

Seeing the “We” in “Me” Sports: The Need to Consider Individual Sport Team Environments

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Most individual sport settings involve groups, as athletes often train in a team environment even though they compete individually and often in opposition to their teammates. Despite the pervasiveness of individual sport, group dynamics research has almost exclusively investigated team sports because team members rely on one another during the competitive group task. However, the reliance on task interdependence to dichotomize sport environments into one of two categories (i.e., team or individual) overlooks further differences in how members rely on each other (e.g., interdependence for individual and group-level outcomes or resources). The purpose of this article is to promote the investigation of group dynamics and social influence in individual sport by proposing a typology that distinguishes types of sport group environments according to levels of structural interdependence. This typology identifies six distinct sport team types and leads to a number of relevant theoretical and practice-based propositions. This work is a call for increased group dynamics research involving individual sport environments that acknowledges the multiple forms of interdependence that are present both in the group structure and the perceptions held by athletes.

Keywords: group dynamics, interdependence, typology, sport, exercise, psychology, sport psychology

Individual sport performances are rarely individual efforts. Individual sport athletes (e.g., running, wrestling, and golf) often spend hundreds or even thousands of hours with teammates in training and competition, and build important interpersonal relationships. For example, after calculating the number of hours spent competing with the amount of time spent training and travelling with teammates, Canadian cross country skier Marlis Kromm claimed, “for every minute I’m on the race course I’ve spent almost 7 hours with my team” (Kromm, 2009, para. 1). Group dynamics research has largely overlooked individual sport environments in favour of team sports (e.g., soccer) under the expectation that group influence will only exist to the extent that team members interact during competition (Carron & Chelladurai, 1981). Correspondingly, it is unclear whether individual sport environments involve comparable group dynamics processes to those in team sport settings (e.g., Carron, Colman, Wheeler, & Stevens, 2002) or whether group processes are relatively unimportant (e.g., Landers & Lueschen, 1974).

This understanding is particularly hampered by the typical dichotomous categorisation of sports as either individual or team in nature. “Individual sport” is an umbrella term encompassing a number of activities in which athletes are not required to integrate with others on a collective competitive group task. However,

sports identified as “individual” based on task type may also differ according to a number of higher-order characteristics including (but not limited to) the following: (a) the use of team scores, (b) training that requires the presence of teammates, and (c) identification of distinct leaders and roles. Thus, although individual sport athletes are not interdependent with others on the competitive task, there are a number of additional ways that they may rely on other athletes in a group or team setting (Widmeyer & Williams, 1991). As all sources of interdependence are essential in understanding group interactions and collaboration (Saavedra, Earley, & Van Dyne, 1993), they may be valuable for distinguishing group types.

The purpose of this article is to promote the investigation of group dynamics and social influence in individual sport settings by proposing a typology that distinguishes types of sport group environments according to levels of structural interdependence and encouraging research involving interdependence perceptions and structures that determine how group members are likely to impact one another’s sport experiences. This review makes a distinct call for greater consideration of group dynamics issues within individual sport and provides a framework to guide such research efforts.

Traditional Sport Team Classification

In discussing group properties, it is first relevant to consider how sport teams are traditionally defined and classified. Although there are a number of traits that are used in definitions of sport teams, most conceptualisations identify a team as at least two people who define themselves as a group and who develop structured relationships connecting them in their pursuit of individual and common group-level outcomes—outcomes that are contingent on the efforts of all group members (Carron & Eys, 2012; Salas, Dickinson, Converse, & Tannenbaum, 1992). Most notably, one group characteristic that is explicitly or implicitly evident in nearly

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all group definitions and that is particularly evident in sport team settings (Salas et al., 1992) is the concept of interdependence. Interestingly, sport teams are typically further categorised into two overarching types according to levels of task interdependence: team (interdependent; e.g., soccer, basketball, hockey) and individual sport (independent; e.g., running, wrestling, golf). Team sports include those where athletes train together and compete in events that require frequent interaction between members to achieve a group objective (Widmeyer & Williams, 1991). An individual sport team is a group of athletes who train together and may contribute to total team performance but compete individually and often in opposition to their teammates. The term “coacting” is also used to describe individual sport teams (Carron & Chelladurai, 1981).

