

## Identify the Factors of Friendship Between the Players of Basketball Teams

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The present study aimed to identify the factors of friendship between the players of basketball teams and its effect on the performance of players.

**Methods:** The research is based on the purpose of basic research and is based on the collection of exploratory information and using the data theory of the foundation. The data collection tool was a semi-structured interview about friendship between players and a questionnaire. The statistical population of the qualitative section was the coaches, referees, fans and managers of basketball clubs who were selected as snowballs for the interview. The statistical population of the quantitative part of all the players of the Iranian Basketball Premier League in 1399 was 168 people who were distributed among them by the method of the total number of researcher-made questionnaires 130 players completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire was extracted from the qualitative section. To analyze the qualitative data, the foundation data theorizing method was used and in the quantitative analysis, the collected data were analyzed using the structural equation model in AMOS24 software.

**Results:** The results showed that culture, team norms and sociability play a mediating role in the relationship between friendship and individual performance and team performance. Analysis of qualitative interviews led to the identification of components of player friendship in six.

**Conclusion:** causal conditions, pivotal phenomena, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, strategies and consequences. Analyzes based on the structural equation model showed that the development of friendship is social skills, cognitive and emotional empathy, personality traits and good mood among players.

**Keywords:** Team Cohesion, Player Performance, Friendship Culture, Basketball Premier League.

## Introduction

One of the most important factors for success in sports competitions, in addition to having proper physical fitness, technical and technical skills, as well as extraordinary psychological preparation in difficult, accessible and difficult conditions of competitions, coordination among members of a sports team, especially in sports. Group games such as football, volleyball, basketball and handball. To achieve team success in sports, creating a network of friendships between players and members of a team can provide the necessary motivation to compete and implement the technical and technical programs of the coach and ultimately achieve victory and success (Alan ,2019). The concern of all coaches and managers of athletes to win the competitions is the intensity of the relationships and relationships between the players of a team. Therefore, friendship between players is of special importance because it causes team cohesion and in team performance and satisfaction of players and their motivation to fight (Bill et al, 2013). The commercialization of many sports such as football, basketball and volleyball, unhealthy competitions and the development of win-lose thinking can negatively affect friendship and communication between players. Because the most important goal of clubs and sports teams that participate in competitions is to win competitions. In such a situation, the reduction of friendships and the emergence of conflicts between the players and other members of the club is considered as a fundamental and effective obstacle to the realization of this issue. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the components that foster the concept of friendship in sports teams between players and other members of the club and play an important role in team cohesion and winning matches. Studies show that friendship between athletes can have important consequences related to non-

sporting life and family and social life (Clark, 2019). Friendships and gaining support from other teammates during matches increase self-confidence, reduce stress, create creativity and the ability to make decisions in difficult and critical conditions of the match (Hui, 2011), create emotional support during conflicts with opposing players (Sink Liar, 2017) and relative enjoyment and satisfaction of their athletic performance, mental and emotional conflicts in the line of duty (Kuzaski and Bell, 2003) with difficult competition conditions, positive arousal and reduced feelings of burnout and physical exhaustion And psychological (Erickson, Kochanek Vierimaa ,2020 ). Since the consequences of friendship in clubs and sports teams are very important, it is important to study the components that create it in sports teams, especially football teams, which have a very important role in winning. One of the factors of the superiority of a sports club over other rival clubs is having loyal and committed athletes. In very sensitive and critical situations, such as the conditions of the competition, there are other factors that are optional, motivate the athlete and motivate him to fight; It can be boldly said that friendship is one of them. This social phenomenon has been neglected in sports and sports teams because friendships used to be part of a private realm but are now being realized by sports managers. Given the importance of the core value of friendship in sports teams as a starting point for a great transformation, development and expansion of friendship in sports, it is necessary to plan realistically. The problem for which this study was conducted is to find the factors affecting the friendship between athletes, coaches and club managers in order to determine the factors affecting the friendship and classify them according to priority so that according to this information, the sport can be promoted. An important part of success in championship sports and competitions is

