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Psychological Factors and Athletic Success: A Study on District-Level Basketball Players

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between psychological factors including emotion, self-talk, self-efficacy, goal orientation, and intrinsic motivation—and basketball performance among athletes in Segamat district, Johor, Malaysia. Using a quantitative approach, the Sport Psychology Questionnaire and the Athlete's Subjective Performance Scale (ASPS) were employed to assess 140 athletes (70 males, 70 females) aged 7–15 from selected primary and secondary schools. The findings indicate a significant negative correlation between emotion and performance, while self-efficacy, goal orientation, self-talk, and intrinsic motivation exhibit significant positive correlations. These results suggest that basketball athletes in Segamat demonstrate satisfactory psychological well-being, contributing to enhanced competitive performance. Coaches and sports committees should continue fostering psychological well-being to enhance athletes' confidence and potential for success. Future research should explore other sports and diverse age groups to enhance generalizability. Longitudinal studies could examine how psychological factors evolve, while intervention-based research on psychological training programs may provide insights into performance enhancement strategies. Integrating qualitative methods could further deepen the understanding of athletes' psychological experiences.

Keywords: Emotion, Self-Talk, Self-Efficacy, Goal Orientation, Intrinsic Motivation

Introduction

Psychological skills play a pivotal role in determining athletic success, as they enable athletes to effectively adapt to competitive environments and optimize performance (Kaplánová, 2024). In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on understanding the psychological factors that influence athletic performance, highlighting their importance in enhancing sports outcomes (Yang et al., 2024). Research findings suggest that well-developed psychological skills contribute significantly to an athlete's ability to maintain composure, manage stress, and perform optimally under pressure (Domínguez et al., 2024; Nazarudin et al., 2023). However, despite the increasing recognition of these factors, there remains a considerable research gap, particularly in the Malaysian sports context (Wu et al., 2023).

The majority of studies on psychological attributes among athletes have been conducted in Western countries, often overlooking their applicability in Asian settings. For example, Domínguez et al. (2024) and Nazarudin et al. (2023) found a strong positive correlation between an athlete's psychological profile and sports performance, demonstrating that psychological preparedness enhances resilience and adaptability in competitive settings. Similarly, Kaplánová (2024) emphasized that psychological training plays a crucial role in helping athletes overcome performance-related challenges. However, Wu et al. (2023) noted that despite the significance of psychological factors in sports, studies in Malaysia, particularly in regions such as Segamat, Johor, remain limited. This lack of research presents a significant gap, necessitating further investigation into the psychological determinants of athletic performance in Malaysian sports.

Psychological factors influencing athletes encompass a wide range of behavioral and cognitive elements, including emotional regulation, self-efficacy, goal orientation, self-talk, and intrinsic motivation. These factors have been shown to impact an athlete's mental resilience, motivation, and performance outcomes (Wu et al., 2023). Studies indicate that athletes who experience satisfaction in fundamental psychological needs—such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness—are more likely to achieve peak performance (Lourenço et al., 2022). Furthermore, empirical evidence suggests that psychological preparedness correlates with performance metrics such as reaction time, decision-making, and consistency in execution (Juspah et al., 2023). Despite these findings, there is a lack of comprehensive studies addressing multiple psychological variables simultaneously, particularly within the Malaysian sports industry (Nor et al., 2024).

Research Gap and Justification

Existing literature on psychological factors in sports often focuses on a limited number of psychological attributes, neglecting various other crucial elements that contribute to athletic success. Additionally, while psychological determinants of athletic performance have been widely examined in Western contexts, there remains a scarcity of research investigating these factors in Malaysia (Wu et al., 2023). Given that Malaysia's sports industry has experienced rapid growth in recent years, with increasing participation in competitive sports at national and international levels (Malaysian Ministry of Youth and Sports, 2023), there is a pressing need to examine the role of psychological factors in athletic performance.

According to statistics from the Malaysian Sports Council (2023), the number of registered basketball athletes in Johor has increased by 15% over the past five years, highlighting the growing popularity and competitiveness of the sport. Furthermore, the Malaysian Basketball Association (2023) reported a significant rise in the number of youth players participating in structured training programs, reflecting an increasing investment in player development. Despite this upward trend, research exploring the psychological determinants of basketball performance in specific Malaysian districts, including Segamat, Johor, remains scarce.

