



## Motivation of Gender-Based Volleyball Athletes During Competitions : A Coach Athlete Relationship Perspective

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### Abstract

Motivation during competition is one of the important psychological factors that influence an athlete's performance in volleyball. This study aims to determine the relationship between motivation during competition and the coach-athlete relationship, as well as to analyze differences in motivation and the coach-athlete relationship based on gender among volleyball athletes. This study used a quantitative method with a correlational design and involved a sample of 40 volleyball athletes from the JVC Raya Club, consisting of 20 male athletes and 20 female athletes. The instruments used were the Sport Motivation Scale II (SMS-II) to measure motivation during competition and the Coach-Athlete Relationship Questionnaire (CART-Q) to measure the coach-athlete relationship. Data analysis was performed using Spearman's correlation test and the independent sample t-test. The results showed a significant and positive relationship between coach-athlete relationships and competition motivation ( $r = 0.863$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Meanwhile, the results of the difference test showed that there was no significant difference between male and female athletes on both variables, although descriptively female athletes had slightly higher average scores. This study shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between coach-athlete relationships and motivation during competition in volleyball athletes.

### How to Cite

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## INTRODUCTION

Volleyball is one of the most successful, popular, competitive, and enjoyable sports in the world (Mahfud et al., 2023). Volleyball is a sport that is becoming increasingly popular among the public, especially among students. Through volleyball, many teenagers benefit, especially in terms of physical, mental, and social growth (Pangestu et al., 2021). The mind, in the form of thoughts, acts as the controller. The mind commands and the body follows. Proposed by Kartono and Gulo (2000:276) explains that mental refers to matters of the mind, reason, or memory, the organism's adaptation to the environment, and specifically refers to adaptations that include symbolic functions that are recognized by the individual (Nurhayati et al., 2022).

One thing that is closely related to the mentality for playing bola is motivation. Motivation, according to Khan, dkk (2011) is an important element of human personality that directs a person's activities in carrying out a goal to achieve a desire, while in general motivation is a factor or process that drives individuals to react or not react in various situations (Bermain & Bolavoli, 2020). In particular, motivation during competition is essential to encourage each individual to have confidence when performing well in a match (Pasuruan, 2023). Meanwhile, other external factors include the support of the athlete's environment, such as family, friends, and team, and especially the role of the coach. A good relationship between coaches and athletes can create a positive training atmosphere and provide a sense of comfort, which in turn has an impact on athletes' motivation during competitions (Indarji, 2024). The quality of the relationship is described by the level of emotional closeness, including mutual respect, trust, appreciation, and affection; a commitment to maintaining a close relationship over a long period of time; and working in a complementary mode that is responsive, open, friendly, and comfortable with each other's presence (Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004). The quality of the coach-athlete relationship is defined and operationalized as a social environment in which the feelings, thoughts, and behaviors of athletes and coaches are interconnected (Davis et al., 2023). Effective communication and building good relationships with athletes are key principles in coaching (Nolan et al., 2024). Similarly, a poor coach-athlete relationship has a significant impact on the quality of training and athlete performance

(Şenel et al., 2024).

In addition to the coach-athlete relationship, gender differences can also affect motivation levels during competition. Male and female athletes have different psychological characteristics in responding to pressure, challenges, and support from coaches.

Therefore, the role of the coach is very important here. Coaches must be able to be friends when their athletes experience personal problems. Coaches must be authoritative when directing their athletes (Jasmani & Volume, 2018). Coaches who are enthusiastic in performing their roles tend to improve the athletes' performance so that they can achieve common goals (Interpersonal et al., 2021). A coach who provides positive support and instills strong confidence that their athletes can achieve their desired goals, namely performing well and winning, will see those athletes display positive emotions before competing. If athletes feel they cannot achieve those goals and are constantly pressured by their coach, they will display negative reactions before competing (Teori, 2017). Therefore, support from coaches greatly influences athletes' performance and motivation during competitions.

The phenomenon observed in the field shows differences in athletes' responses to coaching instructions, such as decreased motivation to compete, lack of confidence, and emotional tension, which are thought to be influenced by the quality of the coach-athlete relationship and differences in athletes' gender characteristics. This makes it possible to demonstrate different levels of competitive motivation even within the same training environment. Most of these studies investigated 1) the relationship between competition motivation and coach-athlete relationships 2) differences between competition motivation and coach-athlete relationships based on gender. Although there have been studies examining motivation and the coach-athlete relationship, most studies have focused on achievement motivation (Persepsi et al., 2013). This study examines athletes' motivation during competition and the relationship between coaches and athletes. Thus, the purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between volleyball athletes' motivation during competition and the coach-athlete relationship, and to analyze the differences between motivation during competition and the coach-athlete relationship based on gender. This study is expected to provide a clear picture of the importance of the coach-athlete relationship in increasing athletes' motivation to compete, both for male and female

athletes, so that it can be taken into consideration in the process of coaching and training volleyball, especially at the JVC Raya Volleyball Club.

