

Achievement Motivation Among Members of a University Esports Organization

Motivasi Berprestasi pada Anggota Organisasi Esports di Perguruan Tinggi

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Abstract

The rapid growth of esports in Indonesia has led many universities to establish esports organizations as platforms for fostering students' interests, talents, and achievements in competitive gaming. In this context, student members of esports organizations are required to balance academic responsibilities, organizational involvement, and competitive demands, making achievement motivation an important psychological factor in supporting their success. This study aimed to understand achievement motivation among university students who are members of an esports organization and to identify the factors influencing their motivation. This study employed a qualitative case study approach involving a university esports organization in Surakarta. Three student members were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and documentation and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. The findings identified three main themes reflecting achievement motivation among students: achievement as a form of personal accomplishment and self-recognition, social support and a sense of belonging within the esports community, and leadership and responsibility as drivers of achievement motivation. Furthermore, achievement motivation was influenced by internal factors, including personal goals, aspirations for self-development, self-evaluation, and satisfaction with achievements, as well as external factors such as social support, organizational environment, and competitive experiences. The findings imply that university esports organizations should not only focus on competitive performance but also foster supportive social environments and leadership development to enhance students' achievement motivation and organizational engagement.

Keywords: Achievement Motivation, University Students, Esports Organization, Social Support, Leadership

Abstrak

Pertumbuhan esports yang semakin pesat di Indonesia telah mendorong berbagai perguruan tinggi membentuk organisasi esports sebagai wadah untuk mengembangkan minat, bakat, dan prestasi mahasiswa dalam bidang esports. Dalam aktivitasnya, mahasiswa anggota organisasi esports dihadapkan pada tuntutan akademik, organisasi, dan kompetitif yang memerlukan motivasi berprestasi sebagai faktor psikologis penting untuk menunjang keberhasilan mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami motivasi berprestasi pada mahasiswa anggota organisasi esports di perguruan tinggi serta mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang memengaruhinya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus kualitatif pada sebuah organisasi esports di salah satu perguruan tinggi di Surakarta. Partisipan penelitian terdiri atas tiga mahasiswa anggota organisasi esports yang dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik Braun dan Clarke. Hasil penelitian mengidentifikasi tiga tema utama yang merefleksikan motivasi berprestasi mahasiswa, yaitu prestasi sebagai bentuk pencapaian dan pengakuan diri, dukungan sosial dan rasa memiliki dalam komunitas esports, serta kepemimpinan dan tanggung jawab sebagai pendorong motivasi berprestasi. Selain itu, motivasi berprestasi dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal yang meliputi target pribadi, keinginan untuk berkembang, evaluasi diri, dan kepuasan atas pencapaian, serta faktor eksternal berupa dukungan sosial, lingkungan organisasi, dan pengalaman kompetitif. Temuan penelitian mengindikasikan bahwa organisasi esports di perguruan tinggi perlu tidak hanya berfokus pada pencapaian kompetitif, tetapi juga membangun lingkungan sosial yang suportif serta mengembangkan kapasitas kepemimpinan mahasiswa untuk meningkatkan motivasi berprestasi dan keterlibatan organisasi.

Kata kunci: Motivasi Berprestasi, Mahasiswa, Organisasi Esports, Dukungan Sosial, Kepemimpinan

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INTRODUCTION

The development of technology and the digital entertainment industry has had a significant impact on the world of sports, especially in the field of esports (Khoiriyah, 2024). Esports or Electronic Sports is a competitive sports activity that uses video games as the main medium of competition and is played through electronic devices in an organized manner (Kurniawan, 2019). In its development, esports is no longer seen as just digital entertainment, but has developed into a professional competitive activity that involves skills, strategies, teamwork, and individual and group performance (Ardiyanto et al., 2021).

In Indonesia, esports has experienced very rapid growth driven by the large population of the younger generation who are adaptive to digital technology. Indonesia even leads the Southeast Asian market by contributing around 40% to the total mobile game downloads and 35% to the total gaming app revenue in the region (Google, Temasek, & Bain Co., 2025). The acceleration and growth trend of the esports industry in Indonesia in the last three years can be seen from the market valuation, number of active users, and user growth presented in table 1 below.

Table 1. Data on Market Growth Trends and Demographics of Esports Users in Indonesia (2024–2026)

Development Indicators	Year 2024	Year 2025	Year 2026 (Projection)
Market Valuation (Market Size)	US\$ 11.75 Million	US\$ 12.44 Million	US\$ 13.17 Million
Total Number of Active Users	17.3 million people	18.5 million people	19.9 Million People
User Growth (YoY)	-	+ 6,9%	+ 7,5%

The data in table 1 shows a consistent upward trend in terms of economic valuation and the quantity of users in Indonesia. By 2026, the number of active users is projected to reach 19.9 million people with a year-on-year growth rate that continues to escalate from +6.9% in 2025 to +7.5% in 2026. This massive growth is dominated by mobile esports segments such as Mobile Legends: Bang Bang, PUBG Mobile, and Free Fire (Stellar Market Research, 2025).