Moreover, global trends indicate a growing recognition of sports psychology as a critical component of athlete training programs. The International Olympic Committee (IOC, 2023) has emphasized the importance of psychological resilience in elite sports, with studies showing that mental skills training improves performance consistency and reduces athlete

burnout rates. Despite these advancements, Malaysia lags in integrating psychological training into athletic development programs, leaving a gap in evidence-based strategies tailored to local athletes. Addressing this gap is crucial, particularly in the context of regional sports development and talent identification programs. By investigating key psychological factors influencing basketball performance in Segamat, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how psychological attributes contribute to sports success and inform future training methodologies in Malaysia.

Problem Statement

The limited scope of existing research on psychological factors and athletic performance restricts a holistic understanding of how various psychological elements contribute to sports success. Many studies focus on a narrow set of relationships, failing to account for a broader range of psychological determinants that influence performance outcomes. Moreover, while psychological factors such as motivation, self-efficacy, and emotional regulation have been extensively studied in Western sports psychology research, their applicability in Malaysia remains largely unexplored (Wu et al., 2023). The statistical relationship between psychological variables and athletic performance has not been comprehensively investigated within the Malaysian sports industry, particularly in regional settings such as Segamat, Johor.

Addressing this gap, the present study aims to examine the relationship between five key psychological factors (emotion, self-efficacy, goal orientation, self-talk, and intrinsic motivation) and the performance of basketball athletes in the district of Segamat, Johor (Wu et al., 2023; Juspah et al., 2023). By filling this research gap, the study seeks to provide valuable insights into the psychological determinants of athletic success, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of sports psychology practices in Malaysia.

Research Objectives

This study seeks to examine the relationship between psychological factors (emotion, self-talk, self-efficacy, goal orientation, and intrinsic motivation) and the performance of basketball athletes in the district of Segamat, Johor.

Research Question

What is the relationship between psychological factors (emotion, self-efficacy, goal orientation, self-talk, and intrinsic motivation) with basketball athletes' performance in the district of Segamat, Johor?

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses are formulated as follows:

H_1: There is a significant relationship between emotion and sports performance in basketball athletes

H_2: There is a significant relationship between self-efficacy and sports performance in basketball athletes

H_3: There is a significant relationship between goal orientation and sports performance in basketball athletes

H_4: There is a significant relationship between self-talk and sports performance in basketball athletes H_5: There is a significant relationship between intrinsic motivation and sports performance in basketball athletes

The Role of Emotion in Athletic Performance

Emotion is a psychological response of varying intensity that influences motor behavior. Research has consistently demonstrated that emotional states can significantly impact athletic performance, either positively or negatively. Villas et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review examining the relationship between emotion and sports performance, concluding that different types and intensities of emotions affect performance outcomes regardless of the sport. Their findings suggest that emotion can enhance an athlete's motivation and endurance, contributing to improved performance levels.

Beyond general emotional responses, emotional intelligence has been identified as a crucial factor influencing sports performance. Haryanto et al. (2024) explored the relationship between emotional intelligence and top-spin accuracy in table tennis using a questionnaire-based approach. Their results indicated a significant positive correlation, demonstrating that athletes with higher emotional intelligence achieved greater accuracy in executing top-spin techniques. This finding underscores the importance of emotional regulation in fine motor skills and precision-based sports.

Conversely, negative emotional states can have detrimental effects on athletic performance. Haidong et al. (2024) investigated the relationship between stress emotions, the satisfaction of basic psychological needs, and the risk of injury among athletes. Their findings revealed that heightened negative emotions, combined with lower satisfaction of psychological needs, led to an increased risk of injury and a decline in sports performance. This highlights the necessity for emotional management strategies to maintain both psychological well-being and optimal performance levels.

The relationship between emotion and cognitive functioning in athletes has also been explored. Knöbel et al. (2024) examined the correlation between emotion and executive function among male football players through questionnaire-based assessments. Their study found a significant positive correlation between positive emotions and executive function, indicating that athletes experiencing positive emotional states demonstrated better decision-making and cognitive control during competition. This finding suggests that fostering positive emotions may enhance cognitive abilities critical for in-game performance.

Furthermore, emotion regulation skills have been linked to an athlete's overall performance satisfaction. Li et al. (2024) investigated the relationship between emotion regulation skills and satisfaction with performance using self-reported questionnaires. Their results showed a positive correlation, suggesting that athletes with higher emotion regulation abilities were more likely to experience greater satisfaction with their performance outcomes. These findings reinforce the importance of developing psychological skills that help athletes manage their emotions effectively to optimize performance and overall well-being.

