

Enhancing the Self and Collective Efficacy of Student-Athletes in Collegiate Sport Teams: A Teambuilding Intervention

Desiree A. Espina

De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11234618>

Published Date: 21-May-2024

Abstract: This paper proposed a teambuilding intervention in which two psychological constructs, namely self-efficacy and collective efficacy are the main targets of enhancement due to their strong relation and positive influence on performance and group processes that allow sport teams to successfully attain their goals. It is formulated for collegiate sports teams with student-athletes as the direct participants. The modules that are conceptualized and the delivery of the structured learning exercises during the teambuilding sessions will be guided by the specific sources or strategies that were introduced in the Efficacy Theory by Bandura (1997) in enhancing efficacy beliefs. These strategies include verbal persuasion or giving feedback, sharing of performance accomplishments, vicarious experience or modeling, emotional arousal, personal disclosure, mutual sharing, positive imagery or visualization, and goal setting. A four-stage protocol was also forwarded as the guide in implementing the teambuilding intervention that is being proposed. Both modules on self and collective efficacy will contain activities that will facilitate self and team awareness, trust and openness within the group in the hope that it will result in a more confident, cohesive and well-functioning team. Overall, the intervention intends to offer an avenue to clarify and improve the team's efficacy beliefs, enhance the members' capacity to carry out their roles and goals in the team, be confident in their own and in the team's capabilities, and form a cohesive bond that can produce positive individual and team outcomes.

Keywords: teambuilding intervention, collegiate sport teams, student-athletes, self-efficacy, collective efficacy.

I. INTRODUCTION

Teambuilding is a concept that is present in both industrial and sporting environment but its utilization appears to be different. While it takes the form of an organizational development intervention in the industrial setting, teambuilding in sports is normally packaged as part of mental or psychological skills training programs of coaches (Hacker, 2000). It is evident from the perspectives presented in the literature that the concept of teambuilding in sports is far more complex than just having team dinners, wearing the same team shirts, travelling to tournaments together or staying in one dormitory. While coaches highly consider the physical and tactical skills of their players as important, psychological characteristics have been quoted in the literature as also crucial in influencing performance and effectiveness of teams (Voight & Callaghan, 2001). Athletes as well know that psychological factors play a big part in the manner they will perform during trainings and competitions and in the way they will function inside a team. Group dynamics, quality of relationships, negative emotions or affect, momentum, recovery, motivation, leadership, and self-confidence are just a few of the factors which are commonly cited in the literature (Cotterill, 2013; Bloom & Stevens, 2002; Copeland et al., 2009). Some of these elements exist at an individual level but they can accumulate and become a team concern. Two important psychological constructs that literature has emphasized to have a big impact on the team's functioning are self-efficacy and collective efficacy. They are considered very influential in managing one's athletic performance and how one will function successfully inside a team. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is the confident belief that one can perform skillfully.

cope with performance pressure and sustain the hard work necessary to perfect one's skills while collective efficacy allows the team members to have a shared trust with one another and confidence in their team's abilities to be successful in carrying out the challenges related to their sport performance. He emphasized that the concept of self-efficacy, which is commonly viewed as a variation of self-confidence in a sport setting is an important must-have among sport teams. Athletes who have developed self-efficacy are viewed to be more confident in performing what is expected of them in their sports. They have the will to initiate a course of action not just for themselves but also for the team and to produce results despite setbacks or recent failures. The same view may hold true as well at the group level where the whole team possesses a developed confidence and a shared belief in their group's capabilities; an indication that the team has developed collective efficacy. Clearly, these two psychological constructs are major contributors to forming a cohesive team who shares common efficacy beliefs, who trusts in the capabilities of the team members, and who strives to be successful not as individuals but as a team. For this reason, the author deems it relevant to propose an intervention in the form of teambuilding sessions where the focus is on enhancing the self and the collective efficacy of college athletes in the hope that it will result to a more confident, cohesive and a well-functioning team. In addition, the intervention hopes to promote self and team awareness while creating an atmosphere of trust and openness within the group. The modules that will be formulated and the delivery of the structured learning exercises during the teambuilding sessions will be guided by the specific strategies that were introduced by Bandura (1997) in enhancing efficacy beliefs. These strategies include verbal persuasion or giving feedback, sharing of past performance accomplishments, vicarious experience or modeling, emotional arousal, personal disclosure, mutual sharing, visualization, and goal setting. The teambuilding intervention can be utilized by sport teams at the collegiate level where the main participants will be student-athletes. The team's coaching staff will play a role in monitoring team issues and will be active reinforcers of what the athletes gained from the teambuilding sessions during practice, game time, and dorm time. They will take part in being important sources of efficacy information for their players. Overall, the intervention that is being proposed intends to offer a tool for collegiate sport teams to improve the team's efficacy beliefs, enhance their members' capacity to carry out their roles and goals, be confident in their own and in the team's capabilities, and form a strong and cohesive bond that is based on trust and respect. Essential in the implementation is the synergy and collaborative efforts of the coaching staff, athletes, athletic department, and the consultant/ facilitator. As literature would assert, "teambuilding is the deliberate process of facilitating the development of an effective task and close social group" (Bloom & Loughhead, 2011). It is something that should be "worked for" rather than just being "hoped for" (Williams, 2010).

