

Winning Strategies and Techniques in Badminton

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Abstract

Excelling in badminton required a combination of skill, strategic thinking, and mental toughness. This study investigated the key techniques, winning strategies, and areas for improvement that contributed to enhanced performance in the sport. It explored effective gameplay approaches, unwritten rules, and factors essential for achieving success in badminton. Utilizing a qualitative transcendental phenomenological research design, the study gathered data through semi-structured interviews with seven respondents—five badminton players and two coaches. Thematic analysis was then applied to interpret the findings. The study identified three key areas influencing success in badminton: effective strategies, unwritten rules, and areas for improvement. Four main strategies emerged as crucial for competitive play: analyzing opponents, executing tactical shots, adapting strategies during matches, and applying game-specific techniques. In terms of unwritten rules, five key themes were highlighted: maintaining

sportsmanship, using deceptive and distracting techniques, employing delaying tactics, learning informal techniques, and adapting unwritten rules based on the competition setting. Hence, this study provided valuable insights into the key strategies, unwritten rules, and areas for improvement in badminton, emphasizing the importance of skill development, strategic decision-making, and mental resilience for achieving competitive success. It was recommended that players and coaches may prioritized strategic training, including opponent analysis, tactical shot execution, in-match adaptability, and game-specific techniques, while also understanding unwritten rules like sportsmanship, deceptive tactics, and strategic delays; additionally, training programs should enhanced technical skills, physical conditioning, and mental resilience, and future research should have investigated the long-term impact of experience, training, and psychological preparation on badminton performance.

Keywords: *Badminton Strategies, unwritten rules, professional development, qualitative-transcendental phenomenology*

INTRODUCTION

Badminton is a fast-paced, competitive sport that demands not only physical skill but also strategic thinking, adaptability, and psychological resilience. Success required players to make quick decisions, adjust to game dynamics, and master both technical skills and mental strategies. This study, using a qualitative, transcendental phenomenological approach, explored the winning strategies, essential techniques, and areas for improvement in badminton by capturing insights from experienced players and coaches.

Globally, success in badminton hinges on effective movement, shot variety, tactical serving, and psychological composure (SPSA, 2024; UGA PEDB, 2024; Ma, 2021). Strategic serving and mental focus helped players control the game and disrupt opponents (Noobiestnewbie, 2023; Smirnova, 2024).

In the Philippines, badminton continued to grow, with players focusing on agility, diverse shot selection, and net control, supported by a culture of continuous improvement (Soriano & Dolendo, 2024; Badminton Asia, 2020).

In Region XII, increasing participation in regional competitions reflected the sport's local rise. Players emphasized technical training, footwork, and tactical play, including consistent service pressure and shuttle control (PhilAtlas, 2024).

This study seeks to identify the specific strategies and techniques used by badminton players in Region XII, aiming to inform coaching, enhance training, and improve competitive performance at all levels.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to explore and identify the winning strategies, essential techniques, and key areas for improvement in badminton performance, with a particular focus on players from selected public secondary schools in Region XII. Using a qualitative, transcendental phenomenological approach, the study aimed to capture lived experiences and insights from both players and coaches to better understand how strategic thinking, technical execution, and psychological readiness contributed to success in the sport. The findings were intended to inform coaching methods, enhance training programs, and support the development of more competitive and skilled badminton athletes at the regional level.

METHODS

This qualitative study employed a transcendental phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences of badminton student-athletes in Region XII (SOCCSKSARGEN), Philippines. Focusing on players from four selected high schools—Engracia L. Valdomar National High School, Fatima National High School, Lagao National High School, and General Santos City National High School—the research aimed to uncover the strategies, techniques, and mental preparation practices that contributed to competitive success. Seven participants, including players and coaches aged 12 to 22, were purposively selected based on their active involvement in regional and national tournaments.

