



How province and sport discipline shape female athletes' perceptions of patriarchal culture: the role of coach gender

Provincia, disciplina deportiva y género del entrenador en la percepción de la cultura patriarcal

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Abstract

Introduction: Patriarchal culture remains a significant barrier to women's participation in competitive sports, including national-level events such as the 2024 National Sports Week (PON XXI) in Indonesia. However, female athletes' perceptions of this issue have rarely been examined systematically.

Objective: This study aimed to assess perceptions of patriarchal culture among female athletes participating in PON XXI 2024 and to examine the effects of province, type of sport, and coach gender on these perceptions.

Methodology: A quantitative descriptive-comparative design was employed involving 407 female athletes from DKI Jakarta, West Java, and East Java selected through proportionate stratified sampling. Data were collected using a 47-item questionnaire validated through exploratory factor analysis (KMO = 0.79; factor loadings > 0.50) with high reliability (Cronbach's α = 0.87). Two-Way ANCOVA was used for data analysis.

Result: Province significantly influenced perceptions of patriarchal culture ($p < 0.05$), whereas type of sport and coach gender showed no significant effects. Female athletes from East Java reported the highest perceived levels of patriarchal culture, followed by West Java, while the lowest scores were found in DKI Jakarta.

Discussion: The findings emphasize the importance of local socio-cultural contexts in shaping female athletes' experiences and support the development of gender-sensitive sports policies.

Conclusions: Perceptions of patriarchal culture were influenced primarily by provincial context rather than sport type or coach gender, highlighting the need for culturally responsive strategies to promote gender equality in Indonesian competitive sports.

Keywords

Patriarchal culture; female athletes; competitive sports; gender equality.

Resumen

Introducción: La cultura patriarcal sigue siendo una barrera importante para la participación de las mujeres en el deporte competitivo, incluidos eventos nacionales como la Semana Nacional del Deporte 2024 (PON XXI) en Indonesia. Sin embargo, la percepción de esta barrera cultural desde la perspectiva de las deportistas ha sido poco estudiada.

Objetivo: Analizar la percepción de la cultura patriarcal entre las deportistas participantes en PON XXI 2024 y examinar la influencia de la provincia, el tipo de deporte y el género del entrenador sobre dicha percepción.

Metodología: Se realizó un estudio cuantitativo de tipo descriptivo-comparativo con 407 deportistas de DKI Yakarta, Java Occidental y Java Oriental, seleccionadas mediante muestreo estratificado proporcional. Los datos se obtuvieron mediante un cuestionario de 47 ítems, validado mediante análisis factorial exploratorio (KMO = 0,79; cargas factoriales > 0,50) y con alta fiabilidad (alfa de Cronbach = 0,87). El análisis se realizó mediante ANCOVA de dos vías.

Resultados: La provincia influyó significativamente en la percepción de la cultura patriarcal ($p < 0,05$), mientras que el tipo de deporte y el género del entrenador no mostraron efectos significativos. Las deportistas de Java Oriental presentaron los niveles más altos de percepción de cultura patriarcal, seguidas por las de Java Occidental, mientras que las de DKI Yakarta registraron los valores más bajos.

Discusión: Los resultados destacan la relevancia del contexto sociocultural local en las experiencias de las deportistas y respaldan el diseño de políticas deportivas sensibles al género.

Conclusiones: La percepción de la cultura patriarcal estuvo determinada principalmente por el contexto provincial, más que por el tipo de deporte o el género del entrenador, lo que resalta la necesidad de estrategias culturalmente adaptadas para promover la igualdad de género en el deporte competitivo en Indonesia.

Palabras clave

Cultura patriarcal; atletas femeninas; deporte competitivo; igualdad de género.