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. Teambuilding in the Sports Setting

Mostly described as a front-line intervention or strategy, teambuilding activities are goal, process, and task oriented (Voight & Callaghan, 2001). They are designed to help the team function together more smoothly and effectively. Literature implies that it is a collaborative process employed to improve team cohesion, team efficiency, team performance, team chemistry and intra-team connections or relationships (Copeland et al., 2009). It can be delivered through different approaches through the collaborative efforts of the coaches, the players, the sports department, and a consultant in the person of a sports psychologist or a sports counselor. Hardy and Crace (as cited in Bloom & Loughhead, 2011) forwarded that teambuilding is an intervention that enhances team performance by positively effecting team processes or team synergy while Bloom and Loughhead (2011) described it as a method to facilitate consistent and effectual teamwork, team cohesion and relations that is intended to improve individual and team outcomes such as performance or an athlete's satisfaction. Yukelson (1997) clearly described teambuilding as an ongoing, multifaceted process where team members learn how to work together for a common goal, and comfortably express relevant feedback regarding the quality of team functioning in order to establish more effective ways of operating. There appeared to be a consensus among researchers and sports practitioners with regard to the goals and objectives of teambuilding interventions in the sport setting. Shared vision, collaborative and synergistic teamwork, individual/ team accountability, team identity, confidence, positive team climate and cohesiveness, open/ honest communication (Voight & Callaghan, 2001); team chemistry (Hacker, 2000 as cited in Williams, 2010); consistent and effective teamwork (Bloom & Stevens, 2002); enhancing individual and team task and social cohesion (Copeland et al., 2009) were mentioned in the literature as the common goals of teambuilding interventions. Brawley and Paskevich (as cited in Bloom & Loughhead, 2011) believe that teambuilding is a method that should be able to satisfy the needs of the team members, increase the team's efficacy, improve their working conditions, and enhance team cohesion. For Hacker (as cited in Williams, 2010), teambuilding activities serve a crucial role in integrating strong personalities and unique individuals into a united and collective whole. Paradis and Martin (2012) cited findings of different research that validated that

teambuilding programs in sports setting are employed for the improvement of group processes such as cohesion, role understanding, communication, leadership, satisfaction, and performance. Yukelson (1997) opined that an effective teambuilding intervention must consider the core components in building a successful team such as having a shared goal, collaborative and synergistic teamwork, individual and mutual accountability, team identity, a positive team climate and cohesive group atmosphere, open and honest communication processes, peer support, and trust at all levels. Increasing confidence and reducing anxiety have also been clear targets to attain for certain teambuilding programs due to their importance in improving athletes' performance. As Williams (2010) has observed, the most consistent in sports performance literature is the direct correlation between self-confidence and team success.

Researchers also observed that utilization of this intervention generally led to positive outcomes. Team leaders may use teambuilding activities to promote social and task cohesion and identify team leaders (Hepler et al., 2021). One teambuilding intervention conducted by Bruner and Spink in 2010 and 2011 (as cited in Bloom & Loughhead, 2011) among youth exercise participants resulted in improved group cohesion, group task satisfaction and adherence behaviors. Furthermore, results of evaluation studies done among university soccer teams stated that teambuilding interventions were helpful in enhancing individual and team confidence and performance as well as team unity (Voight & Callaghan, 2001). The study also revealed that both stress management skills and group task cohesion were enhanced. A review of teambuilding investigations in the sport setting supports the argument that teambuilding does help boost confidence, teamwork and performance. After twenty-eight article reviews dating from 1997 to 2008, Rovio et al. (2010) revealed that the findings appeared to have cemented the link between team cohesion and performance, suggesting that teambuilding has a positive effect on group functioning, especially in increasing group cohesion. According to Bloom & Loughhead (2011) an effective teambuilding program can lead to the following six outcomes: 1) team leadership being coherent, visionary, and acceptable; 2) team members understanding and accepting their responsibilities and roles; 3) team members dedicating their efforts to the team's goals and objectives; 4) a positive, empowering climate surrounding the team; 5) team members making better use of their time and resources during meetings; " and 6) team members being able to identify and correct team weaknesses.

