

## RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS WITHIN ATHLETIC TEAMS AND GROUPS

**Jyoti Bala**

Research Scholar

Department of Physical Education  
Kalinga University, Naya Raipur,  
Chhattisgarh  
jyotibalarawat@gmail.com

**Dr. Arun**

Assistant Professor

Department of Physical Education  
Kalinga University, Naya Raipur,  
Chhattisgarh

### Abstract

*The study provides a general overview of the distinctive composition and complexity of athletic teams. It gives the reader broad, fundamental knowledge on the physical and psychological makeup of sports teams. It explains the special qualities of interpersonal interactions in sports teams and offers details on how individual strengths and motivating factors may affect collective success. In this context, certain models that look at group dynamics and interaction are given special consideration. Additionally, it shows how social influence affects how well a group interacts and performs. The report also discusses the significance of interpersonal connections in sports groups as well as future trends in group dynamics.*

**Keywords:** group dynamics, group interaction, social influence, interpersonal relationship, group processes, sport team, group cohesion, performance

### INTRODUCTION

Head coaches, managers, and other people in control have discovered through time that a sports team's psychological makeup requires continual observation in addition to its physiological makeup. [Shaw, Gorely, & Corban, 2005, p. 225] "The idea of group structure depicts the many patterns of interactions that occur in groups and allows us to discover the traits common to them all. In this regard, Carron, Hausenblas, and Eys' (2005) definition of a sports team as "a collective of two or more individuals who possess a common identity, have consensus on a shared purpose, share a common fate, exhibit structured patterns of interaction and communication, hold common perceptions about group structure, are personally and instrumentally interdependent, reciprocate interpersonal attraction, and consider themselves to be a group" is cited by Horn (2008).

A sport team's structure may be divided into two categories: its physical structure and its psychological structure. The physical composition of a group reflects its overall organization and makeup. Along with the whole administrative and formal endeavor, it also covers the organizational structure of the sports team. According to Carroll & Eys (2012), "individuals come into a situation where the specific organized structure is in place" when they join teams in organized sports. While other characteristics, like as team administration and organization, have developed via traditions and team culture, the essence of the sport is often determined by regulations. In the past, studies on the physical makeup of sports teams have mostly concentrated on the individual skills of the team members. The success of a team, however, cannot be determined by adding up each player's individual skills, as sports history has shown. While a sports team's physical structure may be regulated and maintained constant, such as squad size or laws, a team's psychological structure comprises a number of elements that need to be continually monitored to guarantee the best possible performance as a whole.

Every coach and team management aspires to build a team culture that encourages good vibes and gives teammates a sense of ease. Finally, every component of the team's environment and experience is influenced by the psychological makeup of the group. In any group, interaction and communication are fundamental functions. The four elements that most obviously demonstrate the existence of a psychological structure arise with that contact and communication, according to Carroll & Eys (2012). Group position, group status, group role, and group norms are the four parts of a psychological framework in sports teams.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Interpersonal Relationships in Sport Groups**

Every kind of group needs interpersonal interactions to function. "Groups are those social aggregates that involve mutual awareness and potential interaction," asserts McGrath (1984). It seems sense to inquire about the significance and impact of interpersonal interactions in sports organizations.

### **Concepts and Models**

The key component of group processes and dynamics according to McGrath's conceptual framework for groups (1984) is interaction. This concept states that "individual characteristics influence group structures and patterns, environmental properties influence the group task and situation, and those factors collectively influence the behavioral setting under which group interaction occurs" (Gill & Williams, 2008). Each of the aforementioned factors, as well as the encounter itself, may have an impact on how the group interacts.

A soccer team serves as an excellent illustration of this structure. Each team member has unique qualities such as abilities, drive, experience, etc. These traits have an automatic impact on the group structure and its members' roles, statuses, and leadership. Environment-related elements like the weather, the opponent, and the audience may also have an impact on positions and strategy. According to Gill & Williams (2008), "the ongoing interaction and the game progress may then change the environment, individuals, and relationships." A player who makes a number of significant errors may lose confidence and be unable to live up to the expectations of the coach and his teammates. This would likely result in a substitute and maybe a modification in the approach.

Widmeyer, Brawley, and Carron (2002) created a linear model that identifies individual attributes and contextual conditions as initial input components for group dynamics in addition to McGrath's conceptual framework. These initial factors have an impact on group structure, which has an impact on group cohesiveness, which has an impact on group processes, which has an impact on individual and group outputs, and so forth (Gill & Williams, 2008). The significance and predominance of group cohesiveness are highlighted by this approach. In order to capture the interdependence and dynamic nature of group activities and individual outputs, Carron changed this framework in 2005 by relocating cohesiveness to the output side of the model (Gill & Williams, 2008). Four types of cohesiveness are categorized under the modified model: situational, personal, leadership, and team (Horn, 2008). The conceptual model's four dimensions of group cohesion are connected to both the causes and effects of cohesiveness in sport.