The growth of esports in Indonesia is supported by an increasingly strong internet infrastructure and easy public access to smartphones. This condition makes it easier for people to get involved in various esports activities and tournaments. In addition, the popularity of local esports teams and the international world's trust that makes Indonesia host various global championships shows that esports has developed from just digital entertainment to an internationally recognized achievement competition. This development is also supported by government policies in the development of the game and esports industry in Indonesia (Statista, 2024).

This phenomenon has extended beyond the entertainment industry and has increasingly influenced higher education institutions. In response to this trend, many

universities in Indonesia have established esports organizations as platforms for student development and competitive participation (Anfarizi & Siregar, 2023). The establishment of esports organizations provides a platform for students with interests and talents in esports to interact, train, and develop their potential (Alvianto, 2021). University esports organizations also provide opportunities for students to develop into high-performing esports athletes who can make the university proud.

Unlike other Student Activity Units, activities in esports organization involve routine training, gameplay analysis, organizational management, and participation in internal and external tournaments, workshops, and seminars (Subekti, 2021). These findings indicate that esports organizations function not only as recreational platforms but also as environments that foster students' skill development and competitive achievement in esports.

In addition, students who are members of university esports organizations also face various challenges, such as differences in abilities and mentality between members, time management between academics and organizations, competition pressure, intensive training, saturation, negative stigma towards esports, miscommunication between members, and limited support facilities for training and competitions (Alfarizi & Widiarti, 2024). The findings suggest that strong achievement motivation is essential for students involved in university esports organizations to remain engaged and achieve success in esports.

Achievement motivation is an individual's motivation to achieve success and obtain the best results through efforts made in a certain activity (McClelland, 1987). The concept of achievement motivation explains that individuals are driven to achieve certain standards of excellence through the need for achievement, affiliation, and power that develops through life experiences and social environments (Siok et al., 2023). Individuals with high achievement motivation tend to have responsibility for tasks, are goal-oriented, and are able to survive in the face of pressure and challenges (Atkinson, 1964). In the context of education and competitive activities, achievement motivation is one of the psychological factors that plays an important role in determining the quality of performance, persistence, and involvement of individuals in achieving desired goals (McClelland, 1987; Butera et al., 2024).

According to McClelland (1987), achievement motivation consists of three main needs, namely the need for achievement, the need for affiliation, and the need for power. These three aspects are related to the individual's drive to achieve success, build social relationships, and gain influence or a certain position in groups and organizations. The concept is still widely used in contemporary research to explain individual behavior in the context of education, organization, and competitive activities (Makuya, 2024; Awang et al., 2025).

Achievement motivation is influenced by various internal and external factors. Internal factors include personal goals, self-regulation, expectations of success, and an individual's drive to achieve certain achievements.

Meanwhile, external factors include social support, environment, rewards, competitive experience, and organizational culture that supports achievement (Faradisa et al., 2022 ; Faizah & Junita, 2021). In competitive activities such as esports, these factors can affect an individual's involvement in training, persistence in the face of pressure, and the ability to maintain performance during competitions (Poulus et al., 2020).

Various studies show that achievement motivation has an important role in improving individual performance in competitive and organizational activities. Individuals with high achievement motivation tend to show greater effort, have perseverance in facing obstacles, and are oriented towards achieving preset goals (McClelland, 1987). In the context of esports, there is research that shows that player performance is not only influenced by the technical ability of the game, but also influenced by psychological factors such as motivation, self-regulation, attention focus, coping stress, and mental toughness (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2020). Other research shows that esports has similar characteristics to competitive sports because it involves structured training, teamwork, competitive pressure, and high performance demands (Jenny et al., 2017). In addition, esports athletes are known to face high psychological pressure during competitions so they need good psychological abilities to maintain performance and achieve success in matches (Poulus et al., 2020). Recent studies in esports psychology also show that motivation is one of the important factors that affect player engagement and competitive performance in modern esports (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2025). These findings show that psychological factors have an important role in supporting individual performance in competitive esports activities.

Although much research has been done on achievement motivation, most previous research has focused on school students, college students in general academic contexts, and professional esports athletes (Faradisa et al., 2022; Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2020). Despite the growing popularity of university esports organizations, research on achievement motivation among their members remains limited, particularly in Indonesia. In addition, the current study of esports psychology still highlights more on the performance of professional athletes than the subjective experiences of students who are members of esports organizations in college (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2025). In fact, students who are members of esports organization have different characteristics and challenges compared to other student organizations, such as academic demands, intensive training, competition pressure, time management, and the need to maintain performance in the team (Alfarizi & Widiarti, 2024).

