

# Team Cohesion and Student Athlete Well-Being in A Normal University in Jiangxi Province

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**Abstract:** This study aims to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between team cohesion and WELL-BEING among college athletes. This study adopts a quantitative research design, with a sample of 627 college athletes from a regular university in Jiangxi Province, China. A survey was conducted on the basic information of student respondents in terms of gender, age, grade, and years of experience, as well as their self-evaluation of athlete well-being, including physical health, mental health, emotions, balance, socialization, achievement, recovery and rest, and support systems. The relationship between team cohesion and self-evaluation of well-being was studied by analyzing the differences in personal characteristics and self-evaluation of well-being. This study also evaluated the positive effects of team cohesion, coach behavior, and athlete well-being on physical, psychological, emotional, and social health, and recommended promoting open and transparent communication within the team, strengthening leadership, establishing conflict resolution mechanisms, cultivating common values and goals, focusing on mental health, balancing lifestyles, and promoting internal respect and team spirit through team building and support networks to increase athlete well-being and team cohesion.

**Keywords:** College Athletes; Team Cohesion; Well-being; Quantitative Research; Coach Behavior; Athlete Well-being.

## 1. Introduction

The focal point of this study delves into the dynamic relationship between team cohesion and the overall well-being of student-athletes. In the realm of sports education, team cohesion represents a critical aspect of an athlete's journey, shaping their performance, emotional state, and overall experience within a team setting.

The importance of team cohesion is self-evident. Team cohesiveness is a crucial aspect in the formation of effective teams because it symbolizes the strength and quality of interpersonal interactions among team members. It includes the interpersonal relationships that enable members' active engagement and motivation to work together to attain their goals. (Weinberg & Gould, 2019) [1]. Therefore, the influencing factors of team cohesion require in-depth research.

Cohesion in sports, according to the model created by Shanthi Jacob and Carron (2018), is a complex and multifaceted term [2]. It has dynamic, instrumental, and emotional components. Team cohesiveness is connected with, or may be predicted by, a variety of environmental, individual, leadership, and team-related variables.

Understanding athlete happiness is critical for various reasons. To begin, examining satisfaction is critical because it matches organizational goals with the contentment and well-being of individuals inside the business. These elements are interrelated and must cohabit peacefully. Coaches and supervisors should prioritize athlete pleasure and enjoyment (Kroupisetal, 2019) [3]. Therefore, the main question of this study is, what is the relationship and impact between the variables of athlete happiness and team cohesion.

Therefore, this study will adopt a quantitative research method to deeply explore the relationship between gender, age, grade, and years of experience, as well as their self-evaluation of altitude well being, including physical health, mental health, emotions, balance, socialization, achievement, recovery and rest, and support systems in team cohesion and athlete well being.

## 2. Research Design

This study will employ a quantitative research design aimed at exploring the relationship between team cohesion and student athlete well-being. The focus of this study is primarily on the interplay between team cohesion and the well-being of student athletes. This encompasses the assessment of student athlete respondents' perception of their team cohesion, which centers around factors such as task cohesion, social cohesion, team communication, trust and confidence, leadership and role clarity, conflict resolution, shared values and team identity, as well as perceived team success. Additionally, this study investigates the self-assessment of student athlete respondents regarding their well-being as athletes, encompassing aspects like physical health, mental health, emotional well-being, balance, social well-being, goal achievement, recovery and rest, and support system.

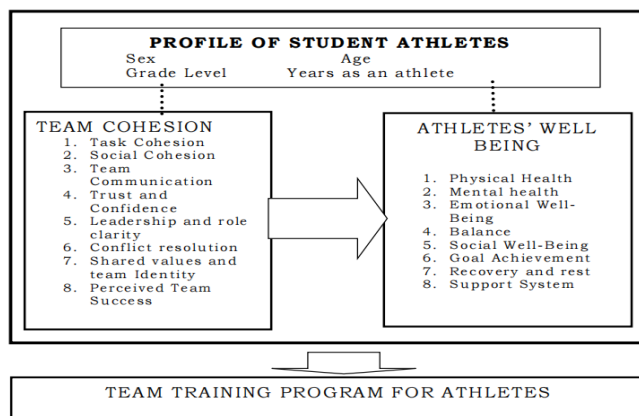


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

The study is descriptive-comparative-correlational research which provided a detailed analysis on the relationship between team cohesion and student athlete well-being.

## 2.1. Target of an investigation

This research study employed structured surveys and quantitative analysis to gather and compare data. The study was done during the 2nd semester of the school year 2023-2024 among the 627 athletes of Shangrao Normal University in Jiangxi Province, China.