Literature likewise presents that a teambuilding intervention is beneficial in addressing team issues concerning communication and interpersonal relationships. A survey among collegiate athletes by Espina (2014) revealed that the lack of trust and communication that seems to affect the team's relationship is of great concern to them while others expressed the need for improved team chemistry and the need to develop the skill to communicate with their teammates especially with the senior members of the team and with their coaches. Essential to sports teams is having the ability to communicate on and off court. Not all sport teams can do this with ease. Ideally, athletes should show genuine support and care for each one both on and off the athletic field. They should be able to trust one another in pressure situations within a game. However, athletic teams are very much like families. Some degree of tension, frustration and conflict is inevitable. Often, interpersonal conflict within sport teams is often the result of misunderstanding or miscommunication of feelings, misperceiving a teammate's motives, intentions or behavior, failing to listen and failure to speak up. In the literature, it has been highlighted that effective communication is important for optimizing team cohesion, team dynamics, and inter-group relationships within the team (Williams, 2010). In addition, teambuilding activities focusing on the use of effective communication in the team can develop good interpersonal relationship and trust which then facilitates the team's working towards achieving its goals (Athanasios as cited in Cotterill, 2013). Strategies for enhancing self and collective efficacy such as personal disclosure, mutual sharing and giving feedback will be very useful in addressing such types of team issues.

B. Teambuilding Approaches

Teambuilding intervention in a sport setting may be delivered using either an indirect or a direct approach. An indirect approach is one in which the consultant (i.e. sports psychologist, sports counselor) works with the coach in the development of relevant teambuilding strategies and then the coach delivers the intervention to his or her team (Beauchamp & Eys, 2007). In their research in sport settings, Carron and Spink in 1993 successfully utilized a four-stage model of teambuilding using the indirect approach. The "first three stages – introductory, conceptual, and practical stage are typically carried out in a workshop setting with the team's coaches. The fourth or final stage- the intervention stage- involves the delivery of the intervention by the coach to the members of the team". (p.126). When it comes to using the direct approach, a few researchers also presented their own ways of implementing teambuilding in a sport setting. In a study made by Voight and Callaghan (2001), the researchers utilized a "hands on" or the so-called direct service approach to teambuilding where the consultant (i.e. sport psychologist, counselor) works directly with the team members in all stages of teambuilding. Yukelson (1997) developed a four-stage protocol for implementing the direct approach in sport. The first stage involves assessment

of the situation followed by education where the consultant explains the rationale underlying the teambuilding program while the third stage, brainstorming, is where team members identify areas where an intervention is needed. From there, an action plan is formulated in the fourth stage and teambuilding activities are conducted as planned. One particular model that also outlines a direct approach to teambuilding is the action research model by Woodcock and Francis in 1994 (as cited in Cotterill, 2013). In this model, there are nine specific steps namely: discussion between the consultant and the coaching staff; education; data collection; data analysis; presentation of data to the coaching staff; presentation of data to team members; designing and implementing a step-by-step intervention; final action plan; and ongoing monitoring and support. In this approach, the consultant needs to collect data in a short period of time in order to understand the team, its structure, its aims, and its members. Only once all this information has been collected, analyzed, and interpreted correctly can the consultant look to implement interventions and develop an action plan. Another specific type of direct approach to teambuilding has been called the personal-disclosure mutual-sharing approach (Cotterill, 2013). In this approach, the sport psychologist facilitates a discussion whereby team members disclose personal stories and information that were unknown to their teammates. The self-disclosure targets to promote better communication among members and a higher degree of trust and confidence in the self and teammates. Bloom and Stevens (2002) on the other hand used both an indirect and direct approach where the consultant and coaches work together in designing strategies to improve team cohesion while most of the methods are implemented by the coaches. Whether indirect or direct in approach, implementing effective teambuilding interventions can only occur if there is a collaborative relationship among consultants, athletes, and coaches. This was best described by Hacker (as cited in Williams, 2010) "I do not work in a vacuum, but rather I complement the philosophical and programmatic goals of the coaches" (p.363), "At the heart of our program is the athlete...players are first encouraged to effectively and systematically monitor himself or herself" (p.364). This argument is further supported by Bloom and Stevens (2002) noting that the support and trust of the coaches allowed the teambuilding intervention to be most effective.

