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RELATIONSHIP OF PERCEIVED ABILITY AND
PLAYING TIME TO TEAM CLIMATE

by

Michaël Anthony Sírianni

An Abstract

of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Exercise and
Sport Sciences at Ithaca College

September 1997

Thesis Advisor: Dr. Victor H. Mancini

ABSTRACT

This study was initiated in an attempt to assess the team climate in various basketball environments and how an individual's perceived ability and playing time may affect team climate. The subjects for this study were 15 high school basketball teams from central and western New York, and eastern Ohio. Subjects were administered the Group Environment Scale (GES), Form R, that measured athletes' perception of the environment that was currently on their team, and Form I, that measured how the athletes would perceive an ideal team climate. The subjects were also administered a Personal Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) to assess their perceived ability, perceived success, and playing time. Results from MANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference between athletes' perceptions of their real team climate and their ideal team climate. Athletes wanted their team climates to be more cohesive, to have greater leader support and leader control, to foster more independence and self-discovery, to be more task oriented and innovative, and to be more organized. They also wanted less expressiveness and anger and aggression in their team climates. The only significant difference from the 3

x 3 x 3 ANOVA on team climate satisfaction was a playing time x perceived success interaction. Each paired comparison contributed enough to the overall variance to reach significance, but no pairs were individually different enough to be statistically significant. It was revealed that starters and key reserves had no satisfaction difference based on their levels of perceived success. Reserves revealed significant satisfaction differences based on their levels of perceived success, but the Scheffe paired-comparison test was not able to locate the difference. One's evaluation of team climate is apparently based on factors other than playing time and one's perception of ability and success. Alternative reasons for team satisfaction were offered: winning or losing, personality conflicts with the coach, position played, type of discipline used by the coach, team organization, and athlete satisfaction to merely be on the team.

RELATIONSHIP OF PERCEIVED ABILITY AND
PLAYING TIME TO TEAM CLIMATE

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of
the Graduate Program in Exercise
and Sport Sciences at
Ithaca College

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

by
Michael A. Sirianni
September 1997

Ithaca College
Graduate Programs in Exercise and Sport Sciences
Ithaca, New York

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER OF SCIENCE THESIS

This is to certify that the Master of Science Thesis of
Michael A. Sirianni

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in Exercise and
Sport Sciences at Ithaca College has been approved.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, my father the best coach I ever had and my mother the best teacher I ever had.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Most successful athletic teams have a productive blend of talent, mental toughness, and a climate that enables players to work together to create an atmosphere of trust, friendship, and teamwork. Every team has a climate that is unique and different. A particular athlete may shine in one climate and be unsuccessful in another environment.

The most important person in establishing team climate is the coach (Andrist, 1985). Coaches need to be sensitive to their athletes and their needs. Contemporary athletes are different than athletes of the past in that they are more sensitive and are no longer willing to do everything that the coach asks of them. This is why coaches need to foster trust and friendship in their teams. If there is more trust and friendship on a team, then there will be more unity and togetherness, which will possibly lead to more success.

Most of the team climate research in sport has shown that players are not altogether happy with their environments. In a series of studies conducted by Fisher, Mancini, Hirsch, Proulx, and Staurowsky (1982),

athletes wanted their climates to be more cohesive, supportive, tolerant of independence, task-oriented, orderly and organized, innovative, and to show less expressiveness and intermember disagreement.

Rudolph Moos developed the Group Environment Scale (GES) to assess the social climate of a group (Moos, Insel, & Humphrey, 1974). Several studies have shown that the GES is applicable in the sport world. For example, Proulx (1979) conducted a study on high school basketball teams using the GES. He showed that teams whose members were less satisfied with their team climate lacked cohesion, leader support, and perceived their climate to contain an unacceptable level of anger and aggression. The GES has three different dimensions with various subscales in each dimension. The three dimensions are the relationship dimension, personal growth dimension, and system maintenance and change dimension. When analyzing team climate, a coach can look at the different dimensions and determine which dimensions need to change to improve the climate.

Playing time may be a consideration when an athlete analyzes his/her team climate. Westre and Weiss (1991), while conducting a study on high school

football teams, showed that starters reported higher levels of attraction to the group (i.e., cohesion) than nonstarters and also had a greater sense of belonging. It seems apparent that athletes would be dissatisfied when they do not play. If players are dissatisfied with their playing time, this could make them dissatisfied with their team climate.

Perceived ability might also affect the way that athletes perceive their team climate. Usually if individuals perceive themselves as being good at something, they enjoy participating in that activity (Browne, 1992). Another way to look at perceived ability and how it can affect social climate is that if an athlete does not play much and his/her perceived ability and perceived success is low, then this athlete may not be dissatisfied with the amount of playing time he/she is getting because he/she knows that he/she is not that talented. On the other hand if an athlete is not playing and his/her perceived ability and success is high, then this athlete may be upset with his/her lack of playing time because he/she feels that he/she deserves to be playing.

Scope of Problem

This study was initiated in an attempt to assess the team climate of athletes in various basketball environments and how an athlete's perceived ability and playing time may affect team climate. The subjects for this study were 15 high school basketball teams from central and western New York State and from the eastern Ohio area. The subjects were visited twice during the 1994-1995 basketball season. On the first visit the athletes were administered the Group Environment Scale (GES), Form R, which measured athletes' perception of the environment that was currently present on their team (i.e., their actual team climate). They were also given a Personal Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ; Appendix A) to assess their perceived ability, perceived success, and playing time. During the second visit the athletes were administered the GES, Form I, which measured how the athletes would perceive an ideal team environment.

The athletes were classified into one of three groups based on their playing time: starters and key reserves who play at least 65% of the time; starters and reserves who play between 65 and 25% of the time;

and reserves who play less than 25% of the time. The discrepancy between athletes' actual team climate and ideal team climate was assessed by subjecting Forms R and I of the GES to a MANOVA. To assess the effectiveness of playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success on athletes' degree of satisfaction with their team climate a 3 x 3 x 3 factorial ANOVA was used.

Statement of Problem

Athletes' perceptions of their team climate were compared to determine if playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success affected team climate.

Major Hypotheses

1. There will be a significant difference between athletes' perception of their actual team climate compared to their ideal team climate.
2. Starters and key reserves will be more satisfied with their team climates than those players who receive lesser playing time.
3. Those who have higher perceived ability will be more satisfied with their team climate than those players who report lower perceived ability.

