

THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL INTERACTION ON THE FORMATION OF ATHLETE CHARACTER: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

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Abstract

Sports coaching at various levels is one of the main elements in advancing the world of sports and achieving optimal performance. Thus, the success or failure of a sport is highly dependent on the coaching process carried out. To become an athlete, not only good physical condition is needed, but also qualified cognitive and effective abilities. Cognitive abilities play an important role in making quick and correct decisions during a match, while affective abilities are related to managing emotions, motivation, and mentality needed to deal with pressure. In addition, a strong character is also an important requirement for achieving success. These three aspects must be well integrated to achieve maximum achievement in the field of sports. In an effort to optimize the potential of athletes, many factors influence and determine. Therefore, this study aims to explore the influence of the environment and social interaction on the character of an athlete. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach and analytical methods. The phenomena analyzed in this study utilize studies that are relevant or related to the topic discussed, namely the influence of the environment and social interaction on the character of athletes. The results of the study showed a significant influence between the environment and social interaction on the character of athletes. Thus, it can be concluded that the environment and social interaction between athletes have a very important role in shaping the character of athletes. The positive relationship between the two variables shows that the better the environment and social interaction that is established, the better the athlete's character will be, which in the end can improve the athlete's achievement.

Keywords: Athlete. Environment. Social Interaction. Character. Achievement

Introduction

An athlete is an individual who works in sports, competing in one or more disciplines that require physical strength, endurance, or speed (Gürsoy, H., & Canli, U. 2021). Then, Allen, M. S. et al., (2013) argues that athletes are individuals who have unique and special talents, with different behavioral and personality patterns, and life backgrounds that specifically affect them. In certain sports, athletes are required to have physical abilities that exceed the average of the general public. They, both men and women, train their skills specifically to compete in various competitions (Barley, O. R., & Harms, C. A. 2021). Nowak, P. F. et al., (2021) argues that athletes

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are sports actors who achieve achievements at various levels, both amateur and professional. Therefore, athletes are trained to develop physical strength, endurance, speed, agility, balance, flexibility, and strength, and prepare themselves long before the competition begins (Gamble, P. 2013). From the explanation above, it can be concluded that athletes are trained individuals who have achievements and have uniqueness and talent in sports that have been prepared in certain branches.

Carlson, B. D., & Donovan, D. T. (2013) argue that every one involved in the world of sports, both as athletes and fans, has different characteristics and personalities. Furthermore, Fransen, K. et al., (2020) explained that an athlete usually has more distinctive traits compared to individuals who are not athletes. Then Siekanska, M., & Wojtowicz, A. (2020) said that athletes often show a high level of social concern, greater self-confidence, and better discipline. According to Piepiora, P. (2020) personality is one of the important factors that can influence an athlete's success in sports. Individuals who achieve success are generally those who have advantages, both physically and mentally. Chang, C. J. et al., (2020) in their research stated that variations in achievement in sports are greatly influenced by mental factors or psychological characteristics. From this view, it can be concluded that an athlete's character can determine and influence his success in achieving achievements. Considering that character and behavior are psychological components, humans are a unity between physical and psychological, which influence each other (Masharipova, R. et al., 2020).

Luhmann, M. et al., (2021) explains that a person's character and personality are formed by their individual background. This has a significant impact on how they deal with various situations and interact in other aspects of life. According to Ribeiro, J. et al., (2021) an athlete is not only formed through physical training and the skills they have, but also by the environment in which they are raised and the social relationships they have. Rouquette, O. Y. et al., (2020) argue that the process of forming an athlete's character is influenced by various factors, including the family environment and social interactions around them. This can be seen from the behavior of athletes before, after, even during the match, as well as in their daily lives. Some maintain their good character, while others experience changes at certain times, and this is all a result of the background in which the athlete was formed and raised (Woods, C. T. et al., 2020). Bilohur, V., & Andriukaitiene, R. (2020) said that in the world of sports, individual character and personality have a significant impact on an athlete's personal life. As the appeal of spectators around the world increases, the importance of character in an athlete's life is increasingly apparent.