Introduction

Competitive sports are not only a domain of physical contest, but also a social arena in which power relations, cultural norms, and gender participation are continuously negotiated (Li et al., 2025). In Indonesia, the National Sports Week (Pekan Olahraga Nasional – PON) serves as a pivotal event that illustrates the quality of inter-provincial sports development systems and the broader social representation of athletes—particularly female athletes, thereby providing an important context for examining gender-related experiences in elite sport (Marsudi et al., 2025).

Major provinces such as West Java, DKI Jakarta, and East Java have consistently dominated the medal standings across various editions of PON. This pattern raises critical questions about the role of local cultural norms, training structures, and socio-cultural factors, especially within the context of gender equality and perceptions of patriarchal culture (Marsudi et al., 2025). These three provinces were selected not only because of their strong athletic representation, but also because they reflect distinct socio-cultural settings that may shape how female athletes experience training environments and interpret gender-related treatment in sport.

The increasing participation of female athletes in Indonesia signifies substantial progress (Ishak et al., 2024). For instance, during the first PON in Solo (1948), women made up only around 10% of the total participants; by PON XIX in West Java (2016), their participation had risen to approximately 47.5% (Muammar, 2025). In the most recent edition of PON, female athletes' medal contributions nearly matched those of male athletes. However, this quantitative growth has not yet been fully accompanied by structural and cultural transformation—particularly in addressing entrenched patriarchal norms that persist within regional sports development systems (Berdahl et al., 2015). Thus, increased participation should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of gender equality, as female athletes may still encounter subtle or overt forms of patriarchal treatment in everyday coaching and training practices.

In the present study, patriarchal culture refers to a system of gendered norms and power relations that positions women less favorably than men in access, recognition, authority, and interpersonal treatment within sport settings. In practice, patriarchal culture in sports may manifest through differential treatment by coaches, unequal access to resources and opportunities, reinforcement of traditional gender role expectations, and barriers in communication, trust, and decision-making processes (Damanik et al., 2025). The diverse local cultural values in the three observed provinces—Sundanese culture in West Java, Javanese culture in East Java, and the urban-cosmopolitan culture of DKI Jakarta—are believed to influence coaching systems, coach-athlete dynamics, and female athletes' perceptions of gender bias.

Previous studies have highlighted the influence of non-technical factors—such as gender perceptions, interpersonal communication, and social support—on the performance and well-being of female athletes (Damanik et al., 2025; Primanata, 2024; Şahin et al., 2024). Furthermore, provincial-level sports development systems exhibit significant variation shaped by local cultural contexts, human resource capacity, and regional government policies (Nova et al., 2023). Although national regulations establish standardized training frameworks, on-the-ground implementation often varies—particularly regarding gender equality (Siscawati et al., 2020). In addition, the type of sport may also influence how patriarchal norms are experienced, because training structures, interaction patterns, and role expectations can differ substantially across aesthetic, combat, measurable, and team sports. For this reason, sport type was included as an analytical variable rather than treated as a neutral background characteristic.

Nevertheless, prior research has rarely examined how perceptions of patriarchal culture among female athletes are shaped simultaneously by provincial context and type of sport in the Indonesian elite sport setting. In addition, although coach gender is often discussed in the literature as an important factor in athlete-coach interaction, communication quality, and psychological comfort, it has not been sufficiently considered in relation to perceived patriarchal culture among female athletes (Vaquero-Cristóbal et al., 2024). Because female athletes may experience training, feedback, and emotional support differently depending on whether their coach is male or female, coach gender was included in this study as a control variable.



Based on these gaps, this study aims to examine whether female athletes' perceptions of patriarchal culture differ by province and type of sport, and whether the interaction between these variables remains meaningful when coach gender is statistically controlled. Specifically, this study addresses the need for a more context-sensitive understanding of how gendered experiences in sport are shaped by local culture and sport-specific environments. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more equitable, evidence-based, and culturally responsive sports policies and coaching practices, particularly in efforts to strengthen gender equality in Indonesian competitive sport.

