



Female Athletes' Experiences Applying Basic Pencak Silat Skills in the Professional World

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Abstract

Pencak silat is classified as a type of hard sport and if a woman decides to learn pencak silat it is considered taboo or inappropriate. However, the phenomenon found by researchers in the field is that there are female athletes who dare to break away from society's construction of women who are involved in pencak silat accompanied by the contribution of female athletes in achievements in sporting events, especially in the martial arts sport of pencak silat. This shows that women tend not to be weak. Based on the initial explanation that has been put forward, the author is interested in exploring this research which focuses on the experiences of female athletes. This research was carried out in the form of experience in using basic pencak silat skills. This research is a descriptive qualitative literature and participatory research. Based on research results, gender equality is still a hot issue to be discussed throughout the world, various efforts have been made to improve gender equality in various fields, including sports. In the world of sports, men and women should have the same rights to participate, excel and pursue sports professionally, but there are still many people who consider that sport is a masculine activity, where it is identified with men's and women's activities, which they feel is lacking. suitable for being involved in the world of sports.

Introduction

Gender equality remains a pressing issue worldwide, and various efforts have been made to enhance gender equality in several fields, including sports (Dermawan et al., 2021). In the realm of sports, both men and women should possess equal entitlements to engage, excel, and pursue professional athletic careers. However, there still exist individuals who perceive sports as a predominantly masculine domain, where it is exclusively associated with male activities, and consider women less suitable for involvement in the sporting world (Ramadhan, 2021).

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has established a specialized commission called Women in Sport, which is dedicated to enhancing gender equality in sports by focusing on increasing opportunities for female participation. This commission operates with the goal of creating a more inclusive sporting environment where women and girls can access the same opportunities, resources, and recognition as their male counterparts. As part of their advocacy efforts, the commission organizes two major events that serve as tangible forms of promoting and celebrating women's participation in sports. The first of these is the IOC Women and Sport Awards, an annual event that honors individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the advancement of women in sports. This prestigious award not only recognizes the achievements of its recipients but also aims to inspire others to support gender equality in the sporting world. The second major event is the IOC World Conference on Women and Sport, which is held every four years. This conference brings together experts, policymakers, athletes, and advocates from around the globe to discuss strategies, share

experiences, and collaborate on initiatives that further the cause of gender equality in sports. Through these efforts, the IOC Women in Sport commission strives to create a sustainable and equitable future for women in all areas of athletic competition (Rosalina, 2017).

Based on data from the 2021 Sport Development Index (SDI) national report survey conducted by the Deputy for Sports Cultivation of the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Indonesia, the survey results show that the level of participation of women in Indonesia in the realm of sports is 47%, while men reach 62%. This indicates that women's involvement in sport is still very limited compared to men. There are several factors that cause this to happen, one of which is the perception that sports can damage the feminine characteristics of women. This perception has long been rooted in culture and society, creating social boundaries that limit women's space to actively participate in sport. In addition, the lack of women-friendly facilities and the lack of support from the surrounding environment also contribute to the low participation of women in sports.

Nevertheless, the Indonesian government continues to provide support and guarantees, especially in terms of women's protection. Various programmes and policies have been designed to overcome the negative stigma and encourage more women to engage in sports activities. For example, the government through the Ministry of Youth and Sports actively conducts campaigns and socialisation aimed at changing society's views on the role of women in sports, as well as providing more inclusive training facilities and programmes. This support not only aims to increase women's participation in sports, but also to ensure that they receive adequate protection and safety during their activities. With these measures, it is hoped that women's participation in sports will increase and help create gender equality in all aspects of society (Sukendro & Diana, 2023).

Currently, there are many acts of violence that occur by women, be it sexual harassment, abuse, robbery and so on. These incidents usually occur at home, at work and in public places. This will leave a big trauma for women (Nisa & Jannah 2021). This is because women have always been perceived as weak and helpless. This causes many women to want to have self-defence skills. Pencak silat is an alternative choice that many women choose to learn self-defence (Nisa & Jannah, 2021).