The researcher used a semi-structured interview guide created by the researcher validated by the content validity experts. Additionally, an in-depth interview was used to capture the phenomenon under investigation. Interviews often provided context to other data, offering a more complete picture of what had happened in the program and why (Boyce et al., 2018). In addition to the primary tool, the researcher also used instruments such as a questionnaire validation tool, interview protocols, and a transcription writing guide.

Data were facts gathered through systematic scientific techniques. This study's data collection process was carefully structured to ensure thorough and reliable data gathering. The researcher sent official letters to the Schools Division Superintendent and the School Principals of the selected schools of DepEd GenSan. Additionally, the researcher sought permission from the participants to ensure their voluntary participation.

This study utilized in-depth interviews (IDIs) as the primary research instrument to explore the lived experiences of badminton student-athletes in Region XII. Guided by a validated interview protocol reviewed by experts and the research adviser, the interviews were conducted one-on-one and audio-recorded with participants' consent to ensure accuracy. Supporting tools included informed consent forms, transcription guides, and validation documents to maintain research rigor.

The researcher employed thematic analysis in conducting data analysis for this study. According to Moustakas (1994), thematic analysis emphasized identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns and themes within the data. This was also employed in various studies in the Philippines (Barroga & Tampus, 2023; Dela Cruz et al., 2023; Protacio, 2022; Sonza et al., 2022; Alfaro & Protacio, 2025; Dela Cruz & Amarillo, 2022). It organized and described all data in detail. Thematic analysis had six (6) steps. First, the researcher read and re-read the data to become familiar with what the data required and to pay attention to the patterns that occurred. Second, it generated the initial codes by documenting where and how patterns occurred. Third, codes were combined into overreaching themes that accurately depicted the data. Next, it examined how the themes supported the data and the overreaching theoretical perspective—then it represented each theme, which aspects of data were being captured, and what was interesting about the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Lastly, I wrote the report and decided which themes made meaningful contributions to understanding what was going on within the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following themes emerged after a rigorous process of thematic analysis, which included identifying significant statements, formulating initial themes, clustering themes, and determining the emerging themes.

ET 1: Observing and Analyzing Opponent

This theme talked about how players paid close attention to their opponents. They tried to see their opponent's weaknesses, movements, and playing style. By observing these things, players planned their shots and strategies to win points. Players believed that knowing how their opponent plays was a good way to control the game.

ET 2: Tactical Shot Execution and Variation

...Titingnan ko yong footwork ng kalaban kung... kung mabilis ba siya mag..mag move or makabalik sa puwesto niya...[... I observe my opponent's footwork—whether they can quickly recover their position...] -Clark

...So in badminton kailangan mo magkaroon ng right weapon in the battle. So, first is kailangan e analyze mo yong opponent mo so, kailangan before.. before magstart yong game specially sa anak ko no..tinitingnan ko yong mga susunod niya na mga kalaban tinitingnan ko yong mga strength and weaknesses para pagmalaman mo yong weaknesses [In badminton, you need the

...I will use a passive or defensive strategy, focusing on net shots and drops. I avoid high clears because they would give them a chance to attack or smash... [... I will use a passive or defensive strategy, focusing on net shots and drops. I avoid high clears because they would give them a chance to attack or smash... – Ej

...you need to be dominant in the net kailangan magaling ka mag net shots and then ahm..kailangan yong attacking shots mo is very precise, your smash and then yong mga clear shots mo ah..maganda yong clear shots mo and then yong mga defensive na strategies kagaya ng drive and love...[... you must dominate the net with strong net shots and have precise attacking shots like smashes and clear shots. Defensive strategies, such as drives and lifts, are also important...] - Elias

This theme explained how players used different types of shots to outplay their opponents. They practiced using smashes, drops, clears, drives, and even deceptive shots to surprise and confuse opponents. Players chose these shots based on the situation during the game.

ET 3: In-Match Adaptability and Strategy Adjustment

...I decided to use the defensive style para ma.. makalma ko iyong sarili ko [... I decide to use a defensive style to calm myself. ..., I switch to defensive play, using neutral shots to stay composed...]