**Table 1.** Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Profile

	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	120	19.1%
Female	507	80.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Age</b>		
18-19 years old	440	70.2%
20-21 years old	165	26.3%
22-23 years old	16	2.6%
More than 23 years old	6	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Year Level</b>		
Year 1	510	81.3%
Year 2	105	16.7%
Year 3	8	1.3%
Year 4	4	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Years of Athletic Experience</b>		
1-3 years	568	90.6%
4-6 years	40	6.4%
7-9 years	8	1.3%
10-12 years	11	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 2.2. Research Instrument

For the purpose of this study, the researcher administered the questionnaire face-to-face to guarantee the precision and completeness of responses. The questionnaire comprised three sections: the first capturing demographic details of student athlete respondents, such as gender, age, and grade; the second focusing on assessing their perception of team cohesion and camaraderie; and the third exploring their self-assessment of well-being as athletes, encompassing various aspects of their athletic experience.

To ensure the questionnaire's reliability and validity, rigorous validation procedures were implemented. Content validation was conducted by experts in the research field, and their suggestions were incorporated into the final instrument. Face validation was also performed with at least five experts to ensure clarity and comprehension of the questionnaire items. A four-point scale was utilized, especially for assessing the professional attributes of school administrators, to allow for a nuanced and comprehensive evaluation.

A pilot test was conducted to measure the questionnaire's reliability, utilizing Cronbach's Alpha through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The researcher welcomed expert feedback and made revisions to enhance the instrument's validity. The resulting overall reliability of the questionnaire, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.984 and 0.994, demonstrates a high degree of internal consistency and reliability across all items, underscoring the statistical reliability of the research instrument.

## 3. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 2 presents the relationship between the assessment of the student athlete respondents of their team cohesion in terms of task cohesion, social cohesion, team communication, trust and confidence, leadership and role clarity, conflict resolution, shared values and team identity, and perceived team success and their self-assessment of their well-being as an athlete in terms of physical health, mental health, emotional well-being, balance, social-well-being, goal achievement, recovery and rest, and support system.

As shown in Table 2, the assessment of team cohesion components and their relationship with athlete well-being reveals valuable insights into the dynamics between team dynamics and individual athlete welfare.

Task cohesion exhibits the strongest correlation with athlete well-being, with an average r-value of 0.719 and a significance level of 0.000. This robust association suggests that the perception of shared objectives, coordinated task execution, and mutual commitment among team members positively influence various aspects of athlete well-being, including physical health, mental health, emotional well-being, balance, social well-being, goal achievement, recovery and rest, and support system. Task cohesion reflects the alignment and synchronization of efforts toward common goals, fostering a sense of purpose and accomplishment among athletes, which, in turn, enhances their overall well-being.

Social cohesion also demonstrates a significant correlation with athlete well-being, with an average r-value of 0.534 and a significance level of 0.000. This underscores the importance of supportive social networks, camaraderie, and mentorship within the athletic community in promoting holistic well-being among athletes. Effective social cohesion fosters a sense of belonging, social support, and positive relationships, which contribute to athletes' emotional resilience, psychological health, and overall satisfaction with their athletic pursuits.

Effective team communication shows a strong correlation with athlete well-being, with an average r-value of 0.604 and a significance level of 0.000. Open communication channels facilitate information sharing, coordination of efforts, and mutual understanding among team members, leading to improved performance outcomes and enhanced wellbeing. Clear and transparent communication fosters trust, cohesion, and psychological safety within the team, creating an environment conducive to positive social interactions and effective collaboration.

Trust and confidence exhibit a significant correlation with athlete well-being, with an average r-value of 0.704 and a significance level of 0.000. Trust and confidence among team members are fundamental for building cohesive team dynamics, promoting mutual respect, and enhancing psychological safety within the team environment. Athletes who trust their teammates, coaches, and support staff are more likely to experience greater confidence, satisfaction, and psychological well-being in their athletic endeavors.