Collectively, these studies highlight the multifaceted role of emotion in sports performance. While positive emotions and emotional intelligence contribute to enhanced motor skills, cognitive functioning, and endurance, negative emotions and unmet psychological needs can increase injury risks and hinder performance. Future research should further explore intervention strategies aimed at enhancing emotional regulation skills to optimize athletic success across different sports disciplines.

Self-Efficacy and Athletic Performance

Self-efficacy plays a critical role in determining an athlete's ability to perform under competitive conditions. Lee and Kang (2024) investigated the relationship between self-efficacy and golf performance through a questionnaire-based study. Their findings suggested that golfers with higher self-efficacy exhibited superior performance as they experienced less fear and anxiety about competition. Similarly, Martínez et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review on the impact of self-efficacy on athletic performance. Their findings confirmed that self-efficacy is a crucial predictor of athlete behavior and success across various sports and can even become an integral part of an athlete's personality.

The role of self-efficacy in sports training and psychological interventions has also been explored. Volgemute et al. (2024) examined the effects of psychological imagery and self-efficacy on alpine ski athletes. Their results indicated that both intervention imagery and self-efficacy had significant positive effects on skill development and performance. However, while athletes demonstrated improved achievement in training sessions, the statistical significance of these improvements was limited.

Self-efficacy is also closely linked to social and motivational factors. Wibowo et al. (2024) investigated the effects of self-efficacy, social support, and achievement motivation on shooting performance. The study revealed that all three factors had significant positive effects on performance, highlighting the importance of psychological support systems in enhancing athlete achievement. Similarly, Aizava et al. (2023) explored the relationship between self-efficacy and mental toughness in futsal athletes, demonstrating that self-efficacy was positively associated with winning rates while negatively correlated with red card occurrences and passing errors.

The mediating effects of self-efficacy on performance have also been examined. Setiyo et al. (2023) investigated the interplay between self-efficacy, self-regulation, and athletic performance in a training center setting. Their findings suggested that self-efficacy and self-regulation significantly influenced performance, with athlete motivation serving as a key mediating factor. Furthermore, Aizava et al. (2024) conducted a systematic review emphasizing that self-efficacy is a fundamental factor in sports performance due to its role in motivational control and managing competitive pressure. Additionally, Mehran and Mir (2023) explored the effects of psychological strength and self-efficacy on the mastery of martial arts kicking skills, concluding that both factors significantly enhanced skill acquisition.

Goal Orientation and Sports Performance

Goal orientation is another critical psychological factor influencing athletic success. Kalinowski et al. (2022) explored the relationship between goal orientation, endurance, and performance effectiveness in competitive settings. Their study found that task-oriented motivation was significantly associated with enhanced performance, suggesting that athletes with higher task-oriented goals demonstrated superior competitive effectiveness.

Motivation interventions have also been investigated about goal orientation. Pop et al. (2022) examined the effects of task-oriented and ego-oriented motivation on sprint performance. Their results showed that motivation interventions positively impacted total sprint distance, although the individual effects of task- and ego-oriented motivation were not

statistically significant. Similarly, Philyaw et al. (2024) analysed the influence of goal orientation on sports performance, finding that while ego-oriented motivation could enhance performance, it significantly reduced athlete confidence unless accompanied by high task-oriented goals.

Knoblochova et al. (2021) explored the interplay between achievement goal orientation, sports motivation, and competitive performance. Their study revealed that task-oriented goals significantly influenced intrinsic motivation, while ego-oriented goals were more strongly associated with external regulation and competitive performance outcomes. Additionally, Pestano and Salazar (2024) examined the relationship between achievement goals and student-athlete motivation, concluding that task-oriented goals, such as striving for efficiency, significantly impacted sports performance.

Self-Talk and Performance Optimization

Self-talk is widely recognized as an effective psychological strategy for enhancing sports performance. Hidayat et al. (2023) investigated the impact of self-talk and mental imagery on badminton skill mastery. Their findings demonstrated that self-talk, alongside mental imagery, significantly improved motor skill execution and self-confidence. However, not all psychological training interventions incorporating self-talk yield substantial effects. Ballıkaya and Saraç (2024) examined psychological skills training—including goal setting, imagery, relaxation, and self-talk—on volleyball athletes' ability to handle competition. Their findings suggested that while competitive imagery had a notable impact, self-talk and other components did not significantly contribute to athletes' ability to address sports-related challenges.