The rationale for making this distinction between sport types is often attributed to differences in task interdependence, as the interaction among teammates during competition is a requirement in team sport but not in individual sport (e.g., Baker, Yardley, & Côté, 2003). Task interdependence is, indeed, an important factor in understanding group interactions. In comparison with team sports, individual sport athletes report weak team norm perceptions, which also have little influence on performance, adherence, and effort (Colman & Carron, 2001). Coaching behaviours also have relatively little influence on individual sport athletes’ coaching satisfaction (Baker et al., 2003). Conversely, recent research also supports the importance of group processes in individual sport environments and, perhaps most notably, a positive relationship between cohesion and performance has consistently been identified (e.g., Carron et al., 2002; Kozub & Button, 2000; Matheson, Mathes, & Murray, 1996; Widmeyer & Williams, 1991). These contrasting findings (i.e., that group processes are/are not important in individual sport environments) have resulted in a lack of consistency in identifying the role of group dynamics across team and individual sport types.

The inconsistency evident in sport research supports the proposition that task interdependence is not the only important factor in understanding group interactions. For example, Wildman et al. (2012) suggested the following:

[W]hat teams do says little about the manner in which they interact as a single social entity, but *how* they interact provides a deeper understanding of the higher order traits that make teams unique. Furthermore, as a testament to the importance of these holistic characteristics, most accepted definitions of teams . . . focus on the higher order characteristics of teams (e.g., interdependent, shared common goal, roles and responsibilities) and say little or nothing about specific task types because, alone, task types provide little insight into the underlying reasons for differential relationships with various antecedents and outcomes (p. 120).

In light of this observation, there are a number of potential consequences for using the existing team versus individual sport dichotomy and avoiding further consideration of how individual sport athletes interact. These are discussed in the following sections and include (a) the dismissal of group influences, (b) the assumption that all individual sport settings involve similar social structures, and, consequently, (c) an underutilization of group intervention strategies.

Dismissing Group Influences

If teams are grouped only because of a lack of task interdependence, this may lead to an assumption that group processes such as cohesion are either not relevant or detrimental to performance. A sole focus on task interdependence also led Carron and Chelladurai (1981) to suggest that individual sport teams should not even be considered groups: “Ad hoc categorisations [that is, individual sport teams] . . . do not possess the qualifying characteristic of inherent required interaction from group members” (p. 24). If task interdependence is the only characteristic acknowledged to distinguish sport types, then there is a conceptual argument to ignore the influence of group dynamics in nontask interdependent environments.

Equivalence of Individual Sport Group Environments

The existing dichotomy is also limited by its ambiguity, as it implies that all individual sport environments are comparable. A wide range of individual sports are considered equivalent in terms of the group environment, even within single study samples, such as (a) swimming, athletics, gymnastics, equestrian, wrestling, golf, triathlon, badminton, and squash (Baker et al., 2003), and (b) wrestling, rowing, swimming, athletics, squash, badminton, and cheerleading (Patterson, Carron, & Loughhead, 2005). Inconsistency regarding sport team categorisation has incited further confusion, as “individual” events requiring interactions amongst teammates (e.g., relays or rowing teams) have been classified as either interdependent (Bry, Meyer, Oberle, & Gherson, 2009) or individual (Patterson et al., 2005). Generally speaking, there are a number of cases where a task distinction is inadequate to capture the diverse characteristics of different individual sport contexts.

Underutilized Group-Oriented Interventions

The existing dichotomy also reduces opportunities to develop group-oriented intervention strategies that are targeted to specific group environments to improve performance, adherence, and affective outcomes. Although there are examples of published individual sport group intervention case studies (e.g., Beauchamp, Lothian, & Timson, 2008; Bloom & Stevens, 2002), more empirical research is required to understand the influence of cohesion manipulations within individual sport. With no framework to identify individual sport settings where group interventions are more (or less) beneficial, applied practitioners have little information to guide team-building.

Classifying Group and Task Types: A Need for a New Typology

When the differences within group types are extensive, it becomes increasingly challenging to identify generalisations that can be applied across the group type (Sundstrom, DeMeuse, & Futrell, 1990). Such are the current circumstances in sport group dynamics research, even though sport psychology researchers have been calling for revised group classification for decades (e.g., Carron & Chelladurai, 1981; Cannon-Bowers & Bowers, 2006).