C. Self-Efficacy of Athletes

Bandura (1977) first proposed the concept of self-efficacy to represent an individual's belief in his or her ability to successfully perform the necessary requirements of a given situation (Beauchamp & Eys, 2007). The theory of self-efficacy was developed within the social cognitive framework theory where individuals are viewed as proactive agents in the regulation of their cognition, motivation, actions, and emotions rather than as passive reactors to their environment (Cox, 2007). It further promotes that in order for self-efficacy to develop, the individual must believe in control and the power to produce specific results. One has to perform intentionally and should have the will to start a course of action. Self-efficacy beliefs are hypothesized to influence the tasks an individual chooses to participate in, the amount of effort an individual will exert in a task and the degree to which an individual will persist in the face of failure. Similarly, Cotterill (2013) opines that self-efficacy influences behaviors including behavioral choice, performance, efforts despite setbacks or recent failures, strategy choice, goal choice, and goal commitment. Furthermore, the Theory of Self-efficacy is the most commonly and extensively used theory investigating self-confidence in sport settings. Self-efficacy is commonly viewed as a situation-specific variation of self-confidence and has repeatedly been found to be significantly related to sporting performance across several sport tasks (Cox, 2007). Most of the research on self-efficacy in sport has dwelt on its significant relation and positive effect on performance. It was found to be a significant predictor of athletic performance; athletes with high level of self-efficacy were found to perform better than those athletes who demonstrated lower levels of self-efficacy prior to competition (Beauchamp & Eys, 2007). One study about male ski jumpers who were classified to have high self-efficacy were able to finish a competitive season in their sport (Sklett et al., 2018 as cited in Hepler et al., 2021). Indeed, high self-efficacy leads to improved performance, which then enhances efficacy beliefs (Hepler et al., 2021). Likewise, self-efficacy contributes to increased motivation, unintimidated drive to attain more challenging targets, increased effort, which in effect should produce better performance (Feltz et al., 2008). In a study by Firmante (2011), she emphasized the importance of enhancing self-efficacy among student-athletes in accomplishing certain tasks involving their sport. She further noted that increasing self-efficacy builds positive perceptions of self, which builds an overall self-confidence and positive outlook on what is expected of them in performing their sports. Self-efficacy beliefs also influence the athlete's emotions or affect, cognition or thought patterns, and their behaviors. In a qualitative study, professional golfers reported that self-efficacy influenced their thought patterns and emotional responses to challenging, stressful, and frustrating game scenarios (Valiante & Morris, 2013). Similarly, self-efficacy has been shown to strengthen the coping mechanism and tolerance of athletes who need to cope with various stressors and performance feedback while competing (Nicholls et al., 2010; Halper & Vancouver, 2016 as cited in Hepler et al., 2021).

D. Collective Efficacy of the Team

Athletes do not perform alone; they normally find themselves as members of a team and when they are part of a team, they will also have beliefs about their team's ability to successfully complete a given task. Their behavior, perceptions and own efficacy beliefs can also affect the beliefs of the rest of the team members. Recognizing that the nature of teams involves members collectively striving to reach common performance objectives and aspirations, Bandura (1986) extended the notion of self-efficacy to include collective efficacy. Collective efficacy, which is defined as "a group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments" (Bandura, 1997), presents a better understanding of a team's capacity to perform as compared to self-efficacy that focuses on each member's belief about their capability to perform certain tasks. It signifies confidence that is specific to a certain situation or task, it represents a shared belief among team members, and it encompasses the group's integrative capabilities (Chow & Feltz as cited in Beauchamp & Eys, 2007, p. 222). The consequences of collective efficacy are similar to those of self-efficacy but extend to the group level. It will also influence the amount of effort members will exert, the degree to which team members will remain task-oriented when the team is not performing well and the resiliency of members following difficult defeats. Collective efficacy beliefs influence what athletes prefer to do as a team, how much effort they put in, the goals they set, and their persistence when individual and team efforts seem to fail (Bandura, 1997). Collective beliefs can sustain the team's composure and drive when faced with a stressful situation. Other sports related constructs which are influenced by collective efficacy include anxiety, satisfaction, team cohesion, teamwork, attributions, and motivation (Myers & Feltz, 2007). Literature supports the notion that increased perceptions of collective efficacy facilitates an improvement in the team's performance and group processes. That is, as collective efficacy beliefs are strengthened, teams coordinate, communicate, and interact more effectively to attain team goals (Cox, 2007). Bandura (1997) recommends that athletes need high efficacy beliefs in their own ability as well as the team's ability to perform at the highest level. Sport psychology book authors opined that there is a reciprocal relationship between collective efficacy and performance (Myers & Feltz, 2007). Same findings were generated in a comprehensive meta-analysis of 96 studies done by Stajkovic et al. (2009 as cited in Hepler et al., 2021). It confirmed that collective efficacy consistently predicted performance especially when the interdependence among team members is stronger. In addition, teams that are more cohesive tend to have higher collective efficacy. One study found that past performance of the team not just during games but more salient during practice is the best predictor of collective efficacy (Chase et al., 2003). This research also suggested that an unusual poor performance may lead teams to form collective efficacy beliefs in order to bounce back.