A kind of martial arts competition known as pencak silat embodies the principles of Indonesian traditional arts while also paying homage to a rich and complex cultural past. Pencak silat is, literally, the combination of the two words pencak and silat, each of which has a distinct meaning and set of properties. Pencak is the term for movements in martial arts techniques that are based on certain principles and highlight the grace and beauty of each movement. These motions are frequently displayed in breathtaking displays or as dances, with a distinctive flexibility and grace. Silat, on the other hand, is a more sophisticated branch of the martial arts movement that emphasises the teaching of effective and efficient combat. It teaches its practitioners how to protect oneself against threats or attacks by employing a range of intricate methods and strategies. Since its introduction in 1948, the term pencak silat has been used in Indonesia to refer to the different traditional martial arts disciplines found throughout the island. Prior to the term's formalisation, several martial arts techniques and names were used throughout Indonesia, including silek in Minangkabau, maenpo in Sunda, and cimande in West Java. The phrase "pencak silat" allowed these disparate styles to be brought together under a single heading, enhancing national identity and creating stronger ties amongst practitioners from various areas. In the course of its evolution, pencak silat has been practiced as a martial art, as well as a component of performing arts, traditional ceremonies, and even as a sport that is participated in in several national and international contests. One of the most valuable cultural legacies of Indonesia is pencak silat, which is still taught to the next generation and

contains virtues like discipline, courage, and honour. Pencak silat, then, serves to both conserve the customs and culture of the country and mould the identity and character of the following generation (Setyawan & Setiawan, 2022).

Pencak silat is a diversity of Indonesian culture, especially in the world of sports. Pencak silat is a self-defence skill that involves attacking or fighting with either bare hands or tools. Types of pencak silat are very diverse in Indonesia depending on the philosophical values raised. Pencak silat is classified as a type of hard sport because it deals with direct physical contact, namely there is a special training field for competing so that the players are required to fight, often resulting in minor or severe injuries. If a woman decides to learn pencak silat, it is considered taboo or inappropriate. Women are stigmatised as having traits such as being gentle, caring, affectionate, and giving in easily. While these things are not found in the sport of pencak silat. However, over time, public awareness related to equality and equal rights between men and women began to show progress, especially in the field of pencak silat sports. In the decisions or actions taken by some women to pursue and learn the sport of pencak silat, they always have several motives (Prasetyo et al., 2023).

Based on the research team's observations with women who are female athletes, the average also works in the field of education, sports and other fields. the experience of several women in this community they have experienced discriminatory actions. Society assumes that the presence of women is something foreign in a sporting activity, especially in pencak silat, which is an extreme sporting field and there is still masculine dominance in pencak silat. The construction of women related to factors such as ethics, myths, culture and religion still occurs in society (Nisa & Jannah 2021). This tends to be due to the social construction of society that perceives martial arts as a masculine, male-dominated sport, and thus not suitable for women. This deeply ingrained belief is rooted in traditional gender roles and societal norms that dictate what is considered appropriate behavior and activities for men and women. The construction of social roles and status within the community inherently gives privilege to men, allowing them greater freedom and opportunities in various fields, including sports. Conversely, these same social constructs place significant restrictions on women, limiting their participation and acceptance in activities deemed too aggressive or physically demanding, such as martial arts. These restrictions are reinforced through cultural narratives, media representations, and institutional practices that perpetuate the idea that martial arts are not aligned with feminine qualities. Consequently, women who do pursue martial arts often face additional challenges, such as lack of support, inadequate training facilities, and social stigma. This systemic bias not only affects their ability to excel in the sport but also impacts their confidence and willingness to participate. Efforts to challenge and change these societal constructions are crucial in creating an inclusive environment where women can freely engage in martial arts and other traditionally male-dominated sports (Khotimah et al., 2023).

However, the phenomenon found by researchers in the field, there are female athletes who dare to get out of society's construction of women who are involved in pencak silat accompanied by the contribution of female athletes in achievements in sports events, especially in the martial arts sport of pencak silat and many parents who trust female sports teachers or coaches more than men (Hanifah et al., 2023). This shows that women tend not to be weak and have a trustworthy nature. Based on the initial explanation that has been stated, the author is interested in exploring this research which focuses on the Experience of Female Athletes Using Pencak Silat Basic Skills to Work in Education and Sports.

Methods

This research is a field research. By using a qualitative descriptive approach to explore and understand the role of individuals or groups related to human or social problems by forming a comprehensive and complex concept expressed in words, describing detailed views obtained from sources of information, and carried out in a natural process (setting) (Rukajat, 2018). Therefore, the goal of this qualitative study is to understand, investigate, recognise, and enhance the employee's ability to use basic silent skills in the workplace.

This study use the method of fenomenology. According to Yin (2009) describes the meaning of a lived experience of several people about a concept or phenomenon, including their own self-concept or outlook on life. Phenomenology aims to eliminate all assumptions that contaminate concrete human experience by seeing, recording and constructing reality. This research method tries to return to the rich and concrete human experience.