Isar et al. (2022) explored the effects of imagery training and instructional self-talk on anxiety, self-confidence, and shooting performance among elite athletes in Malaysia. Their findings indicated that self-talk interventions significantly reduced anxiety levels while improving self-confidence and shooting accuracy. Similarly, Tzormpatzakis et al. (2022) investigated the role of self-talk in learning gun shooting techniques. Their study found that while both experimental and control groups improved their shooting performance, the experimental group—exposed to self-talk interventions—demonstrated significantly greater improvements in aiming stability and shot accuracy.

Intrinsic Motivation and Athletic Success

Intrinsic motivation is a key determinant of long-term athletic engagement and performance. Almagro et al. (2020) examined the relationship between performance, motivation, and the intention to remain physically active in young athletes. Their findings revealed that intrinsic motivation significantly predicted athletes' intent to stay engaged in sports, with competence satisfaction playing a crucial mediating role. Tapia et al. (2020) further investigated the mediating effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on endurance in long-distance running. Their results suggested that intrinsically motivated runners demonstrated better race completion times and perceived themselves as healthier, whereas extrinsic motivation did not produce similar effects.

Hanie et al. (2019) explored the relationship between intrinsic motivation, self-satisfaction, and performance in archery athletes. Their study found that while both factors

influenced performance, intrinsic motivation exerted a stronger effect. Moreover, the presence of self-satisfaction further reinforced the positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and athletic success. Similarly, Liu and Fu (2024) examined the role of intrinsic motivation in mediating the effects of physical training interventions on sports performance. Their findings highlighted a strong positive correlation between intrinsic motivation and performance outcomes, underscoring the importance of psychological well-being in athletic success.

Psychological Factors and Athletic Performance

The cumulative effect of psychological factors on sports performance has been widely studied. Yang et al. (2024) investigated the combined impact of athlete well-being, training intensity, diet, self-efficacy, and coaching quality on performance across various sports in China. Their findings revealed significant positive correlations among these psychological and environmental factors, suggesting that holistic athlete development fosters confidence and performance.

Similarly, Wu et al. (2023) examined the relationship between emotion, spirituality, self-talk, self-efficacy, goal orientation, and intrinsic motivation on sports performance. Their results indicated that spirituality, goal orientation, and self-talk had positive effects, whereas emotion negatively affected performance, while self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation showed no significant influence. Sklett et al. (2018) explored the relationship between self-efficacy, affective state, and anxiety in ski-jumping performance, identifying significant correlations among these variables.

Despite extensive research on psychological factors in various sports, studies focusing on basketball remain scarce. Given that psychological attributes significantly influence performance in basketball, further investigation is warranted. Therefore, this study examines the relationships between emotion, intrinsic motivation, goal orientation, self-efficacy, and self-talk with basketball performance in Segamat, Johor. The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable insights into psychological strategies that enhance basketball performance.

Study Framework

Sports participation enhances not only technical skills but also cognitive and motor functions. Athletes must react swiftly to teammates and opponents, monitor situational changes, and make tactical decisions in high-pressure environments. These cognitive demands necessitate advanced psychological processes for decision-making and performance optimization (Zhou, 2021). Existing research underscores the importance of psychological components in improving athletic outcomes (Martínez et al., 2021). Success in sports is the result of a dynamic interplay between technical proficiency and psychological attributes. Key psychological factors—such as emotion, self-talk, self-efficacy, goal orientation, and intrinsic motivation—enable athletes to maximize their skill potential by enhancing efficiency, resilience, and adaptability. Consequently, fostering these psychological traits is crucial for elevating athletic performance (Alesi et al., 2021).

Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research design using an inferential survey approach with physical questionnaires as the primary data collection instrument. A purposive sampling technique was adopted to select the research participants. The study sample consists of 140 basketball athletes from the Segamat district, Johor, aged between 7 and 12 years old. Among them, 70 are male athletes and 70 are female athletes, with varying levels of basketball skills. Participants with any health conditions that might compromise their safety were excluded from the study.