E. Strategies To Enhance Self And Collective Efficacy

According to Cotterill (2013), many studies supported Bandura's theory that individual perceptions of self-efficacy can be influenced by its four sources: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience (modeling), verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. From the study of Firmante (2011), three sources – emotional arousal, verbal persuasion, and modeling have been identified to have significant relationship in enhancing self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) himself believes that the most salient factor contributing to one's beliefs about team functioning is mastery experiences or past performance accomplishments. A discussion of past performance accomplishments or achievements of the team members themselves may influence the efficacy beliefs of the team. Teams that have performed well in previous competitions tend to hold strong confidence regarding their ability to win especially when the performance resulted from the combined efforts of the team members (Cotterill, 2013). This may imply that if a team outperforms an opponent during their first encounter, they will have a high level of confidence that they can do the same in future competitions while teams that suffer performance setbacks will lack confidence in their abilities to succeed in subsequent competitions. Furthermore, modeling, which Bandura (1997) referred to as vicarious experiences (e.g., observing, demonstration) can also affect perceptions of efficacy. They provide opportunities for social comparison. Conveying task relevant information, and demonstrating effective learning and coping strategies (Bandura, 1997). Watching a team (e.g. film clips, games, training sessions) that is similar in ability or attributes performing successfully raises the observant team's level of confidence to succeed in comparable tasks. It also provides evidence that a victory or a skill may be challenging but it is achievable. Likewise, vicarious experiences can be an especially influential source of efficacy information on skills where the athlete lacks significant experience (Tasa et al. as cited in Cotterill, 2013).

The provision of evaluative feedback or verbal persuasion is another way in which efficacy beliefs can be enhanced. Verbal persuasion usually comes in the form of encouragement from the coach, parents, peer or from the self (i.e. self-talk). Feedback that conveys information about the team's capabilities, collective and individual qualities espouse feelings of

unity and confidence among members (Vargas-Tonsing et al., 2003). Bandura (1997) found that this type of encouragement which uses persuasive verbal statements suggest that the athlete is competent and can succeed. He further emphasized that verbal persuasion is most effective when given by a knowledgeable, credible, trustworthy source and when it is used in conjunction with other sources of ability information such as corrective performance feedback (Bandura, 1997). Surrounding oneself with people who can provide praise, encouragement, and skill related feedback can help boost self-efficacy while encouragement and giving tactical information among players during competition also enhances the collective efficacy of a team (Myers & Feltz, 2007). One researcher suggested that during teambuilding sessions, facilitators should employ activities that promote personal disclosure through mutual sharing (Yukelson, 1997). It was further cited how he employs this in his work with athletes such as asking them to discuss individual and team assets, strengths, or a life event that significantly influenced them as a person or as a team (p.157). Recent qualitative research by Dunn & Holt (2004) also noted the benefits of using personal disclosure and mutual sharing in teambuilding activities before a major competition. These team disclosures promote acceptance of diversity and the need for team cohesion and allow depth to understanding the team members. Cotterill (2013) likewise believes that the personal-disclosure and mutual-sharing approach whereby team members disclose personal stories and information that were unknown to their teammates may improve trust and respect within the team. It has been stated that the more open team members can be to one another, the better their chances of getting along and achieving both individual and team goals. Indeed, much of what goes on in athletics revolves around communication. Unfortunately, not all teams can do this with ease. Many interpersonal problems of sport teams stem from the inability to express or disclose oneself to group members. Orlick (2008), in his work with collegiate athletes, experienced that many interpersonal problems in sport teams result from not being able to talk openly and honestly with one another about the efficiency of group functioning and the quality of interpersonal relationships. This entails a process in which there is engaged mutual sharing which implies reciprocal participation (i.e. two parties sharing thoughts, feelings, ideas or information about themselves or ideas). In essence, “mutual sharing leads to mutual understanding” (p.283). Orlick (2008) expounds by saying that harmony grows when you look for the good qualities in teammates and they look for yours, when you take the time to listen to others and they listen to you, when you respect their feelings and contributions and they respect yours, when you accept their differences and they accept yours, when you choose to help them and help you. Harmony and improved team performance is rooted in mutual trust and respect (p. 282).

Literature also suggests that perceiving what athletes feel usually forms efficacy perceptions. Emotional states such as moods and emotional arousal can greatly influence one's efficacy beliefs. A positive emotional state tends to enhance efficacy beliefs while a negative emotional state often decreases self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Intense emotional states can impact efficacy as well. Bandura (1997) further asserts that emotional and physiological arousals are factors that can influence readiness for learning. It is important to be emotionally ready and optimally aroused in order to be attentive. Proper attention and emotional state are needed to master a skill and develop a feeling of efficacy (Cox, 2007). Video footages of teammates, coaches and significant others, footages of successful performances, motivational or persuasive speeches, hard training sessions and other team events could be useful tools to provoke affective reactions that can enhance feelings of self or group's efficacy (Williams, 2010). Efficacy information can also come from imaginal experiences, referred to by Bandura as cognitive self-modeling or cognitive enactment. This source involves visualizing oneself (or another person) performing a task. This simulated experience allows athletes to rehearse an endless array of skills, game situations, and desired outcomes. Visualizing successful performance and effective mastery strategies increase efficacy beliefs, whereas images of failure usually result in a decreased sense of self-efficacy (Feltz et al., 2008).