Based on these conditions, this research is important to understand the picture of achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization and the factors that affect them. This research is expected to contribute to the development of psychological studies, especially sports psychology and educational psychology, as well as become the basis for esports organization administrators and

coaches in compiling student coaching and development programs in the field of esports.

This study aims to explore achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization and to identify the factors influencing their motivation.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design. Creswell stated that qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meaning of individuals or groups to a social and humanitarian phenomenon (Waruwu, 2023). According to Moleong (2022), qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research participants as a whole and described in the form of words and language in a natural context.

This study employed a case study approach. The case study approach was chosen because this study focuses on one specific case, namely a university esports organization at one university in Surakarta, to understand the dynamics of the motivation for achievement of its members in depth. In line with this, Sujarweni (2024) explained that a case study is an in-depth study conducted on individuals, groups, organizations, or certain events to gain a comprehensive understanding of the case being studied.

The participants in this study were three active students who were members of a university esports organization with the initials AR, RA, and NA. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, which is a technique for selecting participants based on certain considerations and objectives according to research needs (Sugiyono, 2024). The participant criteria in this study were as follows: (1) active students who are members of a university esports organization for at least six months, (2) male or female, and (3) have participated in esports competitions at the campus, regional, national, and international levels.

Table 2. Participant Characteristics

Initials	Gender	Age	Length of Membership	Games	Competition Experience
AR	Male	19	1 year	MLBB	Campus
RA	Male	21	2 years	eFootball	Regional
NA	Male	20	3 years	PUBGM	Regional

After identifying participants who met the research criteria, the researcher provides informed consent to the participants and makes an agreement regarding the interview schedule. The data collection technique in this study uses in-depth interviews and documentation. Interviews are conducted face-to-face and individualized. Each participant was interviewed twice and the entire interview process was recorded using a mobile phone with the consent of the participant. Once the interview process is complete, the audio data is converted into a verbatim transcript for further analysis. The documentation used is in the form of esports organization archives, activity records, and other relevant supporting documents to strengthen the

interview results and provide additional context regarding esports organization activities.

In this study, the researcher plays the role of the main instrument that is directly involved in the process of data collection and analysis. The researcher has an academic interest in esports psychology, but does not have a close personal relationship with the research participants before the research process was carried out. To minimize the potential for subjectivity bias, the researcher used pre-prepared interview guidelines, conducted reflective recording during the research process, and compared the interview results with documentation data obtained from esports organization.

The data analysis in this study uses thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes contained in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis process is carried out in stages according to Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis stages, namely familiarizing yourself with the data, generating initial code, searching for themes, reviewing themes, naming themes, and compiling research reports.

The entire coding process was conducted manually by the primary researcher based on the transcript of the interview results that has been made verbatim. The coding process begins with reading the transcript repeatedly to understand the overall data, then identifying the units of meaning that are relevant to the purpose of the research. Codes that have similar meanings are then grouped into categories and themes that represent the participants' experiences related to achievement motivation in esports organizations.

The credibility strengthening technique in this study is carried out through source triangulation, namely by comparing data from three participants who had different experiences but are in the same organizational context. In addition, the researcher also double-checked the interview results, the coding process, the resulting theme, and the documentation data so that the research findings remain in accordance with the original data obtained in the field. This step was taken to increase the consistency, validity, and credibility of the research results.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The thematic analysis revealed that achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization was reflected in three major themes, namely: (1) Achievement as Personal Accomplishment and Self-Recognition, (2) social support and a sense of belonging in the esports community, and (3) leadership and responsibility as a driver of achievement motivation. In addition, two factors were found that affect achievement motivation, namely internal factors and external factors.

Table 3. Themes and Subthemes of Research Results

Main Themes	Subtheme
Achievement as Personal Accomplishment and Self-Recognition	Desire to be a champion, personal satisfaction, proof of ability, social recognition
Social support and a sense of belonging in the esports community	Peer support, senior support, organizational bonding, family support
Leadership and responsibility as drivers of achievement motivation	Leadership roles, organizational responsibilities, contribution to esports organization, building a legacy
Internal factors	Personal goals, desire to develop, self-evaluation, self-satisfaction
External factors	Social support, organizational environment, competition experience, facilities and achievement opportunities

1. Achievement as Personal Accomplishment and Self-Recognition

The first theme indicates that achievement is perceived by the participants as a source of personal satisfaction, enhanced self-confidence, and validation of their abilities. Although all three participants expressed a strong desire to achieve success, they interpreted achievement in different ways based on their individual experiences.

