

# Motivation's Effects on Success and Cohesion in Small Groups

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Group Dynamics: PSYCH: 4090

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## Abstract

Over a 12 week period a small group of 6 randomly assigned students collected data about how motivation within the group varied in accomplishing given tasks. The change in motivation was then compared to the group's cohesion and success rate. This paper hypothesizes that as a group becomes more cohesive and consistently successful, motivation will decrease. Research was gathered by using a weekly survey based on an assigned task and participants tracked progress with web logs. Results provided should be further investigated, but does provide valuable information in the evolution of motivation in relation to cohesion and success.

## Purpose

Investigate whether motivation decreases when groups become more successful and cohesive

## Hypothesis

Motivation decreases when groups generate a more cohesive relationship and consistently succeed in group settings.

## Previous Studies

Lount, R., Kerr, N., Messe, L., Seok, D., & Park, E. (2008)

- Examined how motivational gains were influenced by group stability
- The results were that participants with a partner performed better than participants that did not have a partner.

Kindermann, T. (1993)

- Explored the influences of peer group affiliation on motivation
- Measured engagement versus disaffection and peer group interaction
- Results: children had high motivation over time depending on the groups they interacted with

## Citations

Kindermann, T. (1993, November). Natural peer groups as contexts for individual development: The case of children's motivation in school. *Developmental Psychology*, 29(6), 970-977. Retrieved September 20, 2009, doi:10.1037/0012-1649.29.6.970

Lount, R., Kerr, N., Mess, L., Seok, D., & Park, E. (2008, December). An examination of the stability and persistence of the Kohler motivation gain effect. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 12(4), 279-289. Retrieved September 20, 2009, doi:10.1037/1089-2699.12.4.279

## DATA

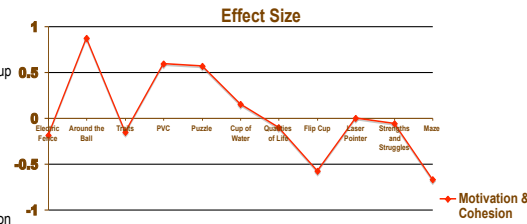
### MOTIVATION & COHESION:

Positive

**Around the Ball:** Cognitive (N=6)  
Group member made comments like: "You had to trust they [group members] were paying attention and wanted to complete the group goal." : **Cohesiveness**  
"Our group is doing an awesome job of keeping each other optimistic and courage." **Motivation**

Negative

**Maze:** Physical (N=6)  
All group members mention how close they were in the activity, "No hesitation in following their [group member's] direction I think that shows we all trust each other to make the right decision for us [group members]." **Cohesiveness**; **Motivation** was less prevalent in this activity because there was more personal explanations mentioned rather than group



### MOTIVATION & SUCCESS:

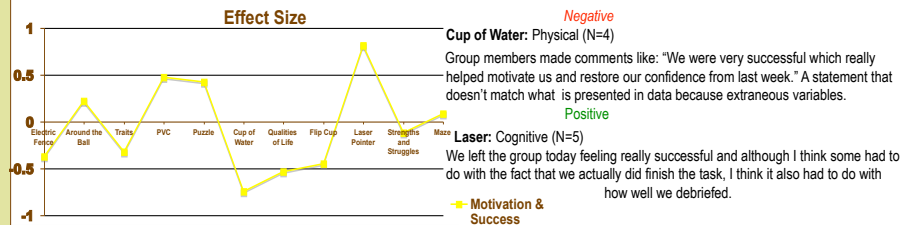
Negative

**Cup of Water:** Physical (N=4)

Group members made comments like: "We were very successful which really helped motivate us and restore our confidence from last week." A statement that doesn't match what is presented in data because extraneous variables.

Positive

**Laser:** Cognitive (N=5)  
We left the group today feeling really successful and although I think some had to do with the fact that we actually did finish the task, I think it also had to do with how well we debriefed.



### COHESION & SUCCESS

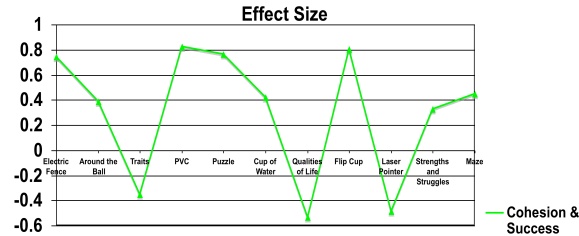
Positive

**PVC:** Physical (N=5)  
Group members made comments like: " We still felt successful as a group because we worked well together." **Success**

"Since we don't have a facilitator that we all look to one another for each other's strengths and jump into those roles consistently each week without worry of being ostracized." **Cohesiveness**

Negative

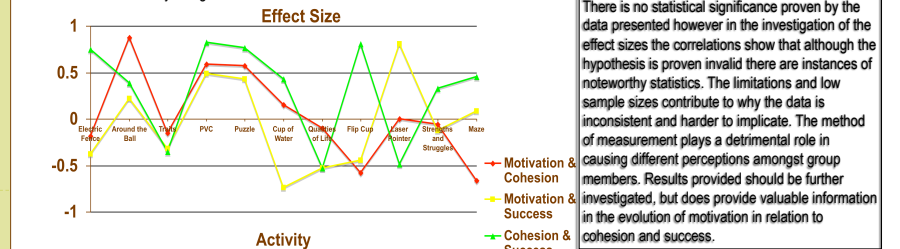
**Qualities:** Emotional (N=5)  
"I got to learn a little bit more about the other members of the group in the things that were important to them." **Cohesiveness** This statement disproves the data presented perhaps because of the nature of the activity being emotional



## Activity

## RESULTS

There is no statistical significance proven by the data presented however in the investigation of the effect sizes the correlations show that although the hypothesis is proven invalid there are instances of noteworthy statistics. The limitations and low sample sizes contribute to why the data is inconsistent and harder to implicate. The method of measurement plays a detrimental role in causing different perceptions amongst group members. Results provided should be further investigated, but does provide valuable information in the evolution of motivation in relation to cohesion and success.



## Definitions

# Motivation

The stimulation to be a part of a group.

# Cohesion

The mutual attraction and desire of group members to be a part of the group

# Success

The achievement of a predetermined goal defined by the group



## Methods

### Participants

- Six undergraduates students at a southeastern liberal arts school
- All participants were involved in a group dynamics psychology course
- Five out of the six participants were of Caucasian decent and the sixth was of African American decent.

### Instruments

- 2 surveys:
  - SurveyMonkey
  - PCFI (Prairie View Process Solution)

### Procedures

- The group met once a week for 12 weeks
- During these week the group was assigned different tasks by their professor
- Tasks were Emotional, Physical, or Cognitive

## Limitations

-Small sample size

-Low diversity

-Participants are researchers

-Some participants knew one another before the study