The selected participants were drawn from six primary schools and five secondary schools. Each participant completed a structured questionnaire consisting of three sections. The first section collected demographic information. The second section measured psychological factors using the Sport Psychology Questionnaire, validated by Wu et al. (2023), which includes five psychological constructs: emotion, intrinsic motivation, goal orientation, self-efficacy, and self-talk. The third section assessed athletic performance using the Athlete's Subjective Performance Scale (ASPS), a validated instrument by Lee et al. (2023), comprising six items evaluating athletes' self-perceived performance over a specific week. The questionnaire was made available in Malay, English, and Chinese to accommodate linguistic diversity among participants.

Pilot Study and Data Collection

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instruments, a pilot study was conducted with 15 participants from the selected schools. The Sports Psychology Questionnaire and ASPS were administered, and their reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Upon completing the pilot study, the actual data collection process commenced. Before distributing the questionnaire's, informed consent was obtained from all participants. Each selected participant was allowed to complete the questionnaire once, with 20 minutes allocated for completion. All responses were required to reflect the participant's most accurate opinions.

Data Analysis

Demographic data were analyzed using frequency and percentage distributions. The psychological factors were assessed using the Sport Psychology Questionnaire, where responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. The reliability of each psychological factor was tested using Cronbach's alpha during both the pilot and actual study phases. Athletic performance was evaluated using the ASPS questionnaire, also based on a 5-point Likert scale. The reliability of the performance scale was similarly assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. To examine the relationship between psychological factors and athletes' performance, a Pearson Correlation Coefficient test was conducted. Psychological factors and athletic performance were further analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Before performing the Pearson correlation analysis, a normality test was conducted to ensure the data met the assumption of normal distribution.

Result and Discussion

Demographic Data of Basketball Athletes

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of basketball athletes in the Segamat district. Among the 140 respondents, 70 athletes (50%) are male, while 70 athletes (50%) are female.

In terms of age distribution, 56 athletes (40%) fall within the 7–9 years age group, 60 athletes (43%) are aged 10–12 years, and 24 athletes (17%) belong to the 13–15 years category.

Table 1
Demographic data of basketball athletes

Gender	**N**	**%**
Male	70	50%
Female	70	50%
Age (years old)		
7-9	56	40%
10-12	60	43%
13-15	24	17%

Reliability Test

To assess the internal consistency of the research instruments, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each psychological factor, including emotion, self-efficacy, self-talk, goal orientation, intrinsic motivation, and athletes' performance. A Cronbach's alpha value within the acceptable range of 0.70 to 0.95 indicates adequate reliability (Taber, 2018). The reliability test was conducted for both the pilot study and the actual study to ensure the robustness of the instruments. Table 2 presents the Cronbach's alpha values for all psychological factors. In the pilot study, the alpha values were: emotion (α = 0.723), intrinsic motivation (α = 0.751), goal orientation (α = 0.711), self-efficacy (α = 0.816), self-talk (α = 0.716), and performance (α = 0.757). These values indicate a high level of reliability, with self-efficacy showing the highest internal consistency (very reliable). Given these results, the instruments were deemed suitable for implementation in the actual study.

For the actual study, Cronbach's alpha values were: emotion (α = 0.706), intrinsic motivation (α = 0.811), goal orientation (α = 0.702), self-efficacy (α = 0.807), self-talk (α = 0.812), and performance (α = 0.818). These findings confirm that the research instruments exhibit strong internal consistency across the selected psychological factors. The high Cronbach's alpha values suggest that the questionnaire items used in the study are reliable and appropriate for measuring psychological constructs among basketball athletes.

Table 2
Test of psychological factors and athletes' performance in pilot study and actual study

Psychological factors	**Cronbach's alpha (pilot study)**	**Cronbach's alpha (actual study)**
Emotion	0.723	0.706
Intrinsic motivation	0.751	0.811
Goal orientation	0.711	0.702
Self-efficacy	0.816	0.807
Self-talk	0.716	0.812
Performance	0.757	0.818

Normality Test Skewness & Kurtosis

Before conducting the Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis, it was essential to assess the normality of the data for the psychological factors under investigation, namely emotion, intrinsic motivation, goal orientation, self-efficacy, and self-talk, as well as athletes'

performance. Normality was tested using skewness and kurtosis, which are widely recognized statistical indicators for determining whether a dataset follows a normal distribution. According to Chua (2020), data are considered normally distributed if the values of skewness and kurtosis fall within the range of -2.0 to +2.0.