Accurate classifications are essential for research because they are heuristic, in that they encourage the proposition and testing of hypotheses (Sokal, 1974). An improved sport team classification

structure would allow us to identify and make hypotheses about group properties or the influence of group processes (e.g., cohesion, leadership, motivational climates) across differing sport environments. This would also help to identify the situations where key group processes such as leadership will or will not exert an influence on individual and group outcomes. Furthermore, a typology of sport team types would provide a shared classification to communicate empirical, theoretical, and applied insights. In the next sections of this article, relevant advances in group classification structures are reviewed, followed by a discussion of interdependence in sport teams and, finally, the presentation of a novel sport team typology.

Group Typologies

The idea for creating classifications to distinguish types of groups is far from novel (e.g., Lundberg, 1940). Group typologies are systems that distinguish a large number of groups (e.g., sport teams) by reducing them into higher-level sets (e.g., sport types). A number of typologies have received attention in the social and organisational psychology literatures, and most are based on theoretical propositions about task differences. Steiner (1972) and McGrath (1984) published two of the most widely cited group task typologies based on the types of tasks that groups are required to undertake (Devine, 2002). Specifically, Steiner (1972) distinguished groups according to whether the collective task was divisible or unitary, maximizing or optimizing, as well as additive, compensatory, disjunctive, conjunctive, or discretionary. As a brief example, compensatory tasks where group member inputs are averaged were considered distinct from disjunctive tasks where the highest performing member's performance represents the group. McGrath's typology (i.e., the task circumplex model) included eight types that were distinguished using three continuums regarding the group task: (a) conflict-cooperation, (b) conceptual-behavioural, and (c) choice-execution. More recent group typologies in organisational psychology have continued with a similar approach to early theorists by separating groups according to the primary task (e.g., Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Saavedra et al., 1993).

Despite their value in distinguishing groups, the existence of a vast number of typologies has created a clutter of different group types. For example, Wildman et al. (2012) reported 17 published attempts to create group typologies, and Hollenbeck, Beersma, and Schouten (2012) identified 50 distinct group types across these frameworks. Thus, researchers have identified a need to integrate existing categories into a more inclusive typology based on key structural and task-based team traits (e.g., Devine, 2002; Hollenbeck et al., 2012; Wildman et al., 2012). For example, Wildman et al. (2012) integrated the available literature to produce an overall taxonomy of 12 group types and proposed a list of higher-order characteristics that are intended to help researchers describe team types. The characteristics included in the list were as follows: (a) task interdependence, (b) role structure, (c) leadership structure, (d) communication structure, (e) physical distribution, and (f) team life span.

When compared with the organisational literature, sport-related attempts to categorise teams are limited and stem from the task types developed in organisational research (e.g., Saavedra et al., 1993). Initially, Carron and Chelladurai (1981) identified four sport task interdependence types, including the following: (a) independence (e.g., individual running race); (b) coactive depen-

dence, where participants compete simultaneously (e.g., rowing); (c) reactive-proactive dependence, where one player relies on another to complete an action (e.g., quarterback throwing to a receiver); and (d) interactive dependence (e.g., soccer). The only other attempt to further distinguish sport teams was by Cannon-Bowers and Bowers (2006) and involved four relatively analogous task types to those proposed by Carron and Chelladurai. The typology included pooled, sequential, reciprocal, and team interdependence task types. Similar to many of the early typologies in organisational research, these attempts focused entirely on task attributes and leave a large number of individual sports undistinguished from one another. Furthermore, they have largely gone unused in the sport literature.

We suggest that attempts to distinguish task types have overlooked individual sport settings because the purpose for the typologies were to understand the influence of cohesion on task coordination (Carron & Chelladurai, 1981) and to improve team-based interventions focused on improving team task performance (Cannon-Bowers & Bowers, 2006). Although we agree that task interdependence plays a primary role in guiding interactions amongst teammates, there are several additional ways that team members may be interdependent that are also valuable for distinguishing group environments.

Interdependence

Across a vast number of definitions and theoretical approaches, interdependence is generally described as the degree and manner in which group members rely on one another and require reciprocal interaction (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 2005; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Interdependence is initially determined by the organisational group structure (i.e., how team members' cooperation, roles, and goals are structured) that continually shapes emergent group member interactions. Interdependence is important because it guides interactions and reliably distinguishes aspects of the environment that make specific behaviours more (or less) appropriate (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). For example, teams with higher structural interdependence will typically develop closer perceptions of interdependence over time (Wageman & Gordon, 2005). Furthermore, team and individual performance is more strongly influenced by collective efficacy (Stajkovic, Lee, & Nyberg, 2009) on teams with a higher level of interdependence. It is important to note that the majority of interdependence research reported in this review involves organisational or educational settings.