From the crucial role of religion, family, and education to the influence of mentors during an athlete's development, developing strong character traits such as sacrifice, perseverance, and dedication to achieving excellence are fundamental aspects of talent development and personal growth (Tedesqui, R. A., & Young, B. W. 2020).

Regarding the personality and achievements of athletes, Birjukovs, A. (2023) in his book explains that there are seven personality characteristics that support athlete achievement, including ambition to achieve, hard work, perseverance, independence, commitment, intelligence, and self-control. These seven characteristics have been empirically tested and proven to be indicators of athlete success in achieving high achievements. In addition, Blynova, O. et al., (2020) argue that the family environment and sports environment have a significant impact on the formation of personality characteristics and athlete achievement. In the context of the family, Ambert, A. M. (2020) said that the most influential individuals are parents. On the other hand, Mossman, G. J. et al., (2021) said that in a sports environment, coaches and fellow athletes are influential individuals. In addition, the influence of parents is reflected through the cultivation of sports in the family, parenting, training, social support, financial support, and being a role model. The influence of the coach can be seen through parenting, training, social support, being a role model, and providing opportunities. Meanwhile, the influence of fellow athletes is manifested through social support, being a role model, and as a sparring partner.

Athletes are often seen as heroes and role models, with their physical strength and competitive spirit inspiring others to strive to reach their full potential. However, while athletes' achievements on the field are important, having strong character and values is equally important (Petrovska, T. et al., 2022). Heupel, J. D. (2017) in his book emphasizes that having good character means more than just ability in a sport. It includes practicing traits such as integrity, humility, perseverance, and sportsmanship. These traits reflect not only the athletes themselves, but also the sport they represent and the fans who admire them (Kunkel, T., Doyle, J., & Na, S. 2022). According to Machida-Kosuga, M., & Kohno, N. (2023) character development in athletes can be done through constructive guidance and role models. Coaches, teammates, and other influential figures have an important role in directing athletes on the right path and teaching essential values and principles. This opinion is in line with Martens, R., & Vealey, R. S. (2024) that by being surrounded by positive influences, athletes can learn to make the right decisions and build strong characters. Overall, the process of character formation in athletes involves

various aspects, including hard work, team collaboration, resilience, and positive influences. And ultimately, by developing these important characters, athletes can not only achieve success in sports, but also grow into better individuals, both on and off the field (Schmid, M. J. et al., 2021).

Ruiz, M. C. et al., (2021) argue that an athlete's character can be influenced by the environment and social interactions they experience. These factors play an important role in shaping their attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors, both in the sports arena and in everyday life. The environment in which an athlete is raised can have a significant impact on the development of his or her character. Growing up in a supportive and positive atmosphere can instill values such as perseverance, resilience, and respect for others (Nikander, J. A. et al., 2022). On the other hand, Birjukovs, A. (2023) argues that athletes who come from difficult or unstable backgrounds may face challenges in terms of self-control, discipline, and motivation. According to Rhodes, R. E., & Wilson, K. E. (2020) there is a close relationship between sports and personality. Some athletes exhibit traits such as competitive, anxious, risk-taking, aggressive, impulsive, individualistic, and disciplined, which are examples of characteristics related to their personality. Furthermore, Cervone, D., & Pervin, L. A. (2022) argue that personality consists of a set of qualities that shape a person's identity. These traits distinguish one individual from another and influence the way we interact. Sport is an activity that involves a high level of competitiveness that requires good physical fitness and mental health. However, social and environmental interaction factors can affect an athlete's character and performance (Walton, C. et al., 2024). This study will explore how an athlete's character can be formed through their environment and social interactions.

Method

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach and analytical methods. This study refers to the theory of Taylor, S. J., Bogdan, R., & DeVault, M. L. (2015) that qualitative research is "a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observable behavior". This qualitative research focuses on the natural background holistically, treats humans as research tools, conducts data analysis inductively, and emphasizes the process rather than the results of the research agreed upon by the researcher and the research subject. The research subjects used must reflect the relevance to the research phenomenon. The phenomena analyzed in this study utilize studies that are relevant or related to the topic discussed, namely the influence of the environment and social interaction on the character of athletes.

