of Students Who Become Athletes in Kupang

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**Abstract.** Each student has the characteristics of a different learning style and students who are also athletes. Learning styles are divided into visual learning styles, auditory learning styles, and kinesthetic learning styles. This study describes students' learning styles who become athletes in Kupang city. This is qualitative research with a descriptive method. Four student-athletes were selected using a purposive sampling method with the criteria of being active in college and still attending sports training. The results show that the four participants had different characteristics. Two student-athletes were more dominant in the visual learning style, while the other two were more dominant in the auditory and kinesthetic learning styles.

**Keywords:** *learning style, college students, athletes*

**Abstrak.** Setiap mahasiswa memiliki karakteristik gaya belajar yang berbeda-beda begitupun dengan seorang atlet. Gaya belajar dibagi menjadi tiga bagian, yaitu gaya belajar visual, gaya belajar auditorial, dan gaya belajar kinestetik. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan gambaran gaya belajar mahasiswa yang menjadi atlet di Kota Kupang. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan metode deskriptif. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini adalah empat orang mahasiswa atlet yang dipilih dengan metode purposive sampling dengan karakteristik masih aktif berkuliah dan juga masih mengikuti latihan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa keempat partisipan memiliki karakteristik yang berbeda-beda yakni dua mahasiswa atlet lebih dominan gaya belajar visual, sedangkan dua mahasiswa atlet lainnya lebih dominan gaya belajar auditorial dan kinestetik.

**Kata kunci:** *gaya belajar, mahasiswa, atlet*

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## **Introduction**

An individual is learning if there is a process of activity that results in a behavior change. Learning sometimes cannot be achieved optimally due to internal and external factors, including student conditions, teacher explanations, learning strategies and methods, learning atmosphere and environment, intelligence, learning styles, and student's ability to understand lessons (Ghufron & Risnawati, 2013). Between the two factors, namely external factors and internal factors. Internal factors are more dominant and determine 70% of learning outcomes than environmental factors, which only contribute 30% to influencing learning outcomes. Learning outcomes are one of the internal factors closely related to learning styles (Sudjana, 2009).

Learning styles are crucial to developing performance at work, school, and interpersonal situations (DePorter & Hernacki, 2002). A person's learning style combines how he absorbs and then organizes and processes information. Bobbi DePorter and Mike Hernacki (2002) mention that there are three kinds of learning styles, namely: (1) visual learning style: this type of learning style is learning by seeing, (2) auditory learning style: this type of learning style is learning by way of learning. Listening, (3) kinesthetic learning style: this learning style is learning by moving, working and touching.

According to Hamzah (in Wahyuni, 2017), students have these three learning styles, but not all develop in a balanced way, but some dominate with their learning style. Various learning styles and preferences led the students to enjoy learning according to their types. The teachers expect the students to improve the study outcome by involving visual, auditory, and kinesthetic aspects. Students have more than one learning style used to achieve their learning goals and will try to divide their time well between studying and developing talent interests, for example, an athlete.

According to Barry (2001), athletes are sports experts or professional people in sports. An athlete is active and engaged in training to achieve achievement in the chosen sport (Sukadiyanto, 2005). The Student Sports Development and Training

Center (Pusat Pembinaan dan Latihan Olahraga Pelajar/Mahasiswa [PPLP/PPLM]) is a national sports nursery school used to find and nurture sports talent at school age and academic achievement at school and on campus. Mar'ah (2015) states that students who become athletes tend to have low academic achievements. This is indicated by the results of the student's Grade Point Average. The reason for choosing athletes as research subjects are that they have a big responsibility in preparing themselves well to participate in the competition. This is a source of problems for an athlete who also has responsibilities as a student, who must learn and pursue/maintain academic achievement. The benefits obtained from learning outcomes are significant for every student, that academic achievement is also crucial for an athlete if training and learning time are balanced. In this research, students who became athletes spent a lot of time practicing, exercising and participating in competitions outside and inside the city. Thus, it is known that learning time was reduced by interviewing athletes. A student-athlete stated that the risk of self-defence training was very exhausting, especially when preparing for competitions, the training time became 3-4 hours of training in the morning and evening. He is also an active third-semester student. He did not forget his primary obligation as a student, but because he faced two choices -college and competition, he had to sacrifice one of the two. He focused his attention and energy on training in preparation for the competition, while he also had less time to study at home. He also said that he experienced a decline in several courses in the even last semester in his grades. Thus, he received a 2.93 GPA. Because of the reduced time to study at home, he mainly uses cellphone media to record every learning process in class, then listens to it again when studying at home.

