



Mindset And Mental Toughness Of Basketball Athletes Under 18 Years Old

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ABSTRACT

Mindset and mental toughness are two crucial factors that affect the performance of basketball athletes under the age of 18. A positive mindset, such as a growth mindset, encourages young athletes to continue learning, overcome failures, and improve their skills. Meanwhile, mental toughness allows them to stay focused, manage pressure, and face challenges and failures with high resilience. The purpose of this study is to discuss the concept of mindset and mental toughness in the context of basketball athletes under 18 years old. This discussion will also explain how these two elements affect the performance of young athletes and how coaches and the environment can play a role in the development of both. This study uses a qualitative approach with a conceptual study design. This type of research aims to understand the phenomenon that occurs through a deep understanding of the experiences and perspectives of young basketball athletes in developing a mindset and mental toughness. This approach focuses more on descriptive data collection and text analysis or in-depth interviews than quantitative measurement. Mindset and mental toughness are two psychological elements that greatly affect the performance of basketball athletes under the age of 18. Having a positive mindset (growth mindset) and tested mental toughness can help young athletes overcome various obstacles and pressures, both in training and matches. Therefore, coaches, families, and the surrounding environment need to provide positive support and appropriate coaching to develop both aspects. That way, young athletes not only develop in technical aspects but also in mental readiness to face even greater sporting challenges in the future.

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INTRODUCTION

The success and failure levels of athletes can be influenced by various factors, the most important of which are physical, tactical, technical, and psychological factors. In the world of sports, especially basketball, the age of 18 is an important period for the physical, skillful, and psychological development of athletes. Basketball is a game played by two teams, each consisting of five players, who compete to score by putting the ball into the opponent's hoop guarded by the defending team (Rustanto, 2017). As a sport that



prioritizes agility, physical strength, and intelligence in decision-making, basketball requires athletes who not only have good technical skills but also a strong mindset and tested mental toughness. The mindset of a basketball athlete reflects a strong, disciplined, and victory-oriented mindset. Mental toughness is the capacity of an athlete to overcome pressure when training and competing effectively, while maintaining endurance and psychological strength (Liew, 2019). These two aspects have an important role in helping young athletes overcome the pressures, challenges, and obstacles that arise in competitions and training. Every competition in sports brings diverse and unexpected mental challenges, ranging from the pressure to achieve team targets, and dynamics with teammates and coaches, to facing public attention and social media (Arisman, 2024).

This article aims to discuss the concept of mindset and mental toughness in the context of basketball athletes under 18 years old. This discussion will also explain how these two elements affect the performance of young athletes and how coaches and the environment can play a role in the development of both. Therefore, the mindset and mental toughness of Basketball Athletes Under 18 years old still do not exist, so it is necessary to discuss a conceptual study on the Mindset and Mental toughness of Basketball Athletes Under 18 years old.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a conceptual study design. This type of research aims to understand the phenomenon that occurs through a deep understanding of the experiences and perspectives of young basketball athletes in developing a mindset and mental toughness. This approach focuses more on descriptive data collection and text analysis or in-depth interviews than quantitative measurement.

The study on mindset and mental toughness in basketball athletes under 18 years old aims to identify psychological factors that affect the performance of young athletes. A positive mindset (such as a growth mindset) and mental toughness can play an important role in helping young athletes overcome various challenges on the field. Therefore, it is important to examine how these two factors develop, are influenced by the environment, and contribute to the performance achievement of early-age basketball athletes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the various results and discussions of this research on the development of young athletes, it can be identified as follows:

a. Mindset

In the world of sports, especially basketball, mindset plays an important role in determining the development and performance of young athletes. Athletes under the age of 18 are in the phase of character and skill formation, so having the right mindset has a great influence on their development in the sport. In the world of sports, athletes

need to be able to control their thoughts and emotions to maintain concentration and stay focused on the goals they want to achieve (Alficantra, 2023). Mindset refers to the mindset and beliefs that affect the way athletes view their training, matches, and development. There are two main types of mindset:

1. Fixed Mindset: Athletes with this mindset tend to believe that their abilities are innate and cannot change. They easily give up when facing difficulties.
2. Growth Mindset: Athletes with this mindset believe that abilities can be developed through practice and hard work. They are better prepared to face challenges and continue to learn from failures. Young athletes need to be guided to have a growth mindset so that they can continue to develop and not give up easily. Strategies to build a growth mindset to help basketball athletes are as follows: (1) **Setting Clear Goals:** Athletes must have short-term and long-term goals to stay motivated. (2) **Seeing Challenges as Learning Opportunities:** Mistakes are not failures, but part of the learning process. (3) **Train Mental Resilience:** Athletes must learn to manage their emotions and stay calm when facing pressure. (4) **Receiving Positive Feedback:** Criticism from coaches and teammates should be seen as an opportunity to improve. (5) **Develop Confidence:** With consistent training and a positive attitude, athletes will have more confidence in their abilities.