Results And Discussion

Environment

Kandler, C. et al., (2021) argue that there are two main factors that influence personality formation, namely genetic factors and environmental factors. As stated by Alzeer, J., & Benmerabet, H. (2023) who said that genetic factors have a significant role in determining individual character, especially those related to the unique aspects of each person. This approach argues that genetic inheritance plays an important role in shaping a person's personality. On the other hand, Reser, J. P., & Bradley, G. L. (2020) explain that environmental factors contribute to equating individuals with others through the various experiences they go through.

According to Crandon, T. et al., (2022) environmental factors include culture, social class, family, peers, and situations. One aspect of the environment that has a significant impact on personality is the individual's experience influenced by a particular culture (Sagiv, L., & Schwartz, S. H. 2022). According to Boyd, R., & Richerson, P. J. (2020) Each culture has different norms and patterns of sanctions for learned behavior, as well as rituals and beliefs. Like Indonesia, which is called a pluralistic country because Indonesia has a diversity of races, religions, cultures, and tribes. In addition to differences in ethnicity, religion, race, class, and culture, a pluralistic country also means that there are differences in social structures and value systems. Both are heterogeneous, and are produced by the diversity of cultures, customs, races, ethnicities, religions, and tribes. Thus, each member of a culture tends to have distinctive personality characteristics.

As previously stated, the factors that influence personality formation, in a special study in the scope of sports, especially athletes, that an athlete is not only shaped by physical training and skills but also by the environment in which he grows up. Then, Rothwell, M. et al., (2020) argue that the environment plays an important role in shaping the character of an athlete. In the family environment, King, A. M. et al., (2023) stated that athletes are often influenced by the values, beliefs, and behavior of their parents and siblings. For example, parental support and involvement in sports activities can greatly influence an athlete's motivation, self-confidence, and discipline. Based on research conducted by Newman, T. J. et al., (2022) showed that athletes who receive positive reinforcement and encouragement from their families tend to develop a strong work ethic and resilience in facing challenges.

In addition, dynamics within the family, including relationships with siblings, can also shape an athlete's social skills, teamwork abilities, and competitiveness (Santos, F., & Callary, B. 2021; Hagum, C. N. et al., 2023). Then, an athlete's character is greatly influenced by his coach. As found by Fouraki, V. et al., (2020) that the interaction that takes place over a long period of time between athletes and coaches plays an important role in shaping the athlete's character. Young athletes often imitate the behavior and character of their coaches, so good performance must always be reflected in a coach. Therefore, in carrying out their profession, coaches need to have a strong philosophy to foster and shape the character and mentality of athletes, which in turn will become examples and part of the athletes' life journey. Positive examples from coaches are very helpful in the process of forming the character and mentality of athletes. Then Rothwell, M. et al., (2022) explained that in the training process, there is a culture that often provides a deep understanding of the dynamics that occur in the athlete's training environment.

De Cruz, N. (2022) in his book entitled "Cultural sport psychology and elite sport in Singapore: An exploration of identity and practice" explains that the culture in the training place reflects a distinctive identity, including policies, practices, and values that shape the training experience for athletes. Furthermore, Nikander, J. A. et al., (2022) argue that the culture applied in the training environment functions as a tool to instill and shape the character of athletes. This character building process involves all components involved and responsible for coaching, including the infrastructure and norms in the training place (Fawver, B. et al., 2020). In addition, Gatterer, H. et al., (2021) said that environmental factors such as training facilities, weather conditions, and equipment availability also play an important role in influencing athlete motivation and performance. Research by Almagro, B. et al., (2020) shows that the existence and quality of training facilities have a significant impact on athlete motivation and performance. Bernard, P. et al., (2021) in their research stated that environmental aspects such as adequate training facilities, favorable weather, and good access to equipment greatly influence athlete motivation and performance. In addition, Baranwal, S. et al., (2023) argued that good facilities can provide comfort and safety during training, while favorable weather can affect athlete stamina and health. Regarding the weather, Gibson, O. R. et al., (2020) research shows that environmental temperature has a significant influence on athletic performance, especially through changes in the athlete's core body temperature during activity.