## METHOD

This study uses a quantitative method with a correlational design approach, which is a study conducted to analyze the relationship between the variables of motivation during competition and the variables of coach-athlete relationships based on gender. This design was chosen because the variables studied, namely motivation during competition and the coach-athlete relationship, did not treat the subjects, but rather examined the interrelationship between variables as they naturally occur in the field. This approach allows researchers to understand how gender differences and the quality of coach-athlete relationships correlate with athletes' motivation levels during competition (Dasar Metodologi Penelitian Dr. Sandu Siyoto, SKM, M.Kes M. Ali Sodik, M.A. 1, n.d.). This method allows for direct analysis of the relationship between variables in accordance with the research objectives, as all data is processed once all respondents have completed the questionnaire. The research was conducted at the JVC Raya Club, located in Bogor Regency, West Java Province, which is one of the volleyball clubs with an organized training structure and a stable population of athletes. The JVC Raya Club was chosen as the research site because its population was suitable for the research objectives and was easily accessible during the data collection process. All research procedures, ranging from filling out questionnaires on motivation and coach-athlete relationships, were conducted at the JVC Raya Club in November 2025. Participants in this study were athletes aged 15-18 years old from the JVC Raya Club. To meet research needs, purposive sampling techniques were used to select samples (Cheng, 2018). The inclusion criteria for sample selection in this study included athletes aged 15-18 years, 20 male athletes and 20 female athletes, for a total sample of 40 athletes, who were actively trained at JVC Raya and willing to participate in this study with parental consent. There were no exclusion criteria, as all athletes met the inclusion criteria that could be considered relevant and eligible for the research sample.

This study has two variables, namely motivation during competition as the dependent variable and the relationship with the athletic coach as the independent variable. Standardized instruments are used to measure each of these variables.

Motivation is assessed through athletes' behavior, interest, social pressure, or meaninglessness towards the activities performed, and the Coach-Athlete Relationship is assessed through closeness, commitment, and athletes' interaction with coaches.

In this study, data was collected using a questionnaire distributed to all respondents. Under the supervision of the researchers in this study, each student filled out the questionnaire independently. This was done to ensure that the filling process was carried out correctly and that the athletes did not misunderstand any of the questions. Competition motivation was measured using the Sport Motivation Scale II (SMS-II) instrument. This instrument contains 24 questions to assess competition motivation in athletes (Manouchehri et al., 2015). In this study, the SMS-II instrument was retested by the author and translated into Indonesian by a language expert. It was found to be reliable with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.75, making it suitable for measuring athletes' motivation during competition. The coach-athlete relationship was measured using the Coach-Athlete Relationship Questionnaire (CART-Q) instrument (Jowett & Ntoumanis, 2004) which has been tested for validity and reliability by previous researchers with a Cronbach Alpha value of 0.93 (Communication et al., 2023). Data collection through questionnaires has the potential to cause response bias, as answers are entirely dependent on the subjective perceptions of respondents, even with direct supervision from researchers. In addition, limitations in ensuring the seriousness and honesty of respondents when filling out questionnaires can affect the accuracy of the data obtained. Differences in respondents' levels of understanding of questionnaire statements also have the potential to cause interpretation bias, which can ultimately affect the quality and validity of research results.

Data analysis began with Spearman's correlation statistics to determine the relationship between variables (Baba et al., 2021). Selanjutnya dilakukan uji sample T-test untuk menganalisis perbedaan motivasi saat bertanding dan hubungan pelatih-atlet pada laki-laki dan Perempuan (Kyriazos & Poga, 2023). All data were processed using SPSS, and the significance level was set at  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study involved a total of 40 respondents consisting of 20 male athletes and 20 female athletes. During the data collection process, all

questionnaires were returned and could be analyzed so that there was no missing data. Spearman's correlation test was used to determine the relationship between motivation during competition and the coach-athlete relationship, both in male and female athletes. This test was chosen because the data did not fully meet the assumption of normality. The results of the descriptive and correlation tests in **Table 1** show that the average value of the coach-athlete relationship is 67.03 with a standard deviation of 10.50, while motivation during competition has an average value of 124.50 with a standard deviation of 17.39. The results of the Spearman correlation test show a significant relationship between the coach-athlete relationship and motivation during competition, with a correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) between the Coach-Athlete Relationship and Motivation during Competition of  $r = 0.683$   $p < 0.000$  and a sample size of 40 people. This value indicates that the better the coach-athlete relationship, the higher the athlete's motivation during competition.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics and Spearman's Correlation

Variable	n	M	SD	1	2	information
Coach Athlete Relationship	40	67.03	10.50	-	-	signifi-cant
Motivation	40	124.50	17.39	.683	-	

The results of the T-test sample in **Table 2** show that the average motivation score for men is 0.123 with a standard deviation of 0.188, while the average motivation score for women is 0.125 with a standard deviation of 0.162. The sample T-test results show that the average motivation score for women is slightly higher than that for men, but the  $p$ -value =  $0.775 < 0.05$ , which means that there is no significant difference between the motivation scores of men and women.

