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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The Impact of Aging to Performance in Malaysian Professional Football Perspective

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I. Introduction

Aging presents physiological and cognitive challenges that influence football performance, especially in competitive leagues like the Malaysian Super League (MSL). This study investigates how age affects key performance indicators such as passing accuracy, defensive decisions, and positional play. By analyzing video footage of experienced MSL players, the research aims to provide context-specific insights into the aging-performance relationship, offering valuable guidance for training and career management strategies in professional football.

II. Methods

Video analysis of three 34–36-year-old professional football players from the Malaysian Super League was used in a correlational study. For each player, three complete match recordings were used to extract performance data. Offensive, defensive, and cognitive indicators were used to classify important metrics, such as positional awareness, defensive duels, and pass completion. To investigate the connection between aging and in-game football performance, descriptive statistics were computed, and performance trends were compared across categories.

III. Results and Discussion

The analysis showed no statistically significant differences in defensive, possession, or offensive performance across age groups (all $p > 0.05$). For example, one-way ANOVA for Shots on Target revealed $F(2,6) = 0.0455$, $p = 0.956$, and for Passes Successful, $F(2,6) = 1.189$, $p = 0.367$. These findings suggest that despite physical aging, performance metrics remain stable, potentially due to players' increased experience, tactical awareness, and positional intelligence.

Table I
ANOVA Summary for Key Indicators by Age Group

Variable	F	df1	df2	p-value
Shots on Target	0.0455	2	6	0.956
Dribbles	0.7500	2	6	0.512
Passes Successful	1.189	2	6	0.367
Interceptions	0.1045	2	6	0.902

Although age-related trends in dribbling and cross accuracy were observed, these were not statistically significant. The results imply that performance sustainability in the Malaysian Super League may depend more on tactical maturity and experience than on age alone.

Player age and performance metrics in the offensive, defensive, and possession categories (such as passes, goals, and tackles) did not significantly correlate, according to the analysis ($p > 0.05$). According to the data, older players can continue to produce at a level that is comparable to that of their younger counterparts, despite the expectation that performance will decline with age. This suggests that players may be able to maintain high levels of performance in professional football by compensating for age-related physical changes through elements like experience, tactical knowledge, and positional awareness.

IV. Conclusions

Most aging players in the Malaysian Super League demonstrate stable or declining performance depending on the performance domain assessed. While some physical indicators show reduced effectiveness, cognitive elements such as passing accuracy and positioning remain consistent. However, no strong correlation was identified across all aspects of aging and performance. These findings highlight the need for further research into other factors influencing veteran player performance in professional football contexts.

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