

Psychological Support for the Mental Toughness of Tae Kwon Do Athletes

Danan Satriyo Wibowo^{1*}, Ahmad Sulaiman², Jepri Akbar¹

¹Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember

²Sports Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Jember

*email corresponding author: danansatriyo@unmuhjember.ac.id

Received: 14/05/2024

Revised: 21/06/2024

Accepted: 24/06/2024

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Abstract

The winning mentality is still a problem for some athletes in professional competitions, where competing to be the best in a match (championship) is the maximum achievement that an athlete can give because of the training process that has been undertaken and the achievement of being the championship winner of a match. The urgency of this research is to measure the influence of psychological support received by athletes on the formation of a winning mentality in each championship they participate in as a form of achieving the need for achievement and self-actualization of the athlete's abilities. This research aims to examine the influence of psychological support on the formation of a winning mentality for Tae Kwon-Do athletes. This research was carried out using a quantitative approach with simple regression analysis to test the hypothesis. The research sample was Bondowoso Tae Kwon-Do athletes who had participated in competitions of at least level. Besuki Ex-Residency region. The measuring instruments used are a psychological support scale and a champion's mental scale. The research results obtained were that psychological support had an influence in forming a winning mentality in Tae Kwon Do athletes. Psychological support can influence a person's mental state so that he can overcome the tension that occurs within him. Social support that comes from support and the social environment can reduce the stress experienced by a person, in this case the athlete's condition. Psychological support will create feelings of being loved, appreciated and not alone in facing the match.

Keywords: athlete; psychological support; winner mentality; Taekwondo.

How to cite:

Wibowo, D. S., Sulaiman, A., & Akbar, J. (2024). Psychological Support for the Mental Toughness of Tae Kwon Do Athletes. *JUMORA: Jurnal Moderasi Olahraga*, 4(1), 98-109. <https://doi.org/10.53863/mor.v4i1.1145>

1. INTRODUCTION

An athlete's success in a sport is influenced by many factors, including physical, technical, and tactical aspects obtained from training and experience gained from a competition

(Bompa & Haff, 2009; Maksum, 2020), but besides that, mental factors are often becoming a determining factor for athletes in obtaining maximum results, namely becoming champions (Tay, et all in Maksum, 2020). The urgency of mental factors is not only needed when an athlete is competing in a championship but also when the athlete is training and living their daily life.

Mentality can be understood as a set of beliefs, attitudes, perceptions, and values that lead to the empowerment of the function of thinking as a controller of actions and bodily responses, including how individuals understand the world and how to act (Maksum, 2020; Ulum, 2014). In a championship or competition, the athletes' physical and technical abilities can be said to be relatively balanced, their determination lies in mental factors.

As in previous studies, elite young athletes who have mental toughness are able to cope with various pressures (stress) (Gerber et al., 2018). An athlete might perform well when practicing, but during a competition in actual competition, their good performance during practice can disappear into an anti-climactic performance, so they often fail when the competition is just being held in the early rounds. A winning mentality for athletes is a condition in which athletes must always be prepared for various conditions, both predictable and unpredictable, therefore maturity in terms of attitude and behavior is needed.

This kind of condition is a finding in Bondowoso Tae Kwon-Do athletes when they are participating in a match at the championship, they are participating in. While practicing, the athlete shows very good and consistent performance, but when they enter the match and know the potential opponents they will face, they have a record of experience. better, suddenly good performance in training and technique becomes not optimal during the match. This condition is said to mean that mental health is one of the key factors in an athlete being able to complete a match with the best ability and competitive efforts that uphold the value of sportsmanship (Irwanto & Romas, 2019; Lismadiana, 2017; Ulum, 2014). The condition of inconsistent and anticlimactic performance in a match due to the lack of a winning mentality is a concern and the need for follow-up for the coaching team (official) to provide psychological support to generate achievement motivation and confidence in the athletes' abilities in continuing the match.

Psychological support is a simple skill to help oneself or others who are in a state of distress to feel calm and supported to better overcome the challenges or problems they face (Sakti & Rozali, 2015; Kurniawan et al., 2021). Psychological support is one part that can be done if athletes experience pressure and begin to doubt their belief in their potential both when they are about to face a match and in the current match.