The results of the normality test demonstrated that all five psychological factors, as well as athletes' performance, met the required normality criteria. Specifically, the skewness and kurtosis values for emotion were 0.338 and -1.373, respectively, while intrinsic motivation recorded a skewness of -0.543 and a kurtosis of 0.834. Similarly, goal orientation exhibited a skewness of -0.297 and a kurtosis of -0.955, whereas self-efficacy showed a skewness of 0.102 and a kurtosis of -1.856. Additionally, the skewness and kurtosis values for self-talk were -0.087 and -1.752, respectively, and for athletes' performance, the values were 0.178 and -1.743.

Given that all values fall within the acceptable range, it can be concluded that emotion, intrinsic motivation, goal orientation, self-efficacy, self-talk, and athletes' performance exhibit a normal distribution. Meeting this assumption allows for the use of parametric statistical tests in the analysis. Therefore, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient was deemed appropriate for investigating the relationships between these psychological factors and basketball athletes' performance in this study.

Table 3
Normality Test For Psychological Factors And Sport Performance

Psychological factors		**Statistics**
Emotion	Skewness	.338
	Kurtosis	-1.373
Intrinsic motivation	Skewness	-.543
	Kurtosis	.834
Goal orientation	Skewness	-.297
	Kurtosis	-.955
Self-efficacy	Skewness	.102
	Kurtosis	-1.856
Self-talk	Skewness	-.087
	Kurtosis	-1.752
Performance	Skewness	.178
	Kurtosis	-1.743

Pearson Correlation Coefficient

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) is a statistical measure that quantifies the linear relationship between two variables. It ranges from -1 to +1, where a positive r value indicates a direct relationship (as one variable increases, the other also increases), and a negative r value indicates an inverse relationship (as one variable increases, the other decreases). The strength of the correlation is determined by the magnitude of r, with values closer to ±1 representing stronger relationships.

Table 4 presents the Pearson correlation coefficients between psychological factors (emotion, intrinsic motivation, goal orientation, self-efficacy, and self-talk) and basketball athletes' performance in Segamat, Johor.

Table 4
Pearson Correlation Coefficient

		Mean	Standard deviation	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Emotion	3.069	0.22138	1					
2	Intrinsic motivation	4.567	0.35714	-.282**	1				
3	Goal orientation	4.592	0.32223	-.267**	-.563**	1			
4	Self-efficacy	4.257	0.59217	-.673**	-.199**	-.457**	1		
5	Self-talk	4.317	0.41552	-.641**	-.038**	-.292**	-.943**	1	
6	Performance	4.217	0.38346	-.621**	-.198*	-.422**	-.978**	-.928**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*
*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

Correlation between Emotion and Performance
A moderate negative and significant correlation was observed between emotion (M = 3.069, SD = 0.221) and performance (M = 4.218, SD = 0.383), $r(138) = -0.621$, $p < 0.01$. This result suggests that higher levels of negative emotion are associated with lower athletic performance. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.386$) indicates that approximately 38.6% of the variance in performance can be predicted by emotion. The effect size ($r = -0.621$) is considered large, demonstrating a substantial impact of emotion on basketball performance.

Correlation between Intrinsic Motivation and Performance
Intrinsic motivation was found to have a weak positive and significant correlation with performance, $r(138) = 0.198$, $p < 0.05$. The descriptive statistics show that intrinsic motivation (M = 4.567, SD = 0.357) is positively related to performance, suggesting that higher intrinsic motivation may contribute to improved athletic outcomes. However, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.039$) indicates that only 3.9% of the variance in performance can be explained by intrinsic motivation. The effect size ($r = 0.198$) is small, indicating a relatively weak relationship between these variables.

Correlation between Goal Orientation and Performance
A low positive and significant correlation was found between goal orientation (M = 4.593, SD = 0.322) and performance, $r(138) = 0.422$, $p < 0.01$. This suggests that athletes with a stronger goal orientation tend to perform better. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.178$) indicates that 17.8% of the variance in performance is explained by goal orientation. The effect size ($r = 0.422$) is considered moderate, highlighting goal orientation as an important factor in basketball performance.