AR views achievement as a source of motivation that encourages continuous self-development and participation in future competitions.

"In my opinion, achievements in the field of esports are like an achievement, an individual or team achievement. With that achievement, we can increase our enthusiasm for the next tournament." (W1.AR:69–75)

RA interprets achievement as something that cannot be obtained by everyone and is a form of recognition for their abilities.

"Like an achievement that not everyone can get. We can show our strengths not only in our friends, but also in society." (W1.RA:201–208)

Meanwhile, NA views achievement as success in achieving long-sought desires that cause a sense of satisfaction and pride in oneself.

"Achievement is the fulfillment of a goal that has been pursued. It brings a sense of satisfaction." (W1.NA:215–218)

The findings suggest that achievement is not solely interpreted as competitive success, but also as a form of self-

validation, recognition of ability, and a source of motivation to achieve the next goal.

2. Social Support and Sense of Belonging in the Esports Community

The second theme shows that the achievement motivation is influenced by social support and a sense of acceptance in the esports organization environment. The three participants reported that positive relationships with fellow members, seniors, and family played an important role in sustaining their motivation to achieve.

AR has felt strong support from seniors and esports organization members since the beginning of joining. This support makes him feel accepted and have the opportunity to grow within the organization.

"There are friends who are more supportive, provide a place, an opportunity, if there are shortcomings, they will be added, directed." (W1.AR:98–101)

RA explained that relationships between members are built through various joint activities that create a sense of togetherness and emotional support.

"At that time there was one program that we were like makrab in the villa. That's where I really bonded with other administrators." (W1. RA:216–220)

Meanwhile, NA strives to build an egalitarian relationship without barriers between members so that all members feel comfortable and appreciated.

"If I were more into this, building relationships that don't have barriers, everything is equal." (W1.NA:219–221)

In addition to support from the organization, family support is also an important factor. NA revealed that her parents began to provide support after seeing her achievements.

"And then when you go to college, most of the parents just say it's important to forget about the college and pray for the championship." (W1.NA:254–257)

These findings suggest that social support fosters a sense of security, comfort, and acceptance, thereby strengthening individuals' motivation to pursue achievement.

3. Leadership and Responsibility as Drivers of Achievement Motivation

The third theme highlights that achievement motivation is driven not only by the desire to succeed but also by the leadership roles and organizational responsibilities assumed by members. All three participants demonstrated a strong commitment to contributing to and positively influencing the esports organization.

AR shows motivation to develop oneself through a greater leadership role in the organization.

"I want to give my best performance to the maximum, then in the next year I can move up to Kadiv or something." (W2.AR:15–17)

RA describes experience as a team manager responsible for managing athletes' training, competitions, and needs.

"I became a manager like taking care of training, training schedules, rental bookings, I was the one who registered." (W1. RA:88–90)

Meanwhile, NA as the head of esports organization views leadership as a mandate accompanied by great responsibility to the organization and its members.

"In UKM esports, in an organization that has the highest power is memorable, but the responsibility is also high." (W2.NA:50–51)

These findings suggest that leadership experiences and organizational responsibilities can enhance students' engagement, commitment, and achievement motivation within esports organizations.

4. Factors That Affect Achievement Motivation

The analysis revealed that achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization was influenced by both internal and external factors.

Internal Factors

Internal factors include personal goals, desire to improve, self-evaluation, and satisfaction with achievements. AR revealed that he has a target that is used as a reference to evaluate his development.

"I have a target, so the reference is how much I have given, if it has not been achieved I can evaluate." (W2.AR:45–47)

RA shows a desire to contribute and leave a legacy for the next generation of athletes.

"It's just a legacy for the next generation of athletes." (W1. RA:160–161)

Meanwhile, NA emphasizes the importance of personal satisfaction after successfully achieving the desired goal.

"If this achievement has been achieved, I am very satisfied." (W1.NA:217–218)

External Factors

External factors include the support of friends, seniors, family, the organizational environment, and the opportunity to participate in competitions. AR assesses that the support of more senior members helps him grow in the organization.

"There are friends who are more supportive." (W1.AR:97–98)

RA feels that the environment of organizations that have the same interest in esports makes him feel accepted and supported.

"In the management, basically all the children who really like to play games." (W1. RA:254–257)

Meanwhile, NA received support from her family after showing her achievements in esports competitions.