The study employs an interpretive paradigm that is congruent with the phenomenological approach, aiming to comprehend comprehension, behaviour, and significance in human existence. The interpretive paradigm can be described as a collection of fundamental ideas that shape one's actions and emotions towards the world, as well as their approach to comprehending and investigating it. The interpretive paradigm posits that meaning and subjective experience play a crucial role in understanding how objects and experiences generate significance and are conveyed in daily existence. The interpretive paradigm is employed to elucidate and depict significant social action, as well as to comprehend and explicate the conduct of the social players engaged in it, rather than to discuss the veracity of a phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2018).

Researchers employ phenomenology to analyse the manner in which female athletes utilise basic pencak silat skills in the professional realm. Through the experiences of women facing obstacles in public spaces, the informant is able to provide insights into the phenomenon of gender-responsive policies and offer solutions to address this issue.

This research employs an analytical approach grounded in gender theory to explore the distinctions and dynamics between women and men. Gender, in this context, refers to the differences between the sexes as they relate to roles, functions, and the benefits of life itself. Unlike biological sex, which is fixed, gender is a fluid concept that can evolve and change according to societal agreements and cultural norms. This fluidity means that what is considered appropriate or expected behavior for men and women can vary widely across different cultures and historical periods. Gender differences manifest in various values and behaviors that societies assign to individuals based on their sex. Essentially, gender is a social construct used to describe and categorize the distinctions between men and women in a given culture, encompassing a wide range of attributes and behaviors that are culturally prescribed. These gender roles and expectations shape and influence how individuals perceive themselves and are perceived by others, impacting their opportunities, interactions, and experiences within their communities. By utilizing gender theory, this research aims to highlight how these social constructs are formed, maintained, and potentially challenged, providing a deeper understanding of the ways in which gender roles and identities are constructed and the implications they have for both men and women. This is different from qodrat, where qodrat is a decree given by Allah SWT and cannot be changed. Gender is not sex, gender and sex are different things. In Webster's New World Dictionary, gender is defined as the differences between men and women in terms of values and behaviour (Br Pinem & Rosramadhana, 2023).

Results and Discussion

Based on the experiences of former pencak silat women who used to actively work in the field of sports and became educators or sports teachers in schools or trainers and sports instructors as well as other professions related to using pencak silat basic skills, they explained their experiences, obstacles they felt during their work and the authors summarised them in the form of a matrix as follows:

Tabel 1. Matrix of Analysis of Experiences and Barriers to Female Athletes Using Pencak Silat Basic Skills in Sport and Education

Informant	Experiences	Obstacles
FDO	<p>Having been a Pencak Silat athlete since elementary school until high school, FDO pursued her secondary education at the East Java Sports High School. Upon reaching her final year of high school, FDO began contemplating her career trajectory beyond athletics.</p> <p>Considering the limitations of pursuing a career in athletics at the national and international levels, FDO decided to explore alternative paths after completing high school. Consequently, FDO transitioned to a vocational school, which guaranteed employment upon graduation. During this period, she diligently balanced her time between training and studying, dedicating her evenings to preparing for entrance exams to vocational schools. Following her graduation from high school, FDO applied to various vocational schools and even attempted to join the military. Eventually, she was accepted into the Indonesian Railways Polytechnic in Madiun. Throughout her college years, FDO continued to occasionally participate in Pencak Silat competitions between vocational schools. Upon completing her studies, she faced challenges in securing her desired job, as she had to wait for recruitment opportunities from railway institutions. Despite facing rejection during job applications, FDO remained resilient, drawing parallels between her experiences in competition and in job hunting.</p> <p>She viewed setbacks as part of the process, akin to winning and losing in competitions, and persisted in her efforts. Currently, FDO is employed at her dream company, PT. Indonesian Railways (Persero), in her second probationary period. Her role involves railway signaling, aligning with her previous experience in athletics. Despite the predominantly male-dominated nature of her job, which often requires fieldwork and occasional climbing, FDO feels comfortable and capable,</p>	<p>According to Mr Fdo, it may be because his company is one of the BUMN, which makes him have no free time to do sports. Her work is not only at work, but also sometimes at home there is still work to be done. In addition, sometimes if there is an action that is felt to be work that can only be done by men, fdo is prohibited from doing the action with other words 'it's okay to let men do it' even though according to fdo, she can do the work.</p>