### **Group Performance**

Every sports team's manager or head coach has the goal of enhancing team performance. The

adage "the best players make the best team" is among the most well-known and widely accepted. A champion team, on the other hand, would rather overcome a team of individual champions than just adding up each player's unique skills, as shown by sports history. It is crucial to comprehend how members of the group interact in order to explain group performance.

In this regard, Steiner (1972) put up a straightforward model that depicts the connection between individual and group performance. According to the concept, a group's actual production is equal to its potential productivity minus losses brought on by flawed procedures. The term "potential productivity" refers to the team's best performance when all available resources are taken into account. These materials primarily outline all of the members' pertinent knowledge and abilities, as well as their general degree and distribution of capabilities (Gill & Williams, 2008). Any sports team's most valuable asset may be found in each athlete's unique set of skills.

Processes within a sports team refer to both individual and collaborative actions used to accomplish shared objectives. Process losses are divided by Steiner into two groups:

- Coordination losses explain tactical and timing errors. A soccer team that struggles to get the ball to their leading scorer is a good example (Gill & Williams, 2008).
- The major causes of motivational losses are a lack of self-efficacy and group efficacy. A soccer team behind is a common scenario in which motivational losses may place.
- By two or more goals in a short period of time in interpersonal relationships in sports teams. Such a circumstance often lowers team member motivation and necessitates a change in tactic.
- A head coach's primary responsibility is to identify practical strategies to lessen these flawed procedures. He or she must create organizational techniques to be able to minimize coordination losses and maintain motivation even under trying circumstances.

The Ringelmann-effect, which occurs when group size grows and individual productivity of group members declines by as much as 50% in certain situations, was discovered via research on the function of group processes (Barker et al., 2007). competitors feel less responsible for their personal performance as the group size increases because they may "hide" behind the other competitors. According to research, motivational deficits rather than coordination losses are what lead to the Ringelmann effect.

These motivational declines in teams were referred to as "social loafing" by Latane, Williams, and Harkins in 1979. The greatest motivational losses occur when team members' individual contributions go unnoticed or seem to be optional (Barker et al., 2007). Athletes that engage in social loafing often lack self-efficacy and question their ability to make a positive difference for the team. In contrast, studies showed that when team members thought their individual outputs were recognizable, social loafing was abolished.

### **Social Support**

Social support is another continuing contact mechanism among sports teams. Social support is described by Shumaker & Brownell (1984) as "an exchange of resources between at least two individuals perceived by the provider or the recipient as intended to enhance the recipient's well-being." Social support, however, also has a significant impact on crucial group dynamics concerns like group cohesiveness. Rosenfeld and Richmann (1997), who

created a model with three major categories of social support, are cited by Gill & Williams (2008). According to Gill and Williams (2008), there are three different kinds of help: physical support, informational support and emotional support. Sportspeople may benefit from social support since it gives them a sense of security and belonging and may boost their self-efficacy. Particularly after a catastrophic injury, athletes face difficult cognitive, emotional, and behavioral circumstances (Loutsch, 2007). It may be quite beneficial for an injured athlete to have sentiments of support and approval at such a trying period. An early extension of an injured athlete's contract is an excellent illustration of how sports organizations may provide social assistance to its players. A few years back, a player with a more than year-long injury had his contract prematurely extended by the German soccer team FC Bayern Munich. As this action offers not only material help but also motivational and emotional support, it encompasses all three categories of social support.

### **SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK**

Every head coach and sports manager, as was already established, wants to get the most out of their squad. To optimize performance, one has to have a fundamental awareness of the team's structure and workings. The significance of psychological aspects in sports teams has steadily grown in recent years. Numerous instances of sportsmen who, under certain situations, were unable to reach their full potential may be found throughout sports history. As a result, the importance of personalized support for athletes has consistently grown. Sports psychologists and head coaches need to focus more on the consequences of interpersonal interactions, such as the impact of player turnover. Head coaches must take into account and treat each athlete as an individual in order to improve group motivation and performance. The club and the whole leadership staff must learn something unique about each athlete and treat them as uniquely as possible in order to unleash their maximum ability (Gill & Williams, 2008).