Another strategy highlighted in the literature for enhancing efficacy is team goal setting. This strategy can be used to improve team confidence especially when goals are met successfully during the entire playing season (Beauchamp & Eys, 2007, p. 241). A few other concepts have been suggested to impact upon collective efficacy in the team. In particular, leadership coming from the coaches and the senior members of the team might be more likely to enhance collective efficacy by modeling confidence and success. Leaders can directly influence the group's efficacy by modeling confidence in their problem-solving and decision-making capabilities as well as their ability to motivate and influence their team members. They need to be made aware of their potential and their responsibilities as role models in the team (Chen & Bliese as cited in Cotterill, 2013). Hepler et al. (2021) forwarded a few self-efficacy enhancing techniques which include providing athletes with opportunities to experience improvement, success and mastery, feedback-giving, encouraging positive self-talk, and practicing imagery or visualization. He further suggested five strategies to enhance collective efficacy in teams namely providing successful performance experiences, encouraging the team, using appropriate comparisons with other teams, building team cohesion, and establishing a positive productive culture and team environment.

III. CONCLUSION

A. Proposed Process and Content of the Teambuilding Intervention

1. Implementation Process

The four-stage protocol which was introduced by Yukelson (1997) will be utilized as the guide in implementing the teambuilding intervention that is being proposed. He used a direct approach to teambuilding in sports whereby the consultant is directly involved in looking into team issues and processes and to directly plan and implement the interventions for teambuilding. In this approach, the participants are also actively involved in the process.

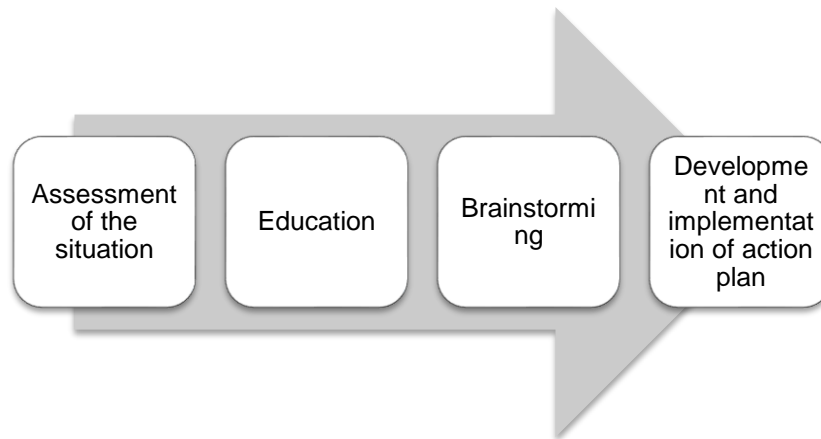


Figure 1. Four-stage protocol of a direct teambuilding approach

The first stage involves assessment of the situation where the consultant/facilitator becomes familiar with the dynamics and atmosphere within the team, the quality of interpersonal relationships among team members, and their level of confidence individually and as a team. Consultation meetings specifically with the unit/s (coaching staff, athletes, athletic office) who will be needing teambuilding sessions are done in this stage to learn about the team's needs, culture, dynamics and receptiveness to the intervention. This will allow the facilitator to clarify the rationale of the activity and their expected outcome of the teambuilding sessions. Likewise, it may be the best time to know and discuss with the coaches the team's needs and concerns based on their experiences, observations, and knowledge of their players. At this stage, it is also advisable to discuss important details such as the schedule, venue, logistical requirements, number, and profile of the participants. Equally important is knowing the teambuilding needs as perceived by the athletes themselves who will be the main participants in this intervention. This may be done through the use of a needs assessment tool such as the Athlete's Self-efficacy Scale (Kocak, 2020) or a self-made survey and through a focus group discussion (FGD) among the team members. To further validate the information at hand, observing team practices and having casual talks with team members may form part of this stage as well. This may give way for the facilitator/consultant to establish rapport with the team members and become familiar with the team's culture, dynamics and social climate.

In the second stage called education, the consultant/facilitator explains the rationale underlying the teambuilding intervention. The stage also includes presenting and discussing with the coaching staff and the athletes the results of the needs survey or needs assessment that was conducted. The team can also be oriented on the possible scope of intervention plan of the facilitator and the timeline or duration of the intervention based on the perceived needs of the team members. It would be helpful also to clarify at this stage the expectations of the team on the manner of delivery of the sessions, the limitations of the team members, what they need from the facilitator and what other needs should be considered so that full participation and commitment can be expected from the team. Facilitator's expectations may also be laid out to the participants. They will also be asked to accomplish an Informed Consent Form to ensure that they agree to participate in the intervention that will be delivered and that confidentiality of the sessions whether individual or group shall be strictly observed.

Stage three would include the planning and selection of teambuilding activities based on what the team needs while also considering their input as to the nature of activities that they like in order to maximize their cooperation and participation. Activities except for energizers may lean towards more on "paper and pencil" type accompanied by individual sharing and

group discussions. The facilitator may consider limiting games that would entail a lot of physical movements during sessions to avoid the risks of the participants getting some injury prior to their playing season. It may be possible that the participants may also opt for personal sharing and discussions among themselves to get to know one another better because they had been into a lot of physical activities during their trainings, they may see it better to be less mobile and be more reflective this time.