"Keep praying for the winner." (W1.NA:254–256)

Table 4. Similarities and Differences in Findings Between Participants

Theme	Similarities	Differences
Achievements as achievements	The three participants interpret achievement as a form of personal success and achievement	AR emphasizes increased competitive spirit; RA emphasizes recognition of ability and self-branding; NA emphasizes satisfaction for the achievement of the desire
Social support	All three participants received support from the organizational environment and felt welcome in the esports community	AR has more senior support; RA emphasizes organizational bonding; NA gains family support and builds egalitarian relationships
Leadership	All three participants show a desire to contribute to the organization	AR aspires to assume leadership roles; RA performs the role of team manager; NA serves as the head of the organization
Internal factors	All three participants have personal goals that encourage achievement	AR is self-evaluation-oriented; RA is contribution and legacy-oriented; NA is satisfaction-oriented towards achieving goals
External factors	All three participants were influenced by social support	AR is influenced by seniors; RA is influenced by the organizational environment; NA is influenced by family and members of the organization

Based on Table 4, it was found that the three participants had similarities in interpreting achievements as a form of personal success, obtaining social support from the surrounding environment, and showing a desire to contribute to esports organizations. However, there are differences in the way each participant interprets achievements, sources of support obtained, forms of leadership involvement, and goal orientation that are the drivers of achievement motivation. These findings show that the achievement motivation in student members of esports organizations has a similar general pattern, but is manifested through different experiences and contexts in each individual.

Despite differences in the participants' experiences, the analysis revealed a consistent pattern of factors shaping achievement motivation. The achievement motivation in students who are members of esports organizations is influenced by internal factors and external factors that interact with each other. The interaction of these two factors is reflected in the three main forms of achievement motivation, namely achievement and self-recognition, social support and belonging in the esports community, and leadership and responsibility in the organization. The relationship between these themes can be seen in Figure 1.

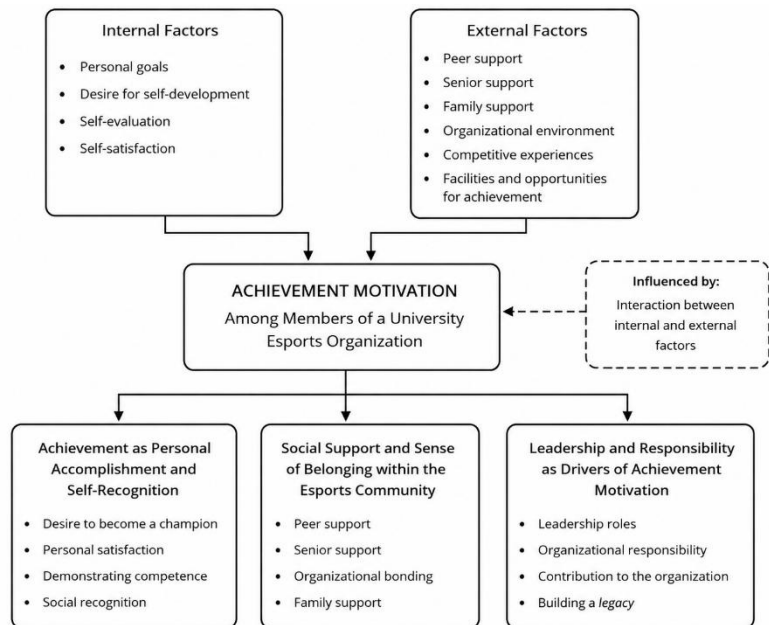


Figure 1. Research Results Model

DISCUSSION

This study aimed to explore achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization and to identify the factors influencing their motivation. Based on the results of the thematic analysis, three main themes were found that describe the achievement motivation of esports organization students, namely Achievement as Personal Accomplishment and Self-Recognition, social support and a sense of belonging in the esports community, and leadership and responsibility as drivers of achievement motivation. In addition, internal factors and external factors were found

that affect the achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization.

1. Achievement as Personal Accomplishment and Self-Recognition

The findings indicate that students who are members of esports organizations perceive achievement as a source of personal satisfaction, enhanced self-confidence, and validation of their abilities. All three participants show a drive to achieve success through participation in esports competitions. These findings are in line with McClelland's theory of achievement motivation which explains that individuals have a need to achieve a certain standard of success and derive satisfaction from achievement (McClelland, 1987). In the development of contemporary motivational theory, the need for achievement is also understood as the encouragement to demonstrate competence, achieve challenging goals, and obtain a positive evaluation of one's abilities (Butera et al., 2024; Elliot et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The findings suggest that achievement is not merely interpreted as competitive success, but also as a form of self-validation and social recognition. AR views achievement as a source of motivation to continue to develop, RA interprets achievement as a form of recognition of one's abilities, while NA views achievement as success in achieving goals that have been pursued for a long time. These findings suggest that achievement motivation among students involved in esports organizations is oriented not only toward competitive outcomes but also toward psychological needs such as self-actualization and social recognition. These findings are in line with research showing that the achievement motivation in students is related to self-development orientation, goal achievement, and individual readiness to face future academic and career challenges (Li et al., 2022). The findings are in line with research showing that individuals with high-achieving motivation tend to have a strong orientation towards self-development, goal achievement, and positive evaluation of their competencies (Howard et al., 2021; Butera et al., 2024).