Haniah, A. R. et al., (2020) emphasized that value and character education not only emphasizes attitudes, but also prioritizes knowledge and skills. These three aspects interact with each other to shape the cognition and character of athletes. Character education includes several elements, including knowledge, emotions, and actions. The environment plays a very important role in shaping the character of athletes (Lockwood, A. L. 2015). According to Gould, D. et al., (2012) several aspects that need to be developed in the character of athletes include discipline, teamwork, mental toughness, and sportsmanship. In addition, the environment where athletes train, live, and socialize will affect their character, attitudes, and character. Therefore, the training environment can be a means to shape and develop the character of athletes, considering that they will spend a lot of time there and there is intense communication between coaches and fellow athletes. As previously stated, character education for athletes can be carried out through support from family, a positive environment, professional coaches, and adequate facilities.

Social Interaction

Pierce, S. et al., (2020) argue that social interaction plays a very significant role in shaping an athlete's character by developing essential interpersonal skills. One of the most crucial elements is teamwork and collaboration, where athletes learn to work together harmoniously to achieve common goals. Furthermore, Moustakas, L. (2023) states that involvement in team sports encourages individuals to set aside personal ambitions for the common good, thereby fostering a sense of solidarity and collaboration. This experience goes beyond the realm of sport, teaching athletes about the importance of collective effort in achieving success (Hepler, T. J. et al., (2021). In addition, Eime, R. M. et al., (2013) in his analysis stated that developing communication skills is another important benefit obtained from social relationships in sports. Athletes need to communicate effectively, provide feedback, and express their emotions to teammates and coaches. This interaction strengthens verbal and non-verbal communication skills, making athletes more skilled at communicating and accepting other people's perspectives.

In addition, Schwab, B. (2019) stated that building trust and respect are basic elements in the world of sports. Trust between team members is essential for smooth play and strategy execution, while respect for teammates and opponents strengthens the spirit of sportsmanship. Furthermore, Crossan, W. et al. (2023) revealed that positive and consistent social involvement in sports instills these values, which contribute to the formation of individuals who have broad insights, value mutual respect, and are reliable in various aspects of life. Christensen, K. M. et al. (2021) stated that coaches and mentors play a very important role in shaping the character and behavior of athletes. The

guidance and motivation they provide can have a significant influence on the performance and personal development of athletes (Jordalen, G. et al., 2020). Foulds, S. J. et al. (2019) stated that an effective coach is able to identify and develop the potential of athletes while addressing existing weaknesses.

They provide motivation to athletes through encouragement, constructive feedback, and goal setting, which encourage athletes to excel not only in sports but also in other aspects of life. In addition, setting standards of behavior is another important function of coaches and mentors. They set rules and expectations that athletes must adhere to, thereby instilling discipline and a sense of responsibility (Jones, J., & Smith, H. A. 2022). This structure helps athletes understand the importance of following ethical guidelines and respecting authority, which is crucial to their development as responsible individuals. In addition, coaches also play a role in resolving conflicts. Hanin, Y. L. (2021) noted that the sports environment often presents situations of tension and conflict among team members. Coaches serve as mediators, teaching athletes how to resolve conflicts peacefully and maintain harmonious relationships. These conflict resolution skills are invaluable, helping athletes manage interpersonal issues in a variety of situations (Smith, M., & Arthur, C. 2022).

