Vol. 13 No. 2 September 2026
e-ISSN: 2807-2227
p-ISSN: 2355-4355

Exploring the Lived Experience of Indonesian Petanque Athletes in the SEA Games: A Phenomenological Study of Achievement, National Representation and Personal Transformation

Yusradinafi[1], Ely Yuliawan[2*], Sugih Suhartini[3], Bangkit Yudho Prabowo[4], Alek Oktadinata[5], Fadli Zainuddin[6]

[135]Program Studi Pendidikan Olahraga Dan Kesehatan, Fakultas Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia
[24]Pendidikan Kepelatihan Olahraga, Fakultas Keguruan Dan Ilmu Pendidikan, Universitas Jambi, Jambi, Indonesia
[6]Program Studi Pendidikan Jasmani, Fakultas Ilmu Keolahragaan Dan Kesehatan Masyarakat, Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika, Nusa Tenggara barat, Indonesia

Authors Email: yusradinafi@unja.ac.id, elyyuliawan.fik@unja.ac.id, sugihsuhartini@unja.ac.id, yudhoprabowobangkit@unja.ac.id, alek_oktadinata@unja.ac.id, fadlizainuddin@undikma.ac.id

Correspondent Author: elyyuliawan.fik@unja.ac.id

Received: June 16, 2026; Accepted September 12, 2026: Published: September 30, 2026
Ed: 2026: 532-545

Abstract

This study explores the lived experiences of Indonesian petanque athletes participating in the SEA Games, with particular attention to how they experienced achievement, national representation, psychological pressure, social relationships, and personal transformation. The study employed an interpretive phenomenological approach to understand the meanings participants attributed to their experiences. Four Indonesian national petanque athletes from Jambi, DKI Jakarta, Aceh, and Central Sulawesi served as the primary phenomenological participants, while one national coach was included as a contextual informant. Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews and analysed with the assistance of NVivo 12 Pro. The analysis generated five interconnected experiential themes: (1) achievement as personal and family fulfilment; (2) struggle and sacrifice in pursuing elite sporting aspirations; (3) psychological pressure and emotional regulation in international competition; (4) national representation as a source of pride and responsibility; and (5) the SEA Games as a transformative experience. Across these themes, achievement was understood not simply as winning a medal, but as a meaningful experience involving family pride, representing Indonesia, overcoming personal and sporting challenges, learning from victory and defeat, and developing future aspirations. The findings highlight how Indonesian petanque athletes interpreted their SEA Games experiences within personal, relational, cultural, and national contexts.

Keywords: Petanque; SEA Games; achievement motivation; mental toughness; phenomenology.

INTRODUCTION

Petanque is a precision sport that requires technical skill, concentration, emotional regulation, and psychological preparedness during competition. In high-performance sport, athletes experience competitive situations in which technical and physical preparation intersects with how they interpret pressure, manage emotions, sustain commitment, and respond to challenges (Serpa, 2025; Tossici et al., 2024). Motivation refers to the reasons and values that encourage athletes to persist in pursuing sporting goals (Arifin & Wahyudi, 2021; Pramono & Priambodo, 2024). In contrast, mental toughness is used in this study to describe participants' experiences of maintaining focus, confidence, and emotional control when confronted with competitive demands, while psychological resilience refers more broadly to the process of adapting or recovering in response to adversity (Petersen, 2024; Vauziah et al., 2026). Sporting achievement is therefore approached in this study not as an outcome that can be causally attributed to a particular psychological factor, but as an experience that athletes interpret within personal, social, and competitive contexts (Arisman, 2024; Irwanto & Romas, 2019; Sakalidis et al., 2022).

The SEA Games is the largest multi-sport event in the Southeast Asian region and a key target for national athletes. This competition brings significant psychological pressure, as athletes represent not only themselves but also carry the hopes of the nation. It is well established that the pressures of international competition can affect athletes' mental state and performance during matches (Fadilah & Priambodo, 2024; Hudaniah & Masturah, 2024). Athletes who are able to manage competitive stress tend to demonstrate more consistent performance (Juhanis et al., 2025; Rahmatilah et al., 2026). Furthermore, experience of competing at an international level helps shape athletes' perceptions of the successes and failures they experience (Arisman, 2024; Broa & Baradillo, 2024).

In practical terms, the Indonesian national petanque team competed at the 33rd SEA Games Thailand 2025. The SEA Games provides an important context for examining athletes' lived experiences because athletes participate not only as individual competitors but also as representatives of Indonesia. The Indonesia Olympic Committee provides official documentation concerning the 33rd SEA Games Thailand 2025 and identifies petanque among the sports included in the event. Within this context, sporting outcomes can be considered alongside the subjective meanings athletes attach to preparation, competition, representation, and achievement. Rather than assuming that motivation or psychological resilience produces medal success, this study examines how participants themselves experienced and interpreted the demands associated with competing at this level (Maksum, 2022; Sarkar & Hilton, 2020; Sholicha & Dwi W., 2020).

From a sports psychology perspective, athletes' experiences whilst preparing for and competing in international competitions are a phenomenon rich in meaning. Every athlete has a unique experience influenced by their background, training process, social support, and personal interpretation of the challenges faced (Qin et al., 2026). The motivation of elite athletes often develops through a combination of interacting intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Jordalen et al., 2020; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Social support from coaches, family, and teammates has been shown to be a key factor in maintaining athletes' commitment to training and competition (Hubli et al., 2026; Wekesser et al., 2021). On the other hand, the ability to interpret sporting experiences positively can enhance psychological well-being and the sustainability of an athlete's career (Zvosec et al., 2023).