Method

This study employed a quantitative, descriptive-comparative research design to investigate how regional origin and type of sport influence female athletes' perceptions of patriarchal culture, while controlling for coach gender as a covariate.

Participants

The population consisted of all female athletes from three major Indonesian provinces—DKI Jakarta, West Java, and East Java—who were registered as participants in the 21st National Sports Week (PON XXI) in 2024. Based on initial registration data, the total estimated population was 1,380 athletes.

A sample of 407 female athletes was selected using a proportionate stratified sampling technique, based on the proportion of female athletes in each province. The sample distribution is presented in Table 1. The athletes had a mean age of 22.34 years (SD = 8.50).

Table 1. Distribution of Sample by Province

Province	Population	Proportion (%)	Sample Size
DKI Jakarta	460	33.3%	138
West Java	480	34.8%	140
East Java	440	31.9%	129
Total	1,380	100%	407

This distribution ensured fair and representative sampling across all provincial strata.

Sample Size Justification

The minimum required sample size was calculated using the Lemeshow formula (1990) for large populations (Memon et al., 2020), assuming:

- Confidence level (Z) = 1.96
- Maximum variability (p) = 0.5
- Margin of error (d) = 0.05

Based on these parameters, the minimum sample size was 385. The final sample of 407 exceeded this threshold, ensuring sufficient statistical power.

Given the factorial design of this study (3 provinces $\times$ 4 sport categories $\times$ 2 coach genders = 24 cells), the average number of respondents per cell was approximately 17. Although slightly below Cohen's (1992) recommended 30 respondents per cell for ANCOVA, this was deemed acceptable due to the robustness of the method in cases of minor cell imbalance.

To ensure external validity, specific inclusion criteria were applied:

- Active female athletes registered from DKI Jakarta, West Java, or East Java for PON XXI (2024)
- Participation in one of the sport categories included in the study
- At least one regional training camp (Puslatda) attended in preparation for PON XXI
- Willingness to participate voluntarily, with informed consent



For analytical purposes, the sample was classified into four sport categories: Aesthetic, Combat, Measurable, and Team sports. This categorization was used to support comparative analysis based on sport type. Because all respondents were female athletes, coach gender was derived from the questionnaire item asking whether the athlete and the coach were of the same gender. Responses indicating the same gender were coded as female coach, whereas responses indicating a different gender were coded as male coach. This variable was later used as a control variable in the inferential analysis.

Procedure

Data were collected using both online and paper-based questionnaires administered to female athletes participating in PON XXI 2024 from DKI Jakarta, West Java, and East Java. Prior to participation, all respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before they completed the questionnaire.

Instrument

Data were collected using a researcher-developed closed-ended questionnaire entitled Patriarchal Culture in Sports Coaching. The instrument consisted of 47 statements rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). In addition to demographic information such as sport discipline, province, age, and whether the athlete and coach were of the same gender, the questionnaire was designed to capture female athletes' perceptions of patriarchal culture as experienced in everyday training and coaching contexts.

The questionnaire was developed in line with the study's conceptual focus on gendered experiences in sport and was informed by previous literature on female athletes, coach-athlete relationships, self-efficacy, social support, and the influence of coach gender on athletes' perceptions and development. Although the instrument was tailored to the context of Indonesian female athletes participating in elite competition, its construction was theoretically informed by earlier work examining female athletes' experiences with coaching behaviors, support, communication, and leadership in sport settings.

To improve interpretive clarity, the questionnaire items were organized thematically around how patriarchal culture may manifest in sports coaching practice. These manifestations included differential treatment and implicit gender bias in training decisions, reduced comfort or openness in communication due to gendered dynamics, unequal emotional support, trust, or psychological safety in the coach-athlete relationship, stereotypical assumptions about women's roles, abilities, and suitability in sport, and unequal encouragement, motivation, or access to opportunities in the training environment. The item pool therefore focused on several recurring domains, including perceived fairness in coaching treatment, gender-based expectations and stereotypes, communication comfort and openness in coach-athlete interactions, emotional support and psychological safety, and access to recognition, motivation, and development opportunities within the sport environment.

