



Self-Confidence of The Rugby Athletes of The Responsible Contingent Following The PON XXI Championship Aceh-Sumut 2024

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the self-confidence level of rugby athletes from the West Java contingent participating in the 2024 National Sports Week (PON XXI) in Aceh, North Sumatra, and to identify the influencing factors. Self-confidence is a crucial psychological aspect that affects an athlete's performance, especially under the pressure of national-level competition. This research employed a qualitative approach with a case study design, involving four athletes as participants. Data were collected through questionnaires and in-depth interviews and analyzed using thematic techniques. The findings revealed variations in self-confidence levels, with two athletes categorized as moderate and the other two as high. Internal factors such as competitive experience, physical readiness, and self-concept, along with external factors including social support and educational background, were found to shape the athletes' self-confidence. These results provide important insights for designing more effective mental training strategies to support athletes in preparing for high-level sports competitions.

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B. Acquisition of data;
C. Analysis and interpretation of data;
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INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, human interest in sports has increased very rapidly, including in Indonesia. Not only that, sports are also an important part of learning, especially in Physical Education because it is one of the effective subjects and is widely recognized to increase students' physical activity (Fauzi, R.A., Suherman, A., Saptani, E., Dinangsit, D., & Rahman, A.A. 2023). This development is seen from the increasing number of people who like and participate in various sports activities, both as participants and spectators. One real form of the spirit of sports in Indonesia is the National Sports Week (PON), which is the largest sports competition event in the country. This event is competed by the Indonesian National Sports Committee (KONI) and takes place every four years, rotating throughout the provinces in Indonesia (Wahyudi et al., 2022). On this occasion, people from various backgrounds gather to show their best abilities in various sports.



Interestingly, in the 21st PON in 2024 held in Aceh and North Sumatra, a new sport emerged that is still relatively foreign to most Indonesians, namely rugby. The presence of rugby as one of the branches competed in shows that sports continue to develop and open up space for humans to get to know and develop potential in sports that were previously unpopular in the country.

Rugby, as one of the sports that is still developing in Indonesia, is a game that relies on the ball as the main object, where players try to bring the ball across the opponent's goal line and then slam or put it on the ground to get a score (Putri & Wisnu, 2019). In this game, not only excellent physical abilities are the main requirements, but also solid team cohesion and strong mentality are needed. In addition, the confidence of rugby athletes plays an important role in determining their performance on the field. This confidence can affect the way they make decisions, as well as their ability to deal with pressure and resistance from a tough opposing team (Rodríguez, Velastequí, 2019).

In the world of sports, psychological factors play a very large role and are often equated with technical and physical aspects (Dongoran et al., 2020; Hayashi, 2016). As humans, athletes do not only rely on muscle strength or technical skills alone but also need mental stability to achieve their best performance. One important aspect of this psychological side is self-confidence (Sholeh & Hakim, 2019). Self-confidence is a positive attitude that grows in athletes when they believe in their abilities, both during training and during competitions (Purnamasari et al., 2022). When an athlete feels confident and self-assured, this can increase their enthusiasm, focus, and resilience in dealing with pressure. Conversely, a lack of self-confidence can make them easily shaken in critical situations. Therefore, as a whole human being, an athlete needs strong self-confidence to be able to perform optimally and achieve the best results in every competition.

In the context of rugby athletes participating in the XXI PON championship, there are differences in the level of self-confidence between individuals. Some athletes, especially from the West Java Rugby team, still do not realize how important it is to have a strong sense of self-confidence in themselves as a whole human being, both physically and mentally. Some athletes follow the training program not because of the urge to develop, but only for pocket money. When the coach gives them heavy training, they often complain and show mental unpreparedness. Some athletes are not sure of their abilities, even feeling nervous and burdened when receiving attention from others during training or matches. This phenomenon is often found in athletes who are new to the world of rugby, or those who have moved from other sports. However, surprisingly, some athletes have been involved in the world of rugby for quite a long time but still show signs of a lack of self-confidence. This can be triggered by various factors, both from within the human being, such as fear of failure or bad experiences, or from external factors such as social pressure or an unsupportive environment.

Several previous studies have highlighted the importance of psychological factors in rugby athletes' performance. For example, a study by (Quintero et al., 2022) showed that athletes' self-confidence levels can be influenced by various factors such as competitive experience, social support, and coping strategies used to deal with competitive pressure.

In addition, other studies have found that athletes with high self-confidence tend to be better able to manage emotions and maintain focus during matches (Leitner & Richlan, 2021). However, these studies are still limited to the specific context of rugby sports in Indonesia, especially in national-level competitions such as PON.

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the level of self-confidence of rugby athletes competing in PON XXI Aceh-North Sumatra, thus, it is expected that the findings of this study can provide valuable insights for coaches, managers and policymakers in designing more effective training programs and strategies to improve the performance of rugby athletes in the future.