The right mindset plays a huge role in the success of basketball athletes under the age of 18. By building a growth mindset, young athletes can face challenges with more confidence, continue to develop, and reach their best potential in the world of sports. Support from coaches, parents, and teammates is also crucial in forming a positive mindset that helps them achieve success in the future.

b. Mental Toughness

Mental toughness is one of the main factors that distinguish great athletes from others. For basketball athletes under the age of 18, having good mental resilience is essential to face challenges in training and matches. Maintaining athletes' performance when facing challenges, and pressure in matches, and managing thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in potentially stressful situations (Cowden, 2017). Mental toughness helps them stay focused, confident, and able to overcome pressure and failure with a positive attitude. Mental toughness is the ability of an athlete to remain calm, focused, and persistent in the face of pressure and challenges, both in training and competition. Athletes with high mental toughness are not easily influenced by failure or external pressure but can use it as motivation to continue to improve. This study revealed that there is a relationship between age and the mental toughness of athletes, showing that age level affects the mental toughness of an athlete (Akbar, 2019). Psychological resilience in the world of sports is manifested as a series of characteristics that support a person to become a superior athlete and be able to face the challenges of training and tough competition so that they can perform optimally without losing confidence (Kumar, 2017).

(Gucciardi, 2008) states that mental toughness consists of four dimensions, namely:

1. Thrive through challenge refers to the ability of athletes to control themselves against pressure both from inside and outside. This dimension includes seven key attributes, namely (1) Belief in physical and mental abilities – Athletes are confident in their physical and mental strength and can bounce back after facing pressure. (2) Ability to perform under pressure – Athletes can show their best performance even in stressful situations. (3) Pressure as a challenge – Athletes can turn the pressure they experience into a motivating challenge. (4) High competitiveness – Athletes have a strong motivation to be the best in a competitive environment. (5) Ability to bounce back – Athletes can recover and regain focus after facing adversity or failure. (6) Concentration – Athletes remain disciplined and focused both during training and in matches to achieve their goals. (7) Perseverance – Athletes show persistence in undergoing training and matches to achieve the desired target.
2. Sport awareness refers to the attitude of athletes towards individual and team performance. This dimension includes six main attributes, namely: (1) Awareness of the individual's role – The athlete understands his responsibilities as part of the team and performs his role well. (2) Understanding of pressure – Athletes are aware of and able to deal with the pressure that arises in the competition. (3) Acceptance of role in the team – Athletes understand the importance of responsibility as a team member and always prioritize the common good over personal interests. (4) Self-worth – Athletes have an understanding of personal values that drive them to become superior individuals. (5) Sacrifice – Athletes realize that effort and sacrifice are needed to achieve team goals as well as personal goals. (6) Responsibility – Athletes can introspect on mistakes made without making excuses or blaming others.
3. Resilient mindset is the ability of athletes to control themselves in facing various challenges, both positive and negative. This aspect consists of five main attributes, namely: (1) Emotional Adaptability – The ability of athletes to adjust their emotions to changes in the atmosphere during the match. (2) Self-Discipline – The attitude of discipline inherent in athletes to always try to be the best, both individually and in a team. (3) Perseverance in Challenges – Perseverance and unyielding attitude in facing obstacles and achieving predetermined goals. (4) Endurance Under Fatigue – The ability of athletes to continue to perform at their best in matches and training despite fatigue. (5) Performance Amidst Injury – Endurance and endurance of athletes in continuing to perform optimally in matches and training despite minor injuries.
4. Drive for achievement is a strong drive to achieve positive goals through hard work and determination. This aspect consists of five main attributes, namely: (1) Game Intelligence – The ability of athletes to understand the rules of the game in detail and apply them strategically. (2) Sacrificial Commitment – Willingness to sacrifice and sincerity as part of the journey to success. (3) Team-Oriented Mindset – Awareness that the success and failure of a team depends on the contribution of each member, including himself. (4) Success Vision – The ability of athletes to have a clear vision in achieving success. (5)

Embracing Competitive Uncertainty – Understanding that in every match, each individual has the same chance to win or lose, so they must be ready to face all possibilities.

