

Research Paper :

Relationship between team cohesion and performance among university level female volleyball players

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ABSTRACT

Historically, cohesion has been identified as the most important small group variable. Also cohesion has been the object of scientific scrutiny in both Sport and Exercise Psychology. The term cohesion is derived from the Latin word “cohaesus”, which means to cleave or stick together. Like many social constructs, cohesion has been defined in a variety of ways. Festinger defined it as “the total field of force that act on members to remain in the group”. In sports Psychology, Carron, Brawley and Widmeyer proposed that cohesion is “a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member affective needs”. To establish the relationship between group cohesion and performance of University Female Volley Ball players, Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) was administered. The GEQ assesses 4 dimensions of cohesion. The four subscales of the GEQ are referred to as: Individual Attraction to Group: Task (ATG-T), Individual Attraction to Group: Social (ATG-S), Group Integration Task (GI-T) and Group Integration-Social (GI-S). The Questionnaire was administered to two female Volley Ball teams, one was the winner of the University tournament and the other was the loser team. To evaluate the Volley Ball performance of the subjects a 10 point rating scale was constructed and the ratings were obtained from the experts. Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was calculated to establish the relationship between the team cohesion and performance. It was found that the winning team had significant relationship with all the four items of team cohesion and performance in Volley Ball and the relationship was not significant in the case of losers team.

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Sports performance is the result of a multitude of factors such as physical fitness, skill fitness, constitutional factors and tactical efficiency. Volleyball, an excellent around team sports, has been widely accepted as highly competitive as well as recreational game throughout the world. It is now recognized as one of the most breath taking and dramatic sports of the Olympics from players and spectators view point. The game of volleyball is performance oriented. The performance of top class volleyball players is the result of interaction of a number of factors which include physical, physiological and psychological demands also. Volleyball performance involves more than physical skills, some of the important psychological factors also. Such factors are evident when we witness a superior display of skill by a player in one occasion and then, on a separate occasion see that same player makes an effort after an error.

In today's competitive society, coaches rely heavily upon the success of their respective team. Coaches strive to understand to why some of their athletes work harder

than others and how to get all the team members to work effective together as one cohesive unit. Team building for sports is being viewed as a medium for increasing team's success.

Historically, cohesion has been identified as the most important small group variable. Also cohesion has been the object of scientific scrutiny in both sports and exercise psychology. The term cohesion is derived from the Latin word ‘cohaesus’ which means to cleave or stick together. Like many social constructs, cohesion has been defined in a variety of ways. Festinger defined it as “the total field of force that act on members to remain in the group”. In sports psychology (Carron *et al.*, 1985) proposed that cohesion is “a dynamic process *i.e.*, reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives.

Empirical research indicated that higher in group cohesion was associated with successful sports performance and had been shown to be related in a number of sports including basketball (Carron *et al.*, 2002). Gardner *et al.* (1996) showed that group cohesion

is hypothesized to positively influence performance and success. Grieve (2000) found that performance has more impact on cohesion than cohesion has on performance. Spinks (1990) study of elite volleyball teams demonstrated high efficacy teams performed significantly better in a competitive tournament than did teams with low levels of collective efficacy (Spinks, 1990).

METHODOLOGY

To establish the relationship between group cohesion and performance of female volleyball players, "group environment questionnaire" (GEO) was administered to two winning teams (finalists) consisting of 12 players on each team and two losers teams (non-finalists) who had no place in the tournament. The group environment questionnaire Carron *et al.*, 1985 is an 18 item instrument measuring athlete's perception of team cohesion. Four sub scales are contained within the questionnaire : Individual attractions to Group – Task (ATG – T), Individual attraction to Group – Social (ATG-S), Group Integration – Task (GI-T) and Group Integration – Social (GI-S). Each scale item is rated on a 9 point Likert type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree), to 9 (strongly agree). The group integration construct represents the closeness, similarity, and bonding within the group as a whole. Conversely, "individual attraction to group" represents the interactions of the motives working on the individual to remain in the group. The task construct refers to a general orientation toward achieving the group's goals and objectives, whereas the social orientation is focused on developing and maintaining social relationships within the group. The questionnaire was administered to two female volleyball teams, one was the winner of the university tournaments and the other was the loser team. To evaluate the volleyball performance of the subjects, a 10 point rating scale was constructed and the ratings were obtained from the experts. To establish the relationship between team cohesion and performance of winners and losers female volleyball university teams, Product Moment Correlation was applied.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

The findings related to the Individual Attraction to the Group-Task (4 items in the questionnaire), Individual Attraction to Group Social (5 items), Group Integration – Social (4 items) of the winning and losing teams are presented in Table 1 and 2.

The findings of the data in Table 1 reveal that there was significant relationship between team cohesion items with performance of winning female teams at university level.

Table 1 : Relationship between team cohesion and performance of winners female volleyball University teams

Items	Co-efficient correlation
Individual attraction to the group-task	0.863*
Individual attractions to the group-social	0.643*
Group integration - task	0.721*
Group integration - social	0.576*

* indicates significance of value at P=0.05

Table 2 : Relationship between team cohesion and performance of loser female volleyball University teams

Items	Co-efficient correlation
Individual attraction to the group-task	0.362NS
Individual attractions to the group-social	0.295 NS
Group integration - task	0.328 NS
Group integration - social	0.225 NS

NS=Non-significant

The findings of the data in Table 2 reveal that there was no significant relationship between team cohesion items with performance of losing female teams at university level.

The findings of the present study showed significant relationship between performance and Team Cohesion items of the winning female volleyball team.

The performance in volleyball is closely associated with high level of technical efficiency and tactical presentation at times of crisis. The execution of the skills in volleyball like service execution, serve reception, the set attack and defense are being performed individually by a player first. The next action is being done by another player like set, quite supportively and only then the last and final touch being made by an attacker, who approaches and jumps timely, calculating the height, speed and flight of the ball, tries to apply the tactical execution in making the ball to land on the opponent's court by deceiving the defenders. Hence, to attain success in each move of action and counter action, the team players on the court must function individually first and then as a group. Here the role of cohesion can be very well seen. Individual Attractions to Group-Task has been given emphasis first, then to the Group Integration-Task. Hence, the performance in volleyball is closely related with team cohesion. The items of team cohesion like Individual Attractions to the Group-Task has got the higher

coefficient correlation in the winning teams than that of the losing teams. The data revealed that Group Integration social has been given last emphasis than Individual Attraction to the Group-Social and here also the winning teams have shown significant relationships while compared to that of the losing teams.

The performance of the losing teams in almost all the elements of the game were not in par with winning teams and the findings of the data revealed that the coefficient correlation of the items of team cohesion like Individual Attraction to the Group-Task, Group Integration-Task. Individual Attraction to Group-Social was found very low compared to that of winning teams and were not significant. The winning team has shown supremacy in performance in most of the elements of the game like Attack, Block and Serve Placement, than the losers teams and have shown much better team cohesion also.

Conclusion:

– Significant relationship was found between the performance and Individual Attraction to Group-Task, Group Integration-Task, Individual Attraction to Group-Social and Group Integration-Social of winning team.

– No significant relationship was found between performance and Individual Attraction to Group-Task, Group Integration-Task, Individual Attraction to Group-Social and Group Integration-Social of loser's team.

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