Example items included statements reflecting persistent gender stereotypes, psychological barriers in interacting with coaches of a different gender, and perceptions of equal or unequal coaching methods across genders. In this way, the instrument was designed not only to measure general perceptions of patriarchy, but also to identify how patriarchal values may be experienced concretely in daily coaching, training, communication, and athlete development.

To ensure the instrument's validity, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value was 0.79, indicating sampling adequacy, and all items had factor loadings exceeding 0.50, confirming strong alignment with the intended constructs. The instrument also demonstrated high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.87.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed in two sequential stages. The first stage involved descriptive statistical analysis to summarize the distribution of female athletes' perceptions of patriarchal culture. This included the calculation of means, standard deviations, and score distributions across relevant categories, such as province, sport type, and coach gender.

In the second stage, inferential statistics were conducted using a Two-Way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). This analysis was conducted to examine the main and interaction effects of province and



sport type on athletes' perceptions of patriarchal culture, while controlling for coach gender as a control variable entered into the model. Because all respondents were female athletes, coach gender was coded from the questionnaire item asking whether the athlete and the coach were of the same gender, with same-gender responses coded as female coach and different-gender responses coded as male coach.

Prior to the ANCOVA, assumption testing was conducted to ensure the appropriateness of the model. The assumptions examined included normality of residuals and homogeneity of variances across groups. The data met these assumptions and were therefore considered suitable for inferential analysis. The significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$, and effect sizes and adjusted model estimates were used to support the interpretation of the findings where appropriate. All statistical procedures were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 27.

Results

Table 2 presents the mean scores of perceived patriarchal culture among female athletes, categorized by sport type, coach gender, and province. The data indicate a consistent increase in patriarchal perception scores from DKI Jakarta to East Java, suggesting the presence of regional differences in patriarchal values within the athletic training environment.

In the aesthetic (judged) sports category, for example, female athletes coached by male coaches reported a mean patriarchy score of 121.1 ± 8.5 in DKI Jakarta, 140.6 ± 8.9 in West Java, and 151.2 ± 10.9 in East Java. This descriptive trend suggests that perceived patriarchal culture may vary across provinces.

Across all sport categories, male coaches were the majority, representing approximately 60–63% of the total coaching population. The highest proportions of male coaches were found in judged and combat sports, while female coaches were comparatively underrepresented.

Overall, these descriptive patterns indicate variation in patriarchal perception scores across provinces and sport categories. However, these descriptive differences should be interpreted cautiously and require inferential testing to determine whether the observed patterns are statistically significant. As such, these preliminary findings underscore the need for further examination through inferential analysis, specifically using a Two-Way ANCOVA, to assess the interaction effects among these variables.

Table 2. Mean Scores of Patriarchal Perception by Sport Category and Coach Gender Across Three Provinces

Sport Category	Coach Gender	n (%)	Patriarchy Score (Mean $\pm$ SD)		
			DKI Jakarta	West Java	East Java
Aesthetic	Male	46 (63.0%)	121.1 ± 8.5	140.6 ± 8.9	151.2 ± 10.9
	Female	27 (37.0%)			
Combat	Male	88 (62.0%)			
	Female	54 (38.0%)			
Measurable	Male	64 (61.5%)			
	Female	40 (38.5%)			
Team Sports	Male	53 (60.2%)			
	Female	35 (39.8%)			
Total		407 (100%)			

Note: SD = Standard Deviation. Patriarchy scores range from 106 to 156.

Source: Processed data from researcher (2025).

Results of Two-Way ANCOVA

A Two-Way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to examine the effects of province and type of sport on female athletes' perceptions of patriarchal culture, while controlling for coach gender as a control variable.