Although previous studies have examined motivation, mental toughness, psychological resilience, and sporting achievement, research specifically exploring the lived experiences of Indonesian petanque athletes participating in the SEA Games remains limited. More importantly, understanding elite athletes' experiences requires attention not only to psychological characteristics but also to how athletes interpret family expectations, sacrifice, national representation, collective relationships, and future aspirations within their sporting journeys. These dimensions may overlap in practice and may acquire meaning differently for each athlete (Burns et al., 2019). A phenomenological approach is therefore appropriate because it seeks to understand how individuals experience and give meaning to a phenomenon as it is lived (Dodgson, 2023; Van Manen, 2023). Through this approach, athletes' narratives can be examined in relation to their preparation, competitive pressure, relationships, national representation, and interpretations of achievement (Alkasasbeh & Akroush, 2025; Jewett et al., 2019). Phenomenological research can also illuminate how athletes construct meanings from success, failure, and significant experiences within their sporting careers (Gotwals & Tamminen, 2022). Accordingly, this study aims to explore how Indonesian petanque athletes experience and interpret participation in the SEA Games, particularly how motivation, psychological challenges, national identity, social relationships, sacrifice, and personal transformation become connected to the meaning of achievement.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological design to explore how Indonesian petanque athletes experienced and interpreted their participation in the SEA Games, guided by an interpretive phenomenological orientation that emphasises lived experience and the meanings individuals attribute to what they have experienced (Pilarska, 2021; Van Manen, 2023). In conducting the analysis, the researchers engaged in reflexive consideration of their prior knowledge and assumptions concerning elite sport, petanque, athlete development, and psychological preparation to minimise the imposition of predetermined interpretations on participants' accounts. The interview transcripts were read repeatedly to obtain a holistic understanding of each participant's experience, after which significant statements describing concrete experiences, feelings, challenges, relationships, and personal interpretations were identified as experiential meaning units. These meaning units were examined within and across participants and progressively interpreted into experiential themes, with attention to both similarities and differences in participants' experiences. NVivo 12 Pro was used as an organisational and analytical support tool to facilitate transcript organisation, coding, retrieval, comparison, and visualisation, rather than as a substitute for phenomenological interpretation. The researchers retained responsibility for interpreting the experiential meanings expressed in the participants' narratives and for refining the emerging themes in relation to the original transcripts. The final interpretation therefore sought to describe the interconnected structure and meaning of the participants' lived SEA Games experiences rather than establish causal relationships between psychological factors and competitive outcomes.

Research Subjects and Procedures

The primary phenomenological participants were four Indonesian national petanque athletes who had direct experience of preparing for and participating in the SEA Games. They originated from Jambi, DKI Jakarta, Aceh, and Central Sulawesi. Purposive sampling was used because participants were required to have direct and relevant experience of the phenomenon under investigation (Tajik et al., 2025). The inclusion of four athletes was considered appropriate for an in-depth phenomenological inquiry because the study prioritised experiential depth and detailed accounts rather than statistical representation. Participant characteristics included ethically reportable information regarding age, sex, years of involvement in petanque, previous SEA Games or international experience, competition event/category, and SEA Games medal status. Data collection was conducted in May 2026 after participants provided informed consent. Semi-structured interviews were conducted via WhatsApp video calls and audio-recorded with participants' consent. Each interview lasted approximately 40–60 minutes and focused on participants' experiences before, during, and after the SEA Games. Interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to enable participants to express their experiences naturally and in detail. The interviews were transcribed in the original language, and relevant data and quotations were subsequently translated into English for manuscript preparation while preserving the original meaning. The informants' data can be seen in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Research Informants

Informant	Role	Province /Region	Sex	Years in Petanque	Previous International Experience	SEA Games Event	Medal Status
A1	Athlete	Jambi	Female	9 years	Yes	Triple Man	Bronze
A2	Athlete	DKI Jakarta	Male	11 years	Yes	Single Man	Gold
A3	Athlete	Aceh	Male	10 years	Yes	Triple Man	Silver
A4	Athlete	Central Sulawesi	Male	11 years	Yes	Triple Mix A	Bronze

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument was the researcher, supported by a semi-structured interview guide developed around broad experiential prompts concerning participants' sporting journeys, motivation, experiences of pressure, responses to challenges, relationships with family and teammates, experiences of representing Indonesia, sacrifices during preparation, and the meanings they attached to achievement. The questions were intentionally open-ended to allow participants to describe their experiences in their own words rather than respond to predetermined psychological categories. In-depth interviews were conducted via WhatsApp video calls in May 2026, with each interview lasting approximately 40–60 minutes and being audio-recorded with participants' informed consent. The interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to facilitate natural and detailed expression of participants' experiences, perceptions, and feelings. The recordings were transcribed verbatim in Bahasa Indonesia, and relevant transcripts and quotations were subsequently translated into English for analysis and presentation in the manuscript. Semi-structured interviews provided flexibility to explore participants' experiences in greater depth while maintaining alignment with the research focus (Ruslin et al., 2022).

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted through an iterative phenomenological process supported by NVivo 12 Pro. First, the researchers read each transcript repeatedly to obtain a holistic understanding of each participant's account. Second, significant statements describing concrete experiences and their perceived meanings were identified as experiential meaning units. Third, related meaning units were coded and compared within each participant's account before being examined across participants. Fourth, the codes were grouped into experiential patterns and provisional themes. Fifth, the researchers reviewed the emerging themes against the original transcripts to ensure that interpretations remained grounded in participants' narratives. Finally, the themes were integrated to develop an account of how participants experienced and interpreted the SEA Games as a sporting, social, psychological, and personally meaningful experience. NVivo 12 Pro was used to organise transcripts, manage codes, retrieve supporting excerpts, compare participant accounts, and visualise relationships among codes. The software was used as an organisational tool and did not determine the themes; interpretation remained the responsibility of the researchers. This distinction is important because computer-assisted qualitative data analysis can support systematic and traceable organisation of qualitative material without replacing interpretive judgement (Allsop et al., 2022).