Assumptions of Study

1. By tallying all 10 subscales of Forms R and I and calculating their absolute differences, the GES can differentiate between athletes who are satisfied with their team environment compared to athletes who are not satisfied with their environment

2. The PAQ can accurately assess an athletes' perceived success and ability and playing time.

3. The athletes answered the questionnaires truthfully and gave an accurate description of their team climates.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were operationally defined for the purpose of this study.

1. Anger and aggression is the degree to which there is expression of negative feeling within the group (Moos et al., 1974).

2. Cohesion is a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives (Carron, 1982).

3. Expressiveness is the extent to which freedom of action and expression of feeling are encouraged

(Moos et al., 1974).

4. The Group Environment Scale (GES) is a scale designed to assess the social climate of a group.

5. Independence is the extent to which the group encourages independent action and expression among members (Moos et al., 1974).

6. Innovation is the degree of diversity that is encouraged in the group (Moos et al., 1974).

7. Leader control is the degree to which the leader directs and enforces the rules of the group (Moos et al., 1974).

8. Leader support is the amount of help, concern, and friendship displayed by the leader of the group (Moos et al., 1974).

9. Order and organization is the degree to which the group is structured (Moos et al., 1974).

10. Perceived ability is how the athlete sees and critiques his/her own basketball performance.

11. Playing time is the amount of time that an athlete is actually on the floor during a basketball game.

12. Self-discovery is the ability of the group to discuss personal details (Moos et al., 1974).

13. Social climate is one of the major ways in which human environments may be characterized (Moos et al., 1974).

14. Task orientation is the degree of emphasis on concrete tasks (Moos et al., 1974).

15. Team climate is comprised of the quantity, quality, and sequence of the interactions that occur among all team members (Moos, 1976).

Delimitations of the Study

The following were the delimitations of the study:

1. Fifteen male varsity basketball teams ($N = 158$) from central and western New York and eastern Ohio were the only subjects involved in this study.

2. The GES was the only instrument used to assess team climate.

3. The PAQ was the only instrument used to assess athletes' perceived success, perceived ability, and playing time.

Limitations of the Study

The following were the limitations of the study:

1. The results of this study may not hold true if it was conducted outside male varsity basketball athletes from central and western New York and eastern

Ohio.

2. Team climate results may only be valid when the GES is used as the measurement tool.

3. Perceived success, perceived ability, and playing time may only be valid when the PAQ is the measurement tool.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature in this chapter will consist of the following topics: team climate, the Group Environment Scale, GES dimensions, and subscales of the GES, playing time and perceived ability, and summary.

Team Climate

Every time a group of people get together for the same purpose they create a social climate. In the athletic world a team creates a team climate, and every team climate is different and unique. It is unique to the particular group and to the environment. The ideal environment cannot be described but organizations and institutions do arrange environments that will elevate desirable behaviors and hinder undesirable behaviors (Moos, 1976).

A team has two or more people in it, has a specific performance goal to be attained, and requires coordination among members of the team for the attainment of the team goal or objective (Larson & Lafasto, 1989). Team climate is essential when coordination among members of the team is required by

the nature of the sport (e.g., basketball).

The definition of team climate is the psychosocial environment, comprised of the quality, quantity, and sequence of the interactions that occur among team members. The quality of interactions can be the trust between the coach and the athlete. The quantity of interactions may be the number of times the coach gives feedback, either positive or negative, to the athletes. The sequence of interactions is related to decisions such as who plays, what different strategies are used, and the discipline used by the coach. These aforementioned interactions create a certain team atmosphere that is responsible for much of the influence exerted on team members' behaviors (Moos, 1976).

Perceived social climate is a promising approach to analyze general norms, values, and other characteristics of a group or team (Fisher et al., 1982). Social climate can be portrayed with an enormous amount of accuracy and can also be detailed by a common or similar set of dimensions that have been divided into the broad categories of relationship, personal development, and system maintenance and system

change (Moos, 1976).

The most important person in establishing the team climate is the coach. The coach is the most powerful member of a team and has the greatest influence on the other members of the team (Andrist, 1985). Sometimes coaches miss a very important aspect of team organization and that is to bring the players together as a family (Andrist, 1985). It is critical that coaches create an appropriate climate for the individuals on the team and also provide them with appropriate inputs needed to increase their feelings of competence (Lefebvre & Cunningham, 1977). With 12 players on a basketball team and only five able to play at once, it is important for a coach to create a sense of harmony within the team. This will enhance the team's level of play and hopefully lead to increased success (Gruber, 1981).

Coaches can engage in many practices to enhance team climate. Some ways would be to set common goals, stress the team concept, have regular team meetings, classify everyone's role on the team, stress that every role is important to success, and recognize any contribution one makes to the team no matter how small

it may be (Hatcher, 1986).

If a team climate can be achieved that enables players to work with each other so that every member of the group will benefit, then that team can accomplish a great deal (Hatcher, 1986). Team members who have a common goal and who are dependent on each other for achievement of that goal form a very strong unit (Lefebvre & Cunningham, 1977). Those members of a team who perceive their environments in a more positive nature tend to be more satisfied and perform better in that particular environment (Proulx, 1979).

When talking about a team being a family and having a strong sense of unity, it is important to note that athletes do not necessarily need to be strongly attracted to their team for personal, task, or social reasons in order to still perceive their teams as having a good climate (Brawley, Carron, & Widmeyer, 1988).

It is virtually impossible for a coach to create an ideal team environment that can meet everyone's needs (Moos, 1976). The way athletes view their team climate is very much related to each individual's role position in the environment. (Proulx, 1979). The task

of improving team climate should not fall exclusively onto the coach. Captains and key members of the team also need to work on enhancing the team climate (Cratty, 1989). Even though captains and seniors can help foster a healthy team climate, the reality is that the coach is still the key.

An examination of the research on team climate reveals that there is a significant difference between actual and the ideal climates. In Proulx's (1979) study, high school basketball team members who were less satisfied with their climate lacked cohesion, leader support, and perceived their climate to contain an unacceptable level of anger and aggression. In a study on high school baseball teams, King (1985) reported that athletes indicated that the ideal environment would contain higher levels of leader control, order and organization, and innovation. The level of anger and aggression in the teams would ideally be lower. Staurowsky (1979) pointed out the ideal environment is one that contains higher levels of cohesion and leader support and lower levels of anger and aggression than what was found in the actual environment. In a study that preceded Staurowsky's,

Hirsch (1978) reported that teams who were satisfied with their team climate were more cohesive, well organized, and had a strong leader. Both the satisfied and less-satisfied athletes indicated that anger and aggression needed to be reduced.