The dataset consisted of 407 female athletes, categorized by three provinces and several sport types. Prior to analysis, assumption testing confirmed that the data met the requirements for homogeneity of variances and normality of residuals. The results of the Two-Way ANCOVA are presented in Table 3.

The overall model was statistically significant, $F(12, 394) = 57.847$, $p < 0.001$, indicating that the independent variables collectively explained a significant portion of the variance in perceived



patriarchal culture. A significant main effect was found for province, $F(2, 394) = 315.395$, $p < 0.001$, suggesting that athletes' perceptions varied substantially by regional background.

However, the main effect of sport type was not significant, $F(3, 394) = 0.536$, $p = 0.658$, nor was the interaction effect between province and sport type, $F(6, 394) = 0.417$, $p = 0.868$. Similarly, coach gender as a control variable did not yield a significant effect on perceptions, $F(1, 394) = 1.146$, $p = 0.285$.

Taken together, these results indicate that province was the only variable that significantly influenced perceived patriarchal culture in this model. Athletes from East Java reported the highest levels of perceived patriarchal culture, followed by those from West Java, whereas the lowest scores were observed in DKI Jakarta. In contrast, sport type, the interaction between province and sport type, and coach gender did not show statistically significant effects.

Table 3. Results of Two-Way ANCOVA: Effects of Province and Sport Type on Perceptions of Patriarchal Culture, Controlling for Coach Gender

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value (Sig.)
Corrected Model	63,187.897	12	5,265.658	57.847	< 0.001
Intercept	4,425,290.110	1	4,425,290.110	48,614.664	< 0.001
Coach Gender	104.316	1	104.316	1.146	0.285
Sport Type	146.459	3	48.820	0.536	0.658
Province	57,419.469	2	28,709.734	315.395	< 0.001
Sport Type × Province	227.660	6	37.943	0.417	0.868
Error	35,864.987	394	91.028		
Total	7,775,620.000	407			
Corrected Total	99,052.885	406			

Discussion

Key Findings and Interpretation

The descriptive analysis revealed notable differences in perceived patriarchal culture across provinces, with the lowest scores reported by athletes from DKI Jakarta and the highest by those from East Java. For instance, in the aesthetic sports category coached by males, the patriarchal perception score was 121.1 ± 8.5 in DKI Jakarta, compared to 151.2 ± 10.9 in East Java. This consistent pattern highlights the significant role of local cultural context and macro-level social norms at the provincial level in shaping athletes' perceptions of patriarchal culture.

These findings were reinforced by the results of the Two-Way ANCOVA, which showed a statistically significant effect of province on patriarchal perception scores, $F = 315.395$, $p < 0.001$, while sport type and coach gender did not yield significant effects. Moreover, the absence of a significant interaction between province and sport type indicates that the provincial effect is relatively stable across various sports disciplines.

Taken together, these findings support the argument that regional cultural and normative structures play an important role in shaping gender-related experiences in sport environments (Daulay et al., 2025).

These results align with patriarchy theory, which posits that deeply embedded social norms and power structures at the community and regional levels are key determinants of gendered behaviors and perceptions (Faruk et al., 2023). Despite the dominance of male coaches (~60–63%) in the sample, coach gender itself did not significantly influence perceptions—possibly because both male and female coaches operate within the same institutional and cultural frameworks, which are already influenced by patriarchal values (Mateo-Orcajada et al., 2021).

At the same time, the non-significant effect of sport type suggests that the experience of perceived patriarchal culture may be shaped more strongly by broader regional context than by differences between sport categories in this sample.

Comparison with Previous Findings

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research emphasizing the powerful role of local values and social norms in shaping gender perceptions in sports (Juliet, 2024). Previous studies have suggested that although coaches may serve as important agents of change, their influence is often



constrained by institutional structures and broader social cultures. In this regard, coach gender does not always emerge as a primary predictor of gender-related perceptions in sport settings (Gosai et al., 2024).