METHODS

This research is a type of qualitative research with a design used, namely a case study. This case study research design allows researchers to achieve the objectives of the research they want to study. In addition, the case study design is very useful for researching contemporary phenomena, revealing causal relationships, developing new theories, and studying unique or extreme cases (Permana, 2020). The flexibility of this design allows researchers to adjust the research according to conditions in the field and provide contextual, holistic, and in-depth understanding (Rifa'i, 2023).

Participants in this study were 4 rugby athletes from the West Java contingent who participated in the 2024 PON XXI Aceh-North Sumatra championship, consisting of 2 men and 2 women. Participants The four rugby athletes were selected purposively based on three main criteria: having actively participated in the 2024 PON XXI Aceh-North Sumatra championship, being willing to provide in-depth interviews, and representing gender balance to obtain a comprehensive perspective. This study was conducted over three months, starting in early January 2025 and ending in late March 2025. During this period, the research team carried out a series of activities including data collection through interviews with rugby athletes, distributing and processing questionnaires, and analyzing the results obtained. This study was conducted at each rugby athlete's residence located in the province of West Java.

In this study, the researcher used an interview instrument and a questionnaire adopted from previous research conducted by (Aguss & Fahrizqi, 2020). The instrument that will be used in collecting data for this study is measuring the variables contained in this study. The instrument used is a grid of self-confidence instruments that have been described in the indicators and factors of each variable that refers to the theory (Ghufron and Rini, 2011) by adopting the instrument from (Andrianto, 2016). The researcher will provide the questionnaire instrument to respondents once. Each respondent is asked to rate statements related to their experiences during the competition.

In this study, interview data analysis was conducted by researchers using the NVivo12 application to better understand the contents of the interview transcripts of the participants. This application helps researchers identify and mark important themes that emerge, through a process called coding. After coding is complete, researchers then conduct inductive data analysis, namely analyzing participants' answers in depth to find

patterns and meanings based on what they expressed, not based on initial assumptions. Both of these analysis processes are carried out to explore and highlight the main themes that are relevant to the research questions while maintaining the authenticity of the voices and experiences of the participants.

The questionnaire data analysis in this study involved three main stages: data collection through the distribution of questionnaires to relevant respondents, transcription of open-ended responses to facilitate analysis, and application of thematic analysis to identify patterns or themes that emerged from the responses given. Using an inductive approach allows researchers to dig deeper into the meaning of the data without being influenced by initial assumptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process also involves coding, where researchers label pieces of data to identify key themes. In this way, researchers can build a narrative that describes insights and interpretations from the data that has been analyzed. Once all themes have been identified, researchers can then compile a report that reflects the results of the analysis in detail, accompanied by relevant quotes from respondents to support the existing findings (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). To calculate the results of the respondents' answers, researchers use a Likert scale. On this Likert scale, the questionnaire gives a score for each answer, namely 1–4. score 1 (one) for opinion/answer strongly disagree while score 4 (four) for opinion/answer strongly agree (Sumartini et al., 2020). The following are the Likert scale Likert:

Table 1.

Likert scale scoring guidelines

No	Alternative answer	Score
1	Strongly agree	4
2	Agree	3
3	Disagree	2
4	Strongly disagree	1

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the author will present the results of filling out the self-confidence questionnaire of the West Java contingent rugby athletes who participated in PON XXI Aceh-North Sumatra 2024. The data was obtained from a questionnaire containing 34 statements that had been filled out by 4 respondents and using a four-point Likert scale. Each answer was scored from 1 to 4, then added up to determine the total self-confidence score of each athlete.

Table 2.

Questionnaire results

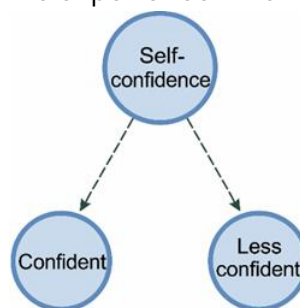
Respondents	Total score	Confidence category
Athlete 1	99	Currently
Athlete 2	94	Currently
Athlete 3	111	Hight
Athlete 4	111	Hight

Based on the results of filling out the questionnaire that has been formed in Table 2, four athletes are respondents. The first athlete scored 99 and the second athlete scored 94, both of which are included in the medium self-confidence category. While the third and

fourth athletes each scored 111, so they are included in the high self-confidence category. This category is determined based on the score interval, where a score of 34–67 is classified as low, a score of 68–101 is classified as medium, and a score of 102–136 is classified as high.

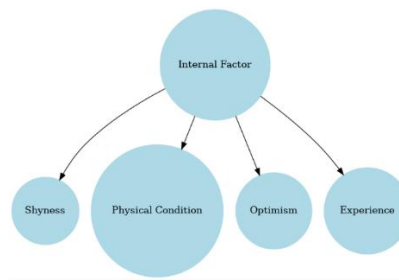
Athletes with moderate levels of self-confidence generally show fairly good confidence in their abilities, but may still feel doubtful in certain situations, such as when facing strong opponents or under match pressure. Influencing factors could be limited competition experience, less than optimal social support, or anxiety when competing at the national level. In the context of sports psychology, this condition is often a critical point in the mental development of athletes. They may display inconsistent performance, sometimes playing very well when in their comfort zone, but are easily distracted when facing challenging situations. The role of mental coaches and sports psychologists is very important to help athletes identify anxiety triggers and develop effective stress management strategies. Techniques such as positive visualization, breathing exercises, and realistic goal setting can help increase athletes' self-confidence gradually. In addition, building a supportive team environment and a structured training program with a progressively increasing level of difficulty can also contribute to increasing athletes' self-confidence in the long term.