In addition to interactions with coaches, MacIntosh, E. W. et al. (2022) stated that interactions with peers have a significant influence on the development of athlete character through support, competition, and social learning. Support and motivation from peers are crucial for the psychological well-being and performance of athletes. Furthermore, Mira, T. et al. (2023) explained that in challenging situations, athletes often seek emotional support from their friends, and these friendships strengthen resilience and form positive mindset. Healthy competition among peers can encourage athletes to go beyond their limits and strive for higher achievements. In addition, Hernández-Mendo, A. et al. (2020) emphasized that by competing with each other, athletes learn the values of hard work, perseverance, and the principles of fair play. Serrano-Durá, J. et al. (2021) in their analysis stated that this competitive spirit, accompanied by respect for opponent, helps athletes develop a balanced approach between competition and collaboration. In addition, social learning and modeling are also important aspects of peer interaction in sports. Athletes observe and imitate the behavior, attitudes, and techniques demonstrated by their peers (Opstoel, K. et al., 2020). This observational learning process allows them to internalize positive traits such as dedication, perseverance, and ethics in behavior. Through these interactions, athletes build a social framework that has a positive impact on their behavior (Su, Y. et al., 2020).

Newton, J. et al., (2020) stated that experiences and interactions in the sports environment have a significant impact on the formation of an athlete's personal identity. The process of developing individual values becomes a very important aspect, because athletes adopt the principles of teamwork, discipline, and respect into their value system. This view is in line with the opinion of Helzer, E. G. et al., (2023) who stated that these values serve as guidelines in decision-making and interactions with others, which ultimately foster a deep sense of ethical responsibility. In addition, Lianopoulos, Y. et al., (2020) emphasized that increased self-esteem is an important consequence of social interactions in sports. Positive support from coaches, peers, and individual achievements contribute to building an athlete's self-esteem. High self-esteem plays a role in increasing self-confidence, which is crucial to achieving success both at a personal and professional level (Vella, S., Oades, L., & Crowe, T. 2011).

Involvement in sports contributes to the formation of athletes' moral and ethical beliefs. According to Yaffe, Y. et al. (2021), participation in various sports activities exposes athletes to various ethical dilemmas that require decisions based on certain principles. This experience allows them to develop a deeper understanding of the concepts of right and wrong, which in turn strengthens their commitment to ethical practice (Smith, I. H., & Kouchaki, M. 2021). Therefore, athletes emerge as individuals with a clear moral compass, ready to make positive contributions to society. Overall, social interactions in sports play a very important role in shaping athletes' character. Through teamwork, mentorship, interaction with peers, and the development of personal identity, athletes develop into well-rounded individuals with strong values, good communication skills, and a solid ethical framework.

The development of an athlete's character is greatly influenced by the environment and social interactions they experience. These factors play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavior of athletes, both in the sports arena and in everyday life. Research conducted by Nikander, J. A. et al. (2022) shows that the environment in which an athlete is raised can have a significant impact on the development of his or her character. Growing up in a supportive and positive environment can instill values such as perseverance, resilience, and respect for others. Conversely, Krasmik, Y. et al. (2024) noted that athletes who come from difficult or unstable backgrounds may face challenges related to self-control, discipline, and motivation. Therefore, the importance of the environment and social interactions in shaping an athlete's character cannot be ignored. Caulfield, J. et al. (2023) in their research revealed that athletes who are surrounded by positive

influences and supportive relationships tend to demonstrate qualities such as sportsmanship, teamwork, and integrity. These athletes also tend to have good leadership skills, effective communication skills, and a high work ethic.

Conclusion

Character is a very important aspect in an athlete's life, which can affect performance, interpersonal relationships, and achievements in the sport they play. Athletes with strong character usually demonstrate an attitude of sportsmanship and fairness in interacting with others. This contributes positively to the team and the world of sport as a whole. The environment and social interactions play a significant role in shaping an athlete's character. Understanding the relationship between various factors, including coaches, parents, and the athlete themselves, can help create an environment that supports and encourages constructive social interactions. Therefore, it can be concluded that the environment and social interactions among athletes have a great influence in shaping their character. A good relationship between these two aspects shows that the better the environment and social interactions, the better the athlete's character, which in turn can improve their achievements.

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