(Gucciardi, 2008) Reveals that two main factors contribute to strong mental toughness, namely:

1. Non-match conditions are circumstances that occur outside the moment of the match. This condition is divided into five main aspects, namely: (1) Injury and Recovery – It relates to the patience and perseverance of athletes in dealing with injuries and the rehabilitation process, which requires adjustments in their routines. (2) Preparation – Athletes who want to achieve success must have maturity in training, including increasing the intensity of training to surpass the achievements of competitors. (3) Challenge Form – Athletes must still show their best performance, both when they are in a superior position and when they are behind their opponents. (4) Social Pressure – A situation in which an athlete feels pressure from a social environment, such as friends, coaches, or family, which can potentially affect their self-control and motivation. (5) Balance of Commitment – The ability of an athlete to balance his or her life as an athlete and his or her personal life, especially in terms of discipline and time management.
2. Competitive conditions are the circumstances that occur in a match. The condition of competition is divided into two aspects, namely: (1) Internal pressure, which is pressure that comes from within oneself, such as fatigue or lack of confidence. (2) External pressure, which is the pressure that comes from external factors, such as the environment, weather, opponents, expectations, and so on.

c. The Influence of Mindset and Mental Toughness on the Performance of Young Athletes

The influence of others is experienced by the entire subject, where athletes can rise from failure, rise from insecurity, and rise from the demands they experience because they are influenced by others such as role model athletes, friends and coaches (Rahayu Setya Utami, 2024).

1. Improving Performance Consistency: Athletes with a growth mindset and high mental toughness can perform stably in various match situations.
2. Accelerate Skills Development: A growth mindset helps athletes continue to learn and improve, while mental toughness helps them stay focused despite challenges.
3. Reduces Stress and Anxiety: Athletes who have good mental endurance are not easily affected by external pressure, so they can play more calmly and effectively.
4. Improves the ability to overcome failures: Athletes with a growth mindset and high mental toughness are quicker to get up after experiencing defeat or mistakes in the game.

d. Mindset and Mental Toughness Development Strategies

Several strategies can be applied to develop a mindset and mental toughness in basketball athletes under the age of 18:

1. Instilling a Growth Mindset: (a) Teaching that skills and abilities can be improved with practice and effort. (b) Encourage athletes to see failure as part of the learning process. (c) Give praise for the effort, not just the final result.
2. Practice Pressure Management Skills: (a) Use breathing techniques to reduce stress before and during the game. (b) Apply visualization techniques to imagine success in various game situations. (c) Conducting training under pressure so that athletes get used to the tense conditions of the match.
3. Building Confidence: (a) Setting realistic and measurable goals. (b) Provide constructive and positive feedback. (c) Practice basic skills consistently so that athletes feel better prepared for the game.
4. Developing Emotional Endurance: (a) Teaching athletes to stay focused on the things they can control. (b) Encourage a positive mindset in dealing with mistakes and criticism. (c) Assist athletes in building good relationships with coaches and teammates to create a supportive environment.

Mindset and mental toughness are two crucial factors that affect the performance of basketball athletes under the age of 18. A positive mindset, such as a *growth mindset*, encourages young athletes to continue learning, overcome failures, and improve their skills. Meanwhile, mental toughness allows them to stay focused, manage pressure, and face challenges and failures with high resilience.

The role of the coach and the environment is crucial in the development of these two elements. Coaches can build mental toughness and a positive mindset by providing support, and constructive feedback, and creating a challenging but still supportive training environment. In addition, family, friends, and a healthy competitive atmosphere also contribute to shaping the character of young athletes to be more confident, tough, and ready to face various situations in the match. With the right combination of mindset and strong mental toughness, young athletes can reach their best potential in the world of sports.

CONCLUSION

Mindset and mental toughness are two psychological elements that greatly affect the performance of basketball athletes under the age of 18. Having a positive mindset (growth mindset) and tested mental toughness can help young athletes overcome various obstacles and pressures, both in training and matches. Therefore, coaches, families, and the surrounding environment need to provide positive support and appropriate coaching to develop both aspects. That way, young athletes not only develop in technical aspects but also in mental readiness to face even greater sporting challenges in the future.

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