The support provided is not only emotional, but support that can provide comfort and help in overcoming tension and anxiety which, if left to drag on, will disrupt emotional balance and performance during a match. Efforts that can be made to provide psychological support are recognizing and paying attention, listening attentively to the conditions expressed or experienced by athletes, and trying to link them with other sources of support (Hasbi, Maznah, Roshonah, Nurannisaa, et al., 2020; Hasbi, Maznah, Roshonah, Mangunwibawa, et al., 2020)

The lack of information and understanding regarding psychological support for athletes towards the formation of a winning mentality is one of the problems that need to be followed up on an ongoing basis because the psychological and mental conditions of champions are not built and formed in just a short time, but time is needed for assessment and intervention. as research results (Sakti & Rozali, 2015) show that social support which includes psychological support

can foster self-confidence in athletes to believe in their abilities and express this in the form of competitive behavior to achieve the best performance.

Psychological support has been recognized as an important element in improving the performance of athletes, including in highly demanding sports such as Tae Kwon Do. Although many studies have highlighted the importance of psychological support, there is no consensus on how this form of support affects *mental toughness* specifically in the context of Tae Kwon Do. *Mental toughness* is a quality that allows athletes to perform consistently under pressure, maintain focus, and bounce back from setbacks. In athlete Tae Kwon Do, this mental endurance becomes critical considering the intense and competitive nature of the sport. However, the literature that directly connects various forms of psychological support and strengthening mental resilience is still limited.

Most previous research has focused more on general aspects of psychological support such as motivation, stress management, and confidence building without directly attributing them to specific elements of *mental toughness*. For example, studies of the role of coaches or family support often focus on improving overall performance rather than on how that support specifically develops aspects such as emotional control, mental endurance, and the willingness to fight, which are core components of *mental toughness*. As a result, there is a gap in our understanding of the mechanisms by which psychological support can be optimized to strengthen mental resilience.

In addition, existing research tends to under consider variations in individual responses to psychological support. Each athlete has unique psychological needs and characteristics, which means that the same support approach may not be effective for all individuals. Some athletes may respond better to forms of support that are motivating in nature, while others may require a more structured approach to stress management or the development of mental strategies. More in-depth research is needed to understand these personal factors and how they affect the effectiveness of psychological support against *mental toughness*.

Finally, in the context of Tae Kwon Do, studies that assess the influence of psychological support often do not consider the dynamic aspects of the sport itself, such as changes in rules, competition levels, and the psychological development of athletes over time. Existing research often uses cross-sectional methods that do not capture how the influence of psychological support can vary at different stages in an athlete's career. There is an urgent need for longitudinal studies that can evaluate the long-term effects of psychological support on *mental toughness*, as well as how changes in the competitive environment and individuals can modify those relationships. The purpose of this study is to focus on the effect of psychological support for the mental toughness of tae kwon do athletes.

2. METHOD

The research will be carried out by quantitative research which aims to find the relationship between two or more variables. This research uses simple regression analysis. Regression research design is a procedure in quantitative research in which the researcher takes measurements of a sample or an entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population (Creswell, 2014). Research with a correlational approach is used to collect data or information about a large population using a relatively small sample. (Creswell, 2014).

The technique used in this research is to measure the role of psychological support felt

by athletes in helping athletes develop a winning mentality so that the role of psychological support for athletes can be known in fostering self-confidence and mental resilience to achieve a winning mentality in every match or competition taking part. The conclusion that can be drawn from the research conducted is that social loafing can appear as a form of decreased motivation and condition of a group where the group atmosphere will provide an overview of the interaction processes and relationships that occur between its members. This condition can illustrate that social loafing behavior in students is not only a form of laziness but also a response to decreased individual motivation to be involved in group activities, passive attitudes, widening responsibilities, supporting other people's efforts, decreased awareness of evaluations from other people, status and cohesive.

2.1 Participants

This study uses participants who are selected through total sampling. Total Sampling is a sampling technique in which the entire population that meets certain criteria is used as a research sample. There was no random or partial election; all relevant members of the population are included. This technique is often used in situations where the population is relatively small, thus allowing all members to be involved without facing major difficulties in data collection. Total sampling is also used when researchers want to make sure that every individual in the population is represented and that nothing is missed.