In the context of esports, achievement motivation has an important role in encouraging player involvement in training, competition, and skill development. Previous studies by Pedraza-Ramirez et al. (2020), Reitman et al. (2019) and Bányai et al. (2019) have shown that motivation is one of the key psychological factors influencing esports performance. Similar findings were also put forward by Poulus et al. (2020), Leis & Lautenbach, (2020) and Trotter et al. (2020) which explains that achievement motivation has to do with an individual's ability to maintain performance under the pressure of competition. Thus, achievement in the context of esports not only serves as an indicator of competitive success, but also as a source of motivation that reinforces an individual's commitment to continue improving.

While the study's findings are in line with McClelland's theory of achievement motivation, there are different characteristics compared to studies on professional

esports athletes. Previous studies by Pedraza-Ramirez et al. (2020), Poulus et al. (2020), and Reitman et al. (2019) indicate that professional esports athletes are primarily motivated by competitive performance improvement, ranking advancement, and tournament success. On the contrary, in this study, achievement is not only interpreted as victory in competitions, but also as a means of gaining social recognition, building self-identity, and proving one's ability to the surrounding environment. These findings show that the context of students who are members of a university esports organization has a broader motivational orientation than professional athletes because it combines the goals of self, organization, and social development simultaneously (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Butera et al., 2024; Howard et al., 2021).

2. Social Support and Sense of Belonging in the Esports Community

The findings suggest that social support and a sense of acceptance within the esports community play an important role in strengthening students' achievement motivation. The three participants reported that support from peers, seniors, organizational leaders, and family members provided psychological encouragement to remain engaged and strive for achievement in esports activities. This finding is in line with the concept of need for affiliation put forward by McClelland, which is the need for individuals to establish positive social relationships and gain acceptance from the group (McClelland, 1987). The need for affiliation contributes to the development of psychological security, psychological comfort, and social attachment that supports the achievement of individual goals (Allen et al., 2021; Ryan & Deci, 2020; Howard et al., 2021).

These findings are in line with research showing that peer support plays an important role in building social connectedness and students' psychological well-being. Social support gained from a peer environment helps individuals feel accepted and part of the group, thus increasing engagement in activities (Lowinsky & Blessed, 2025). Recent systematic studies have also shown that a sense of belonging in the university environment is related to psychological well-being, academic engagement, study persistence, and various indicators of student success (Van Kessel et al., 2025). These findings show that social support in esports organizations not only serves as a source of motivation, but also as a means for students to build a sense of belonging to the community that supports self-development and achievement.

The findings suggest that esports organizations function not only as platforms for competition but also as social communities that foster a sense of belonging among their members. AR received support from senior and esports organization administrators, RA felt the existence of bonding through organizational activities, while NA seeks to build egalitarian and unfettered relationships between members. These results show that the achievement motivation cannot be separated from the quality of interpersonal relationships formed in organizations. Previous research has shown that a sense of belonging and social support contribute to

psychological well-being, engagement, motivation, and individual performance (Allen et al., 2021; Freeman & Rees, 2009; Rees et al., 2016).

These findings show that the achievement motivation among students involved in a university esports organization is not only influenced by individual factors, but also by the quality of social relationships formed in the organization. These results are different from some studies on achievement motivation in academic contexts that emphasize the role of personal goals, self-efficacy, and self-regulation as dominant factors in achievement (Elliot et al., 2017; Howard et al., 2021). In the context of esports organization, positive interpersonal relationships have emerged as an important factor that maintains member involvement in competitive activities and organizations. The findings suggest that the characteristics of esports that demand team coordination and intensive communication cause the affiliate aspect to have a stronger role than in individual academic activities (Allen et al., 2021; Fransen et al., 2017; Eys et al., 2009).

In the context of esports, social relationships have an increasingly important role because competitive activities are often carried out in teams and require high coordination. Research by Fransen et al., (2017), Eys et al., (2009), and Hamari & Sjöblom, (2017) indicates that the quality of relationships between team members is related to team effectiveness, group cohesion, member engagement, and the achievement of common goals. Therefore, the existence of a supportive organizational environment can be an important factor in maintaining the achievement motivation for esports organization members.

3. Leadership and Responsibility as Drivers of Achievement Motivation

The findings further highlight the role of leadership experiences and organizational responsibilities in fostering achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization. The three participants demonstrated a strong commitment to contributing to the organization through their respective roles as athletes, team managers, and esports organization leaders. This finding is in line with the concept of need for power put forward by McClelland, which is the need for individuals to influence the social environment and influence other people and groups (McClelland, 1987). In the modern perspective, the need for power is not always manifested in the form of domination, but can arise through leadership, responsibility, and contribution to a group or organization (Awang et al., 2025; Makuya, 2024).