According to Saputra (2016), Cilacap Contingent Junior High School students showed that sports achievement had no significant relationship with academic achievement. Honey and Mumford (in Ghufron & Risnawita, 2014) say that it is essential for each individual to know their respective learning styles, thereby increasing awareness of learning that is appropriate for themselves and which is not

suitable for themselves, helping to make choices from many activities, and can also help individuals plan goals in achieving their academic achievements.

From the explanation above, student-athletes have a busy schedule of training and activities that are quite exhausting and take up learning time. Student-athletes also have difficulty in choosing the right and appropriate learning style. Therefore, the researcher feels that it is important to research to ensure that student-athletes know.

### **Method**

This research was conducted in the The Student Sports Development and Training Center (Pusat Pembinaan dan Latihan Olahraga Pelajar/Mahasiswa [PPLP/PPLM]) dormitory in East Nusa Tenggara. This research method uses a qualitative descriptive approach. It is a research method that seeks to describe and interpret objects as they are (Creswell, 2015).

The participants in this study were four people and were selected by the purposive sampling method while still actively studying and still attending training. Athletes who had won championships, have a GPA above 3.00 to see how participants optimize their learning to achieve academic achievement and make achievements in the field of sports and are willing to be an informant in the research stated by signing informed consent.

The data collection techniques were carried out by conducting interviews and observing stage I and II participants. Furthermore, the documentation carried out at the research location complemented observation and interview methods in qualitative research.

The data analysis technique is the first data collection, carried out through the instruments that have been made, namely interviews and observations, then the crucial data are sorted. Second, data reduction reduces less relevant data to the research focus and summarises verbatim into good and correct Indonesian.

Furthermore, data display data reduction results in brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, and the like.

Drawing conclusions and verification, based on the reduced data, conclusions or answers from participants are then drawn, supported by solid evidence found in the data collection stage. Drawing conclusions is an activity to answer the problem formulation with proof of valid data.

The data validity test technique used in this study is the triangulation technique, namely by checking the data to the same source with different styles (Sugiyono, 2014). This technique can be achieved by comparing observational data with interview results, comparing interview data with the contents of a document related to research, and like a diary so that the degree of confidence in the data can be valid.

## **Result**

### **1. Overview of Location**

The Student Sports Development and Training Center (Pusat Pembinaan dan Latihan Olahraga Pelajar/Mahasiswa [PPLP/PPLM]) Youth and Sports Office (DISPORA) East Nusa Tenggara Province located in Oebufu Village, Oebobo Subdistrict is also a residence for athletes under the auspices of the Youth and Sports Office (DISPORA). The capacity of the athletes' dormitory building can accommodate up to 60 athletes consisting of 6 super-priority and priority sports, namely six rooms, Boxing 2 rooms, Athletic run two rooms, Taekwondo 2 rooms, Silat 2 rooms, and Karate 2 rooms with complete facilities such as home for athletes.

### **2. Overview of Research Participants**

Participants in this study were students who became athletes living in the dormitory of Dispora East Nusa Tenggara Province. Participants consisted of three martial arts types: two Kempo athletes, a boxing athlete, and a taekwondo athlete.