To this point in this article we have primarily discussed task interdependence, or the degree that the group competitive task requires the reciprocal interaction of team members (Wageman, 1995). When team members are task interdependent, they invest in developing smooth interpersonal interactions, engage in mutual helping, and experience enhanced interpersonal liking and harmony (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). In addition to task interdependence, there are other sources of interdependence that have an influence on group member interaction; namely, outcome interdependence and resource interdependence (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 1989).

Outcome interdependence refers to the extent that team members are dependent on one another in achieving personal and group level outcomes (Johnson & Johnson, 2005). The composition of the individual and group-level goal structures, as well as the

provision of rewards, determines outcome interdependence (Wageman, 1995). With regard to sport teams, outcome interdependence is evident at the group structural level to the extent that an overall team performance is comprised of individual team members' efforts. The type of influence that outcome interdependence has in group environments often depends on the corresponding amount of task interdependence. For example, when group members are both task- and outcome-interdependent, they report more positive affective experiences (Van der Veegt, Emans, & Van De Vliert, 2000). On the other hand, reward interdependence—one aspect of outcome interdependence—primarily improved performance on a student group learning task when members did not already rely on one another (Buchs, Gilles, Dutrevis, & Butera, 2011). Buchs et al. (2011) proposed that reward interdependence benefits performance mainly because it provides incentive for group interaction where none was otherwise required.

In addition to group-level outcome interdependence, teammates may also be positively or negatively interdependent regarding individual level outcomes. Positive outcome interdependence (i.e., the more I get, the more you get; non zero-sum) is comparable with a cooperative setting and is associated with prosocial motives, greater responsibility for others' work, and improved individual-level outcomes (De Dreu, 2007; Van der Veegt, Emans, & Van de Vliert, 1998). In contrast, negative outcome interdependence (i.e., the more I get, the less you get; zero-sum) is akin to a competitive setting and is described as being a contrient environment (Deutsch, 1949). Although anecdotal reports suggest that negative interdependence will bring about productive rivalries (Landers & Lueschen, 1974), there is little evidence to suggest that negative outcome interdependence is always beneficial when compared to positive interdependent settings (Tauer & Harackiewicz, 2004). A meta-analysis conducted by Stanne, Johnson, and Johnson (1999) considered 64 laboratory and field studies and identified that competitive (i.e., negative) interdependence resulted in lower performance on motor tasks (e.g., sport-related skills, fitness tests, reaction time (RT), and maze navigation) as well as lowered interpersonal attraction, social support, and self-esteem when compared with positive interdependent and independent environments.

Additionally, resource interdependence refers to the degree to which members feel they can achieve desired goals if, and only if, important resources are contributed by other group members (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 1989). Resource interdependence leads to improved performance primarily when members are interdependent in other ways, because resource interdependence in the absence of task and/or outcome interdependence may decrease achievement because of process losses (Johnson & Johnson, 2005) and because the performance of other group members becomes threatening (Buchs & Butera, 2009).

Considering the impact of interdependence on group dynamics in organisational settings (Tauer & Harackiewicz, 2004), outcome and resource interdependence should influence individual sport group environments in a similar way. For example, Widmeyer and Williams (1991) identified that golf teams who possessed team goals or outcomes (e.g., outcome interdependence) perceived greater levels of group cohesion. At this point, however, existing typologies do not extend beyond the influence of task interdependence. In the typology presented below, we advance beyond the limitations of earlier typologies and consider several sources of interdependence that are evident in the structure of individual sport groups.

A Sport Team Interdependence Typology

The sport team interdependence typology was developed with the key concepts from interdependence literature as a foundation. The intentions of the typology are to establish several mutually exclusive categories that distinguish sport group settings according to the task and outcome interdependencies evident in the competitive environment. Resource interdependence was not considered as part of the typology because sport competitive structures rarely dictate the sharing of resources amongst teammates. As shown in Figure 1, the hierarchical categorisation system that we present thus comprises three primary interdependence sources: task interdependence, group outcome interdependence, and individual outcome interdependence.