Meanwhile, athletes who have high self-confidence tend to be more stable in managing emotions and pressure during the match. They have strong confidence in their abilities, are more mentally prepared, and show a positive attitude when facing challenges. This can be influenced by high-flying hours, the role of coaches who build mentality, and previous competitive experiences that form psychological resilience.



Picture 1.
Mind Map Self-Confidence

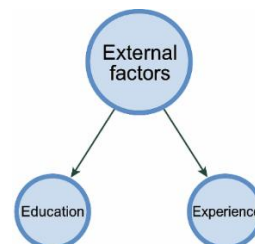
Based on the results of the interview referring to the mind map regarding self-confidence, it was found that the rugby athletes of the West Java contingent who participated in the 2024 Aceh-North Sumatra XXI PON Championship showed two main tendencies, namely the categories of self-confidence and lack of self-confidence. Athletes who are classified as self-confident generally have strong beliefs in their individual and team abilities, as seen from their courage in taking the initiative during the match, as well as their optimistic attitude when facing tough opponents. They are also more open to the coach's direction and can control the pressure of the match well. Conversely, a small number of athletes show symptoms of a lack of self-confidence, such as hesitation when making decisions, feeling anxious before the match starts, and being less active in team communication.



Picture 2.
Mind Map Internal factors.

The results of this interview show that internal factors play a key role in an athlete's performance. From the mapping carried out, it can be seen how internal factors branch into four main aspects: feelings of inferiority, physical condition, optimism, and experience. When athletes experience feelings of inferiority, this usually appears when facing opponents who appear more prepared or when facing high-level competitions that have never been participated in before. Physical condition is also an important determinant of athletes who are fit and prime tend to perform better than those who are injured or tired. As expressed by one of the respondents a West Java rugby athlete who participated in PON XXI Aceh-North Sumatra 2024:

"We were demanded during the TC for 7 months in Yonzipur, we were demanded to be ready whether we were sick or injured or anything because we were formed like athletes who must not know pain or injury, I experienced it during the trial in Yonzipur at that time until my hand was dislocated, I raised my hand to the coach to ask for a replacement, the coach fixed it immediately taped it and immediately told me to play again, because rugby, no matter how injured it is, if we play as athletes, we don't know injury or pain, we have to be ready whether we are sick or injured."



Picture 3.
Mind Map External factors

The results of the study showed that external factors have a significant influence on athlete performance, with two main components standing out: education and experience. From the mapping carried out, it is clear how athletes' educational backgrounds shape the way they understand sports, analyze game strategies and develop self-discipline. Athletes with higher formal education tend to have a more systematic and analytical approach to facing challenges on the field. Meanwhile, the experience of competing at various levels of competition has proven to be an irreplaceable "school" for athletes who have faced various match situations, various types of opponents, and various audience pressures showing better mental resilience.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study showed that the level of self-confidence of the West Java contingent rugby athletes participating in PON XXI Aceh–North Sumatra 2024 was divided into two categories, namely medium and high. Of the four respondents, two athletes were in the medium category, and the other two were in the high category. This is in line with the opinion of (Robazza et al., 2025) which explains that an athlete's self-confidence is closely related to the emotional condition and psychological experiences they experience throughout the competition. When negative emotions such as anxiety or insecurity dominate, self-confidence tends to decrease and has an impact on decision-making and focus during the competition. Without proper emotional management, athletes can lose momentum and even experience a drastic decline in performance.

In this study, athlete self-confidence is understood as a psychological condition that is influenced by various factors, both from within the individual and from the surrounding environment. In general, these factors can be divided into two main categories, namely internal factors and external factors. Internal factors include personal aspects such as motivation, competitive experience, mental readiness, and individual perception of their abilities. The more positive the athlete's perception and belief in their abilities, the greater their level of self-confidence.

Internal factors play an important role in shaping athletes' self-confidence when competing. Diverse competitive experiences are valuable assets for athletes, because those who have competed at various levels, both regional and national, usually show higher levels of self-confidence. This is because they are accustomed to facing different pressures and competitive situations (Rintaugu et al., 2018). Meanwhile, external factors are more related to the social environment and situations outside the athlete that can affect their psychological condition. This includes support from coaches, teammates, family, and the atmosphere of the competition itself. The presence of consistent support and an environment that supports the development of achievement can strengthen athletes' self-confidence in facing the pressure of the match. These two factors interact with each other and play an important role in shaping an athlete's self-confidence, especially when facing major competitions such as the National Sports Week (PON). Therefore, a deep understanding of these two factors is important to describe the psychological condition of athletes more completely.

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