Group Environment Scale

The Group Environment Scale (GES) is an inventory devised to measure the social climate of a group (Moos et al., 1974). It is comprised of 10 subscales that measure the psychosocial characteristics of task oriented, social, and mutual support groups (Moos, 1981). These 10 subscales are comprised of 90 statements, divided equally. To respond to the statements, respondents are asked to mark an "X" beside either the true or false.

The GES consists of three forms. The first is R, which is used to assess characteristics that are present in the actual or real environment. The second is Form I, which indicates how group members would envision an ideal environment. The third is Form E, which is what group members would expect the environment to be like before they actually enter the group. Forms R and I can illustrate the need for

conformity to leader and member values and also identify specific areas in which members and leaders feel change should occur (Moos et al., 1974).

The GES initially consisted of 211 items that were constructed to distinguish among different groups (Moos et al., 1974). To reduce the 211 items to a 90-item questionnaire, four criteria were used: (a) each item should discriminate significantly among groups at the .05 level, (b) the overall item split should be 50-50 to avoid items characteristic only of extreme groups, (c) items should correlate higher with their own than with other subscales, and (d) each of the different subscales should have an equal number of true-false responses.

The GES is applicable to sport research on team climate, which was established by the studies by Hirsch (1978), King (1985), Proulx (1979), and Staurowsky (1979). The GES can be very effective because it can tell why an athlete does well in one environment and poorly in another (Moos, 1976). This can be important information for a coach to know when trying to create a successful team climate. Members of a team can take advantage of the feedback GES provides by trying to

change the environment so that positive feelings exist between members and the leader (Proulx, 1979). The coach can change the behaviors and conditions that are causing the athletes to be dissatisfied with their environment. The first step to change the team climate is for the coach to realize that there is a problem and that the athletes are dissatisfied.

GES Dimensions and Subscales

The GES consists of three different dimensions with a total of 90 statements. These dimensions can be very helpful when trying to determine why a team climate is not satisfactory for the athletes. Is it because of one particular dimension? If it is, then the coach and the players can work on this dimension to create a healthier climate.

The first dimension is the relationship dimension, which consists of cohesion, leader support, and expressiveness subscales. Cohesion is a dynamic process that is reflected in the tendency of a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives (Carron, 1982). Cohesion may be one of the most important of the 10 subscales when it comes to team climate. In the sport of basketball a

positive relationship between cohesion and performance has been shown. In Gruber's (1981) study on male varsity basketball teams, the better the won-loss record the more satisfied the athletes were with their cohesion. Other factors that are positively related to cohesion are the ability of athlete, nature of the team's task, feeling of satisfaction with the team's task, and perceptions of team's involvement (Granito & Rainey, 1988).

Cohesion does not evolve right away. It often takes careful planning and leadership on the part of the coach (Hatcher, 1986). This planning and leadership will pay off because the more cohesive a team is, the less likely that conflicts will occur on the team. Cohesiveness and productivity should have an interdependent relationship (Fisher & Ellis, 1990).

However, not all studies show a positive relationship between cohesion and productivity (Gill, 1977). A study done in 1974 by Landers and Luschen reported a negative relationship between cohesion and productivity in intramural bowling. A study conducted on intramural basketball teams revealed that cohesion and productivity had nothing to do with each other.

(Melink & Chemers, cited in Gill, 1977). The selected evidence that cohesion and productivity may be unrelated is important because the GES seems to emphasize social cohesion, which places an emphasis on satisfaction, and not task cohesion, which places an emphasis on performance.

Leader support is the degree of help, concern, and friendship shown by the leader for the group. Trust plays a big role in leader support. Trust fosters teamwork, which in turn fosters team climate. Trust allows team members to stay problem focused, promotes more efficient communication and coordination, and improves the quality of collaborative outcomes (Larson & Lafasto, 1989). Expressiveness is the last subscale in the relationship dimension, and it details the extent to which freedom of action and expression of feelings are encouraged (Moos et al., 1974).

The personal growth dimension consists of the independence, task orientation, self-discovery, and anger and aggression subscales. The first three subscales assess how much the group promotes expression and independence, decision making, and the discussion of information that is considered personal (Moos et

al., 1974).

Anger and aggression determines the degree that negative feelings and intermember disagreement will be tolerated. A negative approach by the coach produces stress in the athletes, decreases the enjoyment of athletics for the participants, and creates a dislike for the coach (Smoll & Smith, 1984). Some people believe that sport provides a socially acceptable outlet for aggression without feeling sorrowful (Husman & Silva, 1984). This does not mean that coaches can take out their anger on the team. There are still coaches who rant and rave on the sidelines, but contemporary athletes are changing and they will no longer take physical abuse from a coach.

Order and organization, leader control, and innovation are the subscales that comprise the system maintenance and change dimension. Order and organization is the degree of formality and structure in a team. Leader control is the decision making and the rule enforcement that is assigned to the coach. It is difficult for coaches to decide when to enforce a rule and what kind of decision to make. Coaches will be the most successful in the eyes of their players

when they analyze the situation and match their behaviors to fit the appropriate circumstances (Chelladurai, 1984). Innovation is the extent to which diversity and change is facilitated by the group.

Playing Time and Perceived Ability

At the high school level and even at the college level, playing time can affect the way an athlete perceives his/her team climate. It is natural for those who play the majority of the time to be more satisfied than those who do not play. After all, it is the starters who receive all the recognition while the nonstarters wait for their opportunity. It is extremely difficult for any athlete, especially at the high school level, to sit on the bench and support the coach and other team members. Most of the athletes on the bench believe they should be on the field or on the court playing.

Granito and Rainey (1988) conducted a study on the cohesion differences between starters and nonstarters in high school and college football teams. They found that starters contribute more to the goal attainment of the team than nonstarters, receive more recognition for achieving a goal, and experience more bonding because

of the time and effort that is put into achieving a goal. This supported their hypothesis that cohesion is related to whether or not one starts or does not start.

In another study using high school football teams, Westre and Weiss (1991) reported starters possessed higher levels of attraction toward the group than nonstarters. The starters also experienced a greater sense of belonging than the nonstarters.

These studies do not necessarily indicate that athletes are not going to be satisfied with their team because of lack of playing time. Some athletes are apparently just happy to be on the squad. Consider the "walk-ons" in Division I basketball. They accept their role on the team, which could be as a defensive specialist or preparing a starter for an upcoming game, and are relatively content with it (Murphy, 1991).