communication, which is friendly and can play the most important role in the performance of athletes and interactions between players (Hui, 2011). Friendship-based relationships are a very important and effective social resource that is important for creating welfare and social cohesion and especially providing social support. Strong social support between friends leads to more commitment and loyalty between the parties in the relationship, and in contrast, lack of social support leads to distance, moral anomalies and ultimately break the bond between them. In sports clubs that work professionally and in championships, the compulsion to achieve success and victory in competitions is generally considered as one of the main goals of clubs, and today in sports, due to more attention to the development of friendly relations, Athletes seek to demonstrate their true performance throughout their careers. But it seems that in very sensitive and critical situations (competition conditions) in order to motivate athletes and motivate them to fight and win, several factors are influential, and perhaps it can be boldly said that friendship is one of them. Voluntary friendship distinguishes friendly relations between athletes from other relationships they establish in society. Grith (2007) argues that although friendship is an important aspect of organizations, it has been neglected in many social phenomena, including sports and sports teams, as well as through internal and external research to identify factors. Friendships between basketball team players and the impact of friendships on team space and player performance have not yet been comprehensively explored; Therefore, it is necessary to determine the factors affecting friendship, strategies for implementing friendship at the team level and the possible consequences of developing the quality of friendship. According to the researchers, attracting and retaining people who are

effective in friendship communication, as well as investing in training and developing friendship in athletes, equips the human resource complex in sports federations and teams. Because human resources in a sports team can create value through friendships and respond to external opportunities and threats, a sports team has a competitive advantage that acts as a defensive shield for the team. Given that the performance of the players is the most important output of the clubs. Therefore, how to deepen the friendship between the players who are known as the most important assets of each club has added to the importance and necessity of this study and the authors know their duty to this very important and effective situation that leads to cohesion and unity between athletes and sports team members. In order to improve the performance of the country's sports, he benefited and witnessed a sense of belonging and continuity in the form of cooperation and better performance in national and international competitions. Therefore, due to the significant importance of friendship and the lack of research and studies on friendship and identifying its components in sports, in this research, an attempt has been made to provide a model of friendship components between players in sports clubs so that friendship manifests its dimensions and components. Shorten the success of a team. The significant importance of friendship and the vacuum of research and studies on friendship and the identification of its components in sports and take a big step towards promoting value orientation in sports teams. The theorists' perspectives reveal different aspects of friendship that are addressed in this study. One of them is reinforcement theory. Believers in this theory believe that human beings are attracted to people who bring them benefits and privileges. Leaders of this theory believe that finding out that others agree with us or have attitudes similar to ours strengthens our

morale and self-confidence (White, 2015). In the theory of social exchange and justice, which has been proposed about friendly relations between individuals. The basis of this theory is based on the fact that profit must outweigh costs for a person to be satisfied with his relationship. According to this view, our satisfaction in a relationship depends on how much the return exceeds our level of comparison. Thinkers of this theory believe that the size of our investments in a relationship (time, money and emotional energy) is the determining factor in our commitment to that relationship. The more we invest, the more commitment we will have.

However, the theory of fairness owes the most profit and the least cost. But the second assumption he makes is that in any friendly relationship, our profit-and-cost ratio must be equal to that of the other party. In this case, a fair relationship is formed that leads to satisfaction with the relationship with our friend (McCann and Pulch, 2019). It is also important to examine the theory of cognitive coherence about friendship. The basic premise of this theory is that people need balance and coherence in their lives. This theory can be illustrated by a better example of research on new students at the University of Michigan; The researchers found that students are more likely to make friends with people whose attitudes and beliefs are similar to their own and who like the same people they like (Clark, 2019). Transformational theory seeks to understand and explain the changes and changes that occur in relationships over time and uses these changes to explain the form and nature of friendship. Levinger, one of the evolutionary theorists in his theory called EPCDE, explains that the relationship begins in the "acquaintance" stage, in which two people become aware of each other and have a positive impact on each other. The second stage, called the formation stage, brings the