RESULTS

The analysis focused on the lived experiences of four Indonesian petanque athletes (A1–A4) who had direct experience of preparing for and participating in the SEA Games. The phenomenological interpretation generated five interrelated experiential themes: (1) Achievement Motivation, Struggle, and Sacrifice; (2) Mental Toughness and Coping with Competitive Pressure;

(3) National Identity and Responsibility; (4) Social Support and Collective Belonging; and (5) Achievement as Personal Transformation and Meaning.

These themes should not be understood as independent causal factors of competitive success. Rather, they represent interconnected dimensions through which the participants described and interpreted their SEA Games experiences. In particular, achievement motivation was intertwined with struggle and sacrifice; national representation was connected to family, team, and collective expectations; psychological pressure was experienced alongside coping strategies and emotional regulation; social support contributed to participants' sense of belonging and resilience; and achievement was interpreted through subsequent reflection, personal growth, and transformation

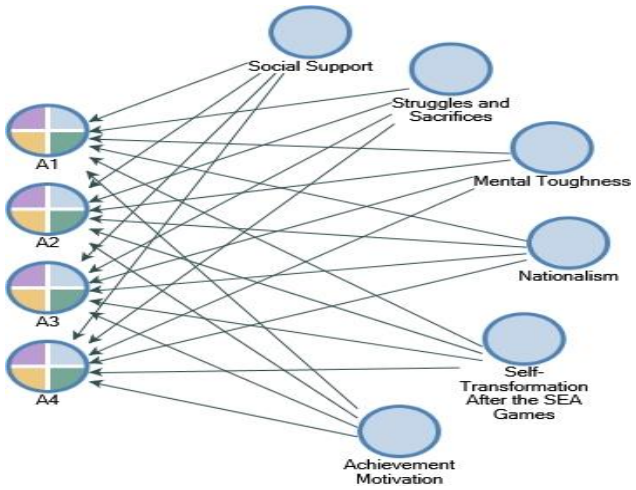


Figure 1. Source triangulation using inter-code relationships

Figure 1 presents the relationship between the four athlete participants (A1–A4) and the five experiential themes identified through the phenomenological analysis. The figure illustrates the thematic coverage and relationships within the dataset rather than implying source convergence or causal relationships. Differences among participants were retained where their narratives did not fully overlap.

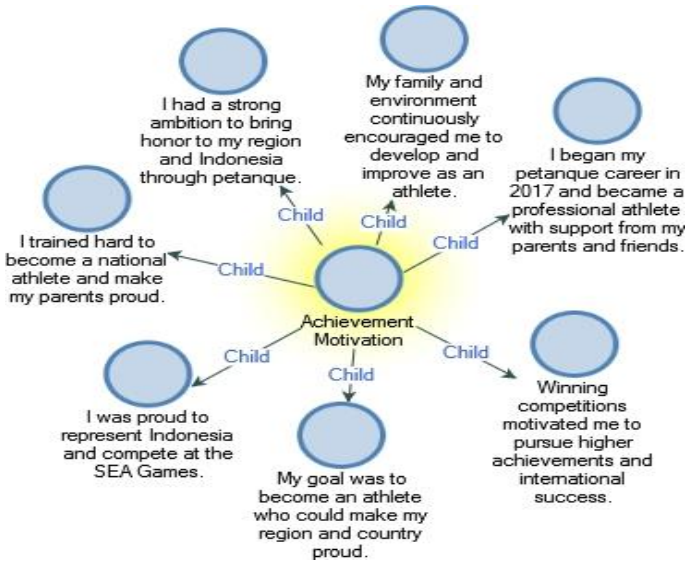


Figure 2. Diagram of Achievement Motivation

As illustrated in Figure 2, participants described achievement motivation as closely connected to family pride, personal aspirations, regional representation, and the desire to become national athletes. Motivation was not experienced as an isolated psychological characteristic; rather, it was intertwined with the sacrifices, challenges, and difficulties encountered throughout their sporting

journeys. A1 stated, “I trained hard to become a national athlete and make my parents proud.” This account illustrates how personal sporting ambition was experienced alongside a strong desire to fulfil family expectations and achieve recognition through sporting performance.

The athletes also described achievement as involving significant costs, choices, and personal sacrifices. A2 remarked, “I almost quit petanque due to my family’s financial difficulties, but I eventually continued pursuing achievements.” Similarly, A3 stated, “I had to choose between university life, social activities, and becoming a national athlete.” These accounts indicate that achievement was experienced not only through the pursuit of competitive goals but also through difficult decisions concerning education, family circumstances, financial limitations, and social life. As shown in Figure 2, these experiences collectively demonstrate that struggle and sacrifice were embedded within the athletes’ lived journeys toward achievement rather than representing a separate experiential theme.