**Table 2.** Relationship Between the Assessment of the Student Athlete Respondents of their Team Cohesion and their Self-Assessment of Their Well-Being as An Athlete

<b>Team Cohesion</b>	<b>Athlete Well-Being</b>	<b>Computedr</b>	<b>Sig</b>	<b>Decision on Ho</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Task Cohesion	Physical Health	.719	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Mental Health	.589	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Emotional Well-Being	.517	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Balance	.598	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Social-Well-Being	.578	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Achievement	.690	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Recovery and Rest	.155	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Support System	.674	.000	Rejected	Significant
	<b>Average</b>	.719	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>
Social Cohesion	Physical Health	.489	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Mental Health	.371	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Emotional Well-Being	.340	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Balance	.411	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Social-Well-Being	.586	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Achievement	.540	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Recovery and Rest	.111	.005	Rejected	Significant
	Support System	.519	.000	Rejected	Significant
	<b>Average</b>	.534	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>
Team Communication	Physical Health	.599	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Mental Health	.533	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Emotional Well-Being	.438	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Balance	.474	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Social-Well-Being	.438	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Achievement	.601	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Recovery and Rest	.117	.003	Rejected	Significant
	Support System	.596	.000	Rejected	Significant
	<b>Average</b>	.604	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>
Trust and Confidence	Physical Health	.666	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Mental Health	.564	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Emotional Well-Being	.505	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Balance	.585	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Social-Well-Being	.561	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Achievement	.669	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Recovery and Rest	.228	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Support System	.657	.000	Rejected	Significant
	<b>Average</b>	.704	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>
Leadership and Role Clarity	Physical Health	.727	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Mental Health	.643	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Emotional Well-Being	.568	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Balance	.670	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Social-Well-Being	.631	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Achievement	.744	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Recovery and Rest	.242	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Support System	.736	.000	Rejected	Significant
	<b>Average</b>	.788	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>
Conflict Resolution	Physical Health	.734	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Mental Health	.665	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Emotional Well-Being	.605	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Balance	.682	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Social-Well-Being	.620	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Achievement	.755	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Recovery and Rest	.260	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Support System	.749	.000	Rejected	Significant
	<b>Average</b>	.805	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>
Shared Values and Team Identity	Physical Health	.762	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Mental Health	.675	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Emotional Well-Being	.575	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Balance	.681	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Social-Well-Being	.673	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Achievement	.804	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Recovery and Rest	.234	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Support System	.746	.000	Rejected	Significant
	<b>Average</b>	.818	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>
Perceived Team Success	Physical Health	.713	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Mental Health	.611	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Emotional Well-Being	.516	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Balance	.600	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Social-Well-Being	.628	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Goal Achievement	.725	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Recovery and Rest	.183	.000	Rejected	Significant
	Support System	.679	.000	Rejected	Significant
	<b>Average</b>	.740	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>
<b>Over-all Team Cohesion</b>	<b>Over-all Athlete Well-Being</b>	.840	.000	<b>Rejected</b>	<b>Significant</b>

Conflict resolution exhibits a significant correlation with athlete well-being, with an average  $r$ -value of 0.805 and a significance level of 0.000. Effective conflict resolution strategies promote constructive dialogue, mutual understanding, and resolution of conflicts or disagreements within the team. Athletes who perceive their team as proficient in resolving conflicts experience lower levels of stress, greater emotional resilience, and improved overall well-being.

Shared values and team identity demonstrate a strong correlation with athlete well-being, with an average  $r$ -value of 0.818 and a significance level of 0.000. Shared values and a strong team identity create a sense of belonging, purpose, and collective identity among team members, fostering cohesion, collaboration, and commitment to common goals. Athletes who identify with their team's values and embrace its identity are more likely to experience greater psychological well-being, satisfaction, and fulfillment in their athletic pursuits.

Perceived team success exhibits a significant correlation with athlete well-being, with an average  $r$ -value of 0.740 and a significance level of 0.000. Perceptions of team success influence athletes' confidence, motivation, and satisfaction with their athletic experiences.

Athletes who perceive their team as successful are more likely to experience greater self-esteem, pride, and overall well-being, reinforcing the importance of positive team achievements in promoting athlete welfare.

Overall, the computed correlation coefficient between overall team cohesion and overall athlete well-being is 0.840, with a significance level of 0.00, indicating a strong and significant relationship between these constructs. This suggests that a cohesive team environment characterized by shared goals, effective communication, trust, leadership, and support systems significantly contributes to athletes' overall well-being. These findings underscore the importance of promoting team cohesion as a key factor in enhancing athlete well-being and overall performance in sports.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the data analysis and results of this study, This suggests that Set up conflict resolution procedures. Encourage constructive collaboration, focusing on win-win solutions while maintaining team harmony. Foster shared purpose by emphasizing core values and goals. Emphasize balanced lifestyles with rest, recovery, and leisure. It promotes the happiness of athletes by influencing their environmental atmosphere, physical, psychological, emotional, and social health support systems.

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