	<p>drawing on her athletic background. While acknowledging her late start in formal education due to her singular focus on athletics, FDO credits her journey for instilling qualities such as resilience, patience, and diligence, enabling her to compete and pursue her career goals effectively. process, akin to winning and losing in competitions, and persisted in her efforts. Currently, FDO is employed at her dream company, PT. Indonesian Railways (Persero), in her second probationary period. Her role involves railway signaling, aligning with her previous experience in athletics. Despite the predominantly male-dominated nature of her job, which often requires fieldwork and occasional climbing, FDO feels comfortable and capable, drawing on her athletic background. While acknowledging her late start in formal education due to her singular focus on athletics, FDO credits her journey for instilling qualities such as resilience, patience, and diligence, enabling her to compete and pursue her career goals effectively.</p>	
<p>PG</p>	<p>Having pursued the field of Pencak Silat since high school and becoming a Pencak Silat athlete, PG pursued a Bachelor's degree in Physical Education. Throughout PG's university years, she remained actively involved in Pencak Silat and participated in several Pencak Silat competitions. Following graduation, PG continued her Pencak Silat training and eventually became a Pencak Silat coach. Through her coaching role, PG secured a position as a teacher. As a former Pencak Silat athlete and a graduate in Physical Education, PG's background significantly aids her current profession. Moreover, as a physical education teacher, PG incorporates Pencak Silat into her teaching curriculum, allowing her to effectively integrate it into her students' learning experiences. curriculum, allowing her to effectively integrate it into her students' learning experiences.</p>	<p>According to PG, being a pencak silat athlete must be smart in placing himself in the environment he is in. In this case PG, did not really find significant obstacles. Only after he worked as a teacher, the time for training was slightly reduced. In his job as a teacher, PG sometimes has difficulty when teaching about theory in sports. That is because it is more often in terms of field practice than theory.</p>

Becoming an athlete entails dedicating nearly 50% of one's life to training in order to excel in competition, leaving little room for academic pursuits such as theoretical knowledge or practical skills development. However, this does not imply a complete absence of such endeavors. FDO has cultivated traits of determination, consistency, and other mental fortitudes to support her career outside of athletics. Securing employment in a prominent company where the majority of tasks are traditionally carried out by men, she adeptly navigates an environment predominantly populated by males, engaging in physically demanding activities and fieldwork. Despite facing challenges such as limitations in upgrading her skills, discrimination, and harassment in her predominantly male workplace, she perseveres.

Experience is something gained from a decision or action taken. Experience serves as the best learning tool for individuals, as through experience one can learn from mistakes and identify various shortcomings, thus enabling improvement in the future. Participating in championships provides a platform for individuals or groups to seek valuable experiences. Findings from data collected from several female athletes who are the subjects of this study indicate that their reason for utilizing basic Pencak Silat skills in the field of sports is to gain experience through participating in Pencak Silat championships. According to explanations from some research subjects, by participating in championships, they can learn many new things such as facing tense situations, making bold decisions and accepting risks, being sportsmanlike towards opponents, and learning to accept defeat. Some female athletes who are the subjects of the study explain that while they do aim to achieve victory or success in these championships, they also seek valuable experiences. Although defeat may bring disappointment, they learn from it and strive to improve in subsequent championships (Mulyana & Lutan, 2020).

Furthermore, the experiences garnered by female athletes through the utilization of basic Pencak Silat martial arts skills can be delineated into two distinct categories, encompassing both positive and negative dimensions. In the realm of positivity, women immersed in the domain of Pencak Silat martial arts exhibit a remarkable journey of perseverance, commencing from their initial foray into the discipline until they ascend to the echelons of professional athleticism, driven by an unwavering resolve to attain excellence. This enduring commitment is underscored by their unwavering determination and unwavering discipline throughout the rigorous training regimen, coupled with an ardent dedication to their craft. Furthermore, the cultivation of intrinsic motivation emerges as a pivotal force propelling their pursuit of success, informed by a tapestry of past experiences and reflective evaluations that serve as guiding beacons along their trajectory. Conversely, the landscape is not devoid of challenges, as negative experiences often manifest in the form of societal biases and misconceptions directed towards female athletes. This unfortunate reality unfolds when female athletes are compelled to return home late at night, a circumstance that inadvertently fosters the proliferation of unfavorable perceptions within society. These adverse encounters are encountered both during the nascent stages of their athletic odyssey, as they navigate the arduous path towards realizing predetermined aspirations, and during their tenure as seasoned professionals, adorned with a plethora of accolades as testament to their prowess (Yulienugroho et al., 2022).

In the process of objectification, the social reality experienced by each informant varies in accordance with their individual knowledge and experiences. Findings from field data collection reveal and substantiate that the utilization of basic Pencak Silat skills, according to several informants, represents one form of martial arts that demands physical resilience, strength, Pencak Silat techniques, cultural artistry, mental fortitude, and the cultivation of personality traits, among other aspects. Simply put, the social construction of reality for female athletes utilizing basic Pencak Silat skills is comprehended through the presence of stages or processes of externalization as a form of self-adjustment, followed by the process of objectification, which results in the emergence of a new mindset concerning women utilizing basic Pencak Silat skills as a form of objective reality. Consequently, there exists an objective reality as a form of interpretation regarding women utilizing basic Pencak Silat skills in the fields of sports and education (Abdul Latif et al., 2022).