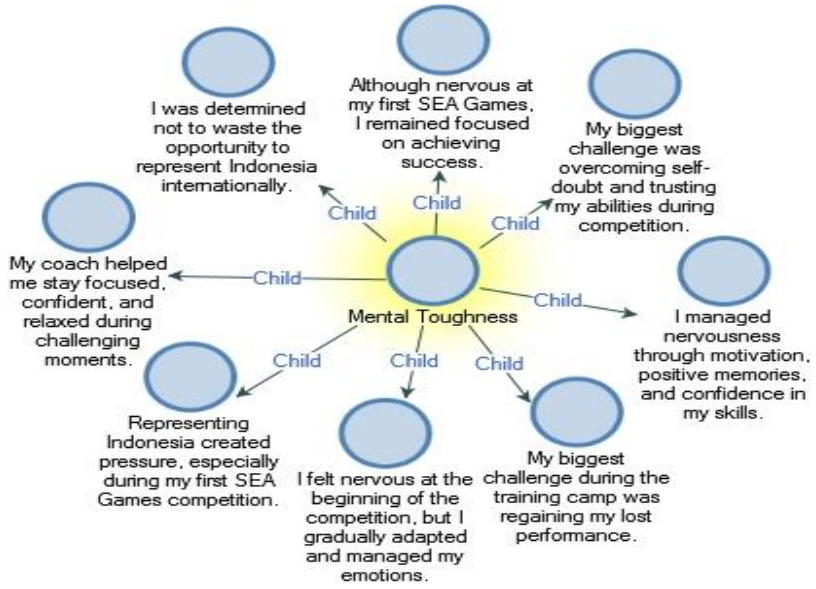


Figure 3. Diagram of Mental Toughness

As illustrated in Figure 3, participants described the SEA Games as an environment characterised by nervousness, self-doubt, uncertainty, and pressure to perform while representing Indonesia. In this study, the term mental toughness refers specifically to how participants experienced maintaining focus, confidence, and emotional control under competitive demands. The broader concept of psychological resilience is used only when discussing the literature concerning adaptation to adversity. A1 stated, “My biggest challenge was overcoming self-doubt and trusting my abilities during competition.” A2 similarly explained, “I felt nervous at the start of the competition, but I gradually adapted and managed my emotions.” These accounts demonstrate that psychological pressure was experienced as an ongoing process of coping and adjustment rather than as the absence of negative emotions. As presented in Figure 3, the participants’ experiences suggest that mental toughness emerged through their efforts to manage nervousness, overcome self-doubt, maintain confidence, and regulate emotions throughout the competitive experience.

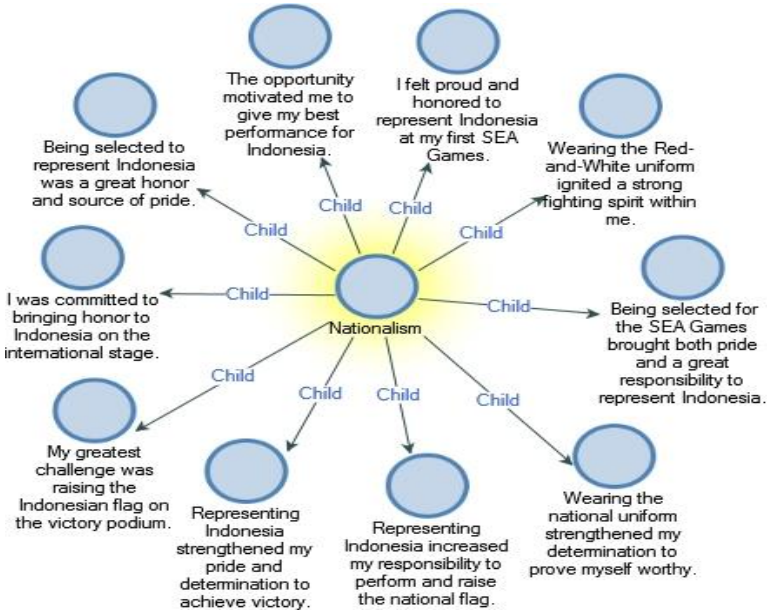


Figure 4. Diagram of National Identity and Responsibility

National representation emerged as an important dimension of how participants interpreted their participation in the SEA Games. As illustrated in Figure 4, the athletes did not describe representing Indonesia solely as a competitive opportunity; they also associated it with pride, responsibility, regional identity, and the symbolic significance of wearing the national colours. A1 stated, "Representing Indonesia increased my sense of responsibility to perform well and raise the national flag," while A3 remarked, "Being selected to represent Indonesia was a great honour and a source of pride." A4 further stated, "My greatest challenge was raising the Indonesian flag on the victory podium." These narratives indicate that the meaning of achievement extended beyond an individual result. For these participants, achievement was connected to representing a collective identity and fulfilling a perceived responsibility to the nation. The national dimension was therefore interpreted as part of the cultural and relational context of sporting achievement. Rather than treating nationalism simply as a psychological factor that improves performance, the findings suggest that participants experienced national representation as a source of meaning, responsibility, pride, and personal significance.