What can a coach do to help the nonstarters feel as though they are part of the team? A coach can talk in terms of togetherness once in a while, not always in terms of X's and O's. The coach needs to talk about the 10th, 11th, and 12th players on a basketball team and how important they are to the success of the team (Andrist, 1985). Most coaches use playing time and

only playing time as a way of awarding a varsity letter. Other factors should be taken into account, such as effort to improve, responsible behavior during the season, effort in the classroom, and enthusiasm (Moe, 1994).

How does perceived ability affect team climate? There is not a great deal of literature on this topic, but those who perceive themselves as being good at something usually enjoy the activity in which they are competent. In two studies on physical education, it was revealed that students who perceive themselves positively in physical activities are those who select physical education, and those who perceive themselves negatively decide not to take physical education (Luke & Sinclair, 1991). Elsewhere it was also reported that females who engage in physical education classes perceive themselves as being good at physical education and those who do not take physical education class perceive themselves as being poor at physical education (Browne, 1992).

Another mediating circumstance is that the members of the team who do not receive much playing time, when their perceived ability and success is relatively high,

will probably not be satisfied with their team climate. These athletes perceive themselves as being good and successful; and if they are not playing, the first person to blame is the coach. On the other hand, if there is a member on the team who does not play much and whose perceived ability and success are low, then he or she is not likely to have a problem with the climate for reasons that have to do with playing time. These athletes know that they are not very talented, so they do not blame the coach for a lack of playing time.

Summary

Every time a group of individuals get together for a common purpose they create a social climate. In the athletic world the members of a team create a team climate. A social climate can be portrayed with a great amount of accuracy, but every team climate is unique and different (Moos, 1976). The most important person in establishing team climate is the coach. It is critical that a coach creates an appropriate environment for the players, which includes feedback and support to enhance the team climate (Lefebvre & Cunningham, 1977). If a climate is created that enables the members of a team to work together, so that

every member of the group will benefit, then this team can reach tremendous heights (Hatcher, 1986).

All of the various studies done on team climate revealed that change was desirable. Most of the athletes in these studies who were unhappy or at least less satisfied with their environment lacked cohesion, leader support, and perceived their climate to contain an unacceptable level of anger and aggression.

Moos developed the Group Environment Scale (GES) in order to measure the social climate of different groups. The GES consists of three different forms, designed to measure the real, ideal, and expected environments (Moos et al., 1974). The GES consists of three different dimensions that can determine why a team climate is not satisfactory to the athletes. The three different dimensions are the relationship dimension, the personal growth dimension, and the system maintenance and change dimension.

The few studies conducted on playing time revealed that starters were usually more satisfied than nonstarters. The starters had a greater amount of cohesion than the nonstarters because they were the ones who were actually out on the playing field trying

to achieve their goal.

Chapter 3

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Methods and procedures used in this study with regard to selection of subjects, testing procedures, testing instruments, scoring of data, and treatment of data are outlined in this chapter.

Selection of Subjects

High school varsity basketball teams from 15 schools in central and western New York and eastern Ohio served as the subjects. Athletes ($N = 158$) and their coaches were given an explanation of the study, including what would be expected of them as subjects. It was stressed that all information would remain confidential and that the subjects could withdraw from the study at any time. All of the participating athletes and coaches gave their informed consent (Appendixes B and C).

Testing Procedures

Two visits were made to each school in the middle of the 1994-1995 basketball season. During the first visit the players were given an informed consent form to have signed by their parent or guardian. The coaches also signed their consent form. Form R of the

GES was then administered to the athletes. After the athletes completed the GES they were administered the PAQ. During the second visit to each school the athletes were administered Form I of the GES. All data were collected at the conclusion of practice.

Testing Instruments

Moos, Insel, and Humphrey's (1974) Group Environment Scale was used to measure how athletes perceived their team climate. The athletes were administered two forms of the GES. Form R was used to measure the athletes' perception of the climate that actually existed on the team. Form I was used to measure how the athletes perceived an ideal climate. The variables that were used to classify the environment were the three dimensions of the GES. These dimensions are the relationship dimension, the personal growth dimension, and the system maintenance and change dimension. Inside the three dimensions are 10 subscales with 90 statements divided equally over the subscales (Moos et al., 1974). Each time it was administered, the GES took approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The Personal Assessment Questionnaire was used to

measure the athletes' perceived ability and success and playing time. The athlete was asked to place an X in the space that best represented his personal assessment of the statements. For example: If you've always been successful in your sport, mark X in the left hand space; if you've been unsuccessful as often as successful, mark X in the middle space; if you've been unsuccessful, mark X in the right hand space. This scoring scheme paralleled a 1-5 Likert scale. The athletes were also asked to choose one category that best described their playing time. The Personal Assessment Questionnaire took no longer than 5 minutes to complete.

Scoring of Data

Forms R and I of the GES were tallied with a transparent scoring sheet. This resulted in raw scores for each of the 10 subscales in both the real and ideal forms. The absolute difference for each subscale between Forms R and I was then calculated for each athlete. The subscales were then summated into the three dimensions to give a total between the R and the I in each dimensions. The three dimensions were then added together to give a cumulative total between Forms

R and I for each athlete.

The PAQ was scored by totaling the points on both the perceived success category and the perceived ability categories.

Treatment of Data

The predictive validity of the perceived ability and perceived success parts of the PAQ was assessed by examining the scores across the three different levels of playing time. Those athletes who received the most playing time were expected to evaluate their success and ability to play the game of basketball greater than those athletes who did not receive much playing time.

A MANOVA was run on Forms R and I of the GES to find the discrepancy between athletes' actual team climates and their ideal team climates. Additional ANOVAs and discriminant analysis were planned to identify the GES subscales that contributed to the overall difference.

To assess the effectiveness that playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success had on how athletes portrayed their team climates, a 3 (playing time--starters and key reserves, reserves, nonplayers) x 3 (perceived ability--high, moderate, low) x 3

(perceived success--high, moderate, low) factorial ANOVA was used.

The importance of the athletes' playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success to the assessment of their actual team climates were assessed by a 3 x 3 x 3 factorial MANOVA.

Summary

Athletes from 15 high school varsity basketball teams served as subjects in this study on team climate. Two visits were made to each school for the purpose of administering Forms R and I of the GES and administering the Personal Assessment Questionnaire.

The GES information was tabulated into raw scores for each athlete. This was accomplished by calculating raw scores for each of the 10 subscales in both the real and ideal forms. The absolute difference for each subscale between Forms R and I was then calculated. The subscales were then summated into the three dimensions to get a raw score in each dimension. The three dimensions were then added together to give a cumulative total between Forms R and I for each athlete.

The discrepancy between athletes' actual team

climates and ideal team climates was assessed by subjecting Forms R and I of the GES to a MANOVA.