Table 1

*Research Participants*

Name (pseudonym)	Age	Gender	Semester	Sport
Tita	21 years	Women	VII	Kempo
Pinki	19 years	Women	III	Kempo
Odin	19 years	Man	III	Boxing
Rossa	20 years	Woman	V	Taekwondo

3. Research Data Analysis

Table 2

*Data Analysis*

Learning Style	Participant 1	Participants 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
Visual	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerning physical and written neatness.</li> <li>Having a neat record.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Love to read.</li> <li>Research in detail.</li> <li>Recording important things when studying in class.</li> <li>Re-recording.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerning the neatness of appearance, study table, and writing.</li> <li>Sometimes having difficulty in receiving verbal instructions. By rewriting, it is not easy to forget.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Love to read.</li> <li>Preferring to learn by reading and re-recording material that is considered necessary.</li> <li>Speech tends to be fast and loud.</li> <li>Memorizing and repeatedly reading.</li> </ol>
Auditory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easily distracted by a commotion.</li> <li>Easy to learn in class by listening to explanations and then discussing with friends.</li> <li>Memorizing and recording the materials.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easily distracted by a commotion.</li> <li>Choosing to talk rather than write when explaining something to others.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easily distracted by a commotion.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Easily distracted by a commotion.</li> <li>Choosing to speak rather than write.</li> </ol>

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Learning Style	Participant 1	Participants 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
Kinesthetic	1. Doing speech slowly. 2. Speaking while showing hand gestures.	1. Practicing and reviewing reference books.	1. Likes learning with hands-on practice. 2. Easy to think by moving. 3. Move your hands while speaking.	1. Being unable to sit still for long periods while studying at home or attending lectures.

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Based on the research results on students' learning styles who became athletes above, the tendency of visual learning style characteristics in study participants is to learn through reading and writing, happy to answer with short answers, and fast speech tempo. The characteristic tendency of the auditory learning style in study participants is to learn by listening and discussing and easily disturbed by commotion. The usual tendency of kinesthetic learning styles is to move while learning, speak slowly, actively, and practice.

From the various descriptions above, it is clear that although students who become athletes use a combination of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles, the tendencies of learning styles vary. Two participants tended towards visual learning style, one participant had a tendency to the auditory learning style, and another participant had a tendency to kinesthetic learning style.

### **Discussion**

Learning style combines the ability to absorb information and then organize and process the information (DePorter & Hernacki, 2002). According to DePorter & Hernacki (2002), there are three learning styles; visual learning style, auditorial learning style, and kinesthetic learning style.

This study shows a learning style with characteristic tendencies of different learning styles. Some student-athletes show visual learning styles, some tend to show auditory learning style characteristics, and some show kinesthetic learning styles. This finding follows the opinion of DePorter& Singer (2007) that in reality, learners

have all three learning styles, only it usually tends to one particular learning style. It is also supported by a theory that says that understanding learning styles is one of the best ways to maximize the learning process in the classroom. After discovering the learning style and knowing the best methods to help yourself learn through that style, one can develop and perform well (De Porter 2004).

In line with this study, student-athletes achieve a satisfactory Cumulative Achievement Index using different ways of learning. The student-athletes, Pinki and Rossa, use a visual learning style by paying attention to the lecturer's explanation. Thus, Rossa and Pinki absorb learning by looking at/paying attention to the media image through a PowerPoint display. The two participants make small notes that are considered essential to make it easier for him to learn again at home. Pinki can easily remember when reading repeatedly and tends to read by putting signs/symbols on books. The same goes for Rossa by learning by reading and then writing them down neatly in her notebook.

Their preferred learning style focuses on their vision using visual media or the book itself based on the description above. This way of learning is what participants do when attending lectures and preparing for semester exams. This learning style is supported by Ahmadi and Supriyono's (2004) opinion, which suggests that someone who is visual type will quickly learn materials presented in writing; in other words, it is easier to understand lesson materials that can be seen with their sense of sight.

In addition to visual learning styles, there are also student-athletes with auditory learning styles. In achieving a GPA of 3.00, student-athletes with an auditory learning style tend to use their ears as a suitable medium for learning, so they will not be able to concentrate on learning.

For Tita, she has auditory learning styles find it easier to understand a lesson if they read aloud and then re-record their voices and then listen to the recordings. This method makes it easier for her to learn, and Tita also likes the learning method in group discussions, questions and answers, and listening to the lecturer's explanation. Based on the interview results, it is also known that the discussion and question and



answer learning method is one way of learning that can make it easier for participants to understand a learning material.