The main reason for using total sampling is to increase the representativeness and validity of the research results. By involving the entire population, researchers can ensure that every variation in the population is represented, resulting in more comprehensive and accurate research results. This technique also reduces the potential for bias that may arise if only a portion of the population is sampled, especially if that portion is not well representative of the entire population

In addition, total sampling is often chosen when the target population is a specific group with a limited or easily accessible number of members. For example, in a study involving small groups such as employees in one company or students in a class, using total sampling makes it easier to collect data because all subjects are available and can be contacted. It also provides an advantage in data analysis because the results will cover the entire perspective of that population without overgeneralizing.

The population of this study was Tae Kwon-Do athletes in the Bondowoso area, totaling 15 athletes. The characteristics of this research population are as follows:

- a. Tae Kwon-do athlete and has participated in at least Besuki Residency championship matches.
- b. Athletes who take part in competitions in pre-cadet, cadet, junior and senior classes.

2.2 Research Design

A descriptive-correlational survey method was used in this study. The descriptive-correlational survey method is an approach used to understand the relationship between variables in a population without manipulating experimental conditions. The first reason for choosing this method is its ability to provide a detailed description of the existing situation or phenomenon. Through descriptive surveys, researchers can collect quantitative data that describe the characteristics, attitudes, or behaviors of the research subjects. As such, this method is useful in studies that require data that reflects the perception or view of the population at large, such as in social, educational, or marketing research. For example, a survey on customer

preferences for a particular product can provide valuable insights for companies to understand the needs and wants of the market.

The second reason is the flexibility of the descriptive-correlational survey method in analyzing the relationship between variables without indicating cause and effect. In this study, researchers can use correlational statistical techniques to identify and measure how strong the relationship between two or more variables is. For example, researchers can use this survey to determine whether there is a relationship between education levels and income. The results of correlational analysis can be used to identify patterns and trends that are useful in decision-making or theory development. This advantage makes the descriptive-correlational survey method particularly valuable in situations where researchers want to explore relationships and patterns without conducting complex or expensive experiments

2.3 Instruments

The data collection method in this research aims to reveal facts about the variables to be studied so it is necessary to use efficient and accurate methods to achieve the objectives that will be known. This research uses psychological support measuring instrument in the form of the DASS-21 Test measuring instrument developed by Lovibond and Lovibond consisting of 21 items (Kinanthi, M. R; Listiyandini, R. A; Amaliah, U. S.; Ramadhanty, R.; Farhan, M.: 2020); (Arjanto, 2022). To measure mental toughness using instrument designed by Gucciardi (Gucciardi et al., 2009).

2.4 Procedures

The research procedure carried out was by distributing questionnaires to respondents, the questionnaire was distributed to 15 athletes who participated in the match / had participated in the match. Respondents were asked to respond regarding how conditions were felt when getting psychological support during preparing for the match and in running the match, whether it was done by officials, family, or fellow contingents, the questionnaire to measure psychological support was measured by the DASS-21 Test measuring instrument developed by Lovibond and Lovibond consisting of 21 items. (Kinanthi, M. R;Listiyandini, R. A; Amaliah, U. S.; Ramadhanty, R.; Farhan, M. : 2020); (Arjanto, 2022). To measure mental toughness by providing responses on the Mental Toughness measurement tool consisting of 30 items developed by Gucciardi (Gucciardi et al., 2009).

2.5 Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used in this study includes the following two stages. These stage are validity & reliability test and by pothesis testing.

a. Validity and Reliability Test

Testing measuring instruments involves two aspects, namely validity and reliability testing. The validity test is carried out to determine the extent of the accuracy and accuracy of a measuring instrument in performing its measuring function. A measuring instrument can be said to have high vadility if the measuring instrument carries out its measuring function or provides measuring results in accordance with the purpose of the measurement. Reliability means the extent to which the results of a measurement can be trusted (Creswell, 2014), (Nofianti & Qomariah, 2017).

b. Hypothesis Testing

The analysis used in this study uses a simple regression correlation analysis. If there is an influence, changes that occur in one variable (X) will result in changes in the other variable (Y). The term is said to be a causal term, and this term is a characteristic of regression analysis. The hypothesis of this study is:

H₀: Psychological support does not have a significant influence on the mental toughness of Tae Kwon Do athletes;

H₁: Psychological support has a significant influence on the mental toughness of Tae Kwon Do athletes.