Correlation between Self-Efficacy and Performance

A very strong positive and significant correlation was identified between self-efficacy (M = 4.257, SD = 0.592) and performance, $r(138) = 0.978$, $p < 0.01$. This finding suggests that higher self-efficacy is strongly associated with better athletic performance. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.956$) indicates that 95.6% of the variance in performance can be explained by self-efficacy, making it the most influential psychological factor in this study. The effect size ($r = 0.978$) is large, reinforcing the significant role of self-efficacy in optimizing sports performance.

Correlation between Self-Talk and Performance

Similarly, a very strong positive and significant correlation was found between self-talk (M = 4.317, SD = 0.416) and performance, $r(138) = 0.928$, $p < 0.01$. This suggests that increased use of self-talk strategies is associated with enhanced athletic performance. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.861$) indicates that 86.1% of the variance in performance can be attributed to self-talk. The effect size ($r = 0.928$) is large, confirming that self-talk plays a crucial role in improving athletes' performance.

The findings highlight that self-efficacy and self-talk exhibit the strongest positive correlations with basketball performance, explaining a substantial proportion of variance. Goal orientation and intrinsic motivation also contribute positively, albeit to a lesser extent. In contrast, negative emotion negatively affects performance, reinforcing the importance of psychological regulation in competitive sports. These results underscore the need for targeted psychological interventions to enhance self-efficacy, goal-setting strategies, and self-talk practices to optimize basketball performance.

This study examines the relationship between emotion, self-efficacy, goal orientation, self-talk, and intrinsic motivation with the performance of basketball athletes in Segamat, Johor. Psychological readiness is a critical determinant of athletic success, as it plays a significant role in enhancing performance and achieving competitive excellence (Kaplánová, 2024).

Emotion and Athletes' Performance (H1)

Hypothesis 1 (H1) tested the relationship between emotion and athletes' performance, revealing a significant negative correlation. This finding aligns with the study by Villas et al. (2024), which demonstrated that negative emotions negatively impact performance. Athletes who experience high levels of negative emotions tend to have lower performance levels compared to those who can regulate their emotions effectively.

Optimal emotional states for peak performance include happiness, calmness, and energy, whereas anger, anxiety, and stress tend to impair performance outcomes. Haryanto et al. (2024) found that athletes with higher emotional intelligence perform better than those with lower emotional regulation abilities. Similarly, Gusril et al. (2022) suggested that negative thinking patterns lead to impaired decision-making and spontaneous, ineffective actions. Furthermore, Haidong et al. (2024) highlighted that stress-related emotions contribute to an increased risk of sports injuries and performance decline. In contrast, Knöbel et al. (2024) suggested that positive emotions enhance response time, aligning with Mood-as-Information Theory, which predicts that excessive positive emotions can also impair

cognitive processing. Li et al. (2024) found that emotion regulation skills significantly enhance cognitive assessment ability and performance, emphasizing that athletes with high emotional intelligence and cognitive flexibility are better equipped to manage stress and optimize performance.

Self-Efficacy and Athletes' Performance (H2)

Hypothesis 2 (H2) examined the relationship between self-efficacy and performance, revealing a significant positive correlation. This finding is consistent with Lee and Kang (2024), who demonstrated that golfers with higher self-efficacy experience less fear of failure and perform better in competitive environments. Martínez et al. (2024) also confirmed that self-efficacy is strongly linked to athletic performance across various sports, as it influences motor ability and decision-making.

Volgemute et al. (2024) found that self-efficacy interventions significantly enhance performance outcomes, reinforcing its importance in improving mental skills and training effectiveness. Furthermore, Wibowo et al. (2024) highlighted that self-efficacy, social support, and achievement motivation are essential factors for success in precision sports such as shooting. Aizava et al. (2023) noted that athletes with high self-efficacy are better equipped to control their behavior, set goals, and achieve performance objectives. Additionally, Setiyo et al. (2023) found that motivation mediates the relationship between self-efficacy and performance, suggesting that athletes with strong self-belief are more engaged in learning and skill development. Mehran and Mir (2023) further reinforced that self-efficacy enhances motivation, endurance, mental toughness, and confidence, which collectively contribute to higher performance outcomes.