Using the Typology

A presupposition of the model is that the group of interest, in fact, identifies themselves as a "group" with structured relationships connecting them in their pursuit of individual and common group-level outcomes (e.g., Carron & Eys, 2012). Within the typology, groups are then distinguished (via the second and third columns in Figure 1) according to whether they involve integrated task interdependence (e.g., hockey), segregated task interdependence (e.g., baseball), or no task interdependence (e.g., running). This task distinction is similar to that outlined by Cannon-Bowers and Bowers (2006). Earlier typologies included an additional task interdependence type labelled sequential (Cannon-Bowers & Bowers, 2006) or coactive dependent (Carron & Chelladurai, 1981) that distinguished simultaneous or sequential tasks such as relay or rowing. We consider these settings to be equivalent to integrated task settings to the extent that the group of interest is the specific task-interacting group (e.g., relay team) rather than a higher-order group (e.g., track and field team); in which case the group would be considered collective.

Groups are then further distinguished according to whether (a) there are group-level outcomes typically identified during competition (e.g., team scores) and (b) whether group members influence one another's personal goals (i.e., whether teammates compete directly against one another). Groups demonstrating task interdependence are assumed to have group outcome and relative individual outcome interdependence because of the nature of the task.

Example Classification

To provide an example of how the model would be applied in a specific situation, consider an example of a female collegiate golf team with members who:

- Compete within the same conference and consider themselves to be a team;
- Are not task interdependent, because golf is an individual task;
- Are interdependent for a collective group goal that is based on contributions from group members, such as tournament or conference titles;
- Are interdependent on individual outcomes because all members compete in the same events and directly influence one another's individual goal attainment.

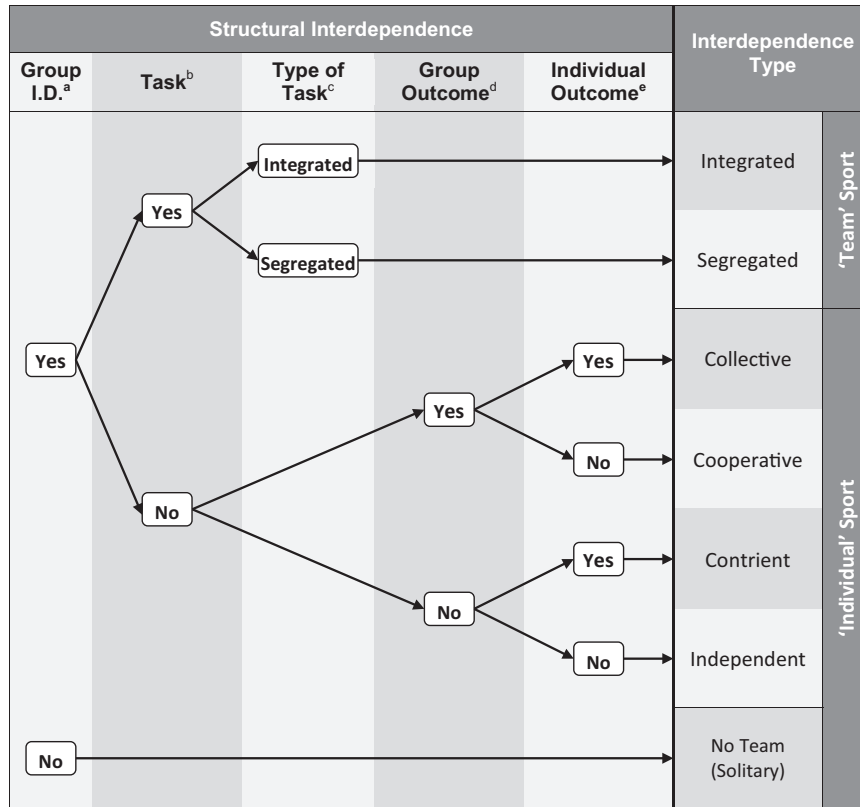


Figure 1. Decision tree for determining team interdependence types. ^a To be considered in the typology, members must consider themselves to be a group. ^b Task interdependence refers to whether teammates must interact during the competitive task. ^c Types of task interdependence include integrated, segregated, and none. ^d Group outcome interdependence refers to whether group-level outcomes are applicable during competition. ^e Individual outcome interdependence refers to whether group members directly compete against one another during competition.