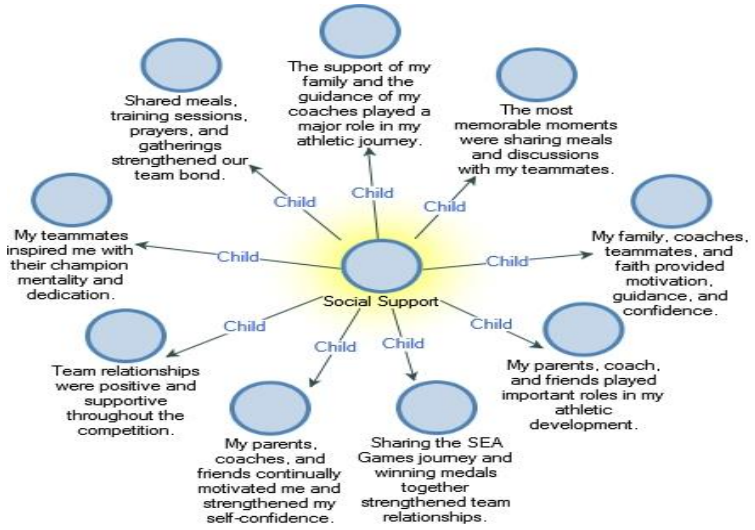


Figure 5. Social Support and Collective Belonging

As illustrated in Figure 5, participants described support from family, coaches, teammates, and the wider social environment as an important part of their SEA Games experience. However, their narratives indicate that social support involved more than encouragement to perform; it was also experienced through everyday forms of collective belonging, including shared meals, training, prayer, conversation, and time spent together. A1 explained, "My family, coaches, teammates, and faith provided motivation, guidance, and confidence." A3 stated, "Shared meals, training sessions, prayers, and gatherings strengthened our team bond." These experiences suggest that a sense of belonging was constructed through repeated interpersonal and collective practices. In this sense, support was experienced not only as assistance in dealing with competitive pressure but also as a relational environment in which athletes felt connected to others throughout the demanding preparation and competition process. The reference to prayer and shared activities is particularly relevant to understanding the participants' experiences within their social and cultural context. These practices should therefore not be reduced solely to psychological support; they also formed part of the participants' understanding of togetherness and collective identity.

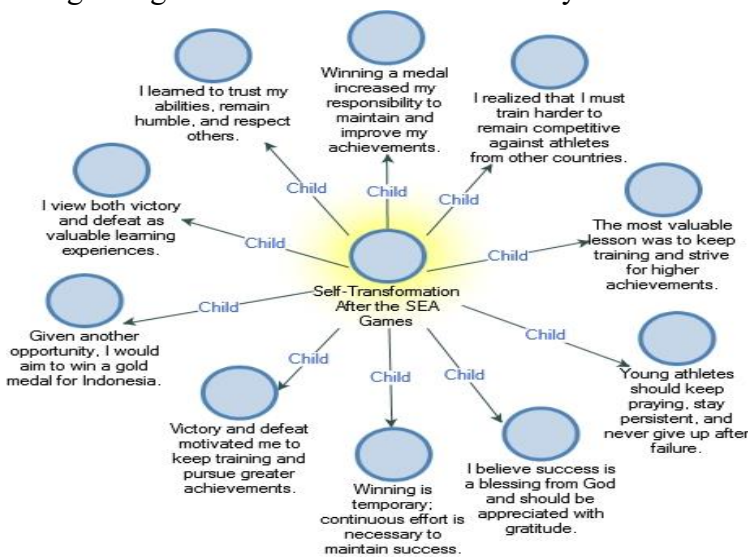


Figure 6. Diagram of Self-Transformation Following the SEA Games

As illustrated in Figure 6, the participants' accounts indicate that achievement was not understood solely in terms of medals, rankings, or competitive outcomes. Instead, achievement acquired meaning through the relationships, sacrifices, responsibilities, challenges, and personal changes experienced throughout their sporting journeys. Family pride, national representation, sacrifice, collective belonging, and future aspirations were therefore interconnected rather than isolated categories. A4 stated, "The most valuable lesson was to keep training and strive for higher achievements," while A3 remarked, "I view both victory and defeat as valuable learning experiences." These accounts suggest that achievement was interpreted as an ongoing process of learning and development rather than a final endpoint. The meaning of achievement was connected to the capacity to continue growing after experiencing both success and failure. Taken together, the narratives suggest an experiential structure in which achievement was understood as a journey from aspiration and sacrifice, through national representation and collective support, toward reflection, learning, and personal transformation. In this interpretation, achievement meant not merely obtaining a competitive result but becoming a more mature athlete and person while continuing to pursue future goals.



Figure 7. Word Cloud from the Exploratory Data Analysis of Indonesian Petanque Athletes' Experiences in the SEA Games

Figure 7 presents a word cloud generated from the interview transcripts. The visualisation shows frequently occurring lexical items such as "training," "Indonesia," "SEA Games," "athlete," "motivation," and "achievement." The word cloud is presented only as an exploratory representation of the dataset and is not used to determine thematic importance or phenomenological significance. The interpretation of the findings is based on participants' narratives, experiential meaning units, and the relationships among the themes rather than on word frequency alone.

DISCUSSION

The participants' narratives portray achievement motivation as part of a broader experiential journey rather than as a primary factor that determines performance. A1 stated, "I trained hard to become a national athlete and make my parents proud," while A4 remarked, "My goal was to become an athlete who could make my region and country proud." These statements show that sporting aspirations were connected to family, regional identity, and national representation. This interpretation is consistent with Guo et al. (2023), who discuss the relationship between personal values, identity, and meaningful sporting engagement. Similarly, Alkasasbeh & Akroush (2025) highlight the relevance of intrinsic motivation and psychological needs in competitive contexts. In the present study, however, motivation is interpreted phenomenologically as something participants experienced through relationships, aspirations, and responsibilities rather than as a variable that caused competitive success.

This motivational experience was inseparable from sacrifice. A2 stated, "I almost quit petanque due to my family's financial difficulties, but I eventually continued pursuing achievements," while A3 explained, "I had to choose between university life, social activities, and becoming a national athlete." These narratives show that the pursuit of achievement involved choices and tensions across different areas of life. Consistent with Pilkington et al. (2024) and Holding et al. (2020), elite sporting pathways may involve tensions between sporting demands and personal needs. Xiang et al. (2024) similarly highlights the role of environmental demands in athlete development. For the participants in this study, sacrifice was therefore experienced as part of the meaning of pursuing achievement rather than simply as a cost that produced success.

