



## **The Influence Of Mental Toughness on The Achievement Of Professional Athletes**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study aims to examine the relationship between mental toughness and athlete achievement. The research method used in this study is correlation research with a descriptive research design. This research was conducted in the city of Makassar with the population in this study being PORPROV 2022 athletes in Sinjai Regency. For the sampling technique, we used convenience sampling by giving freedom to the sample over availability to be the research sample in this study. Through this sampling, the number of samples in this study amounted to 38 athletes. The instrument used in this study was mental toughness (AfMTI) to measure the mental toughness of athletes, and an achievement instrument to take the number of medals with the top three rankings obtained by athletes. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between mental toughness and professional athlete achievement.*

**Keywords:** Athlete Achievement; Mental Toughness; Relations.

## **INTRODUCTION**

One of the determinants of an athlete's victory is mental toughness. The psychological aspect plays a major role in the athlete's performance, even at the level of competition the psychological aspect plays a very large role. Therefore, the involvement of a sports psychologist is very important to build the mental toughness of a professional athlete. The involvement of other parties also affects the mental toughness of athletes, for example with parents, and the athlete's own environment (Weinberg, Freysinger, & Mellano, 2018). Mental toughness is much influenced or shaped by the environment, including the family environment, school environment, and training environment (Connaughton, Wadey, Hanton, & Jones, 2008).

The role of the social environment in the formation of an athlete's identity is

undeniable. Coaches must be distinguished from mere educators because coaches not only train athletes to perform optimally but also train athletes to display correct behavior both within the club and in the general public. One of the pressures for athletes to excel is the fear of failure. These thoughts can be ignored by athletes if they get good social support around them. Meanwhile, sports provide an environment in which individuals must motivate themselves intensely to achieve their goals (Sukys, Tilindienė, Cesnaitiene, & Kreivyte, 2019).

Social support eventually becomes an external motivation. In addition, motivation can act as a mediator; for example, motivation plays a role in the interaction between perfectionism and burnout. Athletes need this aspect of motivation to achieve peak performance. In this case, achievement is defined as achieving goals that are valued individually or socially and that have physical significance for someone (Roberts, Treasure, & Conroy, 2012). In this way, achievement can also be defined subjectively, success or failure in obtaining goals is a subjective state based on participants' assessment of the results of achievement behavior. Therefore, to achieve maximum performance, athletes are often faced with various challenges, both in training situations and in competition situations. Therefore, athletes must have good abilities in physical, technical, tactical, and mental aspects. Basically, a team that is well prepared, mentally and physically, then success is clear in sight.

In this regard, each athlete has a different mental strength and athletic motivation to face the competition, both when the team wins and loses. This research needs to be done because many coaches have not researched and considered the mental toughness of athletes. The facts on the ground show that there are still many coaches who focus on the physical and technical readiness of the athletes without considering their way of thinking, sports motivation, and personality of the athletes.

Mental toughness is an important aspect that must be owned by an athlete. The components of mental toughness are commitment, control, challenge, and trust. Athletes with good mental toughness contribute to improving athlete performance. Likewise, athletes with good motivation can also improve the athlete's performance. In addition, motivation is a fundamental mental skill that must be possessed by athletes. In addition to mental strength, athletic motivation can also improve an athlete's performance and influence personality. Therefore, personality is influenced by genetic and environmental factors. In addition, genetic factors are factors that come from within the individual. In contrast, environmental factors are factors that come from outside the individual and

consist of four sub-factors, namely sub-culture, social class, family, and peers. These two factors always work together. each other, influencing the personality of the other. Therefore, personality development is an interaction between heredity and the environment (Hidayat, 2009).

Jones (2007) explains that mental toughness is defined as a psychological quality that helps overcome athletic pressure and allows athletes to consistently demonstrate psychological skills such as focus, motivation, confidence, and control. More specifically, mental toughness includes the athlete's perception of self-control, the will to succeed, and moderate to high risk-taking. The language used to describe mental toughness seems to reinforce an elitist attitude toward success (Caddick & Ryall, 2012). Language explicitly links the concept of mental toughness to success and ideology. Once again, these qualities serve to conjure up the inspiring image of the determined and determined heroic athlete. Clough (2002) conceptualizes mental toughness and toughness as similar constructs, with the only important difference being the addition of confidence to their models. The four components of mental toughness, according to this model of mental toughness, are Control, Commitment, Challenge, and Confidence. The key components of mental toughness according to Gordon and Guacciardi (2011) are as follows: (1) Belief in oneself to achieve success (i.e., self-confidence); (2) Ability to focus on what is relevant and minimize irrelevant information (ie, attentional control); (3) The ability to persevere in difficult situations and bounce back from setbacks (i.e., resilience); (4) The desire to achieve success and to act on such thoughts (i.e., mindset success); (5) Tendency to expect positive future results, and to see oneself in a positive light (i.e., to think optimistically); (6) Awareness of and ability to use emotions to facilitate optimal outcomes (ie, emotional awareness and regulation); (7) Thrives when challenged to carry out required skills and procedures effectively (i.e., handles challenges); (8) Awareness and understanding of the environment, and how to apply that knowledge to achieve success (ie, context intelligence). On the other hand, Riordan (2013) describes six main elements namely flexibility, responsiveness, strength, ethics, resilience, and sportsmanship.