This is supported by Suhardjono's (2016) opinion that someone with an auditory learning style relies on their sense of hearing when studying. They prefer to hear explanations. Their power is in the ears. When in the lecture hall, students with this auditory type will understand the lesson better when the lecturer explains verbally while teaching. Auditory type people will generally make a sound when memorizing something. They need something that their sense of hearing can hear even when studying alone, such as music that participants often listen to. In addition to visual and auditory learning styles, there are also characteristics of kinesthetic learning styles that are owned by student-athletes.

Odin's kinesthetic learning style tendency, which is very weak in verbal activities, are also always physically oriented and move a lot. This follows the opinion of De Potter & Hernacki (1999), who say that people with this learning style are easier to catch lessons if they move, walk, or practice directly. This makes student-athletes unable to remember material by memorizing and sitting still, moving body parts such as hands/feet when speaking even when presenting in class or speaking in public, likes learning by participating in practice to make it easier for students to learn and understand the course material. Kinesthetic learning style requires the individual to touch something by placing the hand as the primary recipient of information to continue remembering the information. Individuals with a kinesthetic learning style will learn better when physically involved in direct activities (Elindriani et al. 2017).

Using the right and appropriate learning style is very important; it can be seen from the results of this study that student-athletes will get learning outcomes that continue to increase in managing study time and determining learning styles that are following their abilities. In line with the opinion of Honey & Mumford (in Ghufron, 2014), explaining the importance of learning techniques for students, namely helping determine the right choice of many activities and preventing students from inappropriate learning experiences. This means that students can choose which types

of activities are helpful or not suitable for them so that students decide what is appropriate and supports their career.

Some student-athletes succeed in achieving academic and sports achievements, and these four have repeatedly won championships within the province and outside the province of East Nusa Tenggara. Dewantara's (2018) research shows a relationship between sports achievement and academic achievement. There is a significant relationship between sports achievement and academic achievement. Thus, student-athletes are known from the research results that they can balance the two activities they are undergoing, even though it drains them a lot of energy.

Two solid activities must be carried out by student-athletes, with two choices between education (learning) and profession as an athlete (practising). Therefore, the final goals and priorities expressed by student-athletes are not only to excel in sports but also to want to excel in their education. Athlete students also commit to graduate from college and become highly educated scholars so that student-athletes do not leave lectures even though they have a busy schedule of activities.

Based on the discussion above, the four participants have three different learning styles: visual learning styles such as neat and orderly, speaking tends to be fast, likes reading comic books/novels, and easy to remember by seeing, furthermore, in auditory learning styles, such as being easily distracted when there is a commotion, being able to repeat what is heard, and being a good listener. Then on kinesthetic learning styles such as speaking slowly, moving a lot, liking practice, and liking sports. Each participant has a different learning style from one another. Auditory learning styles more dominate the learning style of Tita, Pinki and Rossa have visual learning styles, and Odin has kinesthetic learning styles.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the research results, the learning styles of students-athletes in Kupang City are different. There are athlete students when learning in class or at home is done by reading and writing important things, whereas there are those who

like to learn by listening to the lecturers' explanations. Some learn by moving and also practicing. This difference in student-athlete learning methods shows the easiest way for student-athletes to absorb information while studying in achieving a satisfactory GPA.

Visual learning style in two student-athletes with characteristics, namely liking reading, collecting various reading books, speaking tend to be fast, meticulous in detail in preparing the required needs, challenging to receive verbal instructions and attaching importance to neatness in terms of appearance and notes. The auditory learning style in student-athletes is easily disturbed when there is a commotion, can repeat what is heard, is a good listener, and prefers to tell stories rather than writing. Kinesthetic learning styles in other student-athletes, namely not wasting time, tend to do speech slowly, move a lot in remembering lessons, and learn through practice.

#### *Suggestion*

Participants are expected to understand their learning style to obtain satisfactory learning outcomes. The lecturers must find appropriate learning methods or strategies by emphasizing the student-athletes visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles. Then, parents must pay more attention to and support student-athletes in studying at home to obtain maximum learning outcomes. Coaches also have their role in supporting and motivating student-athletes to maintain exemplary academic achievements and finish college on time.

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