The experience of competitive pressure was another important dimension of the athletes' lived experience. A1 stated, "My biggest challenge was overcoming self-doubt and trusting my abilities

during competition," while A2 remarked, "I felt nervous at the start of the competition, but I gradually adapted and managed my emotions." These accounts suggest that mental toughness was experienced through active efforts to regulate emotions, maintain confidence, and regain focus rather than through an absence of anxiety or doubt. The distinction between mental toughness and psychological resilience is important. Mental toughness in the present study refers to participants' descriptions of maintaining focus, confidence, and emotional control under competitive pressure, whereas resilience refers more broadly to adaptation to adversity. This interpretation is compatible with Vauziah et al. (2026), who discuss mental toughness in relation to focus, self-confidence, and emotional control, and with Li et al. (2025), who examine psychological resilience and coping in competitive contexts. Thus, the findings are better understood as participants' experiences of coping with pressure and maintaining psychological readiness rather than as evidence that mental toughness caused successful performance.

National representation gave the participants' experiences a meaning that extended beyond individual sporting achievement. A1 stated, "Representing Indonesia increased my sense of responsibility to perform well and raise the national flag," while A3 described selection for the national team as "a great honour and a source of pride." A4 similarly stated, "My greatest challenge was raising the Indonesian flag on the victory podium." These accounts indicate that achievement was interpreted through a collective frame of reference in which the athlete's identity was connected to Indonesia, the region, and significant others.

This finding can be related to Stevens et al. (2024), who emphasise the importance of social identity in sport, and to Febriani (2022), who discusses group belonging and cohesion in sporting contexts. Worley et al. (2020), likewise highlights the relationship between collective identity and team cohesion. However, the present findings add an experiential dimension: national identity was not described merely as an abstract psychological construct but was embodied through wearing the national uniform, representing Indonesia, and imagining the Indonesian flag on the podium. Consequently, nationalism in this study is interpreted as part of the meaning participants attached to achievement rather than as a demonstrated cause of performance.

The most distinctive aspect of the findings concerns the way participants connected achievement with personal transformation. A4 stated, "The most valuable lesson was to keep training and strive for higher achievements," while A3 explained, "I view both victory and defeat as valuable learning experiences." These statements suggest that achievement was not experienced as a fixed endpoint. Instead, its meaning developed through reflection on success, failure, sacrifice, relationships, and future aspirations.

The participants' narratives can therefore be understood as an interconnected experiential structure. Achievement began as an aspiration to become a national athlete and to make family and region proud. Pursuing that aspiration involved sacrifice, including financial difficulties and choices between sport, education, and social life. Representing Indonesia then gave the experience a broader sense of responsibility and national identity. During competition, athletes encountered nervousness and self-doubt and had to negotiate these experiences through emotional regulation, confidence, and adaptation. Family, coaches, teammates, faith, and collective activities provided a relational context in which these experiences were lived. Finally, participation in the SEA Games became an occasion for reflection, through which athletes interpreted both victory and defeat as opportunities for learning and future development.

This integrated interpretation extends the discussion beyond a factor-based explanation of athletic success. The findings do not demonstrate that motivation, mental toughness, nationalism, or social support caused competitive achievement. Rather, they show how these experiences became interconnected in participants' interpretations of what it meant to pursue and achieve something as a national petanque athlete. This interpretation is consistent with Gotwals & Tamminen (2022), who highlight the subjective meanings athletes attach to success and failure, and with Dongoran et al. (2025), who discuss how competitive experiences may contribute to meaning, future goals, and career commitment. In the present study, achievement was therefore experienced as both an outcome and a transformative journey, encompassing personal fulfilment, family pride, national responsibility, sacrifice, belonging, learning, and commitment to future development.

CONCLUSION

This study explored how Indonesian petanque athletes experienced and interpreted their participation in the SEA Games. The findings revealed five interrelated experiential themes: achievement motivation, struggle and sacrifice; mental toughness and coping with competitive pressure; national identity and responsibility; social support and collective belonging; and achievement as personal transformation and meaning. The participants' narratives suggest that achievement was experienced as more than a competitive result, encompassing the desire to make family and regional communities proud, the sacrifices associated with pursuing an elite sporting pathway, the responsibility of representing Indonesia, relationships with coaches and teammates, and lessons derived from both victory and defeat. Experiences of nervousness, self-doubt, and emotional pressure were accompanied by efforts to maintain confidence, focus, and emotional control, while shared meals, training, prayer, and collective activities contributed to participants' sense of belonging during the demanding preparation and competition process. Overall, achievement emerged as an interconnected lived experience involving aspiration, sacrifice, national representation, social belonging, learning, and personal transformation. The findings therefore describe how participants understood and gave meaning to their SEA Games experiences rather than establishing motivation, mental toughness, nationalism, or social support as causal determinants of competitive success. The study is limited by the small number of phenomenological participants and should not be generalised to all Indonesian petanque athletes. Future research could include athletes from different generations, competition categories, regions, and levels of international experience to examine variations in the meaning of achievement across sporting contexts.

RECOMMENDATION

Future research is recommended to expand the exploration of Indonesian petanque athletes' lived experiences by involving participants from different regions, competitive categories, generations, and international sporting events. Longitudinal qualitative studies could provide deeper insights into how achievement motivation, mental toughness, national identity, social support, and personal transformation develop throughout athletes' sporting careers. Additionally, mixed-methods approaches may be employed to examine the relationship between athletes' subjective experiences and measurable psychological characteristics, including competitive anxiety, emotional regulation, motivation, and psychological resilience. Further investigations should also consider the perspectives of coaches, family members, and sporting organisations to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the social and institutional environments influencing athletes' experiences. From a

practical perspective, future studies could explore the development and evaluation of psychological support programmes that integrate mental skills training, emotional regulation strategies, and social support mechanisms into national petanque training programmes. However, several limitations and potential challenges should be considered, including the small number of participants, differences in individual competitive experiences, geographical dispersion, and difficulties accessing elite national athletes. Furthermore, retrospective interviews may introduce recall bias, while the sensitive nature of personal sacrifices, competitive pressure, and national expectations may influence participants' willingness to disclose their experiences openly. Researchers should therefore employ appropriate participant recruitment strategies, methodological triangulation, reflexive analysis, and ethical safeguards to strengthen the credibility and depth of future investigations. These efforts are expected to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of elite petanque athletes' psychological and social experiences and support the development of athlete-centred training and well-being programmes.