Goal Orientation and Athletes' Performance (H3)

Hypothesis 3 (H3) investigated the relationship between goal orientation and performance, revealing a significant positive correlation. Kalinowski et al. (2022) demonstrated that task-oriented football players possess higher emotional intelligence and lower anxiety levels, leading to improved performance. Philyaw et al. (2024) found that ego-oriented motivation enhances performance in sprinting, further supporting the positive relationship between goal orientation and sport performance. According to Knoblochova et al. (2021), task-oriented motivation is associated with intrinsic motivation, while ego-oriented motivation is linked to competitive performance. Athletes with task-oriented goals tend to engage in sports for personal development, whereas ego-oriented athletes focus on external validation and social recognition. Pestano and Salazar (2024) emphasized that task-approach goals, such as self-improvement and competence-building, positively influence sports performance, reinforcing the idea that goal orientation fosters self-esteem, teamwork, and success in competition.

Self-Talk and Athletes' Performance (H4)

Hypothesis 4 (H4) tested the relationship between self-talk and performance, showing a significant positive correlation. This result aligns with Hidayat et al. (2023), who found that self-talk facilitates learning and enhances psychological skills. The strategy is particularly effective in motor skill development and performance optimization. Similarly, Isar et al. (2022) demonstrated that self-talk reduces cognitive and somatic anxiety while improving self-confidence during competition. The ability to reinforce positive self-instruction helps athletes stay focused and execute tasks effectively. Furthermore, Tzormpatzakis et al. (2022)

found that self-talk enhances attention, aim stability, and shooting accuracy, further confirming its role in performance enhancement.

Intrinsic Motivation and Athletes' Performance (H5)

Hypothesis 5 (H5) explored the relationship between intrinsic motivation and performance, revealing a significant positive correlation. Almagro et al. (2020) emphasized that intrinsic motivation plays a crucial role in sustaining physical activity and long-term athletic engagement. The study found that young athletes with high intrinsic motivation demonstrate greater compliance with training programs. Similarly, Tapia et al. (2020) found that intrinsic motivation influences physical activity levels and adherence to training regimens, reinforcing its importance in athletic development. Hanie et al. (2019) also confirmed that intrinsic motivation contributes to performance improvements and enhances positive sports experiences. Pestano and Salazar (2024) highlighted that intrinsic motivation can be strengthened through access to quality sports facilities, skill development programs, and tactical training, further supporting its role in enhancing athletic performance and fostering long-term participation.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into psychological interventions for athletic development. Given the negative correlation between emotion and performance, coaches should implement targeted emotional regulation training to help athletes manage stress and anxiety effectively. Additionally, the positive correlation between self-talk and performance suggests that sports development programs should incorporate self-talk strategies to enhance focus and confidence.

Furthermore, as goal orientation positively influences performance, coaches and sports administrators should emphasize goal-setting techniques to help athletes stay motivated and committed. The strong correlations between self-efficacy, motivation, and performance highlight the need for structured mental conditioning programs to enhance self-belief and competitive resilience. Coaches play a pivotal role in fostering positive motivation, self-efficacy, and confidence, ultimately enabling athletes to achieve optimal performance levels.

Research Limitations and Future Directions

Several limitations were identified in this study. The sample was restricted to basketball athletes from selected schools in Segamat, limiting generalizability. Future research should expand the sample size and include athletes from diverse sports disciplines to enhance the applicability of findings. Additionally, this study focused on a limited set of psychological factors, omitting other potentially influential variables due to time constraints. Future research should explore additional psychological constructs, such as mental toughness, resilience, and attentional control, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of psychological determinants in sports performance. Furthermore, this study examined team sport athletes, while individual sports were not considered. Future research should investigate the role of psychological factors in individual sports, as performance determinants may differ across sporting contexts.

Conclusion

This study confirms that emotion has a significant negative correlation with performance, whereas self-efficacy, goal orientation, self-talk, and intrinsic motivation exhibit significant positive correlations with basketball athletes' performance in Segamat, Johor. The results indicate that basketball athletes in this region possess a satisfactory level of psychological well-being, which contributes to improved competitive performance. To further enhance athletes' potential and confidence, coaches and sports organizations should consistently implement psychological interventions that promote emotional regulation, goal-setting, self-talk, and intrinsic motivation. By emphasizing these psychological strategies, athletes can achieve higher levels of competitive success and maintain long-term engagement in sports. While this study provides valuable insights into the psychological factors influencing athletic performance, further research should explore additional variables such as stress management techniques, team dynamics, and coping strategies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of psychological well-being in sports. Longitudinal studies can also assess the long-term impact of psychological interventions on athlete performance and mental resilience. Additionally, comparative studies across different regions and sports disciplines could provide deeper insights into the generalizability of these findings.

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