In consideration of the group environment, the collegiate golf team example would be classified as *collective* using the team type decision tree in Figure 1 because members identify as a group (column 1) and are not task interdependent (column 2), while being interdependent on both group (column 4) and individual outcomes (column 5).

For further clarification of group classification, Table 1 provides examples of each specific sport team type environment and compares the team types presented in our typology to those of previous sport typologies. When compared with previous attempts, the novel contribution of this typology is the characterization of individual sport settings as collective, cooperative, contrient (Deutsch, 1949), independent, or solitary. In light of these novel contributions, there are several features of the typology that are important to recognise, both for its effective use and in understanding its limitations.

Considerations Pertaining to the Typology

Team Types Versus Sport Types

A first consideration is that we have established a number of sport *team* types rather than *sport* types. We do not explicitly refer to these as sport types because the structural interdependence

evident even within one sport may change at different levels of competition and in different settings. For example, wrestling competitions at the high school and collegiate levels are often collective or cooperative settings because they typically involve overall team scores and, at times, “dual meets” where two schools are directly pitted against one another. In contrast, other wrestling environments that don’t include team-related outcomes (e.g., international wrestling competition) would be labelled independent.

Structural Versus Perceived Interdependence

A second consideration about this typology is that it is purely based on structural interdependence that is inherent in the group environment. However, there are additional levels of interdependence that are important for group functioning but are not considered in this model, including team-specific structural interdependence sources (e.g., team norms, how often teammates travel or train together) and individual perceptions of interdependence (Wageman & Gordon, 2005). Interdependence structure, alone, was used to distinguish sport team type because the complexity of interdependence perceptions at the individual level would require researchers to have in-depth understanding of each team setting; a situation that is not practical for easily identifying team type. Regardless, it is important to note that individual perceptions of

Table 1
Examples of Team Interdependence Types With a Comparison With Previous Typologies

STIT ^a type	Example	Classification in previous typologies		
		Traditional dichotomy	Carron & Chelladurai (1981)	Cannon-Bowers & Bowers (2006)
Integrated	A soccer team, required to work together during competition with a clear group goal	Team	Interactive dependence	Team
	A rowing team of 8s, required to work together to achieve a common goal ^b	Team or individual	Coactive dependence	Sequential
Segregated	A baseball team whose members compete together but aren't always required to interact with one another on the task	Team	Reactive-proactive dependence	Reciprocal
Collective	A boys cross country running team, with members who all partake in the same race in competition with one another <i>and</i> to obtain a team 'title'	Individual	Independence	Pooled
Cooperative	A team of collegiate wrestlers who compete in different weight classes (e.g., are not individual outcome interdependent), but contribute to team titles	Individual	Independence	Pooled
Contrient	A national team of trampolinists who compete individually, against one another, with no identified group goal	Individual	Independence	Not applicable
Independent	A training team of triathletes with no identified group goal and who compete at different competitive levels	Individual	Independence	Not applicable
Solitary	Cyclists who, at times, gather together for long distance rides but who wouldn't identify as a group	Individual	Independence	Not applicable

^a Sport Team Interdependence Typology. ^b Although earlier typologies have distinguished sports such as rowing and relays as coactive or pooled, we consider these examples of integrated teams to the extent that *all* members must work together on a group task (e.g., rowing 8s).

interdependence emerge over time as a combination of team structure and member attributes as well as personal interactions and are fundamentally interrelated with the overt structure of the group environment (Wageman & Gordon, 2005). Overall, the pressures and forces initially (and continually) exerted on a group by structural interdependence provide an important foundation upon which team members' interdependence perceptions grow.

It is worthwhile to note that interdependence perceptions are also related to youth athletes' personal and interpersonal developmental experiences (e.g., teamwork, initiative, and positive relationships). Bruner et al. (2011) investigated how outcome and task interdependence perceptions are associated with personal developmental experiences of adolescent basketball players and cross country runners. Although the basketball players reported higher levels of task interdependence, Bruner and colleagues demonstrated that there were few differences between the two sport types regarding outcome interdependence perceptions. Furthermore, outcome interdependence positively predicted greater developmental experiences for athletes—even after controlling for sport type. Such findings demonstrate that interdependence perceptions predict key outcomes, and imply that interdependence structures and interdependence perceptions are related but distinct concepts.