relationship closer through a process of mutual self-disclosure that expands and deepens. At this stage, similarities are discovered and compared between the two sides. In the next stage, continuity leads to commitment to the relationship (Smith, 2006). A psychologist named Albert Bandura proposed the theory of social theory. This theory combines cognitive learning theory with behavioral learning theory. According to this theory, man can increase his empathy capacity by imitating the empathy of others and experiencing their empathy. Empathy bridges the emotional gap between players, establishes a connection between them, and creates shared experiences for them. When we do not know what a shared emotional experience is like with someone, it becomes difficult to know how we should treat others. Inability to empathize with others leads to problems in the team, relationships, the club and at the community level. Theories of reinforcement psychology, social exchange and fairness, cognitive cohesion, evolutionary theory, and social theory have much in common with regard to the issues of friendship, and place the friendship relationship in a certain framework and define a scientific basis for it; With these 5 theories that have been selected for this study, a comprehensive and clear view of the friendship relationship in this study from the design to the conclusion is obtained. Harwood and Trevor (2020) conducted a study entitled Motivational Atmosphere in Youth Sports Groups. In this study, the effect of motivational atmosphere on the structure, performance and consequences of sports groups (intrapersonal, interpersonal and group results in sports competitions) was investigated and the results showed that motivational atmosphere can affect the structure (group norms), tangible and prominent situation. (Cohesion, collective efficiency) and processes (social excellence) affect youth sports groups. Eriksen, Wright,

Kochanak, and Weirima (2020) used the Rubin (2006) Peer Relationship Model to examine the role of youth development and its relationship to group dynamics in sport and its experiences and consequences. In this study, the processes and effects of peer relationships on several complex and nested levels were examined using the concepts of interaction, relationships and groups. The results of this study showed that relationships and interaction within the group can increase motivation for activity and team cohesion. Daniuni and Barney (2019) examined the relationship between adolescents' individual values and social and antisocial behaviors towards teammates and opponents in team sports and showed that players with higher self-transcendence values versus social behaviors teammates. Show more and make more friends on the team.

Han and Vandongen (2015) conducted a study entitled The centrality of the friendship network and the performance of football players. The findings showed that when a player has a high level of cognitive accuracy about their friendships, it has a more positive effect on the performance of the player's task. Given the importance of research on the components of friendship among players in group sports such as football, volleyball, handball and basketball and the important role it plays in the performance of players and success in winning competitions, the researcher tries to find the components of friendship between employed basketball players. Explain in the Premier League through interviews with experts and analyze its role in the performance of players.

### **Materials and Methods**

The research is based on the purpose of basic research and is based on the collection of exploratory information and using the data theory of the foundation. The data collection tool was a semi-structured interview about friendship between players and a

questionnaire. The statistical population of the qualitative section was the coaches, referees, fans and managers of basketball clubs who were selected as snowballs for the interview. The statistical population of the quantitative part of all the players of the Iranian Basketball Premier League in 1399 was 168 people who were distributed among them by the method of the total number of researcher-made questionnaires and finally 130 players completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire was extracted from the qualitative section. To analyze the qualitative data, the foundation data theorizing method was used and in the quantitative analysis, the collected data were analyzed using the structural equation model in AMOS24 software. The first statistical population was sports management professors (3 people), athletes (8 people), coaches (4 people), referees (4 people) and club managers (4 people) who were selected as snowballs for qualitative interviews on the subject of research (The interview continued with theoretical saturation). Finally, in this study, the opinions of 23 people were used. The statistical population of the small section also included all the players of the Iranian Basketball Premier League (14 teams and each team 12 players). Their number was 168. Through the sampling method, the total number of questionnaires was distributed among all of them and finally 130 players in The present study participated. The method of data collection in the present study was both library and field; Regarding the theoretical foundations, research results, authoritative scientific sites, related books, dissertations, dissertations and articles have been used. In the field research, interviews with coaches, players, referees, managers and professors were conducted and a questionnaire was distributed. The method of data collection was first the professors of sports management started and they were asked to introduce experts in the management

