

The Environment, Structure, and Interaction Process of Elite Same-Sex Dyadic Sport Teams

Tamara L. Wickwire, Gordon A. Bloom,
and Todd M. Loughead
McGill University

The purpose of this study was to examine elite same-sex dyadic sport teams. Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with elite beach volleyball athletes. The results of the analysis revealed three higher-order categories: (a) *sport environment*, which included elements related to participation in beach volleyball such as challenges and comparisons between partnerships and other sports; (b) *dyad structure and composition*, which included individual and relationship elements that created a sense of balance in the partnership; and (c) *dyadic interaction process*, which focused on developing communication and cohesion in the partnership and working toward an ideal state where interaction was efficient and effective. The results of the study extend group dynamics literature by studying the dyad as a separate group entity and by revealing information specific to this group of athletes.

A sport team can be defined as

a collection of two or more individuals who possess a common identity, have common goals and objectives, share a common fate, exhibit structured patterns of communication and modes of communication, hold common perceptions about group structure, are personally and mentally interdependent, reciprocate interpersonal attraction, and consider themselves to be a group. (Carron & Hausenblas, 1998, pp. 13-14)

Based on the above definition, a dyad is the smallest possible team and is comprised of two communicating individuals (White, 1982). The prevalence