To assess the effectiveness of playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success on athletes' degree of satisfaction with their team climate, a 3 (playing time--starters and key reserves, reserves, and nonplayers) x 3 (perceived ability--high, moderate, low) x 3 (perceived success--high, moderate, low) factorial ANOVA was used.

The importance of athletes' playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success to their assessment of their actual team climates was assessed by a 3 x 3 x 3 factorial MANOVA.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter presents the results of the comparison of actual vs ideal team climates. It also shows the importance of athletes' playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success as it relates to the assessment of their team climate.

Validity of PAQ

According to the results of the PAQ, the perceived ability means of all three groups were significantly different: starters and key reserves reported the highest ability (36.37); reserves reported a lower perceived ability (32.06); nonplayers reported the lowest (28.67). A similar pattern appeared for perceived success. Perceived success means were as following: starters and key reserves reported the highest success (20.33); reserves reported a lower success (16.89); nonplayers reported the lowest success (15.35). The only pairs of means not significantly different were reserves and nonplayers.

Actual vs Ideal Team Climates

Through a comparison of GES Forms R and I, specific areas in which athletes perceived a need for

change were identified. The means and standard deviations for each of the 10 GES variables for Form R and I appear in Table 1. MANOVA revealed a significant difference between athletes' perceptions of their real team climate and their ideal team climate, Hotelling $T^2(10,148) = 34.47, p < .01$. This led to the acceptance of the hypothesis that there will be a significant difference between athletes' perception of their actual team climate compared to their ideal team climate.

As can be seen in Table 1, all GES subscales were significantly different ($p < .01$). Athletes would like their team climates to be more cohesive, to have greater leader support and leader control, to foster more independence and self-discovery, to be more task oriented and innovative, and to be more organized.

Likewise, athletes would like there to be less expressiveness and anger and aggression in their team climates. According to the discriminant function analysis, the three most important variables in determining how satisfied athletes were with their team climate were anger and aggression, self-discovery, and leader support.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and ANOVA of GES Subscales

Subscale	Form R		Form I		F
	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	
Cohesion	6.34	2.32	8.41	0.85	126.20*
Leader Support	6.29	2.16	8.37	1.06	148.16*
Expressiveness	5.87	1.87	5.32	1.49	10.82*
Independence	5.29	1.66	5.93	1.59	23.07*
Task Orientation	5.99	1.87	7.46	1.47	79.90*
Self-Discovery	4.63	1.71	6.10	1.61	76.26*
Anger and Aggression	6.24	2.19	3.18	1.63	230.61*
Order and Organization	5.49	2.16	7.71	1.41	134.85*
Leader Control	5.73	2.08	6.57	1.55	22.68*
Innovation	4.08	1.79	5.21	1.69	47.93*

p < .01.

Satisfaction with Team Climate

A 3 x 3 x 3 ANOVA of team climate satisfaction by playing time, perceived success, and perceived ability is reported in Table 2. The only significant difference was a playing time x perceived success interaction. The dissatisfaction with team climate as a function of playing time can be seen in Figure 1.

Simple effects revealed that starters and key reserves had no satisfaction difference based on their levels of perceived success. Reserves revealed significant satisfaction differences based on their levels of perceived success, but the Scheffe paired-comparison test was unable to find the difference.

It seems that each paired-comparison contributed enough to the overall variance to reach significance; but when put together, no pairs were individually different enough to be statistically significant. Nonplayers with moderate perceived success had less satisfaction than those athletes who reported high perceived success, but they did not have less than those athletes who had low perceived success.

These results led to the rejection of the hypothesis that starters and key reserves will be

Table 2

ANOVA of Team Climate Satisfaction by Playing Time,
Perceived Success, and Perceived Ability

Source of Variation	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>
<u>Main Effects</u>			
Playing Time	2	20.91	0.21
Success	2	227.22	2.28
Ability	2	54.22	0.54
<u>2- Way Interactions</u>			
Playing time x Success	4	264.08 [*]	2.65*
Playing time x Ability	4	37.47	0.38
Success x Ability	4	149.16	1.50
<u>3-Way Interaction</u>			
Playing Time x Success x Ability	5	93.49	0.94
<u>Explained</u>	23	142.43	1.43

* $p < .05$.