REFERENCES

Alkasasbeh, W. J., & Akroush, S. H. (2025). Sports motivation: a narrative review of psychological approaches to enhance athletic performance. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *16*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1645274

Allsop, D. B., Chelladurai, J. M., Kimball, E. R., Marks, L. D., & Hendricks, J. J. (2022). Qualitative Methods with Nvivo Software: A Practical Guide for Analyzing Qualitative Data. *Psych*, *4*(2), 142–159. https://doi.org/10.3390/psych4020013

Arifin, Z., & Wahyudi, H. (2021). Ragam Motivasi Atlet Dalam Berprestasi Olahraga. *Jurnal Kesehatan Olahraga*, *9*(2), 77–86. https://doi.org/10.26740/jurnal-kesehatan-olahraga.v9i2.38439

Arisman, A. (2024). Faktor Faktor yang Mempengaruhi Mental Toughness Pada Atlit Cabang Olahraga Permainan (Factors Influencing Mental Toughness in Athletes Participating in Team Sports). *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Pendidikan Jasmani Dan Kesehatan Mental Peserta Didik*, 645–662. https://proceedings.unnes.ac.id/snpjkmpd/article/view/4237

Broa, D. I. G., & Baradillo, D. G. (2024). A Grounded Theory on the Dynamics of Sports Anxiety of Collegiate Athletes. *European Journal of Physical Education and Sport Science*, *11*(7), 126–153. https://doi.org/10.46827/ejpe.v11i7.5713

Burns, L., Weissensteiner, J. R., & Cohen, M. (2019). Lifestyles and mindsets of Olympic, Paralympic and world champions: is an integrated approach the key to elite performance? *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, *53*(13), 818–824. https://doi.org/10.1136/bjsports-2018-099217

Dodgson, J. E. (2023). Phenomenology: Researching the lived experience. *Journal of Human Lactation*, *39*(3), 385–396. https://doi.org/10.1177/08903344231176453

Dongoran, M. F., Setyawati, H., Kristiyanto, A., Raharjo, H. P., & Setiawan, C. (2025). Understanding significant experiences of adolescent athletes' participation in competitive sports life: a systematic review. *Frontiers in Sports and Active Living*, *7*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fspor.2025.1515200

Fadilah, R. N., & Priambodo, A. (2024). Stress dan kecemasan dalam olahraga kompetisi (Stress and anxiety in competitive sports). *Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah Dan Riset Sosial Humaniora*, *4*(1), 27–37. https://ejournal.penerbitjurnal.com/index.php/humaniora/article/view/660

Febriani, R. (2022). Peran Kohesivitas Dalam Tim Olahraga Untuk Memprediksi Keberhasilan Kelompok. *Jurnal Terapung: Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, *4*(1), 59–67. https://doi.org/10.31602/jt.v4i1.7359

Gotwals, J. K., & Tamminen, K. A. (2022). Intercollegiate perfectionistic athletes' perspectives on

success and failure in sport. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, *34*(1), 25–46. https://doi.org/10.1080/10413200.2020.1740826

Guo, K., Wang, Z., Zhang, L., & Li, C. (2023). Self-Transcendence Values Influence Meaningful Sports Consumption Behavior: The Chain Mediator of Team Identification and Eudaimonic Motivation. *Sustainability*, *15*(14), 10938. https://doi.org/10.3390/su151410938

Holding, A. C., St-Jacques, A., Verner-Filion, J., Kachanoff, F., & Koestner, R. (2020). Sacrifice—but at what price? A longitudinal study of young adults' sacrifice of basic psychological needs in pursuit of career goals. *Motivation and Emotion*, *44*(1), 99–115. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11031-019-09777-7

Hubli, T. V, Collins, D., & Khasnis, U. (2026). Achieving from deprivation in sports: a scoping review on talent identification and development in sport in low socioeconomic context. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 1–28. https://doi.org/10.1080/1750984X.2026.2705272

Hudaniah, H., & Masturah, A. N. (2024). Ketangguhan mental sebagai solusi kecemasan bertanding atlet. *Jurnal Psikologi*, *20*(2), 157–165. https://doi.org/10.24014/jp.v14i2.23019

Irwanto, I., & Romas, M. Z. (2019). Profil peran psikologi olahraga dalam meningkatkan prestasi atlet di Serang-Banten Menuju Jawara (The Role of Sports Psychology in Enhancing Athlete Performance: A Profile of Efforts in Serang, Banten, Toward Achieving Championship Status). *Prosiding Seminar Nasional IPTEK Olahraga (SENALOG)*, *2*(1). https://ejournal.unibabwi.ac.id/index.php/semnassenalog/article/view/610

Jewett, R., Kerr, G., & Tamminen, K. (2019). University sport retirement and athlete mental health: A narrative analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, *11*(3), 416–433. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2018.1506497

Jordalen, G., Lemyre, P.-N., & Durand-Bush, N. (2020). Interplay of motivation and self-regulation throughout the development of elite athletes. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, *12*(3), 377–391. https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1585388

Juhanis, J., Fatoni, F., Syafir, M. I., & Badaru, B. (2025). Strategi Manajemen Stres sebagai Upaya Peningkatan Kesiapan Mental Atlet Muda Sulawesi Selatan. *Bima Abdi: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, *5*(3), 941–949. https://doi.org/10.53299/bajpm.v5i3.2645

Li, Y., Ren, Y., Du, Z., Li, M., & Jiang, J. (2025). Competitive pressure, psychological resilience, and coping strategies in athletes' pre-competition anxiety. *Scientific Reports*, *15*(1), 35467. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-19213-1

Maksum, A. (2022). Mental juara: Interrelasi antara komitmen, persisten, dan ambisi prestatif. *Jurnal Olahraga Papua*, *4*(1), 34–46. https://doi.org/10.31957/jop.v4i1.1359

Petersen, L. (2024). Sports psychology: Mental resilience and performance in elite athletes. *Revista de Psicología Del Deporte (Journal of Sport Psychology)*, *33*(2), 271–279. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2025-30760-027

Pilarska, J. (2021). Phenomenological Qualitative Research Design. *Research Paradigm Considerations for Emerging Scholars*, *33*.