The results of the study show that leadership experience provides opportunities for students to develop organizational, communication, and decision-making skills. AR has aspirations to obtain a higher leadership position in the organization, RA plays the role of a team manager who manages athletes' activities, while NA performs the role of the head of the esports organization who is responsible for the overall activities of the organization. These findings suggest that achievement motivation is not only related to

individual success, but also to the desire to contribute to the group's success. Previous research has shown that leadership experience in sports organizations and teams plays a role in shaping leadership identity, sense of responsibility, and commitment to group goals (Fransen et al., 2017; Cotterill et al., 2022).

Interestingly, the need for power found in this study is not manifested in the form of domination over other members, but through responsibility and contribution to the organization. These findings show that students interpret leadership positions as opportunities to help other members develop and maintain the sustainability of the organization. These results are in line with research showing that effective leadership in sports and esports teams is more determined by the ability to build interpersonal relationships, empower members, and create an environment that supports collaboration than simply the use of formal authority (De Backer et al., 2022; Kecici et al., 2025).

One of the interesting findings in this study is the emergence of egalitarian leadership patterns. NA views leadership not as a rigid hierarchical relationship, but as an effort to build equal and supportive relationships between members. These findings suggest that the organizational context of esports has distinct social characteristics compared with conventional student organizations. Collaborative leadership patterns allow members to feel more valued, have a sense of ownership of the group, and be more actively involved in the decision-making process. Research on sports teams shows that leadership that is oriented towards group identity and positive social relationships contributes to improved team cohesion, member well-being, and group effectiveness (Cotterill et al., 2022; De Backer et al., 2022). In addition, recent studies in the context of esports also show that the quality of relationships between leaders and team members plays an important role in building effective teamwork and improving group performance (Kecici et al., 2025; Raetze et al., 2025).

These findings on egalitarian leadership broaden the understanding of the need for power in the theory of achievement motivation. In the context of college esports organizations, the need for power seems closer to the concept of socialized power, which is the use of influence to support group development and achieve common goals, rather than personalized power that is oriented towards individual domination (McClelland, 1987). Thus, achievement motivation within an esports organization not only encourages individuals to pursue personal success but also inspires them to assume leadership roles that support the development of other members and contribute to organizational success.

The three main themes were found to be interconnected and collectively shaped the achievement motivation of students who were members of esports organizations. Achievement as personal accomplishment and self-recognition represents goals that individuals strive to attain, while social support and a sense of belonging serve as psychological resources that maintain members' involvement in the organization. On the other hand,

leadership and responsibility provide opportunities for students to contribute to the group while developing personal abilities. Despite having different focuses, the three themes show that the achievement motivation in the context of esports organizations is not only oriented towards individual success, but also on social relations and contribution to the organization. These findings suggest that achievement motivation develops through the interaction between personal goals, social relationships, and organizational experiences, as described in recent research showing that self-development, organizational participation, and social engagement are important factors shaping student achievement motivation (Dang et al., 2025). These findings show that the achievement motivation among students involved in esports organizations is multidimensional and emerges from the interaction of personal, social, and leadership-related needs.

4. Factors Affecting Achievement Motivation Among Members of a University Esports Organization

The results of the study show that the achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization is influenced by a combination of internal factors and external factors that interact with each other. Internal factors include personal goals, desire to grow, self-evaluation, satisfaction with achievements, and orientation towards the future. These findings are supported by research Natasya et al., (2025) which shows that a positive psychological state is related to increased motivation and student involvement in various activities undertaken.

Additionally, research by Mahdavi et al. (2023) shows that achievement motivation has a positive relationship with mental health, academic engagement, and individual achievement in the context of higher education. These factors encourage individuals to continue to develop their abilities, sustain their efforts, and achieve their set goals. These findings are in line with motivational theory that explains that achievement behaviors are influenced by the need to achieve competence, autonomy, and self-development (Ryan & Deci, 2020; Howard et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, external factors include social support, organizational environment, competitive experience, opportunities to participate in tournaments, and recognition gained from the surrounding environment. Social support provided by friends, family, and organizations helps individuals maintain motivation when facing various challenges in esports activities. These findings are in line with research showing that social support from family, friends, and the surrounding environment contributes to a more positive psychological state in college students. This support is a source of reinforcement that helps individuals face various demands and maintain motivation in achieving their desired goals (Tan & Sumargi, 2025).

In the context of higher education, social support and a sense of belonging to the campus community are known to contribute to increasing student motivation, involvement, persistence, and satisfaction in carrying out academic and non-academic activities (Crawford et al., 2023).