The fourth stage is on developing and implementing the action plan and the modules after careful consideration of the needs of all members of the team. The consultant/facilitator decides the scope of the teambuilding intervention, how many modules should be formulated, how many sessions will they be delivered, how long will the intervention be and how will the undertaking be evaluated. The information may again be disseminated to the team members for clarity of plans and expectations. Other than module development, logistical and materials preparation are also done in this stage. More importantly, preparing an evaluation tool for dissemination to the team is very essential to know if the objectives of the intervention are met or not met, insights and learnings were formed, feedbacks are received and documented, and that there will be basis for the enhancement of the intervention. The evaluation instrument may include a mix of quantitative and qualitative items in order to get a better understanding of what the activity has achieved, what contributed to the attainment of the goals and objectives and what insights are valuable to the improvement of the intervention. Monitoring and follow-up such as individual consultations with athletes and coaches, counseling sessions as needed, observing games and practices can be made part of the post-intervention to ensure that there's a follow-through of what was gained by the participants from the teambuilding sessions conducted.

The intervention that is being proposed will comprise of modules with structured learning exercises that may be conducted in five to six sessions with each session having a 2 to 3 hours delivery time in a venue that is conducive for discussion, sharing and listening. Sessions will utilize the commonly employed strategies to enhance self and collective efficacy among members of a sport team as suggested by literature. With teambuilding as the primary target, these strategies are meant to deepen the athletes' self and team awareness, influence their efficacy beliefs, provoke positive affective reactions, and increase the trust and confidence of team members by giving and receiving positive feedback, encouragement, affirmation and recognition of roles and capabilities. Each session will also include imagery or visualization exercises where the athletes can see themselves mastering skills, achieving goals, overcoming challenges, and coping effectively in the team.

2. Proposed Content

2.1 Self-Efficacy Module

The module which is composed of structured learning exercises that can be delivered in 2-3 sessions will target to clarify the self-efficacy beliefs of the athletes through self-assessment exercises while allowing the team members to also provide significant feedback that may increase the self-awareness of each one. The activities also hope to deepen the athletes' understanding of how their self-perception of efficacy affects their confidence level, their performance in training and games and the way they see themselves in the context of a team. Likewise, the exercises will work on increasing the athletes' self-confidence by promoting awareness of their personal qualities, appreciation of their past achievements, and affirmation of their undiscovered leadership traits, unacknowledged strengths, and unrecognized formal and informal roles in the team. Persuasive techniques will be used in attempting to influence an athlete's self-efficacy beliefs into positive perceptions. These techniques include verbal persuasion, giving positive feedback, clarifying expectations by others, self-talk, and positive imagery. Likewise, the module will encourage self-disclosure, clarifying perceptions, and giving affirmation towards one another. As a result, it can be expected that team members will be more rational, respectful of differences, trusting, open, and honest in their interaction with one another. With the hope of promoting insights and confidence that each one has the skill and the capability to step up and that everyone can lead or take initiatives in making their team function effectively, specific activities are designed to highlight the strengths, leadership traits, contributions, and roles of the participants for an improved efficacy perception.

2.2. Collective Efficacy Module

Structured learning exercises in this module may be delivered in 2-3 sessions. The specific targets that will be worked on to enhance the group's collective efficacy include identifying each one's team participation style and how this style affects and can best contribute to the team; clarifying acceptable team behavior or norms that support healthy team interaction; and defining the team's culture that everyone can embrace and be accountable for. An activity on understanding verbal and non-

verbal social clues will also be given to deepen their familiarity with one another and consequently promote smooth interaction and an improved understanding of the team members' feelings and thought patterns. Articulating the expectations of each one towards one another in terms of what the team needs from the athlete will be given focus as well while emphasizing and reiterating the formal and informal roles of each one which were identified in the self-efficacy module. In addition, each one's commitment on what they can offer or sacrifice for the team will also be elicited from the team members. A session will be also allotted for goals setting specifically on the targets that the team wants to accomplish and achieve during the tournament season and what they want to develop among themselves to contribute to the success of the team. Performance goals that are specific to their team's growth and development will also be given emphasis. A discussion on how the team should be able to manage themselves when goals are temporarily not met will also be included. The efficacy techniques or strategies that will guide the delivery of the exercises include verbal persuasion or feedback-giving, personal disclosure, mutual sharing, emotional arousal, visualization or imagery, self-talk, and goal setting. Overall, the module hopes to promote team or social cohesion and task cohesion, a healthy interpersonal relationship among team members and a positive and caring team environment which can foster self-improvement, skill development, goal achievement, improved performance, and higher collective efficacy.