Pilkington, V., Rice, S., Olive, L., Walton, C., & Purcell, R. (2024). Athlete Mental Health and Wellbeing During the Transition into Elite Sport: Strategies to Prepare the System. *Sports Medicine - Open*, *10*(1), 24. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40798-024-00690-z

Pramono, S. E., & Priambodo, A. (2024). Aspek psikologi motivasi dalam pencapaian prestasi olahraga (The psychological aspect of motivation in achieving sports performance). *Jurnal Pendidikan Sejarah Dan Riset Sosial Humaniora*, *4*(1), 38–47. https://ejournal.penerbitjurnal.com/index.php/humaniora/article/view/661

Qin, H.-H., Liu, J.-J., Zhang, L.-W., Huang, N.-S., Schinke, R. J., Li, Y.-F., & Ge, Y. (2026). How is a champion made?–Insights from nine team China Olympic and world champion trampolinists. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, *44*(17–18), 2638–2650. https://doi.org/10.1080/02640414.2025.2569254

Rahmatilah, R. P., Alif, M. N., & Lengkana, A. S. (2026). Analysis of Karate Athletes' Emotional Intelligence and its Relationship to Competition Performance. *Tadulako Journal Sport Sciences And Physical Education*, *14*(1), 54–66. https://doi.org/10.22487/tjsspe.v14i1.6023

Ruslin, R., Mashuri, S., Rasak, M. S. A., Alhabsyi, F., & Syam, H. (2022). Semi-structured interview: A methodological reflection on the development of a qualitative research instrument in educational studies. *IOSR Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)*, *12*(1), 22–29. https://doi.org/10.9790/7388-1201052229

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination theory perspective: Definitions, theory, practices, and future directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *61*, 101860. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101860

Sakalidis, K. E., Menting, S. G. P., Elferink-Gemser, M. T., & Hettinga, F. J. (2022). The Role of the Social Environment in Pacing and Sports Performance: A Narrative Review from a Self-Regulatory Perspective. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *19*(23), 16131. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph192316131

Sarkar, M., & Hilton, N. K. (2020). Psychological Resilience in Olympic Medal–Winning Coaches: A Longitudinal Qualitative Study. *International Sport Coaching Journal*, *7*(2), 209–219. https://doi.org/10.1123/iscj.2019-0075

Serpa, S. (2025). Psychological Sustainability in Elite Sport: Implications for Olympic Preparation. *Psychology International*, *7*(4), 82. https://doi.org/10.3390/psycholint7040082

Sholicha, I. F., & Dwi W., A. (2020). Motivasi berprestasi dan ketangguhan mental atlet. *PSIKOSAINS* (Achievement motivation and mental toughness in athletes. PSIKOSAIN) *Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pemikiran Psikologi) 15*(1), 91–99. https://doi.org/10.30587/psikosains.v15i1.2004

Stevens, M., Cruwys, T., Olive, L., & Rice, S. (2024). Understanding and Improving Athlete Mental Health: A Social Identity Approach: M. Stevens et al. *Sports Medicine*, *54*(4), 837–853. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40279-024-01996-4

Tajik, O., Golzar, J., & Noor, S. (2025). Purposive sampling. *International Journal of Education & Language Studies*, 1–9. https://doi.org/10.22034/ijels.2025.490681.1029

Tossici, G., Zurloni, V., & Nitri, A. (2024). Stress and sport performance: a PNEI multidisciplinary approach. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *15*, 1358771. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2024.1358771

Van Manen, M. (2023). *Phenomenology of practice: Meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research and writing*. Routledge.

Vauziah, V., Permadi, A. A., & Kurniawati, A. (2026). Studi Diagnostik Profil Mental Toughness dan Kecemasan Bertanding Atlet Petanque Bk Porprov Garut 2025. *Jurnal Porkes*, *9*(1), 530–543. https://doi.org/10.29408/porkes.v9i1.33635

Wekesser, M. M., Harris, B. S., Langdon, J., & Wilson, C. H. (2021). Coaches' impact on youth athletes' intentions to continue sport participation: The mediational influence of the coach–athlete relationship. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, *16*(3), 490–499. https://doi.org/10.1177/1747954121991817

Worley, J. T., Harenberg, S., & Vosloo, J. (2020). The relationship between peer servant leadership, social identity, and team cohesion in intercollegiate athletics. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, *49*, 101712. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychsport.2020.101712

Xiang, C., Dong, W., Kamalden, T. F. T., Ismail, N., & Luo, H. (2024). Structural analysis of environmental factors of sports talent development. *Current Psychology*, *43*(7), 6516–6532. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04803-x

Zvosec, C., Baer, N., Hughes, M., Oja, B., Kim, M., Dahlin, S., & Howell, S. (2023). The Career Transitions of High-Profile Student-Athletes: Identity, Role Engulfment, and Psychological Well-Being. *Journal of Athlete Development and Experience*, *5*(1), 4. https://doi.org/10.25035/jade.05.01.04