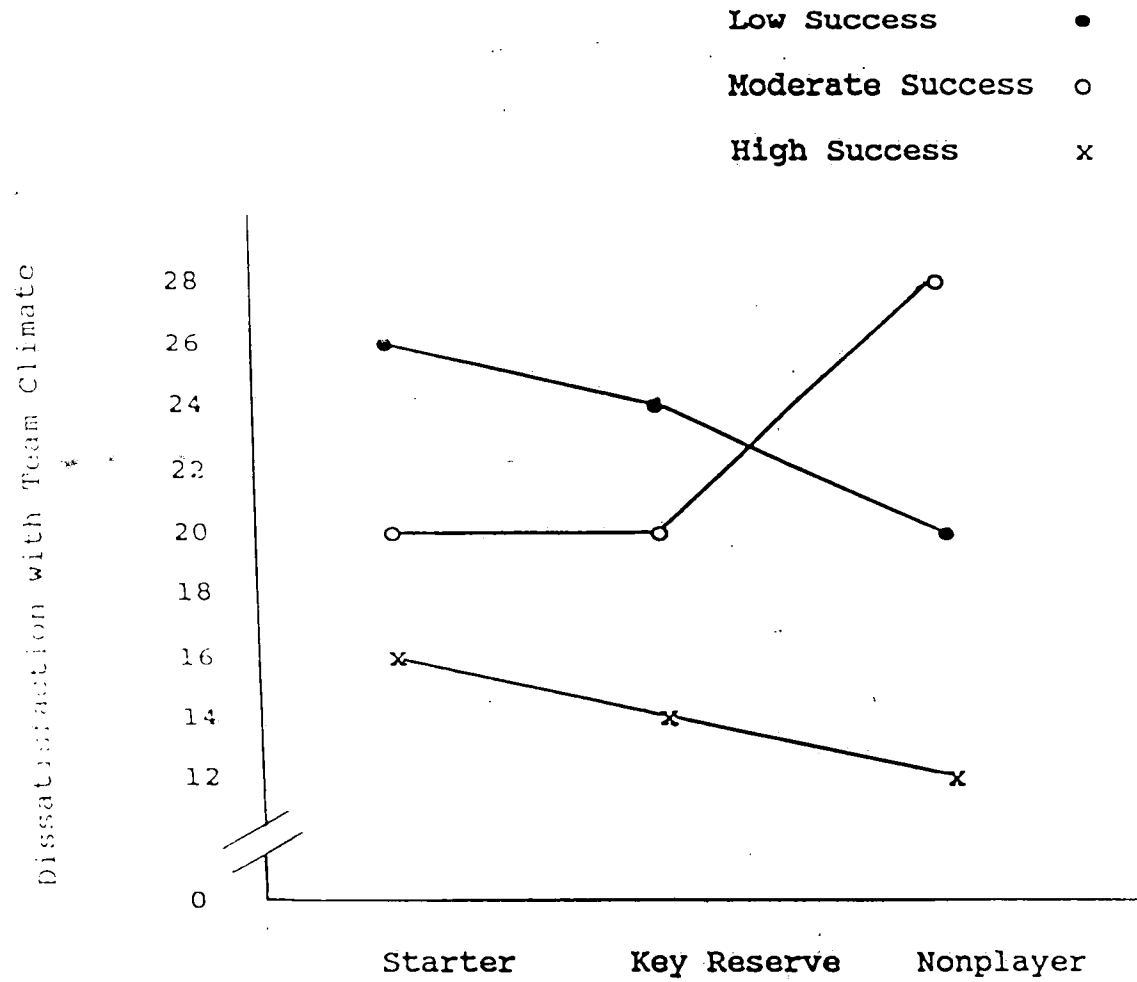


Figure 1. Dissatisfaction with team climate as a function of playing time and perceived success.

more satisfied with their team climate than those players who receive lesser playing time. It also led to the rejection of the hypothesis that those who have higher perceived ability will be more satisfied with their team climate.

Team Climate Assessment

Results of previous studies give rise to the importance of one's playing time, the assessment of ability to play basketball, and past basketball successes are to the assessment of team climate. Present results reveal that team climate appears to be relatively independent of the suspected relevant variables. In the sport of basketball, team climate is apparently based on factors other than playing time and athletes' perceptions of ability and success.

Summary

The results of Forms R and I of the GES were subjected to MANOVA, follow-up ANOVAs, and discriminant analysis. According to the results the athletes were not satisfied with their team climates. This led to the acceptance of the hypothesis that there will be a significant difference between athletes' perceptions of their actual team climate compared to their ideal team

climate. The three most important variables in determining satisfaction were anger and aggression, self-discovery, and leader support.

The 3 x 3 x 3 ANOVA of team climate satisfaction by playing time, perceived success, and perceived ability revealed only one significant difference-- playing time by perceived success interaction. Each paired comparison contributed enough to the overall variance to reach significance, but no two pairs were individually different enough to be statistically significant.

Based on these results the hypothesis that stated starters and key reserves will be more satisfied with their team climates than those players who receive lesser playing time was rejected. The hypothesis that those athletes who have higher perceived ability will be more satisfied with their team climates was also rejected.

The results of the study reveal that the evaluation of athletes' team climate is based on factors other than playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

This chapter presents a discussion of the results revealed from this investigation. This study was initiated to assess the team climate of athletes in various basketball environments. The study determined how satisfied athletes were with their team climate. Comparisons were also made to assess if playing time, perceived success, and perceived ability had any relationship with team climate.

In this study, the discrepancy between the athletes' actual or real team climates and ideal team climates were assessed by subjecting Forms R and I of the GES to a MANOVA. The MANOVA revealed a significant difference between athletes' perceptions of their real team climate and their ideal team climate, indicating that the athletes were not satisfied with their team climate and desired a change. This is in agreement with previous studies on team climate. Proulx (1979), King (1985), Staurowsky (1979), and Hirsch (1979) all revealed that there was a significant difference between actual and ideal team climates: It is virtually impossible for a coach to create a team

climate to meet the needs of every athlete on the team. Most coaches are very competent in teaching the knowledge and the skills required to play the sport of basketball, but many coaches do not have the ability to socially and emotionally meet the needs of athletes (Nakamaura, 1996).

The attitude of today's young athletes and the attitudes that athletes once had are different. In the past it was unthinkable to question the authority of the coach. Today a coach's authority is questioned on a regular basis. This makes it even more difficult for coaches to create a team climate to satisfy every member of the team.

As evident in Table 1, all of the GES subscales were significantly different in the real vs the ideal comparison. The athletes would like their teams' climate to be more cohesive, to have greater leader support and leader control, to foster more independence and self-discovery, to be more task oriented and innovative, and to be more organized. The athletes would also like there to be less expressiveness and anger and aggression in their teams' climate. Of all the GES subscales, the most differentiating were anger

and aggression, self-discovery, and leader support.

In Proulx's (1979) study the athletes wanted their teams to be more cohesive, to have greater leader support, and for there to be less anger and aggression on the team. King (1985) reported that athletes indicated that their ideal environment would contain higher levels of leader control, order and organization, and innovation. The level of anger and aggression would ideally be lower. Staurowsky's (1979) study desired higher levels of cohesion and leader support and lower levels of anger and aggression. Hirsch (1978) reported that teams who were satisfied with their team climate were more cohesive, well organized, and had a strong leader.

Anger and aggression is the degree to which there is expression of negative feelings within the group (Moos et al., 1974). It is very natural for athletes to want to have less negative feelings and more positive feelings on their teams. There are not many athletes in the world who would choose being yelled at over being praised.

There are many different ways that a coach can inflict negative feeling toward the team. The obvious

way is by yelling, screaming, or cursing at the athletes. Yelling and screaming at athletes has gone on forever; it is a technique that will never cease. Coaches such as Bobby Knight have made yelling at their athletes somewhat of an art form. Usually there is a big problem when coaches constantly curse at their athletes. At times coaches focus solely on the negatives and forget the positive. Athletes of today are changing. They are no longer willing to run through a brick wall to please their coaches. Therefore, most of them are no longer willing to put up with the verbal abuse distributed by coaches (Nakamura, 1996).

There are a few reasons why athletes are no longer willing to take negative treatment. The first reason is that the high school players are trying to emulate current NBA stars. High school players look up to these stars and try to act just like them. This is a big problem because many of these NBA stars have attitude or discipline problems. Dennis Rodman gets an incredible amount of attention for using antisocial behaviors on and off the basketball court. High school players look at this and figure that they can act just

like him. The second reason is that many young athletes today lack a male figure in their household. When these athletes get on the basketball court, they are not used to verbal discipline by a male because they do not get that at home.

A review of previous studies dealing with team climate points to athletes' dissatisfaction with the level of anger and aggression on their teams. Hirsch (1978), King (1985), and Staurowsky (1979) all reported that the level of anger and aggression in teams should ideally be lower.