of clubs and sports organizations. This process was also applied to other people. Prior to the interview, a letter was sent along with the interview questions, signed by the researcher stating that he / she has a moral obligation to maintain the contents of the interview and the details of the participants and not to publish it. Also, with the knowledge of the participants, all interviews were recorded and reviewed to extract key points. After announcing the agreement, interviews were held focusing on perceptions, perceptions, and indicators to identify the components of friendship in the Basketball Super League. In the interviews, the respondents commented on the question of providing components or approving the collected components and indicators. At the end of the qualitative part of the research, which was done through interviews, a questionnaire was designed in the quantitative part; This questionnaire was

extracted from the qualitative section. The questionnaire designed in the present study consisted of 41 questions. The content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed using the opinions of 7 experts and specialists in sports management; Also, following the validity of the questionnaire, using exploratory factor analysis, 5 questions were removed because the factor load was less than 0.5 and the remaining 36 questions were classified into 9 components. The results related to the reliability of the questionnaire based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient are presented in the table below. The interpretation of Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient is that if the coefficient obtained is more than 0.7, it is approved, and if it is less than 0.7, the designed questions should be reconsidered and not approved.

**Table1:** Results related to the reliability coefficient of the components of the questionnaire

factors	Number of items	Alfa kronbakh
The quality of friendship	4	0/81
Personality characteristics	5	0/83
Good mood	5	0/77
Emotional and cognitive empathy	3	0/73
social skills	3	0/75
Team culture and norms	3	0/79
Sociability	5	0/87
Development of individual-social - performance	4	0/74
Development of team-club performance	5	0/86
Number of deleted items	41	-
Total		
Approved total	36	-

The results of Cronbach's alpha coefficient have shown that all 9 components identified in the present study have a good reliability coefficient because the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of all components is calculated to be more than 0.7.

The approach used in this research is a mixed research approach with exploratory mixed method. In this way, the researcher first collected qualitative data on factors and indicators related to friendship between players using a qualitative method and interviews with experts. For this purpose, the

Grand Theory method is used to analyze the qualitative data after the implementation of the interview text. In this section, the initial codes are identified, then the identified codes are categorized, and finally the main categories are identified. At the end of qualitative data analysis, the proposed research model is presented. In the quantitative analysis section, measurement

models have been examined by the second-order confirmatory factor analysis method. After refining the measurement models, the model is tested using AMOS24 software and its fitting indices as well as the analysis of coefficients between model variables are presented.

## Results

**Table 2.** Characteristics of the qualitative research sample

<b>Samples</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>education</b>
Academic member	3	PHD
athletes	6	B.A , M.A
coaches	4	International coach
referee	3	International referee
manager	3	Club managers

Based on the data obtained from the opinions of experts in 21 interviews, they pointed to a wide range of factors in answering the questions, and finally, by removing similar concepts, 231 concepts were extracted from the text of the interviews. Open coding and axial coding were used and the concepts were reduced by selective coding resulting from axial coding. In the continuation of open or primary coding, by combining and reducing the themes obtained using the back-and-forth process of data analysis, the total set of primary codes was reduced to fewer codes.

**Axial coding:** Axial coding is the process of linking categories to their subcategories. This

was done based on a comprehensive and general model and paradigm model. In this stage of coding, also selecting a category as the central category, the components of axial coding such as causal conditions, central phenomena, contextual factors, intervening variables, strategies and consequences were identified using the collected data.

**Selective coding:** The most important step in the selective coding step is to draw the selected codes resulting from the causal, pivotal, strategic, consequential and contextual categories. The table below shows the selective coding pattern resulting from the axial coding listed above.

**Table 3:** Axis and selected categories in the research model

Category	Selected categories (dimensions)	The main category
social skills	Factors Shaping Friendship	<b>Causal categories</b>
Cognitive and emotional empathy		
personality trait		
Good mood		
Tendency to friendship	Development of friendship	<b>Axial phenomenon</b>
Worthy of friendship		
Improving the quality of friendship		
Lack of social self-efficacy	Restrictions on player friendship	<b>interfering factors</b>
Inadequate team norms		
Weak communication skills		
Unproductive behavior		
Intellectual and cultural heterogeneity		
Moral heterogeneity		
Support the club and the fans	Requirements	<b>course and background</b>
Sociability		
Situational factors		
Strengthen team culture	Friendship development strategy	<b>Strategies</b>
Improve social functionality		
The value of friendship		
Fair performance evaluation		
Individual development	Positive consequences	<b>consequences</b>
Team development		
Club development		
Social Development		
Interpersonal conflict	Negative consequences	
Ignoring social values		
Weakness in team performance		
Physical and psychological injuries		