In order to completely comprehend group dynamics in sports teams, interpersonal connections and group processes have emerged as crucial components. To decrease coordination losses and improve group performance, "coaches, instructors, and leaders might direct efforts toward developing interactive skills, as well as performance skills" (Gill & Williams, 2008). Finding methods and tactics to lower motivating losses will also be more crucial in this situation. This might imply that each team member's unique responsibilities and contributions are understood and valued.

The last Olympic Summer Games in Rio once again shown how many competitors struggled under pressure and with great expectations and ultimately fell short of their ability. The Summer Games did however show that numerous Olympic Sports Confederations had included psychological surveillance and support. The German Olympic Sports Confederation has declared its intention to advance the science of psychology in order to benefit athletes' health and personalities in addition to their athletic success.

It is difficult to get additional knowledge regarding the interactions and dynamics among sports teams, however. Researchers and sport psychologists must concentrate on the connections between various factors. To increase team productivity, they must examine possible influences including gender, cultural background, and other sorts of impact. The fact that "it is not only understood that each individual on the team be capable of performing well

at the sport, but that the entire team have an overall sense of efficacy when it comes to the task at hand" (Manning, 2007) must be taken into account.

## CONCLUSION

This essay gave a broad review of the significance and complexity of sport group structures. The nature and traits of interpersonal interactions were the main topics of the essay. It demonstrated the importance of interaction as the key component in group processes and dynamics using McGrath's conceptual framework. According to the statement made by Gill and Williams (2008) on page 242, "individual characteristics influence group structures and patterns, environmental properties influence the group task and situation, and those factors collectively influence the behavioral setting under which group interaction takes place." Because each of these aspects is interconnected and affects the team's overall success or failure, coaches should be aware of the wider conclusion that attempting to concentrate on one component may have an adverse effect on the team's entire performance (Manning, 2007). Additionally, the Widmeyer, Brawley, and Carron (2002) linear model demonstrated the significance and importance of group cohesiveness. It further identified situational, personal, leadership, and team factors as the four main determinants of group cohesiveness. The link between individual and group performance was examined in the article. The research used Steiner's concept, which states that a group's actual production is the result of its potential productivity minus losses resulting from flawed procedures, in this context. Coordination losses and motivational losses were the categories used to describe these losses. As a result, reducing flawed procedures is definitely associated to raising group performance. Coaches must devise methods and techniques to uncover and fix any flawed team procedures. Finally, the capacity of the head coaches to evaluate the interrelationships of numerous aspects is crucial to bringing forth the finest performance possible from a sport group. A head coach has to comprehend the whole scope of the many important aspects that have a significant impact on group dynamics; it is not enough to only concentrate on the links between various role parts.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Shaw, D., Gorely, T., & Corban, R. (2005). *Sport & exercise psychology*. Independence, KY: Taylor & Francis.
- [2] Horn, T. S. (2008). *Advances in sport psychology (3rd ed.)*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- [3] Carron, A. V., & Eys, M. A. (2012). *Group dynamics in sport (4th ed.)*. Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology.
- [4] McGrath, J. E. (1984). *Groups: Interaction and performance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- [5] Gill, D. L., & Williams, L. (2008). *Psychological Dynamics of Sport and Exercise (3rd ed.)*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- [6] Widmeyer, W. N., Brawley, L. R., & Carron, A. V. (2002). *Group dynamics in sport*. In T. S. Horn (Ed.), *Advances in sport psychology (2nd ed., pp. 285-308)*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- [7] Steiner, I. D. (1972). *Group process and productivity*. New York, NY: Academic Press.
- [8] Barker, R., Gledhill, A., Lydon, C., Miles, A., Mulligan, C., Saffery, G., Sutton, L. (2007). *BTEC National Sport, Book 1 (2nd ed.)*. Oxford: Heinemann.
- [9] Latane, B., Williams, K. D., & Harkins, S. G. (1979). *Many hands make light the work: The causes and consequences of social loafing*. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37(), 823-832. *Interpersonal Relationships in Sport Groups*
- [10] Shumaker, S. A., & Brownell, A. (1984). *Toward a theory of social support: Closing conceptual gaps*. *Journal of Social Issues*, 40(), 11-36.



- [11] Brewer, B. W. (Ed.). (2009). *Sport psychology*. Hoboken, NJ: International Olympic Committee.
- [12] Loutsch, J. A. (2007). *Perceived social support systems during athletic injury recovery in collegiate club sport athletes* (Masters thesis). Retrieved from <http://books.google.de/books?id=6dhPs8dbipUC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>
- [13] Manning, C. T. (2007). *Relationship among team collective efficacy, cohesion, and coaching competency in sports* (Doctoral dissertation, Utah State University). Retrieved from <http://books.google.de/books?id=NemVNYsJPFkC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false>