IV. IMPLICATIONS

1. The quality of coach to athlete and athlete to athlete relationships highly influences the efficacy beliefs of a sport team. Teambuilding as an intervention will ensure that these relationships will promote a healthy social environment, a positive team climate and a highly efficacious team.
2. Coaches play an important role in the enhancement of the self and collective efficacy of athletes. Coaching efficacy, style, and behavior as well as the impact of their feedback on the efficacy beliefs of their players may be explored in future research undertakings.
3. The intervention can prosper into a more collaborative and integrated approach by including the coaching staff as participants in the teambuilding sessions.
4. The teambuilding intervention can be a springboard for the discovery and exploration of other psychological factors other than self and collective efficacy that might have an impact on the confidence and performance of athletes.
5. Skills gained by the athletes through the teambuilding sessions may still be relevant and useful in managing their life outside of their sport. Their personal, social, and academic life may benefit well from their improved self and collective efficacy.
6. By continuously using evidence-based self and collective efficacy enhancing techniques or strategies and making them part of the team's culture, athletes will eventually perform with a higher level of confidence, persistence, and effort.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- [2] Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. Freeman.
- [3] Bloom, G.A. & Stevens, D. E. (2002). Case Study: A team-building mental skills training program with an intercollegiate equestrian team. *Athletic Insight, The Online Journal of Sport Psychology*, 4(1).
- [4] Beauchamp, M.R. & Eys, M.A. (2007). *Group dynamics in exercise and sport psychology: contemporary themes*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- [5] Carron, A. V., & Spink, K. S. (1993). Team building in an exercise setting. *The Sport Psychologist*, 7(1), 8–18.
- [6] Copeland, B., Bonnell, R., Reider, L. & Burton, D. (2009). Spawning sliding success: Evaluating a stress management and cohesion development program for young lugers. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 32(4), 438.
- [7] Cotterill, S. (2013). *Team psychology in sports: theory and practice*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- [8] Cox, R. H. (2007). *Sport psychology: concepts and applications*. (6th Ed). McGraw Hill International.

- [9] Dunn, J. G. H., & Holt, N. L. (2004). A qualitative investigation of a personal disclosure mutual-sharing teambuilding activity. *The Sport Psychologist*, 18, 363-380.
- [10] Espina, D. (2014). *A Profile of the Needs, Concerns and Needed Support of the DLSU Student-Athletes*. Unpublished document. De La Salle University.
- [11] Feltz, D. L., Moritz, S., Sullivan, P. (2008). Self-Efficacy in Sport: Research and Strategies for Working with Athletes, Teams and Coaches. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching* 3(2): 293-295.
- [12] Firmante, M.C.M. (2011). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis of self-efficacy among student-athletes. *Educational Measurement and Evaluation Review*, 2, 137-147.
- [13] Hepler, T. J., Hill, C. R., Chase, M. A., & Feltz, D. L. (2021). Self, relational, and collective efficacy in athletes. In Z. Zenko & L. Jones (Eds.), *Essentials of exercise and sport psychology: An open access textbook* (pp. 643–663). Society for Transparency, Openness, and Replication in Kinesiology. <https://doi.org/10.51224/B1027>
- [14] Kocak CV (2020). Athlete self-efficacy scale: Development and psychometric properties. *Balt J Health Phys Act*; 12(4):41-54. doi: 10.29359/BJHPA.2020.Suppl.1.05
- [15] Loughead, T. M., & Bloom, G. A. (2011). Current developments in north american sport and exercise psychology: teambuilding in sport. *Revista de iberoamericana de psicología del ejercicio y el deporte*, 6(2), 237-249. ISSN: 1886-8576
- [16] Myers, N. D., & Feltz, D. L. (2007). From self-efficacy to collective efficacy in sport: Transitional methodological issues. In G. Tenenbaum & R. C. Eklund (Eds.), *Handbook of sport psychology* (3rd ed., p. 799–819). John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- [17] Orlick, T. (2008). *In pursuit of excellence* (4th ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- [18] Paradis, K. F & Martin, L. J. (2012) Teambuilding in Sport: Linking Theory and Research to Practical Application. *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 3(3), 159-170, DOI:10.1080/21520704.2011.653047
- [19] Rovio, E., Barrow, M.A., Weigand, A.D., Eskola, J., & Lintunen, T. (2010). Teambuilding in sport: A narrative review of the program effectiveness, current methods, and theoretical underpinnings. *Athletic Insight Journal*, 2(2), 1-19.
- [20] Vargas-Tonsing, T.M., Warners, A.L., & Feltz, D.L. (2003). The predictability of coaching efficacy on team efficacy and player efficacy in volleyball. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 24, 396-407.
- [21] Voight, M & Callaghan, J. (2001). A teambuilding intervention program: Application and evaluation with two university soccer teams. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 24(4), 420.
- [22] Williams, J. M. (2010). *Applied Sport Psychology: Personal Growth to Peak Performance*. 6th ed. McGraw Hill International.
- [23] Yukelson, D. (1997). Principles of effective teambuilding interventions in sport: A direct service approach at Penn State University. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 9, 73-96. doi.org/10.1080/10413209708415385