Many psychological characteristics that can help develop mental toughness are influenced by factors such as coaches, types of sports, goal setting, visualization, and self-talk (Quinn & Cavanaugh, 2017). First is the role of the coach, several factors determine whether a person has mental toughness including how hard they work, their playing attitude, their intensity, and the way they practice (Weinberg et al., 2011). The second is visualization, which is one of the most effective ways for players to prepare themselves.

Finally, speak for yourself. Similar to visualization, another tool for preparing your mind is self-talk.

The diction for achievement actually comes from the Dutch language, which means the result of effort. From this understanding of achievement, the notion of self-achievement is the result of one's efforts. To achieve achievement in various sports, is determined by several factors, Gunarsa (1989) explains that these factors are as follows: (1) Physical factors, namely related to physical conditions such as structure, posture, and endurance; (2) Both technical factors, skill factors, and special abilities are closely related to talent; and (3) Factors related to the structure and function of the athlete's personality.

Achievements achieved by athletes do not come by themselves, but must begin with the search for talented athletes and then develop them properly through programmed training. Theoretically, individuals engaged in a task should exhibit positive and adaptive motivated behavior, regardless of their perceived level of competence. This is because they are more concerned with the adequacy of their abilities than with other people, which increases the likelihood of feeling incompetent, especially for those who doubt their abilities.

## **METHOD**

The method in research is a way used by the author to conduct research so as not to get out of the corridors of academic scholarship. The method or method in research is very important so that the research carried out can obtain results in the form of answers from the research and the research takes place not out of the discussion that has been formulated by the author. The research design used in this study is a Korean design. This study consisted of one independent variable (X), namely mental toughness, and one dependent variable (Y), namely athlete achievement. Many types of research methods can be used in accordance with the research to be carried out, in this study the authors used a correlational research method. According to (Fraenkel, 2012), "correlational correlation studies research to determine the relationship and level of relationship between two or more variables without any attempt to manipulate the variables.

The data source for this research came from professional athletes who were the samples in this study. This research involved athletes from various branches who took part in the 2022 Sinjai PORPROV which took place in the Sinjai and Bulukumba districts. The author chose the participants in this study by looking at the minimum achievements of getting a bronze medal at the event. Researchers used a convenience sampling technique,

which is a sampling technique that emphasizes or is based on willingness to be a sample in this study. Therefore, 38 athletes were selected who were willing to be the sample after the researchers gave 24 hours to consider the offer, of course, with mutually agreed consequences.

The mental toughness measurement tool is a scale used to measure mental toughness variables. The mental toughness measurement tool that the authors use in this study is a construction of the measurement tool developed by Gucciardi, et al (2009), namely the Australian Football mental toughness inventory (AfMTI), this scale consists of 24 statement items that measure 4 mental factors toughness: thrive through challenges, sports awareness, tough attitude, and desire success.

For achievement, measurement is carried out using an ordinal scale, which is a scale based on rankings ordered from the higher level to the lowest level or vice versa. The data analysis technique used is the calculation of the description of the data which includes the mean, variance, and standard deviation using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 for windows application.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the multiple linear regression tests performed, the results are obtained in the following table.

**Table 1.**  
The results of the linear regression test

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	160.392	25.210		6.362	.000
Mental Toughness	.586	.270	.388	2.170	.042
Athlete Achievement	-.579	.252	.411	2.299	.032

a. Dependent Variabel: Athlete Achievement

Thus it can be concluded that the mental toughness variable (X) contributes significantly to athlete achievement (Y). Related to the factors that influence the mental toughness that must be possessed by athletes in obtaining better performance. There are several categories of indicators organized with an emphasis on mental toughness that must be possessed by athletes, namely: First, the factor of thriving through challenges (developing through challenges). Second, is the sports awareness factor. Third, is the tough attitude factor. Fourth, is the desire for success factor.

Based on the explanation above regarding the factors that affect mental toughness

and athlete achievement, the view of sports psychology experts emphasizes that building or increasing mental toughness in the family environment, school environment, and training environment is very important because it is necessary to consult with coaches, parents, sports psychologists and athletes themselves who play a major role in building or increasing mental toughness both during practice and competition in achieving the expected achievement, (Connaughton, Wadey, Hanton, & Jones, 2008; Weinberg, Freysinger, & Mellano, 2018). In this case, personality development is expected to produce healthy individuals who have the ability/smartness to adapt and can produce the expected achievements. However, the pressure on athletes to excel is the fear of failure, therefore, coaches and sports psychologists play an important role in shaping the attitude, competence, and performance of athletes (sports performance). In this regard, in the training environment, coaches and athletes must experience all obstacles, difficulties, or pressure from the organization. However, also maintaining concentration and motivation when things are going well, is to be able to understand/increase mental toughness and can assist coaches and athletes in maintaining a level of consistency and drive to achieve achievement goals set as a team and individually. Thus, trainers must have a variety of approaches, which can start from the coaching environment to specific exercises in practice that are applied sequentially to promote the growth of mental toughness.

Coaches must use emotional and material aspects to find the athlete's inner motivation, for example, stress, in this case, what needs are not being met, and growing mental toughness. If the trainer seeks to provide an approach to obtaining a championship title or maintaining a championship title for the common interest or organizational goals.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The findings from this research reveal that there is a significant relationship between mental toughness and athlete achievement. It can be said that the athletes who won medals at PORPROV Sinjai have very good mental toughness. Therefore, it is recommended for coaches and parents of athletes support the formation of mental toughness in athletes so they can reach peak achievements. The researcher also suggests for future researchers elaborate on different methods related to the formation of athletes' mental toughness in the team and individual sports.

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