Becoming an athlete involves dedicating nearly half of one's life to rigorous training in pursuit of excellence in competition, often leaving little room for academic pursuits such as theoretical knowledge or other practical skills. However, this doesn't preclude the possibility entirely. FDO exemplifies traits of unwavering dedication, consistency, and mental fortitude, which serve to bolster his career beyond the realm of athletics. He adeptly transitions into roles within

large corporations, where male predominance still characterizes many facets of work. Despite the demands of his athletic pursuits, he navigates environments largely populated by men and engages in physically demanding tasks with ease. Yet, the time and energy devoted to athletic endeavors may limit his capacity to upgrade skills in other areas. Furthermore, the male-dominated nature of his profession exposes him to the harsh realities of discrimination and harassment in the workplace, as entrenched power dynamics continue to favor men in public spheres (Aga et al., 2023).

PG perceives that the main obstacle lies within oneself. Having spent more time engaging in physical activities and field practices, he finds it challenging to integrate theoretical learning into sports. PG also believes that as a former athlete and now a teacher, it is essential to exhibit adaptability and adeptness. Professional integrity is paramount in his profession. In his experience, PG has been fortunate to have a supportive environment and family that encouraged his pursuit of Pencak Silat, from athlete to teacher, owing to the strong relationships he cultivated since his days in martial arts. PG's Bachelor's degree in Sports has also facilitated his proficiency in various other sports disciplines. However, if he fails to upgrade himself, particularly in terms of knowledge and networking, the threat of being replaced by fresh graduates in his teaching position looms larger (Latif et al., 2022).

The experiences of FDO and PG serve as compelling narratives showcasing the potential for women to thrive in fields traditionally dominated by men. Despite encountering formidable challenges like discrimination and negative stigma, these women have demonstrated remarkable resilience and determination, proving that gender does not dictate one's ability to succeed. Through unwavering perseverance and dedication, they have shattered stereotypes and paved the way for future generations of women to pursue their aspirations without the constraints of gender-based limitations (Syaifullah & Doewes, 2020).

The journey of FDO and PG underscores the transformative power of support systems comprising family, friends, and communities. Their unwavering encouragement and belief in the capabilities of these women have played an instrumental role in their achievements. Moreover, FDO and PG emphasize the crucial role of mentorship and networking in navigating professional landscapes, highlighting the importance of fostering supportive environments conducive to women's success (Kurniawan et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the experiences of FDO and PG shed light on the evolving landscape of gender equality in the workplace. While significant strides have been made in reducing barriers to access and opportunities for women, challenges such as discrimination, marginalization, and negative stigma persist, albeit to a lesser extent. However, the concept of gender equality extends beyond mere representation and encompasses the creation of inclusive environments where individuals are valued and empowered irrespective of gender (Qutrotunaini et al., 2022).

From a feminist perspective, the achievements of FDO and PG signify not only the attainment of access and opportunities but also the dismantling of systemic barriers that impede women's progress. By challenging entrenched power dynamics and advocating for equal treatment, FDO and PG exemplify the transformative potential of feminist activism in advancing gender equality.

In conclusion, the experiences of FDO and PG serve as inspiring testimonials to the resilience, tenacity, and ingenuity of women in overcoming barriers and achieving success in male-dominated fields. Their stories underscore the imperative of fostering supportive environments, challenging discriminatory practices, and advocating for gender equality to ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to realize their full potential, regardless of gender.

Conclusion

Based on the findings obtained from this research, the researcher can conclude that gender equality remains a pertinent issue worldwide, and various efforts have been made to promote gender equality across various domains. In the realm of work, it is imperative that men and women have equal rights to participate, excel, and develop their professional potential. However, there still exist social classifications regarding the types of jobs assigned to each gender.

The utilization of basic skills in Pencak Silat is considered one of the rigorous sports where players are required to engage in combat, often resulting in minor or severe injuries. If a woman decides to learn Pencak Silat, it is often deemed taboo or inappropriate. However, over time, societal awareness regarding gender equality and equal rights between men and women has begun to show progress, particularly in the field of Pencak Silat. The decisions or actions taken by some women to pursue and learn Pencak Silat always have several motives. Based on the experiences of some former female athletes, Pencak Silat skills greatly assist them in their careers, such as instilling mental fortitude and social behavior.

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