Similarly, previous research has shown that female athletes' perceptions of gender inequality are often shaped more strongly by the broader social and institutional environment than by the individual characteristics of their coaches (Levi et al., 2023). Structural biases against women in sport settings remain prevalent, which further highlights the need to focus on socio-cultural context rather than assuming that individual coach characteristics alone are sufficient to explain athletes' experiences (Gosai et al., 2024; Szoltysek et al., 2025).

On a cross-national scale, cross-regional studies have demonstrated that perceptions of patriarchy vary significantly across settings and are influenced by cultural background, educational attainment, and local policy frameworks (Szoltysek et al., 2025; Woetzel et al., 2018). These findings reinforce the analogy that provincial differences within Indonesia can function similarly to cross-country variations in gender and sport studies, underscoring the importance of context-sensitive approaches in social analysis.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, these findings strengthen the sociocultural approach to gender studies in sport, which emphasizes that perceptions of patriarchy should be examined not only at the individual level, but also within the broader cultural and social structures in which athletes are embedded (Howard, 2024; Jawoosh et al., 2022). Integrating geographic and community-level cultural factors into gender research is essential to avoid overgeneralizations that neglect the diverse lived experiences of women in sport.

Practically, the results suggest that female empowerment interventions in sport must be tailored to the local cultural context of each province. For instance, in regions with higher patriarchal perception scores, such as East Java, more effective interventions may include gender-awareness training for coaches, athletes, and sports administrators; advocacy for local policy reforms promoting gender equity; and educational campaigns involving community leaders and local media (Damanik et al., 2025). These findings also imply that policy responses should not assume that increasing female participation alone is sufficient, but should also address the cultural and institutional conditions that shape how female athletes experience training, communication, and support in sport environments.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged:

1. Incomplete data were available for certain groups, particularly for female coaches in some sport categories, which limited the ability to conduct comprehensive comparisons and generalize the findings across all subgroups.
2. The descriptive analysis was based on raw means rather than the adjusted means from the ANCOVA model, which may introduce bias in interpreting intergroup differences.
3. The control variable was limited to coach gender; other potentially influential factors—such as athletes' socioeconomic background, competitive experience, and exposure to gendered media—were not included in the model, which may act as important confounding variables.
4. The cross-sectional design of the study restricts the ability to draw causal inferences. The relationships observed between variables are associative and may be influenced by unmeasured factors.

These limitations may lead to potential bias in interpreting the results and restrict the generalizability of the findings to the broader population. Therefore, future research is recommended to:

- Include more representative samples, particularly ensuring adequate data across all combinations of variables to enhance the robustness of group comparisons.
- Integrate additional control variables, such as socioeconomic status, educational level, and media exposure, to provide a more comprehensive analysis of how provincial and sport-specific factors interact.

- Further examine specific dimensions of patriarchal experience, such as communication barriers, emotional support, and perceived fairness in coaching, to identify which aspects are most salient for female athletes across different sport environments.
- Combine quantitative and qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews and ethnographic studies, to better understand the processes of internalizing patriarchal norms within localized cultural contexts.

Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that perceptions of patriarchal culture among female athletes participating in the 2024 PON XXI remain relatively strong and are significantly influenced by provincial context, while coach gender does not appear to have a meaningful effect. These results reinforce prior literature on the critical role of socio-cultural context in shaping gendered experiences in sport and highlight the need for policy interventions that are locally tailored to the cultural characteristics of each region. Although the research instrument demonstrated validity and reliability, the findings should be interpreted in light of certain limitations, including the use of descriptive group means in the preliminary comparison of categories, the limited inclusion of control variables, and the cross-sectional research design. In addition, sport type did not show a statistically significant effect in the inferential model, suggesting that broader regional context may play a more central role than sport category in shaping perceived patriarchal culture in this sample. Future studies employing longitudinal and qualitative approaches are recommended to provide deeper insights into the dynamics of patriarchal norms in Indonesian sports.

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