- Clark

[... If they go on the offensive with fast shots, I respond with slow shots... But if they play slow, I

This theme showed that players adjusted their strategies depending on how the game was going. If their first plan did not work, they switched to defensive shots or changed the speed and direction of their shots. Some players adjusted by playing slower or faster to match or disrupt the opponent's rhythm. Flexibility in thinking and strategy was important for them to win.

ET 4: Game Format Specific Strategies

This theme explained how players used different strategies when playing singles versus doubles. In singles, players focused on covering the whole court, being patient, and controlling the game. In doubles, they worked closely with their partner, practiced rotating positions, and ensured good communication to set up shots and defended effectively.

...Yes Ma'am, as a single player the phase of the game is slow and ikaw iyong kontrolado yong full court and gumagamit sila ng deception crucial iyong footwork and endurance at sa doubles naman hindi lahat lahat a.. hindi full court yong laro mo side lang.. [Yes, Ma'am. As a single player, the pace of the game is slower, and you have full control of the court. In doubles, you don't cover the full court; you only play on your side...]

-Clark

...Yes mag-iiba siya dahil sa singles more on stamina at placement at sa doubles naman more on attacking [Yes, it changes because, in singles, the focus is more on stamina and placement, while in doubles, it's more about attacking...] - Ej

ET 5: Sportsmanship and Etiquette

This theme highlighted how players showed respect during the game. They apologized when they accidentally hit their opponent and maintained good manners on the court.

...Yes Ma'am, apologizing kung matamaan ko iyong kalaban... [Yes, Ma'am. I apologize if I accidentally hit my opponent...] -Clark

...Pagmatamaan ang opponent, I say sorry... [... If I hit my opponent, I say sorry...] -Garnet

ET 6: Employing Deceptive and Distraction Techniques

This theme was about using strategies that confused or distracted opponents. Players sometimes used deceptive shots, shot during rallies, or used body language to mislead opponents about their next move. These techniques were used to gain an advantage in scoring.

...Yes, minsan gumagamit ako ng deception or iyong tinatawag na pending ito ay isang technique na ginagamit para malito ang kalaban... [...Yes, sometimes I use deception, also known as "pending." It is a technique used to confuse the opponent...] -Ej

...and I will also shout at my opponent... [... and I will also shout at my opponent...]

ET 7: Using Delaying Tactics

This theme explained how players sometimes delayed the game, especially when they were tired. They may slow down serving or take longer between points to recover their stamina and refocus.

...I also use delaying tactics, especially when tired [I also use delaying tactics, especially when tired...] -Garnet

...delaying tactics specifically in serving. We are always asking the learners and the players to take time in serving because that's your best shot to regain your stamina... [... delaying tactics, specifically in serving... because that's their best shot at regaining their stamina...]

ET 8: Learning and Acquiring Unwritten Techniques

This theme focused on how players learned strategies and techniques that were not taught directly. They learned these by watching international players, listening to seniors, coaches, and teammates, observing games, watching videos, and joining tournaments. These experiences helped them learn useful behaviors and tricks in the game.

[...I learned those unwritten rules from international players, especially my idol, Lee Zii Jia...]
- Clark

...Natutunan ko ito sa aking mga seniors sa RMMC at mga NDDU college...[I learned this from my seniors at RMMC and NDDU College...] - Ej

ET 9: Variation of Unwritten Rules by Competition Context

This theme explained how players saw unwritten rules differently depending on the type of tournament. While some believed these rules stayed the same, others said adjustments were needed based on the pressure, type of opponent, or how the tournament was managed. Players also noticed differences between training games and actual competitions.