Research by Rees et al., (2016), Freeman & Rees, (2009), Allen et al. (2021), then Fransen et al. (2017) It shows that social support has a significant contribution to individual motivation, psychological well-being, engagement, and performance.

In addition to social support, competitive experience also plays a role in shaping the motivation to achieve. The experience of participating in tournaments, feeling wins and losses, and facing the pressure of competition is a learning process that encourages individuals to continue to develop. In the context of esports, competitive experience has been shown to contribute to the formation of psychological skills such as self-regulation, coping stress, and mental toughness Required to maintain performance (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2020; Poulus et al., 2020; Leis & Lautenbach, 2020; Trotter et al., 2020). Therefore, the achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization can be understood as the result of the interaction between personal, social, and organizational factors that affect each other.

This research makes a new contribution to the study of achievement motivation in the context of esports, especially for students who are members of esports organization in the university environment. Previous research has focused more on professional esports athletes, competitive players, or college students in a general academic context (Pedraza-Ramirez et al., 2020; Poulus et al., 2020; Faradisa et al., 2022). Meanwhile, this study shows that the motivation for achievement in members of a university esports organization is not only oriented towards achieving competitive performance, but also on the need to gain self-recognition, build social relationships, and contribute through organizational roles. These findings broaden the understanding of achievement motivation in the context of esports by showing that students' experiences in esports organizations have different psychological characteristics compared to professional athletes and students in non-esports organizations.

Overall, this study shows that the achievement motivation in members of a university esports organization is a complex psychological construct and is formed through the interaction between internal factors, external factors, and competitive experiences experienced by individuals in the esports organization environment. These findings show that achievement motivation not only serves as a driver of competitive achievement, but also as a means of self-development, social identity formation, and organizational contribution in the context of student life.

This study demonstrates that the achievement motivation in students who are members of esports organizations is not only formed through the need for achievement, affiliation, and power as described by McClelland, but is manifested in three more contextual forms of experience, namely achievement and self-recognition, a sense of belonging in the esports community, and egalitarian leadership. These findings show that the achievement motivation in college esports organizations has different characteristics compared to academic contexts and

professional esports athletes because they integrate competitive, social, and organizational goals simultaneously. Thus, this study expands the application of McClelland's achievement motivation theory into the context of esports organizations in college that is still not widely researched.

CONCLUSION

This research shows that the achievement motivation among members of a university esports organization is formed through three main themes, namely Achievement as Personal Accomplishment and Self-Recognition, social support and a sense of belonging in the esports community, and leadership and responsibility as a driver of achievement motivation. Achievement is interpreted not only as success in competition, but also as a form of self-proof, social recognition, and the achievement of personal goals. In addition, social support from friends, seniors, family, and the organizational environment plays an important role in maintaining motivation to achieve. Leadership experience and organizational responsibility are also factors that encourage students to continue to grow and contribute to the esports organization.

The study also found that achievement motivation is influenced by a combination of internal and external factors. Internal factors include personal goals, desire to improve, self-evaluation, and satisfaction with achievements. Meanwhile, external factors include social support, organizational environment, competitive experience, as well as opportunities to participate in various esports competitions. The interaction between these factors forms the motivation for esports organization members to achieve their individual and organizational goals.

The findings of this study contribute to the development of the study of sports psychology and educational psychology, especially in understanding the motivation for achievement in students who are members of esports organizations. The results of this research are expected to be the basis for coaches and administrators of esports organizations in compiling coaching programs that support the development of student achievement and psychological well-being. These findings also show that the achievement motivation in students who are members of esports organizations is not only oriented towards competitive achievement, but also a means of developing self-identity, social relations, and leadership in the university environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For esports organization administrators and coaches, the results of this research can be used as a basis for designing a coaching program that not only focuses on improving technical playing skills, but also pays attention to the psychological aspects of members, such as strengthening achievement motivation, social support, leadership development, and the formation of a supportive organizational environment.

For further research, it can be examined the motivation for achievement in students who are members of esports organizations with a larger number of participants and involving various universities so that a broader picture is obtained. In addition, further research can examine the relationship between achievement motivation and other psychological variables, such as mental toughness, self-regulation, competitive anxiety, or psychological well-being in the context of esports.

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ETHICAL APPROVAL

This research has obtained consent from all participants through informed consent before the interview process is carried out. The researcher guarantees the confidentiality of the participant's identity by using initials and ensures that all data is used only for research purposes.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this study.

TRANSPARENCY OF DATA

Data supporting the results of this study are available from the authors of correspondence upon reasonable request. Access to data is provided while maintaining the confidentiality of the identity and information of the study participants.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contributed to the research and writing of this article.

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