3. RESULTS

The results of validity testing on the DASS-21 Test measuring instrument obtained the validity coefficient value is at the sig.2-tailed coefficient score on valid items (p) less than 0.05 (p = 0.05) and valid items are indicated by the validity correlation coefficient value (r_{xy}) = 0.458 to 0.721. The result of the reliability test of the DASS-21 test measuring instrument showed a Table 1.

Table 1.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
0,722	21

Source: Primary Data

In the results of measuring the validity of the mental toughness measuring instrument, the validity correlation coefficient value (r_{xy}) = 0.343 to 0.689 shows that both measuring instruments can be declared valid for measuring the variables studied and for measuring the reliability of the mental toughness measuring instrument shows a result of 0.765, thus both measuring instruments are declared reliable for use in measuring the variables studied.

Table 2

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
0,765	30

Source: Primary Data

The normality test was carried out to determine whether the data from the research variables, namely data on psychological support and mental toughness in this study, were distributed normally or not. The following is a table of normality test results using one sample kolmogorov-smirnov in Table 3.

Table 3*One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*

		Unstandardized Residual
N		15
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	0,0000000
	Std. Deviation	3,38481413
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	0,036
	Positive	0,033
	Negative	-0,036
Test Statistic		0,036
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.200 ^{c,d}

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Source: Primary Data

Based on the table, it is known that the value of *Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)* is $0.200 \geq 0.05$, meaning that the research data is normally distributed, and can be used on the population in the study according to the population characteristics. Thus, the normality requirements before carrying out regression analysis have been fulfilled.

The linearity test is carried out to determine the form of relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The results of testing the linearity of the psychological support and mental toughness variables show a significance value for deviation from linearity $P > 0.05$ so that the research data can be linear. The following is a table of linearity test results in Table 4.

Table 4.*Linearity Test-ANOVA Table*

			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Mental Toughness Psychological Support	Between Groups	(Combined)	1808,522	3	29,170	2,699	0,000
		Linearity	993,080	1	993,080	91,871	0,000
		Deviation from Linearity	815,443	2	13,368	1,237	0,174
Within Groups			1037,717	11	10,810		
Total			2846,239	14			

Source: Primary Data

Based on the results of the linearity test, it is proven that the variables of psychological support and mental toughness are linear, with significance (p) $0.000 \leq 0.05$. This means that the two scales have a linear relationship.

This research uses multiple linear regression analysis to test the hypothesis so that it can be seen whether there is an influence between psychological support and mental toughness (Can be seen in Table 5 and 6).

Table 5.

Hypothesis Test- ANOVAa

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1124,515	1	1124,515	18,150	,000 ^b
Residual	5514,210	13	61,957		
Total	6638,725	14			

a. Dependent Variable: Mental Toughness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Psychological Support

Source: Primary Data

Table 6.

Coefficients

Model	Coefficients ^a				t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1 (Constant)	35,366	7,351			4,811	0,000
<i>Psychological Support</i>	0,392	0,074	0,412		4,260	0,000

a. Dependent Variable: Mental Toughness

Source: Primary Data

Based on the ANOVA output table above, the Sig. $0.000 < 0.05$, meaning that there is a significant influence of the psychological support variable on mental toughness. The results of hypothesis testing conducted that the role of psychological support in Tae Kwon Do athletes on mental toughness that forms the athlete's mental toughness as a psychological process experienced by athletes in competition obtained the results of H_1 accepted, thus it can be explained that psychological support has a significant effect in shaping the winning mentality of Tae Kwon Do athletes with a regression coefficient of $= 0.392$ and sig (p) $= 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). This means that the stronger the psychological support received by Taekwondo athletes, the higher the mental toughness owned by athletes, and vice versa, the weaker the psychological support received by Tae Kwon Do athletes, the lower the mental toughness owned by athletes.