### Quantitative findings:

The average age of the players participating in the study is determined by teams; The age range of the players was 18-35 years. Based on the results, it can be said that out of 130 players in the study, 8 had less than 2 years of experience in the league, 36 had 2-5 years of experience, 62 had 6-10 years and 24 had more than 10 years. They have a history of activity in the Iranian Basketball Premier League. Of the 130 basketball players in the present study who participated in the present study, 10 had undergraduate and graduate degrees, 39 had postgraduate, 67 had a bachelor's degree and 13 had a master's degree or higher.

To perform heuristic factor analysis, the preconditions for this test are first examined. The significance level obtained from Bartlett tests to check the data spherical was 0.002, which is less than 0.05 and indicates that heuristic factor analysis was appropriate to identify the factor structure and model and the assumption that the correlation matrix is

known is rejected. Kaiser Meyer-Alkin sampling adequacy index was obtained as the second precondition equal to 0.871. As a result, it can be concluded that the number of samples in this study is sufficient to perform factor analysis. In this regard, 5 items out of 41 items did not meet the above conditions and as a result, these questions were removed and finally, 36 questions were selected for exploratory factor analysis. In this analysis, using Varimax rotation, 9 factors were obtained that had specific values higher than one and their materials had a factor load greater than 0.5.

To determine how acceptable the indicators are for measurement patterns, all measurement patterns must first be analyzed separately. Based on the adoption of such a method, first the measurement patterns that are related to the variables are tested separately. General pattern fit indices for measurement patterns (confirmatory factor analysis) are presented in the table below.

**Table 4: General indicators of fit of measurement patterns**

Optimal amount	Team-club performance	Individual-social performance	Sociability	Team culture	The quality of friendship	Good mood	Personality characteristics	Cognitive and emotional empathy	social skill	Structure Indicator
	Reported value	Reported value	Reported value	Reported value	Reported value	Reported value	Reported value	Reported value	Reported value	
$\geq 5$	1/164	4/241	1/388	1/022	1/490	2/121	1/330	1/926	4/274	CMIN/DF
$\leq 0/9$	0/927	0/924	0/918	0/967	0/931	0/933	0/943	0/945	0/902	PCFI
$\leq 0/9$	0/943	0/927	0/916	0/998	0/976	0/922	0/964	0/928	0/917	GFI
$\geq 0/05$	0/05	0/04	0/02	0/05	0/04	0/03	0/03	0/04	0/04	RMR
$\leq 0/9$	0/906	0/938	0/914	0/905	0/946	0/926	0/939	0/921	0/903	CFI
$\geq 0/08$	0/025	0/077	0/078	0/062	0/069	0/072	0/066	0/066	0/704	RMSEA

Given that the value of P for all measurement patterns is greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the chi-square value is suitable for measurement patterns.

The GFI index for measurement patterns is greater than 0.9, which indicates a good fit of the data from the pattern.

The second root of the mean squared residual or RMR for the mentioned patterns is less than 0.05 and a small value, which also

indicates a small error of the patterns and their acceptable fit.

The CFI value for all measurement patterns is greater than 0.9, which suggests that the data well support the measurement patterns.

It can be concluded that the measurement patterns fit well, in other words, the general indicators confirm that the data support the patterns well.

**Table 5:** General indicators of structural equation model fit analysis

Optimal value (suggested)	Reported value	Index structure
≥5	1/540	CMIN/DF
≤0/9	0/965	PCFI
≤0/9	0/914	GFI
≥0/05	0/03	RMR
≤0/9	0/949	CFI
≥0/08	0/071	RMSEA

The results of the model fit indices are all in the desired range, so it is concluded; The

implemented model is optimal. Then the research model is approved.