Self-discovery is a part of the personal growth dimension. It can be very difficult for a coach to address individual details with the team. It may be looked at as wrong for a coach to develop a personal relationship with a member of his team. While each athlete is part of that team, a coach cannot let personal feelings get in the way when the decision is made who plays in the game, or who does what in critical parts of the game. If coaches have personal feelings toward particular athletes, that may affect their ability to make a fair and rational decision about the team.

That is not to say that coaches should act coldly and distance themselves from the team. If a member of the team has a serious personal problem, it is important for that athlete to know that the coach can be approached for help.

Leader support is the amount of help, concern, and friendship displayed by the leader of the group (Moos et al. 1974). One of the major points in leader support is trust. Trust allows members of the team to stay problem-focused, trust promotes more efficient communication and coordination, and trust improves the quality of collaborative outcomes (Larson & Lafasto, 1989).

Leader support is extremely important when discussing team climate. If a coach or a leader is not supportive, it is natural for athletes to see their team climate as being poor. If athletes feel that they cannot trust the coach, they are not going to feel secure with their team. To be successful, athletes need to be able to trust the coach. They have to trust the decisions that the coach makes during the game, the decisions the coach makes on who plays and when, and the miscellaneous decisions that every head coach has

to make.

Athletes who do not trust the coach are a problem for the team. If they do not have trust, they do not have confidence in the coach's ability to coach. Confidence is an important factor for both coaches and athletes. King (1985) was the only previous investigator to report leader support as one of the most differentiating GES subscales.

Based on the results of the study, the hypothesis that those who have higher perceived ability will be more satisfied with their team climate than those players who report lesser perceived ability was rejected. It also led to the rejection of the hypothesis that starters and key reserves will be more satisfied with their team climate than those players who receive lesser playing time.

The original thought was that if athletes perceive themselves as being talented, then they will probably enjoy competing in that sport. Low perceived success did lead to less satisfaction than high perceived success for the nonplayers, but not for the other two groups. This may be true for the nonplayers because if athletes ride the bench and portray their perceived

success as being high, then those athletes may just be happy to be on the team.

On the other hand the nonplayers with the moderate perceived success who are dissatisfied with their team climate may want more than to just be a member of the team. These athletes may feel as though they are not part of the team because they do not actually contribute on the floor during a game and perceive themselves as being a failure.

When discussing nonplayers, many things need to be taken into account. Number one, is the athlete satisfied to just be on the team? Number two, do the athletes perceive themselves as being good enough to play? Number three, does the nonplayers' love for the game outweigh the disappointment they have for not playing?

If playing time and perceived ability are not important variables when discussing team climate, then what is important? One factor to take into consideration is whether or not the team is winning or losing. Teams that are winning games may be considerably more satisfied than teams that have a losing record. There is a bond that is associated with

being a championship or winning team that is hard to capture anywhere else. Whether an athlete is the star of the team or the last person off the bench, that athlete experiences a special feeling that is hard to emulate outside the athletic arena (Martens, 1987). Therefore, it is much easier to sit on the bench for a winning team than it is for a losing team.

Another possible factor accounting for reduced satisfaction with the team climate is a personality conflict with a coach. There are many instances when there are conflicts between a coach and a player. One reason is that the so-called stars of the team may feel that they do not have to listen to the coach. These players may feel that they are above the rest of the team. This will definitely cause a conflict. Another reason, which even coaches do not like to admit, is that every coach plays favorites on the team. The other members of the team may resent coaches for playing favorites even though coaches may not be aware that they are doing it.

A third possible factor is that sometimes athletes do not like the position that they are playing. They may feel as though they are a guard, and the coach is

playing him at power forward. Athletes need to realize that the coach is playing them at a position where their talents will be best utilized to help the team win. This factor may be more relevant in the sport of football, for example, where the athlete wants to play running back, but the coach puts him at guard. It is also relevant in the sport of basketball.

A fourth possible factor that causes athletes to be dissatisfied with their team climate is that they are not used to the discipline of the coach. As discussed earlier, not many players like to be yelled at or disciplined. Coaches need to be leaders. They need to be firm with their athletes. Firm communication sends clear messages about rules and expectations (Nakamura; 1996). There are some athletes who can take the discipline and correct their mistakes, but there are others on the team who cannot take the criticism. Some athletes may think that a coach has something against them personally because of the discipline they receive. Also, some athletes are not used to getting disciplined because they do not receive it at home.

The fifth possible factor is that a player may not

be happy with the way the team is organized. Some athletes believe that their ideas and thoughts are correct 100% of the time. There may be little things about which the athlete is not happy, such as they do not like how the practice is organized, they are unhappy about the uniforms, or they do not like the decisions made about training rules. There could be many more little items that players are dissatisfied with related to the organization of the team. Athletes need to understand that the coach makes the decisions about everything not just strategy during the game and who plays.

The last possible factor is that the athlete may be happy just to be on the team and playing time has little to do with being satisfied with team climate. People feel a bond by being part of an athletic team. It is a bond that is hard to experience anywhere but on the athletic field. There is a closeness between members of the team that is very hard to explain. Even if athletes are not playing they may feel that bond or closeness that is associated with being on an athletic team. This is especially true when teams are winning. When a team is winning, it seems that everyone feels as

though that they are a part of the success. It is a special feeling that people outside of the athletic arena do not experience.

Summary

The MANOVA revealed a significant difference between athletes' perceptions of their real team climate and their ideal team climate, indicating that the athletes were not satisfied with their team climate and desired a change.

All of the GES subscales were significantly different. The three most differentiating GES subscales were anger and aggression, self-discovery, and leader support. It was not surprising to see anger and aggression as one of the most important differences. It is very natural for an athlete to want to have less negative feeling on a team. Present day athletes seem to be less willing to take the verbal abuse that athletes of the past took on a routine basis. The athletes of today are more sensitive and more individualistic than the athletes of yesterday.

Based on the results of the study the hypothesis that stated starters and key reserves will be more satisfied with their team climate than those players

who receive lesser playing time was rejected. The hypothesis that those who have higher perceived ability will be more satisfied with their team climate than those players who report lesser perceived ability was also rejected.

Moderate perceived success did lead to less satisfaction than high perceived success for the nonplayers but not for the other two groups. The nonplayers with high perceived success may be thrilled to just be on the team, but the nonplayers with the moderate and low perceived success may want to be more than just on the team.