4. DISCUSSIONS

Based on the results of data analysis and hypothesis testing carried out that the role of psychological support for Tae Kwon Do athletes in forming and developing a winning mentality as a psychological process experienced by athletes in competition, the results of H_1

were accepted, thus it can be explained that psychological support has a significant effect. significant in forming the winning mentality of Tae Kwon Do athletes with a regression coefficient $r = 0.392$ and sig (p) = 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). This means that the stronger the psychological support received by Taekwondo athletes, the higher the formation of a winning mentality the athletes have, and vice versa, the weaker the psychological support received by Tae Kwon Do athletes, the lower the winning mentality the athletes have.

The results of this research are in line with previous research (Sakti, Rozali: 2015) regarding self-confidence and the formation of a winning mentality in terms of psychological support in the form of social support which results in that high social support can influence self-confidence. Meanwhile, the coefficient of determination value is (r^2)= 0.15 or 15%, which shows that psychological support contributes 15% to the formation of a winning mentality in Tae Kwon Do Athletes, the rest is more influenced by other factors such as physical, mental and religiosity factors. (Mangunhardjana in Pasaribu, 2010).

Athletes who have a perfect and healthy physique will have mental toughness as the basis for determining a bigger champion and be ready to face every match. Physically healthy athletes will be able to train and compete better. Likewise with mentally prepared athletes. Mental here is readiness as a result of abilities that have been recognized by others. When an athlete receives recognition from others regarding their abilities and strengths, the athlete's belief in their abilities becomes higher and increases the athlete's self-confidence.

An athlete in every competition with a spirit of sportsmanship is required to be able to maximize his potential to achieve the expected achievements. An athlete's success in achieving an achievement is influenced by his physical and psychological condition (Gunarsa et al., in Yulianto & Nashori, 2006). However, it cannot be denied that an athlete will feel anxious about bad possibilities such as defeat. This anxiety will become a special pressure for the athlete when competing and will cause his psychological condition to decline.

Post (in Trismiati, 2004) mentions anxiety as an unpleasant emotional condition characterized by subjective feelings such as tension, fear, and worry. When an athlete experiences anxiety, he will feel tension within himself when facing a match or what is called stress (Handayani & Suharnan, 2012). Stress is a condition that arises when a person cannot overcome the situation he is facing. Stress can cause two impacts which are divided into two aspects, biological aspects and psychological aspects. The biological aspect is the physical symptoms felt when facing stress, including headaches, loss of appetite, and excessive sweat production throughout the body. In other words, when an athlete is about to compete and feels anxious about failure, it can be predicted that the athlete will feel a loss of appetite, sweat easily, or experience a headache.

The psychological aspect is related to cognition, emotions, and behavior. Athletes who experience stress due to anxiety in facing competition will reduce their concentration so that they are unable to focus on the competition. The emotions of athletes who are experiencing stress will also be disturbed, such as being irritable, feeling sad, and feeling frustrated so athletes easily blame others, find fault with others, are unable to control themselves, are indifferent to the environment, or are easily ignited by emotions. These aspects of stress will occur in athletes who are unable to overcome the stress caused by the situations they face. The impact of stress will make athletes less able to maximize their potential so their achievements are not optimal.

The stress that occurs in an athlete can be minimized with psychological support that comes from the social environment, including coaches, team officials, and closest people such as family. Psychological support can influence a person's mental state so that he can overcome the tension that occurs within him. Taylor et al (in Dowle, 2006) also stated that social support that comes from support and the social environment can reduce the stress experienced by a person, in this case, the condition of athletes. Psychological support will create feelings of being loved, appreciated, and not alone in facing the match. This will create a feeling of comfort in the athlete. In this way, the athlete will feel comfortable and be able to maximize his abilities and form mental toughness which will later form a winning mentality for the athlete in every match he participates in.

5. CONCLUSIONS

From the results of the research conducted, it can be concluded that psychological support influences forming a winning mentality in Tae Kwon Do athletes. Psychological support can influence a person's mental state so that he can overcome the tension that occurs within him. The social support that comes from support and the social environment can reduce the stress experienced by a person, in this case, the athlete's condition. Psychological support will create feelings of being loved, appreciated, and not alone in facing the match. This will create a feeling of comfort in the athlete. In this way, the athlete will feel comfortable and be able to maximize his abilities and form mental toughness which will later form a winning mentality for the athlete in every match he participates in.

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