...No Ma'am, because this unwritten rules is not ah.. official rule in the badminton so.. it is your choice a..its whether kung GSCAA man or International or NCAA o mga competition the rules is not hindi nagbabago, it is your choice to do it so... [.. whether it's GSCAA, International, NCAA, or other competitions, the rules don't really change — it's your choice to do it or not...] - Clark

...Naga change po yong laro ay yong game kapag pressured kana kapag ganun pabayaon mo lang huwag ka ma pressured... [..The game changes when you're pressured, so when that happens, just let it be ...] - Jash

ET 10: Enhancement of Technical and Tactical Skills

This theme focused on the need to improve playing skills. Players wanted to reduce errors, improve footwork and shot placement, master different strokes, and understand how to move and play better during the game. They aimed to be more consistent and skillful in their matches.

...Ah..kuan Mam ahm.. the errors I need to.. improve my errors na dili na makagawa pa noon [.. Ah.. Ma'am, I need to improve on my errors so that I won't make them again...] -Clark

... placement at mga footwork na kailangan pabilisin at dapat tama ang placement para mahirapan ang kalaban Ahm... [..placement and footwork need to be faster and more accurate so that the opponent will have a hard time...] -Ej

ET 11: Systematic Evaluation and Correction

...para maayos ko ito nag tre training ako with my teammates para nagtre training ako paulit ulit ko yon ginagawa...[... To fix this, I train with my teammates, repeating the drills...] -Clark

...Ma'am sa akin naman a.. ang weaknesses ko lang Talaga is pag late backhand na Talaga yong hindi na Talaga kaya e backhand [..Ma'am, my main weakness is when I have to do a late backhand, especially when I can no longer properly execute it...]-Ej

This theme highlighted how players checked and fixed their weaknesses. They identified mistakes they usually made, practiced drills to correct them, and reflected on their games to see what needs to be improved. They also sought feedback from coaches and teammates to get better.

ET 12: Improving Physical Conditioning and Fitness

This theme was about being physically ready for games. Players recognized the need to improve their flexibility, endurance, and stamina. They also focused on doing proper warm-ups before playing and wished to have longer training hours to build strength and energy for long rallies.

[Warm up. Very important. That is why we don't allow our players to play the game ... without proper warmups...] -Jairus

...pero iyang dalawang oras na iyan ay hindi magkasya sa kanilang training so atleast a day mag spend ka ng atleast 4 hours or 3- 4 hours sa training [...but the two hours allocated are not enough for their training... Ideally, they should spend at least 3 to 4 hours a day in training...] -Elias

ET 13: Building Mental Toughness, Discipline, and Commitment

This theme talked about the importance of having a strong mind and good discipline. Players mentioned the need to train hard, be consistent, and keep practicing even when tired. They know that to become better players, they must be committed, focused, and mentally prepared to face challenges during games.

...sa mga gustong manalo o mga malalarong manalo be patient and pagbutihin yong training niyo... [...For those who want to win or become great players, be patient and train hard...] -Clark

Ahm.. kailangan lang nila mag training ng maigi [...Ahm... they just need to train hard ... themselves...] -Ej

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study provided a comprehensive understanding of the strategies, unwritten rules, and areas for improvement that contribute to success in competitive badminton. It highlighted the role of strategic decision-making, such as opponent analysis, tactical shot selection, and in-game adaptability. Unwritten rules—including sportsmanship, deception, and informal game strategies—were also found to influence performance. Additionally, the research identified key areas for development, including technical and tactical skill enhancement, regular performance assessment, physical conditioning, and mental resilience. By employing a transcendental phenomenological approach, the study captured the lived experiences of players and coaches, emphasizing the interplay between strategy, skill, and mindset. These insights support the development of evidence-based training and coaching methods aimed at improving performance and fostering long-term success in sport.

Players and coaches are encouraged to focus on strategic elements like opponent analysis, tactical execution, and in-game adaptability, using tools such as video analysis and match simulations. Emphasis should also be

placed on teaching unwritten rules—like sportsmanship and deception—within ethical boundaries to help players adapt in various competition settings. Training programs should include technical refinement, endurance building, and mental preparation to strengthen confidence and focus under pressure. Lastly, future research may investigate the long-term impact of training, experience, and psychological readiness on athlete performance to further enhance coaching practices and player development.

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