**Table 6:** Results of the final research model

Result	P	Critical value	Regression coefficient	Type of effect	Relationship
confirmation	0.046	1.991	0.186	Direct	social skill <---The quality of friendship
confirmation	0.015	2.429	0.328	Direct	Cognitive and emotional empathy <---The quality of friendship
confirmation	0.001	3.234	0.29	Direct	Personality characteristics <---The quality of friendship
confirmation	***	7.528	0.62	Direct	Good mood <---The quality of friendship
confirmation	***	7.118	0.549	Direct	The quality of friendship <---Team culture and norms
confirmation	***	7.055	0.558	Direct	The quality of friendship <---Sociability
confirmation	***	4.701	0.405	Direct	Sociability <---Development of team-club performance
confirm	***	4.23	0.356	Direct	Sociability <---Development of individual-social

ratio					performance
confirmation	***	3.836	0.325	Direct	Team culture and norms <---Development of team-club performance
confirmation	0.001	3.197	0.267	Direct	Team culture and norms <---Development of individual-social performance
confirmation	0.005	2.831	0.237	Direct	The quality of friendship <---Development of individual-social performance
confirmation	0.039	2.02	0.193	Direct	The quality of friendship <---Development of team-club performance
confirmation	***	4.17	0.346	indirect	The quality of friendship <---Development of team-club performance
confirmation	***	4.701	0.405	indirect	The quality of friendship <---Development of team-club performance
confirmation	***	7.855	0.583	Total	The quality of friendship <---Development of individual-social performance
confirmation	***	8.055	0.597	Total	The quality of friendship <---Development of team-club performance

Based on the findings of Table 6, it can be stated that considering that the level of significance of all the studied routes is less than 0/05 are considered positive and significant.

## Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to identify the factors of friendship between the players of basketball teams and to investigate the effect of friendship on their team space and on the performance of the players. To conduct this study, interviews were conducted, the analysis of which led to the identification of six main categories. The categories include: causal conditions, pivotal phenomena, contextual conditions, intervening conditions, strategies and consequences. In interpreting the causal factors of the findings, it should be said that empathy is an effective and valuable skill. Therefore, excessive empathy can be detrimental to a person's emotional, physical,

and relationship health. Emotional empathy is one of the building blocks of communication between players. Emotional and cognitive empathy work in two completely different ways. Hence, some people, although highly skilled in cognitive empathy, can not easily show emotional empathy. This is the difference between cognitive processing and emotional processing. Empathy empowers players to walk towards each other, help each other, and be effective in healing each other's injuries. When players show deep empathy for a teammate, their level of defensive energy decreases and positive energy replaces it. In this way, they are more creative in solving problems. Although genetics affects our ability to empathize, our learning experiences in social settings also affect our capacity to empathize. A psychologist named Albert Bandura proposed the theory of social theory. This theory combines cognitive learning theory with behavioral learning theory.

According to this theory, man can increase his empathy capacity by imitating the empathy of others and experiencing their empathy. Empathy bridges the emotional gap between players, establishes a connection between them, and creates shared experiences for them. When we do not know what a shared emotional experience is like with someone, it becomes difficult to know how we should treat others. Inability to empathize with others leads to problems in the team, relationships, the club and at the community level. These results are in line with the findings of Herbison et al. (2019), Eriksen et al. (2020), Han and Vandongen (2015). Regarding contextual and situational conditions, coaches' use of club support, sociability, positive correlation between educational leadership behaviors, positive feedback, social support, group cohesion, task cohesion and social cohesion on the other hand make athletes attractive and interested in sports and skills. And learning more and more increases individual skills (task coherence) and on the other hand makes it more attractive among group members (social cohesion), also increases the group's desire to stay together, pursuing group goals and objectives. These findings are consistent with the findings of Harwood and Trevor (2020) and Danyoni and Barney (2019), Wachsmott et al. (2017) and Soleimani et al. (2015) and Sheridan et al. (2014). In this study, social inefficiency, inappropriate team norms, poor communication skills, unproductive behavior, intellectual and cultural heterogeneity, and moral heterogeneity are among the intervention variables that, as in the case of interfering elements, limit friendships. Players are considered to reduce the efficiency of the team. These findings are in line with the findings of studies by Eriksen et al. (2020), Danioni and Barney (2019), Wachsmott et al. (2017), Landkamer et al. (2019) and Hajiwarra et al. (2017). Thus, social self-