Other reasons than playing time and perceived ability were offered to explain why athletes may be dissatisfied with their team climate. One factor is winning or losing, a second factor is personality conflicts with the head coach, a third is satisfaction with the position that he is playing, a fourth is the type of discipline used by the coach, a fifth factor is the team organization, and the last is the feeling that some athletes are just happy to be on the team and it does not bother them that they do not get much playing time.

Chapter 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Summary

This study was initiated to assess the team climate of athletes in various basketball environments. Fifteen high school basketball teams from central and western New York and eastern Ohio served as subjects. The subjects were visited twice during the 1994-95 basketball season. On the first visit, the athletes were administered the GES, Form R, to measure athletes' perception of the environment that was currently present on their team. During that first visit the athletes were given a Personal Assessment Questionnaire (PAQ) to assess their perceived ability, perceived success, and playing time. On the second visit to the team the athletes were administered Form I of the GES to measure how the athletes would perceive an ideal team climate. The athletes were then classified into one of three groups based on their playing time: starters and key reserves who play at least 65% of the time; starters and reserves who play between 65 and 25% of the time; and reserves who play 25% of the time.

Through a comparison of the GES Forms R and I, it was discovered that there was a significant difference between athletes' perceptions of their real team climate and their ideal team climates. Athletes wanted their teams to be more cohesive, to have greater leader support and leader control, to foster more independence and self-discovery, to be more task oriented and innovative, and to be more organized. They also wanted less expressiveness and anger and aggression in their team climates. The three most differentiating GES subscales were anger and aggression, self-discovery, and leader support.

A playing time x perceived success interaction was the only significant difference that was found when assessing the impact that playing time, perceived ability, and perceived success had on how athletes portrayed their team climates. Each independent variable paired comparison contributed enough to the overall variance to reach significance, but no pairs were individually different enough to be statistically significant.

Starters and key reserves had no satisfaction difference based on their levels of perceived success.

Reserves revealed significant satisfaction differences based on their levels of perceived success, but the follow-up tests were not able to locate the difference.

Based on these results, playing time does not seem to be a very significant variable in determining basketball athletes' satisfaction with their team climate.

Alternative reasons for team satisfaction were offered: winning or losing, personality conflicts with the coach, position played, type of discipline used by the coach, team organization, and athlete satisfaction merely to be on the team.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were established from the findings of this investigation.

1. Athletes are dissatisfied with their team climate, compared to their perception of what is ideal.
2. The three areas in which athletes are least satisfied with their team climate are anger and aggression, self-discovery, and leader support.
3. Moderate perceived success leads to less satisfaction than high perceived success for the nonplayers, but not for the other two groups.

4. Playing time does not seem to be a very significant variable in determining basketball athletes' satisfaction with their team climates.

Recommendations for Further Study

1. Conduct a similar study on a sport other than basketball to determine if playing time is an important variable in other sports.

2. Conduct a similar study and, instead of using playing time as a variable, use winning and losing or the discipline levels of the coach.

Appendix A

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Please mark an X in the space that best represents your personal assessment of the statements. Example: If you've always been successful in your sport mark X in the left hand space; if you've been unsuccessful as often as successful, mark X in the middle space; if you've been unsuccessful mark X in the right hand space.

As a athlete in my sport I have generally been

Successful	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Unsuccessful
Unnoticed	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Recognized
Frustrated	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Rewarded
Happy	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Sad
Uncertain	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Confident

My athletic ability in my sport is

Above average	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Below average
Bad	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Good
Ridiculed by coach	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Praised by coach
Superior	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Inferior
Limited	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Broad
Praised by others	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Ridiculed by others
Encouraging	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Frustrating
Strong	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Weak
Worse than most	___ ___ ___ ___ ___	Better than most

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE (Cont.)

Choose the one category that best describes your playing time.

- _____ Starter (Play 80-100% of the time)
- _____ Starter (Play 65-80% of the time)
- _____ Starter (Play 50-65% of the time)
- _____ Starter (Play less than 50% of the time)
- _____ Key Reserve (Play at least 75% of the time)
- _____ Key Reserve (Play at least 50% of the time)
- _____ Reserve (Play 25-50% of the time)
- _____ Reserve (Play 10-25% of the time)
- _____ Mop up time (Play last 2 or 3 minutes of the game)

Appendix B

PARENT OR GUARDIAN INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The study in which your son is asked to participate focuses on team climate as it is affected by an individual's perceived ability and playing time.

Your son will be given two questionnaires asking for opinions about team spirit and performance before a practice during the season. This will not interfere with practice time.

There are no apparent physical, psychological, or social risks involved in participating in this study. Participation in the investigation is voluntary, and your agreement to participation does not prevent your son from discontinuing participation at any time. If your son does not want to participate in this, he will be excused.

It is assured that the names in this study will be kept strictly confidential. The Group Environment Scale and the Personal Assessment Questionnaire will be disposed of following the investigation. If you do not have any questions and are willing to let your son participate in this study, please sign your name below. Failure to return a signed consent form shall be taken to mean that your son will not participate in the study.

If at any time during this study you would like any additional information, please feel free to contact Dr. Victor H. Mancini or Mike Sirianni at (607) 274-3109.

Thank you,

Michael Sirianni

Dr. Victor Mancini

Dr. A. Craig Fisher

I have read the above information about the study and I understand its content. I agree to allow my son to participate in the study.

Student's Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student's Signature

Date

Appendix C

COACH CONSENT FORM

1. a) Purpose of this study. Research is being conducted to examine team climate, both from actual and ideal perspective to determine the relationship between perceived ability and playing time and team climate.

b) Benefits. The resulting information may assist coaches in better understanding the climate of their teams. It can help coaches improve their team climates by trying to get more like the ideal.
2. Method. You will be asked to allow the researcher to administer the Group Environment Scale and the Personal Assessment Questionnaire. This will take no longer than 20 minutes to complete.
3. Minimal risk. There are no apparent physical, psychological, or social risks involved in participation of this study.
4. Need more information? Additional information about the study or general results from the study can be obtained from Dr. Victor Mancini or the researcher at (607) 274-3109.
5. Withdrawal from the study. Participation is voluntary and your initial agreement to participate does not stop you from discontinuing your participation at any time.
6. Will the data be maintained in confidence? It is assured that the names in this study will be kept confidential. The questionnaires are solely for the purpose of this study and will be available to the researcher, Dr. Victor Mancini, and Dr. Craig Fisher. All forms will be destroyed immediately after the study is completed.
7. I have read the above, I understand its contents, and I agree to my team's participation in the study.

Signature of Coach

Thank you,

Michael Sirianni
Graduate Student
Ithaca College

Date

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