Typology Effectiveness

A final consideration is that of effectiveness. The need to assess effectiveness is particularly relevant in this case because the distinctiveness of the group types in the current typology have not been confirmed empirically; a limitation held in common with most other group typologies (e.g., Devine, 2002; Hollenbeck et al., 2012; McGrath, 1984; Steiner, 1972; Wildman et al., 2012). With regard to identifying an ideal classification, the evaluation of

typology effectiveness involves three primary aspects: internal validity, external validity, and utility (Fleishman & Zaccaro, 1992). Internal validity of the current typology would consider whether there is a comprehensive, mutually exclusive, list of group types that can be reliably identified. External validity concerns the degree that the group types predict expected differences in group processes and individual/group level outcomes. In addition, effective group typologies must—ultimately—balance these validity considerations with the need for a practical tool. Although the effectiveness of this typology can be partially supported through theoretical consistency with existing work (e.g., Johnson & Johnson, 2005), it should also be used in empirical and applied settings to test its validity and utility.

Future Research Directions

As the promotion of hypothesis testing is a central goal for developing a typology (Sokal, 1974), a well-developed system should prompt research questions about the nature of group types. Examples of specific questions that the sport team interdependence typology prompts include (but are not limited to) the following: whether team-based goal and reward interventions will have a larger influence within groups that do not experience structured group outcome interdependence, whether structural interdependence plays a greater role in group interactions early in a season, and whether there are additional forms of interdependence that bond individual independent teams together. Of particular relevance to the last point, there is potential for additional structural influences to be important interdependence sources within sport teams, such as training interdependence (i.e., the extent that teammates rely on one another for training). In addition to the sources of interdependence identified in this typology, it is important to

note that existing organisational group typologies have also addressed additional forms of interdependence (e.g., McGrath, 1984; Steiner, 1972). Although the forms listed in these typologies are not relevant for distinguishing interdependence in individual sport teams because they are based on types of task interdependence, they may be relevant for distinguishing types of outcome interdependence structures. For example, it may be valuable to distinguish whether group outcomes are additive (e.g., cross country running team members' performances are combined) or disjunctive (e.g., a professional cycling team where the lead rider's performance represents the group).

Future research should also consider the extent that additional theoretical perspectives such as social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and social comparison theories (Stapel & Blanton, 2007) should also be applied to this typology in future research. For example, perceptions of interdependence may influence the extent that an athlete identifies with being a member of a team.

Summary

If advancements in group dynamics research with individual sport are to occur, an accurate sport team typology is a crucial addition to the field of sport psychology. Without distinguishing between team types, it is difficult to predict how research based in one context will or will not apply in other situations (Devine, 2002). The Sport Team Interdependence Typology is meant to be an appeal for more consideration of interdependence structures and perceptions, rather than the "final word" for distinguishing group environments. Our hope is that this work facilitates group dynamics research with individual sport teams and helps elucidate when team environments may (and may not) influence important individual and group-level outcomes.

Résumé

La plupart des milieux de sport individuel comportent des groupes. Les athlètes qui pratiquent un sport individuel s'exercent souvent au sein d'un groupe, voire s'exercent contre leurs coéquipiers. Malgré l'omniprésence du sport individuel, la recherche sur la dynamique de groupe a presque toujours eu pour sujet les sports collectifs, car les membres d'une équipe dépendent les uns sur les autres pour la tâche collective à accomplir dans le cadre des compétitions. Toutefois, le recours à l'interdépendance des tâches pour dichotomiser les environnements sportifs en l'une des deux catégories (sport d'équipe vs sport individuel) oublie les différences dans la façon dont se réalise l'interdépendance entre les membres (par ex., interdépendance sur le plan des résultats ou des ressources pour l'individu ou le groupe). L'objectif de cet article est de promouvoir l'analyse de la dynamique de groupe et de l'influence sociale dans le sport individuel en proposant une typologie qui fait la distinction entre les types d'environnement de groupes sportifs selon les niveaux d'interdépendance structurale. Cette typologie a permis d'établir six types d'équipes sportives distincts et d'établir des propositions pertinentes, tant théoriques que fondées sur la pratique. Ce travail se veut un appel à davantage de recherches sur la dynamique de groupe portant sur des environnements de sport individuel qui reconnaissent les formes multiples de l'interdépendance présentes à la fois dans la structure du groupe et dans les perceptions chez les athlètes.

Mots-clés : dynamique de groupe, interdépendance, typologie, sport, exercice, psychologie, psychologie du sport.

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