efficacy is a basic belief or ability of an individual to control social situations that leads to an optimistic attitude and positive behavior, both of which contribute to effectiveness in social situations. Since players with social anxiety disorder experience a lot of anxiety in social situations and self-efficacy in social situations is considered to be the determinant of social anxiety, so clubs 'focus on players' social self-efficacy is essential. Et al. (2020), Danioni and Barney (2019) are in the same direction. Strengthen team culture, improve social ability, promote the value of friendship and evaluate fair performance. Friendship development strategies including strengthening team culture, improving social capability, promoting friendship values and evaluating equitable performance have been analyzed and considered as friendship development strategies. By strengthening the team culture, the managers certainly have full confidence in the players and provide them with sufficient support while performing their duties. The manager has common interests with the players and treats them fairly, and the values and thoughts of the players are in line with each other; Also, when the social capability of the players is developed, the amount of conflicts created by them is low and the managers value them and their work in the club enough, and the amount of dissatisfaction and differences created between them is small and the player is optimistic and satisfied with attending the club. And loyalty. Studies by Hajiwarra et al. (2017) and Han and Wandongen (2015) confirm the results. Naderian (2016) who believes that the factor of friendship in sports environments has positive consequences for both athletes and sports teams and sports clubs. The results of this study also confirm that high motivation for training and progress, athletes' heart satisfaction, stress reduction, team cohesion and goal sharing, and cooperation and trust, and improving the

atmosphere of the sports environment are examples of these consequences.

### Conclusion

The present study, which was conducted with the aim of identifying the factors of friendship between the players of basketball teams and examining the effect of friendship on team space and players' performance, identified the effective components in establishing friendship between players. Causal, pivotal, strategic, consequential, and contextual categories were identified during the codings and their selected subcomponents. Depending on the context, coaches' use of educational leadership behaviors on the one hand increases the attractiveness and interest of athletes in the type of sport and skills and learning more individual skills (task cohesion) and on the other hand causes more attractiveness among group members (social cohesion). It also increases the desire of athletes to stay together, pursuing the goals and objectives of the team and the club. Examining the contingent elements as intervening elements showed that the clubs' focus on the social self-efficacy of the players is essential, which shows the relationship between the friendship between their players. In the study of causal factors in study, it was found that empathy from a friendly relationship gives players the strength to help each other and be effective in treating each other's injuries. The alignment of strategic factors in the friendship development strategy causes the managers to gain full trust in the players by strengthening the team culture and to provide them with sufficient support while performing their duties; The level of dissatisfaction and differences between them should be minimized and the player should be optimistic, satisfied and loyal to the club, and finally the performance of the individual, the team, the club should be improved. In the central phenomenon, the interviewees

described what the main phenomenon is and why, focusing on the components of friendship between the players. The main philosophy that the respondents mentioned in their descriptions, expressions of views, opinions and experiences, mainly emphasizes on the basic components and categories that affect the quality and development of friendship. According to the components of the data theory of the foundation in the central phenomenon, in this study, the development of friendship emerged in 3 categories, which are: 1- tendency to friendship, 2- choosing a worthy friend, 3- promoting the quality of friendship and 13 concepts. Interpretation of these results confirms that team culture and norms along with player sociability can convey a large part of the impact of the quality of friendship on individual-social performance and club team performance. In general, according to the findings of the present study, it can be said that the phenomenon of friendship and perceived quality can play an important role in solving problems related to communication between players and many positive consequences such as individual development, team development, club development and Have social development. From this study, it can be concluded that interpersonal conflict, trampling on social values, decline in team performance and club inefficiency have been identified as negative consequences of lack of friendship development, which identifies the causes and predicts measures to resolve conflicts in sports. And especially conflicts between players, is one of the main tasks of coaches and one of the important factors in achieving progress and sporting success

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