**Table 2.** Sample Statistics for the T-test of Motivation during Competition

Logistic Parameter	M SD	t(40)	p	Cohen's d	information
Motivation Men	.123 .188	-287	.775	0.091	no signifi-cant
Women	.125 .162	-287	.775	0.091	

The results of the T-test sample in **Table 3** show that the average value of the coach-athlete relationship for males is 0.659 with a standard deviation of 0.123, while the coach-athlete relationship for females is 0.681 with a standard deviation of 0.836. The sample T-test results show that the average value of the coach-athlete rela-

tionship for women is slightly higher than that for men, but the  $p$ -value =  $0.505 < 0.05$ , which means that there is no significant difference between the values of the coach-athlete relationship for men and women.

**Table 3.** T-test Sample Statistics for Coach-Athlete Relationship

Logistic Parameter	M SD	t(40)	p	Cohen's d	information
Coach Athlete Relationship	.659 .123	-673	.505	0.213	no signifi-cant
Women	.681 .836	-673	.505	0.213	

The results of the study indicate that the coach-athlete relationship has a significant correlation with competition motivation in volleyball athletes (Nur et al., 2024). Interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes characterized by effective communication, emotional support, openness, and trust have been shown to contribute to athletes' motivation during competition. Other studies also show that strong coach-athlete relationships, which include closeness, commitment, and complementarity, have a positive impact on motivation in the context of sports (Longakit et al., 2024). According to the literature underpinning self-determination theory, coaches who support athletes' psychological needs can increase athletes' autonomous motivation, making them more motivated and committed to training and competition. This finding is also in line with local research that found that interpersonal communication with coaches can positively influence athletes' motivation during competition (Lubis et al., 2024). This study implies that sports coaches, especially volleyball coaches, need to pay more attention to interpersonal relationships and effective communication with athletes, as the quality of these relationships contributes positively to athletes' motivation during competition. A training approach based on improving athlete motivation through support and good interpersonal relationships can help optimize athlete performance.

However, this study shows that there are no significant differences between male and female athletes in terms of motivation and coach-athlete relationships. This indicates that in this study, gender differences are not a significant factor in determining competition motivation or perceptions of relationships with coaches. This supports the view that social and psychological factors such as coach support and relationship quality have a greater influence on athlete motivation than gender alone. Although there were

no significant differences in the variables of motivation and coach-athlete relationships between men and women, statistical results show that women's motivation and coach-athlete relationships were slightly higher than men's. This shows that female athletes tend to be more responsive to interpersonal relationships, including communication, emotional support, and empathy from coaches. The difference in average scores, which shows that female scores are slightly higher, indicates that there are psychological tendencies that need to be considered. Coaches need to maintain a positive relational approach to all athletes, regardless of gender.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between coach-athlete relationships and motivation during competition in volleyball athletes. The better the quality of the relationship between coaches and athletes, which is characterized by emotional closeness, trust, effective communication, and commitment to the training and competition process, the higher the athletes' motivation during competition. However, research also confirms that healthy interpersonal relationships between coaches and athletes play an important role in supporting the psychological aspects of athletes, particularly their motivation to compete. This study also found that there were no accurate differences between male and female athletes in terms of motivation during competition and the coach-athlete relationship. This shows that, in general, the level of motivation during competition and the coach-athlete relationship is not determined by gender differences, but is more influenced by other factors such as the training environment and support from coaches. However, descriptively, the average motivation scores of female athletes and the female coach-athlete relationship were slightly higher than those of male athletes, indicating a tendency for women to be more responsive to psychological support, especially in terms of communication, empathy, and emotional support, although these differences were not statistically accurate.

This confirms that future researchers should continue to examine important factors closely related to motivation during competition, regardless of gender differences. Therefore, coaches are expected to continue developing coaching approaches that emphasize interpersonal relationships, open communication, and balanced psychological support for all athletes. In addition, the use of self-report instruments was one of

the reasons why the differences between variables did not appear strongly in this study. Further research is recommended to continue investigating the quality of the coach-athlete relationship in improving athletes' motivation during competition, expanding the sample size, and involving several clubs so that the research results can be generalized more broadly.

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