

Partition of a Team

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Introduction

Based on an ethnographic research study of the NWC varsity baseball team, this study highlights the physical and relational distance between the sub-groups of the team.

Method

- This research was completed by observing and interacting with the team at practices and one scrimmage game.
- Notes were taken by hand during the observation as well as afterward typing up those notes while filling in the blanks with more information.
- The field notes were coded over time and put into reoccurring themes.
- These themes were used to develop an inductive theory of teamwork.

Results

- The baseball team has two sub-groups, the field players and the pitchers. The necessity of separation within the team is based on the individual needs of the pitchers within their training and practice.
- Based on Simmel's concept of Multiple Group-Affiliations. There can be multiple loyalties to sub-groups within a main group.
- Based on Durkheim's concept of mechanical solidarity, the pitchers are connected to each other because of the similarity within the members of the group. Although, the team as a whole is an example of organic solidarity.
- The physical distance between the two groups of the team is apparent: "the field players started to set up for a scrimmage and some continued to warm up while the pitchers pick up all of their equipment from one part of the field that they had taken up and went, almost kitty corner, across the field to a corner to make it their own." [Field notes 3-4]
- The relational distance, is a by-product of the individualistic needs of the pitchers and during the meetings that happen before and in the middle of practices, the pitchers often leave the main group to have an offside huddle.

Conclusion

- Separation of two sub-groups
- The necessity of the separation for expertise and efficiency
- The necessity of individuality alongside a team